

# **WORKING TOWARD A VIBRANT AND SUCCESSFUL FUTURE FOR THE MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE**

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DELEGATION TO

MINDEN HILLS TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

APRIL 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2022

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- “The Minden Hills Cultural Centre, tied to the downtown core through the Boardwalk and the Riverwalk, is truly the gem of the town.”



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- *First Impressions, Tourism review with Sundridge, ON, 2019*

*"The four acres known as the Minden Hills Cultural Centre, is a beautiful municipal asset that houses a library, gallery, museum, and a nature's facility... This collection of attractions is the culmination of years of volunteers, council and staff time and effort to have the gem that we enjoy today.*

*Minden Hills Council should re-engage many of the original stakeholders that created these assets and together with their efforts, chart the next chapter of development within our downtown strategy. The linkage of these assets to the Boardwalk, Riverwalk and perhaps in the future Rotary Park Trail will bring cohesiveness to our in-town attractions. Increased signage and social media presence can all work to grow the numbers of people that visit these attractions each year.*

*I am confident that collectively we can continue to grow the vision that Minden Hills Cultural Centre represents in our town."*

*Brent Devolin, August 2014*

*Campaign comment while running for Mayor*

*"The Ache at the Corner", column in The Highlander, February 18, 2016*



# BACKGROUND

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# MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

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The Minden Hills Cultural Centre is a 4-acre site in the village of Minden that includes the Agnes Jamieson Gallery, the Minden Hills Museum & Heritage Village, Nature's Place and the Minden Hills Branch of the Haliburton County Public Library.

The site is connected to the downtown Riverwalk by the Boardwalk which traverses over natural wetlands.



1973 – Frank Welch, former Reeve, bequeaths his collection of 41 [Andre Lapiné](#) paintings to the township if it can be housed properly in a gallery. Born in what is now Latvia and buried in Minden artist André Lapine was a contemporary of members of the Group of Seven. Dr. Agnes Jamieson, Ontario's first female coroner donates the monies for the building.

1981 - The Agnes Jamieson Gallery is named in honour after Dr. Agnes Jamieson. The AJG is entrusted to preserve and present the life, work and ongoing legacy of André Lapine ARCA (1866-1952) and to exhibit work by local and regional visual artists.

1984 - The Minden Hills Museum opened in 1984 as a modest one-building facility operated solely by dedicated volunteers.

2000 – now including a small village of buildings, the Minden Hills Museum changed its name to Minden Hills Museum and Heritage Village.

2002 – A 2,000 sq ft addition and proper storage for the gallery is added.

2007 – Nature's Place, A straw bale building is designed to have the least amount of impact on the environment while working in harmony with its natural surroundings, is opened. Based on the philosophy of R.D. Lawrence, it is a nature interpretive centre, with a mandate to educate, inspire and expand our understanding of our place in nature.

2010 – Cultural Center and new library are opened

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# MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE HISTORY



Boreal Baroque – Mary Anne Barkhouse, national Tour, acquired by the National Gallery.

The Last of the Great White Pine, by Michael Fay, one of several plays of local historical significance.

Fire and Ice, one of several events to bring the community together, this one incorporating winter and scotch tasting and jazz.

Heritage Gardens, grown with the Heritage Garden group and the students of Archie Stouffer Public School.

Not shown, literary readings, nature and environmental activities and so much more.....

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# **MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE HIGHLIGHTS**

# **MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE FOUNDATION (MHCCF)**

The MHCC Foundation was very active in the early development of MHCC, raising significant funds for the building and its programs.

The MHCC Foundation currently:

Sponsors popular fund raisers such as Fire and Ice (last two years were cancelled due to COVID) and was in the process of working with Curator on Summer Simmer for August long weekend as well as other events

Sponsors Education Programs for under-privileged children and families.

100% of donations to MHCCF are used to support the MHCC, with Directors' donations covering MHCCF operating expenses.



