

---

# Waterloo Historical Society

## Newsletter

### MAY / JUNE 2024

---



Marion Roes, Editor

### Public Meeting

All are welcome. There is no admission charge.

**Tuesday, June 11, 2024**

**Doors open at 6:30 pm; meeting at 7:30 pm**

**Victoria Park Pavilion**

**80 Schneider Avenue, Kitchener**

**Early Aviation in Kitchener-Waterloo** by WHS director and local historian rych mills begins with lighter-than-air flights and then highlights the first-ever airplane appearance over Berlin. The presentation then moves on to a few First World War-connected flying visits. In the 1920s, several ex-military pilots began advocating for an airfield to be set up in Kitchener. That brings the story around to Fred Gillies and his role in establishing such a field in east end Kitchener. The story concludes with the building of an actual aerodrome on the edge of Waterloo at Lexington.

**Parking:** If the pavilion lot is full, there is more parking past the playground near the Iron Horse Trail.

**Passenger-Carrying  
Aeroplane Flights**

For the benefit of the many Kitchener people who were unable to avail themselves of a pleasant safe aeroplane flight during Old Home Week, a special service will be given here on

<b>SATURDAY, SEPT. 5.</b>	<b>SUNDAY, SEPT. 6.</b>	<b>MONDAY, Sept. 7</b>
-------------------------------	-----------------------------	----------------------------

---

<b>AERODROME</b>	Frederick St. at City Limits, on A. L. Shantz' Farm.
------------------	---

---

Approximately <b>15 MILE FLIGHTS</b> No stunting unless requested.	Harold Smith of General Battery Service will be the Pilot in charge of the Aeroplane.
---	---

---

<b>\$10.00</b>	<b>JACK ELLIOT AIR SERVICE</b>
----------------	------------------------------------

*Kitchener Daily Record*  
advertisement September 4, 1925



An overdue whole-hearted "Thank you" to WHS volunteers all year and especially during National Volunteer Week, held April 14-20 - for their numerous contributions to publications, editing, meetings, exhibits, plaques, research, speakers, Board of Directors, Councilors, Book Table sales, photos, minutes, financials, archives, web site, social media, programs, drivers...

# Happenings in the Grace Schmidt Room (GSR)

---

A belated Happy New Year! A heartfelt thank you goes out to WHS members who joined us for the KPL Genealogy Fair on November 4, 2023 and for the team that exhibited at the Fair. We look forward to hosting our next fair in 2025!

We are pleased to have completed a community research project, funded by the Edna Staebler Legacy Fund, Waterloo Region Community Foundation, which identified marginalized communities in the federal censuses 1851-1931.

We are offering the ever-popular Bookbinding for Beginners program at Central Library on May 28 at 6:30 p.m.

Love heritage plants and gardens? Bob Wildfong, Horticultural Specialist for Doon Village will lead us on a visual tour of turn of the century gardens, practices, and plantings! Join us at Central on Wednesday, June 5, at 7 p.m.

Get help on digitizing your family treasures with our Show Me How to Digitize! program. Appointments are available Monday to Saturday.

To register for all programs – register online or call 519-743-0271, ext 212 or email [gsr@kpl.org](mailto:gsr@kpl.org).



**From Instagram and Facebook:** That's a wrap for Archives A to Z from Kitchener Public Library GSR! All credit and kudos go to Lauren for all of her delightful posts and the window display in the Grace Schmidt Room!

