



Paris Museum & Historical Society

Annual General Meeting

April 26, 2026, at 2 pm

Contents:

Agenda

Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting

By-law Revisions

2025 Year-End Financial Statement

Proposed 2026 Budget

Nominations to the Board of Directors

Annual Activities Summary



Paris Museum & Historical Society

Agenda for the 2026 Annual Meeting

51 William Street, Paris, Ontario, Canada

Sunday, April 26, 2026, 2 pm.

Welcome and Call to Order: Chair Cate Breough

Approval of the Agenda

Approval of the Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting

Change to PMHS By-laws

2025 Financial Statement

Proposed 2026 Budget

Nominations to the Board of Directors

Election of 2026-2027 Board of Directors

Speakers: Sharon Morton – The Bell Project

Marg Deans – The Paris Veterans Project

Adjournment

Paris Museum & Historical Society

Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting

April 27, 2025

Attendance: 27 members

Welcome and Call to Order: Chair Cate Breauh thanked everyone for coming and called the meeting to order at 2:06 pm.

In her opening remarks, she reflected on the scarcity of gratitude in a world of strife and its importance to the Paris Museum & Historical Society. “We are deeply grateful for our members whose interests and support and passion for the past provide the air we breathe.”

She thanked volunteers who spent 4,650 hours working at the museum in 2024. She thanked donors for their financial support and she thanked the County of Brant for its help in ensuring the sustainability of the museum.

She warned that 2025 is likely to be a year of uncertainty. The “Downtown Dig” will snarl traffic and make Paris unappealing to tourists. But PMHS plans to use the slowdown to plan a tribute to the town’s founder, Hiram Capron, in 2026.

Approval of the Agenda: Marg Deans moved approval of the agenda for the Annual General Meeting. Diane Baltaz seconded the motion. CARRIED.

Approval of the Minutes of the April 21st Annual General Meeting: Carol Goar moved and Ursula O’Brien seconded approval of the minutes of the 2024 AGM. CARRIED.

Awarding of Lifetime Membership: Bob Hasler came forward to present Marie Williamson with a lifetime membership, the highest honour PMHS can bestow. He explained that Marie joined the museum in 2000, agreeing to serve as treasurer. She held that role for 25 years.

Bob presented Marie with a lifetime membership and a bouquet of flowers, as members applauded.

Year-End Financial Statement: Ursula O’Brien led members through the museum’s income and expenditures for 2024, highlighting the \$26,704.00 the museum received in grants and the \$6,472.40 it spent on new computers. There were no questions from members.

Proposed 2025 Budget: Ursula remained at the podium to explain the budget the board of directors approved for the current year. She pointed out that the museum's projected operating costs, covering everything from utilities and security to office supplies and computer maintenance, will come to approximately \$21,000.00.

Bob Hasler moved approval of the budget. Marg Deans seconded the motion. CARRIED

Report of the Nominating Committee: Marg Deans who chaired the nominating committee recommended that three new members be added to the directors. She described Darlene Goad as a diligent researcher, Daniel Churchill as a tech-savvy volunteer with the skills to diagnose and fix Internet problems and Patrick Draper as former public official with experience at the provincial and municipal level.

Pat Hasler-Watts moved that these recommendations be adopted. Cathey Murch seconded the motion. CARRIED.

Election of the 2025-2026 Board of Directors: Cate invited Brant Councillor Steve Howes to the podium, thanking him for agreeing to conduct the museum's elections.

Councillor Howes said it was a privilege to act as the liaison between PMHS and Brant Council, a position he has held for six years. Picking up on Cate's theme of gratitude, he said: "This community is grateful for the work you do." He stressed the importance of having deep roots and a strong sense of identity in chaotic times.

He then proceeded with the election, asking members if they were in favour of electing Marie Williamson to another term on the board of directors. All hands were raised and he declared Marie re-elected.

Next, he invited members to thank Bob Hasler, who was about to step down from the board for his many years of service. They responded with sustained applause.

Finally, he sought members' approval for the election of the three new board members recommended by the committee: Darlene Goad, Daniel Churchill and Patrick Draper. All three were unanimously endorsed by those present.

