

**WATERLOO HISTORICAL SOCIETY AGM REPORTS**  
**Tuesday, November 5th, 2019. 7:30 PM**  
**Victoria Park Pavilion, Kitchener**

**Archives – Karen Ball-Pyatt, Archivist**

As 2019 comes to an end, I am happy to report that it has been another year of growth for the archives of the Society. The mission of the Waterloo Historical Society to inform, educate and preserve the unique history of Waterloo Region continues through research, discovery and growth of the Society's records and holdings.

This past year has been a year of transition for the Grace Schmidt Room. We are in the process of creating a digital memory lab space for library customers. With the redevelopment of Heffner Studio as a broadcast and music studio space, the GSR inherited photograph and slide scanning and VHS conversion equipment that no longer fit their mandate. In order to accommodate the transferred equipment, we've had to design the physical layout of the GSR. Unfortunately, the shift and redistribution of collections has meant that staff time to work on collections has been reduced, but will be redeployed in the coming year. After much work, I am pleased to report that the reorganization project was completed at the end of October.

With space a continual challenge, I continue to work to find more efficiencies in archival records, photographs and map storage in the Grace Schmidt Room. With the ongoing efforts to digitize the collection, storage options are being assessed and more efficient and safe storage options are being explored. I also work with rych mills to coordinate retrievals and refileing of collections stored off-site for research requests.

I'd like to thank Ingrid, Valerie, Joseph, Cynthia, and Curtis of the Information Services Department for their support work in the GSR. Without them, much would go undone. They provide assistance with keeping materials shelved and organized, displays mounted, and reference queries answered.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the WHS Board for their agreement regarding the use of the Susan J. Hoffman Local History Fund to help subsidize the purchase of the newest digital microfilm scanner in the GSR.

Among the many highlights of our donations this year, there are the following:

- Patricia Mary Koehler Atwater Collection – collection includes personal documents, photographs, cards, and assorted invoices and paper ephemera.
- Framed and matted panoramic photograph of the Schatz Coal Company, 14 Esson St., Kitchener, employees and vehicles, taken by Ernest Denton Photo, July 1940
- A photograph of the Berlin Base Ball Club, Champions, Waterloo County, 1897.

The annual call for inactive corporate records was made at the Waterloo Historical Society Board's meeting on Tuesday 4 June 2019. To date, I have received the inactive records of Board members and other miscellaneous documents.

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### **Ad Hoc Newspaper Storage Committee – Karen Ball-Pyatt**

The Committee, composed of myself, rych mills and Past President Lesley Webb, did not meet during 2019. We continue to monitor developments and digital initiatives undertaken by area archives and libraries and welcome the opportunity to assist with digitization projects and programs.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Waterloo Public Library on the launch of their Waterloo Chronicle newspaper collection on Our Digital World.

Currently, the WHS collects the following newspapers in paper form: New Hamburg Independent, Woolwich Observer and the Ayr News. All paper editions, with the exception of current year issues, are kept at the WHS off-site storage facility.

We will continue to explore options for the storage of the WHS newspaper collection and will keep the Board apprised of our findings.

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### **Book Table – Sherwood Hagey – Co-ordinator**

The Book Table has brought in over \$2,000 over this past year. This has included used, donated books, books on consignment, annual volumes, county and township books. The board appreciates the support that all buyers and donators give our society.

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### **Ad-Hoc Online Indexing – Lesley Webb, Chair**

Last year, I announced that the initial indexing was complete for annual volumes 1 to 103. The text and image indexes for each volume are available in searchable PDFs on the Waterloo Historical Society website. Find them under Publications > Annual Volume > [Online Index](#). The indexer has been provided with volumes 104 to 106 to continue indexing in a consistent manner as volumes are published.

The goal of the Online Indexing project is to enable local history researchers to quickly locate articles and subject matter in the annual volumes and ensure that the volume remains relevant in the digital age. In Stage One, we had great help from our WHS Index-Editors, John Glass, Jon Fear and Todd Bowman. This year we have moved into stage two of the project which involves merging all of the text indexes together and doing the same with the image indexes. rych mills and I continue to work with the indexer to prepare the indexes for the merge and hope to have some tests of the merge completed next year. The final step will be to review the merged text and image indexes and ensure the same person, organization, and location with different name variations is matched up.

