WATERLOO HISTORICAL SOCIETY REPORTS
113th Annual General Meeting
Saturday November 15th, 2025, 1:00 P.M.
St. Matthews Lutheran Church
54 Benton Street, Kitchener, Ontario

Membership, Mary Anne Banks

We currently have 157 members. During 2025 13 new members joined. There were 30 members in 2024 who did not renew in 2025. So far, renewals for the 2026 membership year which runs from Oct 1 2025 to Sept 30 2026, have been received from about half of our members.

We would like to welcome our new members and thank our returning members for their continued support and engagement.

Just a reminder to current members as well as those considering membership, Waterloo Historical Society membership entitles you to participate in all of the activities of the society; voting rights at the annual general meeting; 10% off the price of most used books from the book table at meetings; 25% off admission to the Waterloo Region Museum; access to our public meetings each year featuring guest speakers; a subscription to the society newsletter; a copy of the society's award winning annual volume; and a chance to network with like-minded local history enthusiasts. An adult membership is $30, and a student membership is $15.

A few demographics of interest relating to our current membership:
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
- 10-20 years 41
- 0 to 10 years 65

Residence

- Kitchener 59
- Waterloo 31
- Cambridge 13
- Wilmot 11
- Wellesley 3
- Woolwich 13
- North Dumfries 4

- Outside WR 17
- Outside Ont 3
- Outside Can 3

Communications, Lesley Webb

At the beginning of the year, WHS joined the Waterloo-Wellington Network (WWN) of Museums, Galleries and Archives to leverage their social media platforms to promote membership and events to a wider audience. The social media accounts are managed by City of Waterloo Museum staff who share posts from network members and post weekly event listings to larger groups on facebook, reaching around 5,000 people a month. Thanks to WHS councillor Marion Roes for continuing to administer our facebook page which is our most popular engagement tool with 1,640 followers (https://www.facebook.com/waterloohs). You can also follow us on Instagram (www.instagram.com/waterloohistoricalsociety) where we have 622 followers.

News releases were sent out to local newspapers ahead of our public meetings. Thank you to rych mills for often including meeting details in his Flash From the Past Waterloo Region Record column. The meeting details were also included in the TL;WR weekly newsletter that is distributed on the Monday prior to the meeting.

The media invitation for the July 8th Idylwild Plaque unveiling was sent out to select reporters covering Cambridge and Ayr as well as the Waterloo Region Record. The post unveiling news release was sent out to all local newspapers resulting in an article by Doug Coxson in Cambridge Today on July 19th titled, New plaque marks once idyllic spot on the banks of the Speed River. Special thanks to Ray Ruddy for taking Doug out to the plaque and providing more details for the article.

Newsletter, Sophia Grande-Lawlor

We distributed three newsletters in 2025. Thank you to Marion Roes, Mary Anne Banks, rych mills, Sandy Parks, Jon Fear, and Harold Russell for their help and contributions. Thank you to everyone who shared or forwarded news and photographs this year.

The deadline to contribute news for the Winter 2026 newsletter is Friday January 9, 2026. News updates, photographs of events, or questions are welcome to be directed to whs1912newsletter@gmail.com

Ontario Volunteer Service Awards, Sandra Parks

The Ontario Volunteer Service Awards recognize 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 Waterloo Historical Society nominated six of its members for the Awards in 2025:

- 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

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 all of our recipients.

Report of the WHS Plaques Committee for the November 8, 2025 Annual General Meeting

Active steps toward the establishment of an historical society in Waterloo County (now the Regional Municipality of Waterloo) were taken in 1912.

With the encouragement of the Ontario Historical Society, a public meeting was held in November 1912, which resulted in a recommendation that the Waterloo Historical Society (WHS) be organized. The first meeting of the board was held on November 26, 1912.

When the Waterloo Historical Society was founded by W.H. Breithaupt and other interested community members, the mission of the WHS was to foster the recognition of Waterloo County's unique heritage and diligently encourage its heritage preservation.

For the past 113 years, the WHS has documented the history of the Waterloo Region, including the cities of Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge, along with the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich.

