

**KESWICK RIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MONTHLY MEMBERS' MEETING**

Tuesday, June 3, 2025, 7:00 p.m.

At the Superior School, 112 Route 616 or
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2448497387>

Attending: Emma Craig, Bruce DuPlessis, Evelyn Fidler, Wade and Elaine Geldart, Gillian Holden, Anne and Russ Hunt, Dan Nicholson, Nancy Rideout, Ruth DuPlessis Riordon

Regrets: David Addleman, Cynthia Craig, Chuck McKeen, Sheila Moore

Welcome: At 7:03, after some difficulties with local sound from the participants on Zoom, and after ascertaining that we were going to be able to hear Ruth, who had offered a historical tidbit for this meeting, Anne introduced Emma Craib, our Canada Summer Jobs employee for the summer, and asked her to talk about her plans for next year. Emma said she is going to Brock University to work on a MA in history, with a substantial scholarship. She said much of the reason for her scholarship was the work she's done with the Historical Society, and she's grateful for the opportunity.

Anne then asked Ruth to share her tidbit, noting that we haven't had one for a long time. Ruth explained that when Sylvia Sharpe had republished her book, she'd bought four copies, and when she'd gone to pick them up Sylvia had told her a story. When she got home she realized she couldn't remember all of it, and asked Sylvia to write it down, which she did. Ruth then read the letter. Anne said it was great that she had that and shared it. Elaine said she thought everybody would be aware that Sylvia had passed away this week.

Approval of Agenda: Anne asked for a motion to approve the agenda; Nancy so moved, Gillian seconded, and the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Anne asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 6 meeting. Bruce noted that there was an error in the genealogy section; he and Ruth had asked Sharon Bird about their "mystery man" picture, not the reverse. Russ said he'd correct that. Elaine moved to approve the minutes as amended, Gillian seconded, and the motion carried.

Business Arising from the Minutes

Signing Officers – Anne said that David Addleman is now an official signing officer.

Collections Grant – Anne said there is still no word= Evelyn said that nobody has yet heard about those grants, that the decision usually comes down in June.

Website Committee (Russ, Bruce, Chuck, Cynthia) – Bruce said that Kit's created a sample of what the site will look like and we've been discussing that and what should be in it and how it should be made simple enough that people can get quickly to whatever they're looking for without going through a bunch of rabbit holes. Right now, he said, he and Ruth are looking after the genealogy section, and trying to figure out what should be in that area. Russ said that Kit had been simplifying the main page and introducing new images to draw attention to the site,

and the committee's been thinking about what should be promoted and who should be asked to work on various sections. He said that, for instance, he was interested in making *The Keswick Exchange* easier to navigate and find things in. He said that we'd discussed creating temporary online exhibitions – for instance, Emma might put together an exhibition with an online component. The plan is that we'll work on specific areas over the summer and hope to have something to present to the membership in August or September. Russ said he'd suggested having a look at it at this meeting, but that Kit and Bruce had both advised waiting until it was ready for public unveiling.

Canada Summer Jobs – Anne said Emma has already set up a lovely display on the shelves in the brown bookcase in the classroom. Nancy said she had arrived back just after Emma had started, and things were already underway. Emma said that so far she'd mainly been focused on cataloguing, because there was some backlog, and has also recatalogued the reference library. She's started working on the virtual exhibitions for the toy display she and Mia had set up two years ago, and the World War II display with the ration books. Anne said we're lucky to have Emma back.

Central NB Museum Summer of History update – Evelyn explained that it is a project spearheaded by Heritage New Brunswick to feature all of the heritage institutions, museums, art galleries, living historical sites, things like that, in the province. What it's going to do is link people that are going to visit each place, one place is featured each day. By following a QR code, or going to the website, you can see an update on the Heritage New Brunswick website. You can be eligible to win a prize, so the more places you visit the better your chances of winning. It was the provincial tourism department who are really interested in doing this. It is a pilot year, and I think they're going to be more on board next year to promote it. Today in the legislature, the Minister of Tourism, Heritage, and Culture, Madame Theriault actually announced to the legislature that this is going to be the summer of history. Evelyn said she was part of the initial planning, but dropped away from the working group because a lot of it was marketing. It was spearheaded by Janet Clouston from Albert County Museum. She said she hasn't seen our day on the schedule yet, but is keeping an eye out for it. Anne asked, how are people going to know about our museum? Gillian said she'd found the website, and there's a great menu which takes you to 110 historical sites. Anne said she'd been on the website and didn't see us listed. Gillian said, you go from Keeler House Museum to Kings County Museum; no Keswick Ridge Historical Society in there. Evelyn said, there will be, I'm going to fix that for sure. We will be added because it's money from our budget we get from the Central Zone that was used to help fund this. Thanks for checking.

Financial Report: Dan said he had now completed the report for April in case anybody wants to see it; the corrections hadn't made a big difference. He shared his screen and walked us through the report for May. There was some discussion of current money in the desk in the office, and of one deposit which had gone into the wrong account and needed to be transferred.

Monthly Committee Reports

Curator and Registrar – Evelyn said she's been corresponding with Nancy about two collections that are coming to the committee. One is the Jesse Clark collection. He was a very important person in the history of Springfield and operated the post office there for a few years. A trunk belonging to him was found with some documents and receipts and archival materials.

