



Annual Report

OSHAWA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2023

— Collections. Spaces. People. —



1450 Simcoe Street South, Lakeview Park
Oshawa, ON L1H 8S8

905-436-7624

oshawahistoricalsociety.org · oshawamuseum.org

023.8.1 ab—Cub uniform, on display as part of the feature exhibit, *Be Prepared*.



**Fred Popham's
Cubs Uniform:**
This cubs uniform was worn
by Fred Popham while he
was a member of the 30th
Oshawa Beavers in the late
1930s.

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The Oshawa Museum is situated on the traditional territory and treaty lands of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation.

Our work on these lands acknowledges the signatory communities of the Williams Treaties, as well as the Mississauga Nation and other members of the broader Indigenous community, for their resilience, and their longstanding contributions to the area now known as Durham Region.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Once again, the Oshawa Historical Society has completed another year of safe-keeping and telling of the story of Oshawa. Each year, new stories of historic happenings both large and small are brought forward. This year, more than ever, the 100th anniversary celebrations for the city has brought forward new stories.

The function of the OHS Board of Directors includes increasing planning strategic leadership, setting future goals for the Society, enhancing public image, and determining and monitoring programs.

Our seven directors represent a breadth of knowledge and expertise that they continually bring to decisions made by the board.

The board and the museum staff continually seek ways to set future goals to enhance the experience for the public at the museum. Once again, we are seeking innovative pathways for programming space, particularly, to increase our visibility in the city.

The museum staff, under the direction of the Executive Director Kat Akerfeldt, plan and execute excellent and varied programs throughout the year. They have increased and broadened the diversity of these programs to reflect the changing population of the city.

The OHS is involved with many local partnerships, not limited to: Trent Durham University GTA, Durham College, the Oshawa Public Libraries, the Robert McLaughlin Gallery, the Canadian Automotive Museum, and the Ontario Regiment Museum. Collaboratively, they tell the story of Oshawa from divergent points of view.

It has been my honour to continue the work that was begun by the 20 past presidents of the OHS. It is important to keep not only our ancestors in our minds but also our volunteers from many backgrounds who actually complete the work of preserving the story of Oshawa. Happy 100+ years Oshawa!

Marg Wilkinson
President, Board of Directors
Oshawa Historical Society

VOLUNTEERS

The Oshawa Museum is very thankful for the 32 people donating their time in 2023. They worked in many capacities: transcribing archival minute books and audio files – both from home and in the office – keeping the gardens looking pristine, at-home preparation of craft material for public and education programs, or being a smiling face to greet visitors at events in the city.

From February to June, the Oshawa Museum hosted a co-op student from Courtice Secondary School. Jay was on-site in the afternoons, helping with tours and programs, reading through newspapers for blog content and the Oshawa at 100 campaigns, developing social media campaigns for Volunteer Week and May is Museum Month, and using their creativity to film content for the Oshawa Museum’s TikTok channel. They also developed the ‘seagull scavenger hunt’ that had visitors looking for seagulls as they toured Robinson House. Thank you, Jay, for your hard work and creativity!

In the fall, a group from Redemption House of Recovery came to clean up the yard at Henry House, which was a great help to our other garden volunteers. We look forward to working with Redemption House again, and with other local groups from non-profit organizations or corporate volunteer programs.



Jay, Sarah, and Ainsley at the Oshawa Museum’s Doors Open Oshawa event, May 2023.



Diann making garlands for Henry House, November 2023.

In late November, Henry House was decorated for the holidays, thanks to the efforts of a volunteer named Diann. It was through her vision and dedication that Henry House looked its very best for the 2023 festive season. Halls were decked, trees were trimmed, and the stoves were warmed with ‘coal!’ Thank you, Diann, for your creativity!

There are two people receiving awards for their service in 2023.

Pat Bayus, an Oshawa Historical Society member and frequent program participant, discovered a love for the gardens while attending the Yoga in the Garden events. In only three months, she donated 32 hours, with particular attention paid to the gardens in front of Henry House. She received the 2023 Earl Hann Volunteer of the Year Award for her dedication and diligence.

The Youth Volunteer of the Year award is given to Ainsley Passmore. Ainsley loves to dress in historical costumes and tell people about the Oshawa Museum. She has also helped in the gardens and when the museum attends events at her school. Ainsley donated 36 hours of her time in 2023.

The Oshawa Museum is grateful for the 562 hours donated by volunteers in 2023.

DONORS, SPONSORS, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The Oshawa Historical Society is grateful for the individual donors and local businesses/organizations who supported our programs and activities throughout 2023. Thank you for your support!

DONORS

\$1,000+

Sandra Gaskell
Arthur Lovell

\$500+

Gordon Bryant
Jim Paterson

\$250+

Ted Rundle

\$100+

Michael P. Leonard
Peter Young

\$50+

Patricia Bayus
Sprague Furey
Ron Getz
Douglas Todd

\$25+

Pat Andrey and William
McCormack

Anne Bessie

James and Glenda Black

Donna Bradley

Robert and Betty Davies

Denise Drinkle

Margaret Henderson

Carol L. Hewitt

Winston Legrand

Kathy Ranstead

Eric Sangwine



Jill Passmore and Pat Davies, the 2022 Earl Hann Volunteer of the Year award recipient.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Canadian Automotive Museum

Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority
(CLOCA)

City of Oshawa

Durham College

Durham Storytellers

Durham Yogi Community

Friends of the Second Marsh

Ontario Regiment Museum

Oshawa Civic Band

Oshawa Little Theatre

Oshawa Public Libraries

Parkwood National Historic Site

Robert McLaughlin Gallery

The Costume People

The Livingroom Community Art Studio

Tracey-Mae Chambers (#HopeAndHealingCanada)

Trent University Durham GTA

Union Cemetery

NEWSLETTER SPONSORS

Right at Home Realty – Janet Dowson
Coldwell Banker 2M Realty – Robert T. Bell
Cooper’s Auto Services

EXHIBIT SPONSORS

Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority (HOPA)
Ontario Power Generation (OPG)

EVENT SPONSORS

Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority (HOPA)
Compute
Right at Home Realty – Janet Dowson
Ontario Power Generation (OPG)



Tracey-Mae Chambers’ #HopeAndHealingCanada installed at Robinson House, Summer 2023.