This has been done through public meetings across the Region, publications, such as the always highly anticipated annual volume and the unveiling of historic plaques.

2025 marks the 100th anniversary of the plaques committee.

From the unveiling of the first WHS plaque in 1925 at First Mennonite Church on King Street East in Kitchener to the July 2025 unveiling of the story board Idylwild Park plaque along the Mill Run Trail in Cambridge, the WHS has unveiled 24 plaques at various historic sites across the Region.

The Grand Trunk Railway arrived in Berlin on November 10, 1856. There's a 2006 WHS plaque on the wall inside the train station on Victoria Street North to recognize 150 years of train service in Kitchener (Berlin).

During the centennial year of the WHS in 2012, a plaque was unveiled, in partnership with the Ontario Historical Society, along the historic Huron Road at the Ken Seiling Waterloo Region Museum.

The WHS members of the plaques committee in 2025 include Sandra Parks, Debbie Kroetsch, Harold Russell, Ray Ruddy and myself, Warren Stauch as committee chair.

There have been some challenges over the years. Plaques have been intentionally removed and misplaced such as the 1983 one on the Maple Grove Public School in Hespeler, or have been stolen like the 1994 plaque to Otto Klotz and the Free School in Preston or the 1978 plaque Trinity Anglican Church in Galt.

The 1974 plaque the John Watson Manufacturing Company in Ayr was removed this past year as part of the exterior renewal of the building and to my knowledge, it has not been replaced. I have not been able to make contact with the owners of the building.

And finally, the 1928 plaque dedicated to the John Erb Mill in Preston, the longest continuously operated industry in the Region, was removed from the building during construction and became "lost". Through diligent work by Ray Ruddy, the plaque was found.

We would desperately like to have the plaque remounted on the King Street building in Preston but I have not been successful in making contact with person at Parrish and Heimbecker, the owners, who would deal with the erection of the plaque.

That's our 100th anniversary plaque's committee report. Anyone interested in joining the plaques committee, please see us at the end of the meeting.

Respectively submitted

Warren Stauch, chair

Archives, John Glass

I met with our previous WHS Archivist, Karen Ball-Pyatt, in December 2024, before her retirement as the GSR Manager in January 2025. I took over the task of managing the WHS email. After Karen's departure, many of the WHS activities in GSR such as collection development, digital projects, local history and public genealogy projects slowed significantly. Acquisitions and Donations ceased in December 2024. We were able to take in some materials and hold them until they can be evaluated and potentially placed into the WHS collection at KPL. WHS will be meeting with KPL staff in the new year to discuss how we will move forward.

Ad Hoc Newspaper, John Glass

We continue to receive the Woolwich Observer and The Ayr News into the KPL archives. WHS pays for these subscriptions. WHS retains hard copies of the New Hamburg Independent up to September 2023 when they ceased publishing a print edition.

We continue to house our large newspaper collection in our storage facility. Access to these newspapers is by appointment only.

Web Site, John Glass

Our web site, whs.ca, continues to offer information about the Society. Our service provider continues to be Peaceworks – a company that specializes in providing hosting services to not-for-profit organizations. Over the past year, there have been no disruptions or security issues. We need a refresh on the overall look and feel of the site, but that is not urgent. We are looking for members or a friend of the WHS to take leadership of the site's update. The site runs on the WordPress platform, and if you are adept at using Google or Microsoft office tools or Adobe tools, you would be able to take over the updating and management of our website.

If you are interested in helping, or if you know someone who might be interested in helping (high school volunteer hours?), please contact me or anyone else on the board.

President's Report, John Glass, WHS President

Welcome to the 113th Annual General Meeting of the Waterloo Historical Society. I hope you enjoyed rych's presentation as much as I did. It brought back some memories and it also reminded me how much time has passed and how much the Region, or should I say "County" has grown and changed.

