

WELLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARDWALK BANTER

Fall Issue 2024

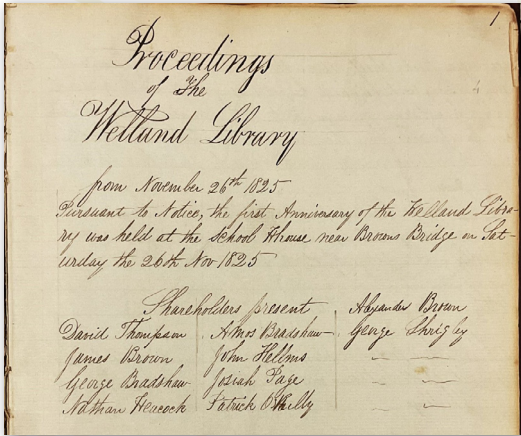


www.wellandlibrary.ca
t. 905-734-6210



Welland Library Celebrates 200 Years!

WPL is celebrating 200 years this November, and we'd like to take this opportunity to focus on the visionary pioneers who began this institution.



"The Welland Public Library bears the proud honour of being the oldest continually operated institution in the city". (Lewis, 2000, p. 125)

Brown's Bridge was built in the late 1700s by Lieutenant John Brown, a United Empire Loyalist who was a veteran of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, and later settled on a grant of land on the Welland River. The bridge he constructed was made of wood with eight pilings and a deck of planking. A small community formed north of the bridge, and a school was established there around 1815, initiated by John Brown's son Alexander and other nearby neighbours.

A community library was a logical addition to the school building, but it was by no means inevitable that it would be established. Rather, it was a unique community spirit and zeal for knowledge that drove these pioneers. Alexander Brown was among the original shareholders of the library, along with his eldest son James Brown who bears the honour of being the first librarian for Welland. The rest of the original shareholders included David Thompson, George Bradshaw, Nathan Leacock, Amos Bradshaw, John Hellems, Josiah Page, Patrick O'Reilly, and George Shrigley.

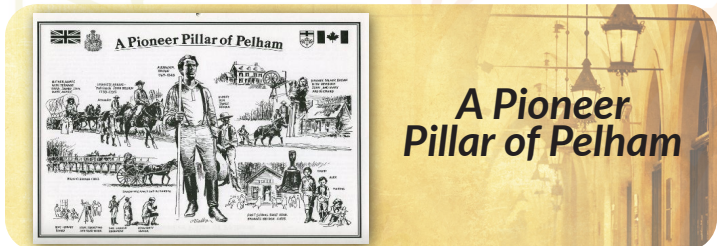
"These men were not residents of one thickly settled neighborhood, but lived miles apart and instead of having the good roads of to-day on which to travel, were obliged to go to this meeting by the bridle paths which mostly formed the highways of those days". (Rice, 1887/1972, p. 402)

The image below is reprinted with permission from the Pelham Historical Society. Illustrated by George Balbar and originally appearing in their 1995 Historical Calendar, it has Alexander Brown in the forefront with James Brown behind him. Brown's Bridge and the library board meeting location can also be seen on the left, with the school house which housed the library on the right.

The earliest record we have for the library is dated Saturday, 26 November, 1825. It is the minutes of the first anniversary meeting, as seen above. It being called the first anniversary meeting, our best estimate for the inaugural meeting is Saturday, 27 November, 1824, for which unfortunately no records were kept. Nevertheless, this is why we chose Wednesday, 27 November, 2024 as the official date to celebrate our 200th anniversary.

"At that time there was not even a hamlet where the town now stands; there was no village of Merrittsville; the "Aqueduct" did not then exist; the first sod had not yet been turned on the Welland Canal; the beautiful farms that today line both banks of the Chippawa were just being reclaimed from a state of wilderness; the settlers' rude homes were far apart. The pioneers of that day realized the necessity of improving the minds of the people of this young country and set about the collection of some literature out of which to form the nucleus of a circulating library". (Rice, 1887/1972, p. 402)

For at least the first 10 years the library shareholder meetings occurred at the Union Section No. 2 School (which also doubled as a meeting house) on the north side of Brown's Bridge, which spanned the Welland River. The bridge and school no longer exist, but the location is in the south-west part of Welland, at the bottom of South Pelham Road and north of the Welland River. In fact, two wood pilings from the bridge can still be seen sticking out above the water.



