

Waterloo Historical Society Newsletter



Winter 2026

Sophia Grande-Lawlor, Editor

WHS Membership Demographics

Submitted by Mary Anne Banks

Location

Residence	Number	Percent
Kitchener	62	38%
Waterloo	32	20%
Cambridge	16	10%
Wilmot	11	7%
Wellesley	3	2%
Woolwich	13	8%
North Dumfries	4	2%
Outside Waterloo Region	17	10%
Outside Ontario	3	2%
Outside Canada	3	2%

Total: 164 100%

Length of time as a member of WHS

60+ years	2
50-60 years	7
40-50 years	9
30-40 years	12
20-30 years	21
10-12 years	41
0-10 years	72

Total: 164

whs.ca

Have news to share?

Send updates you would like to see
in the newsletter to:

whs1912newsletter@gmail.com

Deadline for Spring 2026 newsletter
Friday, March 13, 2026.



Mark your calendar

2026 Events

Submitted by rych mills

Saturday, March 21 2026

Doors open at 12:30; 1:15 presentation

All are welcome. No admission charge.

The spring meeting of Waterloo Historical Society takes place on the first full spring day of 2026 ... Saturday, March 21. Once again, the venue is St Matthews Lutheran Church at 54 Benton Street in Kitchener. Doors open at 12:30 and proceedings begin at 1:15. Enter the meeting hall via the parking lot door.

WHS welcomes Philip Augustine to detail some of his family's background in Berlin / Kitchener. In the first half of the 20th century, the Augustine name was well-known in social, civic and business circles. Through marriage, the Augustines were also connected to the Breithaupt and Kaufman families, many of whom lived close to the Augustine home at 22 Margaret Avenue.

Philip's father, John, was born in Kitchener then attended medical school in London, Ontario before setting up practice in Fort William. There he and his wife Annette helped create a wide range of medical, cultural and social institutions in the (re-named) Thunder Bay area.

Philip was raised in Thunder Bay and following a four-decade career as a lawyer, discovered a second career as an author, historian and film maker.

Philip Augustine has just published a book about his father's life and it will be available at a discount at the meeting. Attend the presentation and you'll discover how much impact a couple of people can make to the betterment of their community ... in this case Thunder Bay ... and how that contribution had roots in K-W.

At the meeting, Debbie Kroetsch will set up a juice and nibbles table as usual. We know from past experience that she hates dealing with leftovers so visit her snack table more than once.

The WHS Book Table will also bring along a selection of inexpensively priced history books. These have been donated to WHS for resale to members and others attending the meeting.

Speaking of books, WHS member Ken McLaughlin has added another tome to his lengthy list of publications. Ian Ormston enlisted in the RCAF as a teenager and rose in the ranks during the Second World War. Ken's book, *A Time to be Forgotten*, traces Ian's wartime experiences following which he moved to Kitchener and developed successful businesses. Ken will give us a brief overview of Ian Ormston's story at the start of the meeting. This book will also be on sale that afternoon.

Park in the St Matthew's lot at 54 Benton St. There is also free parking on Church Street and along Benton Street across from Arrow Lofts. Right beside the church are city parking lots and a parking garage. As always there is no admission charge to WHS meetings and everyone is welcome.

For information, contact rychmills@golden.net or 519-742-4990.

Saturday March 7, 2026

WHS Members Only, Registration Required

On Saturday March 7, it's the Book Table Open House at the WHS storage room site in Kitchener. Because of limited space, we ask people to register for one of 4 time slots: 9:30 to 10:00; 10:00-10:30; 11 to 11:45 or 11:45 until 12:30.

Register by sending an e-mail to rychmills@golden.net ... or (only for those without e-mail) by calling 519-742-4990.

Payment is by cash or direct deposit. Paid-up members receive a 10% discount on the marked prices of used books and back issues of annual volumes. Please register to avoid overcrowding. Details will be provided when you register.

