

**Municipal Archives Interest Group  
Annual General Meeting Minutes  
May 10, 2023  
Virtual Meeting**

Executive Present:

- Megan Lockhart, Oxford County Archives, Chair
- Amber Mandich, Elgin County Archives, Vice-Chair
- Gina Dewaele, Elgin County Archives, Secretary-Treasurer

Present:

- Maria-Lise Dobri, Ajax Public Library
- Deb Sturdevant, Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre
- Krista Keller, Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre
- Marisa Purdy, Burlington Public Library
- Lauren Bridges, The Regional Municipality of Durham
- Alex Goddard, Grey Roots Museum & Archives
- Karin Noble, Grey Roots Museum & Archives
- Kate Jackson, Grey Roots Museum & Archives
- Michael Molnar, Huron County Museum Archives
- Krista Taylor, Middlesex Centre Archives
- Paul Henry, City of Ottawa Archives
- Liz Dommasch, Oxford County Archives
- Ellen Millar, Simcoe County Archives
- Jamie Levy, Simcoe County Archives
- Jenna Kondo, Simcoe County Archives
- Jennifer Huddleston, Simcoe County Archives
- Kamryn Loney, Simcoe County Archives
- Matthew Fells, Simcoe County Archives
- Olivia White, Simcoe County Archives
- Eva Lee, York Region Archives

1. Call to Order

Megan Lockhart called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m., welcomed everyone attending, and read a Land Acknowledgement Statement.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda for the meeting was presented.

Motion to approve the Agenda: Liz Dommasch



Archives Association of Ontario

Seconded by: Ellen Millar

Carried.



### 3. Approval of the 2022 AGM Minutes

There were no omissions in the 2022 AGM Minutes.

Motion to approve the Minutes: Karin Noble

Seconded by: Krista Taylor

Carried.

### 4. Report of the Chair

Megan read the report below to members present. No comments were made.

MAIG's annual newsletter, the *MAIGazine*, was published in September 2022. "New perspectives in archives" was the theme for this edition, highlighting the transformations municipal archives have experienced in a "post-pandemic" world and the innovative projects that were undertaken in the process. Six updates from municipal archives and professionals were shared in this year's edition. The Executive would like to thank our colleagues who contributed to the newsletter and look forward to this year's submissions. Also published in this edition were the results from the COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery Survey, a collaboration between MAIG and the IDC. The results are available on the MAIG webpage.

In October, 2022, MAIG members attended the first in-person Open House since 2019. The event featured guest speakers Sahana Puvirajasingam, Alex Avdichuk, and Gabrielle Major. The Executive would like to thank our guest speakers for providing insightful presentations and the Dufferin County Archives for hosting the event. The Open House meeting followed with twelve members attending.

Last year, the Municipal Archives Interest Group's Annual General Meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom on May 25, 2022. A total of twenty-six MAIG members, including the Executive, attended. Four motions were passed during the AGM, adopting the 2022 AGM agenda, approving the minutes from the 2021 AGM, and approving the 2022-2023 financial report and budget.

This year, the MAIG Executive will conduct the AGM virtually for its members during the AAO Conference on May 10. Members will be asked to take part in the approval of the 2022 AGM minutes, the adoption of the 2023-2024 financials and budget, and the election of the MAIG Secretary-Treasurer for the 2023-2026 term.

### 5. Financial Reports

a. Financial Report, 2022-2023

b. Approval of the Budget, 2023-2024



Archives Association of Ontario



Municipal Archives Interest Group

Gina provided an overview of the 2022-2023 Financial Report and proposed 2023-2024 Budget. Megan noted that now that Open Houses are being held in person, and catering is needed, the Executive has increased the amount we are requesting from the AAO. No comments were made.

