



Lambton Musings

LAMBTON'S HISTORY AND HERITAGE NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2022

www.discoveriesthatmatter.ca

Members Provide Clues to History Mysteries

Staff, Moore Museum

The Summer 2020 issue of *Lambton Musings* included an article requesting information and photographs of the school sections of the former Moore Township, especially sections 6, 13 and 19 for which Moore Museum had little or no information.

S. S. #6 Moore

The schoolhouse serving S. S. # 6 Moore was located on the north side of Petrolia Line, about ¼ mile west of Brigden Road, near the hamlet of Leckie. Moore Museum member Margaret Armstrong shared several items regarding S. S. #6 Moore. In addition to a map she prepared of the farms of the school section, with names of families with children attending the school in 1941, she shared this photo. The architectural design of this schoolhouse is unusual locally, with the placement of the doors at opposite ends of the length rather than the width of the building.



S. S. #6 Moore

When the request was shared to local heritage Facebook group "Lost Lambton, Found!", former local resident Brian Hayes provided us with information and several photos, including this one of S. S. #6 Moore, taken just two years before centralization. By this time, students were attending a 2-room red brick school built around 1955, when the class outgrew the one-room school.



S. S. #6 Moore, April 1961, Gr. 1 to 4

Back row (left to right): Richard Duncan, Brian Hayes, Miss M. Marilyn Staples, Robert Wray, William Wray.

3rd row: Sally Irwin, Joanne White, Cathy Frayne, Eugene Harrison, Carol Irving, Sylvia Betts

2nd row: Debra Brown, Jean Racher, Judy Berry, Gloria Barnes, Georgina Barneveld, Jennifer Young, Susan Wray.

Front row: Ronald Barnes, Lyle Leckie, George MacDermid, James Irwin, James Stothers, Robert Ramsey, Donald Racher.

S. S. #13 Moore

When Diane Sullivan purchased a membership at Lambton Heritage Museum recently, she was given some back issues of *Lambton Musings* to peruse. Noticing the article about school information, she contacted Moore Museum and provided a copy for us to scan of this photograph of S. S. #13 Moore, for which, in spite of it being from approximately 1893/94, she provided all of the identifying names!



S. S. #13 Moore/S. S. #13 Sarnia (a.k.a. Jackson's School) c. 1893/94

Top row (left to right): Vida Lindsay, Maggie McFadden, Susie Ansell, Jane Landon, Lizzie Miller, Rose Hare, Millie McMeehan, Art Herrington, Les Logan, Al Miller, Herb Logan, Charlie Leckie.

2nd row: Lloyd Jackson, Frank Rowe, Jack Roddy, Eva Duncan, Stella Webster, Lena McMahon, Eva Dicer, Jennie Watson, Maggie McMillan, Noreen Duncan, Ada Landon, Ray Young, Dick Openham.

3rd row: Whip Hare, Russell Miller, Mamie Ansell, Pearl Watson, Mabel Brown, Delmar Elliott, George Rowe, Winnie Watson, Alex McFadden, Bruce Leckie, Tommy Patton, Ab Landon, Gordon Herrington, Gib McFadden.

4th row: Eva Chesser, Jennie Patton, Earl Jackson, Murray Elliott, Tom Leckie, Harvey Gray, Billie Jackson, Earl Logan, Mary Ann Jackson, Emma Jackson, Kate Rowe, Charlotte Dicer, Henrietta Rainsberry, Bertha McClellan, Ida Hodgins, Sadie McFadden.

Front row: Nellie McMeehan, Eliza Ansell, Annie McMahon, Ella Ansell, Stanley Gray, Lizzie Dicer, Maudie Watson, Alice Jackson, Rhea Miller (donor's grandmother), Lottie Miller (donor's great-aunt), Jenny Young, Johnny Duncan, Billie Dicer, Joe Robinson, Charles McMahon, Harry Webster.

Trustees: John McMillan, Tom Robinson, Fred McMahon

In window: Annie Watson, Tis McFadden



*Name being removed from S. S. #13 Moore
– Photo credit Vivian White*

This provides us with early information on this school section, which was a union school with S.S. #13 Sarnia Township. The school was located at the intersection of Brigden Road and LaSalle Line, near the hamlet of Osborne. It was originally located on the southwest corner, which placed it in Moore Township, but was later located on the northwest corner of that intersection, on Lot 7, Concession 1 Sarnia Township. The school was also known as Jackson's School as the land was purchased from the Jackson family.