Note: at the site, there are 4 flights of 8 steps each to climb to our floor.

We acknowledge that the land on which we meet are the lands traditionally used by the Haudenosaunee, Anishnaabeg, and Neutral peoples. We also acknowledge the enduring presence and deep traditional knowledge, laws, and philosophies of the Indigenous people with whom we share this land today. We are all treaty people with a responsibility to honour all our relations.

Ontario Volunteer Service Awards

Submitted by Sandra Parks

The Waterloo Historical Society nominated six of its members for the annual Ontario Volunteer Service Awards in 2025. This award recognizes volunteers for providing committed and dedicated service to an organization, with nominees recognized by the length of time they've volunteered, ranging from five to 65 years of continuous service.

The 2025 nominees were:

- Harold Russell - 45 years' service
- Debbie Kroetsch - 40 years' service
- Marjorie Kohli - 35 years' service
- John Glass - 20 years' service
- Nancy Maitland - 10 years' service
- Sandra Parks - 5 years' service



Three members of the Waterloo Historical Society received years of service pins at the 2025 Ontario Volunteer Service Awards ceremony at Bingemans on October 1 last year - Harold Russell - 45 years; Debbie Kroetsch - 40 years; and Sandra Parks - 5 years. Members unable to attend the ceremony include Marjorie Kohli - 35 years; John Glass - 20 years; and Nancy Maitland - 10 years. (Harold Russell photo)



WHS member Warren Stauch received a standing ovation at the 2025 Ontario Volunteer Service Awards ceremony at Bingemans on October 1 last year when he was presented with a pin for 65 years of service to the Ken Seiling Waterloo Region Museum. He's pictured with his MPP for Kitchener Centre, Aislinn Clancy, and Perth Wellington MPP Matthew Rae. (Harold Russell photo)

Several WHS members attend the OVSA ceremony at Bingemans on October 1 last year.

Recipients received a personalized certificate and lapel pin acknowledging their years of service. In total, the Ontario government recognized over 6,000 community leaders in 2025, from organizations such as non-profits, schools, community centres, hospitals, libraries and community associations.

Congratulations and thank you to the recipients.



WHS Councillor for Wellesley Township Nancy Maitland (at left) and WHS President John Glass proudly display their 2025 Ontario Volunteer Service Award pins and certificates. (Sandra Parks photo)

