



"Building on the past to forge a prosperous, green, creative and inclusive future"

March 2024 Newsletter Volume 4, Issue 2

FOMOS Welcomes a new Board member!



We are very happy to welcome **Christine McNaughton** on board! Christine has her B.A. Honours in English (Specialization in English Literature and Minor in Linguistics). After years of teaching ESL (English as a Second Language) to international students and newcomers to Canada, she began working as a Digital Strategist for small businesses to larger corporate clients.

Christine is what her local friends call an island import. She moved to Manitoulin Island in 2004 and is passionate about sharing and supporting all things life on Manitoulin-related. Christine believes that a community that supports its members thrives together.

A Word from the President

Greetings to all our members,
Here is the latest news on our undertaking to save this century-old building from demolition.

On March 14, Council voted to allow Friends of the Mindemoya Old School an extension of two years to milestone deadlines in one section of our lease. We had requested changes to these deadlines to give us more flexibility. The lease required FOMOS to obtain \$525,000 for construction by the end of February 2024. Council's response gives us some welcome "breathing room".

We have raised substantial amounts of money but the construction budget, even pared-down, is over \$650,000. We are actively applying for grants from both provincial and federal governments.

Fortunately, we do have many friends! Our partnership with the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO) is definitely a big deal. The mandate of this charity is to preserve historical buildings such as the Mindemoya Old School and the partnership opens many doors that would otherwise be closed to FOMOS. Many foundations only donate to charities, to ensure they retain their own charitable status. Most businesses and individuals also want to donate to charities.

Our friends are terrific! We are deeply grateful to the Douglas A. Smith Family Foundation for their generous contributions totalling \$100,000, and also our many, many individual, family and business donors, especially the Trillium Mutual Insurance Company, TerraStar Building Products, and the following families: the Gervais, Davidson, Palmer, Costigan, and Pettis families, and Norm Morell, who will each have a plaque in the Old School for donating \$1,000 or more. Adding donations and our other fundraising campaigns, like the 50-50 draws and art auctions, we have raised a total of \$190,000. Belanger Salach Architects, the award-winning architectural firm in Sudbury, has been fantastic, providing drawings and budgets to suit the requirements of the government agencies as we apply for different grants.

We have learned a lot. Government agencies do not fund capital projects without a guarantee that the project will be completed by the end of their funding program, which means the applicant must have some funding already in hand before applying. For municipalities, this is not an issue, but for not-for-profits like us, it can be a high bar. The more money we request, the more we must have in hand.

To make the funding more manageable, we divided our project into two phases, starting with the main floor. The idea was to start smaller, with renovations sufficient to open the artists and artisans hub, and quickly start to earn ongoing rental income.

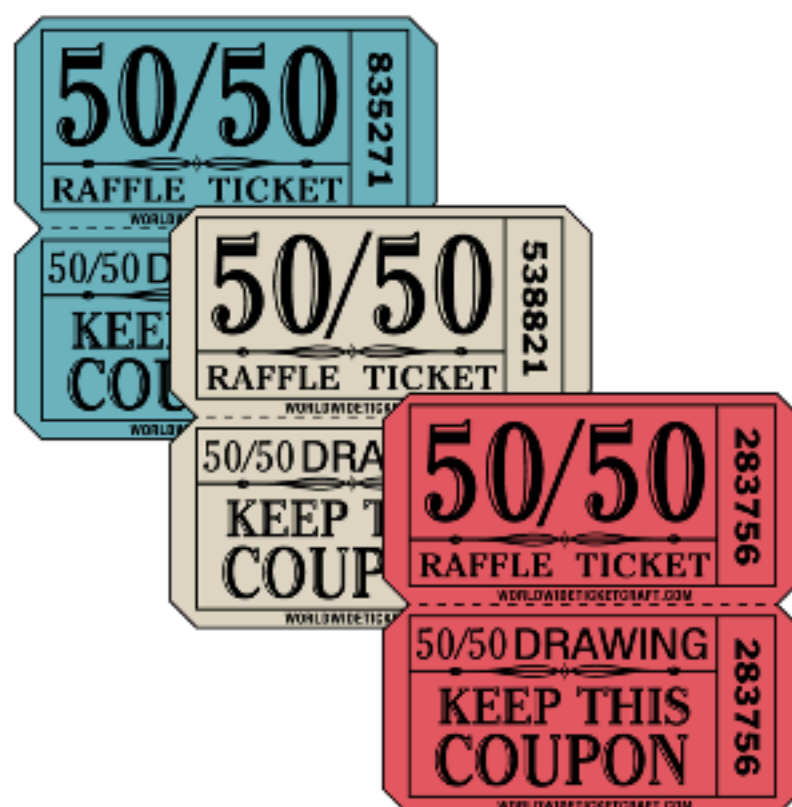
The plan was to secure government funding for this phase in the winter and push for a grand opening in early July. It's now spring. Admittedly, our plans to open the building by summer are fading with each passing day as we wait and hope for approvals. Be assured our very hard-working, very determined Board will find the funding, even if the opening must be delayed. We will apply for funding wherever we can, and we welcome your help. If you can possibly open a door for us, please let us know.

