

Wellesley Township Heritage and Historical Society

RESEARCH GUIDE

This guide provides basic information on how to research the history of Wellesley Township using resources in our collection as well as a list of other local history resources.

WTHHS OBJECT AND PHOTOGRAPH DATABASE

This database is an inventory of all items in our collection with information on each of the items as follows. The items are in numbered boxes in the cupboards below the display cases and display tables. This is not a public database. A volunteer will help you search it.

Our photo database includes several significant collections:

- Photos taken Wellesley photographer, Charles Ottmann, jr, 1902-1906
- Photos taken by Jessie Harkness, teacher at S. S. #17 Crosshill School, ca 1912-1914
- Photos taken by Dr. Deborah Glaister Hannay during WWII in Europe; also Glaister family photos
- Views of Wellesley village by various unidentified photographers

MAPLE LEAF JOURNAL RESEARCH FILES

These files were compiled during the research and writing of the township's history - *The Maple Leaf Journal: A Settlement History of Wellesley Township*, published in 1983. They consist of handwritten, typed and photocopied documents such as oral histories, clippings and articles from Waterloo Historical Society annual volumes, census summaries and others.

✓ A complete list of titles is in a folder in the cupboard with the documents boxes which are in the cupboards below the display cases, boxes D to J.

MAPLE LEAF JOURNAL - A SETTLEMENT HISTORY OF WELLESLEY TOWNSHIP

The history of the township was researched and written by members of the historical society. Their work was edited by Barbara J. Stewart, Phyllis Leleu Kitchen and Debbie Dietrich. It was published by The Corporation of the Township of Wellesley in 1983.

✓ In 2012 the book was digitized and produced on a searchable CD for sale by the WTHHS. The cost is \$17.70 + HST = \$20.00.

CEMETERY TRANSCRIPTIONS

There are 27 cemeteries in Wellesley Township. The Waterloo-Wellington Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society transcribed the headstones in each cemetery and produced a CD of the transcriptions. We purchased the CD and it is stored in the CD drive of the historical room computer. Information about the cemeteries and a map of their locations is on our website at ✓<https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/cemeteries.html> .

WELLESLEY TOWNSHIP MAPS

There are six historic maps of the township and village of Wellesley. These have been reproduced and mounted and are displayed on easels.

- **1843 Wellesley Township Survey** by William Walker – This is the original survey of the township after which it was opened up for settlement. It shows the names and locations of original settlers. ✓An index of names on the 1843 Survey is in a folder beside the easel.
- **Wellesley Township “Patent Plan” Map #20 from RG-1-100 at the Archives of Ontario.** Excerpt from AO description of Patent Plans: “... plans showing the status of Crown lands, whether patented, leased, or under a license of occupation Particularly in the pre-Confederation period, these plans were used to record locations on land made for grants and sales. Often, however, the individuals named on the plans did not follow through with obtaining a patent on the land.
- **1855-1860 Plan of the Village of Wellesley** - This map shows businesses in Wellesley village. It appeared in *Waterloo Historical Society Annual Volume #55*, 1967 in an article called “Wellesley Village,” by Florence Ratz Dewar. It was drawn by W. H. E. Schmalz to accompany the article. It has been reproduced by permission of the Waterloo Historical Society. (Map MO49)
- **1861 Tremaine Map** – The Tremaine maps of Upper Canada were published by George C. Tremaine, Toronto. They are out of copyright and may be reproduced. ✓An index of names on the 1861 Tremaine map is in a folder beside the easel.
- **1894 Fire Insurance Plan** - Charles Edward Goad created the plans between 1876 and 1910 followed briefly by his sons, who took over production. Ownership of the copyright of the plans has been disputed over the years. In 1993, the Ontario Archives, Library and Archives Canada and CGI Environmental Services reached a compromise agreement according to which the two government institutions would enforce restrictions on reproducing maps *less than ninety years old*. Since the Wellesley map was created in 1894, it is out of copyright and may be reproduced.