Eaton's catalogue ended 50 years ago

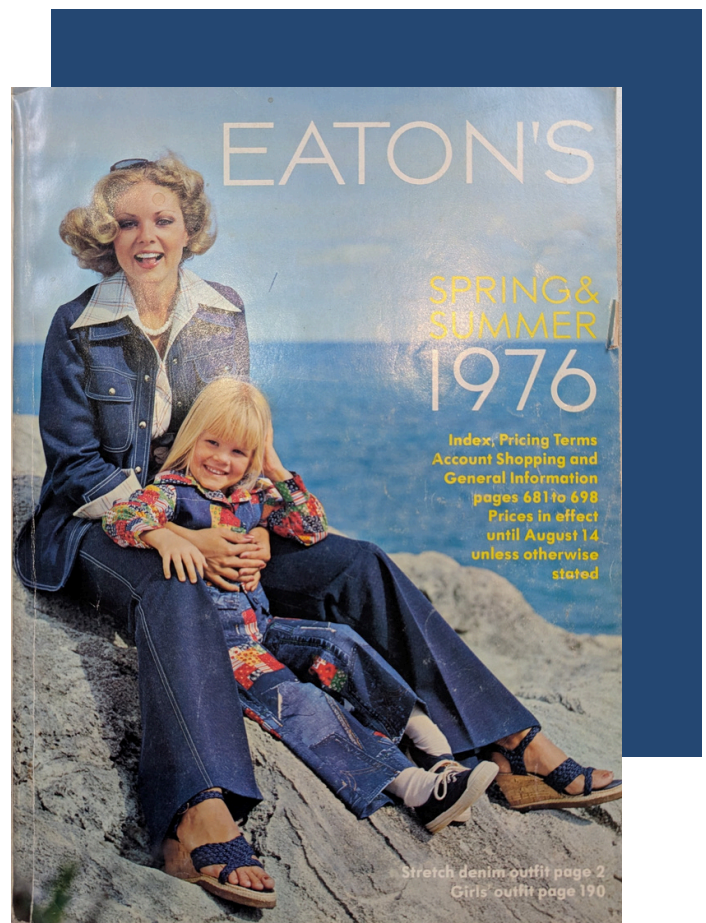
Submitted by Jon Fear

They were never on the best-seller lists for books, but for decades the catalogues of the T. Eaton Co. were among Canada's best read publications. Several times a year more than a million copies were dropped with a thump on doorsteps coast to coast. The pre-Christmas catalogues, filled with images of toys, were magical page-turners for children. Their arrival marked the start of the holiday season.

Today, it's hard to explain to young people how significant those catalogues were in the lives of Canadians. Reading them was a bit like going on Amazon today to check out things you might need – from clothing and sports equipment to home appliances, furniture, tools, cameras, garden supplies, toys and so much more, even build-it-yourself homes. Had there never been any Eaton's stores, the company's success with catalogue sales was by itself an amazing business story.

And then, 50 years ago on Jan. 14, 1976, the Toronto-based retail giant announced the unthinkable. It was shutting down its catalogue division, which employed 8,500 full- and part-time workers at 250 sites. Many people were surprised to learn the venerable Eaton's catalogue, first published in 1884 and especially popular in rural areas, was now a big money-loser.

Times had changed. More Canadians now lived in urban areas, much closer to stores. And that was only part of it. Business analysts said the catalogue division was now badly run -- lax about tardy payments and too generous in accepting returned goods. In his 1998 book, *The Eatons: The Rise and Fall of Canada's Royal Family*, journalist Rod McQueen wrote that in 1976 the catalogue division was a "festering sore" on the balance sheet, one the company ignored until it was too late. To make it worse, dropping the catalogue immediately allowed rival Sears Canada Inc. to boost its own catalogue sales.



Waterloo Region's only Eaton's site in 1976 was a big four-level store in the new Market Square shopping mall at King and Frederick streets in Kitchener. Its mail-order office had 12 employees whose positions were eliminated following the announcement. (Two retired and Eaton's found jobs for the others.) In May that year area catalogue shoppers were invited to visit the store for an evening with special shopping privileges. About 4,000 lined up outside along King Street to get in, the Kitchener-Waterloo Record reported.



By then the final Eaton's catalogue, a 700-page Spring & Summer edition, had been out for several months. Reflecting the times, its front and back covers featured blue denim "patch" jackets and "wide-leg" blue jeans. On inside pages, representing the latest in home technology, were pictures of calculators, telephone answering machines and "Viking Automatic 12" electric typewriters that featured automatic carriage return and "quick-switch" ink-ribbon cartridges.

The Market Square location was the T. Eaton Co.'s third store site in Kitchener. The first opened in 1928 at 57-63 King Street West, near Ontario Street. It was initially a Teco Store (short for T. Eaton Co.) but two years later was renamed and became part of Canadian Department Stores Ltd., a mostly-Ontario chain the Eaton company had purchased. For several years in this period the company also operated an Eaton's Groceteria food store and a mail-order outlet for catalogue shoppers, both at 165 King St. W. In 1949 the first local "Eaton's" store opened at King and Water streets, housed in a three-storey structure still standing today. This store moved to Market Square when the downtown mall opened in 1973.

Elsewhere in today's Waterloo Region, Eaton's had mail-order offices for many years in Galt and Preston, both now part of Cambridge. The Galt location was open from roughly 1930 to 1962 at 59 Main St. It then moved to 103 Main St. for a few years and for much of the 1970s was at 47 Dickson St. In the early 1930s there was also briefly an Eaton's Groceteria at 24 Main St., in Galt. The rival Simpsons-Sears department store chain (later Sears Canada) had Galt mail order offices during the 1960s and early 1970s at 9 Mill St and later at 118 Main St. It also had a Kitchener mail-order office at 200 Fairway Rd. S., near Manitou Drive.