There were no nominations from the floor. Steve therefore declared the closed and announced the members of the 2025 board of directors: Cate Breaugh, Marg Deans, Marie Williamson, Ursula O'Brien, Bill Allan, Carol Goar, Daniel Churchill, Patrick Draper and Darlene Goad. The board pledged to act in the best interests of the museum and the people of Paris.

Honouring our Heritage: Having completed the business of the meeting, Cate called on Bob Hasler to talk about the Scott Collection, a package of 4,000 letters, documents and family heirlooms donated to the museum by the descendants of George Scott, one of Paris's earliest businessmen.

George Scott, born in Dundee Scotland, was determined to come to North America. He did not make it on his first attempt. His ship hit a massive storm off the coast of Newfoundland. The passengers survived until a second ship came along and took them back to Scotland.

Undeterred, George Scott tried again eight years later. He sailed to New York City and moved north to Dundas, Ontario, working for a Scottish pharmacy company. When he was able, he set up his own apothecary shop in Paris. It sold not only medications but Wedgewood china, hand-stitched tablecloths, clothing and other household goods.

Starting in about 1890, he wrote the story of the ill-fated 1848 transatlantic voyage, using the back of invoices as stationery. His text ran horizontally, vertically and sometimes diagonally. Bob and his team of transcribers are now attempting to turn those invoices into a coherent story.

George Scott died in 1892. His son, Paul, was a pharmacist in Paris, then moved to Toronto to become a doctor. He died in 1944. His daughter donated 13 banker's boxes of family records to PMHS.

'Crossing the Threshold': Marg Deans said PMHS is offering tours of three historic Paris homes to members and their guests. Partly to raise funds and partly to demonstrate the benefits of membership. She encouraged those present to buy tickets to the tours of Asa Wolverton House. Charles Mitchell House and the redevelopment of a downtown block that once housed the businesses of the town's founder, Hiram Capron.

Suggestions and Comments from Members: Steve Hall suggested the anniversary of Alexander Graham Bell's first long-distance phone call to Paris presents an opportunity for PMHS to highlight the town's role in one of the 19th Century's technological breakthroughs.

Adjournment: Bill Allan moved the Annual General Meeting be adjourned at 2:56 pm.



Proposed Constitution and By-laws Change

Annual General Meeting

April 26, 2026

The current Board of Directors is recommending a change to the Constitution and By-laws regarding the election of the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Current Provision Reads

Section 5: Officers

The positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary will be determined by a vote of the Members. These positions can come from newly elected Directors or from returning Directors, as determined by circumstances.

Proposed Provision

The positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary will be determined by a vote of the elected Directors at their first official meeting after the Annual General Meeting. These positions can come from newly elected Directors or from returning Directors, as determined by circumstances.

Rationale

This year, six Board Directors will not stand for reelection or have resigned. Of the three current Board Directors returning, none has committed to serving as Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, or Secretary.

This means that the current Directors and the new Directors elected at the 2026 AGM will need time to consider the incremental demands of these roles and discuss who may be willing to fill them.

In light of this situation, the newly constituted Board of Directors, elected by the PMHS members at the AGM, should be given sole responsibility for appointing the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.

2025 Year-End Financial Statement

The Paris Museum & Historical Society

January-December, 2025

Distribution account	Total
Income	
Donation	2,268.01
Donation Hat	1,217.70
Total for Donation	\$3,485.71
Event	1,870.00
Grants	9,312.00
Grants - restricted	10,500.00
Total for Grants	\$19,812.00
HST rebate	3,326.64
Membership	1,755.00
Research	590.00
Sales	1,636.76
Total for Income	\$32,476.11
Gross Profit	\$32,476.11
Expenses	
Administration	
Dues and Subscriptions	278.00
Fuel Surcharge	10.63
Import Fees Deposit	11.96
Insurance	1,577.39
Other general and administrative expenses	115.00
Total for Administration	\$1,992.98
Archives	1,095.38
Artifacts	782.35
Artifact supplies	949.32
Storage expense	990.00
Total for Artifacts	\$2,721.67
Bank charges	29.00
Communications	
Stationery and printing	441.45
Web Design	2,475.00
Web Hosting	623.52
Total for Communications	\$3,539.97
Event Expenses	51.27
Exhibits	71.80
Finance & Governance	
Square Fee	60.62
Total for Finance & Governance	\$60.62

