

Date of Meeting: May 22, 2025

Report Number: A30-25

Report Subject: May 2025 Curator & Heritage Services Manager Report

Recommendation:

1. THAT the Clarington Public Library Board receive Administrative Report No. A30-25: May 2025 Curator & Heritage Services Manager Report; and

THAT the Clarington Public Library Board approve the items listed in the Deaccession List 2025-05 (Appendix A) be approved for removal from the Museums & Archives collections.

Report Overview:

To provide the Board with information about operational highlights from the museums and archives and key activities in April and May 2025.

Highlights

Archival Materials Returned

On May 2nd, selected archival materials that received conservation treatment by MuseumPros were returned to CLMA. The materials were remediated and digitized to provide long-term preservation and access. The selected materials include items related to Camp 30 and the Boys Training School, as well as other historic businesses and persons. This summer, a Master of Museum Studies Student will be assisting with the cataloguing of the returned materials as part of an internship.

MuseumPros removed the next Phase of archival materials selected for treatment. These materials include oversized paper documents, framed photographs and diaries.

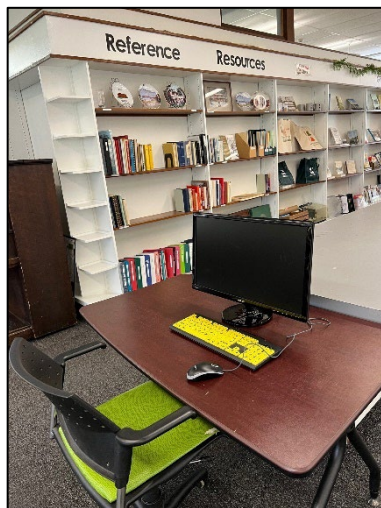
Image: Returned archival materials in temporary storage, ready for cataloguing



Waverley Place Renovations and Restoration

Restoration work on the Waverley Place veranda has continued during the month of April. The upper balcony railings and posts were removed, and the new posts have been installed.

The new railings have been replicated to match the former railings, posts and decorative post finials to preserve the culture and historical significance of the building.



Local History Research Computer

On April 28th, a new local history research public use computer station was installed at the Sarah Jane Williams Heritage Centre. The computer will be available for drop-in research use to access online resources such as the Digitized newspaper Collection, Ancestry Library edition, online census data, ONLand Property searches, and other historical research resources.

Image: New Local History Research Computer Station at the SJWHC

Human Resources

Harmonization Training

In April, five (5) staff members completed Harmonization Training on heritage services at the Sarah Jane Williams Heritage Centre. Training includes learning about Museum and archives collections, research services, exhibitions and heritage programming as well as guided tours and group visits. More harmonization training will continue for other CLMA staff through May.

Programs

Local History Research - Property

On April 3rd, CLMA staff presented a drop-in program on how to conduct property research. A slide deck with visuals was presented to the attendees as they were guided through various online resources as well as live demonstrations of the websites. Attendees were

guided by staff through the on-site resources at our locations, shown how to complete a research request and provided with a tip sheet to take home.

Celebrate Earth Day

On April 22nd, the museum sites hosted an Earth Day program promoting enjoying nature and protecting the environment. Participants toured Waverley Place, planted seeds to take home and walking the grounds for the historic Garden Walk

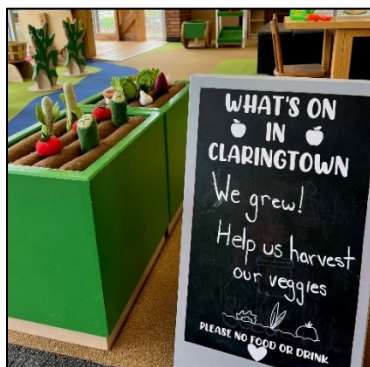
Image: Celebrate Earth Day, Garden Walk signs on the museum grounds



Waverley Place Tours

Tours of Waverley Place have continued to be offered to the public on select Thursdays in April with tours leaving the Sarah Jane at 6:30pm. This will continue through May and June and will provide an extra opportunity for visitors to have a guided tour of the historic home.

