

NEWSLETTER



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PRESIDENT'S GREETINGS

Summer 2024 is now behind us, and what a summer it was! For the first time in several years there were no barriers for visitors wishing to visit the Fredericton Region Museum. Officer's Square renovations were finally complete. And, I'm thrilled to report, attendance was up significantly.

According to figures put together by Liam Hemmings, our former Museum Intern, Canada Day was our busiest single day with well over 400 visitors, who enjoyed all sorts of fun activities for families. As usual, Froggy Weekend was also very popular, and Stanton Friedman weekend still continues to attract great interest (thank you Hal!). Thanks must go to all of those who organized and managed those fun events.

And speaking of the Coleman Frog, popular historian Andrew MacLean recently published in Brunswick News two columns about our favourite amphibian and we've also seen a picture of a person who has had the famous image of Fred Coleman with his frog friend tattooed on their back! Our frog remains an important part of our historical family.

On August 8, we officially opened the New Brunswick Goes to War Exhibit, focused on the Italian Campaign in the Second World War. The audience filled the balcony, including many family members who had provided the stories of loved ones who fought in the campaign, and who listened intently to the presentations of our Lieutenant-Governor Brenda Murphy, Grand Chief Ron Tremblay, Deputy Mayor Jocelyn Pike, and David Hughes of the New Brunswick Military History Museum. Thank you all!

We tried out some new events this summer, such as performances on the balcony by Frantically Atlantic (Michelle Daigle and Don Rigley), including their "News from the Front, 1944," which tied into the New Brunswick Goes to War exhibit.

Fall/Winter 2024

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We also enjoyed the music of the MEKA String Quartet, who performed nineteenth century music composed by Col George Maunsell of the Infantry School Corps (Royal Canadian Regiment). Both groups were excellent! Many people enjoying the sunshine in Officers Square also benefited from the balcony performances.

Our fascinating Speaker Series began its new season on September 19 with James G. Long discussing his new books on the McNair-Fleming Years in New Brunswick. Please do come out to these (in person for the Fall, on Zoom in the Winter), as they will be informative and interesting. Thank you to Leah Grandy and Ruth Murgatroyd who organize these events. Finally, I must extend my personal thank you to our amazing staff this year for their hard work, creativity, and profound commitment.

At the end of the summer some of them headed back to class or to new adventures, and we wish them all the best, especially Liam Hemmings, Jasmine Gidney, and Zach Poitras. Thank you for your great work! And thank you to our volunteers Simon Corey and Riya Rajith who proved invaluable this summer. Staff who are continuing with us are Connor Fraser, Elizabeth Wiley, and Zoé Leroux-Blain (Museum Intern). They are doing amazing work under the skilled direction of Executive Director Alena Krasnikova.

I also wish to thank our Board Members who are actively engaged in the operations of the Society and its Museum. For example, our First VP and Chair of Exhibits, Cynthia Wallace-Casey, continues to commit incredible time, energy, and creativity in overseeing our exhibits. She is also Chair of the Finance Committee, and together with committee members and our Treasurer Evelyn Fidler, helps keep our financial house in order. Our Chair of Collections Patrick Proctor and his committee work tirelessly to ensure that our precious artefacts are well maintained, researched, and recorded. I'd also like to thank Anqi Fang, Chair of Membership, who I have frequently seen behind the FRM front desk and engaged in various FRM activities. To all our members, I'd like to encourage you to join us at openings, performances, the Speaker Series, and to just pop by the museum during open hours, which we are extending into the Christmas season, Wednesday to Saturday, 1-4pm.

Members benefit not only from access to the museum, but will also receive the excellent The Officers' Quarters with informative articles, as well as this newsletter. Please do join us or renew your membership!

See you at the next event!

Gary Waite, PhD



WHAT A GREAT SUMMER IT WAS WITH MEKA PERFORMING ON OUR BALCONY THIS SUMMER!

Reflecting on an Amazing Summer at the Fredericton Region Museum

Last summer was a truly unforgettable season at the Fredericton Region Museum, filled with a variety of exciting events and activities that brought our community together. From June to August, visitors of all ages enjoyed a rich tapestry of experiences, celebrating our local history and culture.

The summer kicked off with the captivating musical series, "News from the Front," featuring the talented musical duo Frantically Atlantic. This unique program transported audiences back to 1944, blending music from the 1940s with stories of New Brunswick soldiers serving overseas.