**MINDEN  
HILLS  
CULTURAL  
CENTRE  
FOUNDATION  
MEMBERS**

Neil Briggs, President

David Rea, Treasurer

Susan Murray, Director

Sue Tiffin, Director

Emily Stonehouse, Director

Mary Hamilton (MHCC Advisory Committee  
representative, non-voting role)

# MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre Advisory Committee (MHCCAC) (as defined by the Municipality) is to serve in an advisory capacity by providing advice and recommendations to Council on:

- Development, maintenance and improvement of facilities
- Strategic planning on an annual basis
- Programming and budget
- Marketing and development
- Policies and procedures
- Accessions and de-accessions of collections

Minden Hills initiates meetings and one has not been called since November 2021. There were no meetings from March 2020 to September 2021 (no input on 2022 Budget) *risking CMOG Community Museum Operating Grant funding – (provincial).*

# **MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

## **Community Representatives:**

Jim Mitchell, Member

Mary Hamilton, Member

## **Haliburton County Public Library Representative:**

Erin Kernohan-Berning, Member

## **Council Representatives:**

Jenn Hughey, Councilor (Chair)

Brent Devolin, Mayor

The Municipality receives CMOG (Community Museum Operating Grant) Funding of \$14,000 per year. Eligibility for this funding requires meeting Provincial standards.

The operations of a Community Museum and Public Art Gallery and the care and preservation of their archives and collections must meet a wide range of provincial standards and

# MANDATE OF A COMMUNITY MUSEUM

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**As a community museum, you must be governed according to standards and be open and accountable to the public for your decisions.**

Community museums need to meet the standards to qualify for funding under the provincial [Community Museum Operating Grant \(CMOG\)](#).



# MANDATE OF A COMMUNITY MUSEUM (CONT'D)

[HTTPS://WWW.ONTARIO.CA/PAGE/STANDARDS-COMMUNITY-MUSEUMS-ONTARIO](https://www.ontario.ca/page/standards-community-museums-ontario)

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A community museum must: (among others)

- Be governed by a publicly [accountable body](#) (a committee or board of management that advises council and has authority for the museum)
- museum's mission statement
- identify the impact it will have in its community

The responsibilities and duties of the governing body , include:

- **recruiting, supervising and evaluating the museum's curator or director**
- preparing or approving an annual budget and monitoring it to ensure public accountability
- ensuring that the purposes for which the museum exists are being fulfilled
- ensuring that the collection is being cared for under proper conditions

# **MANDATE OF A COMMUNITY MUSEUM** (CONT'D)

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## **Museum's governing body**

An appointed or elected body that is solely responsible for the operation of the museum, such as a Board of Directors, a Management Committee, or an Advisory Committee. This body cannot have a mandate that includes other municipal entities (for example, libraries, tourist offices, or recreation centres).

# **MINDEN HILLS MUSEUM & HERITAGE VILLAGE**

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The Minden Hills Museum & Heritage Village has been bringing local history to life since 1984. This picturesque museum invites visitors to imagine what life was like 150 years ago back when Minden was a rough and tumble logging town.

The Heritage Village is made up of five historic buildings, moved here to preserve and celebrate Minden's history.

# THE AGNES JAMIESON GALLERY

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## **Public Art Gallery**

Public art galleries must have a distinct and separate space solely for gallery purposes that is secure and dedicated to exhibitions and interpretation of contemporary visual art.

## **Art Museum**

As classified by it's André Lapine collection. Operating since 1981, the AJG is entrusted to preserve and present the life, work and ongoing legacy of André Lapine ARCA (1866-1952). The AJG has the largest collection of Lapine's in the world.

## **Recommender Gallery**

Acts as a third-party recommender for Ontario Arts Council exhibition assistance grants. There are only 5 recommender galleries between Barrie and Ottawa. Minden Hills is the smallest gallery in Ontario to have received this distinction.

# NATURE'S PLACE

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Nature's Place is a nature interpretive centre, with a mandate to educate, inspire and expand our understanding of our place in nature.

The white pine cone is our symbol. White pines were plentiful during the 1800s in Haliburton Highlands but were logged nearly to extinction. Now this symbolic pine cone is a constant reminder of our impact on Nature. Nature's Place is based on the philosophy of R.D. Lawrence an widely renowned author and naturalist. Nature's Place is a straw bale building (built in 2007) designed to have the least amount of impact on the environment.

