



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

2023 Chairperson's Message	3
2023 Finance Report	4
2023 Acquisition Report	5
2023 Building Report	6
2023 Membership Report	8
2023 Volunteer Report	10
2023 Curator's Report	12
2023 Board of Directors and Staff	15
2023 Members, Sponsors, and Supporters	16

2023 CHAIRPERSONS MESSAGE

Welcome to the 2023 Annual General Meeting of the Aylmer-Malahide Museum and Archives.

Our new location at 75 Talbot Street East has been busy this past year with a series of pop-up events, planned and manned by our stalwart Museum staff and volunteers. The exhibit, At the Going Down of the Sun, proved very popular, and was organized in conjunction with the debut of the Museum's second major publication and shares its title. It presents the biographies of those soldiers from Aylmer and Malahide who lost their lives in WWII, as well as the casualties at RCAF SFTS 14, north of Aylmer. The book was the brainchild of Jim McCallum, a member of the Board, who brought his considerable talents in genealogy to bear on the project. Thanks, Jim. It also required the considerable efforts of staff members Amanda and Sarah. Again, thanks. The book is selling well due to heightened interest in this aspect of local history. Jim has hinted at producing further books of local interest in the future, so stay tuned.

On the fundraising front, several events brought much-needed revenue to our relocation fund, as well as to general coffers. Our first murder mystery dinner, Mayhem at the Museum, was well received by an enthusiastic audience at Legion Branch 81. It showcased the surprising acting talents of staff and Board members and it was a hoot to do.

Our second-annual Car Show was held at the German-Canadian Club and had a good turn-out. The winning car, as chosen by the public, was a lovely 1929 Ford Model A, owned by Paul Weir of Aylmer.

The major fundraiser was, of course, the Christmas Tour of Homes. After a two year hiatus due to COVID, the TOH returned with our most successful tour ever. A committee of volunteers, along with committee chair Jacquie Jeffery, spent months organizing the tour and along with an army of more volunteers, pulled off this logistically daunting event with panache.

Without the devoted effort of our volunteers, we would not be able to bring the amazing history of Aylmer and Malahide to our community.

Thanks, guys.

It is time to acknowledge the tremendous contribution of the OLG and Jackpot Time in St. Thomas. The funding, provided through our volunteer participation in their bingo games, gives the Museum opportunities to further our mandate of keeping our collections organized and safe.

2023 was a great year for the Museum. Our hopes are high for an even better 2024 for the Aylmer-Malahide Museum and Archives.

Ron Sawyer

Board Chair, Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives

2023 FINANCE REPORT

As part of our commitment to transparency and accountability, we would like to present the financial report for the 2023 fiscal year.

The past year has been both challenging and rewarding for the Aylmer-Malahide Museum from a financial perspective. We are anticipating some financial uncertainties due to external factors such as economic fluctuations, increased expenses with the new building, and the additional expense of property taxes assessed on both buildings, which may cause an approximate \$20,000 deficit for 2024. Though this anticipated deficit is concerning, the AMMA board is committed to looking for new sources of income to cover this. We were fortunate to receive an increased amount from Malahide Township, \$10,000 (up from \$6,500). The Town of Aylmer grant remained the same at \$20,000 and the CMOG grant at \$15,192. These grants combined represent 34% of the total operating revenue at the museum. The remaining revenue is generated through fundraising, memberships, sponsorships, admissions, and sales. We were able to host our biggest fundraiser event once again, the Christmas Tour of Homes on November 17 and 18, 2023. This year was our best attended event ever at over 700 people, bringing in over \$17,000 in income. Other fundraising events included a vintage car show, a murder mystery night, and a music concert. More events are being planned for the 2024 year to help with the anticipated deficit.

We received grant funding through the Community Foundations of Canada for a Community Services recovery fund. This grant allowed us to hire a consultant to create new by-laws for ONCA (Ontario Non-profit Corporations Act) compliance, and to create a fundraising strategy, as well as a membership and board member recruitment strategy. With the aid of these documents, the AMMA board will focus on increasing museum memberships and fundraising activities to help maintain a stable financial position and achieve our strategic objectives.

AMMA has been an active member of the Charitable Gaming Association since 2017. Our volunteer opportunities at Jackpot Time in St. Thomas continues to be a much-needed source of income. All funds raised must be used towards collection and artifact expenses. This has included the purchase of many archival safe storage boxes and materials, mannequins for exhibits, artifact maintenance supplies, the collection manager salary, and utilities to keep our buildings climate controlled for the safe storage of our artifacts. We are very grateful to Jackpot Time and thank them for all their support.

