

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



— Collections. Spaces. People. —

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oshawahistoricalsociety.org · oshawamuseum.org

Inside the *Welcome Gallery*, on display in the Verna Conant Gallery, Guy House.



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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.

Cover photo: Robinson House, December 2025, taken by Derek Cutting.

FROM THE OSHAWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY CHAIR



To begin, I would like to express how honoured I am to be the 22nd Chair (formerly titled President) of the Oshawa Historical Society (OHS).

THE PURPOSE OF THE OSHAWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Oshawa Historical Society is a not-for-profit charitable institution, founded in 1957. It is affiliated with the Ontario Historical Society. The purpose of the Oshawa Historical Society is to research, record, retain, preserve, and present historical information pertaining to the Oshawa area by bringing together those individuals interested in the diverse historical aspects of Oshawa.

The Historical Society also oversees the operation of the Oshawa Museum, which celebrates Oshawa's history with engaging events, inspiring exhibits, and an immense collection of archival materials. Nestled on the shores of Lake Ontario in beautiful Lakeview Park, the Oshawa Museum tells the story of Oshawa from the earliest Indigenous settlements to the present day.

2025 SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

The Oshawa Historical Society was once again represented in the Oshawa Remembrance Day Parade, and, on behalf of its members, a wreath was laid at the cenotaph.

In 2025, members of the Oshawa Historical Society Board of Directors attended many high school graduation ceremonies to present the Oshawa Historical Society Award to Oshawa's top history students. The students receive a certificate of merit and a financial gift to encourage them in their future studies.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to recognize and thank our exceptional museum staff, and a big 'thank you' also goes out to all of our members and donors who, since 1957, have dedicated their time and financial support to see that Oshawa's history is preserved. The Board asks that you speak about the Oshawa Historical Society with your family, neighbours and co-workers, and encourage them to join the Society, or to pop into the Oshawa Museum.

"What we do today, is history for our future generations." Let's do everything we can today to make future generations proud of us!

Mike Leonard
Chair, Oshawa Historical Society

P.S. Please reach out to us anytime to share your thoughts and suggestions. Wishing you and your loved ones a safe, healthy, and happy 2026.

VOLUNTEERS

The Oshawa Museum is thankful for the 29 volunteers who gave their time and expertise in 2025! Museum volunteers contribute through many different projects, such as:

- The transcription of audio files and hand-written documents;
- Creating beautiful garden displays in the Henry House Gardens and in front of Guy House;
- Helping staff at events, during drop-in programs, or sharing information about the Museum and Historical Society at events around Oshawa;
- Leading Friday morning yoga sessions in the Henry House Gardens.

In 2025, the Oshawa Museum was the grateful recipient of 653.25 hours of volunteer time by the following individuals: Taheem, Tanisha, Pat Bayus, Trish Bruce, Page, Alexis Cheseboro, Myra Cole, Joanne Cowley, Pat Davies, Patty Davis, Emma Fox, Matthew, Mya Kirk, Sydney Legault, Helen Lister, Amy Liu, Ann Lloyd, Peter Lloyd, Annella Mendoza, Olivia Micallef, Ankit, Ainsley, Joey, Prithvi Patel, Susan Pleasance, Ann Thurn, Roland Thurn, Cathy Vandermeer, and Logan Wilson.



Eileen, Mya, Calleigh, and Alexis at the Durham Region Heritage Fair, May 2025.

Each year, the Earl Hann Volunteer of the Year Award is dedicated to the volunteer who contributed hours and who has gone above and beyond in their service. For 2025, we honour Pat Bayus for her dedication to the support and beautification of the museum. Pat has been a committed member and has volunteered over 102 hours this year. Congratulations, Pat!

The Oshawa Museum hosted two co-op students in 2025. From February to June, we hosted Shriya, a student from O’Neill CVI. From September 2025 to January 2026, Chloe from Anderson CVI joined us. Co-op students assist with tours and programs, read and transcribe historic newspapers for blog content, and develop social media campaigns. They also assist by scanning photograph collections for the archives. Shriya curated a display case for the *Untold Oshawa* exhibit, celebrating Pride with a rainbow of artefacts. Chloe assisted Laika, the 2025 registrar, with the Henry House textile collection inventory.

Thank you, Shriya and Chloe, for your hard work throughout the year!

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 2025. Thank you for your support!

DONORS

\$1000+

Sandra Gaskell
Arthur Lovell

\$100+

J. Doris Cherkas
Sprague Furey
Brian and Myrna Gough
Margaret Henderson
Robert Leask
Michael Leonard
Jeffrey Milgram
Ron Pierce
Ted Rundle
Peter Young

\$50+

Patricia Bayus
Robert and Betty Davis
Brian Drew
Ron Getz
Margaret Henderson
Pat Andrey and William McCormack
Bob McIntyre

\$25+

Satu Arvola
Steve Barker
Anne Bessie
Harold Ellis
Amanda Wilson

NEWSLETTER SPONSORS

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

EVENT SPONSORS

Right at Home Realty – Janet Dowson

The Oshawa Historical Society is grateful for the granting agencies who have supported the Museum and Historical Society in 2025, including:

The City of Oshawa

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming, Government of Ontario

Department of Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada

Employment and Social Development Canada

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Archaeological Services Inc.