As you are about learn, WHS is in a rather good financial position. We have a strong and experienced array of councillors and board members, so I am greatly confident in our ability to continue to "foster the recognition of our Region's unique heritage and diligently encourage heritage preservation." We have a strong "brand recognition" within the Region and throughout the region, the province and beyond. We continue to publish a highly anticipated and highly regarded volume of local history. We have held some great public events this year and have interacted with several "like" organizations. We have many patrons who continue to support our activities and the publication of our annual volume. We have many active and enthusiastic volunteers who help run meetings, provide media communications, update or social media, take on special projects and create and distribute our annual volume.

Even while in this envious position, we do have some work to do to remain in this comfortable position. Our membership numbers are remaining steady. We need to continue to build our membership. It's important that we get some net-new members. Many board and council members will be leaving these roles in the coming years. We'd like to get more innovative ideas and help with promoting the Society to expanded demographics.

We have had some challenges over the past year as we have not had an Archivist. This board position is defined to be held by a KPL employ having the requisite skills and knowledge to quarterback the Grace Schmidt Room - to receive and process donations, to interact with the public, answering questions and helping direct them with their own research and to facilitate the sharing of the WHS collection with the public. We have recently met with KPL to discuss how we move forward with the Archivist role, and we are hopeful that we will have good news to share in the new year. Additionally, when we met with KPL, we discussed the formal agreement that we have in place between our organizations. We will do a more formal review of this agreement in the new year, but initial discussions indicate that both parties are very much aligned with fulfilling the agreement's terms.

We have had some issues addressing the timeliness of some of our deliverables, including the Annual Volume, replacement of the Archivist role and updating our web site, we are chipping away at improving our performance. You will see some of these changes soon with the Annual Volume and the Archivist, but we are still looking for some members to help us out. You don't need to be part of the board or council to help. You don't need to be proficient with technology or social media. You don't even need to be an "expert" in local history. All you need is some spare time and the desire to help.

I am proud to be part of the WHS board. I know that we have a fervent desire continue to present our Region's history and to discover and learn more about it. WHS is in its 114th year of operation, and I anticipate that it will continue to evolve and be a relevant organization for many years to come. Thank you.

Publications, rych mills

The WHS Publications Committee Report begins with yet another apology from your editor … who is me. As you are well aware the volume is not in your hands and will not be until the new year. The fault is entirely mine and I accept responsibility for not being able to overcome some health issue in 2025. I believe things are back in gear and we can look forward to distributing volue112 within a couple of months. Quite a bit of editing work and layout has been completed and in addition to my frustration with my self is the frustration of not being able to share these great articles we have in the contents.

The rest of the committee, Rosanne Atwater-Hallatt, Marj Kohli, Susan Mavor and Jon Fear are not to blame in the least and I appreciate the great work they've done so far. Likewise, Cober Printing has been most understanding and bears no fault.
In the slightly-better news department, the NEXT volume, # 113, has a number of submissions already in and the instant 112 is completed our attention turns to those with the aim of getting back to a summer 2026 deadline. There is still room for another article or two so if you have been working on something please submit it by February.

WHS is assisted in the publication by grants from the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturism. And it goes without saying, but I will anyway, that our ongoing partnership with the Kitchener Public Library and the Grace Schmidt Room continues to be top-notch and will soon grow in strength.

Programming, rych mills

In 2025, WHS had four public meetings.
In March in this exact room, John Roe shared the inspiring story of hometown boy Stanley Marsland's growth from a teenage science wizard into a major K-W industrialist. His Marsland Industries was a leader in electronic development and the Marsland Center in Waterloo remains a landmark building in that city's uptown area.

Our early summer get together was at Linwood's community center and we learned so much about perhaps the least-known of the townships among the region's city-dwellers, Wellesley. The retired head of the Wellesley Heritage and Historical Society, Nancy Maitland, took us on a visual and verbal tour of that township's villages and towns.

The September meeting was in Maryhill as that village's historical society invited WHS to meet in their community center. Elysia de Laurentis took us along the road of Rough Justice in the Ontario of the 1800s. Chivarees began as wedding night hazings but developed into justice dispensers. Elysia is editor of the Wellington County Historical Society publication and brought a number of members of that organization to join us at Maryhill. Thanks to the Maryhill Historical Society for being super hosts.

Meeting number four of 2025 is today and I hope you enjoyed my brief peek at the slides of Bill Motz.