Larry Jeffery

Finance Chair, Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives

2023 ACQUISITION REPORT

The Acquisition Committee continued to review acquisitions in 2023 via email. Items were listed, pictures accompanied the lists and the committee members emailed comments and voted. The acquisition committee consisted of myself, as Acquisition Chair, Kelly Pearson, Deb Addley, Pat White, Allan Cross, and James McCallum, with support from Sarah Bentley and Amanda VandenWyngaert.

There were 954 items from 42 donors. Items donated ranged from documents, clothing, pictures, to tools. The largest donation of items received in 2023 came from the Aylmer Fair Board with 465 items in total.

Janet Rigsby

Acquisition Committee Chair, Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives

	Number of Items	Number of Donors
2021	375	30
2022	325	27
2023	954	42

A special thank you to volunteers Bozena Boadway and Cathy Kasza for assisting our Collections Manager Sarah in listing, cataloguing, and photographing our new acquisitions!

2023 BUILDING REPORT

The Museum Building Committee was established in February 2022 and met 4 times in 2023. The committee meets as required.

The committee has two purposes:

1. Fundraising to pay for the renovations at the former Hamilton, Ward and Cathers building at 75 Talbot St. E.
2. Provide guidance to the AMMA Board of Directors on how best to proceed with the renovations to this structure.

Fundraising guidelines

The museum has two fundraising objectives:

- To raise operating capital for the current facility on East Street through events like the Tour of Homes.
- To raise funding for renovations to the new facility on 75 Talbot Street East.

We need to be clear with all participants that there are two streams of fundraising, each with their own purpose. The committee strives to keep all fundraising events simple and manageable by museum staff and volunteers, with a clear understanding of which objective the event funding is going towards.

Where possible, these events will be coordinated with activities of the town and business community. Communications, promotion, information are provided through our website, newsletters, letters of solicitation, tabloid posters, advertisements, and presentations to key community groups and organizations. These provide a schedule of events and pertinent information.

Fundraising Events have included:

- Vintage car show
- Murder Mystery Dinner
- MCS Food festival information table
- Online Monthly Raffle
- Solicitation of CRA-registered foundations who support museums.

- Frankie and the Fairlanes - a 1950s themed band for a fundraising concert. We need to solicit more help from the volunteers to help with fundraising events, pop-ups, and other events.
- Donation boxes
- Raffle draws

A Request for Proposal was prepared by Kathi Vandemeer and Chris Csernyei that was submitted to a local Engineering and Architectural firm to provide architectural and engineering services relative to renovations at 75 Talbot St. E. Aylmer, ON. The scope of this project includes the review and assessment of the current site conditions, as well as preliminary conceptual development and detailed design.

Professional services included in the 14-page RFP include site condition assessment, architectural concept design(s), cost estimating, design development and construction documents. Assistance during the project bidding phase. Construction administration work is included in the proposal as separate tasks.

We will be able to use the architectural concept designs and cost estimates to apply for funding through various foundations and government grants.

Physical Building Reports

14 East St. E., Aylmer

The automatic door opener on the front entrance door failed in March 2023. Due to the age of the opener, we were no longer able to get parts for repair. We applied to the Aylmer Community Foundation for a grant for \$1800 to cover the cost of a replacement. We were fortunate to receive the full funding amount and K&K Locksmith replaced our opener. No other repairs were required to this building. An intensive clean and organization was managed in December after the annual shutdown. New smoke detectors were installed to replace several expired ones.

75 Talbot St. E., Aylmer

A large section of exterior bricks at the back of the building are disintegrating due to water drainage from the roof. A brick expert examined the bricks to determine what was needed to prevent further damage. The solution was to install a tarp to cover the affected area. This will serve as a decent short-term solution until such time as renovations will start.

Bill Murch, Building Committee Chair, Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives
Kathi Vandermeer, Office Manager, Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives

2023 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership dues are of great importance to the continued success of our museum. As museum membership has stayed consistent year over year, a membership campaign is needed to try to increase membership and sponsorship numbers overall. A Community Recovery grant was applied for and approved in partnership with the Community Foundations of Canada. This grant allowed us to hire a consultant to draw up a membership recruitment and retention strategy. The final document is still under review. We are looking at other strategies to help with increasing our membership.