*“Nature is careless of the individual but careful of the species. We have reversed the maxim; we are careful of the individuals and careless of the species. That is the road to extinction. If you kill the species, the individual will follow.” —R.D. Lawrence*



# MOVING FORWARD

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## **A unique model needs a unique solution.**

- The uniqueness of this kind of facility is rare within Ontario.
- We have looked at other models, other small communities, and the legislation.

**We propose that the Township of Minden Hills enter into discussions with the MHCC Foundation to have it take on the role of the governing body and take on responsibility for the day-to-day management of the MHCC.**

**In this model a member of Council and Municipal management would join MHCC Foundation board of directors.**

**The MHCC Foundation would establish community advisory committees for the Museum, the Gallery and Natures' Place to advise the Board.**

**This governance model will fulfill the standards of the Government of Ontario and bring a wide range of expertise and community engagement to the operation and future development of the MHCC.**

The day-to-day operations would be managed by the curator/s who would report to the Board of the MHCC Foundation and would be responsible for managing the staff and volunteers of MHCC.



# A STRONGER RELATIONSHIP FOUNDATION/TOWNSHIP/COMMUNITY

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This model will:

- Attract additional sources of funding not available to municipalities
- Have more engagement with the public
- Have a dedicated board of Directors to manage a cultural institution to
- recruit and engage community volunteers, stronger, more consistent programming
- Enhance tourism and economic benefits to local businesses and the community
- Reduce Township administrative workload

Examples of Municipally owned facilities operated by a separate charitable organization: Haliburton County Public Library (Minden Hills), the Tom Thomson Gallery (Owen Sound), Campbell House Museum (Toronto), Rails End Gallery (Dysart et al), Market Hall (Peterborough)

# WHAT YOU COULD EXPECT

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Potential early benefits:

- Promotion of Artist Talks, Heritage Events, educational programs
- obtaining a liquor licence to facilitate Social Events such as Fire and Ice
- Manage an expanded Gift Shop
- A thorough review of operating practices to ensure that provincial standards are being met.



# IN CONCLUSION

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In conclusion, we wish to work together.

To develop and manage the MHCC as a dynamic place for arts, culture, heritage and ecological awareness to benefit the community.

As visualized by the founders

- Agnes Jamieson, 1950s
- Frank Welch, 1970s
- The council members of Anson, Hindon, and Minden
- Ross Rigney, former Mayor, 2002 ( seeds of a Foundation)

# Our Voices

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- MaryAnne Barkhouse, Artist
- Jack Brezina, Past MHCC Foundation Director
- The Haliburton County Community Cooperative
- Gary Blundell and Victoria Ward, Artists
- Environment Haliburton EH! and the
- Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (HHLT)
- Fay Wilkinson, Registered Expressive Arts Therapist
- Fleming College, Haliburton School of the Arts
- Haliburton Highlands Secondary School
- The Haliburton Highlands Arts Council
- Alex Jack, Artist
- Dr. Agnes Jamieson
- And more to come.....

### MaryAnne Barkhouse, Artist

#### The Mysterious Case of the Disappearing Curator

I am one of the many artists who have been affected by the mysterious disappearance of Laurie Carmount, who, until recently, was the curator of the Agnes Jamieson Gallery in Minden. I was to have a solo exhibition this June, which had been postponed since last year due to pandemic-related changes in the gallery's schedule, and now is in limbo due to Laurie's sudden departure.

I was very disappointed, as many have been, to find that Laurie was no longer working at the Gallery ... all the more disappointing since her departure has been cloaked in secrecy. Laurie is a valued colleague who has an excellent reputation and working relationship with the many players in the local, provincial and national art community. In my instance, over the decades that I have had the opportunity to work with her, she had partnered with other galleries across the country to tour some of my exhibitions, with subsequent excellent critical result and public response. Many of the works that were in those early exhibitions went on to be acquired by noted institutions such as the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa and the Remai Modern in Saskatoon, to name a few. Through her initiatives Laurie was able to advance critical dialogue between local and national interests.