Programming also includes seeing that WHS participates in outside organizations' historical events. Thus we were present at Wilmot Heritage Day in the spring. Not long ago we had a display at Doors Open, setting up at the entrance of the Gaol Governor's house. Our display from that event is set up here today.

A number of meeting plans are in place for 2026 and later in the announcements portion of today's meeting I'll let you in on some details.

Booktable and Storage, rych mills

I think by now everyone knows that the WHS Book Table sets up at all our meetings, including today's. We are often given collections of no-longer-wanted local history books from members who are downsizing or from late members' estates. We price

these quite low so they don't just sit on our shelves out at the storage site. Mary Anne Banks and I handle the incoming books, cataloguing them and then bringing out to meetings. Usually, Mary Anne is behind the books but from time-to-time people such as Jeff Shank, Todd Bowman and Sherwood Hagey help out and we thank them. One goal is to get the Book Table on our website because we have thousand of books and can only lug a hundred or so to our meetings.

I mentioned our storage site. We have a large, shelved room rented from ACCESS Storage on Guelph Street. In that room are stored not just the donated books, but our back issues of the annual volume, plus boxes of the Township and County books we published in the late 1990s. WHS display items are also stored here. The main occupant of the shelves however is the hard copy newspaper collection dating back to the mid-1800s from area publishers. When the Kitchener Public Library was renovated about a decade-plus ago, a large storage area was lost so we had to step in and provide space to keep these fragile bound volumes. In addition, copies of area weekly newspapers of today are stored there.

Also sharing shelf space are a dozen or so fairly large collections given to WHS over the years that have yet to be taken into the official WHS archives These include photos, maps, artwork, letters, documents etc. Sophia Grande-Lawlor is currently going thru these using a template created by Karen Ball-Pyatt last year. This will simplify the future examination by the new WHS archivist to determine which items will be catalogued in the main collection.

As noted in other years, any member wishing to take a look at the storage site can contact me and we will arrange a visit.

Treasurer's Report for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025
Jeff Shank, Treasurer

The financial statements have been prepared for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025. I would like to quickly review some of the major highlights.

- WHS had $32,356 in revenues. This was approximately $5,700 more than the previous year, mainly from one large donation. Revenues included:
    - Donations were $23,653. This included an unexpected $10,000 donation from the Victorian Classroom, which was winding down its operations. Many thanks to Marg Dickson who suggested donating the funds to WHS. This was partially offset by a reduction in patron donations.
    - Membership fees were $4,527.
    - Book table sales and other revenues were $1,081.
    - Accrued GIC interest was $1,935 ($52,582 GIC from TD Bank, 3.25%, matures Jan. 2026).

    - An Ontario government HODG grant of $1,159.
- Expenses were $25,998 vs. 31,726 the previous year. The decrease was mainly due to the Idylwild Park interpretive plaque. I would like to acknowledge our Plaques Committee who has done a great job in guiding this through to the unveiling this year. WHS also paid higher storage locker rent this year. The Cober printing invoice has not been received yet but an amount has been accrued for this year as the annual volume will be ready soon.
- WHS had net income of $6,359 this year vs. a loss of $5,067 the previous year.
- WHS has assets of approximately $91,000 and equity of $67,000.

- WHS received donations from 52 annual volume patrons this year, down a bit from 61 in the previous year. I would like to thank our patrons for their generosity each year.

- Other activities:
    - the annual charitable return was filed with Canada Revenue Agency before the deadline. This is necessary in order for WHS to be allowed to issue donation receipts.
    - the Ontario government's online business registry was updated.
    - charitable donation receipts were mailed out to donors in late January or early February.
    - the Ontario government's Heritage Organization Development Grant (HODG) application was submitted before the deadline.
    - semiannual HST rebate claims were submitted to Canada Revenue Agency.
    - an information form is sent to The Ontario Historical Society, annually. This is necessary in order to remain affiliated with OHS (which is required for the HODG and the director and officer insurance policy).
    - WHS applied for a grant from the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation, and was approved for $10,200. WHS has not yet completed the conditions which are part of the approval, so I have not yet accrued this amount in the financial statements.
- I have reviewed the procedures and practices I use as WHS Treasurer with another accountant, Dan Cardy, CPA, CA, who retired from public accounting in 2020. Dan simply provided a "second set of eyes" on the work I performed in order to prepare the financial statements being presented at this AGM. Dan has no concerns with the accounting and booking and financial statement information I am presenting to the members.