In July, families flocked to the museum for our lively Canada Day celebration, complete with guided tours, scavenger hunts, and engaging trivia games that highlighted our national heritage. The MEKA String Quartet performed a heartfelt tribute to the Royal Canadian Regiment, showcasing the musical talent of our community while honoring local history.

One of the standout events was the Froggy Weekend, celebrating Fredericton's beloved Coleman Frog. Kids delighted in face painting, a froggy quest, and various activity tables, creating joyful memories for all who attended.

New Brunswick Day brought further excitement, with activities that included guided tours and fun-filled scavenger hunts, allowing everyone to discover fascinating local stories. We also hosted the Stanton Friedman Weekend, which offered intriguing insights into the life of this renowned ufologist, featuring family-friendly activities and engaging storytelling.

The summer was not only about special events; it also marked the opening of new exhibits, including "We Were Here: A Portrait of New Brunswick's Black Community: 1850-1960," and "New Brunswick Goes to War," which honored the sacrifices of our local heroes during wartime.

As we look forward to the next summer season, we are inspired by the joy and enthusiasm expressed by our visitors. The smiles, laughter, and sense of community were palpable throughout every event. We can't wait to welcome families back to the museum for another summer filled with exploration, discovery, and fun. Stay tuned for an exciting lineup of activities and exhibits that will continue to bring history to life for everyone!



Membership Benefits

Our members enjoy a range of exclusive benefits, including:

- Unlimited admission to the Museum
- A complimentary copy of our annual publication, *Officers' Quarters*
- Invitation to all special events
- Discounts on rentals
- Free guided tours

Your continued support helps us preserve and share the rich history of our region.

Fredericton's Black History: New Bilingual Walking Tour



The Fredericton Region Museum is thrilled to announce that Jennifer Dow's acclaimed Black History walking tour of downtown Fredericton is now available in both English and French! This self-guided experience can be easily accessed through the internationally recognized VoiceMap app, allowing visitors to explore the city's rich history at their own pace. Jennifer Dow, a sixth-generation descendant of early Black New Brunswickers, leads this enlightening 4.1 km tour, which begins at the Fredericton Region Museum. "I'll show you a side of downtown that few visitors see," Jennifer states, inviting everyone to discover the hidden stories that shape our cultural hub. The tour highlights significant locations, including the first female employee of Canada Post, Mrs. June Carty, and the historical significance of the former Queen Hotel, now the Fredericton Convention Centre. Participants will learn about the transformative impact of the Crowne Plaza on the local Black community, visit the O'Ree House, home of the NHL's first Black player, and explore the Old Burial Grounds, where members of the Black community are laid to rest.

This unique opportunity to engage with Fredericton's history is made possible thanks to the efforts of Jennifer Dow and our partner institution REACH (Remembering Each African Cemetery's History New Brunswick). We are grateful for the financial support from the Province of New Brunswick and the City of Fredericton, which has made this initiative possible. We are excited to serve the Fredericton community and its visitors by offering this enriching bilingual experience. Dive into the captivating history of our city and uncover the stories that have shaped Fredericton into what it is today!



Exciting Speaker Series Continues at the Fredericton Region Museum



The Fredericton Region Museum's speaker series has kicked off with great success! The season began with Jim Long's engaging talk on "The McNair-Flemming Years," attracting many attendees who appreciated the insights shared. A heartfelt thank you goes to Ruth Murgatroyd for her excellent MCing, as well as to the museum staff for their invaluable support in setting up the event. Special thanks are also due to Leah Grandy for her exceptional organization of the series.

Following this, Andrew MacLean presented "Fredericton Through the Letters of Juliana Horatia Ewing," another successful session that captivated our audience with a unique perspective on local history.

Looking ahead, we are excited to announce the next talk featuring Trevor Dow and co-authors of the new book, "Bibliography of New Brunswick Archaeology." This event will take place on November 21 at the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, marking a special occasion as the Archives has graciously allowed us to hold the event in their Exhibition Hall.

The speaker series continues to provide a platform for exploring diverse topics, with Jennifer Dow returning by popular demand in February to discuss her new research in New Brunswick Black History. With a lineup that includes discussions on early photography and loyalist historical fiction, there's much to look forward to!

Join us as we continue to celebrate our community's rich history through these engaging presentations!