Canadian Language Museum

Catholic Cemeteries and Funeral Services –
Archdiocese of Toronto

Canadian Automotive Museum

Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW)

Canadian Tank Museum

Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority
(CLOCA)

City of Oshawa

- Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
- Community and Operations Services
- Corporate and Finance Services
- Economic and Development Services
- Safety and Facility Services

Derek Cutting

Durham College

Durham District School Board

Durham Yogi Community

Fleming College, Conservation Program

Holodomor National Awareness Tour

Ontario Tech University

Oshawa Civic Band

Oshawa Little Theatre

Oshawa Public Libraries

Paranormal Seekers

Parkwood National Historic Site

Postcards to the Front

Robert McLaughlin Gallery

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 43

Second Marsh

Supernatural Mysteries Inc.

The Costume People

Trent University Durham GTA

Tourism Oshawa

Union Cemetery

Whitby Public Library



Untold Oshawa panel discussion at Ontario Tech University, March 2025. Photo: Amanda Watson, Amanda's Photography.



Kes and Holly at Convergence Music and Art Festival, September 2025, an annual event hosted by Oshawa Tourism.



Paranormal Night at the Museum with the Paranormal Seekers, October 2025.

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 2025 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



Local author Tony Leah was the speaker for April’s Local History Speaker Series. He discussed his book, *The Truth About the ‘37 Oshawa GM Strike*.

The Oshawa Historical Society continued the trend of growth and success through 2025. The year finished with 184 members, representing a 3% increase over last year. Thank you for your support of the Oshawa Historical Society.

The Local History Speaker Series continued to be a favourite event for members. This event is presented in partnership with the Oshawa Public Libraries, a partnership three-years strong. By offering this event as a joint program, we are reaching a broader audience and engaging a wide variety of speakers. We look forward to continuing this rewarding partnership.

The Local History Speaker Series takes place on the third Tuesday of the month (Jan–May, Sept–Nov) at 6 PM. With construction at the McLaughlin Branch, the membership embraced a temporary location change. For the first half of 2025, this event was held at the McLaughlin Branch of the Oshawa Public Libraries (65 Debwewin Miikan), in the lower level auditorium. From September, it was held in the Nonquon Room at the John Aker Northview Branch (250 Beatrice St. E.).

The Local History Speaker Series for 2025 saw the following speakers and attendance:

Date	Speaker and topic	Attendance
January 21	Samantha George, Curator, Parkwood NHS presents: <i>Behind the Scenes as a Film Set at Parkwood</i>	98
February 18	Jill Passmore, Visitor Experience Coordinator presents: <i>Windfields Farm</i>	90
March 18	Adam Bunch presents: <i>Toronto Book of Love</i>	54
April 15	Tony Leah presents: <i>The Truth About the ‘37 Oshawa GM Strike</i>	90
May 20	Annual Meeting—Melissa Cole, Curator, presents: <i>Milk Stories: Dairies of Oshawa</i>	70
September 16	Dani Crosby presents: <i>The Warren Mill Mural</i>	51
October 21	Mike McDonnell presents: <i>European Battlefield Photography</i>	71
November 18	Jeremy Neal Blowers, Executive Director, Canadian Tank Museum presents: <i>The Canadian Tank Museum</i>	60

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

OSHAWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AWARD

The Oshawa Historical Society is pleased to celebrate students in Oshawa who are excelling in the study of history. The Society helps to support their post-secondary studies through the Oshawa Historical Society Award.

This award is received by secondary students who are outstanding in subject of history. The value of the award is \$200.

The Oshawa Historical Society has been offering this 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 2025:

Eastdale CVI.....Savannah Robinson
 G. L. Roberts CVI..... Kiyra Duval
 Maxwell Heights Secondary School Myanna Leyes
 Monsignor John Pereyema Catholic Secondary School Selene Cababasay
 Monsignor Paul Dwyer Catholic High SchoolAttilio Iezz
 R. S. McLaughlin CVI.....Mya Papanicolopoulos

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! 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!
- 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.

Oshawa Historical Society memberships, as of December 31, 2025:

Membership Type	Number of Members
Complimentary	13
Family	48
Individual	92
Life	25
Organizational	1
Student	1
Volunteer	4
Total Members	184
New Memberships	25

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.

MINUTES OF THE 2025 ANNUAL MEETING

Held at 6:00 PM, Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at the McLaughlin Branch auditorium, Oshawa Public Libraries, 65 Debwewin Miikan (formerly Bagot Street), Oshawa.

