

Bi Monthly Update

May/June 2022



Photography by Jessi McConnell

President's Message

Clayton Spears | Cottonwood Mansion Preservation Foundation

In my last President's message I referred to volunteerism and in particular focused on the attributes and love for Haldimand County by my longtime friend and associate, Catherine Berry Stidsen. Little did I fathom when I penned this she would be taken from us on the 18th of May, 2022. Catherine epitomizes the very meaning of the word volunteer. Not only did she devote her time and energy to causes near and dear to her, but she stepped up to the plate when monetary issues became an area of concern. Her presence here on earth will have a long range effect on those who had the pleasure of knowing her.

Helen and I personally attest to this fact and we will miss her. I feel the last paragraph in her obituary prepared by Ann Vallentin says it all; "Your suffering has ended, as you fought the battle, ran the race, and kept the faith. Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord."

Not only did the loss of my dear friend grieve me, but Brittany Van Dalen found it necessary to accept an offer from another historic site and while she has worked tirelessly to create a bright future for Cottonwood, unfortunately, it's not yet in the position to offer the wage and hours she justifiably deserves.



Brittany came to Cottonwood at a time when the future of our beloved site was in jeopardy and through her insights, personal hands on efforts, sheer determination and major revamping of the Mansion's interior, there has been a noticeable uptick in enquiries and bookings from folks looking for "special" venues for their weddings and events.

On the bright side, Brittany recommended, and the board accepted, Iona Whatford of Jarvis to assume the vacancy and Brittany has been mentoring her for this position. Also, Brittany has agreed to be available as an advisor on a volunteer basis.

On behalf of your board, as Brittany embarks on a new direction in her life, I wish to extend a sincere thank you to her for coming to Cottonwood Mansion Museum at a time when dark clouds were looming on the horizon and wish her every success for her future. Also, I wish to welcome Iona and look forward to her input and personal support in keeping Larry Hamilton's dream alive.

Clayt Spears, President.



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Past Events

The Garden Fundraiser Event was a brilliant success! Over the weekend of May 28th and 29th guests enjoyed garden themed experiences on Cottonwood's beautiful grounds.

The Bouquet Workshop & Cream Tea provided guests with the opportunity to learn the art of flower arranging through a workshop hosted by Lilac Gardens. Guests were then taken on a historic garden tour to learn about Victorian garden practices and then completed their experience with a house tour and cream tea.

The Garden Afternoon Tea was hosted on the grounds as guests enjoyed the lovely warm air, sunshine, and beautiful harp performance by our local harpist. Guests finished their experience with a historic garden and house tour.

We would like to take this time to thank our incredible volunteers who supported us during the events, Lilac Gardens for hosting the bouquet workshop, Haldimand Museum and Archives for their loan of garden artifacts and of course the guests who attended our weekend events!

Please visit page 5 for a list of upcoming events for 2022!



Updates

Cottonwood has received great news that our application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation's Resilient Communities grant was approved. This grant was created to allow organizations to find new ways to adapt or re-imagine their spaces and programs during and post Covid. Since 2021, Cottonwood has hosted a number of outdoor events that were proving very successful and therefore it was most evident that during and post Covid, offering a proper washroom facility was vital in our hopes to continue to host large outdoor events. Therefore, the funds granted from OTF will go towards the purchase of a full functioning and accessible washroom facility. In other news, Cottonwood was also successful in receiving the Canada Summer Jobs grant and looks forward to hiring a Museum Assistant and Garden Interpreter.

www.cottonwoodmansionmuseum.com
Instagram @cottonwoodmansion



Upcoming Events

Garage Sale

Saturday, June 11th 2022

8am - 2pm

To donate items to the garage sale please contact staff at cottonwoodmansion@gmail.com



Afternoon Tea

Saturday, June 18th 2022

11:30am & 2:30pm

\$55 per person

Pre-Registration Required



Dinner in the Countryside

Friday, July 22nd 2022

6pm

\$60 per person

Pre-Registration Required



Afternoon Tea

Saturday, July 23rd 2022

11:30am & 2:30pm

\$55 per person

Pre-Registration Required

Cottonwood's Classic Car Show

Saturday, August 6th 2022

(Rain date Aug 13th 2022)

9am - 4pm

Car Registration & Vendor Applications now available!

Visit: www.cottonwoodmansionmuseum.com

Message from the Curator

For anyone who attended an event in 2021 or 2022 at Cottonwood you have probably heard Clayton Spears say "This girl played Lillian Holmes during our Murder Mystery events when she was 15 years old". Fast forward to 2020, I did not realize I would then become the Curator of this beautiful historic mansion.

From the very beginning, I saw amazing opportunity and despite the strain caused by the pandemic, I made it my mission to restore the interior spaces of this historic house and create a new brand and image.

Since then, Cottonwood has soared to new heights, reaching over 1,425 followers on Instagram (from the original 430) to 84% increase in event revenue and 70% in rentals. Cottonwood has also symbiotically been able to offer educational and cultural experiences along with setting a new standard in becoming a unique location for special high tiered experiences.

As my time with Cottonwood has ended, I would like to thank the board of directors of Cottonwood Mansion, our amazing supporters, donors, volunteers, my family and friends, and especially Clayton Spears who gave me this incredible opportunity that I will treasure forever.

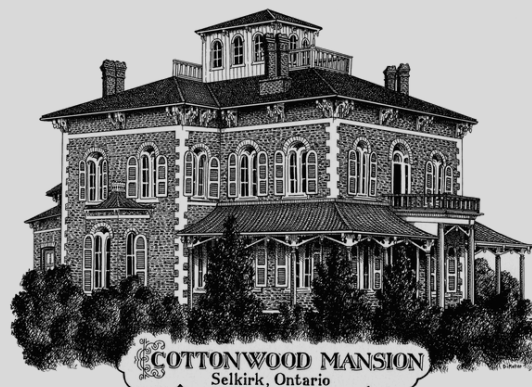
Cottonwood will always hold a special place in my heart and I know it will keep on progressing and becoming an incredible venue and cultural space.



Welcome Iona Whatford!

My name is Iona Whatford and I am honoured and excited to be joining the Cottonwood team. A bit about me: I studied History, Material Culture and Garden History at the University of Toronto, and recently received my Certified Interpretive Guide certification from NAI. I have worked at several museums over the years, but house museums have always called my name.

I fell in love with the beauty and elegance of Cottonwood through attending several events, and began to volunteer with Brittany this year. The Cottonwood team has made such strides in recent years and I look forward to seeing it thrive in the years to come.



Cottonwood Mansion is a proud partner of the
Haldimand Horticultural Society

Haldimand Horticultural Society

**Blooming
on the
Grand**

July 16 - 17

Annual Garden Tour

Hagersville and Selkirk area
<https://www.haldimandhorticulture.com>



A ticket station will be located at Cottonwood Mansion
Museum on Saturday, July 16th for the Annual Garden
Tour event.