



ELORA FERGUS ARTS COUNCIL

COMMUNIQUÉ

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Spring 2022

## THE PANDEMIC YEARS

This spring issue of our newsletter reflects a flowering of arts events with the lifting of pandemic restrictions on gatherings. Ever since the Covid-19 pandemic descended on the world in January 2020, theatres, art openings, many small businesses—all have been closed, and it is important to record that here, in our quarterly newsletter which is filed in the county archives.

Some of the events reported in this issue of *Communique* have already passed in time, but it is important to record that, like flowers that remained in bud, they are blooming again.

New committees have been formed to carry previous projects forward and other creative events have met the challenges of the shut down and now remain vibrant, to enrich our arts scene.

There is euphoria, but also a sense of caution.

## ROUND TABLE FOR THE ARTS In Centre Wellington-Autumn 2022

This fall the Elora Fergus Arts Council will convene Arts Roundtables to discuss what we have learned and to develop a united plan of action for our arts community.

In November/December 2020, the Elora Fergus Arts Council surveyed artists and arts organizations and businesses in Centre Wellington to determine how the COVID-19 pandemic was affecting them. The survey reports, posted at our website [www.EloraFergusArtsCouncil.ca](http://www.EloraFergusArtsCouncil.ca), identified a number of shared concerns and needs, some of which predated the pandemic, others which were heightened by it.

Our plan is for the Arts Council to host two separate sessions: one for artists and the other for arts organizations and businesses. Goals of the sessions are:

- 1) to identify the strengths and opportunities of artists and arts organizations and businesses in Centre Wellington;
- 2) to develop strategies to take advantage of these strengths and opportunities and to address the challenges identified by the survey.

We anticipate that the information gathered by the two sessions will be helpful for future planning, developing grant applications, enabling collaboration and cooperation between organizations and advocacy activities. Stay tuned for more information.

## ELORA PLEIN AIR FESTIVAL – May 19th through May 22nd

After a 2-year, Covid-enforced hiatus we are delighted to host our plein air festival in 2022. Thanks to our amazing plein air committee, we are on track for a wonderful Festival. We have 70 artists who will be painting throughout Centre Wellington for the 3 days, including nocturne painting. Our judge, Sam Paonessa, will review all works on display and decide the award winners on Sunday morning. This is followed by our exciting Show and Sale at the Elora Centre for the Arts on Sunday from 2 pm to 5 pm. More details about our Festival are available at: [www.elorapleinair.ca](http://www.elorapleinair.ca)



### \*ADDED VALUE EVENTS HAPPENING DURING OUR FESTIVAL\*

#### Friday, May 20 and Saturday, May 2, 2 pm – 3:30 pm:

Sam Paonessa will be doing painting demos in downtown Elora. We encouraged people to watch, listen, and ask questions as Sam demonstrates the fundamentals of plein air painting.

#### Friday, May 20, 6 pm: Film On A Plate:

In collaboration with our Festival, Sensational Elora is offering a 'Film on a Plate' event on Friday evening. *The Hundred-Foot Journey* will be paired with delicious fare from local restaurants and a complementary glass of wine or beer. At \$35 all in, it is a perfect Friday night event! The location is indoors at the Highland Rugby Club, Fergus. Tickets: [www.sensationalelora.com](http://www.sensationalelora.com)

#### Saturday, May 21, 9 am – noon: Elora Plein Air 'Quick Paint' Templin Gardens, Fergus.

A mini competition in which participating artists must complete their paintings by 11 am. at 11:30 the artwork is available for sale on the spot.

Participants can paint anywhere downtown between the Tower Street and St. David Street bridges. Its great fun to watch the artists work with speed and skill! The judge reviews the works and awards the winner and

#### Saturday, May 21, 2 pm: Elora Fergus Tourism has arranged a free A.J.Casson/ F. Banting Walking Tour;

Hosted by our friends, Older Voices (Al Koop and Gary Bryant), who will take people on a walk around Elora to places A.J. Casson painted. Discover why Casson called Elora *Ontario's most beautiful village!*

### MEET OUR JUDGE: SAM PAONESSA

Sam Paonessa is a professional artist who has enjoyed a creative career spanning over 35 years. He graduated from the Ontario College of Art and was awarded the Canadian Studio Scholarship Award. He was then hired by one of Canada's largest commercial art studios, TDF Artists, where he worked as an illustrator. He subsequently joined Hallmark Cards Canada in the role of illustrator and later art director.