Grants & Fundraising	
Items Purchased	549.98
Total for Grants & Fundraising	\$549.98
HST paid	6.15
Operations	
Cleaning supplies	150.49
Furniture	1,469.97
Internet	890.96
Maintenance	1,828.11
Office expenses	1,666.42
Packaging	7.28
Phone	337.23
Postage	237.27
Shipping and delivery expense	463.44
Utilities	1,305.28
Total for Operations	\$8,356.45
Technology	134.30
Computer Hardware	299.99
Computer Laptop	800.35
Computer Maintenance	1,218.75
Computer Software	1,434.58
Network Equipment	348.98
Total for Technology	\$4,236.95
Unapplied Cash Bill Payment Expense	27.85
Total for Expenses	\$22,740.07
Other Income	
Interest earned	1,318.28
Other Ordinary Income	232.00
Total for Other Income	\$1,550.28
Profit	\$11,286.32

Balance Sheet - YTD 2025

The Paris Museum & Historical Society

As of December 31, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalent	
Cash in Donation Hat	\$48.05
Cash in Drawer	\$88.15
TD Business Investor 5100	\$60,518.35
TD Chequing 4416	\$48,615.54
Total for Cash and Cash Equivalent	\$109,270.09
Donation Hat Cash in Hand	\$0.00
Total for Current Assets	\$109,270.09
Total for Assets	\$109,270.09
Liabilities and Equity	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable (A/P)	
Accounts Payable (A/P)	\$0.00
Total for Accounts Payable (A/P)	\$0.00
Credit Cards	
Visa 4736	\$232.79
Visa 5163	\$0.00
Total for Credit Cards	\$232.79
GST/HST Payable	-\$1,894.89
Total for Current Liabilities	-\$1,662.10
Total for Liabilities	-\$1,662.10
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	\$99,266.14
Retained Earnings	
Net Income	\$11,666.05
Total for Equity	\$110,932.19
Total for Liabilities and Equity	\$109,270.09

Draft Budget 2026**The Paris Museum & Historical Society**

<i>Opening Balance</i>	<i>\$11,666.05</i>
Distribution account	Total
Income	
Donation	\$3,300.00
Donation Hat	\$1,800.00
Event	\$1,800.00
Grants – Restricted	\$5,000.00
Grants – Non-Restricted	\$4,500.00
Membership	\$3,000.00
Research	\$800.00
Sales	\$1,600.00
Interest earned	\$1,800.00
Total Income	\$23,600.00
Expenses	
Dues and Subscriptions	\$250.00
Insurance	\$1,500.00
Archives	\$1,450.00
Artifacts	\$1,200.00
Artifact supplies	\$950.00
Storage expense	\$990.00
Stationery and printing	\$450.00
Web Hosting	\$650.00
Event Expenses	\$500.00
Exhibits	\$100.00
Square Fee	\$85.00
Items Purchased	\$550.00
Cleaning supplies	\$200.00
Furniture	\$1,000.00
Internet	\$900.00
Maintenance	\$1,900.00
Office expenses	\$2,100.00
Phone	\$350.00
Postage	\$50.00
Shipping and delivery expense	\$500.00
Utilities/Rent	\$4,900.00
Computer Hardware	\$300.00
Computer Maintenance	\$1,700.00
Computer Software	\$1,500.00
Network Equipment	\$325.00
Total Expenses	\$24,400.00
<i>Deficit</i>	<i>-\$800.00</i>

Paris Museum and Historical Society

Nominating Committee Report for the 2026 Annual General Meeting

This will be a year of renewal for the board of directors of the Paris Museum.

More than half of our directors, including the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer intend to step down at the Annual General Meeting on April 26, 2026.

The current board is recommending a slate of candidates recruited and interviewed by its nominating committee. Museum members will be asked to elect the following five volunteers to the new board:

Donna Jaques, a lawyer with extensive experience in the not-for-profit sector, is a cataloguer at the museum. After 20 years in private practice, she served as legal counsel for the Chatham Kent Children's Aid Society, city solicitor for Guelph and chief legal officer for Ontario Northland, the provincial Crown Agency that provides train and bus service across northern Ontario.

Dave Spencer, a construction supervisor, moved to Paris three years ago and found a stache of military records left by a previous owner of the house he moved into. He brought the information to the museum and developed an interest in the history of Paris.

