



## ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20.

This has been another year of steady achievement. A major focus was to raise enough funds to hire a full-time Archives Manager for a six-month period. Then in the Fall we launched a major fund-raising drive, driven by Fundraising Committee Chair Jeff Holmes, which led to us being able to appoint Matt Honey as Archives Manager on April 6 for a year-long contract, renewable pending further funding. During the year, we made enormous improvements in the operations of the Archives office, and the “Archives Road Shows” greatly helped us reach out across the County, while our Photographic Team substantially increased the indexed collection.

### Progress through the year

- Robin Burton, our Treasurer and *de facto* Office Manager, has organized and rationalized the office and prepared a comprehensive Operation Manual that lists everything our new Archives Manager needs to know about the state of the organization and how to run it.
- Shirley Brinkhurst led an effort to clear out much of the attic at the Archives and disposed of many unwanted books and documents.
- Derek Cooke worked with us for almost six months through the summer, maintaining a presence in the office, sorting and accessioning documents and some maps, participating in the Road Shows, and acting as tour guide for the historic buildings when needed.
- We had three federally funded students, Michael McEachern, Briana Akey, and Claire Maker, who attended to visitors, drafted posters and sorted the family records in addition to helping with our public events such as the Old Jail Day on July 13. They also helped organize the 2019 Summer Speaker Series. These talks were given by Dr. James Murray at the AGM, followed by Donald Soctomah, Brent Suttie, and Matt Abbott on Passamaquoddy-related themes.
- Bethany Clarke returned to do a great deal of work on the accessioning records throughout the summer.
- Lee Sochasky, with the help of our Photographic Team, ran an intensive Archives Road Show program across the County for the Canada New Horizons for Seniors program. This has raised much interest in our work and has accumulated many more records for accessioning.
- Ernie Depatie has been almost constantly on call to help sort out intractable technological puzzles and has also been a ready volunteer for tours and events and a regular shoulder-season office volunteer.
- We have also received a “Torts and Trials” grant for \$10,000 to prepare interpretive materials and displays. These are being worked on.

- We also received a grant through Working NB to employ Victoria Bryant for 18 weeks through the winter to work in the Office with Robin.
- In the fall, we had another virtually sold out Heritage Home Tours program, which brings us the largest part of our regular annual donations. A huge thank-you goes to Peggy Fothergill and Sheila Washburn and their team of 40 plus volunteers.
- Our major fund-raising campaign in the Fall, seeking large individual donations, was a complete success, raising over \$25,000 from individuals and \$20,000 from the Kiwanis Club. It was this that has enabled us to hire a full-time Archives Manager for a year.
- During the winter, we responded to research requests and enquiries as Ernie and Robin volunteered to be in the office most days on a schedule.
- We have been doing an in-depth review of our archives collection management, with the valued assistance of Mount Allison University archivist and faculty member David Mawhinney, who volunteered his time and professional help in all-day sessions in December and February.
- With a grant from CANB, Matt Honey helped us with our accessioning on a short-term part-time contract before being appointed Archives Manager.

**A very big THANK YOU goes to more than 100 individuals who helped us surpass our Fall-Fundraising goal.**

Thanks also to the Council of Archives New Brunswick (CANB), the Fundy Community Foundation, the Kiwanis Club of St. Andrews, the Towns of St. George and St. Andrews, Archives Board members and volunteer fund raisers, and to the many others for their generous additional contributions and support of the Charlotte County Archives. As a result of these fundraising efforts, we have now been able to hire Matt Honey as our full-time Archives Manager, on contract for a year, renewable pending funding.

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**Thanks to our volunteer Photo Team, our digital photographic collection is expanding rapidly and we plan to make more of it accessible online soon.**

Our Curator of Photographs, Irene Scarratt, and her team Lila Haughn, Donna Walsh, and Mary Myers worked very productively throughout the winter, keeping up with the increased inflow of photographs. Our photographic archive now has around 25,000 digitized and indexed photographs. We plan shortly to release many photos that are not



restricted by their owners, into the public domain, while protecting copy-right as needed. The Photo Lab volunteers, left to right, hard at work, are Irene Scarratt, Lila Haughn, and Donna Walsh. Missing from the photo is Mary Myers.