## PROFILE



### Staci Barron- The Elora Pottery

The colourful, hand painted pottery of Majolica was Staci's first love. Traditionally highly decorated, with intricate brushwork on a plain base glaze, Staci met the Majolica tradition in Italy while living in Rome for work in 1994. Weekends in Tuscany, visiting Montepulciano and Montalcino and eating in country homes with tables decorated in colourful pottery, this presented her first inkling that tableware had intriguing possibilities.

In 1995, while visiting Elora and walking down Church Street from Victoria Park, Staci and her best friend from Portugal mused that Canadian pottery should become more colourful. In the midst of this conversation, they casually passed Geof Steven's Elora Pottery Studio. Struck by the liveliness of his designs, they entered, and Staci spontaneously signed up for pottery classes. Then, for three years she came to Elora to learn the intricacies of throwing, firing and glazing pottery, making the weekly journey even after she had moved to Kleinberg.

Staci Barron was born in Kitchener-Waterloo. Her life has seen many moves. She has lived in Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Sarnia, Whistler, Rome, Ayr, Kitchener, St. John's, Canmore and Kleinberg. In all she has had 26 addresses! Some were related to her husband's work as a Hotelier.

Her breakthrough as a professional ceramicist occurred when she moved to St. John's, Newfoundland in 1999. The Craft Council of Newfoundland, through the Department of Trade, guided her to become a successful entrepreneur. They asked how much she wanted to make through her craft. They told her to cost her time. It turned out that each minute of her pottery production would be equal to ten cents for labor not including overhead. They provided money for a brochure, opened grant opportunities and locations for her work to be viewed. They suggested subjects for the majolica paintwork that would sell to east coast clients. For three years the Craft Council brought her pottery to Halifax craft festivals and she developed 25 wholesale accounts from those opportunities.

The family had moved to Canmore, Alberta, when Geof Stevens contacted Staci with an offer to sell his pottery studio, complete with all its assets and living space, in central Elora in 2004. This coincided with a move by her husband to work nearby. What a wonderful opportunity! With their two sons, the family moved east.

Adjustments were made to the studio space. Staci found ways to maximize her output but with a different style. The open production area of the Stevens studio, where Geof could be seen working at the pottery wheel, was walled in for display space, behind which the inevitable clutter of glaze pots and tools and buckets and the large worktable were obscured. A teaching area was developed where the large gas fired kiln had been dismantled. Its firebricks destined for later projects.

Pottery is having a resurgence. Respect for craftwork is rising, Staci has doubled her ceramic sales in the last two years and uses 6 different clays from both Tuckers and PSH, and more recently black clays imported from Spain. Her top two lines of glazing appeal to those appreciating a Scandinavian style, as well as a formal country look called *Snowflake* encompassing a clear gray and white. Also displayed are large Asian inspired Buddha bowls and porcelain dinnerware plates with edges impressed by the grain of wood. Innovative Elora beer mugs are decorated with a descriptive custom stamp Staci designed. Tea pots and mugs with unusual handles display Staci's flair for creative design.



Pottery classes are a staple of The Elora Pottery. They are efficient and remunerative. Staci has developed a way of teaching the centering of clay on the wheel really fast, with excellent outcomes. The class workshops offered are two hours long, during which each participant will each create four pieces of ceramic: two small bowls, a third cereal bowl and a plate. The raw clay of these creations is then left at the studio to dry over the next few days. Staci trims, fires and glazes the pieces before they are returned to the creators, all included in the price of the class.

