Curator’s Corner
Brian Wood

Although 2018 seemed quiet without the Canada 150 celebrations of the previous year, it was anything but. It was, in fact, a year of change for staff, programming and the site itself.

With Sherri Grafton’s retirement as our Food and Beverage Supervisor in 2017, we welcomed Shelley Kajganic to the Exchange Café in the early part of the New Year. Shelley settled into the position well, taking on the café’s regular season as well as the site’s special event meals. She introduced a few new items to the regular menu and changed-up the group menus, the latter being particularly enjoyed by several private bookings. We look forward to seeing her new ideas for the 2019 season!

One area that saw little change was our summer staff. Cierra Hager, Brandon Schofield, and Patrick Mulligan returned to their Historical Interpreter positions. Patrick also worked as Kitchen/Dining Room Staff in the café for the summer. Sherri Grafton finished the café season in that position when Patrick returned to school in September. We were also very fortunate to have Scott Dickinson volunteer many hours with us through the spring and fall. He was a tremendous help to Sarah and I and in furthering the digitization of our collections records.

With artifact preservation being a high priority for the museum, work to provide necessary conservation treatments to Bell Family artifacts continued in 2018. Two books, Bell’s Standard Elocutionist by Melville and David Bell and The Works of Henry Kirke White, originally belonging to Edward Bell, were sent to Ubbink Book and Paper Conservation in Ottawa. The two volumes came back much improved and stabilized, ensuring they remain important pieces in telling the Bell’s story. We also had four horsehair chairs from the drawing room reupholstered in new, but similar fabric. Unfortunately the original horsehair was simply past its time.

The area that saw the greatest change was the historic houses. New windows were installed throughout the Henderson Home (windows that open – what a concept!), well-worn carpets in the library, dining room and drawing room of the Homestead were replaced with wonderful new period patterns, the dark mouldings and trim in the drawing room were painted white to reflect the early years the Bell’s lived in the house, the back exterior railings on both houses were replaced, and both houses received new furnaces. All of these upgrades will see the houses well into the future.

Slowly but surely, our new parking lot neared completion at the end of the year with the installation of entrance gates and lighting. What a bonus to have lighting for our nighttime events!

2018 saw over 14,000 visitors at the Homestead. Interpretive tours, education programmes, daycamps, special events, and outreach activities kept staff and volunteers busy. Admittedly, not all of our special events were successful. Mother Nature definitely did not co-operate causing the cancellation of the Summer Serenade Concert, and lesser numbers at our activities at Canada Day and the Children’s Safety Village Halloween event. But, the Bell Summer Theatre Festival continued to thrive, bringing over 2,600 people to the site. We also saw an increase in the number of off-site presentations booked by various community groups and Laurier Brantford. The site also participated with the Great War Centennary Association in the Remembrance Day event held at Grace Anglican Church. Thanks to Evan Habkirk for taking our Bell Memorial exhibit on-the-road. All-in-all, another great year for programming!
Working with various community groups is a mainstay when it comes to our museum programming. The Brantford School of Instrumental Music continued to be the backbone of our Summer Music Series. Loril Shannik and Dan McDonald, better known as the celtic duo, Cymer, and Pleasant Ridge made sure our other events had a musical component. Working with Brant Theatre Workshops was a pleasure once again as they presented three productions on the Bell’s front porch.

None of what we do would be possible without great staff, our co-workers at Brantford Parks and Recreation, and our brilliant volunteers. In total, 193 individuals volunteered 1,446 hours of their time, assisting Sarah and I with the delivery of the museum’s programmes and services. This speaks volumes about how important the Homestead remains in the eyes of the community 108 years after it first became an historic home and parkland. Thank you to everyone for helping us to keep the Bell’s brilliant legacy alive.

Education Corner
Sarah Hamilton

We had a good year in 2018. Once again, bookings from public, private and separate schools were steady. We also partnered with the Children’s Safety Village to deliver science and safety programs in the summer. In total, we delivered programming to 3638 children and we brought in $11,717.75.

Students as Museum Professionals

Winter, Spring, and Fall Sessions – Once again, we ran the SMP programme in January, to coincide with our Family Day event in February. Twenty-six students from the Grade 7 classes of Banbury Heights participated. The students helped make our Family Day event a success by giving tours in the morning and afternoon.

We added an SMP session in March, leading up to the Edwardian High Tea in April. I had 7 members of the Brant 4-H give tours during the event.

BCI’s grade 12 history class did SMP in April and May. They gave tours during our Mother’s Day Brunch, and were a great help on a very busy day.

The grade 7 class of Braemar House School returned in November, with 16 students and they gave tours during our Melville House by Moonlight event. They also gave a tour to the Grade 4 students from their school. The Brant 4-H was back to do SMP for that event as well, with 7 club members.