1. **Welcome:** Michael Leonard, Oshawa Historical Society President, called to order the 67th Annual Meeting of the Oshawa Historical Society. He drew attention to last year's minutes printed on page 11 of the Annual Report.
2. **A motion was called to accept the Minutes** of the May 21, 2024 Annual Meeting, as distributed.
Moved by John Foster
Seconded by Ted Rundle
Carried.
3. Kat Akerfeldt, Executive Director of the Oshawa Museum, presented the **2024 Museum Activities Report.**
4. Doug Lavis, Director-at-Large, asked the Membership to review the information contained in the 2024 Annual Report. **A motion was called to adopt the 2024 Annual Report as written.**
Moved by Brian Gough
Seconded by Paul Burk
Carried.
5. Michael then introduced the board members in attendance at the Annual Meeting. He then called up Chris Locke, Vice President, to 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 9, 2025.**
Moved by Merle Cole
Seconded by Marg Wilkinson
Carried.
6. Marshall Mayne, Secretary, asked for a motion regarding the appointment of Jeffrey D. Milgram Professional Corporation as auditors for 2025. **A motion was called "to reappoint Jeffrey D. Milgram Professional Corporation as auditors for 2025."**
Moved by Erika Redermeier
Seconded by Doug Lavis
Carried.
7. Next, Michael Leonard called upon Jill Passmore, Visitor Experience Coordinator, to recognise the 2024 Volunteers. Jill recognized the 29 individuals who volunteered over 533 hours in 2024, thanking them for their contributions.
8. Next, Jill recognized the 2024 Earl Hann Volunteer of the Year Award recipient. **Mya Kirk is the Earl Hann Award recipient for 2024.**
9. 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: Trish Bruce, Ann & Peter Lloyd, Anne Lord, Eric Sangwine, Pam Scheufler, Joan Sheffield
10 Year: Brian Drew, Lake Scugog Historical Society (Recognition)
15 Year: Andrew Jackson, Winston LeGrand
20 Year: Donna Bradley, Robert & Betty Davies, David Dowsley (Life Member), Gordon & Marilyn Dowsley, Roy Miles, Skip & Darlene Williams
25 Year: David & Joan Andrews, Brian & Myrna Gough (Life Member)
30 Year: Steve Barker, Susanne Sutton
10. Michael Leonard then called for **a motion to adjourn the 67th Annual Meeting of the Oshawa Historical Society.**
Moved by Steven Barker
Seconded by Susan Marsh
Carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT, OSHAWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REVENUE

The Oshawa Historical Society's revenue includes membership dues, newsletter sponsorships, and income from Society events, such as the Local History Speaker Series. The Society also benefits from a Heritage Organization Development Grant from the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming.

<u>Total 2025 Revenue</u>	<u>\$5,937</u>
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EXPENSES

Expenses include costs associated with Society events, such as speaker honorariums, the Oshawa Historical Society Award, and laying a wreath on behalf of Society members at the Memorial Park Cenotaph on Remembrance Day.

<u>Total 2025 Expenses</u>	<u>\$3,322</u>
Net Excess of Revenues Over Expenses For 2025	<u>\$1,993</u>

The full 2025 Financial Statements, completed by Jeffrey D. Milgram Professional Corporation, are available upon request.

PERSONNEL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025–2026



Michael Leonard
Chair



Christopher Locke
Vice Chair



David Tonkin
Treasurer



Marshall Mayne
Secretary



Dr. Pariss Garramone
Director-at-Large



Doug Lavis
Director-at-Large



Dr. Jennifer Newton
Director-at-Large

OSHAWA MUSEUM STAFF, 2025

Kat Akerfeldt, Executive Director

Melissa Cole, Curator

Jennifer Weymark, Archivist

Jill Passmore, Visitor Experience Coordinator

Lisa Terech, Community Engagement

William Fiddler, Maintenance

Calleigh Barton, Museum Assistant

Sarah Campbell, Registrar

Laika (Pollock) Dadoun, Registrar

Tyler Gaskin, Heritage Gardener

Megan Sullivan, Digital Collections
Assistant

Toluwani Adeniyi, Visitor Host

Eileen Bethune, Visitor Host

Holly Huntington, Visitor Host

Kes Murray, Visitor Host

Mintie Pitamber, Visitor Host

Aya Yagnaya, Visitor Host



Handwritten: *Wally*

VOTERS' LIST
 1887,
 MUNICIPALITY OF THE
TOWN OF OSHAWA,
 COUNTY OF ONTARIO.