"Z" is for Zilliax. Henry Zilliax was the owner and proprietor of the Zilliax House Hotel on the north-west corner of Arthur and Church Streets in Elmira. In 1898, the hotel burned down after a lightning strike and had to be entirely rebuilt. Photo: WHF PH124, ca. 1899



## Recent donations to the WHS archives include:

- Ongoing accruals to F142 Ron Welker 2SLGBTQ+ Collection;
- Weichel family of Elmira information and photos;
- A panoramic photo of the third Shantz Reunion at Waterloo Park, dated July 3, 1935;
- A panoramic photograph of the Woolner Reunion at Victoria Park, Kitchener, dated July 1, 1940, video recordings of Breslau Homecomings, wall calendars from Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church and H. Schilling & Sons general store, Breslau;
- A copy of "The Taoist Pearl: the Life of a Chinese Convert";
- Poster titled "Rules and Regulations: Berlin Market", (n.d.); and
- Dreisinger, Lichty, and Wilken families' certificates and history, and Silverwood Dairies, Elmira information.

Karen Ball-Pyatt, WHS Archivist  
Email [karen.ball-pyatt@kpl.org](mailto:karen.ball-pyatt@kpl.org)  
Tel: 519-743-0271, ext. 252

Waterloo Historical Society gratefully acknowledges that the Kitchener Public Library continues to keep and care for our collection and archives in the Grace Schmidt Room of Local History at the Central Library.

## Condolences

---

To the family of Ernie Ritz who died on March 13, 2024. Ernie was a WHS member since 1971, a past president and all-time supporter of WHS. Ernie's many contributions to the community are given in his obituary and Valerie Hill's "Lifetimes" column in *The Waterloo Regional Record*.

<https://obituaries.therecord.com/obituary/ernst-ernie-ritz-1089467136> and

[https://www.therecord.com/life/waterloo-region/ernie-ritz-had-a-wealth-of-local-historical-knowledge/article\\_9f825504-0edc-57bc-91aa-9ffe958a9c99.html](https://www.therecord.com/life/waterloo-region/ernie-ritz-had-a-wealth-of-local-historical-knowledge/article_9f825504-0edc-57bc-91aa-9ffe958a9c99.html)

## Congratulations to John English

---

WHS member and distinguished Professor Emeritus John English has been named to the Order of Ontario. Dr. English was among 25 appointees named to the Order on January 1, 2024 by the Honourable Edith Dumond, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and Chancellor of the Order of Ontario.

<https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/news/distinguished-professor-emeritus-john-english-appointed>

## Wilmot Heritage Day

---

Thank you to Heritage Wilmot for organizing a fun day on February 19. Left: Our Book Table sales were good, and many people enjoyed the photo display. Right: WHS volunteers Mary Anne Banks and Ray Ruddy are at the table. Warren Stauch (blue sweater) is talking with Ken Seiling, and other friends and fellow historians. Credit to Harold Russell and Heritage Wilmot.



## Board of Directors' News and Notes

---

*Nominating Committee* – John Glass, Lesley Webb, Debbie Kroetsch

Earlier this year, Marion Roes notified the Nominating Committee that she will not be standing for another term as director term and will step down as newsletter editor. One of the Society's newest members, Sophia Grande-Lawlor reached out to the Nominating Committee to inquire about a position on the board. Sophia's past work experience editing the Wellington County Economic Development newsletter made her the perfect candidate to assist and learn from Marion in producing the WHS newsletter for the remainder of the term. This brings up the opportunity for creating a Newsletter Committee for next year. Please reach out to a member of the Nominating Committee if you are interested in contributing to the newsletter

At the February 6 board meeting, Sophia was voted in as a director and in addition to working with the newsletter, joined the Programs Committee to help plan member meetings. To both tasks, Sophia brings a strong connection and interest in local history, with previous work experience at the Wellington County Museum & Archives and the Region of Waterloo Archives. The Nominating Committee is pleased to welcome Sophia to the board!

If you are interested in a position on the board or council speak to one of the following members of the Nominating Committee: Debbie Kroetch, John Glass, Lesley Webb

## The Victorian Classroom Project is ending

---

From Margaret Dickson's letter to the editor, *Waterloo Region Record*, May 3, 2024.

