

Edmonton and District Historical Society
Annual Report

2019

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EDHS 2018: By the Numbers

Who are we?

- 191 members
- 10 board members
- 5 committee members from the community
- 4 contractors

+1400 volunteer hours

Social Media



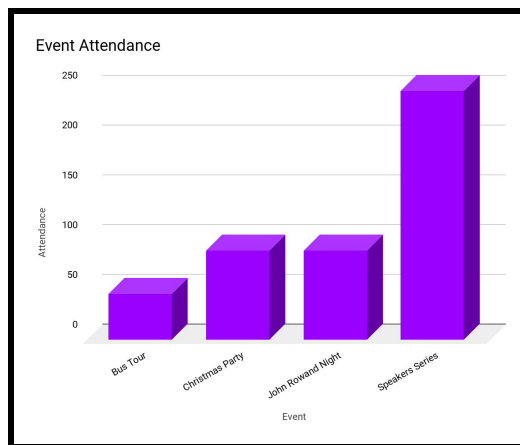
1225 Facebook likes



1788 Twitter followers

Events

9 events
476 attendees



Newsletters

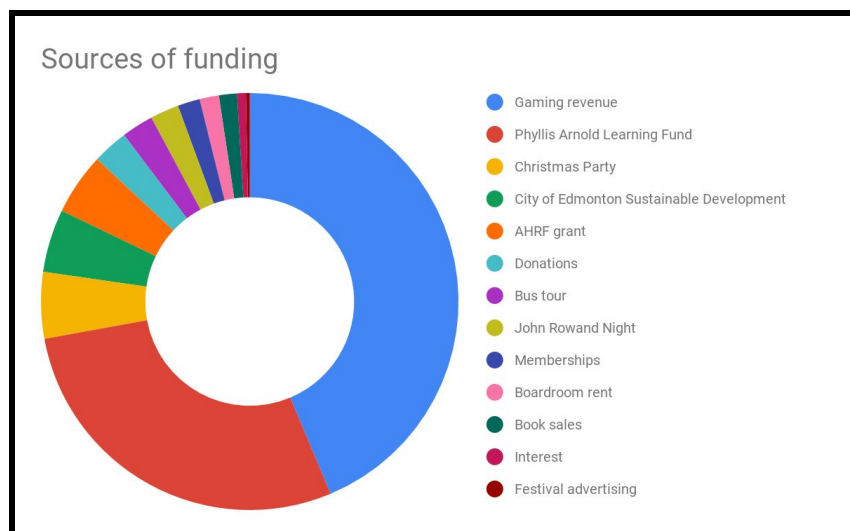
4 newsletters
9 original articles
992 issues mailed

Educational Programs

2 different programs
224 classroom/community history sessions
2760 students

Festival

7 days
43 partners
176 events
+82,000 attendees



President's Annual Report

The Society completed several major projects and initiatives this past year, 2018:

- the completion of the writing and registering of new bylaws
- the development of a new website with e-commerce capability
- the completion and review of a strategic plan (2018-2020) that includes a comprehensive communications plan, a SWOT analysis and an orientation package for new Board and Committee members
- an increased use of social media platforms to advertise our activities and spread the “word” about the Society
- a re-introduction of bus tours in conjunction with our annual Historic Festival/Doors Open Edmonton event
- another successful year of educational and community-based programs for school age children, adults, members and the citizens of the greater metro – Edmonton region at large

We also started several projects during this past year that are ongoing:

- an overhaul of our policies and procedures
- the updating of our casino licensing and expenditure documents with the AGLC
- We are looking seriously at relocating our offices, on account of changes imposed on the Society by the School Board relative to our current location at the Queen Alexandra School

One of the matters that we did not get to that I reported on last year was our logo and visual presence. We have worked on matters relative to vision and mission statements, but visual logos were beyond our reach this past year – something for future Boards to consider.

