

DECEMBER 12 2025 | BRANTMUSEUMS.CA | 519-752-2483



A Message from the Board of Directors

As the holiday season unfolds and the year winds down, we wanted to send our warmest wishes to you and yours. This time of year is all about connection, and we're so grateful to have you all as part of the Brant Historical Society community. Thank you for being with us throughout this past year. Your support has been paramount with regards to events and programs that we have presented this year. It's wonderful to see the support that we receive for our Historical Walking Tours, our Speakers Series presentations, our summer barbeque and our Annual General Meeting, just to name a few. Our Events Committee is headed up by one of our Board members, Brian Moore, and a committee of volunteers who's tireless work seems to always ensure that we present top quality events.

We have also been fortunate to receive some new items into our collection. We were happy to receive a personal collection of Brantford made pottery from a local family, as well as receiving quite a number of Birth Record journals from the Brantford General Hospital, dating back to the mid 1800's.

We also want to recognize and thank our staff for the creative and exemplary work that they undertake in highlighting the various displays and events at both museums.

In closing, we hope your holidays are filled with joy and laughter along with a bit of quiet time. We look forward to connecting with you in the new year.

All the best,
On behalf of the Board of Directors
Murray Angus

BRANT HISTORICAL —SOCIETY—

Established on May 8, 1908, the Brant Historical Society is an independent registered charity operating two museums uniquely positioned to make a difference in the lives of Brant citizens.

The Brant Historical Society is dedicated to preserving, educating, celebrating, and sharing the unique history, culture, and stories of the Brantford/Brant area, fostering a sense of connection and pride among its residents and visitors.

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Contact Us
519-752-2483
information@brantmuseums.ca

From the Recipe Books

Gingerbread Cookies

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 tbsp molasses
- 8 tbsp water
- 2 cups flour
- 2 pinches salt
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp cloves
- 1 tsp ginger

Directions:

- Add butter, sugar, molasses, and water into a bowl, stir until combined
- In the same bowl, add flour, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, and ginger. Stir until combined.
- Form dough into a ball, knead in flour until no longer sticky.
- Roll out on a floured surface until 3/4cm thick and cut out cookie shape. Bake at 350 for 10-12 minutes.



Myrtleville House Museum
34 Myrtleville Drive
Brantford, Ontario N3V 1C2

519 – 752 – 3216
esther.brouwer@brantmuseums.ca
Monday to Friday 9:00am – 4:00pm



January 23, 2026 marks our fourth annual Scotch Tasting event at the Brant Historical Society. Over the last three years we have enjoyed a surge in interest from both our membership and the membership of the Canadian Military Heritage Museum, who have graciously hosted us since 2024. We have sampled a range of well loved, high priced, and high rated whiskies from both Canada and Scotland, and celebrated the birth of Scotland's most famous poet, Robert Burns at the same time.

The world's oldest working Whisky distilleries are in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Bushmills in Northern Ireland claims to be the oldest – a distillery was recorded on their site in 1608. However, we know whiskies were produced for many years before that in less formal distilleries.

While whisky (without an "e" when referring to Scottish versions) is now made in many parts of the world, the three basic ingredients are the same: water, grain and yeast. The methods used to produce the product are also very similar. It is simply a case of taking grain, some of which must be malted, crushing it, adding it to boiling water, draining off the sugar-enriched water before adding yeast to it, then distilling the beer made from that, two or three times. The spirit produced is then placed into oak barrels where it should be left for several years to react with the wood, taking on colour and defining character. Many times the scotch whisky is aged in ex-bourbon barrels shipped from America.

Our first year of whisky tasting we offered four Scottish whiskies and one Canadian and hosted it at Myrtleville House. The Scottish options were a 10 year aged Jura, the special Viking Honour 12 year from Highland Park, a Talisker 10 year, and a Laphroaig Quarter Cask. Our Canadian brand was a Bearface Triple Oak that surprisingly did not grip our participants with its vanilla and spice notes. Since this event, we have stuck to a Scotch only menu.