Laurie networked tirelessly and continually to come up with content for not just the gallery, but the museum and Nature's Place. Most recently she had reached out to me for consultation in regards to several other programming initiatives that she had on the go ... one that concerned Indigenous history of the area, and another to do with a wetland series that was also bringing in noted biology professionals from near and far to develop programming and displays to highlight the importance of these ecosystems, which are prevalent in the county. One set of speakers were to address the issue of beavers, their role in the ecosystem as well as non-lethal mitigation strategies to deal with their activity (something

### MaryAnne Barkhouse, Artist (cont'd)

that is very much top-of-mind with a lot of permanent, as well as seasonal, residents). She was always looking for projects that would hold resonance for our community, helping to provide insight into the myriad aspects of the culture and natural history of our area.

Sadly, not unlike what happens to beavers when people come into conflict with them, Laurie was mysteriously "disappeared". It is unfortunate that whatever the problem was, that it could not be resolved in another way as her departure has had an immediate and negative impact on the art community ... something perhaps that was not considered when this decision was taken. It has come at an *especially* bad moment, just when schedules were starting to be sorted out, programming was being resumed after so many pandemic-mandated closures and we were all looking forward to revitalization of our practices ... the rug is pulled out from under our collective feet.

Laurie brought many skills to the table as she was proficient not just in her curatorial abilities which saw her strike the fine balance of finding representation for a variety of media, artists at different stages of their careers as well as local and national interest, but also in her own critical writing abilities, graphic design and publishing acumen that led to quality catalogues for the gallery, as well as programming that was of benefit to our diverse population. Her enthusiasm and insight are already greatly missed.

sincerely,

Mary Anne Barkhouse

'Namgis First Nation

RCA, AOCA, Adjunct Professor OCADU

Proud Resident of the GGA (Greater Gelert Area)

### **Jack Brezina, Past Director of MHCCF**

Mayor and Members of Minden Hills Council:

I was shocked to learn of the termination of the employment of Laurie Carmount as the Curator at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre.

I am well aware that personnel matters are beyond your purview for public comment. I am also aware that over the years, Ms. Carmount struggled hard to create a gallery that our community is proud of, a facility that attracts visitors from far beyond Minden Hills and fulfilled the dream of its namesake, Dr. Agnes Jamieson. The extensive Andre Lapine holdings are the envy of small community galleries across this country and beyond. Many of those paintings are community treasures inspired by the very landscapes that surround us right here in Minden Hills.

Under Ms. Carmount's guidance our community was exposed to visiting exhibits that broadened everyone's appreciation of art and offered opportunities to meet artists who would likely never pass this way. At the same time, she created time and space for local artists to showcase their work and helped them gain recognition for their talents.



### **Jack Brezina, Past Director of MHCCF (cont'd)**

The Agnes Jamieson Gallery, The Minden Hills Museum and Nature's Place were all inspired by personal commitments and visions that emerged from our community. The buildings, but more importantly the ideas and effort they embody, represent tangible evidence that our fellow citizens cared enough to make this corner a touchstone our community. My fear is that Ms. Carmount's departure is but a first step in dismantling this legacy.

The council needs to offer the citizens of Minden Hills assurances that the Cultural Centre is not about to be abandoned and in fact every effort should be made to enhance and improve the facility. A public acknowledgement of Ms. Carmount's contribution to the Centre's growth and success over her many years of service would also be in order.

Jack Brezina,

Minden.

March 8, 2022

## HALIBURTON COUNTY COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE

Dear Mayor Devolin and Council members

The Haliburton County Community Co-operative is a county-wide organization founded in 1998. We currently have 19 initiatives operating under our umbrella. Many of these are focused on art, culture and heritage and a number based in Minden Hills – including Minden Pride, the Lantern Festival of the August Moon, the Haliburton Highlands Writers and Editors Network and the U-Links Centre for Community Based Research.

The Minden Hills Cultural Centre has played a central role over the years as a place for meeting, presenting art, holding events, hosting performances, and partnering in projects for initiatives of the Co-op and many other organizations.

We are concerned by the sudden departure of Laurie Carmount as the Curator of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre. Her departure leaves a void in the cultural fabric of our community and leaves a significant cultural institution without leadership and with no apparent plan for the future.

Many of our members were actively involved in raising funds for the construction of the new gallery and Nature's Place as well as contributing to the consultations that led to the creation of the Minden Hills Cultural Plan. As president of the Co-op my e-mail box has been filling up with expressions of concern from our members, from artists and from other community organizations.