A Special Tribute to Artist Garfield Saunders at the Fredericton Region Museum



This September, the Fredericton Region Museum had the pleasure of welcoming the family of esteemed artist Garfield Saunders, whose vibrant paintings have become a cherished part of our collection. Several years ago, Garfield poignantly captured the spirit of Fredericton's Harvest Jazz Festival in his series of "Fredericton Jazz Festival" paintings, which he generously donated to the museum in 2011.

During their visit, Garfield's family experienced the powerful emotions evoked by his artwork, providing a touching moment as they appreciated his unique artistic vision. Known throughout the Maritime art community as both an artist and educator, Garfield's legacy lives on in the vibrant canvases that celebrate the essence of jazz in Fredericton.

During Harvest 2025, their visit served as a beautiful reminder of how art connects us to our community and its history. The museum is proud to continue showcasing Garfield Saunders' work, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the rhythm and energy of jazz through his captivating art. This family reunion not only honored Garfield's contributions but also highlighted the lasting impact of his artistic legacy on Fredericton's cultural landscape. Garfield Saunders artwork will remain on exhibit until March 2025.



JAZZ FESTIVAL FREDERICTON, ARTIST: GARFIELD SAUNDERS
FREDERICTON REGION MUSEUM, 2022.17.1

Uncovering Family History at the Museum



This fall, the Fredericton Region Museum welcomed visitors whose personal journey led them to our doors in search of family history. As part of their research, they were drawn to a significant item in our collection: a Webley rifle (1969.2444.1) that once belonged to David Ogilvy, an ancestor of theirs.

This encounter highlights the museum's role as a vital resource for those exploring their heritage. By connecting individuals with artefacts that hold personal significance, we not only preserve history but also foster meaningful connections to the past.

We are always thrilled to assist visitors in their quest for knowledge and understanding of their family stories, and we look forward to many more enlightening experiences like this one in the future.



THANK YOU TO FRANTICALLY ATLANTIC WHO PERFORMED "NEWS FROM THE FRONT, 1944" EACH WEEK ON OUR BALCONY THIS SUMMER!

Upcoming Honours & Award Ceremony

The York-Sunbury Historical Society is pleased to announce the upcoming ceremony for the annual Award of Distinction and the Author's Recognition Award, honouring contributions to Central New Brunswick's history.

Thank you to all who submitted nominations! We look forward to celebrating the achievements of our nominees in December.

Opening of “New Brunswick Goes to War: The Liberation of Italy Exhibit”



On August 8, 2024, the Fredericton Region Museum proudly opened its new exhibition, “New Brunswick Goes to War: The Liberation of Italy,” commemorating the 80th anniversary of New Brunswick’s significant contributions to the liberation of Italy during World War II. The opening event was a resounding success, attended by numerous distinguished guests, including The Hon. Brenda, as well as families of Carleton and York soldiers who participated in these historic battles.

The exhibition vividly recounts the bravery and sacrifices of local soldiers during key engagements, including the fierce battles of Ortona, the Liri Valley, and the Gothic Line. The date also marks the anniversary of the Breaking of the Gothic Line, a pivotal moment in the campaign led by the Canadian Corps. Guests were moved by the stories of the individuals featured in the exhibition, many of whom hailed from Fredericton and surrounding areas.

The families of the Carleton and York soldiers were also present, contributing their personal stories and memories. As they spoke about their ancestors, their excitement was palpable, creating a warm atmosphere of remembrance and connection. The stories shared by these families highlighted the lasting impact of the soldiers’ sacrifices on local communities, serving as poignant reminders of the bravery displayed during the war.

Members of the museum community, friends, and volunteers gathered to celebrate the culmination of their hard work in bringing this exhibition to life. Their dedication is evident in the thoughtful displays and accompanying online catalogue, which provides biographies of local soldiers, ensuring their legacies are honored and remembered.

The exhibition not only serves to educate visitors about New Brunswick’s role in the liberation of Italy, but it also emphasizes the importance of collective memory in shaping our understanding of history. As guests walked through the museum, they were treated to artefacts, photographs, and narratives that vividly illustrated the harsh realities faced by soldiers on the front lines.

Financial support from the Government of Canada (Veterans Affairs Canada), the City of Fredericton, the Province of New Brunswick, and the York-Sunbury Historical Society made this exhibition possible. Their contributions, alongside the efforts of dedicated volunteers, have created a space where history can be honored and reflected upon.