1. I would like to make a motion for the members of WHS to approve the financial statements for the year ending September 30, 2025.

2. I would like to make a motion for the members of WHS to approve the use of a person with a financial background to be a second set of eyes looking at the financial procedures I use and the financial statements I produce.

11/10/25

Waterloo Historical Society
Profit and Loss YTD
October 2024 through September 2025

	Oct '24 - Sep '25		Oct '23 - Sep '24	
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
Donations		23,653		16,002
Grants				
Ont. HODG	1,159		1,159	
Total Grants		1,159		1,159
Interest		1,935		1,897
Membership Fees		4,527		4,896
Sales				
Annual Volume	440		957	
Township Books	180		45	
Sales - Other	462		1,629	
Total Sales		1,081		2,631
Other Revenue		0		75
Total Income		32,356		26,660
Expense				
Administrative				
Internet	424		391	
Insurance	1,877		1,719	
Newsletter Printing	324		155	
Administrative - Other	397		269	
Total Administrative		3,022		2,534
Archives				
Storage Locker Rent	6,479		6,181	
Archives - Other	698		49	
Total Archives		7,177		6,230
Books / Photos For Resale		360		0
Education		31		6,137
Honourarium/Donations		1,750		1,500
Meeting Costs		1,075		334
Postage and Mailing				
Annual Volumes & Books	196		208	
Newsletters	394		93	
Postage and Mailing - Other	13		191	
Total Postage and Mailing		603		492
Publishing				
Annual Volumes	11,979		14,500	

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Waterloo Historical Society
Profit and Loss YTD
October 2024 through September 2025

	Oct '24 - Sep '25	Oct '23 - Sep '24
Total Publishing	11,979	14,500
Total Expense	25,998	31,726
Net Ordinary Income	6,359	-5,067
Net Income	**6,359**	**-5,067**

11/10/25

Waterloo Historical Society
Balance Sheet
As of September 30, 2025

		Sep 30, '25		Sep 30, '24
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Chequing/Savings				
Book Table Float		75		75
Archive Purchase Fund		0		500
General Fund				
WHS / GSR Cataloguing	775		775	
General Fund - Remainder	33,858		28,365	
Total General Fund		34,633		29,140
GIC's				
General Fund GIC's	52,582		50,000	
Total GIC's		52,582		50,000
Total Chequing/Savings		87,290		79,715
Other Current Assets				
Federal HST Recoverable		96		158
Ontario HST Recoverable		251		407
Other Receivable				
General - Accrued Interest	1,250		1,897	
Total Other Receivable		1,250		1,897
Prepaid Expenses		2,055		1,765
Total Other Current Assets		3,652		4,226
Total Current Assets		90,942		83,941
TOTAL ASSETS		**90,942**		**83,941**
LIABILITIES & EQUITY				
Liabilities				
Current Liabilities				
Other Current Liabilities				
Accrued liabilities		14,000		17,568
Unearned Revenue				
Donations	5,100		5,100	
Memberships				
2025 Memberships	0		175	
2026 Memberships	1,260		0	
Total Memberships		1,260		175
Volume Patrons				
May 25 Patrons	0		200	
May 26 Patrons	3,325		0	
Total Volume Patrons		3,325		200
Total Unearned Revenue		9,685		5,475
Total Other Current Liabilities		23,685		23,043
Total Current Liabilities		23,685		23,043

11/10/25

Waterloo Historical Society
Balance Sheet
As of September 30, 2025

	Sep 30, '25	Sep 30, '24
Total Liabilities	23,685	23,043
Equity		
Opening Bal Equity	47,417	47,417
Retained Earnings	13,481	18,547
Net Income	6,359	-5,067
Total Equity	67,257	60,898
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	**90,942**	**83,941**