Saving the Old School from demolition is not a frivolous endeavour, it's a worthy, even noble cause because it will benefit the entire community. Our motto, "Building on the past to forge a prosperous, green, creative and inclusive future" says it all.

Best wishes, Jan

Upcoming Events

50/50 Draw

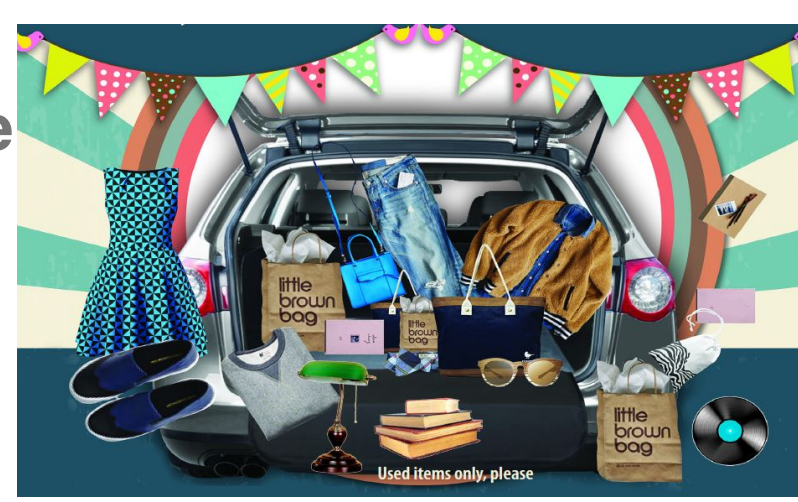


Our fundraising team coordinated by Lynn Quesnel will put these activities together:

People love 50-50 Draws. And they're a great way for us to spread the word about the Old School, to build enthusiasm, and to make money for our cause. Last year many volunteers sold the popular tickets at markets, events and at Foodland in Mindemoya. Our thank-you to Foodland! Thanks also to Williamson's Pro Hardware and Kat's Pet Supplies, who sold tickets for us. All 1,000 tickets were sold and the prize came to \$2,500! This year we'll print more tickets, and the 50-50 Draw will start in May and run until August 10.

Saturday June 22nd: Our annual Yard / Bake / Trunk sale

will be happening. If you wish to sell items, bring your car, pay a nominal fee and sell your items without unloading.



We won't be accepting donated items for the main sale. Again this year we will have some *antiques* for vintage lovers. It's a great time to stock up on home-baked goodies, quirky gifts and maybe enjoy scrumptious homemade chilli.

Birthday Bash & BBQ Celebration



Plans for our **Aug 10th Birthday Bash & BBQ** are starting to come together! Details to follow, but save the date!

We are always in need of **volunteers** for events and our ongoing efforts, so please let us know via email if you have some time to spare.

Missed a version of our previous newsletter? They can be found here

[DONATE NOW](#)