More recent information on this school was shared by Vonda DenBoer, pastor of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The former Kimball and Petrolia Branches joined together to form the LaSalle Road Branch in 1966 and purchased this former school at public auction, for use as their house of worship. The church's records include

some files on the school, including that the original building burned down in 1953 and the students attended class across the road in the basement of Mooreline United Church until the new two-room brick school building was constructed. Also in the church's files were several photos, including this interesting one of the name being removed from the former school.

So, thanks to the information sharing through our members and their contacts, we now have some early information on these two school sections, as well as information from these buildings around the time of consolidation.

School Section #19 Moore remains rather unknown, however. We know that it was a union school with Sombra Township (S. S. #16 Sombra) and was built on Lot 22, Concession 1 Moore (Bickford Line midway between Tecumseh Road and Hwy. 40), but we have little other information on it. If anyone has access to information on this mystery school (or further information on any of the school sections of the former Moore), please contact Moore Museum at 519-867-2020 or through our [website](#).

Downriver Craft & Gift Sale Returns!

Moore Museum is excited to announce the return of the Downriver Craft & Gift Sale for 2022. The event will be held on Sunday, September 18 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mark your calendar now so that you don't miss this opportunity to get an early start on your holiday shopping at this sale, featuring over 80 tables of handmade crafts and intriguing gifts. There will be something for every interest, so come on out to purchase great gifts for family and friends, fun new fashion accessories for yourself, and decorative items for your home. Admission is just \$2 and children are admitted free when accompanied by an adult.



Wyoming Once Had Two Papers, a Key Point in the Oil Boom

Gordon MacKenzie, Plympton-Wyoming Museum

This is a reproduction of an article that was printed in *The Sarnia Gazette* on Thursday September 8, 1955.

Wyoming is said to be derived from an Indigenous word meaning "Large Plains", but it is likely that the name came from a town in Pennsylvania from which came one of the early oil prospectors.

Prior to the building of the Great Western Railway the site was farm lands consisting of Lots 13 and 16, Concession 2 of Plympton Township. For some years the village consisted of the station, a small store, a hotel and few houses.

However, the oil discoveries near Oil Springs changed this. Wyoming was the nearest settlement on the railroad and for a great number of years the entire oil production of the area was shipped from there.

By 1868 a branch line was in operation to Petrolia where wood burners and cordwood were in demand.

Crude oil was teamed in from Oil Springs in barrels and with the railway connection, Petrolia sent its crude to Wyoming and unloaded for shipment on a long platform, later used by W.G. Travis as a lumber yard.

At this time four refineries were in operation within the village and many stores were opened. Then came new hotels, a foundry, a woolen mill, a grist mill, etc. Later D.H. Mott opened an office and J.B. Dale set up his drug store.

Wyoming had its weekly papers too. First was the *Wyoming News Letter*, later the *Enterprise*, where Arthur W. Ellis was editor.

Mr. Ellis later moved to Petrolia to set up *The Advertiser*.

Many churches were built, a public school erected and Wyoming merchants drew their customers from Petrolia to the South, and Forest from the north.

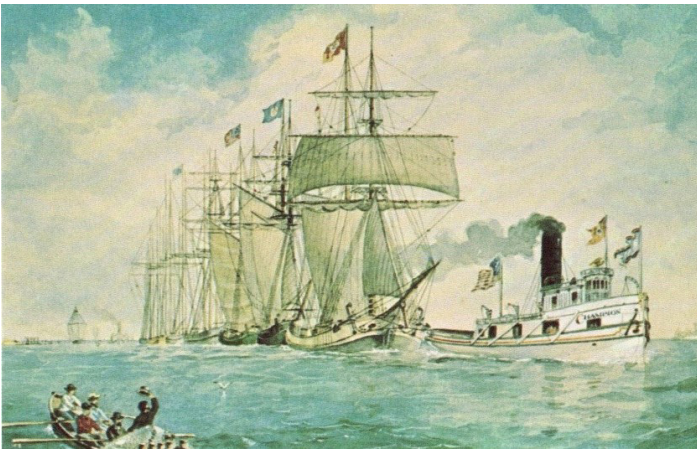
The village was incorporated in 1873 when prospects were at their peak. As the oil boom recessed the entire area showed a decline in population.