Not unlike last year's report, as you can infer from the lists noted above, much of what we focused on in 2018 related to “the back of house” issues. These aren't exactly topics one publicizes and announces from the “tops of rooftops”, however this work has to be undertaken every generation or so to ensure the Society stays current with technology, laws and regulations and societal trends and interests.

The two most substantive undertakings were the development of a new website, allowing for online financial transactions, and the completion of the updating of our Bylaws.

The 2018 Festival featuring “Food” as the theme, was one of the most successful we have ever undertaken. The feedback was exemplary. Numbers were up (or equal) in all categories in relation to such categories as partners, participants, media coverage and expressions of interest. (Looking ahead, this year's event features the topic of Leisure and the dates are July 1-7; launch location is forthcoming.)

Educational programs were once again a hit – History in the Classroom “sold out” in days, as did requests for busing rebates associated with trips to the History Centre at the Fort Heritage Precinct in Fort Saskatchewan. Support for History in Community and the annual school heritage fair continued. All of these initiatives are a result of the annual contribution the Society receives from the Phyllis Arnold Learning Fund via the Edmonton Community Foundation. Without sounding offhanded or glib, as always, we are very grateful to Phyllis Arnold for her ongoing support of these initiatives.

This evening marks the end of one operational year and the beginning of another. The make-up of the Board will change, as will responsibilities. That includes me. As I noted in my last President’s message in the most recent newsletter, it has been a pleasure and an honour to hold this position. I thank my Board colleagues and the members for the opportunity, comradery and willingness to take on the challenges we have dealt with these past few years – thank you.

At the end of tonight, we will have a new President, Tim O’Grady and two new Board members. For those who do not know, the Board is made up of eleven (11) members, and of those, the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer form the Executive. Stepping off this year is Marilyn Patton. She has served as Secretary for the past several years. Marilyn has done an exemplary job and we all need to thank Marilyn for undertaking this most often overlooked role, yet one that is critical to the timely and efficient functioning of the organization.

Lastly, my thanks to you, the membership - you pay your dues, attend events, submit donations and volunteer your time. These actions ensure that we all continue to have the opportunity to learn about and engage in the history of this wonderful community we call home.

Respectfully submitted by

Sean Moir
President

Bylaw, and Policies and Procedures Report

The Society completed the writing and submission of a new set of bylaws in 2018, with much help and guidance from former President Kathryn Ivany, and Bob Wyatt – we extend our gratitude and thanks to both for their work on this project.

Bylaws:

Subsequent to submission of the Bylaws to Alberta Registries, the Society was contacted by a representative of that agency, for the purposes of making clear two points, in three sub-sections, relative to whether or not Officers of the Society shall be compensated for services, and the method of notification to the membership for General and Special meetings.

The sections this refers to are:

- 3.17 (within Article III – Board of Directors & Officers) in relation to remuneration or not for Officers
- 4.3 and 4.4 (within Articles IV – Meetings of the Members) in relation to method of notification for members for Special and General meetings

In consultation with personnel from the Registry Services (Government of Alberta) they advised that the corrective language was for clarification purposes; it was not changing the primary intent of the sections or sub-sections, thus they recommended that the clarifying words be added and that the document be submitted for formal acceptance. The Board agreed to proceed according to this advise and present this information to the membership at the next AGM for information purposes.

What you have in front of you in conjunction with this report are several documents:

- Copy of letter from Corporate Registry Services indicating the changes required
- Version of Bylaws accepted by Corporate Registry Services with amended wording (underlined) addressing the issues raised

In the case of remuneration, the words “Officer or” were added to sub-section 3.17 to make clear that neither directors or officers of the EDHS Board shall receive any kind of remuneration for services rendered to the Society. (In the case of the EDHS Board, an officer is a director, hence the point was already covered, but as the two terms are defined and used in the Bylaws Registry Services required that both be included in this section in relation to the matter of remuneration.)

In the case of the matter of notification of the membership for the purpose of Special and General meetings, the methods of notification – telephone calls, e-mails and notifications on the Society’s website - were not cited in section 4.3 [general meetings], and telephone calls, e-mails, letters and notifications on the Society’s website - were not cited in section 4.4 [special meetings]; these methods of notification were added.

