



Annual Report 2019

Maryboro Lodge: The Fenelon Museum is the City of Kawartha Lakes' public museum, located in Garnet Graham Beach Park in an ancient bur oak grove. Managed by volunteers, it operates on an admission by donation basis, supported by numerous business sponsors. It is open from Victoria Day weekend to Thanksgiving, with occasional special events in its off-season. In 2019 it operated for 111 days and attracted 30,709 visitors, more than four times the attendance of the previous year.

2019 was a transformative year at Maryboro Lodge. It was the first full year since the completion of the Allen Wood Play Space, an interactive exhibit featuring locally manufactured toys. For a generation, our community's largest employer was a toy factory producing a great variety of wooden toys, including the Tinkertoy. The new exhibit displays locally manufactured toys and brings them to life with a great many hands-on activities. It was also the first year of offering daily heritage and cultural activities, which were enthusiastically received, augmented programs for seniors, and a major special event, KidsFest, again drawing on local children's manufacturing.

The museum's 140 volunteers contributed 4872 hours towards all aspects of the operation: programming, research, collections maintenance, bookkeeping, special events and building maintenance. Volunteers made particular efforts towards offering heritage activities for guests, planning special events and improving the museum's gardens and grounds.

Building and Grounds:

The museum continued to create gardens in partnership with the Fenelon Falls Horticultural Society offering an educational vegetable garden, fruit trees, and heritage flower gardens. Several bur oak trees were planted in an effort to regenerate the historic grove in which the museum is situated.

In 2019, a new roof was installed at Maryboro Lodge and several accessibility upgrade were completed. Improvements were made to the building envelope to eliminate animal entry points, which has seemed to solve this problem. New display cabinets were installed, which allowed the museum to free up floor space to offer interactive activities, particularly relating to traditional handicrafts. Maryboro Lodge premiered an archaeological dig, featuring replicas of the artefacts that were unearthed at the nearby Kirche site. It also substantially improved its agricultural activity area, where children can use miniature replicas of nineteenth century farm tools.

Programming:

Maryboro Lodge's One-Room School Program introduced a new format, resulting in vastly increased attendance. Operating on a daily drop-in basis, it offered a variety of heritage activities for attendees, many inspired by Garnet Graham, a beloved character and the namesake of the local beach park.

Afternoon teas remained successful, and were augmented by a daily drop-in social designed for seniors. Maryboro Lodge offered a great variety of programming for seniors, much of it focussed on keeping seniors socially engaged, and gaining new appreciation for the heritage of the Kawarthas. These programs involved visiting local long-term care facilities, and collecting community memories.

In partnership with the Lindsay *Advocate*, Maryboro Lodge began collecting local heirloom recipes (particularly at seniors' residences) to create an heirloom cookbook. It offered weekly programs in partnership with the Ontario Early Years Centre, and facilitated regular visits from the local Adult Day Program. Maryboro Lodge offered daily drop-in heritage activities and crafts, and hosted 23 public events.

Collection:

The museum is continuing to modernize and digitize its collections management system. Maryboro Lodge partners with the Canadian Conservation Institute and students of the conservation program at Sir Sandford Fleming College in Peterborough as necessary to conserve artifacts. New acquisitions for 2018 included numerous postcards, locally manufactured toys and photographs.

The museum continued its routine conservation, housekeeping and maintenance procedures as in past years.

Research & Exhibits:

In addition to the new children's exhibitions (Play Space, Archaeological Dig and Farm Activity Area) the museum premiered four new exhibits. The museum showcased the original artwork of Anne Langton, a founding figure of our community. An exhibit located in the schoolhouse featured Garnet Graham. Another display explored self-esteem through art. It also opened an interactive handicraft exhibition. The Allen Wood Play Space has been tremendously successful. It quickly became the most commonly visited part of the museum, and is now busy every day.

The museum conducted extensive research relating to these upcoming feature exhibits, and began to prepare the feature exhibitions for 2020: on local photographer Claude Bellwood, environmental history and a Victorian parlour.

Community Involvement:

Maryboro Lodge expanded its role in the community's special events, becoming a focal point for local cultural activity. It hosted 23 public events, including KidsFest, which celebrates the community's history of children's manufacturing. The museum also conducted extensive outreach activities, visiting local seniors residences and seniors in their homes.

Planning:

In 2019 the Museum completed a new strategic plan. Maryboro Lodge's long-term objective is to move the museum beyond being an institution that caters primarily to local residents with an interest in history to becoming an historic site with broad appeal to the local public and relevance to visitors from other regions. An important part of this process will highlighting aspects of local history with particular relevance to potential visitors.

Specific improvements are planned for many aspects of museum operations, including: improving the organization's financial sustainability, better relations with business, sponsors and donors, greater attention to public feedback, improved interpretation methods, better collections management, greater response to the needs of school groups, improvements to physical plant and increased organizational capacity.

It implemented previous plans to utilize a much greater variety of interpretive methods in exhibits and continued to work on better integrating exhibits throughout the museum with the historic site.

Future planning focused on improving staff training, creating more effective exhibits, and improving community outreach.

Marketing:

The museum's staff and volunteers continued their diligent efforts towards marketing all of the museum's events throughout the summer: through print media, brochures, posters, online content and sustained the partnership with the numerous local media outlets. The museum acquired five portable road signs which are used to notify the public of available programs. The Maryboro Lodge website was redesigned. Social media presence increased. An improved working relationship with the local Chamber of Commerce facilitated much better exposure for museum programs and events.

Training:

Maryboro Lodge continued to make improved training for its employees a priority. One staff member is enrolled in the OMA Museum Studies Program, and the organization benefited greatly from the insights gained from this training.

The museum encouraged its employees to visit other institutions, and continued its involvement with the Kawartha Arts and Heritage Trail.

A new training manual was successfully introduced. Feedback was gathered from staff to improve training procedures for 2020.

Gift Shop:

The gift shop continued to feature local historical books, and the work of local artists and artisans. The City of Kawartha Lakes plans to construct a larger gift shop and entrance.