The Oshawa Historical Society is grateful for the granting agencies who have supported the museum and historical society in 2023, including:

The City of Oshawa
The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport
The Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism
Canadian Heritage
Employment and Social Development Canada
Digital Museums of Canada (administered by the Canadian Museum of History)

MANDATE AND GOVERNANCE

The Oshawa Museum is administered by the Oshawa Historical Society through a duly elected Board of Directors as an agent for the City of Oshawa. The Constitution and By-Laws of the Oshawa Historical Society detail the election process and the roles and responsibilities of the Board.

The 2023 Board of Directors consisted of seven members elected at the Annual Meeting by the Oshawa Historical Society.

MANDATE

The Oshawa Historical Society was founded in 1957 and is an affiliate of the Ontario Historical Society. The purpose of the Oshawa Historical Society is to bring together those individuals interested in the diverse historical aspects of Oshawa and to research, record, retain, preserve, and present historical information pertaining to the Oshawa area. The objectives of the Society are:

- ◆ Encourage the study and research of the history of Oshawa.
- ◆ Secure and preserve an accurate account of the historical, architectural and archaeological heritage of Oshawa.
- ◆ Promote public interest in the history of Oshawa.
- ◆ Maintain, as an agent of the City of Oshawa, a community museum and archives as a repository for artefacts and written records of historical interest to Oshawa.

GOVERNANCE

The Oshawa Historical Society's governing body is the Board of Directors whose members are elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting held in May.

Standing and ad-hoc committees assist the Board in their duties. These committees report to the Board and bring important matters to the Board for discussion and direction. The standing committees are: Finance and Audit Committee, Governance Committee and Human Resources Committee.

The day-to-day operations of the Oshawa Museum and the Oshawa Historical Society are the responsibility of the professional staff under the direction of the Executive Director.

OSHAWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY REPORT



April 2023 Speaker Series, Doris Cherkas & Irene Chromej-Johnston present: *Finally Finding Home in Oshawa*.

This has been a great year of growth for the Oshawa Historical Society. Perhaps one of the most exciting changes has been to the OHS Speaker Series, now known as the Local History Speaker Series. Starting in 2023, this event has been offered in partnership with the Oshawa Public Libraries. The OHS Speaker Series was a long-running member favourite, and the Oshawa Public Libraries had been offering their own series for a number of years. Each organization realized that, by partnering for a joint program, there was the potential for a broader audience reach and variety of speakers. The partnership has been rewarding, and we look forward to continuing to greet OHS members in person at each meeting.

The Local History Speaker Series takes place on the third Tuesday of the month (Jan-May, Sept-Nov) at 6pm, held at the McLaughlin Branch of the Oshawa Public Libraries (65 Bagot Street, Oshawa), in the lower level auditorium.

The Local History Speaker Series for 2023 saw the following speakers and attendance:

Date	Speaker and topic	Attendance
January 17	Nicole Adams, Local History Librarian, Oshawa Public Libraries, presents: <i>History of Oshawa's Newspapers</i>	62
February 2	Club Carib presents: <i>A History of Club Carib: Our First 50 Years</i>	44
March 21	Dan Buchanan presents: <i>Murder in the Family: The Dr. King Story</i>	53
April 18	Doris Cherkas & Irene Chromej-Johnston present: <i>Finally Finding Home in Oshawa</i>	47
May 16	ANNUAL MEETING Melissa Cole, Curator, Oshawa Museum presents: <i>Summer in the City</i>	32
September 19	Dave Mowat, Alderville First Nation, presents: <i>The Williams Treaty</i>	70
October 17	Ron Brown presents: <i>Ontario's Ghost Towns</i>	84
November 21	Movie Night: <i>Unarchived</i> , a National Film Board of Canada documentary	29

The Oshawa Historical Society relies on its members and their continued support. By attending events, donating to the OHS, sharing the OHS through word of mouth and on social media, and by renewing your membership annually, you keep history alive in Oshawa!

Oshawa Historical Society Members at the Member's Preview of *Be Prepared: Scouting and Guiding in Oshawa*, October 2023.



Oshawa Historical Society memberships, as of December 31, 2023:

Complimentary memberships: 13
Family memberships: 51
Individual memberships: 75
Life memberships: 24

Organizational memberships: 2
Student memberships: 2
Volunteer memberships: 3

Total memberships: 171

New memberships in 2023: 26

Oshawa Historical Society Award

The Oshawa Historical Society is pleased to support Oshawa students, their scholastic achievements, and their endeavours of post-secondary study with the Oshawa Historical Society Award.

This award is presented to a student in each of Oshawa’s secondary schools. The student must be in the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) in Arts and Culture program, or entering post-secondary education to study Canadian history or Indigenous studies, Canadian studies, or museum studies. The value of the award is \$50.

The Oshawa Historical Society has been offering a scholastic award to Oshawa secondary students since the 1990s, and we are proud to continue our support of excellence in academic achievement.

Congratulations to the winners of the Oshawa Historical Society Award in 2023:

Maxwell Heights Secondary School Kathryn Beresford
Monsignor John Pereyema Catholic Secondary School Corrado Iacono
Monsignor Paul Dwyer Catholic High School Marco Costantino
R.S. McLaughlin CVI..... Madeleine Dawson

About Oshawa Historical Society Memberships

The Oshawa Historical Society was founded in 1957 and is an affiliate of the Ontario Historical Society. The purpose of the society is to bring together those individuals interested in the diverse historical aspects of Oshawa and to research, record, retain, preserve, and present historical information pertaining to the Oshawa area.

