

SWANSEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



THE ROARING 20'S

It was a time of the Jitter-Bug and juke boxes, the Bee's Knees and the Cat's Pajamas. Its era had no precedent and its place in history marks it as the most revolutionary decade this last century.

It was an era bigger than life, louder than convention--it was the Roaring 20's!

Wednesday, March 5, 2025, 7:30 pm
Rousseau Room – Swansea Town Hall – 95 Lavinia Avenue
Speaker – Lianne Harris
“Life in the Roaring Twenties”

Message from your President: As you may have heard, the Swansea Historical Society (SHS) is seeking to fill various volunteer positions, which are either currently vacant or expected to become vacant in the coming months.

Firstly, I **Robert (Bob) Roden** have been a member of SHS since the mid-1980s. I served as Auditor and then Membership Coordinator for several years. In the spring of 2012, a vacancy suddenly arose, and I was invited to fill in temporarily as Acting President. Now, after 13 years as SHS President, I feel it is time for me to accept a promotion to Past-President, and make way for someone who can bring fresh perspectives, new ideas, and renewed energy to the organization. My tentative target date for moving on is August 31, 2025 – the end of our current programme and financial year.

Secondly, **Lance Gleich** recently accepted the position of President of Heritage York, the organization which manages the historic Lambton House building and all the activities that take place there. It is an enormous responsibility, and he has stated that he needs to step away from any formal duties with SHS. Lance joined the SHS Executive in 2012 and served as our Vice-President for several years. Among his many contributions to SHS, he played a leading role in the acquisition of computer equipment and software for SHS, and in recent years he has also looked after our walking tours and the annual Community Calendar.

Thirdly, **Amy Wilkinson** has stated recently that she now needs to step down from her two roles as Zoom-Meeting Facilitator and Programme Coordinator, preferably after the April 2025 SHS meeting. In the fall of 2021, after COVID restrictions had shut down our meetings for more than a year, Amy answered the call for someone with the technical knowledge to set up and manage "virtual" meetings, to enable members to participate on-line. Subsequently, she took on the role of Programme Coordinator, and she also managed our transition to hybrid meetings in 2023.

Please join me in thanking Lance and Amy for their many contributions to the Swansea Historical Society over the years. We Board members who are stepping down from our Executive positions have all indicated that we will be available to share our knowledge and experience with our replacements, in order to ensure the smoothest possible transitions.

Brief Job Descriptions: Without going into great detail, the jobs that now need to be filled are essentially as follows. Some understanding of local history is useful, but not required. The most important requirements are an interest and commitment to furthering the preservation and promotion of Swansea's fascinating history, and a willingness to work in collaboration with the other members of the Executive. For some positions, management experience would be useful (but not required). Experience working on committees and working with non-profit volunteer organizations is also useful but not required. There is much that can be learned on the job!

President: The President acts as the chief executive officer of the Society, presides at meetings, and is an *ex-officio* member of committees. The President is accountable to report, as appropriate, to the Executive and SHS members on activities and developments undertaken by or impacting the Society, at monthly meetings, at the Annual General Meeting, and through the SHS Newsletter. As CEO, the President has the authority to delegate duties and responsibilities, and the ultimate responsibility to ensure: (a) smooth operation of all SHS activities through monitoring and providing guidance, (b) awareness of heritage activities in the community; (c) that all legal and financial obligations are satisfied; (d) that the requirements of the Society's Constitution, By-laws, and policy documents are adhered to; and (e) that productive relationships are maintained with other organizations, including sister historical societies, the Ontario Historical Society (the parent organization of the SHS), and the administration of the Swansea Town Hall (currently the host of many SHS activities).

Virtual Meetings Facilitator: The Virtual Meetings Facilitator is responsible for managing the on-line aspects of the Society's meetings. This includes ensuring that licensing for on-line activities is current, that the required equipment and software are available and functioning correctly, and that links are provided to members in advance of meetings. The Facilitator is also responsible for the operation of the equipment and software during any meetings that have an on-line component. [Note: The Society's current practice involves holding hybrid meetings where members and guests can attend in-person at the Swansea Town Hall, and people can also participate on-line using the Zoom conferencing tool.]

Programme Coordinator: The Programme Coordinator is responsible for (a) scheduling speakers for the Society's monthly meetings, (b) providing the speakers with background information, directions, and instructions, (c) obtaining information needed in order to announce the speakers' presentations and introduce the speakers, and (d) following-up to ensure that honoraria are provided when appropriate. [We currently have speakers booked through December 2025. The next meeting for which a speaker is required is February 2026.]