Wyoming kept, however, daily mail delivery both East and West, an Express Service, two telegraph offices and a private bank. With the development of an excellent farming community nearby it settled down... and now is on the rise with a heavy building boom well under way.

Champion, the Workhorse Tug

Mara Garva, Sombra Museum

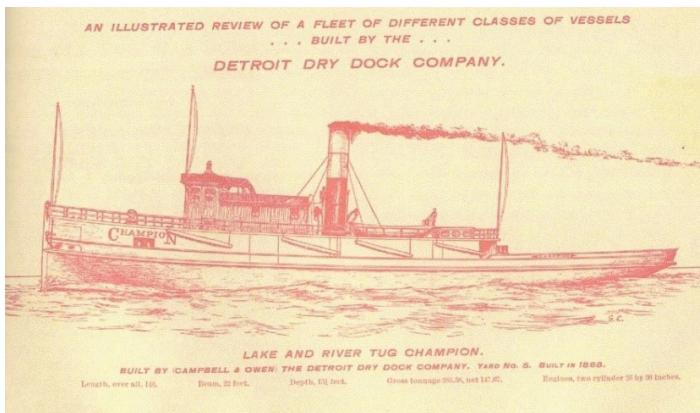
The *Champion* had a very prestigious reputation as one of the finest and most powerful tugs on the Great Lakes. Whenever she ventured out of her home turf, she made the news. She was built in Detroit in 1868, by Campbell and Owen. The engineer of the tug was Thomas Murphy, a well-known machinist and engineer. At the time she was built, she was said to be the largest steam tug afloat on fresh water. The *Champion* towed schooners that were broken down or engineless and needed help safely navigating through the narrow channels of the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair, and the Detroit River.



A lithograph of this painting, made by Seth Arca Whipple of New Baltimore, Michigan, hangs in the Great Lakes Hall at Sombra Museum. Captain Hiram Ames was the commander of Champion when she accomplished the feat of pulling eight schooners at one time.

We have a painting in our Marine Room that captures the *Champion* towing eight heavily loaded schooners from Lake Huron to Lake Erie. The schooners being towed were *Wells Burt*, *Michigan*, *Elizabeth A. Nicholson*, *James P. Joy*, *Frances Palms*, *Sweetheart*, *Sunnyside*, and *Emma L. Coyne*. This proves how sturdy and strong the *Champion* was, as she safely towed eight schooners at once across the Great Lakes. The *Champion* was also responsible for pulling the largest tow that has ever passed through the Detroit River. She broke records and captured the attention of many. The *Champion* later went into the raft towing business and was then converted into a wrecker when she was purchased by Captain Baker.

Sadly, the *Champion* burned down in 1903. At that time, Captain Baker was master of tug. He was ashore reading a telegram when he turned around and saw the boat in flames. Three members of the crew were on board when the fire started, and they had narrow escapes from burning as the fire spread so quickly. There was no opportunity to save the boat, and the flames overtook it. Despite this, the *Champion's* legacy will live on.



A drawing of the tug Champion from Sombra Museum's collection.

Looking into Lambton's Closet

Colleen Inglis, Lambton Heritage Museum



C. & H. Dickins dress worn by Jane (Sym) Mackenzie in 1875.



*Jane (Sym) Mackenzie, April 1878.
Topley Studio, Library and Archives
Canada, PA-026532.*

From leggings to bell-bottoms, miniskirts to maxi dresses, women's fashions come and go. They are influenced by world events, customs, popular culture, and the role of women in society. Clothing in the Lambton Heritage Museum collection represents one hundred years of change, from the 1860s to the 1960s. Several interesting pieces are highlighted below. The ladies of Lambton definitely had style!

1870s

One of the oldest dresses is also one of the most remarkable. In 1853, Jane Sym married widower Alexander Mackenzie of Sarnia. Twenty years later, he became the second Prime Minister of Canada. Jane accompanied her husband on a diplomatic visit to London, England in 1875. She wore this dress to Buckingham Palace at the invitation of Queen Victoria.

Women's fashions in the 1870s were complex and restrictive. Styles highlighted mature, full-figured bodies. Corsets and bustles emphasized and embellished curvy hips and artificially narrow waists. Jane's fashionable black velvet and satin lace dress has elbow length sleeves and a square neckline. This suggests it was a dinner dress rather than a day dress or evening gown. The centre panel guides the eye downwards to the full tiered skirt and a short train.