Following the opening, Omni News Italian, the Italian-language daily national news show, visited the museum to interview historians Lee Winsor and Cindy Brown from the University of New Brunswick, both specialists in the Italian campaign. Family members of the soldiers were also interviewed, sharing their personal stories and memories, which created a warm atmosphere of remembrance and connection.

Fredericton's Folklore Takes Ink: The Coleman Frog Tattoo



In a delightful twist of local lore, Fredericton tattoo artist Max Baird and photographer Mike Erb recently collaborated on a unique piece of art—a tattoo on Mike's back that captures the whimsical story of Fred Coleman and his pet frog, Cornelius Webster. Inspired by an old leaflet promoting The Barker House hotel, the tattoo brings to life a charming chapter from Fredericton’s history.

The tale dates back to 1885 when Fred Coleman, enjoying a day of fishing on Killarney Lake, was visited by a frog that jumped into his boat. Not understanding the frog’s ribbiting, Fred assumed it was hungry and fed it human food. This daily ritual forged an extraordinary bond; the frog would leap into Fred’s boat each day, growing alongside their friendship.

During a recent visit to the museum, Max and Mike shared their enthusiasm for this piece of folklore, agreeing that the Coleman Frog story deserves to be celebrated just as prominently as Scotland’s Loch Ness Monster. “It’s a unique part of our local heritage,” Max noted. “Fredericton should definitely boast about it!”

Mike, passionate about promoting local arts and culture, emphasized the importance of creating opportunities for youth to engage with their community. “There’s so much potential here,” he said. “The city has transformed since my teenage years - there’s more entertainment and creativity than ever before!”

Together, their collaboration not only highlights the charm of the Coleman Frog but also serves as a reminder of Fredericton’s rich cultural tapestry. Visitors to the museum can explore this story further through a short video that poses the intriguing question: “Is the Coleman Frog real?”

With vibrant art and folklore coming together, Fredericton continues to celebrate its unique heritage in fun and engaging ways. So next time you’re in town, keep an eye out for that gigantic frog - and be sure to join us in July for Froggy Weekend, when we celebrate everything Froggy in Fredericton!



Discovering Heritage Through Geocaching: Barbara Walls' Journey



At 72, Barbara Walls and her husband embarked on a life-changing adventure - geocaching. This outdoor treasure hunt has allowed them to explore New Brunswick's hidden gems, leading to an impressive 1,950 cache finds. One of the most poignant aspects of their journey has been visiting rural cemeteries, where they've found over 300 caches. These visits inspired Barbara to reflect on the stories of early settlers commemorated on headstones.

Barbara's passion for history deepened through her involvement with the New Brunswick Great War Geocaching Project (NBGWGP), commissioned by the Gregg Centre for the Study of War & Society. The aim of the project is to honor the valiant service and sacrifice of the thousands of New Brunswick men and women who answered the call to arms for King and Country during World War I, known as the Great War. Barbara has personal connections to this history - two of her great uncles, Cyrus Whitefield Gaskin and Walter Geoffrey Bidlake, both made the ultimate sacrifice in the conflict. The geotrail created by the NBGWGP provides a unique opportunity to learn about the sacrifices of local soldiers. Each cache visited reminds participants of the bravery of New Brunswick's troops. Barbara describes the challenges of finding these caches, often requiring navigation through dense woods. While she acknowledges that these adventures pale compared to the soldiers' experiences, she finds herself reflecting on their hardships along the way.

In recognition of her journey, Barbara received beautifully designed geocoins, which she plans to display with family photos of her military relatives this November 11th for Remembrance Day. This personal display will serve as a tribute to her family's legacy and a reminder of the sacrifices made by many. Barbara's story highlights how geocaching can inspire a deeper appreciation for local history. She encourages others to explore this engaging activity and connect with their heritage. The geocaching map for the New Brunswick Great War Geocaching Project can be found exclusively on the Museum's website, providing an accessible way for everyone to participate in this meaningful exploration.