A number of people have wondered what is taking so long since we began this several years ago. WHS entered this project not really knowing all the steps that would have to be taken. Likewise, our indexer, in fact no indexer, had ever handled such a huge project: in effect we are indexing an 11,000-plus page book, written by hundreds of different authors on hundreds of topics, with two dozen

different editors. This is virtually requiring a line-by-line, word-by-word careful reading of all the volumes to ensure everything and everyone is properly placed in the index.

Many of you have generously donated to this project. Thank you for your support as we create the WHS online index.

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### **Communications – Lesley Webb, Chair**

The Communications Committee consists of Lesley Webb and Glenn Thorpe. The purpose of the Committee is to promote the Society and its activities. Public meeting details were posted on community calendars maintained by The Record, SWO CTV, and Snap KW. News releases were also sent out to local newspapers. When a speaker (such as a professor or Masters/PhD candidate) has a relationship with a local post secondary school, the news release is also sent to their student publication. History Under the Trees was included in the Waterloo Chronicle's, "Five fun things to do this weekend in Kitchener-Waterloo, July 6 and 7". Special thanks to rych mills for including our meeting details in his Flash from the Past columns appearing in The Record the Saturday prior to our meetings.

The unveiling of the Westmount plaque gained the most attention in the news this year with an article by Waterloo Region Record reporter Liz Monteiro titled, "Local industrialist created vision of Westmount", that appeared in the September 15 edition.

Glenn set WHS up on Instagram with a goal of reaching a younger audience and promoting membership. Interest is generated by posting a historical image of a local building along with a contemporary view from Google maps. Follow us [www.instagram.com/waterloohistoricalsociety](http://www.instagram.com/waterloohistoricalsociety).

Currently, the Committee along with assistance from WHS Councillor Sandy Parks is developing a rack card which will be used to attract new members. It will include a basic membership form on one side, membership perks on the other side and direct the viewer to the WHS website and social media sites for further information. We are hoping to get the new rack card printed and out in the community early next year.

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### **Past President Report – Lesley Webb**

In transitioning from President to Past President signing authority for the Society was updated and the contact for our Access Storage unit was changed to John Glass. I have continued as the contact for the local GivingTuesday campaign. If you are not familiar with GivingTuesday it is a global day of giving that happens each year after Black Friday and Cyber Monday. It's a time when Canadians, charities and businesses come together to celebrate giving and participate in activities that support charities. WHS uses the GivingTuesday platform to promote our annual volume patronage program. In June we participated in the Great Canadian Giving Contest to solicit general donations which go towards our plaque program, lectures on local history, and preserving archival records.

On Sunday, September 29, I represented WHS at the re-dedication of the War Memorial Stained Glass at Central Presbyterian Church in Cambridge. While I was president, the board supported the church's

project with a letter of support to restore their First and Second World Wars memorial stained glass with a grant from Veterans Affairs Canada. I am happy to announce that the project is complete, and the windows are no longer in danger of collapsing. I encourage you to take in these windows which honour the men of the congregation who served and sacrificed their lives for Canada during the wars.

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### **President's Report – John Glass, WHS President**

The mandate of the Waterloo Historical Society is to foster the recognition of our region's unique heritage, and diligently encourage its preservation by documenting history of the region. I believe that we have fulfilled this mandate in 2018-2019.

There's more to the president's job than generating agendas and chairing meetings. Some of the tasks the president oversees are:

- keeping an eye on finances and making sure that our money is being spent wisely and within our mandate. In doing so, I'm happy to report that
  - o We had 70 annual volume patrons this year.
  - o There were several individuals who provided generous donations.
  - o The society made donations to the Susan J. Hoffman Fund and OHS's Cemetery Defense Fund.
  - o WHS received grants from WHS and the Ontario Government as well as generous member grants.

This year, I was approached several times through the year for items such as the closing of the Walper Barber Shop and people wanting help in preserving and updating their heritage properties. While the active support of such activities are not within WHS's mandate, we have been able to connect these people with other groups or representatives who could help them forward their causes.