The dress was made by C. & H. Dickins of London, England. The company's roots go back to 1803. Known for quality goods and services, their customers included royalty and aristocrats.

1890s



Late Victorian walking suits were practical outfits suitable for travelling and working outside the home. The two piece brown silk taffeta gown is from the 1890s. The bodice has a high collar, long sleeves, and fastens with a long line of ornamental buttons. Each button is decorated with an image of a bird. The skirt is bell-shaped and would have been worn with a bustle. Skirt and bodice are adorned with elaborate beaded floral appliqué.

Silk taffeta two-piece dress and button detail.

1900s



Ladies fashions were extravagant during the Edwardian period, roughly 1900 to 1914. Wealthier women wore several outfits each day suited to different activities. Women achieved an hourglass figure by using an S-bend corset. This pushed the bust up and forward, and the buttocks up and back.

Evening dresses were worn for formal parties, dancing, dining out, or attending the opera. The most revealing dresses, with short sleeves and low necklines, were worn by young, unmarried women. This dress belonged to Anna Mouck. She was photographed wearing it about 1908, when she was in her late teens or early twenties. Originally from Warton, Anna moved to Sarnia with her husband James Marshall Arnold after their marriage in 1922.

Anna (Mouck) Arnold sits for a portrait wearing her dress.



Turquoise and gold cocktail dress, c. 1908.

Anna's stunning turquoise and gold cocktail dress has sheer, tasselled sleeves and gold detailing. A statement-making blue and orange peacock feather adorns the waist. The rich and pastel hues, gilt lace, net, fringe, multi-layer skirt, and tubular, column-like shape were on-trend and fashion forward for the time.

1910s

Until the First World War, the skirt and blouse outfit continued to be incredibly popular. Skirts got narrower and slightly shorter to clear the ground while walking. A one-piece dress in a similar cut was an alternative.

Olive Kennedy was born in 1885 in Plympton Township. She died in 1927 at the age of 41 of Lou Gehrig's disease. Three of her dresses date to the 1910s. One in particular resembles an illustration in the April 1912 edition of the *Ladies' Home Journal*.

The dresses look handmade and are similarly constructed. All three close at the front through an intricate web of hook and eye fasteners that extends from the skirt to the collar.



Dress features a diagonal side closing, lace sleeves and neck, floral embroidery, and detailed beadwork.



Dress is subdued in colour with drop sleeves, and tassels dangling tassels from the waist.



Cinnamon coloured dress has puffed "leg of mutton" sleeves, a two-tiered skirt, and collared neckline (no lace insert).



Easter dresses from the April 1912 edition of the **Ladies' Home Journal**.

1920s

By the end of the First World War, women's clothing had changed. Many women had taken on new roles outside the home and were exploring career opportunities. They were no longer willing to let clothes get in their way! Skirts were shorter, lines were simpler, and uniform-like details were popular. Clothes were more revealing and the size and bulk of undergarments decreased. Party dresses were still extremely decorative. Heavily beaded, silk, slip-like evening dresses are typical of the flapper style.



This fully lined black silk dress with layered skirt belonged to Clara Fairbank. According to the label, it was designed by French couturier Lucien Lelong. Lelong owned a fashion house in Paris. In 1913, the first of his designs appeared in *Vogue*. His house was prominent from the 1920s to 1940s and served an elite international clientele.

Lucien Lelong label from 16 Rue Matignon, Paris, France. *Modèle Déposé* means Trademark.



1920s black silk dress with drop waist and rhinestone decoration.



More rhinestone details at the back

Clara travelled to Paris several times. She likely purchased this dress in 1922 or 1926. By 1926, Lelong's fashion house was located just off the Champs Elysées on Rue Matignon, which matches the dress label. Delicate rhinestones decorate the front and back but overall the dress is understated and unostentatious. The plain decoration and relatively modest style of the dress may have suited Clara, who by 1926 was widowed and approaching middle age.

1940s and Beyond

During the Second World War, inspiration was drawn from menswear and military styles. Skirts were flared enough to be loose over the hips and allow for easy walking. As war rationing made fabric less accessible, hemlines rose to just below the knee. Pants grew in popularity. The first jeans marketed exclusively to women appeared in the 1930s.