One notable story from the project is that of Midshipman John Victor Hatheway, one of the first Canadian casualties of the Great War. His story, like many others, serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by those who came before us. Through her adventures, Barbara Walls exemplifies the importance of remembering New Brunswick's brave soldiers while enjoying the thrill of exploration. As the NBGWGP reminds us, let us take a moment to reflect on the sacrifices made at home and abroad. **Lest We Forget.**

Recent Aquisition



Clarence Wade's Service Medals
Fredericton Region Museum (2024.33.1) - Gift of Kathryn Loyen

In August 2024, we received a very generous gift from Kathryn Loyen. She donated the medals of her grandfather, Clarence Herbert Wade, to the York-Sunbury Historical Society. His medal group consists of:

First World War: Military Medal for Bravery, British War Medal, and Victory Medal.
Second World War: Canadian Voluntary Service Medal, and 1939/1945 War Medal.

Clarence Herbert Wade was from Penniac, NB where he worked as a farmer. After serving for three years in the 71st (York) Regiment, he enlisted in Fredericton on 5 July 1915 and joined the 28th Battery, Canadian Field Artillery. His unit left Canada on 9 August 1915 on board the SS MATAGAMA and arrived in England on 18 August. Following a bout of influenza, he arrived in France on 18 January 1916. On 2 May, he was transferred to the 6th Brigade, Canadian Field Artillery. This unit formed part of the divisional artillery of the 2nd Canadian Division. The Battle of Vimy Ridge (9 to 12 April 1917) was one of the many battles this unit fought in.

Wade served in France except for a two-week period in May/June 1917 when he was invalided to England with an infected foot. On 20 August 1918, he was promoted to Bombardier. Then, on 13 September, he was granted 14 days leave in the UK. Soon after his return from leave, it was announced in the London Gazette of 1 October 1918 that he had been awarded the Military Medal for Bravery. The action that earned him the Military Medal likely took place in the March/April timeframe. Unfortunately, the unit War Dairy for this period does not record what happened. During this time, the 2nd Canadian Division was attached to the British VI Corps and helped them to stop a massive German spring offensive codenamed OP MICHAEL. There would have been ample opportunities during this period to demonstrate bravery in the field.

His service record shows that he was discharged in Saint John, NB on 19 May 1919. He returned to Penniac and his medals (British War Medal and Victory Medal) were mailed to him there on 13 March 1922. He also received a War Service Badge #266464. His Military Medal was likely presented in the field.

He married Elizabeth Boyce on 16 April 1922. They had two children: Donald Allen Wade and Mary Veera (Wade) Balance. Sadly, J38424 F/O Donald Allen Wade (21 February 1923 to 6 March 1945) died of injuries received due to a crash landing when returning from a bombing mission. He served with 428 Squadron, RCAF and is buried in Hotten CWGC, Belgium.

During the Second World War, Wade enlisted in the Veterans Guard of Canada. He served as a Lieutenant at the B/70 internment camp located in Ripples, New Brunswick where they guarded German prisoners of war. After the war, he remained in the Supplementary Reserve until 3 August 1957 when he was released due to having reached 60 years of age. He passed in 1986 and is buried in the Penniac Baptist Cemetery.

Gary Campbell,
Collections Committee Member

Update on Collections



Lawrence Bradshaw Rainsford's Coatee
Fredericton Region Museum, 1969.2547.1
Gift of Jean Gertrude Balloch

Officer's Regimental Coat, circa 1812

I had written an article for the December 2022 newsletter about my research into Artefact 1969.2547. This is a Regimental Coat that belonged to an officer of His Majesty's New Brunswick Regiment of Fencible Infantry. The details of who donated this Regimental Coat had been lost until Cynthia Wallace-Casey found them during her research into the early accession records.

It had been donated by Jean Gertrude Balloch (20 May 1874 to 16 May 1956). Her father was Alexander Rainsford Balloch (10 December 1850 to 18 June 1903). While his father is unknown, his mother was Elizabeth Rainsford (1825 to 1878). Her father was Lawrence Bradshaw Rainsford (1787 to ?). He joined the regiment as an Ensign in March 1810 and resigned his commission prior to 10 October 1811. He later served as a Lieutenant in the New Brunswick Fencibles. This unit was raised in February 1813 to replace the 104th (New Brunswick) Regiment of Foot and was disbanded on 24 February 1816.

Based on this information, the features of this Regimental Coat now make sense. When Rainsford joined the regiment; the old-style coat would have been worn. This coat is evidence that officers also modified their coats prior to the new regulations being introduced in December 1811, after Rainsford has resigned his commission.

Based on the evidence, it is safe to attribute this Regimental Coat to Lawrence Bradshaw Rainsford. This is an interesting and historically significant piece of New Brunswick military history. We are fortunate to have it in the collection of the York-Sunbury Historical Society.