As a member of the Oshawa Historical Society, you are demonstrating your commitment to local history by supporting an organization dedicated to preserving Oshawa’s past.

Membership Benefits include:

- Free admission to our signature events, like *An Evening of Lamplight*, heritage walking tours, and discounts on events like the Tea & Talk series! Don’t forget, OHS Members always get to visit the Oshawa Museum for FREE.
- First access to original research and articles on Oshawa’s history in the quarterly newsletter, *Historical Happenings*.
- The Local History Speaker Series offers historical talks on many different topics of interest, offered in partnership with the Oshawa Public Libraries. Members get first access to talks with popular speakers, like Ron Brown!
- 15% discount on items purchased in the Oshawa Museum Shop.
- Exclusive access to member only events and exhibit previews, and first access to signature events, like *Scenes from the Cemetery*.
- Belonging to an organization that has been helping to make Oshawa a more livable and vibrant community for over 65 years.



Paul Dobbs as Arthur Henry in 2023’s *Scenes from the Cemetery*. OHS Members received early access to tickets to this beloved community event.

MINUTES OF THE 2023 ANNUAL MEETING

Held at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 16, 2023, at the McLaughlin Branch auditorium, Oshawa Public Libraries, 65 Bagot Street, Oshawa.

- Welcome:** Margaret Wilkinson, Oshawa Historical Society President, called to order the 65th Annual Meeting of the Oshawa Historical Society and drew attention to last year's minutes printed on page 9 of the Annual Report.
- A motion was called to accept the Minutes** of the September 20, 2022 Annual Meeting as distributed.
Moved by Janet Dowson
Seconded by Marjorie Sorrell
Carried.
- Kat Akerfeldt, Executive Director of the Oshawa Museum, presented the **2022 Museum Activities Report**.
- Margaret Wilkinson asked the Membership to review the information contained in the 2022 Annual Report. **A motion was called to adopt the 2022 Annual Report as written.**
Moved by Merle Cole
Seconded by John Foster
Carried.
- Margaret Wilkinson read the proposed amendments to the Constitution and by-laws of the Society.
A motion was called to approve the amendment to CONSTITUTION ARTICLE IV – ORGANIZATION (Page 6 Section 2 – Board of Directors).
Moved by Patti Becker
Seconded by Doug Lavis
Carried.
A motion was called to approve the amendment to BY-LAW 4 – ORGANIZATION (Page 6 Section 2 – Board of Directors).
Moved by Patti Becker
Seconded by Doug Lavis
Carried.
- Margaret Wilkinson read the Nomination Committee Report detailing the members put forth for positions on the Board of Directors. **A motion was called to approve the Nominating Committee Report, dated April 3, 2023.**
Moved by Peter Young
Seconded by Sandra Gaskell
Carried.
- Margaret Wilkinson asked for a motion regarding the appointment of Deloitte as auditors for 2023. **A motion was called “to reappoint Deloitte as auditors for 2023.”**
Moved by Steve Barker
Seconded by Patti Becker
Carried.
- Next, Margaret Wilkinson called upon Jill Passmore, Visitor Experience Co-ordinator, to recognize the 2022 Volunteers. Jill recognized the 16 individuals who volunteered over 279 hours in 2022, thanking them for their contributions.
- Next, Jill recognized the 2022 Earl Hann Volunteer of the Year Award recipient. **Pat Davies is the Earl Hann Award recipient for 2022.**
- Next, Lisa Terech, Community Engagement coordinator, was called on to present **Membership service pins/certificates and recognition** to the following long-standing members:
5 Year: Mary Ellen Henderson, Arlene King, James & Glenda Black, Lloyd Murray, Shelley Azzano, William Martin, Ron Pierce, Paul & Carol Burk, Margaret Henderson, Dianne Locke, Chris Locke (Life Member, Recognition), Melody Walters (Life Member, Recognition), Elaine McKenzie (Life Member, Recognition).
10 Year: David Tonkin, Margaret & James Wilkinson, Sprague Furey, Anna Knutel, Heritage Oshawa (Complimentary Member, Recognition).
15 Year: Edward Novak.
20 Year: Sharon Henderson, Karen Boissoin (Life Member, Recognition), Stoney Kudel (Life Member, Recognition).
25 Year: Val Foster (Life Member, Recognition).
30 Year: Bob Bell, Robert & Bev Leask (Life Member, Recognition).
- Margaret Wilkinson then called for **a motion to adjourn the 65th Annual Meeting of the Oshawa Historical Society.**
Moved by Pat Davies
Carried.

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 2024 SPECIAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERSHIP

Held at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at the McLaughlin Branch auditorium, Oshawa Public Libraries, 65 Bagot Street, Oshawa.

1. **Welcome:** Kat Akerfeldt, Oshawa Museum Executive Director, called to order the Special Meeting of the Oshawa Historical Society Membership. Kat explained the purpose of the Special Meeting: to appoint an auditor for the 2023 year.
2. Kat Akerfeldt asked for a motion regarding the appointment of Jeffrey D. Milgram Professional Corporation as auditors for 2023. **A motion was called “To appoint Jeffrey D. Milgram Professional Corporation as auditors for 2023.”**
Moved by Merle Cole
Seconded by Brian Gough
Carried.
3. Kat adjourned the Special Meeting of the Membership.

Oshawa Historical Society Membership Levels

Category	Cost
Individual	\$30/year
Family	\$40/year
Student	\$15/year
Organization	\$50/year
Life (\$200 tax receipt issued)	\$400 – one time due

Optional Print Fee: If you prefer to receive your newsletters and Annual Report through the mail, there is an additional fee of \$15 to help offset the cost of printing and postage.

