

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
LOST VILLAGES HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MONDAY, MAY 15, 2023**

With the pandemic now officially declared over, the Lost Villages Historical Society continues to recoup and regroup after a couple challenging years. 2022 was a year to rebuild for our organization, and I believe we have shown to the community and larger public sector that we continue on the road to success. I would like to thank all of you for attending, this evening. While last year's AGM was a scaled down event, without our traditional dinner, we are pleased that thirty-three members and friends are in attendance this evening. We would like to thank the men and women of St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church for the delicious turkey dinner this evening, with a special thanks to Reid McIntyre, from St. Matthew's, for his work in getting this dinner organized. Not only is Reid from this church congregation, but he also serves as the representative from the Township of South Stormont Council to our organization.

When thanking our Council Representative to the historical society, it is important to recognize the support and stellar work of administration, staff and employees of the Township of South Stormont in 2022. This support has continued into 2023, and we are appreciative of the efforts and support from one and all. The township has left its thumb print on Ault Park in 2022, and we look forward to working collaboratively with the municipality in 2023.

At the outset, I wish to thank the 2022 executive for going above and beyond what is often expected, in the challenging times. As president, I thank you, once again, for stepping to the plate when leadership was required and decision had to be made. As per our Constitution, Jim Brownell as President, Rick Waldroff as Vice-President, and Susan Wallwork as Email and Social Media Coordinator continued in the second year of their two year terms. Gloria Waldroff as Treasurer, Cindy Bickerstaffe as Recording Secretary, and Tim Gault as Events' Coordinator were re-elected to their positions and will serve a two-year term beginning with the AGM of 2022. Gardner Sage continued to serve as Past-President. You all have provided stellar work to the historical society during the past year. As well, we extend a special "Thank You" to Deputy Mayor Andrew

Guindon, the Township of South Stormont's appointee to the historical society, who served out his appointment until his election as Deputy Mayor. Andrew was a guiding force for many aspects of work in our organization, and we thank him for his guidance and support. We are so pleased that Andrew and Emily will continue to serve in our organization.

During 2022, eight monthly meetings were held by the historical society, as well as five executive meetings. As in the past, I continue to appeal to members to suggest guest speakers for our monthly meetings. It continues to be challenging to find speakers who will bring historical flair to presentations. I know the executive would very much like to hear from you. I do!

We can certainly say that the Lost Villages Historical Society has not rested on its past successes, but that it continues to work diligently to support programs and activities that support the conservation and preservation of the history of the Lost Villages. Activities that come to mind include the purchase of new entrance signs to the museum site, and the installation of bilingual signage on the exterior of all buildings at the museum; Civil War Re-Enactment and 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Civil War Memorial at Ault Park, with a Celtic Concert; Remembrance Ceremony; Guided Tours at the museum site; Bursaries at Tagwi Secondary School; Advent Service by Marie Cameron and Ed O'Brien; weddings at the Sandtown Church under the watchful eye of executive member Tim Gault, and many speaking engagements throughout Ontario by the president.

Other activities that stand out in 2022 were the appointment of Susan Wallwork and Pierre Doucette as Email/Social Media Secretaries; Pop-Up Markets by W3G & Co. in May, August and October; Profiling the Lost Village Historical Society and Museum through articles by Jim Brownell in "Know-It-All News" and "Neighbours of Long Sault and Ingleside East"; Wall artifacts and documents on loan to the newly constructed Lost Villages Brewery; and hosting many, many groups at the museum site and throughout the Seaway Valley.

We were particularly pleased in 2022 to establish a very close working relationship with Matt Mulvihill, Public Relation Officer at Ontario Power Generation, and to have been invited to make three presentations at the OPG Visitor Centre in Cornwall. As well, we were delighted to see the return of the Gospel Concerts at the museum site and the return of the Longue Sault Public

School “Bike-a-thon”, a major fundraiser for our historical society. The Remembrance Ceremony at the Mille Roches-Moulinette Cenotaph was well attended on November 6<sup>th</sup>, as was the “Celtic Advent Christmas” concert in the Sandtown Advent Christian Church by Marie Cameron and Ed O’Brien.

Returning once again in 2022, under the guidance of Gloria and Rick Waldroff and their team were “The Haunted Walk” Paranormal Investigations, and the “Light Up the Lost Villages”. Both activities drew attention to the museum site in a very positive way.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize the efforts of Cindy Bickerstaffe in organizing a “Membership Drive” for our organization. This is an ongoing activity and to date it has been successful.

Maggie Wheeler, our esteemed member and author, is to be congratulated on the successful completion of the final book in the Farran Mackenzie Murder Mystery series with “The Last Wave By”. Maggie has, indeed, put the Lost Villages on the map through her books.

Two capital projects that brought smiles to many faces were the commencement of construction of the outdoor pavilion at the museum site by C.M.G. Innovation Limited, as well as the restoration of the Zina Hill Barber Shop by John Gordon Construction. Both projects were substantially completed by the end of 2022, through the efforts of the Township of South Stormont, with only minor work required in the spring of 2023.

Our museum would not be a museum without its patrons and tourists. We are pleased to report that the visitor count bounced back from the disastrous two years of the pandemic. Tim Gault, our Events’ Coordinator, reported that 10,290 visitors attended the museum site in 2022. This was the third best year during the past 12 years, and we can say that our visitors came from all corners of the world. The guest book from the village store indicates that we had visitors from Scotland, Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, China, Bulgaria, Barbados, St. Vincent and Congo, among others.

Oh yes, I must tell you that the first draft of my tour guide “Through the Lands of the Lost Villages” has been completed, and the plan is to have it published in 2023.

In conclusion, I thank all those who worked to keep the memory of our Lost Villages alive in 2022. The story of our villages must never be forgotten.

Respectively submitted this 15th day of May, 2023

Jim Brownell, President  
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