Although the Cultural Plan recommended that Council designate the Council-appointed Cultural Centre Committee as the Township's agent for cultural planning, from a public view there doesn't appear to be any plan for the future. The Township web pages for the Cultural Centre, the Agnes Jamieson Gallery, the Museum and Natures Place show no planned events, programs or shows for 2022. This is very worrisome. People are worried that the Township has abandoned art, culture and heritage.

The Minden Hills Cultural Centre is an incredible facility and resource in the community which has taken many years to develop. The Agnes Jamieson Gallery holds a prestigious reputation in Ontario for its support for local and regional artists, its presentation of finely curated shows and its priceless collection of Andre Lapine painting. The Minden Hills Museum & Heritage Village has done phenomenal work over the years preserving, archiving and illuminating the history and heritage of the region. But these are just buildings and neglected collections if there is not inspired leadership in place to animate the spaces and engage with the community.

We encourage you to reactivate, expand and energize the Minden Hills Cultural Centre Advisory Committee, engage with the members of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre Foundation and invite the public to be involved in re-imagining an exciting future for the Cultural Centre.

Among our Co-op members we have decades of experience in building up the cultural life of the community. We look forward to being able to engage once again with

# Our Voices

## HALIBURTON COUNTY COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE (CONT'D)

talented and inspired professional staff and volunteers to bring life back to the Minden Hills Cultural Centre.

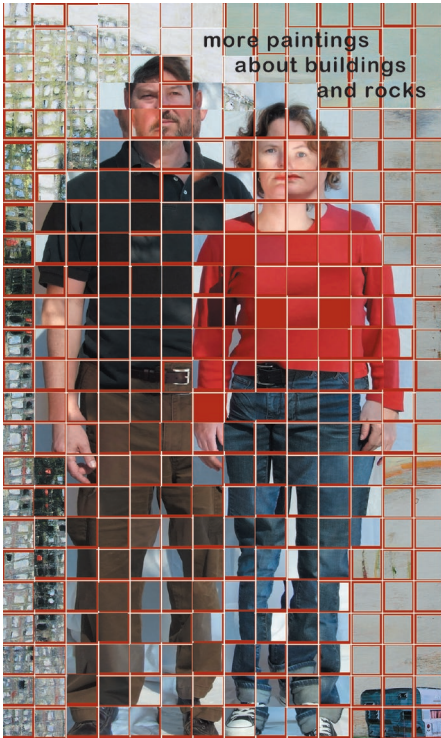
Yours in community

Jim Blake  
President  
Haliburton County Community Co-operative  
P.O. Box 655, Minden Hills Ontario K0M 2K0.

cc.  
Craig Belfry, Director of Community Services  
Tricia McKibbon, CAO/Clerk

# Our Voices

## GARY BLUNDELL AND VICTORIA WARD, ARTISTS



- Gary Blundell along with Mineralogist John Etches, had the first exhibition in the newly expanded Agnes Jamieson Gallery in 2002.
- Gary Blundell and Victoria Ward had the first show post COVID.



# Our Voices

## VICTORIA WARD, ARTIST

To the Editor,

I applaud Lisa Gervais' well thought out editorial regarding a curious pattern of firings and resignations at the Minden Hills Council over the last few years.

The most recent event, the cloud surrounding Curator Laurie Carmount's departure does seem to be part and parcel of an ongoing dysfunction. However, I am not close to the council or anyone who is therefore I really have no idea what that 'revolving door' (Gervais' phrase) is all about.

What I do know is that the Agnes Jamieson Gallery has been a leading light to many of the county's artists for two decades now. An Exhibition Assistance Program and the occasional Project Grant from the OAC has allowed the gallery to exhibit work that has toured nationally, brought hundreds from outside the county into the Minden community and has raised the profile of its cultural cache into the wider Kawarthas, Muskoka and beyond.

The Agnes Jamieson Gallery, for artists in this county and around the province came to symbolize how a small-town art community can have a wide impact. The gallery's reputation is unique in rural Ontario; the exhibitions and programming it created are considered important, of a high calibre and yet still allow for its small roots to shine.