FINANCIAL REPORT, OSHAWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REVENUE

The Oshawa Historical Society's revenue includes memberships, newsletter sponsorships, and income from Society events. The Society also benefits from a Heritage Organization Development Grant from the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport.

<u>Total 2023 Revenue</u>	\$5,328
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EXPENSES

Expenses include Society events and speaker honorariums, the Oshawa Historical Society Award (recognizing the achievements of history students at Oshawa's secondary schools), and laying a wreath at the Memorial Park Cenotaph on Remembrance Day.

<u>Total 2023 Expenses</u>	\$1,224
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Net Excess of (Expenses Over Revenues) Revenues Over Expenses For 2023	\$4,104
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The full 2023 Financial Statements, completed by Jeffrey D. Milgram Professional Corporation, are available upon request.

PERSONNEL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023-2024



Marg Wilkinson
President



Christopher Locke
Vice President



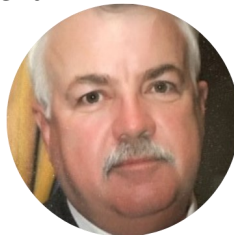
Michael Leonard
Treasurer



Marshall Mayne
Secretary



Dr. Helen Haines
Director-at-Large



Doug Lavis
Director-at-Large



David Tonkin
Director-at-Large

OSHAWA MUSEUM STAFF, 2023

Kat Akerfeldt, Executive Director

Melissa Cole, Curator

Jennifer Weymark, Archivist

Jill Passmore, Visitor Experience Coordinator

Lisa Terech, Community Engagement

William Fiddler, Maintenance

Adam Arko, Registrar

Kes Murray, Registrar

Holly Huntington, Collection Assistant

Sarah Paiva, Collection Assistant

Calleigh Barton, Visitor Host

Caitlan Madden, Visitor Host

Jefimija Vujcic, Visitor Host

Aya Yagnaya, Visitor Host



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Welcome to the 2023 Annual Report of the Oshawa Historical Society, operators of the Oshawa Museum, the home of Oshawa's history.

2023 was a historic year for me, as I arrived in January to begin my first year at the museum. It has been an exciting year of discovery! For my report to you, I would like to share just a sample of how the museum staff spent the year.



In 2023, Curator Melissa Cole, with the help of museum staff, mounted exhibits on and off-site. In January, an exhibit featuring the art of Eric Sangwine was installed at City Hall. Eric's paintings succinctly and often humorously illustrate moments in Oshawa's history, and we are thrilled to be the repository of many of his pieces.

In May, a new exhibit launched online: *From Ship to Shore: Exploring Oshawa's Relationship with Lake Ontario*. Soon after, on the day before Indigenous Peoples Day, Tracey-Mae Chambers installed *#HopeandHealingCanada* on the second-floor balcony of Robinson House, giving us new a new lens through which to view the house, the harbour, and our shared history.



Melissa Cole, preparing an Ember (Brownie) uniform for exhibition, September 2023.

The exhibit *Leaving Home, Finding Home in Oshawa*, which had been on the main floor of Robinson House since 2021, came to a close, and *Be Prepared: Scouting and Guiding in Oshawa* opened in September. This new exhibit benefitted from an unprecedented number of loans and donations from Oshawa residents and has been a hit with groups and visitors!

Speaking of donations, in 2023, the Oshawa Museum added many objects and archival materials to its collections. Archivist Jennifer Weymark accessioned items from the Oshawa Tennis Club, Eric Sangwine, the Rundle/Chappell family, the Robson family, the Popham family, and General Motors. Each accession is a substantial undertaking involving many hours of work, but each item enriches the collection and directly fulfills the museum's mandate to preserve the community of Oshawa's history. We are honoured to be the only organization in Oshawa with this purpose.

Throughout the year, under Community Engagement Coordinator Lisa Terech's guidance, staff produced a constant stream of knowledgeable and accessible articles for *Oshawa This Week*, the Oshawa Museum blog, and the *Historical Happenings* newsletter. At the same time, a substantial amount of research and preparation was done in 2023 for exhibits and content that will not be seen until 2024, including a new exhibit at City Hall to commemorate Oshawa's 100+ anniversary, a new book, and its accompanying exhibit at the museum.

In 2023, the museum was able to host five students – two internships, two summer staff, and one co-op student. Kes, Adam, Sarah, Holly, and Jay lent us their invaluable assistance with transcription and digitization projects, research and writing, exhibit and event preparation, and a lot of organization within the museum's collections. We are excited to see where these young museum professionals go next and hope their experiences and learning at the Oshawa Museum stand them in good stead as they embark on their careers.

We were happy to find the community returning for our annual event calendar, after years of pandemic-related postponements. Programming Coordinator Jill Passmore organizes many of the events at the Oshawa Museum, and we hope to see you all for 2024's Grandpa Henry's Picnic (July) and An Evening of Lamplight (December), which have returned as flagship events. 2023 also saw museum staff back at Union Cemetery to mount *Scenes From the Cemetery* (in partnership with Union Cemetery and the Oshawa Little Theatre), Halloween at the Harbour, World Storytelling Day (in partnership with Durham Storytellers), Yoga in the Garden during summer Fridays (in partnership with Durham Yogi Community), as well as workshops and children's programming for PA Days and March Break.



Derek Cutting and his Victorian-era scientific inventions at 2023 Halloween at the Harbour.

In 2023, our intrepid team of volunteers assisted at events all year, and were particularly busy in the Henry House Garden during the summer months, keeping the flowers and herbs happy, healthy, and beautiful. Staff, Society members, and visitors are sincerely grateful for the work that volunteers put in every day.