School Bookings
We delivered 30 education programmes to 907 students over the course of 2018. We brought in $6,130.00 in programming fees.

Scouting and Guiding Bookings
We delivered one overnight programme to 17 Brownies and guides in 2018. We brought in $425.00 in programming fees.

Children’s Day Camps
We ran 15 day camps in 2018, with 5 P.A. day camps and 10 days of summer camps. Each camp featured a variety of crafts, science experiments, games, and cooking activities based around the history of the Bells and the Bell Homestead. 174 children took part in day camp activities and we brought in $4,573.75 in registration fees.

Birthday Parties
Four birthday parties were booked over 2018, with 23 children in total. The birthday parties brought in $414.00.

Children’s Safety Village
221 children attended our joint STEAM/Safety programming at the Children’s Safety Village. Our share of the fees collected came to $221.00.
In Mrs. Bell’s Kitchen

Cooking and baking have become something of a tradition in our day camps and education programmes. Food is an excellent way to connect with other times and other cultures. Cooking is also a fun and tasty way to learn math, chemistry, and many other STEM skills.

We made Nanaimo bars for the 1950s day of our Over A Century of Connections day camp in August. The first published recipe for this sweet Canadian treat was printed in The Lethbridge Herald on January 18, 1954. The crust can also be made with crushed walnuts, but we eliminated those due to nut allergies.

Nanaimo Bars

Ingredients
- 6 oz. Baker’s semi-sweet chocolate, divided
- 3/4 cup + 1 tbsp butter, softened, divided
- 3/4 cup + 1 tbsp butter, softened, divided
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 cups graham crumbs
- 1 1/2 cup flaked coconut

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Microwave 2 oz chocolate and 1/2 cup butter in large bowl on MEDIUM for 2 minutes or until butter is melted. Stir until chocolate is completely melted. Blend in vanilla and egg. Stir in graham crumbs and coconut. Press onto bottom of 9-inch square pan. Bake 8 minutes, cool completely.

4. Microwave remaining chocolate and butter in microwaveable bowl 2 to 3 minutes or until butter is melted. Stir until chocolate is completely melted. Spread over custard layer. Refrigerate several hours before cutting into bars.

We explored Alexander Graham Bell’s world travels during our November 16th P.A. day camp. The baked good for the day was Pictou County Oatcakes. The recipe is from the cook book, Out of Old Nova Scotia Kitchens by Marie Nightingale. These tasty cakes combine Aleck’s love of oats and sweets, and are a nod to the time he spent in Nova Scotia.

Pictou County Oatcakes

Ingredients
- 2 cups oatmeal (use old-fashioned oats if you can)
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/4 cup shortening
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 cup boiling water

Combine dry ingredients and cut in shortening. Dissolve baking soda in the boiling water and add, continuing to mix with a knife. Mold with the hands and shape into a long wedge. Slice off and bake in 400 degree F oven for 10 minutes.

Mark Your Calendar!

2019 Spring & Summer Events

24th Annual Barn Sale
Saturday, May 26th, 7:30am to noon
Our annual “garage” sale generates funding for the Homestead’s special events and projects. You’ll find just about anything and amazing prices — especially if you talk to Marty! Have saleable items you’d like to donate? Just give us a call, 519-756-6220 or email bellhomestead@brantford.ca

Summer Music Series
The Homestead’s grounds will be filled with the sweet sounds of music enjoyed in the Bell’s time and modern favourites that will have your toes tapping! Bring your favourite lawn chair or blanket.

Saturday, June 22nd, 7pm (rain date Sunday, June 23rd, 3pm)
Summer Serenade with the Brantford Memorial Concert Band
Director Paul Nicholson and the Brantford Memorial Concert Band welcome you to an evening of exceptional musical entertainment. The Bell Homestead provides the stage for this long-standing community orchestra featuring over 60 musicians. Admission by donation.

Thursday, August 22nd, 7pm (rain date Friday, August 23rd, 7pm)
Symphony Under the Stars with the Brantford Community Symphony Orchestra
The Bell Homestead becomes a stage once more, with classical and modern favourites conducted by Director, Deb McLaughlin and featuring some of Brantford’s finest musicians. Admission by donation.

Saturday, September 28th, 7pm
Coffee House at the Café
The Exchange Café will end its 18th season at the Bell Homestead in 1960s fashion with an evening of smooth music and good eats. Prepare to be jazzed by the groovy sounds of Brantford’s Pleasant Ridge. Call for tickets, 519-756-6220.

Bell Summer Theatre Festival
Now in its 11th season at the Homestead, Brant Theatre Workshops will transform the Bell’s front verandah into a stage with three thrilling outdoor productions…

“Puss in Boots” July 1st to 15th
“Ghosts of the Titantic” July 26th to August 11th
“Generation” August 16th to 18th

Visit brantheatre.com for showtimes

Event listings subject to change without notice.
Where Friends are Connected!