## Our Voices

### **VICTORIA WARD, ARTIST (CONT'D)**

I don't know what happened at the Agnes Jamieson. Ms. Gervais is right to wonder if we ever will. But as this county begins to figure out the gallery's life beyond this moment, we should remember that such a place is only fashioned through the hard work of those who work there, and those who support that work and that the notable exhibitions that came about because of such work will not easily be recreated. But the gallery stands a chance if we continue to allow it to thrive and keep the foundation that has taken decades to build.

Victoria Ward

Highlands East



# Our Voices

## GARY BLUNDELL, ARTIST

Dear editor,

I was very saddened when I was informed a few weeks back that Laurie Carmount was no longer working at the Agnes Jamieson Gallery in Minden and that there is some debate now over how the space is going to be financed and managed. For over 20 years, I have forged a great relationship with both Laurie and the gallery. I have had at least 4 exhibitions there over the years and have also worked there giving talks and workshops. I have also, due to the gallery's connection with the Ontario Arts Council (OAC), been able to apply for Exhibition Assistance grants to assist with the financing of these shows and with shows at other locations. Apparently, I was reminded recently, that I also had the first show in the space after its renovation.

As everyone reading this paper well knows by now, I am not the only person concerned about Laurie leaving her job and Minden Hills council's desire to change how the gallery functions. I have been approached by several others with similar concerns to my own. I was informed that these concerned citizens would have the opportunity to speak to the council about this on April 28<sup>th</sup> and I was asked to be one of the speakers, which I was more than pleased to do. Last week I was informed however that the council is only providing this concerned group a total of 15 minutes to hear of our concerns. How can a group of artists and concerned citizens be expected to summarize their concerns in this ridiculously short period of time. It makes one feel fairly certain that the council is completely uninterested in what any of us have to say about the gallery, it's management and continued connection with the OAC.

There have been suggestions that the gallery was not connected to local arts enough. I would dispute that. In 2020, during the first year of the pandemic, I had an exhibition at the gallery about local mining in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that I worked on with local landowners and historians. I also took an enthusiastic group of locals on a hike to the old mining sites that were the inspiration for the show. Last year my partner was in an exhibition of somewhere between 20 and 30 local artists. I am also aware that Laurie has worked with several local artists on plein air workshops. She was also building up a collection of Andre Lapine's work, a good artist who did a lot of work here in Haliburton County during his lifetime. Laurie has had to show work from outside the County in order to continue to receive financial help from the OAC but the funding received from them likely helped the Municipality with the burden of financing the gallery.

Laurie Carmount was doing a great job and the gallery was functioning well. It was a proud institution, something special in this County. It's too bad the Minden Hill's council has been unable to see this.

Gary Blundell  
Highlands East

# **EH! and HHLT (Environment Haliburton! and the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust**

### **NATURE'S PLACE – AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CULTURAL CENTRE**

- THE ONLY DEDICATED SCIENCE CENTRE IN HALIBURTON COUNTY
- Opportunity for HANDS-ON LEARNING (for students from Archie Stouffer Elementary School and for the general public)
- A VENUE FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION BY LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS (Current displays have been developed together with Environment Haliburton!, Haliburton Highlands Land Trust and The Land Between.)
- A physical space for education about the COUNTY'S COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

# **EH! and HHLT (Environment Haliburton! and the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (cont'd)**

Nature's Place is a fantastic demonstration of sustainable building techniques and community partnerships. This straw-bale building was constructed in partnership with Fleming College and students from its sustainable building course, and financed with private donations from members of the public.

Nature's Place is a unique, local "Science Centre". Students from Archie Stouffer Elementary School engage in a variety of hands-on learning activities related to culture, art and the environment. It is a tourist destination for visitors who want to learn more about the natural world.

There is currently an extensive permanent display about wetlands in Nature's Place. Building on this exhibit, local environmental groups, such as The Land Between, Haliburton Highlands Land Trust and Environment Haliburton!, have collaborated with Nature's Place to present displays on related topics, including biodiversity, species at risk, geology and the changing climate.

The County is preparing a climate action plan. Nature's Place could be the focal point for displaying information related to the County's Community Action Plan.