***Elora has been fortunate to have the community engagement Staci has brought to it. Outstanding are two projects.***

**THE KIPP INITIATIVE:** With the shambles of 2000 dismantled gas-kiln bricks, an idea to build an outdoor community oven came as an inspiration. A pitch to the Township of Centre Wellington, backed by over 50 community members, to build a wood-burning oven in Bissell Park became a reality. Known as KIPP, Staci, along with Trish Van Katwyk, brought the project forward in 2008 to council. There were many years of fundraising encompassing a wide variety of community members. Finally, when they reached \$14,000 in the summer of 2011, the team were able to build a pizza oven and the first bake took place. This site has become an inclusive space in the heart of this agricultural region, facilitating participation, pride and capacity-building opportunities for individuals, families and our community to connect with real food, produced and prepared close to home. Eight public bakes are offered a year, and other firings are scheduled with options for group involvement or sales by participant bakers. Staci says "Our build was truly a gift of the community, with trades people donating their time and energy, securing a fabulous design with the guidance of Lee Elkas". In 2022 a combination of generous recent grants will add a large shelter to the site.

**THE SKATE PARK, ELORA:** It is thanks to Staci's insight that our skate park at the community centre, Elora, exists today. Walking by the site of the Elora Arena, Staci was amazed to see youth who had set up van lights and tables, tipped on their sides in the muck of winter, to make an exciting place for 'snowboarding'. Having volunteered at Portage, the rehabilitation centre at Bon Accord, Elora, she realized the needs of the youth for a dedicated play area. With her community experience of effective promotion, Staci was inspired to bring the idea for a skateboard park to the township council. Designed by New Line Skateparks Inc. it was ultimately located on the south side of the Elora Community Centre grounds, The park is suitable for the activities of skateboards, scooters and BMX bikes.

The Elora Pottery Studio continues to be a cornerstone of tradition in our Elora craft strength. The harmonious board and batten structure on Church Street which is the Elora Pottery Studio is a significant building as well as a quality commercial asset. Its artisan is a vibrant personality who contributes with enthusiasm to the quality and economic vitality of Elora.



Members will receive renewal notices for the annual date on which they join.

## Annual Membership

Application/Renewal

Please print. Make cheques payable to:

The Elora Arts Council,  
P.O. Box 3092  
Elora, ON., N0B 1S0

Or become a Member with payment through our website

[www.elorafergusartscouncil.ca](http://www.elorafergusartscouncil.ca)

- Artist (\$20)  Individual (\$20)  
 Family (\$30)  Groups (\$30)  Youth (\$10)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tel. No: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

- I am interested in working as a volunteer at EAC events or being part of a committee.

These are my particular interests:

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### ELORA FERGUS ARTS COUNCIL EXECUTIVE 2022

Chair: Barbara Lee

Vice Chair: Mary Anne Dalkowski

Secretary: Susan Thorning

Assistant Secretary: Louise Dench Beney

Treasurer: Linda Lane

Membership: Linda Lane

Projects: Melanie Morel

Claudia Lambert, Beverley Cairns

Meetings of the Board generally take place the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30 p.m. Members are encouraged to attend meetings.

For location or Zoom meetings, please phone 519 846-0556.

**Bring us your project proposals**

**BE ASSURED YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME**

## ART IN PUBLIC PLACES

Our exhibit spaces have opened again, after a long period of closure, with the following displays:

### Township of Centre Wellington Council Chamber

May & June: **Outside Of Time: Photography of Sylvia Galbraith.** Physical connections with the landscape have always been important to me; I have a perpetual need to see and feel the ground beneath me, taking comfort in the enduring solidity of the rocks I walk on and the knowledge that time has always meant nothing for the scenes I photograph – water flows, rocks erode, the wind sighs across grass, whether I am there to experience it or not. Within the greater context of geological time, all is as it should be.  
[www.silvercreekphoto.ca](http://www.silvercreekphoto.ca)

### Boardrooms of the Fergus Sportsplex

May and June: The paintings of Peter Skoggard as background projections for the Elora Community Theatre production of Jane Eyre. A tribute to both Peter's talents and the Community theatre's innovative technology. Peter will also be creating background projections for the future production of The Secret Garden. A great opportunity!