The following is from the Voters' List Act:
 SECT. VI.—The Sheriff shall, immediately upon the receipt of his copies, cause one of them to be posted up in a conspicuous place



2025 HIGHLIGHTS

 **4760**
Visitors to Guy House

Hours contributed by
dedicated volunteers

653 


22 

Objects donated to the
artefact collection

 **1573**
Students participating
in education programs

2025 Culture
Counts Award for
Untold Oshawa 

 **166** Research
requests

 **15,660**
Social Media followers

 **6538**
Guests engaged with at
on-site and outreach events

 **15**
Visits using Library Passes,
available from the Oshawa &
Pickering Libraries

 **OVER 155**
Items donated to the
archival collection

6 
NEW or relaunched on-site,
outreach or online exhibits

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Since 1960, the Oshawa Museum, operated by the Oshawa Historical Society, has been collecting, researching, and sharing the stories of Oshawa's history. As the only museum with a focus on the community of Oshawa, we take great pride in showcasing the history of our city from the earliest Indigenous settlements to the present day.

At the Oshawa Museum, we strive to tell the story of Oshawa, and that is a story that includes many perspectives, many voices, and many chapters. It must be a collective effort. A great deal of the Oshawa Museum's activities in 2025 were led by the *Untold Oshawa* publication, which was initially launched in late 2024 as a city centennial project. In May, museum staff were honoured to stand, along with rapper Keisha (Keysha Freshh) Fanfair and visual artist Danielle Alexander to receive the City of Oshawa's Culture Counts

Award. We owe thanks to the support of the community in this overdue effort to expand Oshawa's commonly accepted narrative, and particular thanks to those who have contributed their voice and their story.

As always, we convey our grateful thanks to the museum community: our sponsors and funding organizations, the members who encourage us, our staunch volunteers, the committed Board of Directors, our knowledgeable, passionate, and long-standing staff, our dedicated team of co-op students, summer staff, and interns, and our supportive partner organizations and Oshawa's rich cultural community.

We would also like to particularly thank the City of Oshawa for their continued contributions to the Museum's operating budget, and the care of the buildings which house the Oshawa Museum and Archives. We are very honoured to be the home of Oshawa's history.

Kat Akerfeldt
Executive Director
Oshawa Museum

Oshawa Museum staff and OHS President Michael Leonard with members of city council, receiving the 2025 Innovation and Creation Champion Culture Counts Award for *Untold Oshawa: An Expanded History*, May 2025.



2025 ACTION PLAN AND ACTIVITIES

The 2025 Action Plan at the Oshawa Historical Society was composed of four objectives. Each objective incorporated its own strategies, actions, and specific goals.

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

Strategies:

1. The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will provide excellent learning experiences that demonstrate the Oshawa Museum's value, contributions, and connections to the community.
2. The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will seek out and engage in meaningful partnerships and collaborations that build community and awareness of Oshawa's heritage, arts, and cultural facilities.
3. The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will increase the community's awareness of the Museum and its resources.

In 2025, Oshawa Museum staff focused on strengthening relationships with local school boards. This work included sharing educational programming opportunities, supporting history education in the classroom, and developing new programming and resources based on the needs of Oshawa's students.

The Historical Society and Museum continued their participation in events hosted by partner organizations, including the DDSB Heritage Fair, Doors Open Oshawa, the Local History Speaker Series, Purple Woods Maple Syrup Festival, Convergence, and the Peony Festival. The Museum itself played host to visiting organizations, such as the Holodomor Tour exhibit, Postcards to the Front, the Oshawa Civic Band, Paranormal Seekers, and The Costume People.

New opportunities for the public to interact with the Museum were created, including a tour of the Grandview Site and Neighbourhood Walking Tour (part of the Jane's Walk Festival), new March Break programs, and hosting paranormal groups for investigations and interactive public tours. In fact, 9 new outreach opportunities were created (in addition to existing programs and events), and total engagement rose 20% over 2024.

Objective 2: To present relevant and meaningful content that reflect the communities of Oshawa.

Strategies:

1. The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will develop and deliver excellent on-site, in-class, and virtual educational programming experiences.
2. The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will continue to explore digital engagement opportunities to expand accessibility and awareness of the Museum's activities.

Among the new educational programming developed for Oshawa students is a post-WWII program for secondary students, workshops that build on the research of *Untold Oshawa*, and a program for the grade 3 level on industries in Oshawa.

The Museum's social media continued its strong presence, sharing news of the Museum's activities and achievements such as May is Museum Month proclamation, receiving the City's Culture Counts Award (Innovation and Creation Champion) for the publication *Untold Oshawa*, and opportunities to contribute to the design and content of upcoming exhibits and research. To help manage this rich online engagement, ongoing marketing calendars for public and educational programming were produced and in use.

Objective 3: To foster a culture of inclusivity, expertise, and to recognize the value of diversity.

Strategies:

1. The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will connect its collections, exhibitions, and programs with new audiences that reflect the diversity of identities and experiences within Oshawa's communities.
2. The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will review its human resources policies, with the aim to retain and develop staff, board members, and volunteers, to ensure the Museum has sufficient human resources to deliver on its mission.