When you pop into the Oshawa Museum, the first person you are likely to encounter is one of our Visitor Host team. Adam, Aya, Caitlan, Calleigh, Holly, Jefimija, and Sarah not only served as friendly and knowledgeable guides for drop-in tours, they also led education programs, spoke to visitors at partner events (such as CLOCA's Purple Woods Maple Syrup Festival, or the City of Oshawa's Peony Festival), assisted with collection and archival work, researched and wrote blog posts, book chapters, and so much more. This year, Visitor Hosts also led or assisted with a number of historical walking tours, including Lakeview Park, Union Cemetery (including one walk in partnership with Parkwood National Historic Site), and the Second Marsh (in partnership with Friends of Second Marsh).

Even before I arrived at my new post here at the Oshawa Museum, I knew its staff to be particularly professional and well-informed. In 2023, they participated on several inter-organizational groups, committees, and boards. Archivist Jennifer Weymark attended meetings of municipal heritage committee, Heritage Oshawa, and served as Vice-Chair of the Durham Region Area Archives Group (DRAAG). In 2023, she also helped to organize the 2023 Archives Association of Ontario Conference, and, along with Curator Melissa Cole, presented on "Community Connections and Public Programs for Healthy Communities." Community Engagement Coordinator Lisa Terech sat on the Doors Open Planning Committee and the Cultural Leadership Council. Curator Melissa Cole is an integral part of the York Durham Association of Museums and Archives and shares her skills and expertise as an instructor for Fleming College's Cultural Heritage Conservation and Management program.

This report is just a small sample of the work done at the Oshawa Museum in 2023. I want to convey my utmost gratitude to the staff of the museum, for the passion they bring to their work. My thanks also for the trust that the Board of Directors has placed in me, to continue the strategic direction they and the previous Executive Director, Laura Suchan, have set. Finally, my enthusiastic thanks to the members of the Oshawa Historical Society, for joining us in our mission to seek out, preserve, and share Oshawa's stories.

2023 ACTION PLAN AND ACTIVITIES

In 2023, the Oshawa Historical Society's action plan included five objectives, with strategies, actions, and specific goals associated with each.

Objective 1: To be a dynamic and essential part of the community and cultural landscape in Oshawa.

Strategies:

- Continue to focus on providing excellent visitor and learning experiences
- Continue to encourage meaningful partnerships and collaborations that connect the Oshawa Museum to the community
- Continue to demonstrate Oshawa Museum's value, contributions and connections to the community

Some of the actions undertaken within these strategies included soliciting community feedback and staff training to continue to deliver positive visitor experiences, making internships available to students in secondary and post-secondary institutions, developing new partnerships with community organizations, supporting awareness for culture in Oshawa, preparing content and experiences for the City's centennial, and developing ways to communicate with the community.

Objective 2: To present relevant and meaningful exhibits, collections and content.

Strategies:

- Continue to deliver excellent virtual and on-site experiences
- Review youth programming options to ensure relevancy
- Continue to explore digital engagement opportunities to expand accessibility and increase awareness

Actions in 2023 to reach this objective included the launch of the digital exhibit *From Ship to Shore: Exploring Oshawa's Relationship with Lake Ontario*, opening *Be Prepared: Scouting and Guiding in Oshawa*, exhibiting the artwork of Eric Sangwine at City Hall, planning and design for the *Oshawa at 100* exhibit, continuing to offer new content on social media that reflects Oshawa's diverse communities, and continuing to develop and expand online exhibits and programming.

Objective 3: Foster a culture of inclusivity and recognize the value of diversity.

Strategies:

- Connect the Oshawa Museum collections, exhibitions and programs to new audiences that reflect the diversity of our community
- Enhance educational opportunities for all staff, board members and volunteers on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion issues
- Consider the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

In 2023, museum staff continued to audit artefact and archival records for biased or outdated language, and to work with new partners in exhibit, collection, and program development to ensure that the stories the Oshawa

Museum shares reflect the diversity of the community. They continued to review and implement the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the installation of *#HopeandHealingCanada* by Métis artist Tracey-Mae Chambers worked towards this strategy. Oshawa Historical Society Board members, museum staff, and volunteers participated in diversity, equity, inclusion, and respect (DEIR) training and had resources made available to them for further training.

Objective 4: Continue to be resilient and flexible.

Strategies:

- Review revenue generating activities to support a sustainable future
- Continue to increase the number of Oshawa Historical Society members and broaden community support and audience base
- Practice good governance to ensure effective and efficient management

Revenue strategies were reviewed, and staff sought out new sponsorships at the museum, along with other opportunities to increase earned revenue. Policies and guidelines were reviewed and updated by staff members for compliance and efficiency. Financial and progress reports were delivered to the Oshawa Historical Society Board each month for their review and direction.

Objective 5: Provide inspiring and efficient spaces and facilities for museum functions, the community and our visitors.

Strategies:

- Continue to promote facility expansion as 2024 Oshawa Anniversary project
- Continue discussions with City staff and members of Council regarding the facility expansion project
- Continue to investigate funding sources for project

In 2023, a lot of work was completed at the Board level around the expansion of the museum space, specifically with a new building in Lakeview Park. Members of the Board of Directors met with city staff and government, community organizations, and other interested parties to (re)introduce the project.



Eric Sangwine's 'Beverly McCloskey,' Oshawa Museum archival collection (A023.15.2).



Inside *Leaving Home, Finding Home in Oshawa*, on display from January to August 2023.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

 **3647**
Visitors to Guy House

 **2225**
Students participating
in education programs

562 
Hours contributed by our
dedicated volunteers

 **14,008**
Social Media followers

 **90** Objects donated to the
artefact collection

 **OVER
750**
Items donated to the
archival collection

 **5**
NEW on-site, outreach
or online exhibits

 **6025**
Guests engaged with at
on-site and outreach events

 **246** Archives
research
requests

CURATOR'S REPORT

One of the main objectives of the Oshawa Museum is to present relevant and meaningful exhibits, collections, and content.

In 2023, the Oshawa Museum continued to deliver excellent virtual and on-site experiences through various exhibits that featured contributions and stories from our community members.

