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MIDDLESEX CENTRE  
ARCHIVES

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Established 2013



**Middlesex Centre  
Archives**

**Annual General Meeting**

**March 30, 2023**



## Chair's Report for 2022

2022 was another year highly influenced by Covid-19. We were once again closed for the months of January and February; MCA resumed opening hours in March. Covid restrictions, mask-wearing, appointments, etc. were held in place as space, in the Archives, is limited. Even with that, people were happy to visit. Zoom meetings continued to be the venue for Board business.

The email requests continued in the "Inbox". So many and so varied! Genealogy and property history are the two main requests for help. Telephone calls reflect the same requests.

With a slow return to normalcy, our Heritage Fair changed its date to April - a very popular choice! There usually is no snow and no conflict with the London Heritage Fair. Covid restrictions were in place but the number of vendors, the visitors and the caterers were very happy! A success story and the first Saturday in April is now our permanent day for the Heritage Fair. Thank you to Dave Zavitz and his team for coordinating the Fair.

A very special project, the Canada 150 project of identifying buildings constructed pre1870 came to fruition as the year ended. With the identification of London Township buildings, their history researched and recorded, a Historical Landmarks Tour booklet produced and landmark signs sold, this project is officially complete. The *Historical Landmark Tour Book (London Township)* will be unveiled at the Heritage Fair. A huge "Thank You" to MCA's dedicated researchers Steve Rosser, Ann Rexe and Susan Gordon for their long, diligent and dedicated efforts. It could not have been done without them! Middlesex Centre Archives now has a collection of detailed records about buildings built pre1870 in the Municipality.

Financial concerns are a constant theme. Our livelihood depends on grants and donations. Under the guidance of Archivist Krista Taylor, MCA has been successful in achieving several grants (see other reports). MCA received a \$4000 donation from the McEachren Family when their Family Reunion closed. The Online Auction is always a success. The support of the Municipality's business community, our members and supporters is overwhelming. It is rewarding to call and ask for donations. The response to the Archives is so positive!

The direction for MCA has been put in place with a new Five-Year Strategic Plan. It will be exciting to participate in MCA's growth. When one considers 2023 marks the Tenth Anniversary of MCA, its growth, achievements, respect and credibility make it *the little archives that can and does*. The archivists, the volunteers, the Municipality of Middlesex Centre and all our supporters deserve credit for a task that is ongoing and so well done! Thank You!

MCA continues to take a leading role in the Committee To Establish a Middlesex County Archives. Meetings with that Committee have been through Zoom. Several presentations have been created; but on March 14, 2023 CEMCA made an in-person presentation to Middlesex County Council, responding to their digitising project and again urging a commitment to establish a Middlesex County Archives with an advisory committee (including CEMCA and community members) to study the issue and bring a report to Council. CEMCA received a warm welcome with lots of discussion. Councillor visits to the Lambton and Elgin Archives are being planned.

Thank you to the highly dedicated members of the Board for MCA. You have the best interests of the Board foremost in any decision, and you are always willing to dedicate many volunteer hours too. Thank you to retiring Directors, Glenna Ladell, Sharon McMillan and Gail Prior for their services. A big welcome to Frank Berze and Danny Jefferies as new Board members.

Thank you to Sid Prior for his dedicated checks to make sure all equipment is operating properly, picking up the mail and keeping both MCA facilities safe.

Thank you to the Municipality of Middlesex Centre for their dedication and support in providing space and utilities for MCA. To James, Scott, Kent, Justin and team, thank you for always being there so promptly to help. It is so greatly appreciated.

Thank you to the Tami and Villager magazine team for their effort to educate the public about the rich history of Middlesex Centre.

Thank you to Archivist Krista, Board Members, volunteers, members and supporters. You are a great team that works together to make MCA a great asset to Middlesex Centre.

As I close my last report as Chair, let me say that it has been a privilege to work with such a dedicated, thoughtful, kind team and the community. I am so proud of all of you. Keep up the great work. I will still be on the Board and still volunteering – just not Chair. Thank you so much!

With this being our Tenth Anniversary year, many special plans are in place to celebrate the occasion. With a busy group of volunteers and Archivist, the year is becoming even busier. We do hope everyone takes time to celebrate MCA.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Small

## Archivist Report for 2022

I began 2022 with the archivist position funded by two contracts, OTF and MCA. In late March 2022, we received word we had been successful with the DHCP grant, for \$28,500 (950 hours) to digitize the Marsh Store Fonds, particularly, the ledgers. The work for this grant began in June following the arrival of the Epson Scanner purchased with money awarded from the 2022 Middlesex Centre Council Grant.

