



North Huron Museum.

Friends of North Huron Museum 2015 Update.



History

The Friends group was established in 2009 to put the Museum in order and open it to the public. The volunteers spent 18 – 24 months completing this task through tremendous hard work, dedication and with the co-operation and assistance of Pat Newson for urgently needed repairs.



Overview of accomplishments and ongoing initiatives

Cataloguing artifacts

Cleaning, dusting, tidying exhibits

Creating new exhibits both temporary and permanent

Creating and delivering educational programs, with summer student support, for local elementary and secondary students: grade 3 Pioneers, grade 1 Social Studies, secondary Technology studies George Reid project, Rec. Dept. summer day camp

Organizing 3rd floor storage

Accepting and documenting artifacts

Developing, promoting and delivering special events, some off-site, several times a year: annual Edwardian Tea, Halloween Festival of Lanterns, Christmas, Family Day at the NHWRC, Muskrat Festival



Overview of accomplishments and ongoing initiatives

Conducting or assisting with research as requested.

Interacting with the public, giving tours, answering questions, sometimes on an hour's notice responding to out-of-town Alice Munro visitors.

Writing newspaper articles.

Making connections with local groups and regional organizations: Wingham Branch Legion, Alice Munro Public Library, Alice Munro Festival, Maitland River and F E Madill schools, Muskrat Festival, Festival of Lanterns, Sloman School Car, Reuben R Sallows Gallery, Family day at the Complex, local Seniors' groups.

Fundraising.

Staying current with museum procedures through membership in professional organizations, consulting Huron County Museum staff and taking part in a cataloguing workshop.



Future Plans

***The Friends see tremendous potential* to contribute to the culture and history aspects of the municipalities' economic development with exhibits.**

Alice Munro.

George Reid.

Harry Boyle.

161st Huron Battalion anniversary

Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017 (grant possibilities through the Canada 150 Fund)



Challenges

Planning beyond 2016 isn't possible given the lengthy list of challenges presented by:

The building.

Inconsistent heating and cooling and the impact on ephemera (paper archives, artifacts).

Accessibility to 2nd and 3rd floor.

Adequate display and storage space.

Cataloguing, programming and research.

Continuity and consistency will be best served by the Friends supporting and assisting a *qualified museum curator*. Training by Patti Lamb, Huron County Museum archivist, on the updated Past Perfect program is needed.



Direction , governance, communication

Due to a lack of clear expectations for the Friends and the Museum, the Friends developed and submitted a draft Terms of Reference for the operation of the group and are still awaiting a response. An updated copy is included in your package. The Friends are looking for guidelines and support from Council.

As noted in the Blue Rhino Design “Alice Munro Museum Feasibility Study” report of June 2015, day-to-day governance is unclear.



The Friends

For various reasons several members are no longer available and without more volunteers coupled with support from a qualified curator , the group can't maintain the full schedule of activities listed earlier.

In 2013 there was 1158 volunteer hours, yet in 2015 there was only 536 hours.

A few examples: Social media and / or enclosure in Township tax notices.

Council support is essential to help recruit more volunteers.

The lack of accessibility, especially to third floor, is a genuine limit to most of the volunteers.



Questions for Council.

How will the implementation of the Blue Rhino report's recommendations impact the future of the Museum?, and how can we help and work with Council and the other four municipality to move forward ?.

How can we support Council with their development and direction, both short and long term, for the North Huron Museum and the Friends?.

Is there anyone seeking grant money on our behalf, whether short or long term?.



Questions...