Policies & Procedures:

Unlike the old bylaws that contained policy and procedural statements relative to the functioning of the Society, the new bylaws do not – the new bylaws focus on basic governance. Accordingly, we are working to develop a comprehensive policy and procedures manual that supports the bylaws. Further to this policy and procedures document, we will need to develop some separate documents, notably with respect to ethics and conflict of interest. We are working on those and will advise you once they have been completed.

Strategic Plan, with communications plan:

In conjunction with the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures, the Society has been working on constantly updating and reviewing our 2018-2020 Strategic Plan, which contains a communications plan, to ensure that we are, respectively: fulfilling what we set out to achieve operationally during the stated timeframe and; two, adhering to consistent messaging in our communications with you, the membership, the media, our partnering agencies in the heritage community and all other entities that we engage with.

Respectfully submitted by

Sean Moir
President

Annual Report of Educational Programs

History in the Classroom, History in the Community, the Edmonton Regional School Heritage Fair and History Centre Rebates are educational programs funded by the Phyllis Arnold Learning Fund through the Edmonton Community Foundation.

The **Edmonton Regional School Heritage Fair** is held in early May each year and features historical displays and presentations from students in grades 4 to 7. The **Fair** is open to the public at no charge at the Prince of Wales Armouries Heritage Centre and is always a refreshing indication that the younger generation is enthusiastic about our history.

The school rebates for the **History Centre** assist schools to pay bussing costs to visit the Fort Precinct programs. The **History Centre** originated as an EDHS program at Queen Alexandra school in 2006 and later moved to Fort Saskatchewan where it continues to thrive.

The **History in the Classroom** program was designed to coincide with the fall 2016 distribution of the EDHS student resource, ***The Fur Trade in the West***, written by Phyllis Arnold. Since then, this program has offered free classroom visits by Jim Higgs, our teacher/historian, to students from grades 4 to 7. These free presentations focused on three topics: the Fur Trade, the Metis Nation and the North West Mounted Police.

In 2018, Jim presented 3 days a week (2 presentations per day) for 36 weeks, which translates to an audience of over 6,400 students! Every available day was booked, as we had a registration of 100% and a waiting list of other schools hoping for cancellations! The calendar for the 2019/20 school year will be on the website by the end of May. With present feedback, we expect registrations will be filled by June 30, two months before the next school year starts!

History in the Community began in 2016 when Shirley Lowe, Edmonton's second Historian Laureate, began free presentations to school or community groups on the topic of the 100 Year Celebration of Alberta Women's Right to Vote. Entitled **Building the Vote**, the presentation featured the political and social climate of Alberta that lead up to the successful passing of the Legislative Act. Requests from high schools, service clubs, historical societies and other community groups continue to fill the program's calendar. Shirley has also presented on other topics and our future plan is to increase the variety of topics and thus the number of presentations offered.

If you know of teachers or community groups that would benefit from either of these free presentations on one (or all) of the topics, please contact EDHS at 780.439.2797 or info@historicedmonton.ca.

Our deepest gratitude is extended to Phyllis Arnold for her continued generous support in promoting history in the schools and the community.

Respectfully submitted by

Linda Collier
Director

Historic Festival and Doors Open Edmonton, 2018
July 2-8
Theme: Food

The 2018 version of the Society's Historic Festival and Doors Open, our organization's signature annual event, was held from July 2 -8 with the theme of *Food*. The launch was held at the Highlands Golf Club and was the highest attendance the festival has seen for a stand-alone event. Vice President Tim O'Grady served as emcee and Councilor Scott McKeen was in attendance to read the City's proclamation to kick off historic week in Edmonton.

The Festival saw a wide variety of architecturally significant heritage buildings and landmarks open their doors to the public encouraging people to explore and engage in their local history and appreciate the aesthetic contributions heritage plays in our communities. Many local businesses and community organizations hosted interactive events and gatherings celebrating unique aspects of the area while providing an education into their historical importance. New partners included Hand Distillery, Royal Alexandra Hospital, Alberta Food Tours, the Highlands Golf Club and Robertson-Wesley United Church.