Nature's Place is an integral part of the Cultural Centre. With continued community partnerships and collaboration, programming at Nature's Place can grow and meet the needs of the community.

# Our Voices

**FAY WILKINSON**

**REGISTERED EXPRESSIVE ARTS THERAPIST**

I have taken my mental health group to the gallery on several occasions and Laurie agreed to host the program director from the National Gallery of Australia.

Mental health group (top) and Alzheimer Association (bottom)



# Our Voices

**FAY WILKINSON**

**REGISTERED EXPRESSIVE ARTS THERAPIST (CONT'D)**

This note is in support of the Agnes Jamieson Gallery and its' importance in the community. I'm sure you've heard from many others.

Specifically I work with Mental Health Services in Minden as a Registered Expressive Arts Practitioner and I am also a practicing artist in the Community.

Over the years Laurie Carmount has brought in exhibitions of major city quality. I've been introduced to fine artists near and far. I have also had the honour of exhibiting my work. Ms Carmount had her finger on the arts 'pulse' and invited us to stretch our understanding and perceptions with what she brought into the Gallery. Not many has the passion and dedication she did.

I have brought my Mental Health Group to the Gallery on numerous occasions giving them an experience they have never been part of before. Some of them had never set foot into a Gallery. They felt like they belonged. This Gallery is/was accessible to marginalized people. That is not something you can say of every Gallery.

# Our Voices

**FAY WILKINSON**

**REGISTERED EXPRESSIVE ARTS THERAPIST (CONT'D)**

The Gallery welcomed Adriane Boag, a Director from the National Gallery of Australia, and we developed programs with her, Ms Carmount and myself for those living with Alzheimer's in the community, and my Mental Health Group using both exhibitions and pieces from the permanent collection. This is art in action - making a difference.

The role of curator is a complex one. It is not simply an administrative job - as I'm sure you know. I was more than dismayed to hear of Ms Carmount's departure. I look forward to hearing how and when she will be acknowledged for her incredible work over the decades I've known her.

However I am also concerned about the Gallery's future and role in our Community. I sincerely hope therefore that you and Council really understand what a gem of a Centre you have, and its potential influence and contribution is not squandered.

Thanks for listening.  
Warmly, Fay.



# Our Voices

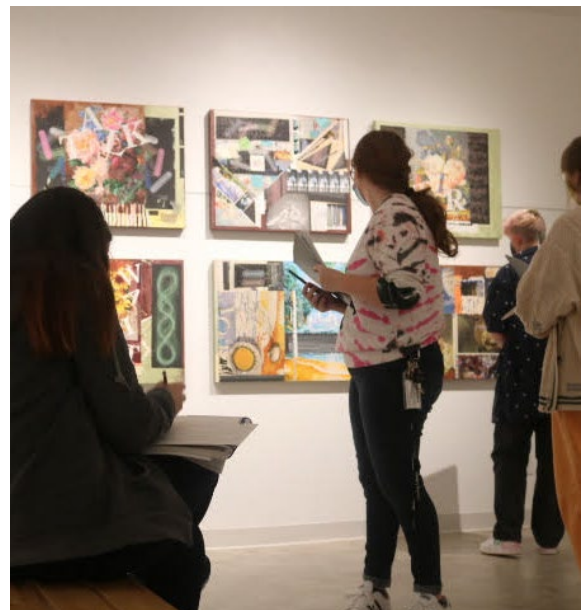
FLEMING COLLEGE

## Educational Partnerships

FLEMING



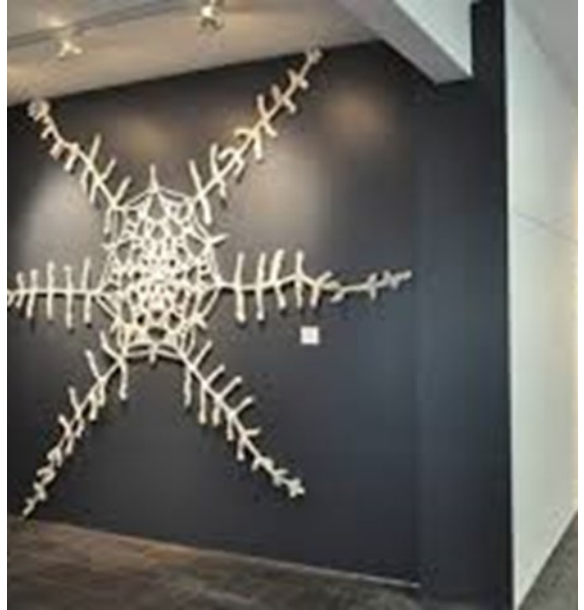
Agnes Jamieson has hosted a show of Faculty work, Alumni work, as well as the Independent Studio Practice Certificate Graduate Show. These are all HSAD relationships that have been terrific learning opportunities for faculty and students of HSAD.



