

MINUTES OF THE 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

March 23, 2024, 12- 3 pm

Held at Hawkestone Community Hall

Hawkestone – Township of Oro-Medonte

In Attendance: 20 members and 10 guests

Attendees perused the displays set up in the hall by Bill Soules, SC Genealogical; Mark Fisher, SC history; Ted Duncan, Barns; Mark Burchell TWGHS; Brian Charles, Wampum Belts; Harry Hughes, former Mayor Oro-Medonte.

A delicious build your own sandwich luncheon was prepared by Amanda Wilce and Donna Wice and enjoyed by all.

The official meeting was **called to order at 1 p.m.** by President Ted Duncan who welcomed the attendees thanking them for their interest in SCHA. He commented on the age of the organization and the very evident signs of the resiliency of its members and executive. Ted is retiring from his Presidency, knowing that many accomplishments have been made during his tenure.

Land Acknowledgement Statement: was read by Secretary Donna Wice.

Introduction of winning Andrew Hunter essay contest Abiishan Nanthakumar of Bradford District High School was made by Donna Wice. Abiishan had prepared a forthright and amusing summary of his research as well as his future aspirations.

Warden Basil Clarke brought greetings from County Council and recognized the many contributions made by SCHA over its long lifespan.

Mayor Oro-Medonte Randy Greenlaw also expressed his pleasure at attending this annual event.

President Ted then introduced the current Board of Directors: Ted Duncan, Mark Fisher, Bryan Wood, Donna Wice, Deb Crawford, Amanda Wilce, Vanessa Kennedy, Karen Mahoney. Special thanks was given to Janine Harris-Wheatley, who retired after 6 years as a director.

The minutes of the 2023 AGM were contained in last year's report for review. A Motion to accept the minutes was moved by Bryan Wood, seconded by Amanda Wilce. Carried. There was no business arising from the minutes.

President's Report: Ted Duncan President 2017-2024

I joined Simcoe County Historical Association (SCHA) 8 years ago. I was interested in our local history; Orillia's and all of Simcoe County. I saw an organization that had a great history itself; but one that had fallen on hard times. Membership, especially at the Board level, had a few dedicated members who worked to preserve and record our County's history. I saw the value of SCHA as a

force that could bring together the various historical Societies within the County to preserve the stories that tell our collective history. The pieces could make up the whole fabric of the County's history.

I realized that no one individual could "make SCHA great again" to paraphrase an unlikely person. I credit Donna Wice, our long time Secretary, for challenging me to take the role as President to keep SCHA viable and attract new people on to the Board. Mark Fisher, John Merritt and Deb Exel along with Donna were the stalwarts who helped keep SCHA afloat early on. They brought enthusiasm, hard work and ideas to rejuvenate our old but storied organization. Over the time, others joined us on the Board; Deb Crawford, Karen Mahoney, Venessa Kennedy, Jan Blommaert, Janine Harris-Wheatley, Lindsay Earl, Bryan Wood, Bruce McRae and Amanda Wilce; some for a short time but others for a longer time. It's made difference!

New initiatives have been developed, and old ones have been continued sometimes in a new format! Our Newsletter "News and Views" continues in a digital form; Our Speakers Series is via Zoom and the Hunter Writing Awards go to high school students who write about Canadian History.

What is new? The Heritage Business Awards honour family companies that have for generations contributed to the growth and development of our County, the Connections meetings of our member organizations that we host to support them in preserving our collective past and new two years ago; a History Conference held at the Simcoe County Museum that brought us together to celebrate our history. We have been busy; but the future could be even better.

My health has been good over this past year; but now I face more challenges. Therefore I am stepping down as your President. Deb Crawford has indicated that she is ready to take on the role of President of Simcoe County Historical Association. She brings experience, energy and knowledge to the Board. Deb is an excellent person to lead SCHA into the future, supported by the Board members who continue with us. I hope to continue as Past President to help pursue the goals that we have set for ourselves.

I encourage those interested in our history to join us. We would like members from all corners of the County to be with us.

Treasurer's Report: Bryan Wood

SCHA was the recipient of 1 grant in 2023: Heritage Ontario Development Grant

The only community partnership grant was awarded to Simcoe County Museum History Fair

Moved by Deb Exel/Mark Burchell, to accept the Treasurer's year-end financial report as of Dec. 31, 2023. Carried.

Membership, Media, Andrew Hunter Writing, Heritage Business Reports

Moved by Amanda Wilce/ Deb Crawford to receive all additional reports as posted on our website. Carried.

Board of Directors slate for 2024 was read by Warden Basil Clarke: Ted Duncan, as Past President; Deb Crawford as President, Mark Fisher, Vice President; Bryan Wood, as Treasurer; Donna Wice, as Secretary; Amanda Wilce, Vanessa Kennedy, Karen Mahoney as Directors.

Moved by Mark Fisher and seconded by Dorothy McKeown to accept the slate of Directors for 2024. Carried.

New Business:

Incoming President Deb Crawford spoke briefly of Connections and making the History of Simcoe County come to life even more.

Program

Marilyn Gregory spoke eloquently about her journey sourcing out the story of Hawkestone Hall's creation and its ups and downs since then. Her tremendous graphic design skills were very evident as one read the story boards created for the 100th anniversary in 2022.

Harry Hughes shared his extensive historical knowledge of the surrounding area of Hawkestone and Oro.

Mark Jacquemain offered to explain what being awarded a SCHA community grant has meant to him as he finalizes the last stages of his book UNCANNY SPIRITS.

Adjournment at 2:45 p.m. SCHA Secretary: Donna Wice