2018 Statistics

Visitors to partnering sites and activities: 82, 559

Volunteers and paid staff at partnering sites and activities: 1003

Volunteer and paid staff hours at partnering sites and activities: 5548

2018 Promotion:

- A marketing campaign with CTV incorporated televised commercials, a live remote at Union Bank Inn, a customized contest package and social media
- Closed captioning with CBC, Global and Bell Media
- Digital billboards placed in 3 locations throughout the city
- 8500 guidebooks were distributed to partner sites, hotels and information and tourist centers
- A Post Media campaign that included banner and digital ads with the Edmonton Journal, Edmonton Sun and Edmonton Examiner

The society hired a photographer to attend various events; this helped with social media engagement and to build a photo database to use for future events and advertising.

Respectfully submitted by
Sean Moir, President
Sue Lacombe, Festival Coordinator

Historic Edmonton Week Bus Trip
Farms and Food with a Little Bit of History
July 7, 2018

During the Historic Edmonton Week Festival the EDHS organized a day long bus tour to three farms down Highway 14 towards Viking Alberta. There were 46 participants.

The first stop was at **Irving's Farm Fresh** where they produce premium quality pork products from free range Berkshire pigs without the use of added hormones and antibiotics for bacon, sausage and ham.

The second stop was to **Natures Green Acres** where Danny and Shannon Ruzicka raise Heritage pigs, sheep and Nouveau beef. Grass fed meats with no added hormones or antibiotics. They host Prairie haute cuisine with Chef Blair Lebsack from RGE RD. There was a horse shoeing demonstration and talk about pigs, sheep, Tee Pee rings and history of people from the area.

A stop for lunch was at the **Footloose Caboose Lodge** where a delicious meal of apricot chicken, roasted potatoes and sliced cucumbers was served while dining in two refurbished dining cars, one the Mount Lefroy dining car built in 1909 by the CPR. It was used for passenger service across Canada until 1942. The other, the Guy Wall dining car was built in 1929 by National Steel Car in Hamilton, Ontario and served as a coach for CNR until 1965. The present owner lives on site in the Grand Trunk Pacific Type E station built in 1910 in Duffield Alberta and retired from service in 1962. There are also other cabooses on site used for bed and breakfasts.

The final stop of the day was at the **Barr Estate Winery** where we enjoyed a talk on the making of wine from rhubarb, raspberries and sour cherries and participated in a wine tasting.

After a full day of adventuring into the countryside down highway 14 all participants returned home to Queen Alexandra School.

Respectfully submitted by

Christine Prokop

Director

Annual Report of the Marketing and Communications Committee

During the past year, the Marketing and Communications Committee implemented the Communications Plan that was developed in 2017 and presented at the 2018 AGM. The purpose of the plan is to clarify the messages provided by EDHS to our stakeholders. The plan identifies each of EDHS's target audiences, what key messaging is important to each audience, and which communication channel(s) are most appropriate for each audience and message. After one year of following the Communications Plan, the board reviewed EDHS's messaging and is generally pleased with the results.

The board continued to work to strengthen EDHS's social media presence by providing frequent posts that include historical content and information about historical events around Edmonton. As a result of these efforts, our social media "followers" continue to grow. Facebook saw a 24% increase in followers from 2017 to 2018, while Twitter saw a 5% increase.

Respectfully submitted by

Matt Ostapchuk
Director and Chair

Newsletter Committee

In 2018 the Newsletter Committee recruited a new volunteer editor. Natalie Zacharewski has an MA in History from the University of Ottawa and has worked for Fort Edmonton Park as the Structured Education Coordinator for the past six years. She also teaches courses for the Alberta Museums Association, and works as a museum consultant. Carrie Myers has continued to work as the newsletter designer, and is the reason our newsletter looks so good. As always, Marilyn Patton's eye for detail was greatly appreciated when reviewing the newsletter proofs. Linda Collier has continued to provide invaluable assistance with the printing and mailing of the newsletters. With everyone's help, the Newsletter Committee has put out four issues this past year. As one of the Board's primary means of communication, the newsletters inform our members of the activities of the Board, and also feature a wide variety of original articles. As always, if you would like to contribute an article to the newsletter, please reach out to the Board and we will put you in touch with Natalie.