Open April 23rd to September 28th
Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 3pm

Don’t forget to make your reservations for
Mother’s Day Brunch on May 12th!

FULLY LICENSED  PHONE 519-756-6220 FOR RESERVATIONS
2018 Year in Review
Sylvia Chupka, Chair
- Bell Homestead Committee

2018 seems to have flown past quicker than a telephone connection. It seems like it was yesterday we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Bell Memorial. But that was 2017. 2018 brought with it another successful year at the Bell Homestead, thanks to all of the volunteers, and primarily Brian Wood and Sarah Hamilton, who were busy keeping the Homestead in tip top condition and promoting the site through many programs and activities.

The Bell Homestead Committee spent a considerable amount of time this year reviewing and updating our 5 Year Strategic Plan. One of the primary focuses of the plan was the implementation of upgraded technology at the site. A WiFi system would be invaluable for our programming and it would enhance the visitor services substantially. There were discussions of self-guided tours translated into different languages which would only be possible through an advanced WiFi service. In keeping with budgetary guidelines, our Strategic Plan always keeps within the operating budget of the Bell Homestead.

Another milestone for the Bell Homestead in 2018 was the completion of our parking lot. This was a long time coming, and the result was beyond our expectations! The parking lot now includes a designated parking spot, as well as much needed lighting for evening events.

Last year, we hired a new Café manager – Shelley Kajganic, who treated the Café guests with wonderful meals and desserts. Thank You Shelley for making your first year a success for the Café!

During the year, the staff and volunteers promote the Melville House and Henderson House through many different educational programs that focus on inspiring discovery and learning through the lives of the Bell family. This would not be possible without the support of Bell Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, the County of Brant and the City of Brantford. Thank you for your continued support.

I would also like to thank the staff at Parks and Recreation for all of the maintenance and grounds keeping support over the year. You never fail to keep our grounds and buildings in tip top shape.

The successful operation of the Bell Homestead would not be possible without the wonderful volunteers that donate many hours making sure that the programs and events the Bell Homestead offers run smoothly. The Outreach Committee Chaired by Adele Gaunt provides an invaluable resource to make every event a success. Thank you to all!

And I would be remiss if I didn’t thank our Past Chair - Eryn Molnar for all of her help and guidance in helping me Chair this year’s committee.

As I complete my first term as Chair of the Bell Homestead committee I know that the staff and volunteers will continue to provide unsurpassed programming and experiences in years to come.

All the best in 2019!
Community Outreach
Adele Gaunt, Chair – Community Outreach Committee

I would like to thank all our volunteers without whom our many programmes at the Homestead would not be possible. Our volunteers attend events to help, that includes school programmes, helping in the cafe serving and dishwashing at our special events, baking for high teas and bake sales, manpower at barn sales and fun events that are scheduled throughout the season.

Our committee meets a few times a year to ensure that we can provide the help required to our Curator Brian and Educator Sarah, both of whom have to be commended for their leadership. We aim to make the Homestead a destination for the community and tourists from far and wide.

For our special events in 2018, the following attendance was recorded.

- 36 Valentines dinner
- 301 Loonie Family Day
- 46 Edwardian High Tea
- 105 (with 80 dining) Eliza Bells Mother’s Day Brunch
- 10 May is Museum Month Open House (it was a mid-week day)
- 150 Annual Barn Sale
- 273 came to the booth at Glenhyrst Family Arts Day
- 20 Telephone Opera
- 2654 Bell Summer Theatre Festival (this includes theatre attendance and rehearsals)
- 60 Symphony Under the Stars with the Brantford Community Symphony Orchestra
- 41 Thanksgiving Weekend Dinner
- 560 Booth at the Children’s Safety Village Hallowe’en event
- 189 Halloween Fun Fair
- 90 Holiday Bake sale and Tea
- 120 Melville House Christmas Celebration, 88 dined - (42 on the 1st Dec and 46 on the 8th Dec), Chad Martin as Santa - great job

Membership Information

Membership
In 2018, The Bell Homestead Society included members from Bermuda, various parts of the United States, Cape Breton, and right here at home in Brant County. Sadly, long-time members Lucy Hagopian and Norm Walker (also a member of the Bell Volunteers and a former Bell employee) passed away last year. Norm was a particularly great supporter of the Homestead and one of the first to purchase a membership when we launched our membership program in 1995.

