

## HERITAGE CORNER

### 10th Anniversary of Sombra Museum Cultural Centre celebrated

The Sombra Museum Cultural Centre officially joined the Victorian-era Bury House on the corner of Smith Street in Sombra on June 19, 2012.

And on June 19, 2022, a small celebration was held at the Cultural Centre to mark 10 years of heritage preservation.

The Bury House, built in 1881 and purchased by the Sombra Township Historical Society in 1958, had been housing collections and exhibits, and preserving local heritage of the township since June 19, 1959, when it became the first museum in Lambton County.

In 1972, the former Sombra Township assumed ownership of the house from the Historical Society, with a board comprised of two members of Sombra Council and five Historical Society members. Through the years, board membership has grown to 14 and they have worked hard to promote the community's rich heritage.

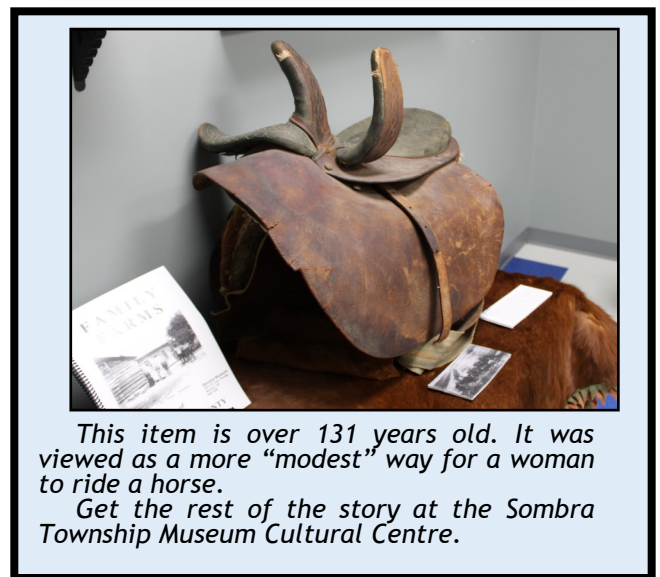
In 2011, thanks to strong community support, enough funds were raised to begin construction on a second building. And on June 19, 2012, the Sombra Township Museum Cultural Centre, as it has been renamed, opened its doors to the public. It now houses: the Marine Room (Great Lakes Hall); World War II Exhibit; Maude Dalgety Reference Room; and the Conference Hall (Shawanese Hall.) And since opening, it has provided a community venue for valuable, illuminating programs such as the winter lecture series. It continues to be a scholarly space where history is the spoken language.

**Group photo:** Attending the celebration were some of the municipal and community supporters who brought the project to life. From left: Mayor Steve Arnold; Darrell Randell; Eldon Grant; Deputy Mayor Steve Miller; Sombra Museum Curator Kailyn Shepley; museum volunteers Catherine Bouman; Kathy Elliott; retired museum curator Shelley Lucier-Lord; and St. Clair Township Councillor Rose Atkins.

*Please note: Conference room rentals are available for meetings or events. The room includes the use of a kitchenette and the optional use of electronics. To inquire about renting the room, please contact the Museum at 519-892-3982 or go online at: <https://sombraumuseum.webs.com>*



*It wouldn't be a celebration without cake.*



*This item is over 131 years old. It was viewed as a more "modest" way for a woman to ride a horse.*

*Get the rest of the story at the Sombra Township Museum Cultural Centre.*

### Newly updated Heritage St. Clair page features map showing historic plaques and storyboards situated throughout the township

Heritage St. Clair has updated its page on the St. Clair Township website, and one of the features now on view St. Clair Township's Historic Points of Interest map. This interactive map points out the locations of these colourful and educational installations and includes photographs of them so you'll be sure not to miss them. Here's a link you can use to go directly to St. Clair Township's Historical Points of Interest page:

<http://stclairtownship.ca/st-clair-townships-historical-points-of-interest/>

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## MORE HERITAGE CORNER

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### Lambton County Historical Society holds first post-pandemic meeting

The Council Chambers at the St. Clair Township Civic Centre was the site of the first post-pandemic meeting of the Lambton County Historical Society on May 26. At the recent meeting, it was agreed the executive elected at the last meeting before COVID shutdowns began would be retained for the 2022. Officers include: President Ron Urry; Vice-President Marie Stephenson; Treasurer Carol Thompson; and Secretary Deb Narr. Member Catherine McKinnon of Corunna spoke about a relative, Leslie Ernest, who had worked in the oil fields and traveled to foreign countries to help them develop their own oil. He also fought in WWI, earning honours for his service.

The Lambton County Historical Society meets monthly. Each meeting features a speaker on local history. The Society welcomes new members and there is no cost to attend a meeting. Membership is only \$25/year.



**Right:** Mayor Steve Arnold welcomed the group on behalf of council and after taking care of 2 years of Historical Society business, the group was treated to refreshments and tasty snacks courtesy of St. Clair Township.

### County dignitaries gather to re-open Oil Museum of Canada

The Oil Museum of Canada, a designated National Historic Site, recently held a grand re-opening ceremony with local dignitaries on hand to cut the yellow ribbon. The ceremony drew a happy crowd of museum supporters and visitors, local dignitaries and museum/county staff members.

The museum had been closed to undergo a \$1 million renovation project which involved a number of substantial infrastructure changes and upgrades. During the closure, the creation story of the petroleum industry and the crucial role the Oil Springs area and its people played in that story, was streamlined to better-inform visitors.

The modernization of the museum, built in 1960, included the replacement of all plain glass windows with UV-filtering panes that will now help preserve precious exhibits that would otherwise be damaged by the light. The HVAC system and much of the inside layout is also updated to enhance the visitor experience.

The emergence of the oil industry in Lambton County helped the entire area flourish. For instance, Plank Road was one of the first super highways through Lambton County. It was the first true paved road, surfaced with sturdy white oak planks to support the movement of the heavy horse-drawn wagons that hauled huge wooden tanks of oil across the soft, swampy heart of Lambton County. The wagons, a pioneer version of our modern tanker trucks, moved the oil from Oil Springs and central Lambton into Sarnia, where it was refined at the Black Star Refinery. Its presence provided inter-county movement that helped to connect county residents with the outside world and with each other. Find information about all Lambton County museums online at: [www.lambtonmuseums.ca](http://www.lambtonmuseums.ca)

**Right:** The yellow ribbon falls away as Warden Kevin Marriott uses a pair of mammoth scissors to make the cut. He was assisted by: Laurie Webb, Manager for Museums, Archives, and Galleries; Lambton-Kent Middlesex MP Lianne Rood; Sarnia-Lambton MP Bob Bailey; Oil Springs Mayor Ian Veen; Erin Dee-Richard, Oil Museum curator/supervisor; and Andrew Meyer, General Manager, Lambton County Cultural Services Division. *Stevenson photo*



### Lambton County Library branches offer much more than books

Summer is a great time to relax with a good book or take up a new hobby or interest. If you have a library card, you have access to the books, paper or digital, and a lot more. **And if you don't have a library card, get one. They're free!**

For more information on locations, services and hours of operation visit [www.lclibrary.ca](http://www.lclibrary.ca) \*Brigden 519-864-1142): Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,

2 p.m. to 7 p.m.; Wednesday, Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

\*Corunna (519-862-1132): Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

\*Courtright 519-867-2712): Tuesday, Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Thursday, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

\*Mooretown (519-867-2823): Monday, Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Wednesday, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

\*Sombra (519-892-3711): Tuesday, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.; Thursday, Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

\*Port Lambton (519-677-5217): Monday, Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Wednesday, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

\*Wilkesport (519-864-4000): Tuesday, Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Thursday, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.