Respectfully submitted by

Tim O'Grady
VP and Chair of the Newsletter Committee

Ad Hoc Website Committee

Planning began for a new website in Fall, 2017. An ad hoc committee was struck, consisting of Board members Tim O'Grady, Marilyn Patton, Linda Collier, Christine Prokop, Lee Smith, and John Dolphin. Discussions were held with several web-design firms, which led to the creation of a request for proposals, sent directly to twelve potential vendors, five of whom sent back proposals. Edmonton-based Bubble Up Marketing was ultimately selected, and the Website Committee worked closely with them on the development of the new site, which launched in summer of 2018. The website has been redesigned for ease of use and the colour scheme matches our new visual identity (as seen in the newsletter). One significant element of the new website is the opportunity for people to buy tickets for events online. This has proven to be a popular alternative, with around half of the Christmas party tickets being purchased online. Another element the new site we are excited about is the "News" section, where we are posting about current activities of the Board. So far we have used it to publish the Presidents' message as printed in the newsletter, as well as to provide a bit of information about recent events and promote special initiatives such as a call for new board members.

Respectfully submitted by

Tim O'Grady
VP and Chair of the Ad Hoc Website Committee

Advocacy Committee

After several years of dormancy, as of October 2018 the Advocacy Committee is back up and running, with Tim O'Grady (Chair) and three members of the community (Brett Bilyk, Ryan Poot, and Mark Pyzyk). The Advocacy Committee supports the Board by helping to define positions on heritage-related issues, building a profile of EDHS in the community, and raising awareness of heritage-related issues and heritage in general. In the last few months of 2018 we were approached by members of the public on a number of issues, including the Northlands site, the Scona Garage, and Oliver Park. Our research on the issues, discussions amongst ourselves, and conversations with different levels of government resulted in letters being sent to the Province and the City to raise the issue of the future of Scona Garage. The Committee is continuing to develop, and expects to be more active in 2019, with specific projects including raising awareness of Syndicate Avenue School, advocating for El Mirador apartments, and working on a digital tool to help find as-yet unidentified historical resources in Edmonton.

Respectfully submitted by

Tim O'Grady
VP and Chair of the Advocacy Committee

EDHS SPEAKER SERIES

The speaker series is one of the outreach activities of the EDHS. As coordinator, my aim is to present a diverse group of speakers on topics of general interest to the members and the public at large. I try to have a cross section of topics, ranging from First Nations history, the settlement era, and wider ranging history of groups over the last 100+ years. The first presentation of the 2018-2019 series was on the history of beer in Alberta, and concluded with a field trip to Situation Brewing for sampling. Our Christmas dinner on Edmonton in World War I by Stéphane Guevremont was most entertaining, however at the same time very sobering from the statistical point of view -- so much of the city was affected. I sincerely thank the presenters who give up their valuable time to put together a presentation on a topic of interest to them. Many of the presentations serve to open the eyes of our audience by offering a different perspective than the one which has been typically available.

Should you have any topic ideas, or names of possible presenters, please contact me at stephen.yakimets@gmail.com or 780 441 5917.

Respectfully submitted by

Stephen Yakimets

Director

Membership

Membership numbers provided by the HSA

June 2018 184 members

Sept 2018 176 members

Dec 2018 173 members

Current mail-out numbers provided by the EDHS

191 members

57 courtesy

Number of social media followers

Facebook:

2018 – 1225

2017 – 991

Twitter:

2018 – 1788

2017 - 1695

Respectfully submitted by

Linda Collier and Matt Ostapchuk

Directors