A shirtwaist dress (or shirt dress) buttons up the front from the hem or waist to the neck. In the 1920s, this style was reserved for uniforms like those worn by nurses and servants. By the 1940s, it was the most popular style for daywear and could be worn for all things.

This shirtwaist dress is likely homemade. The navy polka dot fabric is stretch crepe. There are machine sheered details at the shoulders and gathering at the waist. The skirt is made of six panels and flares slightly from fitted hips. It has navy buttons, a V-neck, and narrow, rolled down collar. It dates to the 1940s or 1950s. Another example of a shirtwaist dress is made from bright floral print fabric that suggests a date from the 1950s or 1960s. It even has pockets.



*Shirtwaist dress from the
1940s-1950s.*



*Floral print shirtwaist dress,
possibly 1960s-1970s.*

Very few items of women's clothing in the museum collection are more recent than the 1960s. It is sadly lacking in mini dresses, bell-bottoms, and denim. If you have any gems in your closet at home that might be a good fit for our collection, reach out to us through [email](#). We'll have to wait a few years to continue the timeline of highlights from Lambton's closet.

Bothwell Oil Connections

Deanna Bullard, Oil Museum of Canada

Lambton County residents are very familiar with our oil fields. Whether it is from personally working in them, knowing family or friends that work in them or in the processing plants, or even just getting a whiff of them as they drive past. Oil fields are an ever present part of our county but have you ever wondered about those in neighbouring counties like Chatham-Kent? Did you know that some of the key players in our oil fields of Oil Springs also explored the area in and around Bothwell?



Currie drill rig near Bothwell, ON

Generally, a man by the name of John L. Lick is credited to the discovery of oil in Bothwell. This is not quite correct. Lick should be credited as the person that started the oil boom or oil fever in the area, but he certainly was not the first to discover oil. The credit of discovery and first uses of the oil goes to the First Nations communities living in the area.

The First Peoples used the oil for medicine and as a water proofing agent. Later, as Detroit developed, the oil was shipped in small barrels made in Chatham, to Detroit, and sold as medicine for \$3.00 a barrel by both the First Nations and European settlers that they taught how to capture the oil.

In 1793, Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe was travelling to Detroit along the Thames River. He reported seeing (he smelled it before he could see it) an oil spring near the village of Fairfield. This spring is again referenced by Samuel Smith, a surveyor, in his field notes of 1822.

The Tripp brothers, Charles and Henry, were the first to use the gum beds of the Enniskillen swamp for asphalt, and it was Charles that found oil ahead of Lick near Bothwell. In 1857 Tripp, for reasons unknown, made a stop on the way back to what is now Oil Springs from Hamilton with his new investor James Miller Williams (Williams ended up owning Tripp's property and was the first to strike oil in Oil Springs). Tripp and Williams dug to a depth of 8 metres or 27 feet where they encountered an oil and water mixture along the banks of the Thames River. Tripp could not control the water, so, he abandoned the well and returned to his gum beds in the swamp.



W. E. Lawrence & oil wagon. Bothwell, ON

Lick uncovered oil on April 1, 1863 with a gusher that shot out of the earth, or perhaps, the better word might be spurted, to the height of "a tall man". This ushered in a boom that would last until 1867. The second oil excitement started in 1895 when speculators once again, began to look for oil in and around Bothwell. One of those first speculators was Francis, "Frank" Carmen.

In 1896, Carmen leased property from Walter Goodyear in Bothwell with the strict condition that he must have a producing oil well in 30 days. Running out of cash, Carmen then asked J.H. Fairbank for enough money to build a power house and drill more wells. A portion of the proceeds going to Fairbank was also part of the deal. The land did indeed produce, with a recorded 200 barrels a day. The Carmen and Fairbank site was in operation until 1932 when it was sold by Clara Fairbank Ranney. Although no longer owned by Carmen and Fairbank, the power house still stands on the outskirts of Bothwell, and oil is still being drawn from the earth.



Carman and Fairbank power house. Bothwell, ON

Lambton County Branch of Ontario Ancestors (The Ontario Genealogical Society)

*Alan Campbell, Ontario Genealogical Society, Lambton Branch
(lambtonnewsletters@ogs.on.ca)*



Branch members are excitedly awaiting better weather in order to get out to update cemetery information. With the elimination of Covid-19 mandates, the Branch is looking forward to taking part in more Heritage events in Lambton County or in contiguous counties. Please contact the Branch through our [email](#) if you are having a Heritage event and would like to see us represented.