Walking Tours Coordinator: Working with the Society's Executive, the Walking Tours Coordinator is responsible for planning and scheduling the Society's guided walking tours, and ensuring that tour leader(s) are scheduled. [Note: Regular guided tours typically include Jane's Walk(s) in May, an annual walk in June, and a Governor Simcoe Walk in September/October. There are detailed tour leader's notes for itineraries which have been followed in past years. Optionally, the Coordinator may be invited to develop new walking tours.]

Special Projects / Special Events Coordinator: Working with the Society's Executive, the Coordinator is responsible for planning, scheduling, and staffing the Society's participation in community events and also projects initiated by SHS. [Note: Recent events include, for example: Heritage Fairs, History on the Humber, Bloor West Street Festivals, Brûlé 400-years commemoration, Doors Open Toronto, etc.]

Persons holding any of the above positions should be members in good standing of the SHS. It is also desirable, although not mandatory, that members holding these positions should be recognized as Directors (also known as "Executive Members") of the Society and be able to participate in Executive meetings. If your Society is to continue functioning, we need more volunteers. Please let us know if you are willing to explore ways that you could become more involved in the operation of your Society, or if you can think of someone we might approach. The future of our Society is in your hands. We need to hear from you now!!

To express interest in any of these positions, or to obtain more detailed information, please contact the Swansea Historical Society, any of its current Directors / Executive Members, or members of the recently constituted Search Committee (currently Ken Stark, Jordan Simons, and Robert Roden).

Also, please feel free to share the information in this Newsletter with neighbours, friends, family, etc., who may not be on our mailing list.

Good News: A few months ago, **Wendy Board** announced her intention to step down as Treasurer after the current financial year ends on August 31, 2025. A long-time SHS member, Wendy accepted the job of Treasurer in early 2020, and she has been a faithful member of the Executive for the past five years. After about two years on the job, Wendy and her husband moved away from the Toronto area, and operating as Treasurer from a distance has certainly presented additional challenges, which she has met very capably. Happily, our newest Executive member (and long-time Swansea resident), **Fereshteh Hashemi**, has graciously volunteered to take over from Wendy.

Please join us in thanking Wendy for her five years of dedicated service to the Swansea Historical Society. Also, we ask that you give Fereshteh your full support as she takes over the reins of the Treasurer's position.

Monthly SHS meeting, Wed. March 5, 2025, 7:30 pm: Speaker: Lianne Harris Racioppo – "*Life in the Roaring Twenties*". The decade of the 1920s was a unique time in human history. It was a time of new inventions, new freedoms, and new trends in music, dance, fashions, etc. It was a time to cut loose and celebrate the ending of World War One – supposedly "The War to End All Wars". Sadly, the celebrations were cut short by the 1929 Stock Market Crash and the ensuing "Great Depression" of the 1930s, all of which led us to World War Two in 1939. We look forward to an entertaining and informative presentation by Lianne, who is a resource specialist with the Toronto District School Board and curriculum advisor for Upper Canada College. To date, she has taught over 70,000 teachers and students (usually in authentic period clothing)!

The March meeting will be conducted in a hybrid format so that participants can attend in-person at the Swansea Town Hall or connect on-line using the Zoom tool. Zoom links will be provided closer to the meeting date. The Zoom connection will be open by 7:15 pm on March 5. If possible, we suggest that on-line participants start tuning in as soon as the link is open, so that we can be ready to kick off the meeting at 7:30 pm.

Monthly SHS meeting, Wed. Apr. 2, 2025, 7:30 pm: Speaker: Jim Adams – “*Digging Deep into the History of Runnymede – the 'In-between Neighbourhood'*”. Local historian/author Jim Adams has been researching the history of one of West Toronto's smallest neighbourhoods, Swansea's neighbour to the north, “Runnymede”. He has been documenting its geographic, cultural, business, and residential history. Join in a lively quiz, and learn about his first graphic little book – featuring local war hero Fred Topham, VC.

Other Upcoming Events: Please mark your calendars for the following dates in 2025:

Wednesday May 7 – Swansea Historical Society monthly meeting – to be held in conjunction with the congregation of Runnymede United Church at the former Windermere United Church building – now the “Windermere Campus of Runnymede United Church” (corner of Mayfield Avenue) – details to follow.

