



# Huron County Historical Society

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[www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca](http://www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca)

## Newsletter January 2024

Executive for 2023-2024

David Armstrong	President	519-524-1156	Mac Campbell	Director
Ralph Laviolette	Secretary-	519-440-6206	James White	Director
Elaine Snell	Membership	519-523-9434	Susan Gloucher	Director
Mary Gregg	Director	519-524-9372	Larry Mohring	Director
Rhea Hamilton Seeger	Director	519-612-1201		

February 21, 2024 Zoom Talk 7 p.m.

## A Huron County Pioneer in Canadian Aviation

Zoom Talk with Anne Tafeit and Jane Sager

On September 14, 2023 Keith 'Hoppy' Hopkinson was inducted into the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame at its 50th Anniversary gala celebration in Calgary, Alberta.

Hoppy is considered by many to be the Father of the homebuilt aircraft movement in Canada and an aviation entrepreneur in every sense. He built and flew the first homebuilt aircraft to be licensed in Canada. Named "Little Hokey", Hoppy flew this little plane throughout North America winning awards along the way.

Hoppy's daughters, Anne Tafeit and Jane Sager, will share his legacy, his fascinating life in aviation and their family memories of 'Little Hokey' and Sky Harbour Air Services in Goderich.

If you have an idea or suggestion about future speakers or topics please contact any of the directors listed on the first page or email us. We would love to hear your ideas.



From the editor's desk

## Huron County Archives Needs to Grow

In 2027 the County of Huron will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of The Canada Company's opening of the Huron Tract and the creation of Goderich. To celebrate this milestone your Huron County Historical Society is reviving a proposal to secure the future of our recorded history with the expansion of the Huron County Museum and Archives space, particularly the Archives space.

David Armstrong and Ralph Laviolette will be presenting a report to Huron County Council in March.

I am sure many of you know individuals and organizations in your communities that have collections and history books that build on the pride of settlement and development. Some years ago a number of both private and public collections were at risk of disappearing. Fifteen were quickly identified and more have come forward since. Seven of those are either disposed of or stored under questionable conditions.

A sample of the larger ones:

- The History Narcisse Cantin collection - was on display in the Hessenland Inn complex, St. Joseph and is now in private storage outside the county, future unknown; St. Joseph and Area Historical Society has a large collection with unknown future;
- The Huron East collection is stored on the third floor of the municipal building under questionable conditions. Its municipal records are stored in a lower level also under conditions risking deterioration, as are those of many other municipalities;

- North Huron Museum collection in the process of being deaccessioned. And the list grows.

There were three reports generated between 2012-2014:

- The County of Huron commissioned the Archives, Corporate Records, and Museum Storage Feasibility Study by Lundholm Associates in 2012.
- The Society formed an Ad Hoc Committee of Volunteers representing Interested Organizations in 2012, visited 14 archives facilities in nearby counties, and published a report titled The Preservation of Archival and Heritage Material in Huron County, and
- a Supplement to that report by the Society focused on archival materials, both corporate and community, being held by the nine lower-tier municipalities in Huron County.

All came to the same conclusion: an expanded archives is imperative to store and preserve the recorded history of Huron County.

One of the County's goals is the preservation and wise management of its cultural heritage as expressed in the Cultural Plan of 2008. We need to work together to create a solution to the issues. We are also sent the report to the lower tier municipalities, as these communities have a great stake in the future of a county archives. We realize in times of budgetary restraint it is a difficult ask but we believe that a business plan is required if future funding is to be sought. We estimate the cost of such a plan to be in the order of \$10,000 to \$15,000, which we are prepared to source working with partners.



We have a wonderful opportunity here to create a 'Made in Huron' solution. We could create a public/private affiliation that brings community and municipal resources into a 'hub and spoke' configuration (not unlike the County library system) based on robust, expanded central archives with community-centred 'satellites'.

An expansion to address the needs of the communities in the County would be a legacy to stand for the next 200 years. Please feel free to contact your municipal representatives and let them know how you feel about the importance of a vibrant museum and archives facility.

*Photo of a portion of the archives at the Huron County Museum.*

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## Historical Society Grant Recipients

Bonnie Sitter and James While were our first two recipients of the Huron County Historical Society Writer's Grant program.

Bonnie Sitter who co-wrote with Shirley English Option Skins and Peach Fuzz: the Farmerettes, is working on a documentary film on the same subject. The Farmerettes are also the topic of a Blyth Festival play this summer. Bonnie is also researching Fred Sloman and his family's story of teaching on a Railway Car starting in 1926.

James White for his collaborative work in writing, and efforts to produce, a play featuring the "Streamliners". The Streamliners were the feature of Andy Sparling's presentation last January of the R.C.A.F. Streamliners, Huron County's Best-Kept Secret.

*The Executive of the Historical Society has agreed to provide nominal grants to encourage writers and presenters to assist in covering their costs. Enquiries may be made through our email.*

## Membership renewal....

To reserve your member's hard copy of Historical Notes, keep your dues up to date. If you received this newsletter by mail, the date shown above your name on the address label is the year to which your membership is paid up, according to our records. Call Elaine Snell if you are not sure or need clarification. If you are in arrears, consider this a reminder that the membership fees are \$20.

Email us about using e-transfer. Copies of recent past Historical Notes are available please call 519-523-9434 (past copies are \$8 to \$10 per copy). To access the members-only section for the Historical Notes or to do a search for names or places in the Historical Notes, go to [www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca](http://www.HuronCountyHistoricalSociety.ca), open the dropdown menu for Publications, click HCHS Members Login. If you cannot get access using the password, then check if your web browser is up to date.

If the password is lost or not available readily, contact

[hchs1965@gmail.com](mailto:hchs1965@gmail.com) or call 519-440-6206