Some of the tasks that I was involved with were Annual Volume index verification, overseeing the website, helping organize the storage location and filling in to help all of the other board members and councilors when help was required.

We organized five public meetings this year. These events are free to members and to the general public and they are one of the ways that we help fulfil our mandate to promote local history. The speakers, and topics were:

- April - Tara Brookfield – Women and the Vote in Ontario
- May – Prof. Cynthia Comacchio – Toys in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century
- July – History Under the Trees - Al Junker – Antique Tools
- October – Jesse Abbot - Taverns & Tavern Going in Ontario
- November – Joanna Rickert-Hall – Researching and overview of her boo, The Waterloo you Never Knew.

One of our other big events was the unveiling of the Westmount Plaque. The beautiful autumn weather and a festival in Belmont Village may have helped build the crowd which was bolstered by several

members of the Westmount neighbourhood. We had over 100 attendees. The event received front page coverage on the Waterloo Region Record. I am excited about our upcoming plaques, which should be unveiled in 2019/2020. These include the re-installation and re-dedication of the of Preston Mill, as well as the much anticipated unveiling of the Idylwild Park plaque in Preston.

We've continued to publish a newsletter but to augment this we've been active on Instram, Facebook and Twitter while also sending the occasional email. I'd like to ask members how they would like to see information transmitted to them. The society published our Annual Volume for the 106<sup>th</sup> consecutive year since our inception in 1912 (with the first volume being published at the end of the first year in 1913).

In the coming 2019/2020 season, I'd like the society to continue with all of the events we conducted this year. I'd also like us to concentrate on establishing a presence at a couple more public events, such as Doors Open Waterloo Region in 2020 and continuing to attract new members. The 107<sup>th</sup> edition of the annual volume, to be distributed in May 2020, is well underway.

After being a WHS board and councilor member for close to twenty years, I thought that the transition to President would be fairly simple and smooth. It wasn't as easy as I expected. There were new duties, new things to learn and opportunities to exercise my diplomatic skills. Through this transition, I was able to receive feedback and guidance from many of the board and councilor members – many of whom were past presidents. I'm especially grateful to recent past presidents rych mills, Marion Roes and Lesley Webb for their ongoing guidance as I've learned more about this role. I look forward serving the Society during the second year of my term. Thank-you to everyone for your help and participation.

I hope all of the board members, councilors and members at large continue to support 'WHS over the next year. Please let us know if you have any ideas, questions or concers. In return, I'd like to ask you all to keep coming out to our meetings – and maybe bring a friend.....

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### **Membership – Erin Applebee, Chair**

The Waterloo Historical Society ended the 2019 year with 205 members, which is 4 less then 2018. This includes 17 new members. We welcome our new members, and thank all of our returning members for their patronage and interest in local history.

The annual volume was released in May and 70 were picked up, and another 100 were delivered by volunteers. Thank you to all the members who picked up there volumes at the meeting and those who offered o deliver volumes. Doing so makes the delivery process much easier and saves on postage.

For those joining us who are new or on the fence about renewing just to remind you of the benefits. Membership in the Waterloo Historical Society entitles you to participate in all the activities of the society and runs from October 1 to September 30<sup>th</sup> each year. Benefits include voting rights at the annual general meeting; 10 % off used books from the book table at meetings; 25% off admission to the Waterloo Region Museum; access to five meetings each year featuring guests speakers; a subscription

to the society newsletter; and a copy of the society's award winning annual volume. An adult membership is \$30 and a student membership is \$15.

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#### **Social Media Administrator and Newsletter – Marion Roes, Editor**

The newsletter is one of our communication tools, along with the web site, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram – *and* you, our members who tell others about WHS. The quarterly newsletter is distributed in January, March, June and September/October by postal mail, email and is current on the web site. It is sent to members, related organizations and some media. Content varies and I appreciate all who submit photos, articles and give suggestions. Thank you to regular contributor Karen Ball-Pyatt for her column, Happenings in the Grace Schmidt Room. Please phone or email to me your questions and suggestions.

