

Report to Heritage Wilmot and Castle Kilbride Advisory Committee

Report No: HCAC 02-24

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Curator

Date: February 13, 2024

Subject: Castle Kilbride Year End Activity Report

Recommendation:

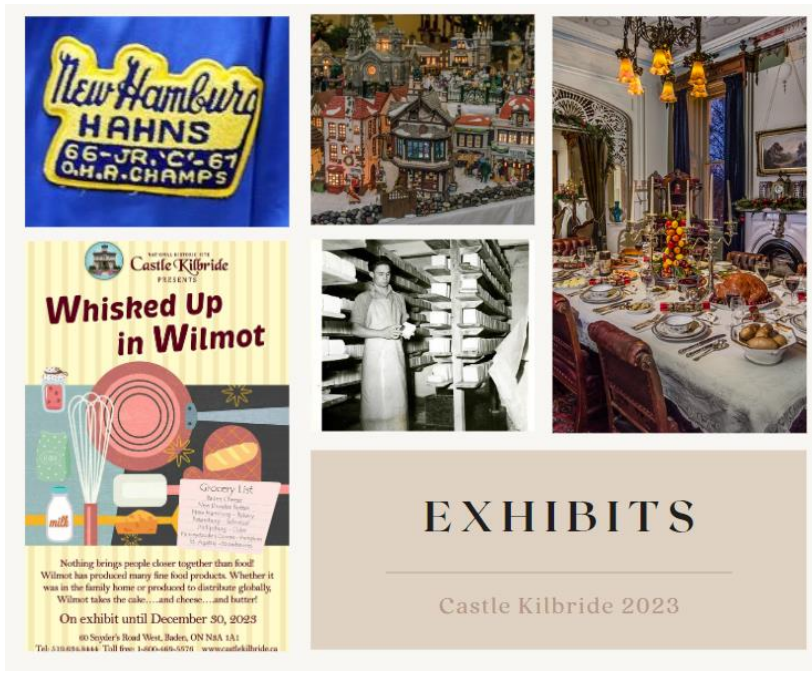
That the Heritage Wilmot and Castle Kilbride Advisory Committee endorse report HCAC 02-24.

Comments:

This report is a year end review for the activities carried out by staff of Castle Kilbride National Historic Site.



2023 Special Exhibits



- **Whisked Up in Wilmot:** March 15, 2023 – January 7, 2024
 Nothing brings people closer together than food! Wilmot has produced many fine food products. Whether it was in the family home or produced to distribute globally, Wilmot takes the cake.....and cheese.....and butter!
- **Say Cheese:** Photographs from Township of Wilmot Archives relating to the cheese industry in Wilmot over the year. March 15 – November 13.
- **70 Years of Junior Hockey in New Hamburg:** All four WRC cases were transformed to feature hockey memorabilia to celebrate the anniversary. On display from end of December until April.

Special Events and Programs

The Castle offered a full slate of events in 2023. Of note, was the return of “Ghost Walks” which sold out for all 10 evenings, our popular tea and tours, Christmas at the Castle as well as the always popular Castle Concert Series. We concentrate our main events such as the concerts and tea and tours to the summer months when summer students are present for adequate staffing coverage.



Event	Date	Participation
March Break – Time with Toys	March 15-19	86
Ghost Walks (10)	Feb - October	1200
Mother’s Day	May 14	44
Homeschool Day	June & December	110
Twenties Tea & Tour (7)	June – August	119
Summer Concert Series (9)	July & August	2461
Ontario Culture Days	Sept 25 – Oct. 16	Free -not tracked
Saturday at the Booseum Workshop	Oct. 21	5
Nutcracker Workshop	Nov. 25	7
A Merry Victorian Christmas	Nov. 30 & Dec.7	102
Christmas at the Castle	Nov. 16 – Jan.7	1716
Sugarplum Tea & Tour	Dec. 10 & 17	40

Please note that the summer concert had 9 scheduled concerts but two were cancelled due to inclement weather which affected the attendance number.