Gary Campbell,
Collections Committee member

Recent Acquisition

Honouring Madhu Verma

The Fredericton Region Museum was recently gifted Madhu Verma's wedding sari. This gorgeous pure silk gown features finely interwoven gold thread, and was custom made in Madras (India), as gift from her husband-to-be, in 1962. Growing up as a refugee in India, Madhu witnessed her mother's struggles to provide for their family. Her father, who had been a medical doctor in Haripur (Pakistan), was poisoned due to his social activism, causing the family to flee to Deoband (India) in c.1939. There they experienced discrimination, since it was assumed they had left Haripur because of wrongdoing (at that time in India there existed scant knowledge of the killings targeting Hindu and Sikh communities within Pakistan). Given that Madhu's mother wore Punjabi shalwar pants instead of Indian saris, and spoke a different language, added to their social isolation; but Madhu's mother overcame such barriers by reading to local women from her Bhagavad Gita (Hindu scripture), and thus eventually gained their trust and acceptance.

In 1962, Madhu immigrated to Chicago as a newlywed, following an arranged marriage to her brother's best friend, Dr. Ram D. Verma. By then, Madhu was living in Punjab with her mother, and it was through her brother, who was studying at the University of Chicago, that she first met Ram. As Madhu recalls: "my brother wrote to my mother that one of [his] friends is coming to India to see you... He said go and see my mother, and my brother, my family, you know, and tell them I'm doing okay, and all that. That's, that's all...We were living in a very small house. I remember I was just getting ready to go into college, because I was still a student." No mention was made of any intentions to marry.

Soon after Ram's returned to Chicago, Madhu's brother wrote again to her mother: "You have seen him, he's a nice boy, and I want to arrange my sister's marriage with him." Madhu's mother was hesitant at first, because she did not want her only daughter to leave for America, but eventually her son convinced her to allow Madhu to be wed. After completing a post-doctoral fellowship with Nobel Laureate Robert Mulliken at the University of Chicago, as well as working with Nobel Laureate Dr. G. Herzberg at the National Research Council in Ottawa, Ram brought Madhu to Fredericton. It was 1963, and he had been offered a faculty position at the University of New Brunswick in the Department of Physics.

In 1960s Canada, however, Madhu still faced the challenges of immigrant life, since the Vermas continued to encounter racial discrimination and social isolation. Madhu recalls how they were turned away from purchasing their first home in Fredericton, since the owner did not think others in the neighbourhood would welcome them. Incidents like this fueled Madhu's determination to dedicate herself to community service, helping new immigrants and refugees to feel more at home in the City. Her pioneering efforts played a significant role in making today's Fredericton a welcoming city with vibrant immigrant communities. We are grateful to Madhu Verma for donating her sari (and other family items) to the museum. Madhu's experiences have also been captured on film, thanks to volunteer Joan Fenety and Alena Krasnikova, who interviewed her earlier this year. Their full interview can be viewed on the Fredericton Region Museum Youtube site. Madhu's wedding sari (2024.16.1) will continue to be on exhibit in the museum until March 2025.

Cynthia Wallace-Casey
Exhibits Chair/Curator Emeritus



Celebrating Black History in Fredericton: We Were Here



Left to right: Hewlett, Terry, Carol, Wayne, & Allen Marr - outside the Kendall Homestead, Lower Queensbury - Kendall-Marr Collection

The Fredericton Region Museum is currently hosting a two-part exhibition on loan from the UNB Art Centre. *We Were Here: A Portrait of Daily Life in New Brunswick's Black Community 1850-1960* and *Black Celebrations in New Brunswick 1858-1923* delve into the rich, and often overlooked history of Black communities. Curated by Jennifer Dow in collaboration with the UNB Art Centre, these exhibits celebrate resilience, unity, and an enduring legacy.

We Were Here: A Portrait of Daily Life in New Brunswick's Black Community 1850-1960 presents a deeply personal narrative, underscored by the curator's own heritage as a sixth-generation descendant of early Black settlers in New Brunswick. It offers visitors an intimate look into the everyday lives of ordinary Black New Brunswickers, with a special focus on Fredericton. Jennifer's family artifacts, including items from the old Kendall Homestead, bring the past to life, allowing viewers to see not only the struggle but also the warmth and happiness that characterized each community.

