



HURON COUNTY MUSEUM AND HISTORIC GAOL

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT







Corporation of the County of Huron

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# Huron County Museum & Historic Gaol

### MISSION

The Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol engage our community in preserving, sharing, and fostering Huron County culture.

### VISION

The vision of the Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol is to nurture and inspire heritage and culture.

### DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol designs its exhibits, programs, events, and services through a lens that includes a wide range of ideas, voices and viewpoints that reflect and engage Huron County's diverse community.

### HURON COUNTY MUSEUM

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p. 519-524-2686

e. [museum@huroncounty.ca](mailto:museum@huroncounty.ca)

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### HURON HISTORIC GAOL

181 Victoria St. North, Goderich ON

p. 519-524-6971

### FOLLOW US:



@HuronCountyMuseum



# MUSEUM PLANNING & ENGAGEMENT

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The five-year Strategic Plan was developed and introduced in 2019. During the period this strategic plan covers, the Museum aims to engage with more people to increase a shared understanding of our culture, leading to greater social cohesion and stronger Huron County roots. It will also be important to put strategies and practices in place to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization. We understand that preserving the past means we will ensure future generations will have access to artifacts, places and stories.

With community, staff and stakeholder input the following goals are part of the strategic plan for the Museum and Gaol:

## **Engage with more people:**

1. Engage and inspire the next generation of Huron County by sparking an interest in their heritage and culture.
2. Connect with audiences beyond physical sites.
3. Create dynamic exhibits that generate interest and attention.
4. Maximize existing footprint to support enhanced participation.
5. Increase the strength of the Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol brand.

## **Long-term sustainability:**

1. Seek out partnerships to share skills, resources and ideas.
2. Implement environmentally sustainable practices and celebrate natural heritage.

3. Build support with funders and advocates to ensure long term financial support.
4. Ensure sufficient staffing levels to maintain energy and support for new strategic directions.

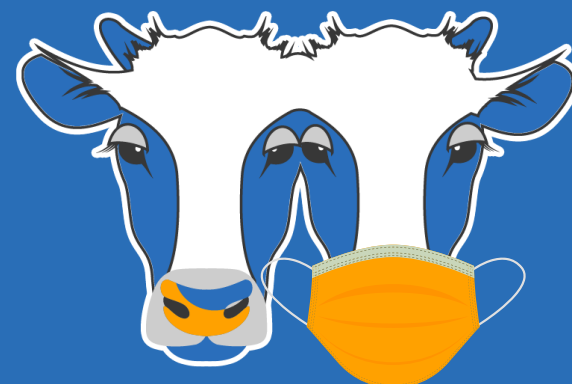
Work throughout the year focuses on these goals as well as a further breakdown of projects to support those goals.

Throughout 2022, the Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol worked to engage with people throughout Huron County and beyond both in-person and virtually. Returning to in-person programming, outreach and events while continuing virtual outreach & programming opportunities to connect with patrons; continuing collections projects focused on nomenclature and collections review; work towards the redevelopment of a permanent exhibit gallery to re-engage visitors; and production of new temporary exhibits with community partners for our visitors to visit in-person, were all part of the Museum and Gaol's work to ensure continued progress in the Strategic Plan. Staff took the opportunity to review the full Strategic Plan to re-access timelines and project goals in order to make adjustments, in particular due to delays based on the extended COVID-19 pandemic, in advance redevelopment of the plan in 2024.

## COVID-19

January 2022 found the Huron County Museum closed to the public as part of the province-wide shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Museum reopened Feb. 1, 2022 with social distancing and capacity limits. In March, capacity limits, vaccination requirements and masking mandates were lifted. The remainder of the year

found the Museum open for regular hours and admissions, and a return to in-person programming and site usage. The Huron Historic Gaol was able to re-open in May to regular hours and self-guided visitation and through the summer was able to reintroduce a variety of in-person special events.





# INITIATIVES & FUNDING

The Huron County Museum & Historic Gaol successfully received the Community Museum Operating Grant in 2022 to assist with Museum & Gaol operations. Funding from the Digital Access grant through the Museum Assistance Program supported further digitization of the archival collection.

Grant funding was received from Young Canada Works in Heritage and the Canada Summer Jobs programme for summer staffing opportunities for the Museum & Gaol. The summer staff grants focused student projects on Museum & Gaol events, marketing and programming. A Research Assistant was also supported and funded through Huron College.

To advance youth programming, funding was received from Compass Minerals to cover virtual programme fees for schools and bussing fees for school groups that wish to visit in person; and from Bruce Power, Liuna 1059, and the IODE for the Canuckstorian youth documentary project.

Sponsorship was received from the Goderich Kinette Club, Liuna 1059, and the Rotary Club of Goderich to support the redevelopment of the Northwest Gallery exhibit gallery at the Huron County Museum.

