



NELLES MANOR

Newsletter

March 2023

Volume 2023, Number 2

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Contact Us

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2023

Looking forward to our initial events for this new year.

The first will be the Mother's Day tea which includes a fashion show. This is always a successful event and quickly sells out. Tickets are limited.

Our official opening to the public will be the Victoria Day weekend starting May 20th. We are hoping to start the season with a **Butter Tart celebration**. We are expecting to line up several local bakers and outlets. Come and try the many choices and compare your favorites with others you haven't yet tasted.

In June we will have our Nelles Family reunion. More on that below.



How to Save a Heritage House

It is now **225 years** since the completion of Nelles Manor. It started as the home of Colonel Robert Nelles and his first wife Elizabeth Moore in 1798. Here they had eight children at a time when the Forty (Grimsby) was just an idea. They began by clearing the land, starting a farm, and surviving the wilderness. While his neighbours were building log cabins or clapboard houses, he decided to build in stone. He was influenced to build the Georgian style manor house by the home of Sir William Johnson and Molly Brant – Johnson Hall. Sir Johnson was Robert and his father Hendrick's commanding officer with the British Indian department in the Mohawk Valley in New York state. That building was made of limestone. He found that there wasn't any limestone to be found at the Forty, so he used local Grimsby Foundation stone and parged the building and had large blocks drawn onto it. The building is very sound and well made.

It is believed that the Manor survived the War of 1812 due to the Engagement at the Forty. The battle took place on Robert and his brother's land along Forty Mile Creek with the Americans leaving all their possessions. They fled and

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never returned. During the war large houses and sometimes villages were burned. Nelles Manor survived.

Elizabeth and their son Robert II died during the war. Robert remarried widow Maria Jane Waddell Bingle. She had two children from her first marriage and Robert and Maria Jane added six more children to the family. In peace the family and the Manor prospered.

The next four generations of the Nelles/Rutherford family cared and protected the building and lands the best they could. Over these generations much of the land was divided amongst family members and/or sold. In order to keep the Manor, it was divided into eight apartments.

In 1971 the last family member living at the Manor – Margorie Harris Rutherford – sold the Manor to the Coutts family. Over the next 40 plus years they took on the responsibility of caring and protecting the Manor. They slowly restored the Manor to one home with the attic and carriage house still available for tenants. They filled the home with period furnishings, artifacts, and art. They created Nelles Manor Museum when they donated the building and grounds to a not-for-profit organization to benefit the people of Grimsby and Ontario in 2016. Nelles Manor survived once more.

Now it is the time for the community to help with the stewardship of Nelles Manor and grounds. That is how we save a heritage house. To another 225 years and more!

Kate Pyatt, Museum Manager

Our First Annual Fundraising Campaign

In the coming weeks we will be providing a series of articles in the local paper outlining just how important Nelles Manor Museum is to our community and in a broader sense to all of Canada. The Manor home is one of the oldest open to the public in Ontario, it is situated on the site of one of the most significant battles of the War of 1812. The Nelles family was extremely influential through their military service, community and government service and commerce throughout the early period of Upper Canada.

We are not a government owned, operated or funded museum.

Therefore, it is necessary for us to look to our many supporters and the general public for financial support. As you can imagine it is costly to maintain a 225-year-old home. While we raise funds through tours, events and grants, our costs continue to grow.

Nelles Manor Museum is a place **Where History is Brought to Life**. Your support is important to the presentation and preservation of this Historic Site.

We can't do it without you – your donations make it possible

You can send a donation to us at the enclosed address or donate through Canada Helps.

A charitable receipt will be issued for all donations over \$20.00.

Charitable registration No. 81779-2831

Volunteers -

We are gearing up for our 2023 season and will be contacting all current volunteers as events and tours begin. We have a gardening committee, a new Marketing committee and are looking for a Volunteer Co-Ordinator and Tour Co-Ordinator. Always interested in more tour guides. If you haven't been a guide before, we have a very instructive training manual to help you learn.

We cannot manage without the time committed by our volunteers and we look forward to their ongoing contribution in the coming year.

Nelles Family Reunion

This year, the Museum will be hosting its first **Nelles Family Reunion**. Previously the Nelles Family Association of Canada organized these events, but the organization came to an end in recent years. This not only involves families under the Nelles surname, but also descendants such as Anderson, Woolverton, Ball, Anderson, Bingle, Grout, Gurney, Pilkington and Rutherford amongst many others.

Planning is well underway and registration forms are now available. It looks to be a very educational day with tours and other activities. The event will include a picnic, Manor and neighbourhood tours, and much more.

Whether you are a Nelles descendant or not, it will be an interesting day and an opportunity to learn about the vast family network and some of the history of the Nelles families. **If you wish to participate in the tours and special events, you must be registered in advance by completing a registration form.**

Please email info@nellesmanor.ca for a registration form.

Become a Friend of Nelles Manor Museum

Some of the benefits of becoming a Friend of Nelles Manor includes receiving first notification and early registration for ticket sales on all events and programs. As a Friend you also tour the Museum for free during our regular season.

Also, we have participated in The **Museums of Niagara** reciprocal agreement so that with your membership in Friends of Nelles Manor you also have free admission to several of the Niagara Museums.

The cost is only \$25 for single and \$40 for family and the contribution helps support our operations. This contribution helps us by showing community support and also financially as we do not receive annual operational funding from any government level.

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New and Renewed Friends of the Manor

Catharine Gonnens
Carl and Nancy Kovacs
George and Nancy Nelles
Jane and Bram Radix

Estate Planning -

Nelles Manor is one of the few historical properties of original Loyalist built heritage left in Ontario. One of the ways to support the Manor is to include Nelles Manor Heritage House in your estate plans.

A donation from your estate or life insurance policy to the Manor could be supportive in a number of ways:

- To our annual operations
- or to an endowment fund where the income supports our annual preservation, maintenance and operations costs, or
- To a capital fund for major capital needs such as roof, equipment or other major purchases.

Consult your lawyer or accountant as to how to provide this type of support that will help ensure the continuing preservation of this important property.



Newsletter Editor
B. Thompson

Thank you all for your encouragement and support and we look forward to a safe, healthy and successful 2023 year!