In Preston, the Eaton's mail order office was at 719 King St. E., near Westminster Drive. In some smaller communities, such as Elmira, the T. Eaton Co. for a time had "commission agents" who handled orders for catalogue shoppers.

The end of the catalogue didn't stop the T. Eaton Co. from adding stores. In 1977 it opened a store in Toronto's new downtown Eaton Centre. In 1978 it opened a Waterloo store at Westmount Place and in 1984 a store in downtown Guelph. These were not to last. The Kitchener store closed in 1997 and the Guelph store in 1998. The Waterloo store closed in 1999, the same year in which Toronto's Eaton Centre store closed and the entire T. Eaton Co. ceased operations.

Save the Date

WHS will be in attendance at Heritage Wilmot's Heritage Day 2026! Come visit our booth. Keep an eye on social media channels for more information and updates.



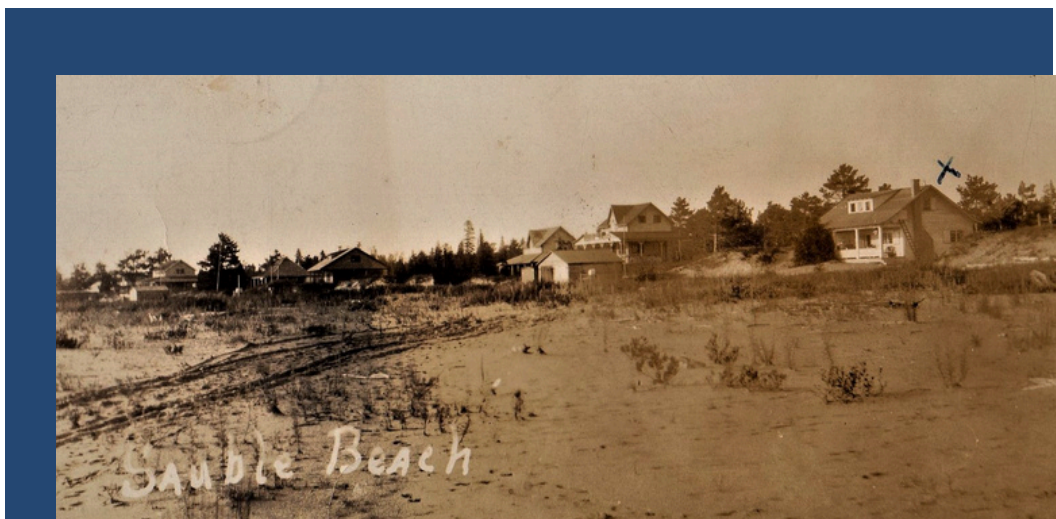
What WHS Members Can Learn About the History of Sauble Beach!