Our event also serves a special menu of finger foods and a haggis tasting. The haggis is a traditional food of Scotland, modern versions are an artificial casing with sheep's offal (heart and liver in Canadian versions) beef or lamb mince, onion, oatmeal, suet, and spices. The original version of this recipe contained mainly oats since the price of meat would have been too high for regular consumption. The haggis is always piped in by our bagpiper, James Williams, and the "Address to a Haggis" poem read out loud in great ceremony.

We also have had the pleasure of hosting the School of Highland Dance for a performance during the event. The students perform a variety of traditional Scottish dances, including a sword dance. The event also includes a collection of readings from Burn's poetry catalogue.

Our fourth annual Scotch tasting will follow the same format as the last two, with five new options from sweet to peaty. We celebrate together on January 23rd at 7pm at the CMHM. Tickets are \$50 for members, \$60 for non-members, and \$20 for non drinkers who would still like to participate in and enjoy the haggis tasting, poetry reading, and highland dancers. We look forward to having you all again!

Volunteer Appreciation

Brant Historical Society Staff and Board Members would like to take the opportunity to extend our appreciation to our volunteers that offer their valuable time to projects and events that the Society offers. It truly is a team effort, and your support does not go unnoticed!

Whether it is helping with children's programs, offering assistance in the archives, looking after the lawn and gardens, or other tasks around our sites, we are so thankful for all that you do.

Happy Holidays!

Please keep our holiday hours in mind when planning your visit to the Brant Museum and Archives or Myrtleville House museum over the coming weeks. If you wish to visit Myrtleville House during the month of December, please remember to call ahead! Esther has a full schedule of children's programs, and will not be able to accommodate other visitors while there are classes on site.

The 2025 BHS Christmas Social, is being held on Wed. December 17th from 6:30 - 8:30pm at Myrtleville House! Be sure to RSVP to 519-752-2483 or lillia.dockree@brantmuseums.ca by Mon. December 15th if you are planning on attending.

Brant Historical Society Holiday Hours

BRANT MUSEUM & ARCHIVES:

DEC. 19 1:00 - 5:00PM

DEC. 20 - JAN 5 CLOSED

JAN. 6 1:00 - 5:00 PM

MYRTLEVILLE HOUSE MUSEUM:

DEC. 19 9:00AM - 4:30PM

DEC. 20 - JAN 4 CLOSED

JAN. 5 9:00AM - 4:30PM

Brant Museum and Archives
Brantford, Ontario N3T 2W6

519 - 752 - 2483
information@brantmuseums.ca

Tuesday - Saturday
1:00pm - 5:00pm



2025 has been a busy year at the Brant Museum and Archives!

Earlier this year we took part in the Community Exhibits Program at Queen's Park in Toronto, which allows for heritage organizations across the province to showcase artifacts and photos from their collections. The exhibits are available to view on the Legislature's [website](#).

We also opened three new exhibits at the BM&A this year: **"Common Threads: Textile Industries in Brantford/Brant"** (in partnership with the Canadian Industrial Heritage Centre (CIHC) and the Paris Museum and Historical Society), **"Roots and Routes: Black Brantford"** (in partnership with the CIHC, Laurier Brantford, and Brant Theatre Workshops), and **"A Night on the Town: Brantford's Theatres and Opera Houses"**. A series of online exhibits are in development for our website as well, so keep an eye out for those in the new year!

Staff members and volunteers were out in the community as well this year, hosting booths at the Paris Fair and at the Seniors Resource Fair at the Doug Snooks community center this fall. The BHS Events Committee organized another well attended tour of W. Ross MacDonald School this past spring, giving insight to day-to-day life of the students and staff there.

The Brant Museum and Archives hosted The Ontario Paranormal Society (T.O.P.S) twice in 2025: August 15th for a fundraiser event which raised just over \$1000 for BHS, and October 3rd & 4th as part of Scare in the Square - the annual City of Brantford Halloween Event. We look forward to partnering with T.O.P.S for more events in 2026!

Outreach programming from the BM&A was also productive this year - we offered presentations to three new community groups that we had not visited before: the Grand River Council on Aging early this year for our "Hats!" presentation, the Laurier Brantford YMCA during their summer camp to talk to the kids about early settler farming, and just this week to the men's PROBUS group at the Sherwood Restaurant to discuss the Brant Historical Society and everything that we offer to the community.

