

SOUTH FRONTENAC MUSEUM

Bringing our history, art, and culture to life
www.southfrontenacmuseum.ca



Remembering Gerrit Buitenhuis

The South Frontenac Museum Society is mourning the passing of Gerrit Buitenhuis. He was a long-time, much-loved volunteer with our museum. He died after a determined battle with cancer. Our thoughts are with his wife Kim and their family.



Gerrit at one of the many events he attended on behalf of the Musuem.

Our Special Thanks

- We want to recognize the contributions that Board members Laurie Gordon and John Sherbino have made this year to the efficiency and comfort of our museum's office area.

- The museum's wildflower garden looks amazing all season long with the care and creativity of our resident gardener, Board member Andy Adamson.
- We continue to be blessed this year with a Verona Lions Club Car Show donation. Two previous Lions's grants are presently held in our Society reserves for support for the Township's planned Bellrock Mill Park, along with the local community donations.



Bedford Mill: Boom Town to Ghost Town in 100 Years

Bedford Mills is off County Road 10 north of Perth Road village as you're leaving Frontenac; if you look west at the right moment, just past the high rock, you may catch a glimpse of a stone mill across a millpond. Tucked in near the road is a small white church.

In early October, the South Frontenac Heritage Committee sponsored a talk about Bedford Mills by Dr John Gray.

Held at the Grace Centre, there was a good turnout. Dr Gray talked about the Tett and Chaffey families who had prospered there 100 years ago. The little town had a water-powered grist mill, grocery store, several other small businesses and a number of residences. Prior to WW1 the Tetts operated lead and mica mines nearby.



A great turnout for the presentation from Dr Gray about the Bedford Mills

Celebrations of Life

Although the South Frontenac Museum closes for the season on Labour Day weekend, two Celebrations of Life took place there during November.

Lynda Penrose

Lynda died suddenly and unexpectedly at her home this summer. Committed to helping those in need, she was a dedicated and cherished volunteer at the Hartington Community Caring 2nd Hand Store. Generous by nature, with a quirky sense of humour, Lynda was famous for finding just the right gifts for family, friends and neighbours. She proudly supplied *Food Less Travelled* in Verona with beautiful handmade cards and vintage finds. A garage sale enthusiast, her house was filled with

collections of pottery, plants, fabrics, costumes and many others. What more fitting venue than our museum to celebrate her life!

Gerrit Buitenhuis

Gerrit and his wife, Kim, were transplants eight years ago from Oakville. Gerrit immediately became involved in the community, serving on both a municipal Lake Eco-systems Committee and in several capacities on the Board of our South Frontenac Museum. He relished rural life: raising chickens, chopping wood, plowing snow and picking up his neighbours' recycling bins with his Kubota, dogs at his side, but he was also an avid curler and a referee for recreational and competitive soccer. Sadly, Gerrit succumbed to cancer on November 21st. His cheerful attitude and kind, open-hearted nature will be greatly missed.

What will we do with this valued treasure?



A leatherwork sewing machine in the museum's collection

When you find something that has real value that perhaps has a storied connection with South Frontenac

Township and you are not sure where it should go, leave a message at SouthFrontenacMuseum@gmail.com. This will put you in contact with our artifacts team for a conversation. We are fortunate to have a safe, climate-controlled space for your treasure.

Artifact Repair or Replacement

In August of this year, Jim Landsdell requested a meeting with the Museum Directors to discuss his concerns around the future of our horse-drawn wood wagon on public display outside the museum. We met on-site the afternoon of August 25th. Present were: Wilma Kenny, Laurie Gordon, Denise Tipton, John McDougall and John Sherbino.

Jim made a comprehensive presentation of his concerns emerging from the extreme deterioration of the wagon's wood. Although rusted and rusting, the metal components pose a much lesser problem for remediation. His overarching concern, followed by the significance of the wagon in our, and Canada's early history, was for the safety of adult visitors and children in the face of the failing display.

The discussion ranged from disassembling and shipping to a company west of Kitchener for the sum of \$5060.00 (taxes and shipping included), to protecting the wagon from further wear with a tent, storing it indoors for winter, dismantling it and preserving parts of it for display inside the museum with an appropriate historical storyboard, finding an alternative home for the wagon as well as an alternative external display for the museum.

There was an agreement regarding the local and historical value of the wagon notwithstanding the prohibitive cost of a commercial repair. Out of that, emerged the idea of soliciting support from our museum neighbour Upper Canada Villiage, that does have the technical skills inherent in its artisan volunteer staff.

With the support of Councillor Ray Leonard, a letter to that effect was sent and further supported by an accompanying letter from South Frontenac's Mayor Ron Vandewal. We are hoping for a positive response.



This image of the wagon shows some of the wood deterioration

Village stories on display

It all started with a spark of an idea to feature our communities in some way inside the Museum.

We wanted to tell the stories of the birth of our villages and the people who lived and strived to create the vibrant communities we now live in.

Movable columns featuring each village seemed the best solution to our small display space, allowing for moving the columns to the side when events occur inside the museum.

Using our collection of old photos and delving into online resources and physical documents to breathe life into the history of the villages resulted in a bright and informative exhibit that will stay on display in the museum for many years to come.

From the first drawings, colour and font choices, arranging for materials and construction, printing of the photos and other graphic elements, to assembly that brought it all together, these projects are major endeavours.

Thanks to volunteers for their assistance, to John Trousdale for his generous donation of construction materials and to Tony Hole for his expert construction of the columns.

When you visit the museum next spring, you can also enjoy our temporary exhibit, "Then and Now", which opened in the spring of 2024. It will remain on display until the fall of 2026.

2025 in review

It was a busy and productive summer at the museum.

Our docents Andy Adamson, Jane Adamson, Irene Bauder, Louise Day, Laurie Gordon, Wilma Kenny, John McDougall, Karen Stinson and Denise Tipton were led by Lynne Hutcheson.

They welcomed 385 visitors over the summer with the museum being open

48 days for a total of 144 volunteer hours just at the museum.

We were open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays from 1.00 – 4.00. Saturday was our best day with 72 visitors, Wednesdays with 43 and Mondays with 29.

In addition, we had displays at the Verona Lions Garlic Farmer's Market, the Battersea Pumpkinfest, a visit from the Women's Institutes, a Blacksmith Demonstration with Sperry Lee, two celebrations of life and our annual *Treasures in the Attic*.

We had 29 more requests for our Newsletter for a total now of 266.

We want to thank the Township of South Frontenac for painting our roof. We also appreciate the installation of the new branding logo signage, both at the museum and on the highway roadside on the opposite side of Road 38. This will definitely increase our visibility for passing traffic.

It was a very good year.

A Holiday Message

This December, our South Frontenac Museum family sends you warmest wishes for peace and joy. May your holidays be filled with opportunities to create happy memories with family and friends.