Lila Haughn has been working as a volunteer on our photo collection for over 25 years, so we gave her a Certificate of Appreciation at a Covid-constrained ceremony on her doorstep and we look forward to a joint celebration in the future.

**“Seniors Preserving Memories of Charlotte County”** was a project sponsored by the Canada New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP) and run by the Charlotte County Archives with Lee Sochasky as Project Leader, under the direction of Board member Marie La Forest.

Lee, with the help of our Photographic team, ran an intensive series of “Archives Road Shows” attracting attention across the County. These raised much interest in our work and accumulated many more records for accessioning. The Archives Road Shows were held in 11 communities last year and the year-long project culminated in the “Charlotte County Heritage Fair” held Feb. 22 at the Garcelon Civic Center in St. Stephen. This full-day event, sponsored by the NHSP:

- Showcased the activities of groups and individuals (museums, archives, genealogists, Facebook groups, and more) that are currently saving and sharing Charlotte County’s heritage;
- Provided practical workshops geared toward their needs and interests;
- Explored ways to collaborate, for mutual benefit; and
- Increased public awareness of Charlotte County heritage activities and showed how to get involved.

**Participants included:**

- Local groups and individuals active in Charlotte County heritage conservation and promotion;
- Local residents who wanted to learn more, and might become future supporters or volunteers;
- Other groups and organizations that support Charlotte County heritage conservation and promotion (including municipalities and adjacent county and provincial groups);
- Government agencies with heritage conservation and promotion mandates that offer programs here;
- Individuals who are personally preserving Charlotte County heritage or are interested in doing so.

58 people participated in the morning workshops. The afternoon open-house with local displays and local films attracted 124.



**Films, films, films**

Before Christmas, **the first of a series of two-minute videos entitled *Charlotte County Moments*** were released on CHCO-TV, to general acclaim. Funding from the Fundy Community Foundation enabled us to contract the services of CHCO-TV for production of these videos. The films were researched, written, and narrated by volunteer Mark Blagrave, with assistance from Sheila Blagrave, using Charlotte County Archives archival footage and photos. Films completed to date are: “Conley’s Lobsters”; “Cottage Craft”; and “Little Norway”; “St. George Red Granite”; and “Pennfield Ridge Air Station.” All five are available on our web site: [www.ccarchives.ca](http://www.ccarchives.ca). Creation of an additional series of five videos, also supported by the Fundy Community Foundation, has begun.

**Three hours of raw film footage shot by** Bill O’Neill and Leigh Williamson between 1938 and the 1950s, much of it in colour, has been revitalized and brought to life with commentaries added from those who remember. From this unique material, Franklin Cardy has produced some 16 videos plus a short Preview, covering various aspects of past life in St. Andrews. After public showings at the NBCC last fall and again in March, they have now been released onto the YouTube channel “Historic Home Movies of St Andrews N.B.” accessible directly on YouTube and through the Archives web site: [www.ccarchives.ca](http://www.ccarchives.ca). The series includes the “secret” launch of the Minesweepers in St. Andrews and colour film of a boat trip to Grand Manan in 1947, complete with the Town Band and its music. Steam trains, in another colour film, feature

the comings and goings at the St. Andrews station in the late 1930s and '40s. Other films include: the gardens of St. Andrews; the Tait family on their estate (now Anderson House) around 1940; sailing activities in the harbour and sardine fishermen at work in the winter and at the weirs; as well as unique colour film of the King and Queen arriving at Saint John on June 13<sup>th</sup> 1939. Finally, the hour-long video "Hockey in St. Andrews 1900 to 1988", will soon also be available online on YouTube and through our web site.

