

Waterloo Historical Society Newsletter



Fall 2026

Sophia Grande-Lawlor, Editor

Fall Meeting at the Detweiler Meetinghouse



Tuesday, September 29

Doors Open: 6:45

3445 Roseville Road

Marion Roes, a past-president of WHS, will first outline some of the story of this restored 1855 stone Mennonite meetinghouse. Then, in cooperation with members of the North Dumfries Historical Preservation Society, we'll tour the township via old photos and stories. Although there are few official towns and villages within North Dumfries, the township has had a vibrant history. It also has some intriguing geographical features to be explored.

Because of limited space, WHS will not be providing snacks and refreshments so please bring your own water bottle. Also, the WHS Book Table will not be set up.

Come early: bring a pillow! old meetinghouses were not built for bottom comfort.

Come early: there is a parking area but, if filled, parking is allowed along Roseville Road.

Come early: spend time exploring the building's architecture and construction.

Come early: explore the adjacent Roseville Mennonite Cemetery.

Come early: enjoy an early autumn North Dumfries evening.



Photos courtesy of Marion Roes

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.

Donations

Thank you to Ron Welker for his donation to WHS in honour of Marion Roes and Karen Ball-Pyatt as well as ongoing accruals to F142 Ron Welker 2SLGBTQ+ Collection.

Call for Directors and Councillors

Submitted by the Nominating Committee

The Waterloo Historical Society is seeking dedicated members to serve as Directors and Councillors on our Board for the upcoming term. If you are passionate about preserving and promoting Waterloo Region's history, this is a meaningful way to contribute.

Why Join the Board?

Our Directors and Councillors help guide the Society's work across a wide range of committees, including:

Membership
Communications
Newsletter
Website
Plaques
Publication (Annual Volume)
Programs
Book Table

These committees shape everything from public outreach to publications, events, and community engagement. Directors chair the committees, report to the Board at meetings as voting participants and serve two-year terms.

Councillor Duties

Councillors play a vital role as WHS ambassadors in their municipalities. Responsibilities include:

Promoting WHS activities and publications locally
Sharing news of historical events and developments in their area
Assisting with newsletter contributions of local items
Coordinating delivery of annual volumes
Helping identify and preserve historical records
Supporting WHS meetings held in their municipality
Keeping the Board informed about partner organizations
Working toward future service as a Director

Councillors are welcome at Board meetings as non-voting participants and serve one-year terms. We welcome Councillors representing any of the Cities and Townships making up Waterloo Region but are specifically looking for those from Waterloo, Cambridge, and North Dumfries.

If you are interested in contributing your time, skills, and enthusiasm to the Society's work, we warmly encourage you to reach out to the Nominating Committee (Lesley Webb, John Glass, Debbie Kroetsch at whs@whs.ca). Your involvement helps preserve and share the heritage of Waterloo Region for generations to come.

100th Anniversary Plaque Defaced, Now Restored

Article and photographs by Sandra Parks

As you may have heard at one of our Waterloo Historical Society public meetings, sometime before March 10 this year, the Idylwild Park plaque located on the Mill Run Trail in Preston (Cambridge) was vandalized. Thanks to the work of current and past members of the Plaques Committee, who celebrated their 100th anniversary last year, the plaque has been restored.

In 2019, the WHS Plaques Committee began developing an interpretive plaque to commemorate the location of Idylwild Park along the Mill Run Trail in Preston. It was manufactured and installed in spring 2025 at a cost of over \$6,600, with an unveiling July 8.



The Idylwild Park plaque located on the Mill Run Trail in Preston was vandalized early this year. (anonymous trail user photo)

The sign company who produced the plaque quoted \$2,000 to manufacture and install an overlay. The Plaques Committee researched other less expensive ways to achieve the same result, using a UV resistant replacement image printed on aluminum, covered with plexiglass, for a cost of just over \$200.

Thanks to Warren Stauch and Ray Ruddy for their work on this project, which was completed in July.

Going forward, this aluminum-type sign may be a low-cost alternative for replacing bronze plaques which have been stolen, and for future storyboard-type plaques the committee may consider.