**Greg Oakes' law office window-opposite Elora Library.**  
**AS EVER, OUR THANKS TO GREG OAKES FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY**

### Botanical paintings of Anita Granger, Fergus.

Anita Granger holds a B.F.A. Spec. Hons. from York University with a double specialization in Visual Art and Graphic Design. She recently completed her Certificate in Botanical Illustration (with Distinction) at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh, U.K. <http://www.anitagranger.com>

### Studio Tour Participant's Show, Fergus Library

Changes every 2 month. With artist talks, Sept 15-24-28, Oct 3 -4

## INSIGHTS April 8 to June 19, 2022

Exhibited at the Wellington County Museum

### Committee Members:

Natalie McDonald, Chair. Linda Lane, Claudia Lambert

**Jurors, 2022:** Yael Brotman, Linda Carreiro, Todd Tremeer

Every year a dedicated group of volunteers brings together the Insights Juried Exhibition of Fine Art, open to a wide geographic area. The opening night hosted 150 people. The walk with the jury had over 30 people attend.

**WINNERS:** There were 211 submissions and 55 were accepted.

### The Insights Award:

Norman Busse, Guelph: Veils ( Acrylic on canvas)

**Fibre and Material Award:** Miko Henry, Guelph: *Rebel Women* .fabric & wool felt.

**Photography Award:** Sophie Hogan, Elora: *Castle Walk*, photograph

**Works On Paper Award:** Phil Irish, Elora: *Witnesses*: Oil, latex, chalk, construction adhesive.

**Painting and Mixed Media Award:** Sonia Jacyk Bukata, Guelph: *Revelation*. Paper collage.

**Water Media Award:** G.C.Lee, Fergus: *Untitled*: ink on paper.

**Ellen Langlands Award:** Michael Madden, Elora: *Murray's Silos*: Coloured pencils on wood.

**Barry McCarthy Watercolour Award:** Heather McDonald, Guelph: *Puca*, Guache on paper.

**Elora/Fergus Arts Council Award:** Karin Silverstone, Guelph: *Preservation Parkfield*, pencil and plaster.

**3 -Dimensional Arts Award:** Hans Veenvliet, Blyth: *Catching the True Rhythm*, wood and metal, mixed media.

## ART IN THE OPEN

An outdoor self-guided tour was held May 7 & 8 11am to 5pm. with opening reception May 6<sup>th</sup> at Local Pieces Gallery, Fergus. There were 14 artists' works to explore. Now in its second year, this creative initiative was originally an innovative response to pandemic restrictions on in-building studio spaces.

### Participants

**Salem :** David Bell: Wood

#### Elora

Julie Denenney painting  
Carla Drimmie: Jewellery  
Grayce Perry, Mixed media/collage.  
Carolyn Sharpe: painting  
Rick Worthington, painting  
Callie Grey, Abstract painting  
Ruth Lane, Painting

**Fergus:**

Toni daLuca: jewellery  
Patrice Baker; Jewellery  
Jane Bowen :Mixed Media  
Lorraine McDonald:Painting  
Claudia Lambert: Pottery  
Jane Bowen: Painting  
Vera Kassileva: Painting.

## NEW BOOKS BY EFAC MEMBERS:

**Donna McCaw: *Across the Great Divide*.** Her newest novel is set by the ocean and in the gardens, homes and cherry blossom lined streets of Victoria, British Columbia in 2016, pre-Trump and Covid. The writing grew from linked short stories to a full-blown novel. The narrative takes us from the Sacred Cave of loneliness to messy, human connections. Donna has authored six books. It is available at Magic Pebble, Elora, or from the author, [dmccaw3@gmail.com](mailto:dmccaw3@gmail.com)

**Sonia Day: *The Mexico Lunch Party*.** A *Sisters of the Soil Novel*. With Recipes Four older women, all passionate gardeners, from Great Britain, the U.S., Canada and Colombia, meet up in Mexico for fun times and good food. They plan to prepare a spectacular lunch together, with each woman contributing an unusual dish. But when the sex-mad younger sister of one of the group insists on tagging along, things go awry. They get even crazier when a strange, unwelcome guest shows up at the party. The consequences are a shock to them all.