- **1907 Wellesley Township Map** – This map is thought to have been created after 1907 when the railroad “spur” line was built to Linwood in the north west corner of the township. It includes the names of people who owned the land that that time. There is no index for this map.
 - We have a modern map of the township showing lots and concessions and current road names. It is useful for people who want to visit land owned or inhabited by their ancestors.
- ✓ There are printed copies beside the easel and it can be downloaded here:

[https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/uploads/9/2/9/6/9296178/wellesley_township_map - roads_lots_concessions_settlement_areas.pdf](https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/uploads/9/2/9/6/9296178/wellesley_township_map_-_roads_lots_concessions_settlement_areas.pdf)

HERITAGE/LACAC FILES

These files were created by the former Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) from the 1970s to the 1990s. They include information on houses of interest for designation or inclusion in the Heritage Register. They are in documents boxes in the large metal file cupboard near the door. A list of file titles is stored with the boxes.

DESIGNATED PROPERTIES

Nine properties in Wellesley Township have been designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. A full list can be seen on our website at

✓ <https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/heritage-wellesley.html>.

✓ More information on each property can be seen in LACAC files in the large metal file cupboard.

HISTORIC NEIGHBOURHOOD SURVEY

This study was done in the early 1980s by students at the University of Waterloo School of Architecture. The purpose was to show the students how to survey buildings in a small settlement area. It was done in conjunction with Wellesley LACAC (now part of the WTHHS). Not every house of historic importance is included. The study can be seen on our website at:

✓ <https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/historic-neighbourhood-survey.html>

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS INVENTORY

This information was compiled from records at the Land Registry Office by the Waterloo Region Heritage Foundation in the 1970s. They are orange ledgers in the large metal file cupboard near

the door. They consist of land ownership information for some early buildings on each lot and concession.

✓ A list of the contents of each ledger is stored with the ledgers.

WALKING TOURS

Walking tours of Wellesley village and Hawkesville are available on our website:

✓ <https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/walking-tours.html>

LAND REGISTRY LEDGERS

These two ledgers were dropped off at the Historical Room in 2014 by an unidentified donor. These appear to be an index to land transactions.

✓ They are stored in flat boxes in the back right corner of the Historical Room:

- 2014-15-001 - Land registry ledger, Berlin 1853 – 1879
- 2014-15-002 - Land registry ledger, Wellesley Township, 1853 – 1881

TAX ASSESSMENT ROLLS, 1854-1889

Waterloo County was incorporated in 1853. 1854 was the first year taxes were assessed and collected by the new County administration. The files are an invaluable companion to other sources. The files have been scanned with the permission of the Waterloo Region Archives and are available on our website at

✓ <https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/tax-assessment-rolls.html>. The files are large and take some time to download, please be patient!

WELLESLEY MAPLE LEAF NEWSPAPER, 1900-1908

The *Wellesley Maple Leaf* newspaper was published in the village from 1900 to about 1927. It was first owned, edited and published by J. W. Green from 1900-1908 who published the paper in conjunction with his printing business. In 1908 he sold the paper and printing business to Herbert Kaufman. While we have a few issues from the later period, there is a complete set of issues of the newspapers from 1900 to 1908 in the Grace Schmidt Room of Local History at Kitchener Public Library. The newspapers were microfilmed by KPL. The originals are very fragile and are not available for research.

In 2015 we digitized the microfilmed copy and created searchable PDF files which are available on our website at

✓ <https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/wellesley-maple-leaf-newspaper.html>

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE - TWEEDSMUIR HISTORY

As the Federation Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) approached its 50th anniversary in 1947, the executive decided part of their celebration should include community histories. In association with Lady Tweedsmuir, the widow of Lord Tweedsmuir (John Buchan, Governor-General 1935-1940) the *Tweedsmuir History Book* project was launched.

We have the Wellesley Women's Institute Branch's Tweedsmuir history. It consists of several binders containing a wealth of information in the form of articles, clippings, photographs and handwritten accounts of current events and issues. These are available for study in our Historical Room.

✓The Wellesley Tweedsmuir History is on the corner cupboard in the back right corner of the Historical Room.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE - MINUTES

The Wellesley Branch of the Women's Institute was founded in 1903. Its early minute books are lost to us, but we do have the minute books from 1919 to 2008.