*Plaques Committee member Ray Ruddy restored the plaque with a UV resistant replacement image printed on aluminum, covered with plexiglass.
(Ray Ruddy photo)*

The Publication Committee Thanks Marj Kohli

Submitted by the Publications Committee

With the publication of WHS annual volume 112 (2024) – which actually came out in late winter 2026 - we say a fond farewell to Marj Kohli. A member of WHS since 1985, she volunteered to serve on the board of directors (1988 - 2010) and the publication committee (1988 – 2026).

For almost 40 years, Marj steadfastly helped to read, correct and add to dozens and dozens of articles. She herself published articles in the volume and is the author of *The Golden Bridge: Young Immigrants to Canada 1833-1939*. It meticulously chronicled thousands of young immigrants transported from the UK and Ireland to Canada between 1833-1939, tracing home children placed by various agencies and organizers. It is considered to be an indispensable tool for those with a “home child” ancestor.

Thank you Marj! We will miss you.

The Publication Committee



Members of the publication committee taken May 2, 2001 with the launch of Volume 88 (2000). This would be Kathryn Lamb's last volume as editor. From left: the late Grace Schmidt, the late Kathryn Lamb, Marj Kohli, Susan Hoffman and Rosanne Atwater-Hallatt.

Ontario Volunteer Service Awards

Submitted by Sandra Parks

The Waterloo Historical Society nominated four of its members for the annual Ontario Volunteer Service Awards in 2026. 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 2026 nominees were:

- Rosanne Atwater-Hallatt - 40 years' service
- Marjorie Kohli - 40 years' service
- Marion Roes - 25 years' service
- Lesley Webb - 15 years' service



WHS member Lesley Webb received her 15 years of service pin at the 2026 Ontario Volunteer Service Awards ceremony at Bingemans on September 16. She's pictured with her MPP for Kitchener Centre, Aislinn Clancy.

Several WHS members attend the OVSA ceremony at Bingemans on September 16.

Recipients received a personalized certificate and lapel pin acknowledging their years of service. In total, the Ontario government recognized over 5,000 community leaders in 2026, from organizations such as non-profits, schools, community centres, hospitals, museums, libraries and community associations.

Congratulations and thank you to the recipients.

Condolences

To the family and friends of rych mills who passed away on September 2, 2026. A Waterloo Historical Society member of over 25 years and prominent local historian, rych made significant contributions to his community and was known for his passion for local history. His obituary can be found [here](#).

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Have news to share?

Send the newsletter committee updates to

whs1912newsletter@gmail.com

Deadline for Winter 2027 newsletter Friday,
January 8, 2027.



Who we are and how to reach us

Website www.whs.ca

Email whs@whs.ca

Mail to Waterloo Historical Society c/o Grace Schmidt Room, 85 Queen Street North, Kitchener ON N2H 2H1

Facebook

www.facebook.com/waterloohistorical

Instagram

[@waterloohistorical](https://www.instagram.com/waterloohistorical)

Board of Directors

President: John Glass
jcglass@rogers.com

Treasurer: Jeff Shank
jeff420shank@gmail.com

Secretary: Mary Lapp
secretarywhs1912@gmail.com

Archivist: Vacant

Communications Chair:
Lesley Webb

Membership Chair: Mary Anne Banks
whsmemberships1912@gmail.com

Editor, Newsletter: Sophia Grande-Lawlor
whs1912newsletter@gmail.com

Editor, Publication
Committee Chair: rych mills

Plaques Committee Chair:
Warren Stauch
mmegeo@golden.net

Book Table Coordinator:
rych mills
whs@whs.ca

Programs Committee
Chair: rych mills

Directors:
Debbie Kroetsch
Ray Ruddy
David Emberly

Councilors

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Kitchener: Jon Fear,
Sandra Parks, Harold
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Wellesley Township:
Rosanne Atwater-Hallatt,
Nancy Maitland

Wilmot Township: Patty
Clarke

Woolwich Township:
Marion Roes, Diane
Strickler

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,

Mary Anne Banks, and rych mills.