In 2025, the Personnel Policy was reviewed, and a welcome package created for incoming volunteers.

With partners at the Durham District School Board, Trent University, and others, new programs were developed and delivered on subjects covered in *Untold Oshawa*, including Black history and industrialization in Oshawa.

We also invested in training opportunities for staff and volunteers that focused on best practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion, on ethics in social media, on accessibility challenges and opportunities at the museum, and on funding opportunities in Durham Region. The Oshawa Museum's Archives was represented at the Association of Canadian Archivists Conference, where Archivist Jennifer Weymark also presented her research based on the release of *Untold Oshawa*.

Objective 4: To ensure the resiliency and flexibility of the museum's operations and collections.

Strategies:

1. The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will review its earned revenue-generating activities to support a sustainable future.
2. The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will continue to pursue an expansion of its facilities in the form of a new Visitor's Centre, and in refreshing existing visitor spaces.
3. The Oshawa Historical Society and the Oshawa Museum will practice good governance to ensure effective, efficient, and open management of the Oshawa Museum and the Oshawa Historical Society.

Efforts continued to increase the number of Canadian-made products in the museum shop, and to increase earned revenue through its retail sales.

In other efforts to increase earned revenue, the events and exhibits sponsorship programs were updated and expanded, and an extra summer employment grant was obtained from Young Canada Works.

Over the course of 2025, planning was underway to update and refresh existing exhibit areas. Museum staff consulted with members of the Wendat Nation and archaeology experts from Archaeological Services Inc. before embarking on changes to the Indigenous galleries and hosting new exhibits in these areas in 2026.

Another new exhibit was researched, designed, created, and opened in Guy House. The *Welcome Gallery* serves as an introduction to Oshawa for visitors to the museum. To accompany this exhibit, a series of 10 videos—Oshawa Museum Shorts—were created and are also available on the Oshawa Museum YouTube channel.

Finally, an audit of all policies and guidelines was completed, and a roadmap for regular reviews was established.

CURATOR'S REPORT

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

In 2025, the feature exhibition at the Oshawa Museum was *Untold Oshawa*, which was developed to accompany the Museum's recent publication of the same name. This exhibit tells an expanded and inclusive story, including stories of Oshawa's early Black settlers, 2SLGBTQIA+ history, a look into the impact of labour unions through the perspective of women in Oshawa, and more. As you walk through this exhibit, many stories lack objects and spaces have been left empty. One of the goals of this exhibit was to highlight and fill gaps in the Oshawa Museum collection. This goal will continue even after the exhibit comes down, and will inform exhibits to come.

In the winter, curatorial staff partnered with Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW), Oshawa and District Division, to create a pop-up exhibit that featured the history of the organization as they celebrate 80 years in the community. Since 1945, CFUW Oshawa has had a proud history of providing scholarships and bursaries to assist women entering university or college. A total of \$145,000 has been donated during the club's 80 year existence.



Melissa & Melanie Kitchen from the CFUW. The CFUW exhibit was on display in spring 2025.

In the spring, the Oshawa Museum hosted a travelling exhibit from the Language Museum of Canada called *Beyond Words: Dictionaries and Indigenous Languages*. This exhibit looked at the complex relationship between Indigenous languages and dictionaries over several centuries, from word lists and dictionaries developed for exploration, colonization, conversion, and assimilation purposes, to online language materials being developed by Indigenous communities to transmit the elders' knowledge to today's youth.

Through the generous assistance of grants through Canada Summer Jobs and Young Canada Works, the Oshawa Museum was able to hire an Exhibit Assistant for the summer, and a Registrar as an internship placement.

Laika, the Registrar, continued a project that mainly focused on the inventory, description, and classification of the textile collection. The goal of this project was to assess the collection for redundancies and condition, which involved detailed descriptions and digitization of each item. This project has taken three years, and a few items remain outstanding. The goal is to complete the assessment in the summer of 2026. The ultimate objective of this project is to rehouse and organize the collection to allow for the growth of the Oshawa Museum collection for the future. This will allow us to strategically develop the collection to ensure it is representative of our diverse community.

Exhibit Assistant Calleigh took the lead, with guidance from Curator Melissa, to research, design, and create the new *Welcome Gallery*. Located in the Verna Conant Gallery at Guy House, this exhibit was designed to welcome visitors to the museum and the City of Oshawa. Lakeview Park tends to be a stopping point for many visitors taking road trips across the Province of Ontario or, as noted by a recent visitor, "a great place to stop while driving around Lake Ontario." This new gallery is a wonderful starting point to discover more about history of our community through the themes of movement, transportation, and growth. Within these themes you can discover stories about businesses, events, and people who have left their mark on Oshawa.

Thank you to Laika and Calleigh, we are grateful for all your assistance and contributions to the museum collections and exhibition program.