Lesley Webb and I both post items on Facebook and I tweet and share on Twitter. It could be photos, our own or others' events and news, and anything else that I think may interest others. Overall, I spend about the same time on WHS social media as on the newsletter.

Our Facebook page currently has 942 "likes," which is up 87 since this time last year, and an additional 134 "follows." We have 275 Twitter followers, an increase of 143 since July 2016. The content isn't always the same on those two platforms and is different from what's in the newsletter or on the website. Like us at [www.facebook.com/waterloohs](http://www.facebook.com/waterloohs) and follow on Twitter at @WaterlooHS.

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**Program Report – Erich Uhlmann, Chair – No report**

## WHS Plaques Committee report for Tuesday, November 5, 2019

### Westmount Neighbourhood Plaque

On Saturday, September 14, 2019 over 100 WHS members and Westmount neighbours gathered at the intersection of Union Boulevard and Dunbar Road in Kitchener to witness the unveiling of the Westmount Neighbourhood plaque, a joint effort of the Westmount Neighbourhood, the City of Kitchener and the Waterloo Historical Society.

Plaques committee member **Sandy Parks** was instrumental in seeing the project come to fruition. WHS member **Susan Mavor's** research on Westmount: The community that binds Kitchener and Waterloo, was vital to the successful plaque installation.

Thanks to everyone who attended the unveiling.

### John Erb Plaque

Plaques committee member **Ray Ruddy** has been the lead on the plans to have the John Erb plaque, dedicated in 1925 to the longest continuously operated building in Waterloo County/Region rededicated. It was Ray who managed to retrieve the original plaque a couple of years ago. Ray has been busy fabricating a new bracket for the plaque, which will be remounted on the wall of the Parrish and Heimbecker mill building on King Street in Preston. Hopefully this will take place next spring.

### Idylwild Park Plaque

Work is still being done on the Idylwild Park story board plaque destined for the trail along the Speed River in Cambridge.

Other members of the plaques committee include Debbie Kroetch, Harold Russell and Warren Stauch.

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Publication/Annual Volume Committee – rych mills, Annual Volume Editor

The WHS publication committee is composed of Rosanne Atwater-Hallatt, Marjorie Kohli, Stephanie Walker and Susan Mavor with me, rych mills, as chair. Our major responsibility is the preparation and production of the WHS annual volume which is released each May.

In May 2019, for the 106<sup>th</sup> time in the society's history, the volume was indeed distributed to members free with their annual membership dues. In addition, copies of the 148-page book were provided to many local school and university libraries and area archives.

As with most annual publications, the wrapping-up of one year's issue quickly becomes the beginning of another. At the present time, November 2019, the committee members are in the midst of reading through a number of articles submitted by a wide variety of people. As editor, I work with these authors to bring their papers into the WHS style guide format before distributing to the committee. The committee attempts to ensure all the submissions contain verifiable facts, dates, names, spellings etc.

The upcoming volume has a variety of topics: village history, biographies, institutional descriptions, historical analysis and much more. All things being equal, you the members will have #107 to hand in mid-May 2020 ... giving you plenty of time to finish reading the 2018 volume.

Last year's volume was produced at a lower cost than previous years' books thanks to some alternate methodology in the editing process and a new system set up by our production partners, Cober Printing. Speaking of costs ... they are covered to a great degree by our generous patrons whose names you see listed at the front of each issue. The support from these patrons, most of whom are members, spurs the publication committee on. The Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation and the Ontario government's Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Heritage Organization Development Program are regular supporters through their grant programs for which WHS is most appreciative.

Just a reminder that copies of the volume most years back to 1913 are available through the website, [www.whs.ca](http://www.whs.ca) and look for the annual volume price list. Copies of the annual volume from the past two decades are for sale during society meetings at the WHS Book Table.

I encourage anyone here doing research on some historical topic related to our region to consider submitting it to the publication committee for considering for a future volume.

Again, on behalf of the publication committee I thank you for your support and look forward to talking to you again in May with Volume 107 in hand.

