

Merrickville and District Historical Society

Collection's Committee Annual Report

1 November 2022 – 31 October 2023

Collection Committee

Nancy Warr (Chair)
Julie Hamilton
Ann Martin
Jeffery Murray

Activities

The Collections Committee, which meets approximately 6 times a year in the fall/winter/spring months, is responsible for managing the 6,000+ artifacts and records belonging to the MDHS. This means reviewing donations presented to MDHS to ensure that they meet the criteria for being acquired by MDHS and then accessioning the records including managing the legal transfer of the items to MDHS and ensuring that the records are uploaded into MDHS' PastPerfect Collections Management System.

In addition, the Collections Committee members also prepare temporary exhibits for the Merrickville Blockhouse Museum. In 2023, Nancy Warr developed an exhibit on the Watchorn Mill which highlighted recent accession of woven items presented to MDHS.

Collections Committee members also help prepare the exhibits on display in the Blockhouse and take down exhibits at the end of the year in order to store fragile items at MDHS' off-site storage facility in the basement of the Burritt's Rapids Community Hall. In 2023, the Committee also removed several value and/or fragile items from the Blockhouse Museum and has a plan to reproduce these documents with a view to having the reproductions on exhibit while the originals can be safely stored.

As part of its work maintaining the off-site storage, the Collections Committee identified aging digital equipment (eg. Monitors, printers, keyboards, etc.) and recommended that MDHS dispose of these items.

PastPerfect Collections Management System

MDHS' decision to move its collections management system "into the cloud" has permitted the Collections Committee to continue its work from any location which has a wifi connection.

MDHS members and researchers are also able to consult the 6,000+ records on-line. During the last year, the Collections Committee, principally Nancy Warr, were busy resolving approximately 600 issues related to creating and maintaining a clean database (records with no photographs, duplicates, linking records, scanning records and uploading images). This work means that researchers have a much richer experience examining the collection/records online.

New Acquisitions

MDHS continues to receive donations of records and artifacts which pertain to Merrickville-Wolford. Notable accessions received this year include:

1. Records of Balmoral Lodge, Number 280, International Order of Odd Fellows, Merrickville, Ontario (172 items)
2. Wolford Chapel 200th Anniversary (2022)
3. Watchorn Collection
4. McLean Collection (531 records and growing; this material is new and has never been consulted by previous researchers interested in the life and work of H.F. McLean)
5. SibbieMussell's 1880 school exercise book

The Collections Committee's work is never done – if there are people who are excited by working “behind the scenes” with MDHS' artifacts and records the Collections Committee would be happy to have you join.

Submitted by Ann Martin
Collections Committee