Submitted by John C. Carter

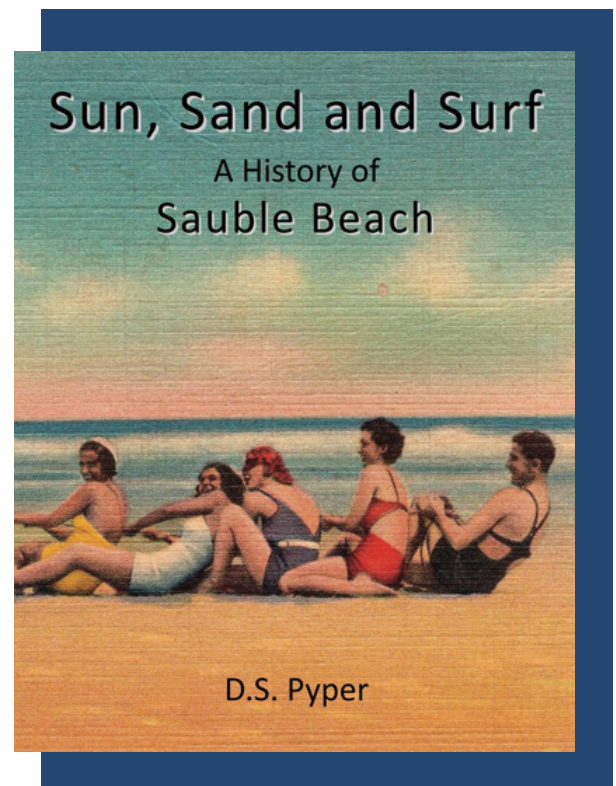
Sauble Beach has recently received much media coverage about current issues, including land claims and the entrance sign change. However, precious little has been mentioned about its past. How can we ameliorate this shortfall? Here's a solution. I'd recommend that you acquire and read David Pyper's book **Sun, Sand and Surf. A History of Sauble Beach.**

David and his family have been long time seasonal residents at South Sauble Beach. His family have vacationed there beginning in 1940, and David since 1955. He is currently a director for the Bruce County Historical Society. David is also a long time member of the Waterloo Historical Society, and was its board member for North Dumfries Township for many years.

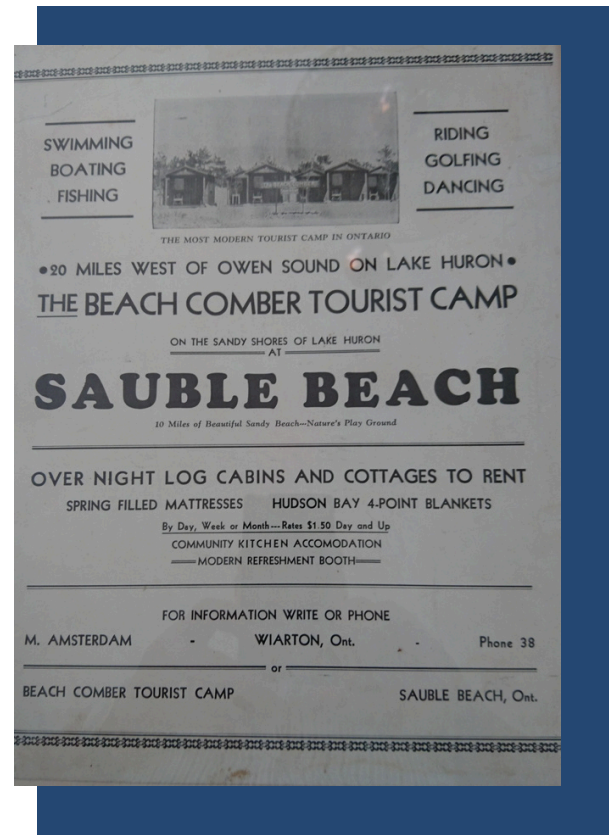
His "labour of love" in researching and writing this book, began in 2016. The first and revised second editions were both published in 2024. David's thesis is that Sauble Beach is made up of several important components, all critical to the development and evolution of Sauble Beach as a whole entity. In early chapters, he includes information about First Nations, South Sauble, North Sauble, Chief's Point and Sauble Falls. Chapter 3 discusses the Ojibway community, the first residents at Sauble. This section was reviewed and authenticated by award-winning Ojibway poet and author David Plain, whose grandparents lived at the Saugeen Reserve. Plaudits must go to author Pyper, for including this informative material at the beginning of his publication, something that all earlier publications about the history of Sauble Beach have neglected.