And then a couple of weeks ago there was a message on the Council of Archives in New Brunswick that there was some material in an archive in Québec that didn't fit with their mandate, so they were ready to give it to anyone in New Brunswick who was interested in the Gilmore family of Keswick Ridge. So, she said, I volunteered and have been in touch with the woman who wants to donate it. She grew up in New Brunswick, moved to Québec, and is related to Sterling Gilmore. There are a few postcards from about the turn of the century, and a host of Valentines given to her probably from the '40s. She has sent the items and Evelyn has already prepared an acquisition proposal for it. Nancy said she was excited to receive the Jesse Clark donation that's suddenly appeared; she had sent some pictures of the items in her Registrar's Report earlier; she's not sure what some of them would have been used for, but they're fascinating. [more to come]

Membership – Ruth said she's compared her list with Russ', and there are some discrepancies. He has people marked as paid that she doesn't, probably because they've paid and she has no way to know, because she doesn't see the money any more. Evelyn said that any time she gets membership money, she emails both Ruth and Russ. A number of ways communication about this might go astray were discussed. It was agreed that Russ and Ruth should discuss this and clarify who is actually paid and who isn't.

Publications – Elaine's publications report said we'd sold two books – *A Taste of Keswick* and *The Vanished Village* – in the last month, both from the Coburn Farm Store.

Communication – Russ said the only communication issues he was aware of had to do with the sound quality at this meeting, and he promised to figure it out before the next one.

Genealogy – Bruce and Ruth said there was a new request from Willard Kitchen, looking for live relatives. He said his grandfather's name was Willard Kitchen. Ruth knew there had been a person by that name in Woodstock, passed on now. Ruth called his daughter and found that her grandfather was Elwood Kitchen, that his parents had died within a day of each other in the flu epidemic and he'd been raised by another family in Woodstock, but two brothers had been sent to Ontario. They had done some research but it's now all in Ontario; the daughter said she'd see what she could find out. There are also Kitchens in Kingsclear. Evelyn said a friend of hers is the community genealogist in Kingsclear, and her maiden name is Kitchen. She could put Ruth in touch with her via email. Anne said she'd just had another communication from Willard Kitchen, wondering how the genealogical committee was progressing; Ruth said she'd contact him and bring him up to date. Bruce said that George Hamilton's been quiet this month, that he and Ruth are still working on the "mystery man." He had been going to contact Andy Atkinson, but hasn't yet, because he's been out in the garden.

Building and Facilities – Dan said he hasn't done much since the last meeting. Anne wondered if we'd engaged somebody to mow this year. Wade said it would be David Coburn, but he hasn't got his mower out yet. He's sure we'll see him soon. Anne said she'd put Judy Jewett's pink petunias back in the flower boxes; they're still a little bedraggled, but they'll fluff out.

Events – Canada Day, New Brunswick Day. Anne wondered if anyone had any ideas about a float. Dan said that he won't be here on July 1st. Anne said it's pretty important that we be open that day, whether there's a float or not, and she was sure we could staff it between 11 and 4. We should make sure the bathrooms are open, because there are often people here with young children. Emma said it would be one of her working days, so she'll be there all day. Anne said

that's great, we just need one other person and we can have both buildings open. We may want to think about whether we've done anything special that we could have on display. Evelyn said Emma can probably take another day off, because it's a holiday; Emma said will do, she's already got her other day picked out. Wade said he'd like to borrow ur canopy tents?] for that day as they'll be selling shortcake. Anne asked if that would be on Calley Ann Field; Wade said yes, but didn't know whether they'd be in or out. Anne said she's not on the Events Committee any more, but either Margie Cummings or Celinda Crandall would know.

New Business

Anne wondered if we want to try again opening the Museum on summer weekends with volunteers to host. We did that last year but sort of spottily, because we couldn't get a lot of volunteers. In order to advertise that we're open, we'd want to have it covered all the time. If we can't, then we should put all our eggs in the basket of the Pumpkin House and the Maze across the street, because we get lots of people through here in the fall. Nancy said that might be the way to go, because we won't get people that are going to be knowledgeable. Anne said last year, we had a handbook for anybody who volunteered. And there's nothing wrong with just being a greeter, and making sure things are safe. Russ said it's important that we should not be expecting that people will put themselves forward as someone who knows something about history. It's more like museum guards than docents. That's why we don't get many volunteers; people don't want to say, I'm an expert on history. Also, he said, I think we should look at other rack cards and see how many museums have formal hours. "Open by appointment" seems pretty conventional. Emma said that we can post "depending on volunteer availability" on Facebook – even the Fredericton Museum does that during most of their year. And she agreed that we don't want to require people to be experts; we might call for volunteers through the Facebook page. Dan said when he gives tours of the store, he just has a few items that he's really interested in and talks about them. Anne said that it is actually getting people comfortable enough to come in the first place that's the problem. After some discussion, Dan said what would happen if we just said Saturday afternoons, because his experience was that there were many fewer visitors on Sunday. Anne said we can get the secretary to send a note to all the members saying, we'd like to be open every Saturday afternoon from Canada Day to Labour Day, and we're looking for people willing to be here to welcome visitors. Russ wondered if one person were enough. Elaine said no, you need two so we can have both buildings open. Dan said yes, most of the time one person could handle it; there's not very often more than one group at a time. Anne said, let's try it that way.

Correspondence: There was none beyond what had already been discussed.

Adjournment: Anne called for a motion to adjourn; Russ so moved, at 8:03, and the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 7:00 p.m.