Classic Membership

Individual \$20	Includes 1 museum membership Admission for 1 to all museum exhibits Access to the Museum Archives (by appointment) 5 AMMA Newsletters per year
Friend \$50	<i>All Individual Membership Benefits above</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charitable tax receipt for a \$30 donation Recognition in the AMMA Newsletter
Supporter \$100	<i>All Individual Membership Benefits above</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charitable tax receipt for an \$80 donation Recognition in the AMMA Newsletter Admission for one guest to museum exhibits

Curator's Circle

Founder \$250	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive a Charitable tax receipt for a \$250 donation
Benefactor \$500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive a Charitable tax receipt for a \$500 donation
Associate \$1000+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive a Charitable tax receipt for full amount of donation

	2021 Memberships	2022 Memberships	2023 Membership
Classic Memberships			
Individual - \$20	16	22	25
Friend of Museum - \$50	17	12	15
Supporter - \$100	22	19	14
Curator's Circle			
Founder - \$250	4	5	5
Benefactor - \$500	5	7	5
Associate - \$1000	1	1	2
Sponsorships			
Business Card Ad	5	6	2
¼ page Ad	2	2	2
Event or Exhibit sponsor	1	0	

Kathi Vandermeer
Office Manager, Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives

2023 VOLUNTEER REPORT

The Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives is incredibly fortunate to have a team of dedicated, talented, and hardworking volunteers to assist us in our operations. With thanks to our volunteers, our organization has grown into the flourishing museum it is today.

In total, our volunteers contributed an outstanding 1,782 hours to the museum in 2023. Volunteers are credited for hours given as members of our Board of Directors, as members of our various committees, and as representatives of the museum at Jackpot Time Gaming Entertainment in St. Thomas. We were also grateful to have the help of our volunteers in tasks like exhibit setup, cataloguing, collections management, building maintenance, and the successful operation of fundraisers and events.

As a collective, museum volunteers were only able to meet twice in 2023. On March 2nd, volunteers gathered to discuss the potential return of the museum's traditional fundraisers, namely that of the Tour of Homes. Volunteers were welcomed to the museum on November 14th for a small holiday celebration to thank them for their time and hard work. An increased number of meetings may loan a sense of community and cohesion to the volunteers in the future, under a Volunteer Coordinator able to arrange such meetings.

The revival of the Tour of Homes was a significant undertaking that would not have been possible without the contributions and dedication of our volunteers. The Tour of Homes Committee consisted of fourteen talented and passionate individuals, who helped us to organize our most successful Tour of Homes to date. Almost eighty volunteers contributed to the event as a whole, and we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to each and every individual who made the tour possible.

The Province of Ontario issued Volunteer Service Awards to six of our volunteers, including Rosemary Kennedy (5 years of service), Linda Charlton (5 years of service), Colleen Sawyer (5 years of service), Betty Pickard (5 years of service), Cathy Kasza (25 years of service), and Ella Killough (25 years of service).

I have been pleased to serve as the interim Volunteer Coordinator for the museum as our Board of Directors searches for an appropriate candidate to fill the role. With the committed and capable volunteer base that the museum has accumulated, we look forward to a bright and prosperous 2024.

Task	Hours Contributed
Tour of Homes (including meetings, decoration, preparation, and the tour itself)	612
Database entry	324
Events (e.g. the Aylmer Fair, exhibit supervision)	219
Meetings of the Board of Directors	123
Bingo volunteers (through Jackpot Time Gaming Entertainment)	108
Artifact listing and cataloguing	86
Committee meetings (i.e. the Building Committee and Acquisition Committee)	31
Miscellaneous activities	279

Total volunteer hours for 2024: 1,782

Total volunteer hours for 2023: 901

Sarah Bentley

Interim Volunteer Coordinator, Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives

2023 CURATOR'S REPORT

I would like to begin by thanking everyone for their continued support throughout 2023! This year marked a very busy year for the museum, with exhibits and events running at both our current location and our new building. We wouldn't have had such a successful year without the support of our board, volunteers, members, and community.

Exhibits

Our preliminary exhibit through 2023 was *If the Shoe Fits*. The exhibit featured the history of shoes and shoemaking, and highlighted the history of over 100 shoemakers and shoe stores in Aylmer and Malahide.

Throughout the year, we hosted exhibits and events at our new building in an effort to raise awareness and funds for the renovations of the building. The first exhibit was *On Track*, an exhibit that celebrated 150 years of railway history in Aylmer and Malahide. The exhibit ran from February through March, and featured artifacts from our collection, as well as ones on loan from the Elgin County Railway Museum.

Throughout April and May we hosted *Witness*, a collaborative exhibit with David Ritchie. The exhibit served as a photography show highlighting local photographs, as well as a fundraiser for our relocation fund.

Our final exhibit in 2023 was *At the Going Down of the Sun*. The exhibit considered the men and women from Aylmer and Malahide who served in World War II. It was created in conjunction with a publication written by board member Jim McCallum.