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### **Storage – rych mills, Co-ordinator**

WHS maintains a storage site in the Access building on Guelph Street and there we administer a variety of WHS possessions. Bound and / or bagged volumes of mostly-20<sup>th</sup>-century, county / region newspapers; non-processed collections of photo and documentary donations; back issues of the annual volume; the large supply of reprinted Township books; meeting and display equipment; and the WHS Book Table stocks. In addition, we rent out shelf space to other historically-oriented groups and people at minimal cost.

This year, a main project has been to conduct an inventory of newspaper holdings at the storage site and at the same time we are organizing them into chronological order, thus making them easier to find. From time to time, the WHS archivist does get a request to see original newspapers rather than microfilm and if the request is valid, the paper will be retrieved from storage for study. When the newspapers had originally been moved to storage they were shelved randomly.

This large reorganization and inventory-ing project is ongoing. My thanks to several members who gave up a couple of evenings over the summer to assist. We'll be back at it in the winter.

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### **Website Committee – John Glass, Chair**

The website continued to operate in 2018/2019 with few issues, but few updates. We did have an issue where we were hacked. This was due to the developer leaving some simple account logins that were easily exploited. These were easily identified (i.e. [john@whs.ca](mailto:john@whs.ca), [lesley@whs.ca](mailto:lesley@whs.ca)). These accounts were removed. We were able to restore operations by doing a simple restore of the previous backup.



We continue to look for someone to provide more active support of the site. Ideally, the person would be familiar with WordPress, but that's not essential. The helper could be a volunteer or student and would not necessarily need to be a WHS member. Please reach out to us if you are interested or if you know someone who could help.

We would be happy to entertain any ideas you have for the website or any other social media platforms.

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### **Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation – David Emberly, Representative**

The Waterloo Historical Society was involved in the creation of the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation in 1973 and has been represented on the foundation's board since it was incorporated on February 13, 1974, when the WHS was one of the six named organizations, the purpose of which were to give structure and guidance to the new and, at that time unique body. Each of the six named in the original letters patent were to send a representative to the foundation; they would then elect others at-large to form the foundation's board of directors. With the passing of time this system became seriously dysfunctional and in 2018, Ken Seiling, the Chairman of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and a long-time member of the foundation board, recommended changes in the structure of the organization.

The letters patent were amended by the province on September 21, 2018 and, now the Regional Council will appoint twelve people, ten citizens at large, the Regional Chair and a Council representative. The WHS is no longer required to select anyone to represent it on the foundation's board - any WHS member wishing to sit on the foundation's board will submit an application for appointment; the form may be easily found on the Region's website. We will all be treated the same thus eliminating the often held perception that the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation was elitist!

The Annual General Meeting of the foundation was held on Tuesday, June 11, 2019, in the Council Chamber of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo Administration Building, 150 Frederick Street, Kitchener. The Awards of Excellence were presented to Benedict Benninger, Jeremy Hetherington, David B. Scott and Lary Turner. The Dr. Jean Steckle Award for Heritage Education was awarded to the late Anne-Marie Bettschen. The Sally A. Thorsen Award of Excellence was given to Hilda Sturm. The Region of Waterloo History Prize was awarded jointly to Karl Kessler and Sunshine Chen for their book *Overtime: Portraits of a Vanishing Canada*. The following eight people were elected to the foundation's board of directors: John Clinckett, Lyndsay Haggerty, Julie Lewis, Robert Oberholtzer, Krystal Osborn, Heather Rennie, John Glass and David Emberly - the last two being directors of the Waterloo Historical Society. Karen Redman and Tom Galloway represent the Regional Municipality of Waterloo. There were two citizen vacancies. The Regional Council is required to ratify these appointments under the foundation's revised letters patent and did so on Wednesday, June 26, 2019.

During the time I represented the society, I also was the "designated spokesperson" of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Cambridge and North Dumfries Branch. In this latter role I did not formally represent them in the position of director - I merely spoke on their behalf. Historians and architectural conservationists may not always see heritage in the same way. History deals with people and events and architecture is about built form - something made clear to me during meetings of the foundation. I take this occasion to thank Lesley Webb, the society's past president, for her advice. Prior to each foundation meeting, I would consult with on what I should say to the foundation and, her observations were always valuable to me.