Since the OHS was founded in 1957, the museum has continually added to its holdings of artefacts through acquisitions, donations, and fieldwork. In total, 22 objects were accepted and processed by curatorial staff. Here are just a few of the additions to the Oshawa Museum’s collection:

- Brooch, Bishop Bethune College
- Police Jacket, Chief Owen Dixon Friend
- Quilt, Northminster United Church
- Horseshoe Collection, Samuel F. Hooper
- Wing Back Chair, Thomas Henry
- Bone China Dishes, Jennie Henry
- Sea Cadet Uniforms, Traditional Ceremonial Dress, Naval Veterans Club



Jennie Henry’s bone china dishes; Oshawa Museum collection (025.6a-f).

The museum has a great line-up of exhibits planned for 2026. *Untold Oshawa* will remain open until May. Second Marsh partnered with the Oshawa Museum and HOPA to create a temporary exhibit about the rich history of Second Marsh. *Connecting People and Nature* is now on display at Oshawa City Hall, and will then travel to the Oshawa Museum.

In June, two new exhibits will open at Robinson House. *So Fetch!* will feature dog related objects and photographs from the Oshawa Museum collections.

A Walk in the Park: A Look at Parks in Oshawa will feature the community stories associated with parks/green spaces located in Oshawa. Oshawa has over 130 parks, spanning more than 1,000 hectares of green space which include large community parks, naturalized spaces like Second Marsh, and small neighbourhood parks, dog parks and urban parks!

In the Indigenous Gallery, *A Carrying Place* will close this summer. In its place we will welcome a travelling exhibit from The Muse called *Miijim: Traditional Foods of the Lake of the Woods Anishinaabeg*, which will be on display from September until the end of October.



Museum Assistant Calleigh preparing a GM smock coat for display in the *Welcome Gallery*.



While *Beyond Words: Dictionaries and Indigenous Languages* was on display, didactics were added to Robinson and Henry House.

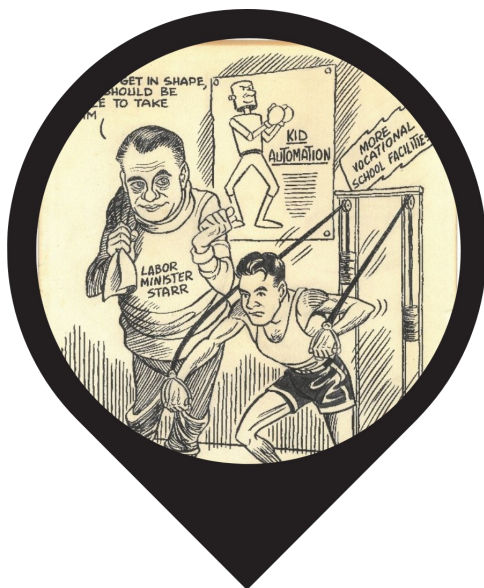


Registrar Laika engaging with OHS Members at 2025’s Evening of Lamplight.

ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

The publishing of *Untold Oshawa: An Expanded History* at the end of 2024 became the basis of a great number of public speaking and education programming for 2025, and culminated in a paper presented at the 2025 Annual Conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists in Ottawa. The paper focused on the research and response to the stories told in the book.

Partnerships with other community organizations were an important focus of 2025. In October, alongside Sarah Ferencz, Archivist at the Whitby Public Library, the Oshawa Museum presented a talk on the Women of Whitby Township. This talk shared stories of some incredible woman who lived in what was once called Whitby Township. The Oshawa Museum Archives was also fortunate to partner with the Second Marsh to provide research, text writing, and images for a display at Art in the Hall, Oshawa City Hall. Partnerships continue with Durham College's Faculty of Media, Art and Design as well as with Flora Fung of the Durham District School Board. These partnerships work to introduce the archival collection to new audiences and to provide hands-on experiences that showcase the work we do at the Oshawa Museum.



Political cartoon; Michael Starr Collection, Oshawa Museum archival collection (A025.8.40).

The Archives was once again fortunate enough to receive some fantastic new additions to the collection. Included in these new additions was a sizeable collection from the family of Michael Starr. Included in that donation were a variety of political cartoons focused on Starr and his work as a politician. The Archives also received transfers from the Whitby Archives of programs from the Oshawa Fair. Over the course of 2025, 15 new collections were donated, totalling over 155 new items added to the archival collection.

With financial assistance from the Young Canada Works program, we were able to hire a summer student whose focus was on the processing and cataloguing of both of the Bonke and A. J. Groen digital collections that were donated in 2024. The Digital Collections Assistant, Megan, was able to fully complete the accessioning of these collections.

PROGRAMMING REPORT

Programming at the Oshawa Museum incorporates on- and off-site educational workshops and tours for school groups, events and activities for drop-in visitors or registered groups, activities that accompany exhibits and partner events, and virtual opportunities to engage with historical research and items. Programming enriches history education.