**Financial Report 2022-2023**

<b>REVENUE</b>	
Amount previously in bank	\$875.96
Grant from AAO	\$100.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$975.96</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
2022-2023 Meetings	\$0.00 (in kind)
2022 Open House	\$243.25 (catering)
Advertising	\$0.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$243.25</b>
<b>FINAL BANK BALANCE</b>	<b>\$732.71</b>

**Budget 2023-2024**

<b>REVENUE</b>	
Amount previously in bank	\$732.71
Grant from AAO	\$250.00 (to be requested)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$982.71</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
2023-2024 Meetings	\$0.00 (in kind)
2023 Open House	\$360.00 (catering)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$350.00</b>
<b>FINAL BANK BALANCE</b>	<b>\$632.71</b>

Motion to approve the 2022-2023 Financial Report and 2023-2024 Budget: Paul Henry  
Seconded by: Amber Mandich  
Carried.

**6. Future Open Houses**

Megan announced that the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre has graciously offered to host the Open House this year with a tentative date of Friday, October 20th. The Executive will be working

with Deb Sturdevant to plan the event, which will be advertised later this summer and in the upcoming edition of the *MAIGazine*.

Megan noted that the Executive is looking for a volunteer archive to host the 2024 Open House. Will remain TBD for now. Oxford County Archives is willing to host it in 2025.

Paul Henry offered the City of Ottawa Archives as a host for the Open House in 2026, in celebration of its 50th anniversary.

The Open House schedule is now as follows:

- 2023 - Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre
- 2024 - To be determined
- 2025 - Oxford County Archives
- 2026 - City of Ottawa Archives

## 7. Other Business

### a. Election of Secretary-Treasurer

Megan advised that only one nomination had been received for the Secretary-Treasurer position – Gina Dewaele. Asked for a call from the “floor” for other nominees. No other nominations were brought forward from the “floor”.

Seeing no additional nominations, Megan brought forward a motion to elect Gina Dewaele as Secretary-Treasurer. Members were asked to vote to elect Gina Dewaele as Secretary-Treasurer for the 2023-2026 term, with a majority voting in approval. By majority consent (at least two-thirds of members in attendance), Gina Dewaele was elected Secretary-Treasurer (2023-2026).

### b. Review and Discussion re: MAIG Executive Terms of Reference

Megan discussed a future potential project for the Executive: drafting Terms of Reference for the Executive positions. While doing so, an additional Executive position could be added (Past-Chair, 1-year term), and the terms of the current Executive positions could be shortened from 3 years to 2 years. This would hopefully encourage more people to get involved in MAIG. Asked members in attendance for their thoughts.

Ellen Millar pointed out that there is a MAIG Constitution (drafted in 2005) which outlines the Executive Terms of Reference. Ellen will forward on to Megan for review. Ellen also noted that it would be beneficial to keep the Executive terms staggered, that way there is at least one position overlapping for each new term. Megan agreed. As there are already Terms of Reference in the Constitution, the Constitution will have to be amended, with potential updates reviewed by members 30 days prior to the 2024 AGM. The amendments to the Constitution will be reviewed and approved by members at next year’s AGM, then brought to the AAO Board for Executive approval.

Paul Henry suggested geographic diversity for the Executive positions as well, to have better representation across the province. Megan agreed that this would be beneficial and will be noted for future elections.

The Executive team will work on updating the Constitution this summer and fall.

c. Message from Kelli Babcock, Archeion Coordinator

On behalf of Kelli, Megan let members know that there will be drop-in Zoom Archeion support sessions with Kelli on Mondays from May to August (12:00 p.m. - 12:40 p.m.). The sessions will include a recorded instructional video (also available on the AAO's YouTube channel) and a question period with Kelli. Contact Kelli Babcock for more info.

Kelli is also working on adding more documentation and resources for Archeion on the AAO website.

## 8. Roundtable

### **Krista Taylor, Middlesex Centre Archives**

The Middlesex Centre Archives (MCA) is pleased to have resumed "normal" hours again for the public. Our research requests and visits have increased, and we're pleased to be welcoming researchers again.

On April 1<sup>st</sup> MCA hosted the annual Heritage Fair at the Delaware Community Centre. More than twenty local heritage organizations were involved with the displays. The 2023 event is the best one hosted to date with the number of visitors, exhibitors, and variety of activities. At the Heritage Fair, MCA kicked off the celebration for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Special events, partnerships or activities will take place from April to the end of the year to promote the 10th anniversary.