ClaringTown Highlights



A total of 284 guests visited including attendees at the Stay and Play programs and the weekly Saturdays at Sarah Jane programs.

In May, felt vegetables were added to the garden boxes in ClaringTown. Our ClaringTown friends that had 'planted' their seeds in the garden boxes in March were so excited to return soon to see what had grown! During staff chats with the children and caregivers about the garden boxes, staff use the opportunity to promote the seed library available

through CLMA.

Above image: Garden veggies 'growing' in ClaringTown

Exhibits

Local History Mini Exhibits

Heritage services staff continue to refresh the Local History mini exhibits at the Library locations. The Newcastle Library case now features a display on the history of the dairy industry in Clarington including notable dairies like Glen Rae Dairy and Cedar Dale Dairy. We are grateful for the support from the Newcastle Village District Historical Society for loaning us items related to the Newcastle Dairy for inclusion in the exhibit.



The Orono Library has a newly installed case which features a history of the library building and the Waddell family as well as a few notable Orono businesses and buildings.

*Image (left):
Orono Library exhibit case with a history of the Waddell home and other Orono stories*

*Image (right):
Newcastle Library case featuring objects from local dairies*



QR codes

Each case will also soon have a QR code installed that links to further information regarding the topic within the case. For the Orono case, there are links to articles from the Digitized Newspaper Collection featuring interesting news clippings about century homes and a bank robbery story!

Image (left): QR code inside the Goodyear case in the Bowmanville Library

Deaccessioning

Deaccessioning refers to the removal of an artifact or artifacts from the permanent collection. To maintain a growing and relevant collection that is aligned with community needs and current professional standards, it is necessary to deaccession artifacts. Deaccessioning must be undertaken in accordance with the Collections Management Policy. Appendix A outlines the items that are recommended for deaccessioning. Staff have conducted an evaluation and based on these factors; the artifacts are considered to no longer be relevant to the Museum's collection.

Approval to deaccession is required by the governing body of the museum, the Clarington Public Library Board. With this approval, the items will be formally deaccessioned from the collection and disposed following The Methods of Disposition, outlined in sections 19, 20 and 20 of the Collections Management Policy.

Staff have submitted the Deaccession List 2025-05 (Appendix A) to the Board seeking approval for the artifacts listed to be removed from the Museums & Archives collections.

Following the formal approval for deaccession, items are first offered to other public institutions to keep the items within the public realm. A fashion history museum has shown interest in transferring some of the deaccessioned fashion-related items to their collection.

Research

Requests for family history information, property research and special research topics continue to be received on a regular basis. There were 7 research requests in April. The physical archival collections are currently unavailable to researchers; however, research requests are being answered by Museum staff with information and resources that are available in a digital format.

The most interesting request received recently was in relation to a home on Lowe Street. This request was interesting, as the home at one point was owned by the Cawker family, who were longstanding business owners in Bowmanville having a family butcher/grocery business. The individual who lived in the home that was the topic of the request had worked at the Dominion Organ and Piano factory and was also involved with the ports. CLMA staff were able to provide the interested party with maps showing the lot on which the home was built, as well as fire insurance maps showing the home. We were also able to provide information regarding the individual who lived in the home via the newspaper database and an ancestry search. This request was submitted by someone who attended the property research resources night, demonstrating the usefulness of that program!

Customers and Staff Comments

- (April 28) The following comment was received through the Member Feedback Form on the CLMA website:

“Hello! Just wanted to send a note. My daughter and I attended a free tour of Waverly Place a few weeks ago and had such an enjoyable time. We learned a lot and thought you might be interested: afterward, we looked up the 2 families who used to own the home and found them both to have stones at our Bowmanville Cemetery. We made it an extra excursion and found both family gravesites! It took some hunting but they were both there. Very interesting piecing this together- the home, the families and their legacies to our town. Thank you for putting on the tour and for all your hard work keeping the history alive.”

Report Submitted by:
Heather Ridge, Curator and Manager of Heritage Services
Monika Machacek, Chief Executive Officer
May 22, 2025