Our Website

Our members were advised in early March that more than 30 new items, most of which were church related, were added to our Members' Resources section of our website. For non-members and members alike, check out the District 38 Lambton Retired Teachers of Ontario/ERO scrapbooks which can be found on the landing page of our [website](#) by clicking on the link.

District 38 Lambton RTO Scrapbook Collection. The two scrapbooks found there contain collected news articles about retired teachers:

☐ *Clippings - Retired Teachers in the News 2002 - 2006*

☐ *Retired Teachers in the News 2006 - 2011*

Two additional scrapbooks will be posted, probably prior to the publication of this issue of Lambton Musings. We are looking seriously at holding hybrid meetings in the fall now that Covid-19 mandates are being eliminated.

Upcoming Branch Webinars

This is the first of a number of presentations by other provinces' genealogical societies. These will be valuable webinars for those who are "chasing" former Lambton County residents who went west.

May 12, 2022: **Meet the Alberta Genealogical Society**

Register for this webinar [here](#).

June 14, 2022: Claire Smith-Burns, **Diligence has its Rewards: A Remarkable Discovery Regarding one of Lambton's First European Settlers**

[with Kent Branch]

This should be an excellent webinar about John Courtney who settled along the St. Clair River in the early 1800s.

Register for this webinar [here](#).

Mark the Calendar!

The 2022 Ontario Ancestors Virtual Conference is scheduled June 24 to 26, 2022. Check out the planned activities at their [website](#). Registration opened on April 1, 2022.

Lambton Branch Drop-In Meetings

Drop-In sessions with Lambton County Branch members are scheduled for the last Monday of each month at 2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m. These sessions are an opportunity for members and guests to ask questions about genealogical resources in Lambton County, share research strategies, share genealogy finds in Lambton County or just talk genealogy.

Registering for the Drop-In session of May 30, 2022 will automatically register you for the series for the remainder of the year. Register [here](#).

HERITAGE HOUR

Mysterious Artifacts

Thursday, June 16
7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

What's lurking inside the museum vaults? What strange and unusual artifacts have we collected over the years? Join us as museums across Lambton County swing open the vault doors to examine the weird and mysterious items in our holdings. You may be surprised at what we have!

Participating museums include:

Forest Museum, Lambton County Archives, Lambton Heritage Museum, Moore Museum, Oil Museum of Canada, and Sombra Museum

To watch this free virtual presentation, register online:
<https://forms.lambtonmuseums.ca/HSL-Heritage-Hour/2022/Mysterious-Artifacts>



This picture was originally published in the Sarnia Observer on April 9, 1955. It shows three girls with beautiful pysanka, Ukrainian Easter eggs decorated with traditional folk designs using a wax-resist method. Pictured are Sandra Charyk, Sylvia Novosad, and Ann Charyk. Image courtesy of the Lambton County Archives collection.

Heritage Sarnia-Lambton Members

Moore Museum

94 Moore Line, Mooretown, ON N0N 1M0

519-867-2020

[Facebook Page](#)

Plympton-Wyoming Museum

6745 Camlachie Road,

Camlachie, ON N0N 1E0

519-869-2357 or 519-869-4909

[Facebook Page](#)

Lambton Heritage Museum

10035 Museum Road,

Grand Bend, ON N0M 1T0

519-243-2600

[Facebook Page](#)

Oil Museum of Canada

2423 Kelly Road, Oil Springs, ON N0N 1P0

519-834-2840

[Facebook Page](#)

Arkona Lions Museum and Information Centre

8685 Rock Glen Road, Arkona, ON N0M 1B0

519-828-3071

[Facebook Page](#)

Sombra Museum

3476 St. Clair Parkway, Sombra, ON N0P 2H0

519-892-3982

[Facebook Page](#)

Lambton County Archives

787 Broadway Street, Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0

519-845-5426

[Facebook Page](#)

Forest-Lambton Museum

8 Main St. North, Forest, ON N0N 1J0

[Facebook Page](#)

Additional Contributors

The Ontario Genealogical Society, Lambton Branch

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