May 2, 3, 4 – Jane's Walk Festival – various locations around the City

Saturday, June 7 -- Swansea Historical Society annual guided walking tour (tentative date)

Saturday, September 27 -- annual Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe walking tour (tentative date)

Swansea Community Calendars for 2025: This is a friendly reminder that the 2025 Swansea Community Calendar is still available. As in recent years, the price has been held at \$10.00. Calendars can be purchased at any SHS events or over-the-counter at the Swansea Town Hall. We can also respond to orders placed by telephone or email, in which case we can send you the calendars by Canada Post, or perhaps drop them off if you are in the area.

HMCS Swansea “Cap Tallies”: The frigate HMCS Swansea, named after our former village and supported by Swansea residents, served in the Royal Canadian Navy during World War 2. It had the distinction of sinking more enemy submarines than any other Canadian warship. Long-time SHS member Steven Green has graciously donated a box of Cap Tallies from HMCS Swansea to our Society. Cap Tallies are the silk ribbons, embossed with the ship's name, which sailors wore on their caps as a means of identification. As a fund-raiser for the Society, and while quantities last, we are offering these ribbons for sale for \$10.00 each. We expect these will appeal to collectors of Swansea memorabilia and military memorabilia.

Financial Notes: As we progress through our 2024-2025 financial year, our Treasurer, Wendy Board, has reported that our finances are healthy, and our application for the annual Heritage Organizations Development Grant (HODG: historically \$1,545 per year) has been approved by the Province of Ontario.

We are pleased to remind you that the Swansea Historical Society can now accept payments electronically. E-transfers directed to swanseahistoricalsociety@gmail.com will result in a direct deposit to the SHS bank account at Scotiabank. This e-transfer approach can be used to pay membership fees, purchase publications, make donations to the Society, etc. (As a registered charity, the Society can provide tax receipts for donations). We invite you to give it a try. In order to assist our Treasurer with her accounting, if you are sending money by e-transfer, please use the “message” area to identify the purpose of your payment.

Communicating with Your Society: You can follow our activities through the Society's website www.swanseahistoricalsociety.ca and the website of the Swansea Town Hall www.swanseatownhall.ca. You can also follow us on Twitter (“X”) at twitter.com/Swansea_History or Instagram at www.instagram.com/swansea_history.

If you wish to contact us, the Society's mobile telephone number is 647-859-3901, and you can send e-mails to: swanseahistoricalsociety@gmail.com or swancnews@gmail.com or through the SHS website. Our mailing address is 95 Lavinia Avenue, Box 102, Toronto ON M6S 3H9. However, for urgent items, we suggest that you use email or telephone where possible, since we have only occasional access to our mail-box at the Town Hall. Your comments and suggestions are always most welcome, and please let us know of any developments that may be of interest to the Society and its members.

Membership: As of September 1, 2024 we are in a new membership year which extends to August 31, 2025. Many of you have already paid your membership for 2024-2025, and we thank you. If you have not yet paid your membership fees for 2024-2025, we invite you to do so at your earliest convenience. Fees can be paid at any SHS events, or payments can be sent to: 95 Lavinia Avenue, Box 102, Toronto, M6S 3H9, or fees can be paid electronically by means of e-transfer to: swanseahistoricalociety@gmail.com . As requested above, in order to assist our Treasurer, please use the “message” area to indicate whether your e-transfer payment is for a single membership, family membership, and/or donation, etc.

Your fees help to offset many of the costs incurred by the Society in its ongoing operations. If you are reading this and you are not already a member of the Swansea Historical Society, please join us so that you can be added to our mailing list and help support this worthy cause.

SWANSEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2024-2025 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
(The Membership Year runs from September 1 through August 31)

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$20.00
Corporate	\$25.00_____

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Individual	\$250.00
Family	\$500.00

Family Name: _____ Given Name(s): _____ Membership Number: _____

Street Address: _____ Apartment Number: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal code: _____

Home Telephone:(_____) _____ Business Telephone:(_____) _____

E-Mail: _____ Please use e-mail for my newsletters: Yes No, thanks

Please send to: Swansea Historical Society Membership Secretary, 95 Lavinia Avenue, Box 102, Toronto, Ontario M6S 3H9

[Payments to the Swansea Historical Society may be made by cash, cheque, or e-transfer to swanseahistoricalociety@gmail.com .]