Sean Murphy, well known by longtime members of the museum, was a manager at Ontario Hydro before his retirement. He has volunteered at the museum as an antique evaluator, speaker and handyman. He is currently chair of the Brant Bottle club which holds its weekly meetings at the Paris Museum.

Susan Bradbury, born and raised in Paris, spent the past seven years as secretary of the board of directors of the Canadian Military Heritage Museum. She and her sisters have donated many family heirlooms to the Paris Museum. She is motivated by a passion "to gather the artifacts that are still out there before they are lost or forgotten."

Scott Jones has a master's degree in library and information science. He has worked as a library technician and chief librarian at schools across Ontario. He is now wrapping up a contract as library services technician at Conestoga College. He is comfortable with archiving, web design and grant writing. He volunteers at the Woodland Cultural Centre in Brantford.

These nominees will be introduced at the Annual General Meeting.

The museum welcomes nominations from the floor, including self-nominations, at its annual general meeting. Anyone interested in seeking a board position is encouraged to do so. If a run-off is required, all paid-up members of PMHS will be given a ballot.

Please take this opportunity to ensure that the Paris Museum has strong, dedicated leadership.

Paris Museum and Historical Society

Annual Activities Statement for 2025

The past year was unexpectedly successful for the Paris Museum & Historical Society. It began with concern that Paris's "Downtown Dig" would deter visitors and reduce donations to the museum. Instead, as downtown parking became scarce, residents and tourists began using the Syl Apps Centre parking lot and dropping into the museum to learn about local history, trace their ancestry and see the records and heirlooms preserved by past generations.

But, like most voluntary organizations, PMHS faced long-term challenges: Shrinking membership, declining government support and aging leadership.

Here are some of the achievements of which we are proudest:

* Steve Pinkett, a longtime member of the museum and former building inspector, collaborated with a videographer to produce a visual record of the "Downtown Dig" while curator Tina Lyon secured bricks from the raceways, the engineered water channels crucial for powering grist and textile mills.

* Sharon Morton, who joined the board of the museum in August, launched a monthly Speakers Series. The inaugural speech by architect Shannon Kyles on Nov. 19 sold out and earned \$460 for the museum. (There have been three successful presentations since then.)

* Marg Deans, the museum's research director, persuaded the owners of three of Paris's historic homes -- Mitchell House, built in 1842 on Broadway Street West, one of the finest cobblestone homes in the County; Wolverton House, built in 1851 on Grand River Street South, once part of the underground railroad for American slaves; and 11 Grand River Street North, the newly-rejuvenated downtown block that once housed the businesses of Paris founder Hiram Capron.

* Marie Williamson, Tina Lyon and Amanda Barclay led walking tours of downtown Paris, Upper Town, where Paris began and King's Ward, originally intended as the commercial centre of Paris.

* A team of volunteers and interns worked for more than a year to restore our diorama of early 20th Paris to its former glory, after decades of wear of tear.

* Patrick Draper, who joined the board a year ago, took on the task of creating a new interactive website for the museum. He found a local web designer and worked with him to produce a modern website tailor-made to the museum's needs.

* A visiting clockmaker offered to restore the museum's silent 19th Century grandfather clock, once owned by Paris Mayor Peter Cox, to working order. It now keeps perfect time, gonging reliably every hour.

* The Canadian Legion, Branch 29, shared its 100th Anniversary Quilt with the Paris Museum to display to the public. Our design team pulled together a "Women in Wartime" to accompany the quilt.

Sad Farewells

The museum's board of directors was sorry to say farewell to lifetime member and former curator Bob Hasler, whose health forced him to step back. We also lost one of our youngest directors, Daniel Churchill, who moved away from Paris for professional reasons.

Our curator, Tina Lyon, announced her intention to resign in mid-2026. She gave the museum plenty of time to find replacements. Tina is currently training two incoming curators, Gabrielle Macrov and Beth Mally.

Lessons Learned

It has become increasingly clear that PMHS can no longer depend on the County of Brant to keep it afloat. The museum's county grant - once in the neighbourhood of \$15,000 - fell to \$7,767 in 2025 and is expected to decline further.

PMHS needs to reach out to younger people if it is to remain vital and relevant. We are doing that through our speakers' series, community events and walking tours, but we need new ideas and fresh initiatives.