General Visitation/Visitor Services

- The museum re-opened to the public on March 16, 2023. The museum was then open continuously until January 7, 2024.
- Regular operating hours for the museum were Wednesday to Sunday 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The months of July & August had extended hours from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Castle Kilbride Visitor Statistics

Month	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
	Patron	Patron	Patron	Patron	Patron
January	197	44	Closed	225	347
February	110	0	Closed	126	59
March	171	186	Closed	Closed	191
April	365	139	Closed	Closed	194
May	373	219	Closed	Closed	312
June	547	359	28	Closed	1243
July	1791	3160	86	Closed	2751**
August	1913	1589	264	24	3599**
September	833	332	157	115	762
October	774	319	165	94	488
November	541	388	315	149	633
December	1416	1064	830	167	1130
TOTAL	9031	7799	1845	900	11709

*note: 2020 & 2021 were ticketed and guided tours no walk in traffic due to COVID-19 restrictions.

**high summer concert participation as well as a special event for the 25th anniversary of the museum.

Marketing/Social Media

- **Website-** Maintained hours, committee details, photographs, exhibit, and event listings.
- **Social media-** the museum created engaging posts for Facebook for the entire year.
- **#MuseumSelfie2023** prepared posts and coordinate joint promotion for the day.
- **Special events marketing-** began to promote 2023 events. Designed images to support exhibits and events for marketing.
- **Articles-** prepared articles and photographs for, Baden Outlook, New Hamburg Independent, Our Heritage, Our Home publication, and the Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette. The Kitchener-Waterloo Record featured Christmas at the Castle on the front page of the paper in late December.

Filming at the Castle

- the Castle was the feature for Episode 5 of Dickson & Bruce titled “The Ghost and Castle Kilbride”. The premier was held at the Kitchener Public Library on November 15.
- Curator described the architecture of the home on the Amazing Architecture 5 minutes segment on CTV News which aired in August and is available on YouTube.
- CBC filmed at the Castle in September for a new program called “Ghosting” airing in January on their streaming network and in April the program will air weekly on television.

Curatorial and Collection Management



- **Donations-** the museum accepted approximately 270 items into the collection. Of highlight are the Original Livingston Grandfather Clock, J&J Livingston plaque, hockey memorabilia from Junior hockey in New Hamburg, Baden Masonic Lodge items and an original Victorian bonnet.
- **Mobile Storage Unit** – continued to organize the mobile storage unit that was installed in 2022.
- **Catalogue-** continued to catalogue new or outstanding artifacts according to museum standards.
- **Database-** entered artifacts into the PastPerfect database. Took photos of each new artifact and uploaded.
- **Collection projects-** prepared a schedule and plan for rolled storage project.
- Created a new **Catalogue Procedure Manual** for new staff and intern. Hosted a training session for one new part time staff member, students and volunteers as required.
- **Maintenance-** full cleaning of house while closed to the public. Washed floors, baseboards, fireplaces, glassware, and wood trim. Each artifact was carefully dusted, cleaned, and displayed. Weekly cleaning is conducted throughout the year.
- **Security-** inspected rooms and security of their contents.
- **Environmental control** - conducted routine temperature and humidity readings.

Staffing

- Department: Community Services
- Two (2) Full Time Staff- Curator and Museum Assistant.
- Three (3) Part Time Museum Attendants
- Two (2) Summer Students through Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) and Young Canada Works (YCW)

Heritage Wilmot and Castle Kilbride Advisory Committee

- In 2023, the Castle Kilbride Advisory Committee (CKAC) amalgamated with Heritage Wilmot to form Heritage Wilmot and Castle Kilbride Advisory Committee (HCAC). The committee commenced in September with 11 members and two staff liaisons. There were four meetings held by the committee in 2023.



Projects and Repairs- Front and Side Porches

- In 2023, the front porch and side porches were carefully restored and repairs. A fresh coat of paint was also added to the exterior to make the Castle shine.