MCA has continued to accept donations, with a noticeable increase in the number of donations and the physical size of the donations. In the past six months MCA accepted the archives of the Middlesex 4-H Association, accruals for the Delaware Lions Club, and prominent family collections. This is encouraging and reinforces the significance of the MCA's purpose (and the need for a county facility!). Communication with the Municipality of Middlesex Center continues in hopes to find a mutually beneficial solution to provide future access to documents of historical value for researchers.

MCA received a DHCP grant in 2023 to digitize the documents in the collection pertaining to the Marsh Store, Mills, and businesses in the community of Coldstream, Lobo Township. A focus is also on the activities of the Society of Friends (Quakers) who established the hamlet. The project is ending (an extension was granted) and more than 25 store, mill and telegraph ledgers, along with several hundred photographs and documents have been digitized to highlight the contributions of this unique community. The digitized versions of the material will be available for use in the Archives' Reading Room on the reference computer.



Archives Association of Ontario



Summer/Fall 2023 should see the beginning of the implementation of a database. AtoM has been chosen. The funds were acquired from the Municipal Council Grant. Everyone is looking forward to this project starting, with the realization it may be a long, and frustrating process – but totally worth it!

The request for both the archivist and board members to speak at historical societies, service clubs, etc. has increased. Krista has been speaking about digitization for personal collections and the importance of making plans for personal archival / genealogical collections to avoid destruction or loss in the future.

Our presence on social media has increased significantly in the past year, promoting MCA's collection, activities, recent donations, etc. Social media may be the reason the Heritage Fair was so well attended with consistent promotion.

MCA recently published the London Township Historical Landmarks Driving Tour booklet. This concludes the project that began as part of the Canada 150 project to document buildings that still exist that date to prior to 1870. This booklet is one of the ways that MCA fundraises for operating funds.

#### Committee to Establish a Middlesex County Archives (CEMCA)

The Committee continues to meet and plan, encouraging others to become involved and support the establishment of a county archives for Middlesex County. Wherever possible, the literature and message are shared, including at the Heritage Fair and social media of the various supporting groups.

On March 14, 2023, CEMCA Chair Carol Small, MCA Archivist Krista Taylor and CEMCA member Dr. David Elliott gave a brief presentation to Middlesex County Council, followed by questions from members of Council. This presentation led to the organization of two tours for Council Members to tour the archives of neighbouring counties. The Committee is grateful for the support and time of Lambton County and Elgin County who hosted Middlesex County Council members and providing the opportunity for them to learn about two different, but excellent archival programs. CEMCA remains optimistic, yet cautious as they continue to work with community supporters and politicians.

#### **Oxford County Archives:**

Liz Dommasch (Archivist) and Megan Lockhart (Archives Technician) presented at the 2023 AAO Conference within the theme of “connecting with our communities and contributing to community wellbeing through outreach”. We discussed various outreach projects that have allowed the Oxford County Archives to expand the services they provide to a wider range of people living in Oxford County, and how meaningful connections and relationships were fostered during the process.

We have also been working with the Area Municipalities to transfer their records to the Archives' holdings, centralizing these records in one location. During this process, some earlier records, such as poll books and township by-laws, have been digitized and are now publicly available on our website. Another collaboration we are currently working on is developing programming for EarlyON, which is



Archives Association of Ontario



now county-run. We've been invited to provide resources and information on some of the historical buildings in the county courthouse square for EarlyON's stroller walking tour.

February was a busy month as our staff members were invited to take part in numerous Black History Month events and celebrations throughout the county and at Museum London. We created a mobile exhibit that we set up at the events, with a staff member attending to answer questions and represent Oxford County. In April we launched a new online exhibit titled "Animals in Archives" which examined the human-animal relationship throughout history and showcased the various records we have in our collections related to how humans and animals interact with one another.

Finally, we have been lucky to have two co-op placements with us in the past few months, one Grade 12 student from a local high school, and another student from Mohawk College. They have been assisting us with processing a lot of our acquisition backlog. A big project for the rest of the year is creating an online photograph and postcard database through a Vita Toolkit subscription. We've been digitizing a lot of our visual records and will be making these available to view online (watermarked) with metadata attached.