### **Charlotte County Archives: Brand Positioning and Priorities**

On January 8, a sub-committee of the Board met to examine the brand positioning of the Archives and its priorities. Knowing we can't be all things to all people, the group endeavoured to assess our current activities as they coincide or conflict with our core mission "to collect, preserve, and conserve significant historical documents relating to the history and culture of Charlotte County and to make available the documentary heritage of Charlotte County to the public." Charlotte County currently manages or plays a part in the operation of three distinct entities – the County Jail, the public Archives, and the Courthouse. We have many volunteers but only one core-staff member, which until April 6 had been only a part-time position. While our mandate is to operate the Archives, heritage tourism has enabled us to raise funds and help sustain the Archives. Our challenges include: not having had a full-time Archives Manager until this April; a limited number of trained volunteers; lack of efficient workspace and computer networking; insufficient funding from other communities in the County; and the need to allocate time to tours and events that fall outside our main mandate to raise operating funds. Our goals moving forward are to reconfigure existing spaces within the Jail and Courthouse, where possible; develop a plan for the entire site; obtain federal historic status for the Jail; create a group focused on Heritage Tourism; and work with other communities and local sites to promote heritage tourism. Partnerships such as these would enable Board members and the Archives Manager to focus more on our main mandate and position ourselves more strongly as a repository of Charlotte County's rich historic past.

**We are also doing an in-depth review of our "tourism heritage" activities**, with a view to providing improved experiences for visitors while we separate the tour duties more clearly from our core Archiving activities. A grant from the Province's Exhibition Renewal Program for interpretive signage will enable us to enhance the visitor experience at the Court House and Old Jail buildings on the historic Common on Frederick Street. We have been in discussions with the Civic Trust, the Legion, and the Town, with a view to improving the visitor experience in the Court House. We also floated some ideas for raising the profile of the historic Common and heritage buildings. Discussion held with neighbours and others were positive and our ideas were sent to the Town, when we requested formal approval to provide tours of the Court House. The tours are a service we provide to the Town that is beyond our strict mandate and diverts time, energy, and resources from our core activities. We think, however, that it is a valuable service in adding historical interest and raising the visitor profile of the Town. However, at a time of fiscal restraint and uncertainty about the future, it is an activity we need to carefully consider continuing.

**Of course, the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic** casts doubts on our public summer activities this year. The Archives is closed to the public but we expect that our new Archives Manager will be able to accomplish a lot behind closed doors, with support from the Board and other volunteers working mostly from home.

**The year ahead is uncertain** and it is already clear that we shall face many challenges in raising funds for next year's operation. Our regular major fund-raising event of the year — the Heritage Homes Tours — is



unlikely to be possible this year but we do hope that government sources of funding will still be available in small amounts. We have received a grant for a second New Horizons for Seniors project for the year, but this does not financially support our base operations. This project will be slow to get off the ground during the current Covid-19 restrictions and is likely to be extended into next year, depending on circumstances.

If **there are no summer tourism distractions**, we are confident that with Matt Honey in place and the continuing support of our volunteers we will be able to spend the next 12 months catching up with the backlog of accessions, revitalizing the procedures and research access at the Archives, and launching a new and exciting web site with greatly improved access to our collections. These measures will bring our facility up to the level of best practice for a county Archive.

**Volunteers coordination and encouragement.** None of these achievements would have happened without the many hard-working volunteers on and off our Board. They are very greatly appreciated. We are a primarily volunteer-run organization and rely on an increased volunteer data base. We need to recruit new active volunteers for the Board. We need volunteers to help staff the office in the shoulder seasons, to act as tour guides and to help researchers. If you have an interest in community heritage and know of others who are also interested, please contact Matt or me.

**As you can see, we had a good year**, thanks to many of you, to our Board members and staff and to our numerous volunteers and, above all, our donors, without whom we could not operate. Thank you all.

Franklin Cardy,

Charlotte County Archives Board Chair

