

Elgin County Archives and Museum



Elgin Historical Society fonds

<https://inmagic.elgin.ca/en/permalink/archives9858>

Museum / Archive: Elgin County Archives

Part Of: Elgin Historical Society fonds

Creator: Elgin Historical Society
Elgin Historical and Scientific Institute
Ontario Historical Society

Description Level: Fonds

Accession Number: 2002-25
2017-25

Storage Room: Archives Storage Rm. 105
Archives Storage Rm. 107
Archives Storage Rm. 110

Storage Location: R7 S2 Sh4 B1-3
R7 S2 Sh3 B1-2
C4 Sh5
M10e
R15 S1 Sh1 B5

GMD: textual records
graphic material
cartographic material

Date Range: 1830-2016

Physical Description: 1.27 m of textual records
244 photographs : b&w and col.
73 photographs : b&w glass slides
33 photographic negatives
2 photographs : b&w metal plate negatives
1 drawing
6 postcards : b&w and col.
1 map

History /

Biographical:

The Elgin Historical Society was formed under its original name, the Elgin Historical and Scientific Institute, on April 29, 1891, and was soon thereafter affiliated with the Ontario Historical Society.

A separate women's section of the Institute, variously known as the Ladies' Auxiliary or Women's Historical Society, was formed in 1899 and continued in operation until the early 1920s.

For many years the Institute maintained offices, a library and a small museum in the St. Thomas Court House, initially in the original building (destroyed by fire in July 1898), and subsequently, beginning in 1900, in the new Court House.

Prominent early Presidents of the Institute included James H. Coyne, Registrar of Deeds for Elgin County, who also served as President of the Ontario Historical Society and the Royal Society of Canada; Judge C.O. Ermatinger; and long-time Elgin County Clerk K.W. McKay.

The Elgin Historical and Scientific Institute collected, preserved and exhibited archival documents and artifacts, and sponsored numerous publications relevant to the history of Elgin County. At its regular meetings, Institute members presented essays on various subjects. In addition, the Institute raised funds to organize public events and to support the erection of numerous markers and memorials commemorating individuals and events significant in the history of Elgin County, including, in 1903, a four-day celebration in St. Thomas of the Talbot Centennial, marking the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Talbot Settlement by Colonel Thomas Talbot.

As a result of declining membership, the Society ceased active operations in the early 1940s. At this time, the Society donated a significant portion of its collection of archival documents and artifacts to the Public Archives of Canada.

The Elgin Historical Society was reconstituted in 1967 as a centennial project and has continued in operation since then. For many years, The Society maintained its library and archive of artifacts and documents in the Elgin County Pioneer Museum, St. Thomas.

The Society's objectives as outlined in its constitution are to "bring together those people interested in the diverse heritage of Elgin County and St. Thomas...to research, retain, preserve and present historical data pertaining to the region...to solicit for preservation artifacts, arms, uniforms, military accoutrements, and other objects of historical interest...to solicit for preservation manuscripts, letters, documents, maps, books, pictures and other materials relating to the Society's objectives...to participate in public functions designed to perpetuate the memory of the past...[and] to publish and republish historical material with the aim of disseminating local history over a wide area."

Custodial History:

The records composing the fonds were created, collected and maintained by the Elgin Historical and Scientific Institute and the Elgin Historical Society. Records were stored as part of a much larger collection at the Elgin County Pioneer Museum, and moved to the basement of Yurek's Drug Store, St. Thomas after the Museum fire in 2001. Records were donated to the Elgin County Archives in December 2002.

Scope and Content:

Fonds consists of records created, collected and maintained by the Elgin Historical Society and its predecessor the Elgin Historical and Scientific Institute. Fonds includes minutes of Society meetings; administrative records including annual reports, constitution and by-laws, financial statements, lists of officers, programmes, newsletters and membership lists; correspondence; photographs; records relating to the Society's involvement in the annual Talbot Anniversary Dinner; Society-sponsored publications; and papers and essays prepared for or presented to the Society. The Miscellaneous Records series principally consists of archival records relating to various Elgin County municipal officials, institutions and agencies, collected and maintained by the Society as part of its mandate to preserve and provide access to resources for the study of Elgin County history. Fonds also includes records of the Ontario Historical Society, collected and maintained by the Elgin Historical Society and the Elgin Historical and Scientific Institute, and an 1886 colour perspective map of the City of St. Thomas that includes a classified business directory and illustrations of prominent city buildings.

Fonds is arranged in the following series:

1. Minutes
2. Talbot Anniversary Dinner
3. Correspondence
4. Publications
5. Papers and Essays
6. Archives
7. Administration
8. Ontario Historical Society Records
9. Photographs
10. Miscellaneous Records

Name Access: Elgin Historical Society
Elgin Historical and Scientific Institute
St. Thomas (Ont.)
St. Thomas and District Horticultural Society
Balaclava Home and School Council
Balaclava Mothers' Club
Bell, James
Munro, Colin
Elgin County Branch Ontario Genealogical Society
Thorman, George
St. Thomas Waterworks
Coyne, James Henry
Alma College
St. Thomas YWCA
St. Thomas Model School
Southwold Prehistoric Earthworks

Accruals: Accruals of minutes and administrative records expected.

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