

Monthly Update

Cottonwood in Spring 2021



He Had a Dream

Clayton Spears | President's Message

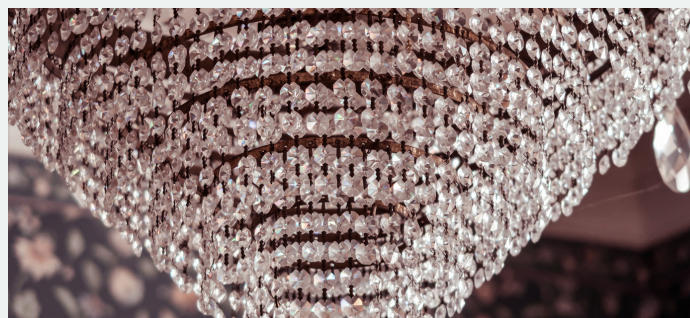
"I wish someone would do something with that old house." These were my comments to Helen every time the two of us drove past the huge derelict home on the Selkirk Town Line. Actually, I had visited the site several times in the late 1960's when Ray and Jean Williams were the owners as Jean and Helen taught school together. The Williams family lived in the servant's quarters and I recall opening the door into the main part of the house on one of my visits. All I can remember about this glimpse was that the dining room was a total disaster with chunks of plaster lying on the floor.

Fast forward to 1988 when along came an American chap by the name of Larry Hamilton (born the same year as myself) who was a descendent of the Hoover family. After purchasing the Mansion, he subsequently invited me to join him in a personal tour and after walking through the house, all I could say to him was; "Larry, you have to be crazy. There is no way you can ever begin to restore the house to its original condition." I will never forget his comeback as he looked me straight in the eye and said; "I will restore this house!"

Obviously I misjudged not only him but the residents of Haldimand County and those who lived beyond its boundaries because the minute Larry started to reach out for support; monetary donations, volunteers, business people and historic artifact donations started to literally pour in. What seemed to be one man's insurmountable dream started to become a reality.

On a positive note, we have been able to offer limited hours to two young ladies who have displayed a love for the Mansion by going above and beyond to not only establish programs, but by working with a professional plasterer and a professional painter who have both volunteered their time and services. Brittany Van Dalen has assumed the position of curator and Cassandra Hutt as her assistant.

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President's Message Continued...

Over thirty years have elapsed since Larry's vision started to unfold and the need for Cottonwood to sustain itself financially is as much of a concern today as it was in the beginning.. This fact has been compounded by the current pandemic. As a result, I am respectively reaching out to each of you for support. The fact that we are able to issue receipts for income tax purposes is one of the perks that we have to offer. The main one of course is the knowledge that your support will help to keep one of Haldimand's "crown jewels" alive for future generations. For further information regarding my comments, please visit our website at www.cottonwoodmansionmuseum.com

Clayt Spears, President
Cottonwood Mansion Preservation Foundation

New President and Staff

Cottonwood Mansion Museum is pleased to welcome Clayton Spears as president as of April 2021 and a big thank you to Richard Hoover for leading Cottonwood thus far. Also new to the Mansion staff are Curator Brittany Van Dalen and Assistant Curator Cassandra Hutt. Both ladies were hired in the Fall of 2020.

Ongoing and Upcoming Projects

Cottonwood is seeing some vital changes taking place around its grounds and within the mansion. Currently, restoration work is being done to maintain Cottonwood's integrity as a historic building as well as ensuring an immersive experience for visitors once we are allowed to welcome you all again. In mid-May, plaster work was completed in the ballroom on the second floor by Caleb Van Dalen. A fresh coat of paint has been applied and the ballroom is now nearing completion! For June, the Music room and lower hall have received plaster repair by Alex Donison who has kindly donated his services.

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The next step in the restoration process will be in painting both lower and upper halls along with the Music room. The anticipated completion date for restoration work is the end of June.



On the Mansion grounds, just in time for summer, Cottonwood is installing a beautiful Victorian garden. The garden will be placed along the side of the house, accessible by a path leading from the main walkway. Mandy Everets Sherk has kindly donated 4 hanging floral baskets for the front veranda which is greatly appreciated!

Current and Future Offerings

As we move into the summer there are new fun and exciting opportunities being offered by Cottonwood Mansion Museum and Partners.

Cottonwood has revamped its membership by providing new categories as well as additional perks which include gift shop and special event discounts. If you are already a holder of a Cottonwood Mansion Museum membership, this update does not affect your already active membership. If you are interested in finding out more about or purchasing a membership please check our website for details!



An online gift shop has been added to the website and offers the most up-to-date Cottonwood merchandise! We are adding new things as fast as we are able to, so please keep checking our social media and website for the latest additions!

Check us out!

Instagram: @cottonwoodmansion

Facebook: Cottonwood Mansion Museum



Three Seasons Ice Cream Parlour in Rainham Centre is running “A Cone for Cottonwood” fundraiser to help support the museum due to the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. \$1 from every cone purchased of Black Cherry or Olde Time Butter Pecan will go towards helping Cottonwood! The fundraiser runs from May 22nd, 2021 to October 11th, 2021. Everyone from the Cottonwood team would like to send a huge thank you to Mandy Everets Sherk and everyone at Three Seasons for their kind generosity!



Cottonwood is pleased to announce that we will be offering In-Person and Virtual Summer Camp programs throughout the months of July and August! Camps start July 5th, with our first in-person camp being Victorian Farm. Camp information and registration is available on our website. Spaces are limited and we encourage early registration to ensure a spot! If you have any questions please send us an email or give us a call, we would love to hear from you!

Outdoor Tours are coming this summer! Beginning in July, pre-booked outdoor tours will be available through our website. Tours run for 45 minutes and have a group capacity of 10 people per time slot. Cottonwood's Outdoor Tour takes visitors back in time to life in Haldimand County during the 19th century. With discussions of forming communities, architecture styles, and how the Holmes family of Cottonwood Mansion operated and ran the estate. Tours are subject to change based on government restrictions and must be booked online in advance. Volunteer tour guides are needed! If you are interested in becoming a tour guide for our outdoor tours, please contact us by email at cottonwoodmansion@gmail.com or apply online!

As Covid-19 progresses and restrictions and regulations change, as will our programs. Please check the website for any updates and changes regarding Outdoor Tours and Summer Camps for Summer 2021.

Thank You

Volunteers and Donors

The work being done to maintain Cottonwood Museum Mansion would not be possible without volunteers, donors, and staff. We want to give a big thank you to Mandy Everets Sherk, Phil Freeman from Lakeside Enterprises, Caleb Van Dalen, Alex Donison, Home Hardware Cayuga, Home Hardware Selkirk, and Grand Erie Home Hardware in Dunnville for all of your kind generosity and services.



If you are interested in supporting Cottonwood Mansion please consider donating or volunteering! Volunteer application forms and donations can be made through our new website: www.cottonwoodmansionmuseum.com