This project was located at Suddaby Public School in Kitchener, and for 28 years has provided insight for today's young people into life as it was in the 19th century. The program embraced century-old classroom experiences. Students engaged in role playing and participated in spelling bees, learned about the times tables in arithmetic, discovered local history and more. Many people have been involved, including members of the Waterloo Historical Society and the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation. Retired teachers have donated their time, talent and experiences as they taught in the program. Others donated desks, books, artifacts and money. It is regrettable that the Waterloo Region District School Board has chosen to terminate the Victorian Classroom Project. Thanks to those who supported this vintage classroom. *Margaret Dickson Waterloo.* Margaret and Helen Koepke were the founders of the Project.

See also <https://www.therecord.com/news/waterloo-region/public-boards-victorian-era-classroom-transitioning-back-to-a-regular-classroom/article> May 8, 2024

Waterloo Historical Society fosters the recognition of our region's unique heritage, and diligently encourages its preservation by documenting the history of Waterloo Region, including the cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo, along with the townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich.

## Who we are and how to reach us

**Web Site** [www.whs.ca](http://www.whs.ca)  
**Email** [whs@whs.ca](mailto: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/waterloohs](http://www.facebook.com/waterloohs)  
**Instagram** [waterloohistoricalociety](https://www.instagram.com/waterloohistoricalociety)

### Board of Directors

**President:** John Glass  
[jcglass@rogers.com](mailto:jcglass@rogers.com)

**Treasurer:** Jeff Shank  
[jeff420shank@gmail.com](mailto:jeff420shank@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** Mary Lapp  
[secretarywhs1912@gmail.com](mailto:secretarywhs1912@gmail.com)

**Archivist:** Karen Ball-Pyatt  
[karen.ball-pyatt@kpl.org](mailto:karen.ball-pyatt@kpl.org)

**Communications Chair:**  
Lesley Webb

**Membership Chair:**  
Mary Anne Banks  
[whsmemberships1912@gmail.com](mailto:whsmemberships1912@gmail.com)

**Editor, Newsletter:** Marion Roes  
[mlroes@sympatico.ca](mailto:mlroes@sympatico.ca) 519 883-1448

**Editor, Publication Committee Chair:**  
rych mills [rychmills@golden.net](mailto:rychmills@golden.net)  
519 742-4990

**Plaques Committee Chair:**  
Warren Stauch [mmegeo@golden.net](mailto:mmegeo@golden.net)

**Book Table Coordinator:**  
Mary Anne Banks  
[whs@whs.ca](mailto:whs@whs.ca)

**Programs Committee Chair:**  
Eric Uhlmann 519 577-5773

**Directors**  
Debbie Kroetsch  
Ray Ruddy  
David Emberly  
Glenn Thorpe  
Sophia Grande-Lawlor

**Councilors**  
Cambridge: Vacant  
Kitchener: Erin Applebee,  
Sandra Parks, Harold Russell  
Waterloo: Jane Britton  
North Dumfries Township:  
Kim Hopps, Irene Schmidt-Adeny  
Wellesley Township:  
Rosanne Atwater-Hallatt,  
Nancy Maitland  
Wilnot Township: Patty Clarke  
Woolwich Township: Diane Strickler

**Archives:** Karen Ball-Pyatt  
[karen.ball-pyatt@kpl.org](mailto:karen.ball-pyatt@kpl.org)  
for questions about the WHS  
archives and if you have items to  
donate.

**Book Table**  
To donate or to buy books, come to  
our meetings and / or see  
[www.whs.ca/booktable/](http://www.whs.ca/booktable/).

**Membership**  
Membership is from October 1 to  
September 30. See  
[whs.ca/membership](http://whs.ca/membership) forms and  
benefits at [whs.ca/membership](http://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, Marion Roes.

*Thank you for help with and  
distribution of this issue to Karen  
Ball-Pyatt, Rosanne Atwater-Hallatt,  
Mary Anne Banks, Sophia Grande-  
Lawlor, rych mills, Margaret Dickson.*

*We acknowledge that the land on which we meet are the lands traditionally used by the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabeg 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.*