A Pioneer Pillar of Pelham

The Welland Library Company later merged with the Welland Mechanic's Institute in 1858, and ultimately became the Welland Public Library in 1895. For a complete listing of the key events in WPL's 200 years of history, please visit www.wellandlibrary.ca/timeline

Winter Warmth Donations



We are now accepting donations for our Winter Warmth table. New and very gently-used coats, hats, scarves, mitts/gloves, and other winter wear will be accepted. Heavy socks (new only) are also a much-needed item. Homemade items are welcome and appreciated. Donations accepted at the Main Branch only.

October is Dyslexia Awareness Month

Did you know that the library has a collection of levelled and decodable books to help beginning readers with phonetics and early literacy? The library also has a collection of C-Pen text-to-speech scanners, Wonderbook early readers with built-in audiobooks, and the electronic platform Tumblebook Library with its wide selection of listen- and read-along animated story books. For more information on our dyslexia-friendly resources, check with staff at the information desk!



Celebrating Ontario Public Library Week



October is Canadian Library Month, and from October 20 to 26, we celebrate Ontario Public Library Week. This year's theme, "Libraries For Life," highlights the essential role libraries play in lifelong learning and community connection. Stay tuned for our activities throughout the month by visiting our website! www.wellandlibrary.ca/events-calendar. Libraries continue to enrich and empower our community!

Every Gift Makes a Difference.

All contributions to WPL enrich the education, vitality, and cultural growth of our entire community.

If you choose to make a gift to the library, you can also decide where you'd like your gift to apply. Choose from these categories: Vibrant Spaces, Community-Driven Programs & Events, Dynamic Collections, Innovative Services & Technology, or Area of Greatest Need.

Thank you for your support!

For more information or to donate, please call (905) 734-6210 ext. 2500.

Reference.

Lewis, W.H. (2000). Aqueduct, Merrittsville, and Welland: A history of the city of Welland (Vol. 2). A.M.W Publications.
Rice, Alan B. (with Burtniak, J.). (1972). The history of the county of Welland. Mika Silk Screening Limited. (Original work published 1887)

The Purse Project Network Niagara Collection: November 1 - 30



In partnership with the Purse Project Network Niagara, we're collecting purses for women and grooming kits for men filled with full-size personal care items. The ten essential items are listed here and must be included in each purse or kit. Optional items can be added and adapted as you see fit. Donated purses and grooming bags must be new or in like-new condition (no scuffs, tears, pen marks, etc.). Donations can be dropped off at any of our branches and will be distributed to local community support organizations including The Hope Centre during the first two weeks of December. For inquiries about participation in this project, please contact us at 905-734-6210. For more information on The Purse Project Network, visit www.facebook.com/ThePurseProject-Niagara/ or thepurseprojectnetwork.com.

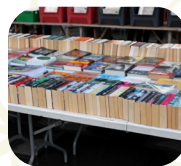
Purse Guidelines

10 ESSENTIALS

Our Organizations have asked that donated purses include ONE of EACH of these following items:

1. Toothbrush
2. Toothpaste
3. Body OR Hand Lotion
4. Deodorant
5. Hand Sanitizer
6. Shampoo (OR 2-in-1 shampoo & conditioner)
7. Body Wash (OR bar soap with plastic holder)
8. Socks
9. Hat OR Scarf
10. Mitts OR Gloves

WPL Fall Book Sale



Prepare to rummage! On Saturday, October 26, you can find books to curl up with this fall at this one-day only book sale! The sale will start at 9am and wrap up at 4pm. Other library materials may also be available to browse and buy. The sale will be offered at the Main Branch only. Bring a grocery tote or small box and fill it for only \$5. WPL totes will be available for purchase (\$2) each. Alternatively, fill a WPL bag for \$1 with a donation of a non-perishable food item, going towards our Little Free Pantry. Items of need include granola bars, cereal, and pre-packaged snack items. All book sale proceeds support library collections, programs, and services.

LIBRARY CLOSURES

Monday, September 2 - Labour Day
Monday, October 14 - Thanksgiving Day
Wednesday, December 25 - Christmas Day
Thursday, December 26 - Boxing Day
Sunday, December 29
Wednesday, January 1 - New Years Day

Main Branch
50 The Boardwalk
Welland, ON L3B 6J1
905-734-6210 ext. 2521

Diamond Trail Branch
315 Southworth Street
Welland, ON L3B 1Z8
905-734-6210 ext. 2501

Seaway Mall Branch
800 Niagara St.
Welland, ON L3C 5Z4
905-734-6210 ext. 2518

*Sunday Hours begin October 20 at Main Branch