Much information for other chapters has come from various sources. These include issues of the Sauble Signpost and the Sauble Bulletin. In chronological order, chapters dealing with the birth of the Sauble Community, the growth of both North and South Sauble, getting to the beach by roads, early cottage life, and Sauble's seasonal activities are presented. This is followed by overviews of beach life, growth and activities by decades, dating from 1910 to the 1990s. This chronology ends with a chapter about Sauble Beach in the new millennium, including material from 2000 to 2020. The book concludes with a postscript written by David Pyper. I feel that a more substantive conclusion should have been included, which would sum up positions taken, information provided, and the thesis the author proposes for writing the book. Maybe included in the third edition?



However, this publication is chock-full of useful facts and informative research. To help navigate the over 250 pages, three appendices with chapter notations (end notes), photo credits and a bibliography are included at the conclusion of text. One serious short fall is the lack of an index, which makes it nearly impossible to locate items of interest throughout*. Hopefully, this would be added to future editions. On a positive note, the text is augmented by nearly 200 images and photographs from the author's and other private collections, as well as from archival sources. Many of these have never been seen publically nor previously published, which adds another great bonus to this book. Finally, any proceeds realized from book sales will be donated by the author to the Bruce County Historical Society and to the Bruce County Archives in Southampton. Both these are worthy causes which require your support. Sun, Sand and Surf.



A History of Sauble Beach, can be purchased at various outlets in Bruce and Grey County. In the Waterloo Region, it can be obtained directly from the author, or purchased at Wordsworth Books, Waterloo, Rook Book Store, Cambridge, and Music and Books, Ayr. As well, it can be ordered from Amazon-Sun Sand and Surf-D.S. Pyper. Do get a copy, read, learn and enjoy this literary treasure. Also be sure to make your friends and neighbors aware of the book's availability, so that they can also experience it, and add it to their own libraries! Sauble Beach is truly an important part of the history of the Waterloo Region!** Get David's book and be a part of this connection.

*Breaking news. Author Pyper has recently informed me that a full index prepared by Bill Stewart, will be included in the forthcoming 3rd edition of his book. This is indeed a great addition to the volume!

**See my article "K-W and Sauble Beach: The Nairn and Carter Families, a Connection of More Than 86 Years!," Waterloo Historical Society Journal (2017), v. 105.

Dr. John C. Carter is a long time member of the Waterloo Historical Society. He is the, son of former W.H.S President, the late Eric M. Carter, and a seasonal resident of Sauble Beach and East York. He is currently the Peninsula Director for the Bruce County Historical Society, and the Vice-Chair and Secretary of the East York Foundation. He can be contacted at drjohncarter@bell.net.

For Sale

Submitted by Marion Roes

A WHS member's family has donated these paintings and photo with permission to sell them with proceeds to the WHS. If you would like to see and/or buy, please contact Marion Roes at mlroes@sympatico.ca.

Decorated Elmira Bandstand in Gore Park: wood framed and matted colour photo of the bandstand decorated for Elmira's 100th anniversary in 1986; 15" x 13"; photographer unknown; \$100.

Elmira Bandstand in Gore Park in front of the Elmira Medical Clinic: metal framed and matted watercolour painting by Marie Kloiber (1928-2015); 15 ½" x 17 ½"; no date; \$100.

Blair Sheave Tower: metal framed and matted watercolour painting; winter 1982 by Marie Kloiber; 14 ½" x 17 ½"; \$100.

Blair Sheave Tower: unframed watercolour painting; winter 1978 by Marie Kloiber; 9" x 12"; \$50.

Pictures below.



Who we are and how to reach us

Website www.whs.ca

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Archives gsr@kpl.org for questions about the WHS archives and if you have items to donate. Please note, donations are currently paused.

Book Table

To donate or to buy books, come to our meetings and / or see www.whs.ca/booktable/

Membership

Membership take place from October 1 to September 30. See membership forms and benefits at whs.ca/membership.

Thank you for supporting WHS with your memberships, patronages and donations.

Newsletter Comments, questions and submissions may be sent to the editor, Sophia Grande-Lawlor.

Thank you for help with and distribution of this issue to Sandra Parks, Jon Fear, rych mills, and Mary Anne Banks.