May 2023 saw the launch of the virtual exhibit, *From Ship to Shore: Exploring Oshawa's Relationship with Lake Ontario*. This exhibit was developed through a partnership with Digital Museums Canada.



Tracey-Mae Chambers installing #HopeAndHealingCanada, June 2023.

In June 2023, the museum welcomed Tracey-Mae Chambers, Métis artist and a member of the Métis Nation of Ontario, who installed her work #HopeAndHealingCanada where it was featured on the exterior of Robinson House for three months from June until September. Tracey-Mae's installations are constructed with red wool, silk, and cotton yarn. Red represents blood and slurs against Indigenous people. Red is the colour of passion and anger, danger and power, courage and love. The goal of #HopeAndHealingCanada is to shine light on Indigenous decolonization and reconciliation. Since July 2021, over 100 installations have been created at residential school historical sites, museums, art galleries and other public spaces. Many of these spaces have presented the colonial viewpoint of the settlers who arrived and lived there, but not the Indigenous people that were displaced along the way.

In the autumn, the exhibit *Be Prepared: Scouting and Guiding in Oshawa* opened in the gallery of Robinson House. This project began in January 2020, when the Oshawa Museum received a large collection of guiding material that was transferred from the Oshawa Public Libraries. In 2019, approximately 40 boxes of guiding archival material arrived at the Oshawa Public Libraries from the Oshawa Guide House after its closure and sale in 2014. Guiding groups remained strong in Oshawa for many decades thanks to the patronage and participation of figures in the community like Verna Conant, T.E. Lovell, Michael Starr, George McLaughlin, and R.S. and Adelaide McLaughlin, who contributed greatly to the local programs that entertained and taught generations of Oshawa's youth.

This exhibit features contributions from over 30 community members who shared their stories, memorabilia, and memories. This exhibit was co-curated by Adam Arko, whose participation was made possible through an employment grant from Young Canada Works.

In addition to our on-site exhibitions, outreach exhibits were created for our community partners. Eric Sangwine's *Mostly True Art Series* was showcased at Oshawa City Hall's Art in the Hall. Oshawa General Hospital Nursing School Display was showcased at the annual OGH Nursing School Alumni luncheon. The Oshawa Museum's 1867 McLaughlin Cutter loan is currently part of an



Adam Arko, Young Canada Works Intern, who co-curated *Be Prepared*.

exhibit at the Remington Carriage Museum in Alberta, and that loan has been extended for an additional five years.

Through the generous assistance of grants through Canada Summer Jobs and Young Canada Works, the Oshawa Museum was able to hire two summer students and an intern. Collection Assistants, Holly and Sarah, and Registrar, Adam, worked with Melissa to re-organize the collection storage at Robinson House. Holly, Sarah, and Adam provided innovative suggestions to assist with addressing the lack of storage space in the Robinson House attic collection storage. This reorganization will allow for future growth and to ensure our collections are representative of Oshawa's diverse community.

Since the OHS was founded in 1957, the museum has continually added to its holdings of artefacts through acquisitions, donations, and fieldwork. In total, 90 objects were accepted and processed by curatorial staff. Here are just a few of the additions to the Oshawa Museum's collection:

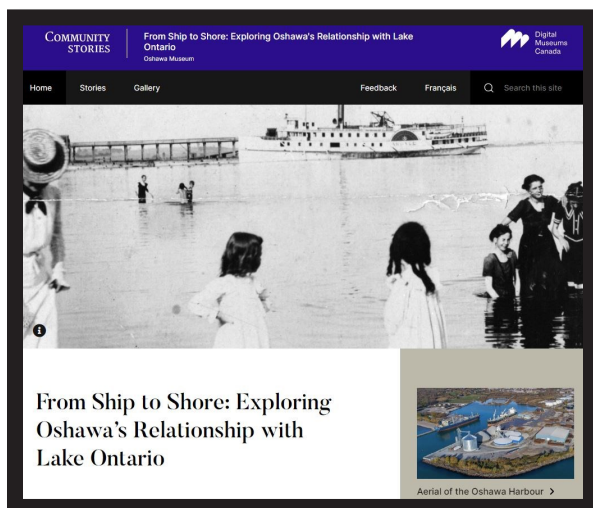
- Scout Uniform and memorabilia, 1930s, Fred Popham
- Girl Guide Uniform, 1966, Jane (Manning) Black
- Tin Lion, made by Pedlar People Limited, which stood at the gates of Alexandra Park in Oshawa
- First Aid Box used for first aid training at Oshawa Guide House
- Clothing and personal items that belonged to Ivy Burr and Margaret MacGregor: 1920s 'Church Outfits' (Ivy Burr), 1920s wedding dress (Ivy Burr), 1960s Wedding Dress (Margaret MacGregor)

In 2024, the Oshawa Historical Society and Oshawa Museum will engage with community members and stakeholders and seek input to develop a collection and exhibit plan that reflects Oshawa's needs and will allow us to strategically develop the collection to ensure it is representative of our community today and for the future.

The museum has a great line-up of exhibits planned for 2024. *Untold Oshawa* will open in September, and community engagement will begin for the renewal of *A Carrying Place* in 2025.



2023 summer students, Sarah, Adam, and Holly, in Robinson House at Canada Day.



From Ship to Shore: Exploring Oshawa's Relationship with Lake Ontario, a virtual exhibit available through Digital Museums Canada.

Weblink: https://www.communitystories.ca/v2/ship-shore-oshawa-ontario_bateaux-jusqu-au-rivage/

ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

The conclusion of 2023 saw some wonderful new additions to the archival collection. We were fortunate enough to receive a donation of over 170 master copies of political cartoons that ran in the *Oshawa This Week* throughout the 1980s. In April, the Oshawa Tennis Club donated their collection of scrapbooks, photograph albums, and photographs stored on C.D. ROM. In July, we received a substantial collection of more than five banker's boxes of documents and other items related to the Robson family. Included in that collection were items related to the Robson Leather business, family photographs, and information about the family farm. Several donations with items related to either the Boy Scouts or Girls Guides in Oshawa were also donated in response to the museum's *Be Prepared* exhibit. In total, approximately 750 individual items were donated to the archives in 2023.