Individual, Student & Senior Members:
Debb Consoli
David M. Cullen, Brantford
Adele Gaunt, Simcoe
Evan Habirkirk, London
Alison Huhtala, Brantford
David Jones, Ancaster
Audrey Lee, Brantford
Ruth Lefler, Brantford
Marilyn McDonald, Brantford
Mildred Macaulay, Brantford

Mary Patenaude, Vanessa
Pat Smeaton, Brantford
Jo Walker, Brantford
Mary Welsh, Brantford

Family Members:
Nancy Browning & Norm Lowe, Brantford
Bonfield/Gjorkes Family, Brantford
Cavin Family, Brantford
Linda & Doug Guest, Brantford
Gordon & Patricia Gates, Port Rowan
Marty & Jenny Hahn, Norwich

Tom & June Hird, Brantford
Jago Family, Brantford
Brian & Debbie Mehlenbacher, Ayr
Molnar Family, Hamilton
Shelia O'Donoghue, Brampton
Dr. and Mrs. William Page, Brantford
Page Family, Brantford
Ross Family, Burford
Janet Snaith and Family, Paris
Lorie Steiner, Paris
Phyllis & Gray Styan, Brantford
Brian Wood & James Clark, Brantford
Corporate/Institutional Members:
Bell Canada, Montreal/Toronto
Extend Communications, Brantford
Millard's, Brantford
Gates Canada, Brantford

Life & Honorary Life Members:

Rosemarie & Charles Barsony, Brantford
Eugene Burles, Brantford
Chupka Family, Brantford
Andrew Crowley, North Carolina
Luke Crowley, North Carolina
Lilou Grosvenor Eller, Utah
Ewan Kobashigawa-Bates, California
Marc Muller, Michigan
Nancy Muller, Michigan
Andrew Muller, Michigan
Sophie Muller, Michigan
Luke Muller, Michigan
Eliza Muller, Michigan
Hugh Muller, Baddeck, NS

Jeanne Muller, Baddeck, NS
Aleck Myers, North Carolina
Martin Myers, Maryland
Beverly Myers, Maryland
Clara Myers, California
Rose Myers, California
Ray & Elsie Martin, Minnesota
Francis Mejia Martin, Minnesota
Lucille Martin, North Carolina
Eliza Martin, North Carolina
Spencer Ogden, Colorado
Bennett Ogden, Colorado
Jackson Spurling, Bermuda
Stasia Spurling, Bermuda

Graham Sullivan, California
Joan Blair Sullivan, Pennsylvania
Nash Shankman, California
Wren Williams, Massachusetts
Finn Watson, Indiana
Elsie Watson, Montana
Emmett Watson, Montana
Nora Watson, Massachusetts
Cailan Watson, Massachusetts
Faye Watson, Maine

Just a reminder...
All annual Bell Homestead Society memberships are due on July 1st of each year. 2019 notices will be sent out soon. Thank you to all of our members. Your support goes a long way to helping us provide our programmes and services!

2018-19 Membership Rates
Individual (annual) $30
Senior/Student (annual) $25
Family (annual) $40
Corporate/Institutional (annual) $200
Life Member $325

2017-18 Bell Homestead Committee
Executive – Chair: Sylvia Chupka (2 year)
Vice Chair – Debb Consoli (3 year)
Secretary – Linda Guest – County of Brant
Past Chair – Eryn Molnar

Elsie Myers Martin – Bell Family
Hugh Bell Muller – Bell Family (Honorary)
Janie Theoret – Bell Canada
Steve Gjorkes (1 year)
Lorie Steiner (1 year)

Marty Hahn – Bell Volunteers
Community Outreach Committee
Chair – Adele Gaunt
Nancy Browning
Eryn Molnar
Debb Consoli
Steve Gjorkes
Marty Hahn
Brian Mehlenbacher

Mary Patenaude
Sylvia Chupka
Cathi Alchin
Sandy Ross
Betty Moore (resigned)
Wayne Wolski (resigned)
August 2019 Day Camps at the Bell Homestead

WORLD TRAVELLERS
August 19th to August 23rd and August 26th to August 30th
Ages 5 to 11. Take a trip around the world with Alexander Graham Bell and his National Geographic magazine! Each day we visit a different destination with food, art and other activities.

Week 1 (August 19 - 23):
Ireland, Chile, Mongolia, Tahiti, Vietnam

Week 2 (August 26 – August 30):
Iceland, Bolivia, Egypt, Papua New Guinea, Kenya

Cost: $30 per day (25% discount for museum members). Call (519) 756-1500 or (519) 756-6220 to register. Online registration available at RecConnect Brantford at https://ca.apm.activecommunities.com/brantford. Register now!

P.A. Drop-In Days for the 2019-2020 school year to be announced in June 2019
Day camps are for children ages 5 to 11. Pre-registration is required, $30 per child per day, $17.00 per half day (25% off for museum family members). Camps run 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Children may be dropped off after 8:30 a.m. and must be picked up by 4:30 p.m. No before- or after-care. Phone (519) 756-6220 or (519) 756-1500 to register!

Drop-In Days run from 9:30 to 12:00 and from 1:00 to 3:30. $5 per child (accompanying adults free), includes drop-in activities and a tour of the historic houses.