Throughout the year, I worked with our team of volunteers in various capacities and identified needs of MCA that we hope to work on in 2023. We desire to have a thriving volunteer program which will support the archives and the archivist.

I attended board meetings, and the AGM – all via zoom, as well as any necessary planning meetings.

I supported and assisted the volunteers with jobs and training where necessary.

I continued to be an advisor for the Committee to Establish a Middlesex County Archives (CEMCA).

I provided administration support where needed, including updating the membership form and creating an online form.

This is all in addition to:

Grants:

- In 2022, four grants were applied for: Heritage Organizations Development Grant; Museum Assistance Program: Recovery Fund for Heritage Organizations; Middlesex Centre Council Grant and Ontario Trillium Foundation. At time of report, three of the four have been successful. OTF will not reply until late March 2023.
- Completed the balance of the 300 hours for the Ontario Trillium Foundation grant.
- Began the Documentary Heritage Communities Programme grant and completed 350+ hours by end of 2022.

Collections Management:

- Deed of Gift update was completed.
- 47 Donations/Collections were donated during 2022. The largest collection received was the Middlesex County 4-H Association.
- Preparations were made to apply for funding for database support through the Middlesex Centre Council grant. This project will commence in Summer 2023.
- Closure of Annex B in July created opportunity for reorganization between the Archives and Annex A. Some rehousing and purging of non-collection items took place.

Outreach, Social Media and Fundraising:

- Spoke via Zoom to the London Newcomers Alumnae group, April 2022
- Spoke in-person to the Southern District Women's Institute Tweedsmuir History workshop day, August 2022
- A new display on MCA was created to be used for outreach events. First used at Ilderton Fair
- Supported volunteers to create a number of displays for the Heritage Fair, Poplar Hill Picnic, Irish History Day at Fanshawe Pioneer Village and Ilderton Fair.
- A slideshow "Did You Know?" was created with volunteers for the Heritage Fair.
- Social Media "Like" and "Follow" numbers continue to increase for MCA's Facebook page.
- MCA participated in #ArchivesAtoZ in conjunction with Archives Awareness Week (this ran most of the month of April)
- Attempts are made to have posts/shares every week to Facebook. Extra attention given during the 11 days leading to Remembrance Day and around holidays. Instagram and Twitter accounts exist, but Facebook continues to be the most popular for exposure.
- Hosted archivists from the Southern Ontario Chapter of the Archives Association of Ontario following the receipt of the AAO Institutional Award in September
- Attended in person, the Municipal Archives Interest Group AGM at the Museum of Dufferin in October
- Adjusted the MCA logo to reflect 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary to be used in 2022 and 2023.
- Designed the 2023 fundraising calendar.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Taylor

## **Fundraising Report for 2022**

We have continued to make grant applications and been successful in receiving funds to complete many archival tasks of cataloguing and preserving local historical documents. Grants received in 2022 included a Documentary Heritage Communities Program (DHCP) Grant; a Department of Canadian Heritage, Museum Assistance Program Grant; a Heritage Organization Development Grant (HODG), and a Municipality of Middlesex Centre Grant. These grants provide money to pay some of our Archivist's salary and to purchase the supplies needed to complete a variety of projects.

The 2022 Auction Sale was very successful, raising \$8,412.000. This was due to the donation of the services of Filson Auctions, the generous support of members of our community who donated items to sell, and to the community members who purchased them.

The local Lions Clubs (Delaware, Poplar Hill and Ilderton) also donated a total of \$1,250.00 to the Archives. This year we also received a donation of over \$4,000.00 from the McEachren Family Reunion Committee, memorial and personal donations. Axion Insurance donated \$2,500.00 to the Archives in 2022.

Forest City Business donated a second photocopier to be used in the Annex A.

This year we sold \$1,757.00 worth of calendars, books and tour guides.

Beyond the financial donations, the Municipality of Middlesex Centre provides us with free use of the Archives facility in the Delaware Community Centre, along with the utilities and internet service. In February 2022 we renewed our contract with them, effective to June 30, 2025.