# Our Voices

## HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS SECONDARY SCHOOL

Workshops for teenagers that concluded with an exhibition of their work in the gallery. A woman, now practicing artist, who had attended more than 15 years ago spoke of how pivotal that experience was for her and the thrill of having her work in the gallery - her first show!



# Our Voices

## ARTS COUNCIL - HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS

April 4, 2022

To: Mayor and members of Township of Minden Hills Council

From: Arts Council ~ Haliburton Highlands

**Re: Minden Hills Cultural Centre**

Dear Councillors,

The Arts Council ~ Haliburton Highlands is an umbrella organization that serves the arts, heritage and culture community in Haliburton County, acting as a catalyst for community economic development through the facilitation of collaborative relationships among artists, organizations, businesses and government.

We were dismayed to learn of the termination of Laurie Carmount's employment as the curator of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre. Under Laurie's expert guidance the Cultural Centre has become a valuable asset to the community.

The effect of this unfortunate situation on the arts community was exacerbated by the lack of information and the apparent absence of a plan to continue the work that had been initiated at the Agnes Jamieson Gallery. At a time like this, one would expect that the Advisory Committee and the volunteers would come together to keep operations going for the sake of the artists involved and for the benefit of the community as a whole. Instead, we saw events cancelled and were left with only rumours about the future because even the Committee was left in the dark. Volunteers did their best but appeared to have had no say into decisions made by township officials.

As an organization that relies on volunteers to provide programming, we understand the importance of community involvement. Meaningful public input is vital, and it is prudent to draw upon the expertise that exists within the vibrant arts, heritage and culture community here in the Haliburton Highlands.

As we move forward, we urge Council to work on issues of communication and community engagement. In more specific terms, we see a need to include members of the public in decision making around the management of the Cultural Centre. This could start with a review of the management structure to explore ways of tapping into the experience and knowledge that exists within the community and would ensure that cultural programming and services meet the needs of the public and contribute to the economic development of Minden Hills.

In the short term, there is help available to assist with hiring a qualified curator and we advise the Township to make good use of this resource. Members of the Advisory Committee, or community members with appropriate backgrounds should be called upon to participate in the hiring process. There are various options for ensuring valuable input while still retaining decision-making authority with the Township.

The Minden Hills Cultural Centre is a remarkable asset to the community and we applaud the Township for the vision that has brought it to this point and look forward to an even brighter future.

Yours truly,

Arts Council ~ Haliburton Highlands

# Our Voices

**ALEX JACK, ARTIST –**

**EXHIBIT FEB 2022 – APR 2022**



After staying in the Welch Room to interact with those who wanted a closer connection to him, Jack made his way to the main room of the gallery...

“It's nice to see them all together,” he said. “It's not very often that I get to see a big section of my work that spans 45 years in one location in a professional gallery setting. It's very gratifying to have the opportunity to see connections and developments, and the differences that have happened over the years, but also things that have stayed constant.”

Asked if seeing the display gave him a sense of pride, Jack smiled and said, “Yes. Yes, it does.”

By the time the last visitor had gone, three of Jack's works had been sold.

*Reported by Jerelyn Craden, Minden Times*



## Our Voices

### **DR. AGNES JAMIESON**

First female coroner in Ontario

Donated funds for a public Art Gallery to house the Lapine paintings



Dr. AGNES JAMIESON, on why she was donating the monies for a public art gallery. 1973

“I spend a lot of time stitching up heads from hockey injuries.....it’s about time I also did something for their minds.”

Both Centre's contribute to the vitality of our community.

**THE END ...FOR NOW**