"A lighthearted fun read for lazy summer afternoon."

Sonia has also written eight previous books. [soniaday.com](http://soniaday.com)

**Stephen Thorning: *Manuscript of Elora History*,** discovered in the late historian's study!

Armed with an insatiable curiosity about the village he called home, renowned local historian Stephen Thorning began researching and writing the history of Elora in the late 1970s. Having traced its development as a planned community in the 1830s to its growth as an industrial centre in the 1920s, he set aside the unfinished manuscript over thirty years ago.

The Wellington County Historical Society is publishing this newly discovered, meticulously researched manuscript and needs your help to make it a reality!

To discover how you can help, find the *Wellington County Historical Society (registered Charity for donations)* at <http://www.wchs.ca> or contact:

Kathy Bouma: [kebouma@gmail.com](mailto:kebouma@gmail.com).

## GALLERY MUSIC CONCERT

The Cantabile String Quartet Concert was held among the displays of INSIGHTS, on Sunday, April 24th at the great hall of the Wellington County Museum. It was well attended. This was the only concert of the season due to previous pandemic restrictions. We anticipate a full season of Concerts starting in September through to March 2023. We have missed our wonderful concerts with opportunities to meet the performers in an intimate, salon style setting of audience interaction.

## THE ELORA SCULPTURE PROJECT 2022

Sculptures are being added to 18 sites in Fergus and Elora throughout the month of May. These have come from across Canada, as far away as Victoria! There were 21 submissions, in a wide variety of media. Thanks to the generous local sponsors of this visionary initiative, gracing our streets and green spaces for the 12<sup>th</sup> year, and to the new committee and jury members. ESP is affiliated to EFAC.

### The Elora Festival

Book sale MAY 6-7-8

Curling Club, Elora

### Fergus Fibre Fest

Sat May 28, 9 am. St. Andrew St. E, Fergus.

### Music in The Village:

Festival in the Greenspace, Mill Street, Elora  
July 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24.

### Elora Centre for the Arts The Minarovitch Gallery

'*Everything Connected*', in the gallery until May 15. The *Octarine Women Artists' Collective* has told the story of climate change in this exhibition, with eight artists' works.

***Splendid Isolation:*** Paintings reflecting the pandemic ethos by Eva McCauley

May 26 to July 24th. Revised full colour catalogue available. Opening on May 28th, from 2 until 4 pm. With Celtic music.

### Elora Community Theatre

***The Secret Garden*** by Frances Hodgson Burnett: June 30th- July 3, 2022 at the Elora Centre for the Arts, Elora, ON

### The Taming of the Shrew

by William Shakespeare: August 5th - August 14th, 2022 at Elora Bissell Park, Elora, ON.

### Sensational Elora:

***Film On A Plate:*** Friday, May 20, 6 pm \$35. Highland Rugby Club, Fergus.

Food, Bar, Film: ***The Hundred Foot Journey*.**

A battle in a French village between two restaurants that are directly across the street from each other: a new Indian restaurant owned by an Indian emigrant family and an established French restaurant with a Michelin star owned by a French woman.

### River Fest 2022:

***Take me To The River:*** August 19. 20. 21, Bissel Park, Elora. Tickets available online. 3 day pass \$222. Starts at 3pm each day.

### Elora Distilling Company

**Church Street-7pm. event 8pm.**

May 27: Colin Fox on his life acting.\$20

June 11:Gwen Zwick and Kaitlin Handford

Sing \$28. Tickets include a drink.

Communique is the newsletter of EFAC which has been published regularly since 1985.

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EAC email: [eloraartscouncil@gmail.com](mailto:eloraartscouncil@gmail.com)

**EAC website:**

[www.elorafergusartscouncil.ca](http://www.elorafergusartscouncil.ca)