Our fundraising for 2022 was very successful.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bev Hughes

## **Governance Committee Report 2022**

In 2022, the governance of Middlesex Centre Archives developed a new Five-Year Strategic Plan, updated the MCA Constitution, and reviewed policies and developed two new policies.

Middlesex Centre Archives developed a Strategic Plan for years 2023-2027. This plan reflects the growth from the previous strategic plan, continues that growth in areas, and also looks at where the Archives wants to be in 5 years. The goals include:

1. To have stable funding
2. To have organisation stability
3. To grow Community Outreach and Relationships

In assessing the Constitution, items were brought in line with current practices.

Regarding policies, the Deed of Gift policy was reviewed and updated. New policies included Bereavement, and Guest Speaker and Renumeration.

To be developed in 2023, various fee/finance and outreach policies.

Respectfully Submitted

Carol Small

## MCA Outreach Activities 2022

Once again, outreach in-person activities were curtailed because of Covid restrictions. The Archives were closed in January and February. The first in-person outreach activity was the Heritage Fair on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Even with Covid mandates in place, the day was a success for historical organisations and for the crowd of attendees. On June 11<sup>th</sup>, displays and MCA personnel were in place at the Poplar Hill Picnic and again in August at the Irish Heritage Day at Fanshawe Pioneer Village. The three-day Ilderton Fair saw good crowds and great interest in the display. MCA also had a display at the Delaware Lions' Club's Christmas Senior celebration.

Social media had a heightened interest as Archivist Krista Taylor posted regularly to Facebook. Advertising continued through social media, our webpage and in print. The annual online auction heightens awareness of the archives and its work. A very positive reaction is received from donors and buyers. Four newsletters outlining the work and celebrations of MCA were distributed to the membership, through email, our webpage and social media. As well articles were written for the Villager magazines in Kilworth-Komoka-Delaware, and in Ilderton. The Archives has also been featured in 2 Banner newspaper reports. Lots of visitors are visiting our webpage. We do receive emails to ask about various topics. Thank you to Danny Jefferies for maintaining the website.

Calendar sales increased substantially in 2022. The calendar had a new format, featured businesses of Middlesex Centre, and could be purchased in-person across the Municipality.

Despite some restrictions, MCA had a successful year with its many outreach activities. All credit must be given to the dedicated, hardworking archivist and volunteers who make it all happen.

| Year         | Visitors   | Volunteer Hours | Acquisitions | Displays  | Newsletters | Articles  |
|--------------|------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| 2013         | NA         | NA              | 7            | NA        | NA          |           |
| 2014         | 12         | 2181            | 60           | 12        | NA          |           |
| 2015         | 120        | 2251            | 128          | 8         | NA          |           |
| 2016         | 192        | 2834            | 119          | 13        | NA          |           |
| 2017         | 195        | 3216            | 162          | 8         | NA          |           |
| 2018         | 195        | 3430            | 126          | 8         | NA          |           |
| 2019         | 123        | 4124            | 105          | 16        | 3           |           |
| 2020         | 60         | 1592            | 48           | 3         | 4           | 12        |
| 2021         | 60         | 2771            | 42           | 3         | 3           | 12        |
| 2022         | 50         | 4328            | 47           | 6         | 4           | 12        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>995</b> | <b>26727</b>    | <b>866</b>   | <b>77</b> | <b>14</b>   | <b>36</b> |

Respectfully Submitted,  
Carol Small

## **Plant Management Report 2022**

In 2022, MCA downsized by closing Annex B. The extra cost for rent and utilities was prohibitive. As a result, much was re-located in Annex A, after reshuffling items there. Some had to be relocated for storage in Bev Hughes' shed.

In the Dr. Ken Veldhuis Reading Room, all items had to be re-shelved as the Family History section had outgrown its space. With all the moves, all items had to be re-catalogued. An inventory of Archives documents is now complete.

A router, in Annex A, has greatly improved Internet reception. Internet reception in the Archives is very slow. The HVAC system in the Archives still requires ongoing maintenance. Thank you to Sid Prior for your constant monitoring of both facilities to ensure all is working well. Middlesex Centre Archives thanks the Middlesex Centre staff for all their support and hard work. All really is appreciated.

Working from two locations is never ideal. The Archivist and volunteers know the extra time, work and yes, frustration, this operation requires. They are to be commended for their diligence and efforts to operate as smoothly as possible.

It takes a whole team working together to make Middlesex Centre Archives a success. There is a great team in place including the volunteers, the archivist, the community and the Municipality.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Small