✓The original minute books from 1919-1994 are stored on Document box K, L, M and N in the cupboards under the display cases.

✓The minutes from 1994-2008 are in Box 48.

The entire set of handwritten minutes has been scanned and is available on our website at

✓<https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/wellesley-womens-institute-minutes.html>

FAMILY HISTORY

There is a family history section on our website ✓<https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/family-history.html> which lists and links to other resource:

- **Published family histories** - stored in the large metal file cupboard.

✓The list of books can be seen here <https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/family-histories.html>

- **Wedding notices** from the Wellesley Maple Leaf newspaper (1900-1908)
✓<https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/marriage-and-wedding-notices.html>
- **Death notices and obituaries** from the Wellesley Maple Leaf newspaper (1900-1908) and other death-related items in our collection such as funeral cards.
✓<https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/obituaries-and-death-notices.html>
- **Wellesley Roots**, a special section on our website for family history information donated by researchers. It is available here ✓<https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/wellesley-roots.html>

DIAMOND JUBILEE HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

This book is a seminal history of the Catholic Church in Waterloo County, 1856-1916. It is out of copyright and there are no restrictions on its use. It available on our website here:

✓<https://www.wellesleyhistory.org/catholic-church-history-of-waterloo-county.html>

WATERLOO HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL VOLUMES

The Waterloo Historical Society has been publishing its annual volume since 1913. We have a small collection of annual volumes, located in the back right corner of the Historical Room.

✓A list of articles relating to Wellesley Township is beside the volumes. We have the all the annual volumes containing articles about Wellesley.

✓A complete list of annual volume article titles can be seen here. <http://www.whs.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/table-of-contents.pdf>

OTHER LOCAL HISTORY RESOURCES

Resource	Website / Source
Waterloo Historical Society	http://www.whs.ca
Region of Waterloo Archives	http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalgovernment/archives.asp
Grace Schmidt Room (GSR) of Local History, KPL	http://www.kpl.org/ref/gsr.html
County and City Directories at GSR	https://www.kpl.org/localhistory/directories
GSR Digital Research Computer	A public computer that contains thousands of digitized records, located in the Grace Schmidt Room of Local History.
Waterloo Region Generations	Contains 360,000 people with over 1,200,000 source citations; a growing site, created by volunteers. Its goal is to create a biographical history of the Region of Waterloo. https://generations.regionofwaterloo.ca/
Ontario Fire Insurance Plans available at UW	https://uwaterloo.ca/library/geospatial/collections/maps-and-atlases/fire-insurance-plans
Ellis Little Local History Room, Waterloo Public Library	http://www.wpl.ca/services/local-history/
Waterloo Chronicle Newspaper	http://images.ourontario.ca/waterloo/search
Mennonite Archives of Ontario	https://uwaterloo.ca/mennonite-archives-ontario/
Waterloo Region Museum	http://www.waterlooregionmuseum.ca
City of Waterloo Museum	http://www.waterloo.ca/en/living/CityofWaterlooMuseum.asp
Township of Wilmot – Sir Adam Beck Archives	http://www.wilmot.ca/en/things-to-do/Heritage-Wilmot.aspx?Township-of-Wilmot-s-Sir-Adam-Beck-Archives-1
University of Waterloo – Special Collections and Archives	https://uwaterloo.ca/library/special-collections-archives/collections/collections-thematic-guides/local-history-and-genealogy
The Eby Book	Ezra Eby collected family histories from Pennsylvania German pioneer families in Waterloo Township, Ontario, and published these as "A Biographical History of Waterloo Township" in 1895 and 1896. http://ebybook.region.waterloo.on.ca/index.html
Waterloo County to 1972: an annotated bibliography of regional history, by Elizabeth Bloomfield, 1993	https://archive.org/details/waterloocountyto00bloo
Waterloo Township Through Two Centuries, by Elizabeth Bloomfield, 1995	Available for purchase from the Waterloo Historical Society http://www.whs.ca/publications/
Waterloo County: an illustrated history. By Geoff Hayes, 1997	http://www.whs.ca/publications/