#### **Maria-Lise Dobri, Ajax Public Library:**

In the months since the last update, the transfer of the management of the archives to Ajax Public Library from the Town Ajax has been progressing as planned. I have completed an inventory of the holdings, carrying out preservation tasks along the way, and will be moving on to physically separating archival materials from town records.

The Ajax Archives achieved a key goal with the completion of our Archives Management Policy, ensuring that there is a clear mandate to guide decision-making going forward. I have also begun to create and collaborate on displays in the library, as well as to provide material to the Marketing team for social media posts.

#### **Gina Dewaele & Amber Mandich, Elgin County Archives:**

This past year, we've made an increased effort to process older backlogged accessions, the majority (75%) of the backlog is now from the past 5 years (2017-2022).

We wrote articles that were published in the Aylmer Express, on the topics of Property History research, Family History research, and how we process collections.

The first few months of 2023 has shown a significant increase in our social media reach due to continuing and new campaigns, such as our #ElginRestaurants and #ElginSchools photo series. We find that people enjoy talking about their memories of the restaurants that they worked at or hung out in, and the schools that they attended.



Archives Association of Ontario



Once a month we participate in the #ArchiveHashtagParty. There we get to highlight photographs from our collection, mostly on Twitter and Instagram, relating to a specific theme. In February, we showcased photographs and material celebrating #ArchivesMusic, and this past month, it was #ArchivesBabies.

2022 Annual Reach for our social media:

Facebook: 2,278,214

Instagram: 91,266

Twitter: 146,372

Flickr: 984,032. Interesting note: we have received over 10 million views of our images on Flickr since 2010.

Over the past year, we conducted 3 Property History workshops at Elgin County Library branches and one green screen program at a special event at the Backus-Page House.

We have digitized all Elgin County newspapers in our collection, and are currently digitizing hard copies of the St. Thomas Times-Journal. So far, we have digitized approximately 550 years of newspapers, comprising of 37 newspapers. All are available for viewing by the public on our newspaper finding aid: [heritagecollections.elgin.ca/findingaid/newspapers](https://heritagecollections.elgin.ca/findingaid/newspapers).

Along with the launch of improved features on our online database last year and our newspaper finding aid, we have created a document and YouTube video, with tips to help the public conduct a more effective search of our online database. We have posted these on our home page and on our social media.

We have completed the consolidation and digitization of the St. Thomas Public Library's local history collections, which have been integrated into the archives' searchable database. This includes well over 50,000 index cards relating to genealogy and local history.

The Elgin County Archives team was featured by *CBC News London* in October 2022 for their newspaper digitization project, and I was interviewed on the radio show *London Morning*. I shared why preserving the recorded history of small-town newspapers is so essential.

We have digitized the tax assessment rolls for 12 municipalities up to approximately 1900, and have posted them on our online database.

We have begun to preserve the County's social media accounts and postings as archival records through a service called "Archive-It" through the Internet Archive. The pages have been captured approximately 3 times in the last year.



**Karin Noble, Grey Roots Museum & Archives (Grey County Archives):**

Our expanded summer hours of operation began later this month. Following the May long weekend, we will be open Saturday afternoons (except Saturdays of long weekends) and Mondays (Monday – Friday, morning and afternoon). Appointments are not formally required, but we still encourage advance booking via a web form to give researchers an opportunity to express the context of their visit which we’ve found helps us provide better service. Grey County was fortunate to receive Municipal Modernization Program (Third Intake) funding from the Province via the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to digitize Grey County minutes, by-laws and published proceedings of council c. 1854-1994 last year and this scanning work is now complete. We’re pleased to be able to welcome a summer student to the Archives in 2023. Our Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 Lecture Series were again hosted in person, on site. We may a host virtual series again in the future to allow for speakers at a distance. We outsourced conservation: mold remediation work for a collection of Orange Lodge materials representing a number of lodges from across the County. Backlog processing work continues for both municipal and private collections.

9. Motion to adjourn by Megan Lockhart at 2:34 pm.

Seconded by: Ellen Millar.

Carried.

---