In addition to the regular schedule of walking tours this year, our summer student Abbey Angevine offered a number of walks pertaining to local World War One and World War Two veterans in Eagle Place, East Ward, and Brant Avenue. She was also quite successful in her research, creation, and delivery of the Mount Hope Cemetery walk, which we hope to offer again as part of the 2026 schedule. Lillia and Murray also offered an additional walking tour on August 20th for staff from all three Wilfrid Laurier University campuses when they were in Brantford for a pre-semester staff event. This walk shared with them the history of Downtown Brantford around the university buildings, and WLU staff that participated provided great reviews after the tour concluded.

Brooklynn, our Collections Assistant, has been hard at work cataloguing the collection of photo negatives that the Brantford Expositor donated to us in 2021. We hope to have the finding aids (inventory lists) for these 50+ boxes on our website early in the new year, and negatives will be able to be scanned on an "as requested" basis.

In other collections news, we have had sixteen donations of artifacts and archival documents in 2025, with two being quite extensive: a collection of 40+ ledgers from Brantford General Hospital (primarily obstetric and labour & delivery records), and a sizeable collection of Brantford Pottery that features day-to-day objects made between 1895-1906. This pottery collection can be viewed on the main floor of the museum, and we are grateful to the donor - Michael Carbone - for this addition to our ceramics collection.

Volunteers are integral to our ongoing digitization project, and staff would like to take the opportunity to thank all of those that have helped in the Archive this year - especially to Crystal Hambly, Bev Golden, and Bernard Granka, who come in on a weekly basis. Your help does not go unnoticed!

Although 2025 is coming to a close, we are still hard at work planning for 2026! Staff is working with the Brant Men of Song to put together an exhibit for their 65th anniversary - this exhibit will run from March 2nd to May 31st. Additional programming will be offered for Heritage Week (February 16th - 20th) and during Museum Month in May, so there will be lots of exciting events to look forward to. Our last day open for 2025 will be Friday, December 19th, so please reach out to staff if you would like to renew your membership or make a donation before the end of the year.

Upcoming Events:

- The **BHS Christmas Social** is being held on Wed. **December 17th @ 6:30pm** at Myrtleville House Museum
- The last day that BHS locations are open for the year is **Friday, December 19th!** We will re-open for regular operating hours on **Monday, January 5th 2026**
- The BHS **Speakers Series** returns on Wed. January 21 at 7:00pm with **Jack Jackowetz** presenting on Brantford's Industrial History
- **Family Day** is Monday, February 16th - keep an eye out for more information on programming at Myrtleville House Museum!
- Our February **Speakers Series** presentation will be on Wed. Feb. 18th - Franklyn Smith will discuss "Moving Water from Source to Usage"



Scotch Tasting

5 FLAVOURFUL TASTES OF WHISKIES FROM ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23RD 2026

7:00 - 9:00PM | CANADIAN MILITARY HERITAGE MUSEUM

347 GREENWICH ST. BRANTFORD ON N3S 7X4

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

HAGGIS TASTING

ROBBIE BURNS POETRY

\$50 FOR BHS & CMHM MEMBERS

\$60 FOR NON-MEMBERS

\$20 FOR NON-DRINKING

CALL 519-752-2483 OR EMAIL
INFORMATION@BRANTMUSEUMS.CA
TO BOOK YOUR TICKETS

**Photo Spotlight**

This edition's photo spotlight shares a photo of the demolition of the YWCA building at 90 Wellington Street, 1959.

The YWCA building - known as Victoria Hall - had rooms for lodgers and at one time accommodated 65 residents. The building was vacated around 1957 when the YMCA and the YWCA joined together in the YMCA building at Darling and Queen streets.

The city purchased the old Victoria Hall building and demolished it in 1959 to make way for a parking lot and the former City Hall structure, built in the Brutalist architectural style.