A023.14.224—split finishing inside Robson Tannery.

Summer Collections Assistants, along with the Registrar, worked under the direction of the Archivist to organize and accession all of these new donations into the archival collection. The scale of several of these donations meant that their assistance greatly helped to get the collections properly accessioned in a timely manner. The students also assisted with research for the museum's upcoming 2024 book project.

This past year has also seen the return to pre-pandemic activities, such as hosting students from Durham College's Faculty of Media, Art and Design for an opportunity to learn about and work with different types of photographs from the archival collection. February and September also saw museum staff returning to local high schools to conduct a variety of archival based workshops, such as primary sources and how to conduct research using them.

Finally, the museum is grateful for the assistance of wonderful volunteers who have been working on projects both at-home and on-site. Those working from home have been helping to transcribe some of the many oral history cassette tapes in the collection. On-site, we have a dedicated volunteer who has been focused on transcribing the hand written account of the history of the Oshawa Fire Department. This transcription should be complete by mid- 2024 and will be made available online shortly after completion.

PROGRAMMING REPORT

2023 was truly the return of Oshawa Museum programs after the pandemic. On and off-site, attendance records for education and public programs peaked at 8,250!

Museum staff offer off-site visits to schools, or programs at the museum itself in Lakeview Park. At the museum, participants can try activities like candle or butter-making, scrubbing laundry, or planting seeds. We also offer education kits for teachers who would like to lead history subjects using museum resources and assistance.

Twenty-three schools and institutions participated in education programs, from primary through high school and post-secondary groups.

Post-secondary groups had the chance to explore the museum's databases of archival and museum object collections. High school students participated in workshops using primary sources and their relevance to local history, and comparing local events to world history. Primary school program participants discussed the diverse backgrounds and experiences of those who have called Oshawa home, and experienced primary source documents and educational artefacts.

All education programs from the Oshawa Museum are curriculum-based, facilitated by staff who strive to meet the needs of teachers and administrators. We are pleased that the most popular programs feature untold and under-told stories of marginalized communities of Oshawa's past.

School groups who visited the museum: 12

Programs held in-school: 24

Program participants: 2,225



Oshawa Cub pack helping with cleaning in the Henry House Gardens, April 2023.

The exhibit *Be Prepared: Scouting and Guiding in Oshawa* was extremely popular with community groups in 2023. Sponsorships from the Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority (HOPA) and Ontario Power Generation (OPG) allowed hundreds of youth in guiding and scouting to visit the exhibit for free. Groups were able to complete badgework with programs like Archaeology in Oshawa, Victorian Handicrafts and Recycling the Past.

In addition to the many scout and guide groups, the Oshawa Museum hosted groups from retirement homes, and camera clubs, and even served as the check-in station for a charity run along the waterfront trail.

Off-site, museum staff participated in several primary school fairs, and brought illustrated talks to community groups and organizations, such as the Ontario Genealogy Society and several retirement homes, on the history of Windfields Farm, Oshawa's street names, archival newspaper collections, and historical clothing.

Community groups who visited the museum: 32

Outreach programs: 24

Community program participants: 1,610

The Oshawa Museum partners with other community organizations to further the reach of the museum’s mandate. In 2023, the Oshawa Museum partnered with 11 local partners, including Oshawa Public Libraries, Union Cemetery, Parkwood National Historic Site, Durham Yogi Community, Durham Storytellers, Second Marsh, the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (CLOCA), The Costume People, and the City of Oshawa.

Community event partners: 11
Events: 16
Participants: 3,922

The Oshawa Museum hosted 11 on-site events in 2023, many of which making their first return since the pandemic shutdown. These included Halloween at the Harbour and an archaeology-themed P.A. day program. The museum also hosted events during Family Day and March Break and led special programming for Walking Tour Wednesdays and Orange Shirt Day. Melissa Cole hosted a special Curator’s tour of *Be Prepared: Scouting and Guiding in Oshawa*, and staff led tours of the artefacts stored in the Drive Shed for McLaughlin Day in August.



At June 2023’s ‘Digging up the Past’ P.A. Day Program.

At our final event of 2023, *An Evening of Lamplight*, the start of the holiday season was celebrated. The Oshawa Civic Band and a mini craft market complemented a beautifully decorated Henry House, and a special visitor, Father Christmas, made an appearance in one of the sleighs in the Drive Shed. For sponsoring this final event, the Oshawa Museum would like to thank the Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority, Compute, Right at Home Realty – Janet Dowson, and Ontario Power Generation.



Museum events: 11
Event participants: 493

The Oshawa Civic Band at Lamplight 2023; photo: Derek Cutting.



Jill Passmore talking to a guest at *An Evening of Lamplight*, 2023; photo: Derek Cutting.

ENGAGEMENT REPORT

The Oshawa Museum continues to work with community partners to help meet our mandate of preserving and promoting Oshawa's history. In 2023, the museum was excited to once again partner with the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (CLOCA) with activations for their annual Purple Woods Maple Syrup Festival. Staff were on hand at their settler cabin to talk about life in the 1800s and promote the museum. Visitor Hosts also attended, in costume, the City of Oshawa's annual Bright and Merry Market, where they spoke with 462 guests about holiday events at the museum. Through the summer months, the Henry House gardens were filled each week with yogis for the popular Yoga in the Garden series. This event is led by volunteer yoga instructors from the Durham community, and we thank them for their continued support of this program.