In the summer of 2025, a Young Canada Works grant allowed the museum to hire Tyler, a student and emerging museum professional. Tyler was a great help to both the Programming and Curatorial departments, as he assisted with the early stages of redeveloping the Indigenous Galleries and Henry House Gardens, and sought opportunities for partnerships with the local Indigenous community, to improve community understanding of Oshawa's Indigenous heritage. Tyler also supported the museum in program delivery, content creation, and hosting special events.

Throughout the year, the Oshawa Museum hosted 28 school or community group visits at the museum site, comprised of 1,573 people. A further 51 groups (3,258 people) met for programming off-site. These programs included new workshops related to the material covered in the Oshawa Museum's 2024 publication *Untold Oshawa*, the post-WWII period, industrialization in Oshawa, Black history, Victorian Oshawa, archaeological discoveries in Oshawa, and more.

In 2025, the Museum named four events as flagship events: Family Day, Grandpa Henry's Picnic, Halloween at the Harbour, and An Evening of Lamplight. These four seasonal events have been popular for many years, and we hope to continue to build these events as a way to activate the Oshawa Museum throughout the year.



Event partner, Derek Cutting, explaining how a dog's vision works at Halloween at the Harbour, October 2025.

However, in addition to the flagship events, Oshawa Museum hosted a further 41 events, and took part in 26 events hosted by partner organizations. All together, we spoke to 4,115 people at events in 2025.

These events included regular meetups such as the monthly Craft Circle, Yoga in the Henry House Gardens, and the Local History Speaker Series. There are also annual events, including the observation of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Scenes from the Cemetery, the Purple Woods Maple Syrup Festival, Doors Open Oshawa, and the Peony Festival, special once-only events such as Curator tours of new exhibits and paranormal investigations, and returning favourites like "Tea and Talks," and walking tours of Oshawa's cemeteries, neighbourhoods, and historic sites.

Thank you for joining us on another journey of discovery in 2025, and we hope to see you at the Museum in 2026!

ENGAGEMENT REPORT

The Oshawa Museum continues to work with many community partners to help meet our mandate of preserving and promoting Oshawa's history. Scenes from the Cemetery was held in September, marking the seventh year for this popular event. This dramatic Union Cemetery tour 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 the cast of 2025, including: Paul Dobbs, Alex Holland-Guy, Rick Kerr, Ross Libbey, Deb Lobban, and Connie Maglioli. This event is made possible through the hard work and participation of Oshawa's Union Cemetery staff, the Oshawa Little Theatre, and Scenes' Creative Director, Rick Kerr. Thank you to everyone involved, and thank you to everyone who has attended year after year. This year will mark the 10th anniversary since this first edition of Scenes from the Cemetery, and it is taking place September 26 and 27. I hope you will mark your calendars and support this beloved community event and the Oshawa Historical Society.

In 2025, the Oshawa Museum continued to see strong follower growth and engagement across its social media channels. The weekly #ThrowbackThursday photos continued to be a follower favourite. These historic photos often lead to discussions and memories about Oshawa, past and present. Various campaigns were developed and delivered for special events, like Heritage Week, Volunteer Week, Archives Awareness Week, and May is Museum Month.

The Oshawa Museum Blog has remained a strong resource. Throughout 2025, 58 articles were shared, showcasing many different stories from Oshawa's past. Thank you to the staff and students who contributed content throughout the year.

The top five blog posts of 2025 were:

- What to Expect When You're Expecting: Victorian Edition
- Oshawa's Newspapers, Past & Present
- Lakas Building
- Prehistoric Oshawa: Glacial Lake Iroquois
- Scugog Carrying Place

Another online resource is the Discover Historic Oshawa site, which serves as an interactive map of historical places of interest. Discover Historic Oshawa received over 22,000 visits in 2025. With new places added frequently, often with ties to the feature on-site exhibits, this platform is another way to open the Oshawa Museum up beyond the walls of the site and allow aspects of exhibits to live on well after the exhibit comes down. Finally, with the help of 2024 summer student Sangeev, the Industry in Oshawa online exhibit was re-launched in early 2025. This was one of the first online exhibits developed by the Oshawa Museum, and we were thrilled to re-launch it with a fresh look.

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



Alex Holland-Guy portraying Alice Carswell Houston at 2025's Scenes from the Cemetery.

FINANCIAL REPORT, OSHAWA MUSEUM

REVENUE

The Oshawa Museum receives its operating budget from agency-raised revenue (for example, special event admissions and program fees), fundraising revenue (individual donations, corporate sponsorships of events, publications, and exhibits), and government grants. In 2025, the Oshawa Museum received financial support from the City of Oshawa, the Government of Ontario, and the Government of Canada. Employment grants were received from the Young Canada Works and Canada Summer Jobs programs.

In 2025, total revenue rose by 3.35% over the previous year, with substantial increases in gift shop sales and special event revenue. The amount of funding through Young Canada Works increased as the Museum hosted an extra summer student over the previous year.