Brant Moment:

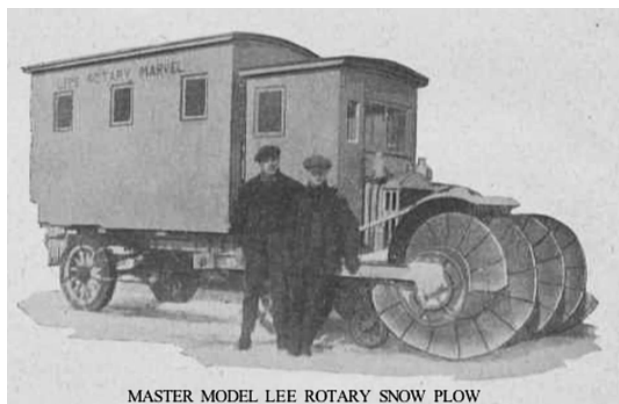
Submitted by: Murray Angus, President - Brant Historical Society

In January of 1925 Mr A.C. Lee was laying in bed, looking out the window of his home on the Brantford to Paris Rd and was watching a group of men shovelling out a snow plow that was stuck on the road in the heavy snow. Being an engineer and a mechanic he thought that there had to be a better way to move heavy snow than pushing it to the side with a plow. There were a number of people around the country working on developing the first snow blowers but they used fan blades to blow the snow up a chute and off to the side. These worked fine in light snow but deep heavy snow was a challenge for these early models. Mr Lee's idea was a screw type mechanism that would break up the snow and ice and throw it off to the side of the road.

He built a small model of his Rotary Snow Plow idea, worked out the perfect pitch for the screw blades and made it relatively simple, so that very little could go wrong with it. He always said that he was fortunate that his work interested the people at Waterous Engine Works, so they were secured to build the new invention. When his first model was completed he was asked if he thought his machine could help with a big five mile blockage of snow on highway 2 between Eastwood and Woodstock. His Rotary Plow was driven to Eastwood and cleared the blocked road, in both directions, in about two hours.

There were a number of these Rotary Snow Plows used by the Road Department but I'm not sure what ever happened to them. As trucks got larger and more powerful I imagine that moving heavy snow became easier with the blade style plows that we see today. I don't think that in 1925 they were thinking about a snow plow travelling down a highway at 100 kms an hour like they do today. The rotating screw style blade is still popular these days in a lot of personal size snowblowers but not so much with the large road plows.

Oh, the things that we used to invent and build in Brantford.



Photographs: Mr. A.C. Lee; an early model of the Lee Rotary Snow Plow; and a later model of the Rotary Plow (taken outside of the Waterous Engine Works building on Market Street South)

Each membership package comes with the following privileges:

- ✓ Advance notification and special invitation to all our Activities and Events, including Children's Camps and PA Days
- ✓ Free Admission to our monthly Speaker Series
- ✓ Free Admission to our Walking Tours (fee applies to all non-members)
- ✓ BHS Newsletter – all that's new and exciting at BHS
- ✓ 10% off all Gift Shop purchases over \$20
- ✓ Access to, and use of, our Research facilities - 5 hours of research time



Packages:

☐ Student (\$20.00)
(to 24 yrs with school/college/university ID)
(One voting membership in all Brant Historical Society membership meetings, including the Annual General Meeting, plus all privileges)

☐ Individual (\$25.00)
(One voting membership in all Brant Historical Society membership meetings, including the Annual General Meeting, plus all privileges)

☐ Couple (\$40.00)
(Two voting memberships in all Brant Historical Society membership meetings, including the Annual General Meeting, and all privileges for two individuals living at the same address)

☐ Family (\$80.00)
(Four voting memberships in all Brant Historical Society membership meetings, including the Annual General Meeting, and all privileges for a family living at the same address)

Payment may be made at or sent to:

Brant Historical Society
57 Charlotte Street
Brantford, Ontario N3T 2W6

Please provide the names of all individuals per package and indicate if over 18 years of age for voting membership.

Name: _____ 18+ ☐

Name: _____ 18+ ☐

Name: _____ 18+ ☐

Name: _____ 18+ ☐

Name: _____ 18+ ☐

Address: _____

City: _____ PC: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Donation Amount: _____

(Tax receipts will be provided for monetary donations above \$20.00)

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT

☐ Cash ☐ Cheque
☐ Credit Card: ___ Visa ___ MC

Number: _____

Expiry date: _____