At one time, the foundation would hold seminars or public meetings as well as preside at such things as plaque unveilings or dedications. Over time this has changed, other organizations do these things very well. The foundation's focus is on funding heritage projects and proposals brought to it - we financially assist others to do their work. In the last year we have funded the cost of a speaker for the Kitchener Public Library Genealogy Fair, covered costs of publications, and the restorations of a brick wall, cemetery monuments and an historic porch in Ayr - among other things.

Since 2018 the annual grant of \$5,000 made by the foundation to the Waterloo Historical Society is now a line item in the foundation's annual budget and no longer needs to be requested annually by the society. As of the foundation's fiscal year end of December 31, 2018, it had assets of \$242,632, mostly invested funds that are administered by the region. Much of this money is held for grants recently approved or grant applications pending. The foundation's actual expenditures for 2018 were \$71,227, mostly either in grants paid or committed.

Warren Stauch served on the boards of both the society and the foundation, being president of the former and chairman of the latter. At the foundation's annual meeting he retired as chairman and Karen Redman, Chairperson of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, thanked him "for his many years of work and selfless dedication to the cause of heritage."

At the foundation directors' meeting of Tuesday, June 25, 2019, John Glass was acclaimed as chairman; he had previously served as vice-chairman. The foundation's committees will be merged from four to three in number.

In 1973-1974 the Waterloo Historical Society's representative to the new foundation was Katherine Hansuld Lamb, the society's president. In 2018 the Waterloo Historical Society was the last of the original six to have a member sitting on the board. I thank the society for asking me to represent them at this time; I did my best to uphold your high standards.

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### **Waterloo Historical Society Annual General Meeting - Treasurer's Report for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019**

The financial statements have been prepared for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and they have been reviewed by BDO. I would like to quickly review some of the major financial activities during the past year.

- WHS had approximately \$31,000 in revenues, which was about \$19,000 less than the previous year. The decrease was mainly due to an \$18,000 Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation grant in the previous year towards the online indexing project, which did not recur this year.
- We received grants totaling approximately \$6,000 from the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport towards publishing the annual volume. We also received a grant of \$1,500 from the City of Kitchener towards the Westmount plaque.

- Our largest expense was approximately \$12,000 for publishing the annual volume. Other significant expenses were for the storage locker, wrapping up phase 1 of the Online Indexing Project, and the installation of the Westmount plaque.
- WHS had a profit in the year of \$2,795, compared to a profit of \$340 in the previous year.
- WHS ended the year with approximately \$63,000 in assets and \$60,000 in equity.

I would like to make a motion for the members of WHS to approve the financial statements.

#### BDO Financial Statement Review Costs

Normally at this time I would move that the members approve the reappointment of BDO to review the WHS financial statements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, however there has been a recent development. The last few years WHS has paid BDO approximately \$1,000 per year to review the financial statements. The cost was increasing about \$50 per year. Last week the partner at BDO let me know that their internal time charges for the review were significantly above this amount the last number of years, ie. WHS has been receiving a discount on the fee, and BDO would be looking for an increase in the fee next year, to approximately \$2,000. There are some alternatives:

1. BDO could prepare a Notice to Reader set of financial statements which would consist of a balance sheet and income statement, with likely no notes. This might cost approximately \$1,300 or \$1,400.
2. WHS could shop around other firms and ask for quotes. The BDO partner emphasized that he has no concerns with WHS as a client and with my work as treasurer, so he is not looking to see WHS take its business elsewhere. My feeling is that since WHS has been receiving a discounted fee, we are unlikely to find a firm that would match the BDO fee of the last few years.
3. I, the treasurer, could prepare financial statements with no review by someone else. This would be cost effective, however WHS has \$60,000 in cash and I believe there is some value in having someone else review my work.
4. We could survey our members and ask if someone, or someone they know, might be willing to do a basic review of the financial statements on a volunteer basis, or for a small honorarium.

Could we please have a discussion on this?

Thank-you,  
 Jeff Shank, Treasurer, Waterloo Historical Society  
 November 5, 2019