“Everyone said they had a great time and that you and your staff did a great job. It was a lot to organize, but everyone was happy.

*- school group participant*





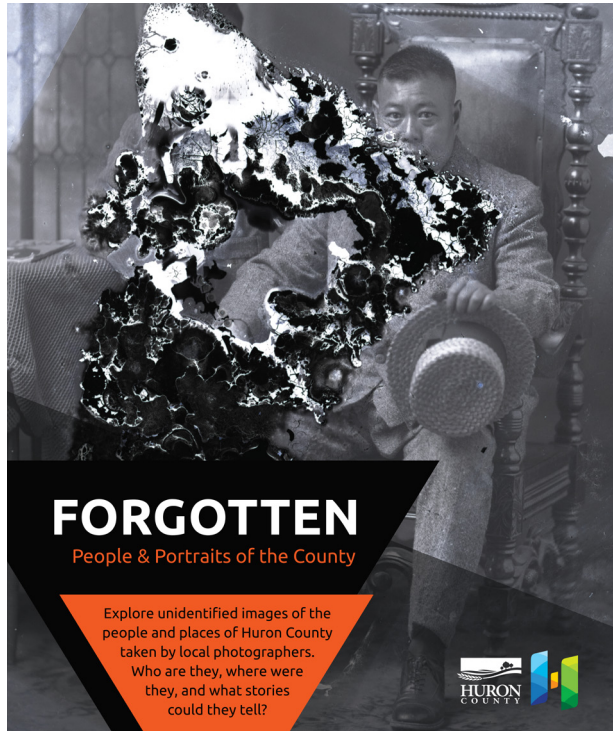
# EXHIBITS

The Huron County Museum facilitated three temporary exhibits on site throughout 2022.



## The Ripple Effect

The Ripple Effect interactive exhibit that explored Huron County's waterways continued until July with gradual reintroduction of interactive components.



## Forgotten: People & Portraits of the County

The Forgotten exhibit continued until October in the Museum's Feature Gallery. The exhibit focussed on the many photographs and portraits in the Museum archival collection that are unidentified but were taken by Huron County photographers. The social media Facebook group to further prompt identifications continued after the exhibit closed.



## The Huron County Art Show & Sale

The Huron County Art Show and Sale returned to the Museum in October in the temporary exhibit gallery with artworks from 31 local artists in a variety of media including painted works, photography, textiles and sculpture. This was the 20th year for the show and there are now 52 artworks in the Museum's Art Bank collection. Winners for this year's show were Harvest Landscape Huron County, Roman Turczyn and With Wonder, Michele Miller, shown above.





# PARTNERSHIP EXHIBITS

Three partnership exhibits were also installed in temporary exhibit spaces. These partnerships were important to allow for expanded stories to be presented in the Museum beyond those of the Museum's collections.

**Métis artist Tracey-Mae Chambers**, #hopeandhealingcanada, installed a site-specific art installation created with red yarn in the overhead area of the Museum front lobby. Chambers uses yarn pieces to illustrate connection between us and promote dialogue about decolonization and reconciliation between Indigenous, Inuit and Métis peoples and settlers.

**The Ribbon Skirt Project: Creating & Gifting a Cultural Connection** exhibit included 268 ribbon skirts as the culmination of a project coordinated by Miss Kettle & Stony Point Junior to gift youth of her First Nation ribbon skirts to continue their cultural traditions. Exhibit themes included the Creation Story, the Medicine Wheel, the Three Sisters, Spirit Horses, the Seven Grandfather Teachings, Ojibway Clans, Water is Life, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls, and a large variety of indigenous symbols, floral & ribbon theme skirts.

**ANKOSÉ: Everything is Connected** was a community art exhibit presented in cooperation with the Goderich Celtic Roots Festival and featured works by a variety of Indigenous artists on loan from the private collections of Celtic Festival supporters.

Traveling exhibits were hosted from two organizations - Speaking of Democracy from the Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and Ticks: Little Bugs, Big Problems from the Public Health Agency of Canada.

## **The Outreach exhibit programme was continued:**

- Digitization Promotions – Goderich Branch, Seaforth Branch and Alice Munro Branch, Wingham, Huron County Library
- Forgotten Portraits from Seaforth – Seaforth Branch, Huron County Library
- Brussels 150th Anniversary – Brussels Branch, Huron County Library
- Huronlea Homes for the Aged reminiscence case – Brussels related artifacts
- Centralia College class reunions

In advance of the planned exhibit redevelopment, the Industry Gallery was dismantled and artifacts relocated to alternate exhibit spaces or storage to prepare for construction work to repair the exhibit space.

The interpretive panels at the Tiger Dunlop Tomb were redesigned and expanded with updated graphics and text font in a more accessible format. The three original panels were expanded to five panels, to be installed in 2023 after the installation of new stands.