One touching aspect is the story of photos belonging to the curator's great-grandmother, Maud Kendall, who imparted memories of her ancestors and family members to her granddaughter, saying: "Someone needs to remember this when I am gone." This phrase resonated deeply with Jennifer, emphasizing the importance of preserving family history, especially in a society that often neglects the contributions and experiences of Black individuals. Visitors are invited to witness the love, strength, and resilience that permeated family life and celebrations, from simple gatherings to cherished moments of storytelling.

Black Celebrations in New Brunswick 1858-1923 invites visitors to explore the rich traditions of communal gatherings that fostered joy and solidarity. Archival records document picnics, dinners, dances, and boat excursions that connected families and friends across the province. Some of these events, such as the annual picnics at Elm Hill—one of Canada's oldest Black communities—was established in the late 19th century and endured as an essential part of community life well into the 21st century. This portion of the exhibition also highlights similar picnics at Fredericton, Rusagonish and French Lake in Geary—which is one of the few picnics that still happens annually. Such gatherings were more than mere social events; they were acts of resilience and unity, expressions of a community determined to celebrate their existence and heritage despite adversities.

Jennifer Dow's curatorial vision not only preserves the legacy of her ancestors but also showcases the enduring spirit of Black New Brunswickers—a spirit of pride, love, and unity that thrived in gatherings (small and large), and built a history that deserves to be remembered and cherished. Both exhibits will continue until March 2025. We invite you to stop by to learn more about Fredericton's Black History, and also download our Downtown Fredericton Black History Walking Tour featured on page 4 of this newsletter.

Exhibits: Looking Back and Looking Forward to 2025



As exhibits chair, I wish to extend our sincere appreciation to the many professionals (both paid and volunteer) who worked so diligently to bring together our summer 2024 lineup of exhibits and related programming.

Highlights of the summer included a special feature **Celebrating New Brunswick's Asian Heritage**, curated by Alena Krasnikova (in close partnership with Madhu Verma and Joan Fenety). This exhibition was inspired by Madhu's wedding sari (showcased in this newsletter), which she recently so generously donated to the museum. Another highlight was historian Jennifer Dow's two-part exhibition **We Were Here: A Portrait of New Brunswick's Black Community, 1850-1960**, and **Black Celebrations in New Brunswick 1858-1923**, loaned by the UNB Art Centre (also featured in this newsletter).

2024 marked the 80th anniversary of New Brunswick's engagement in the liberation of Italy. In honour of this, we opened the permanent exhibition **New Brunswick Goes to War: The Liberation of Italy**, which commemorates our role in the Breaking of the Gothic Line. Fredericton was deeply impacted by the Italian campaign, due to the high number of local soldiers who departed in 1939 for duty with the 1st Canadian Division. From the Invasion of Sicily in July 1943, to the Battle for Ortona in December 1943, and the breaking of the Hitler and Gothic Lines in May and August of 1944, Frederictonians did their part – and many gave the ultimate sacrifice of their lives. "New Brunswick Goes to War" commemorates those—both at home and abroad—who answered Canada's call to defeat Nazi Germany.

Looking ahead to 2025, preparations are well underway for two new exhibitions. **Celebrating 200 Years of Scottish Benevolence** will commemorate the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Fredericton Society of Saint Andrew. This charitable organisation was established on St. Andrews Night, 30 November 1825 by Scotsman who immigrated to Fredericton around the turn of the century. Over 200 years, the Society has made many contributions to the life of this City. They erected Fredericton's memorial to Robert Burns in 1906, and supported the establishment of the Victoria Public Hospital. The Society also established an annual scholarship fund for the University of New Brunswick, which remains active to this day. "Celebrating 200 Years" will be a salutation of all things Scottish in Fredericton! So if your ancestors have connections to Scotland, we'd love to learn your family's story!

Our second exhibition will honour the No 2 Construction Battalion – and in particular local connections to this historic unit. **Forgotten Loyalties: Hidden Connections to the No 2 Construction Battalion** will be a travelling exhibition, curated by Jennifer Dow and produced by the Fredericton Region Museum. The contributions of local soldiers in the No. 2 Construction Battalion are often overlooked. This exhibition will provide an opportunity for visitors to learn more about a never-before-told part of Fredericton's past. Best wishes for a healthy and happy 2025! We look forward to seeing you in the museum.

Cynthia Wallace-Casey
Exhibits Chair/Curator Emeritus