Hosting these exhibits allowed us to utilize the space, raise additional funds, and promote the importance of renovations at our new building.

Staff

We were fortunate to receive the funding to hire two students in the summer of 2023. Aidan Haldenby returned for his second year working at the museum. Aidan was a third-year student studying Health Sciences at Western University. He was hired through the Young Canada Works program and worked diligently to digitize the museum's General Artifact Collection. Morgan Kerr joined us for her first summer. Morgan was a recent graduate of East Elgin Secondary School. She began at Western University studying English Literature in the fall. She was hired through the Canada Summer Jobs program and assisted us with the digitization of our oversized archival material.

Offsite Events and Displays

Throughout 2023, we participated in several exciting events. On June 10th, we attended the MCS Charity Food Fest to promote our Mennonite research project, our relocation project, and the travelling exhibit *Leaving Canada* that we were scheduled to host in 2024.

On June 17th, we attended Springfield Family Fun Day where we featured a display with information about our new building and our relocation project. We also set up our Victorian-era themed photobooth as an activity for attendees.

From August 11th to the 13th, we presented a display at the Aylmer Fair. The display featured information, photographs, and artifacts from our collection celebrating their 175th year!

Fundraising

Throughout the year, we were very grateful to receive funds from our participation in bingos at Jackpot Time in St. Thomas. Through this program, the museum received funds monthly that we were able to use towards the preservation and maintenance of our collection. In 2023 we were able to fund a portion of Sarah Bentley's salary to work on the collection and we were able to continue to purchase archival and conservation supplies.

Our first fundraiser of 2023 was *Witness: An exhibition comprising four decades of local history as seen through the lens of David Ritchie*. *Witness* was a collaborative exhibit with local photographer David Ritchie. The exhibit raised funds for the renovations required for 75 Talbot St. E. Through print sales and donations, we were able to raise over \$4,000 to go towards the renovations of our new building.

On August 19th we hosted our first murder mystery, *Mayhem at the Museum*. It was a fun evening and raised nearly \$1,000 for the museum. On September 9th, we hosted a car show, with the proceeds (an additional \$871) from car registration and the BBQ benefitting the relocation project. On October 21st, we partnered with Frankie and the Fairlanes to host a concert with a portion of ticket sales going towards our relocation project. Through the concert we were able to raise an additional \$730.

In November we launched our most recent publication, *At the Going Down of the Sun* in conjunction with the pop-up exhibit of the same name. The book aimed to honour and biograph the soldiers of Aylmer and Malahide who lost their lives during WWII. The book was researched and written by board member Jim McCallum, who graciously gave his work to the museum to raise funds. To date, the publication has raised over \$1,800 for the museum!

In 2023 our largest annual fundraiser, the Christmas Tour of Homes, was finally able to return! Thanks to our volunteers, the tour was an incredible success, with over 750 people participating in the tour and raising nearly \$18,000 for the museum!

Throughout 2023, we were able to host two online 50/50 raffles through Raffle Box. Our fall raffle raised \$473.64, and our winter raffle raised \$438.60. We also continued to receive donations from the community, including \$10,000 donations from both Hills Pharmacy and the family of Pat Johnston.

In an effort to promote our relocation project, we created a video highlighting our capital campaign. The video can be viewed on our YouTube page.

I look forward to seeing what 2024 has in store for the Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives!

Amanda VandenWyngaert
Curator, Aylmer-Malahide Museum & Archives

2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

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Museum Staff

Amanda VandenWyngaert
Curator

Sarah Bentley
Collections Manager

Kathi Vandermeer
Office Manager

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Springfield Swans

~ are members of Swans Ontario, a fairly new service organization that provides help and assistance to the community by volunteering. To assist those in need ~ to support fellow members ~ someone who offers their hand in friendship willingly. Are part of a team that strives to make a difference in the community through fundraising, service work, making donations and having fun! Springfield Swans maintain the Mary H Pearson Memorial Garden (Cenotaph Park, Springfield), host an annual Seniors "Christmas in July" event and a monthly Senior's afternoon on the second Tuesday of each month. Donations primarily are kept to local ventures, and include the school, fire department, parade, Fun Day, and area charities. Fundraising is varied and includes an annual Community Beef Supper (each year in support of a new charity), Bake Sales, Community Birthday Calendars and assignments at Jackpot Time Entertainment Centre in St Thomas. Anyone who is 18 years of age or older, who is service minded and invited into the club may be a member.

"Volunteering for a Better Community"

Check out our Facebook Page: Springfield Swans Club - Ontario ~~~ PO Box 179, Springfield, ON N0L 2J0



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