Museum Sales Revenue	\$35,562
Fundraising Revenue	\$6,998
Other Earned Revenue	\$14,640
Government Grants	\$553,759
<u>Total 2025 Revenue</u>	<u>\$610,959</u>

EXPENSES

The Oshawa Museum's expenses for 2025 include operating expenses for the museum buildings, human resources, and costs associated with museum exhibits, events, and programs.

Due to the extra summer contract employee, partially funded by Young Canada Works, there was an increase in payroll over 2024. Other extraordinary expenses in 2025 included IT repairs, and the purchase of two new laptops for contract employees, and one replacement staff laptop. WIFI was installed in Henry House and Robinson House, to allow for staff to work in any of the museum buildings, and nearby collections storage areas.

Payroll Expenses	\$501,612
Museum Expenses	\$86,059
Administrative Expenses	\$21,500
Professional Expenses	\$44,073
<u>Total 2025 Expenses</u>	<u>\$631,959</u>
Net Excess of Revenues Over Expenses for 2025	<u>(\$21,000)</u>

The full 2025 Financial Statements, completed by Jeffrey D. Milgram Professional Corporation, are available upon request.

ON DISPLAY AT THE OSHAWA MUSEUM, 2026



A Walk in the Park A Look at Parks in Oshawa



OPENING JUNE 2026

Nestled throughout the City of Oshawa, parks have always been a place for the community to come together. With a rich history of over 120 years, take a *Walk in the Park* and celebrate parks as places for recreation, reflection, play, and peace.



So Fetch! Dogs in the Oshawa Museum Collection

OPENING JUNE 2026

Dogs have been part of many peoples' lives for centuries. Loved as pets, dogs are also life-savers, investigators, and good hunting companions.

So Fetch! features artefacts and photos from the Oshawa Museum collections that tell us about the relationships people had with dogs from the 1400s until today.



OPEN FROM SEPTEMBER TO OCTOBER 2026

An Exhibit of the Lake of the Woods Museum, Iskatewizaagegan #39 Independent First Nation, Natural Resources Institute of the University of Manitoba

Miijim: Traditional Foods of the Lake of the Woods Anishinaabeg focuses on **miijim—food**—and its importance to the body, mind, soul and heart of the Anishinaabeg.



The Second Marsh Connecting People and Nature

OPENING LATE FALL 2026

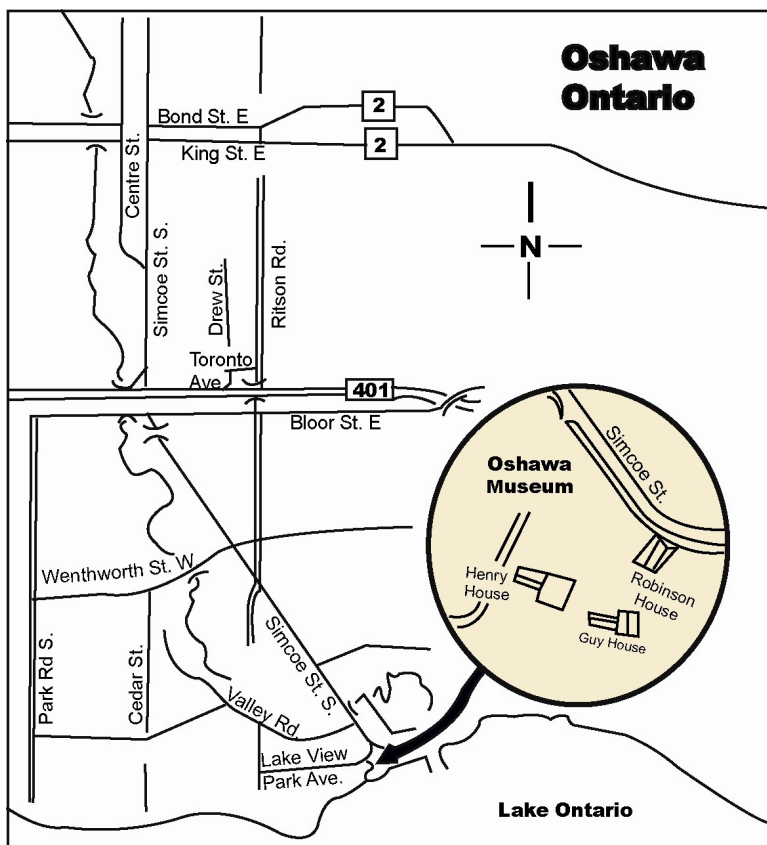
Created by the Friends of the Second Marsh, in partnership with the Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority and the Oshawa Museum, this exhibit explores the impact of colonial settlement on the Second Marsh area beginning in the late 18th century and the remediation efforts that began in the 20th century.



OSHAWA

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

— Collections. Spaces. People. —



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