# SELECT EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

The Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol facilitated a variety of special events and activities over the course of 2022 both in-person and virtually.

## Virtual presentations included:

- Photo Genealogy with Art Taylor
- Huron County Photographers with Larry Mohring
- Use of Archival and Photographic Collections by Museum staff
- Photo Detectives and Reuben Sallows portraits with Colleen Maguire

## In Person presentations included:

- The Clues are in the Clothes with Jennifer Treimstra-Johnston
- Hats off Huron County with Jennifer Treimstra-Johnston
- Ribbon Skirts with Jaylynn Wolfe, Miss Kettle & Stoney Point Junior

In-person and virtual education programs were provided for groups throughout the year including school and classroom visits, Kids & Dads evening programs, seniors groups, and youth groups. Three weeks of summer STEAM Power day camps were facilitated and activities held on PA Days for visitors.

In-person events included Multilingual Movie nights, Family Day programming, Historic Places Day, Behind the Bars, film screenings on Truth & Reconciliation Day, Ghost Tours, Halloween Trick of Treating and a Holiday Open House. A partnership with the Goderich Little Theatre found performances of Measure4Measure at the Huron Historic Gaol. The annual Textile Show and Sale was also facilitated by the Huron County Spinners, Weavers & Quilters guilds.

Outreach programs were provided for a number of groups including OneCare, Middlesex County Library, Eldon House AGM, Huronview, and Ontario Ancestors Huron Branch. The Museum & Gaol provided outreach displays and activities at The Launch, Goderich Children's Festival, Huron County Library Summer Reading Program, Bayfield Fair, Huron County Plowing Match, Seaforth Fair, Huron Multicultural Festival, Lucan Montreal Canadians Alumni Game, and the Belgrave Elementary School Fair events.

The Museum partnered with Mickey Maple to present the Young Canuckstorians project, a video series by kids for kids about Huron County history. Researched and written by Bayfield Guiding and the Avon Maitland District School Board SOAR students, the series can be found on the Museum's Youtube channel. The Guides also put together the Community Curators display based on video themes.

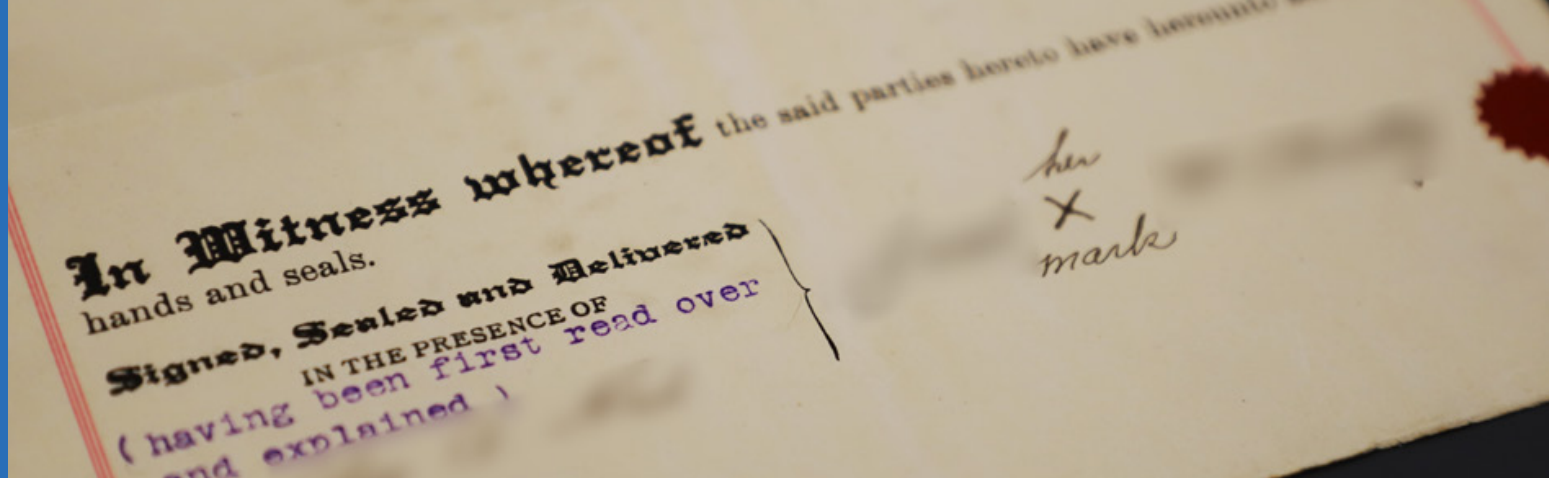




# Collection Highlights

There were 63 new accessions in 2022. The following items are a representative sample of items donated to the collection:

- Cash register used at Hawkins Hardware Store in Exeter by George Hawkins (1879 - 1973)
- Silver platter - "Presented By The Dominion Of Canada To Members Of Civilian Rifle Assoc'ns For Skill In Rifle Shooting. Won By C.M. Beadle, Auburn Rifle Assoc'n 1913"
- Medicinal glass jar with etchings that include "W. & E. Blair 1831" that came from Scotland to Canada with Blair Family
- Goderich Organ Factory piano stool
- Benmiller blankets
- Dress (including skirt, bodice, cape, and hat) circa 1861
- Framed oil painting circa 1978 of a water scene with a lighthouse on an island by Martha Rathburn
- Artifacts and archival items from Fordwich United Church, Salem United Church, Wroxeter United Church, and Gorrie United Church
- A variety of items pertaining to the Goderich Harbouraires (formed in 1947 and disbanded the choir in 2022).
- Archival items also including photographs, diaries, property documents, deeds, school fair documents, directories, etc.



## COLLECTIONS

Staff worked with database review & file updates, artifact cataloging, digitization, deaccessioning, and storage consolidation work at the Museum. Work continued on the addition of artifacts to the PastPerfect online collection database finishing the year with 6,792 artifact and photograph records available online to researchers.

The 2022 Collections Committee met virtually through the year to discuss Museum & Gaol collections issues including policy review, storage & space needs, deaccessioning, and site planning.

### Members consisted of:

Louise Dockstader (Chair), Rhea Hamilton-Seeger (Past-Chair), Al Sanders, Deb Sholdice, Ted Turner, Thomas Lang, Elisabeth Sykes, Sally Leitch, and Glen McNeil (Warden).

## CONSERVATION

Staff worked on condition reports, rehousing and consolidation of a variety of collections in the Main Storage Area. Archival review of the Henderson photography collection followed a similar process.

Museum staff and Archaeologists from Timmins Martelle Heritage Consultants reviewed the Stage 1& 2 archaeological assessments completed at the Huron Historic Gaol. Reports were submitted for Ministry approval and project planning work for work in the interior courtyards is hoped to proceed in 2023 without the need for a stage 3 or 4 assessment.

## RESEARCH

The Research Assistant from Huron College was able to complete further research into the people who were incarcerated at the Huron County Gaol. Transcriptions of the Gaol registry from 1911 to 1921 were completed from registry copies provided by the Archives of Ontario. Along with already transcribed records from 1841 to 1911, the full set of data was analyzed to provide a variety of information to be used for further research, exhibition and publication.







# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Staff participated in a variety of workshops and webinars over the course of the year including those offered through Ontario Museum Association, Cuseum, National Trust and various local organizations.

Some staff took part in a variety of leadership training including Difference Makers modules and County Leadership. Six core staff were recertified in First Aid training.

Museum staff attended the annual conferences of the Ontario Museum Association, Canadian Museum Association, Archives Association of Ontario, and Association of Canadian Archives.

The Huron County Museum & Historic Gaol are active members of the Huron Perth Middlesex Museum Network and the PastPerfect Users group.

## Staff

Beth Rumble, *Director of Cultural Services*  
Elizabeth French-Gibson, *Senior Curator*  
Sinead Cox, *Curator of Engagement & Dialogue*  
Patti Lamb, *Registrar*  
Jeremy Allin, *Visitor Services Coordinator*  
Michael Molnar, *Archivist*  
Amy Zoethout, *Marketing & Branding Coordinator*  
Heid Zoethout, *Museum Technician*  
Keith King, *Exhibits & Collections Assistant*  
Jim Seale, *Fundraising*  
Kelly Greig, *Office Manager*

## Student Museum & Gaol Assistants

AJ Sylver  
Brooklyn Wright  
Harrison Lobb  
Jacob Smith  
Jacob Watson  
Kevin denDunnen  
Kyra Lewis  
Maddy Gilbert  
Mary Murdoch  
Robyn Weishar

## Volunteers

Thank you to our many volunteers who provided 1,486 hours of volunteer service during 2022.







# MARKETING & PROMOTIONS

Social media posts, newly researched blog posts, press releases, interviews with local media, and participation in a variety of video series all added to the regular marketing and advertising to promote the sites, collections and resources of the Museum & Gaol.

## Social Media Followers (December 2022)

Facebook	Instagram	MailChimp - Subscribers
3,503	1,726	792

# ATTENDANCE

2022 Site Visits		Museum	Gaol
Individual Admissions		7,459	9,247
Individual Admissions – Huron County Library Card		1,640	748
Education Programs (in-person & virtual)		1,626	986
Public Programs (in-person & virtual)		1,522	1,348
Outreach (in-person & virtual)		3,196	99
Groups		147	136
Object Depositors, OGS, Researchers, Volunteers, Others		939	688
Meetings, Rentals		1,047	1,068
<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>17,576</b>	<b>14,320</b>
Comparative Years		2021	5,493
		2020	119
		2019	14,385