September marked the return of *Scenes from the Cemetery*. This dramatic series of Union Cemetery tours features volunteer actors from Oshawa's creative community who tell the stories of historic and departed Oshawa residents. We are indebted to the creativity, talent, and passion of 2023's cast, including Jane Hickey, Paul Dobbs, Geoff Coulter, Sheri Pereira, Glenn Rabjohn, and Amber Vibert. This event is made possible through the hard work and participation of the staff of Oshawa's Union Cemetery, the Oshawa Little Theatre, and *Scenes'* Creative Director, Rick Kerr.

The Oshawa Museum continued to see strong follower growth and engagement across its social media channels. A favourite feature are the weekly #ThrowbackThursday posts. These often lead to discussions and memories about changes in Oshawa and what has remained the same. Towards the end of each month, the 'What is it Wednesday' posts always generate fun comments as followers try to guess what the mystery object is. The picture to the right was the festive object for December 2023. These light reflectors led to many people reminiscing about how they had them on their trees growing up!



TikTok, a video platform, continued to see growth as museum staff and students had fun finding unique ways to showcase the museum or Oshawa's history using short video clips and trending sounds.

The Oshawa Museum is on Facebook, Instagram, Threads, TikTok, and YouTube, with the same easy-to-find handle across all platforms: @OshawaMuseum.

Finally, the Oshawa Museum blog marked 10 years of posts in 2023. Throughout 2023, 64 articles were shared on the Oshawa Museum Blog, showcasing many different stories from our city's past, and we appreciate the staff, students, and guest authors who contributed content.

The top five blog posts of 2023 were:

1. *Street Name Stories: Banting Ave.*
2. *Sunnyside*
3. *The Month That Was – April 1922*
4. *Panoramic Photographs: From Past to Present*
5. *Street Name Stories – the Park(s) streets*

However, the top viewed post of the year was *Keeping Warm: The Ways The Victorians Did!* This post was originally written in 2016 and has been the top blog post every year since 2018. The desire to know about foot warmers and window coverings remains a top priority!

FINANCIAL REPORT, OSHAWA MUSEUM

REVENUE

In 2023, the Oshawa Museum received financial support for museum operations through grants from the City of Oshawa, Digital Museums of Canada (administered by the Canadian Museum of History), the Government of Ontario, and the Government of Canada. Employment grants were received from Young Canada Works and Canada Summer Jobs.

Other museum revenue was raised through pay-what-you-can admissions to the museum, education program fees, special event revenue, and gift shop sales. Fundraising revenue came to the museum through individual donations, event and exhibit sponsorship, and in-kind donations to the museum collections.

In 2023, total revenue dropped by 11% compared to 2022, mostly due to the absence of one-time grants (total = \$94,212) that were received in 2022. These two grants related to COVID-recovery expenses and technology upgrades.

Museum Sales Revenue	\$18,508
Fundraising Revenue	\$8,309
Other Earned Revenue	\$732
Government Grants	\$533,478
<u>Total 2023 Revenue</u>	\$561,027

EXPENSES

Oshawa Museum's expenses for 2023 include operating expenses for the museum buildings, payroll, and costs associated with museum exhibits, events, and programs.

In 2023, payroll expenses rose by 1% from 2022, but overall expenses dropped by 0.5%.

Payroll Expenses	\$469,578
Museum Expenses	\$74,678
Administrative Expenses	\$23,071
Professional Expenses	\$37,107
Prepaid Expenses	\$6,594
<u>Total 2023 Expenses</u>	\$611,028
Net Excess of (Expenses Over Revenues) Revenues Over Expenses For 2023	(\$50,001)

The full 2023 Financial Statements, completed by Jeffrey D. Milgram Professional Corporation, are available upon request.

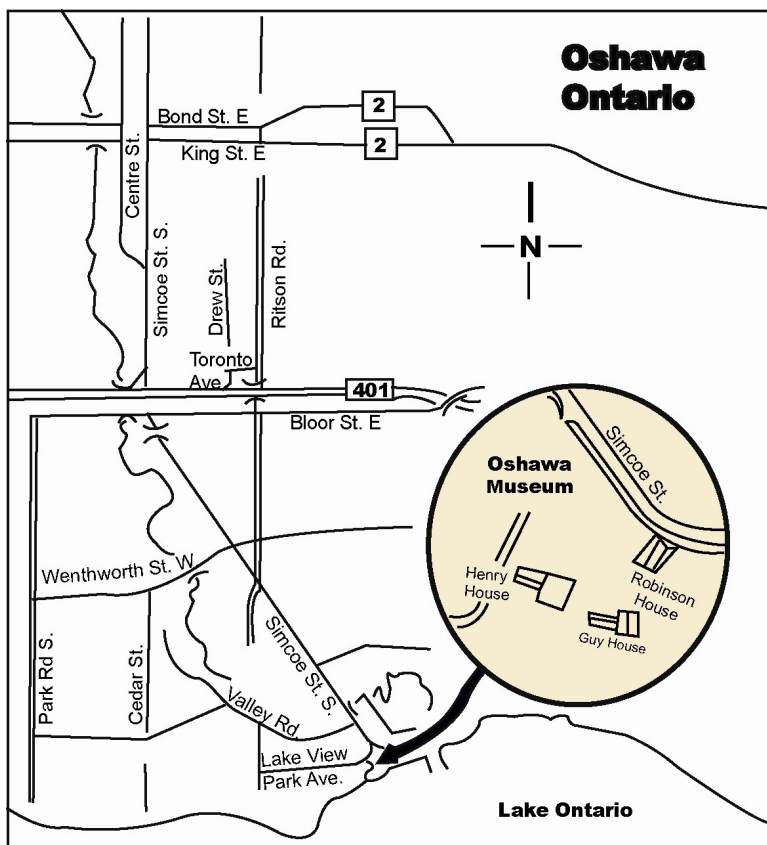




OSHAWA

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

— Collections. Spaces. People. —



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