









Annual Highlights



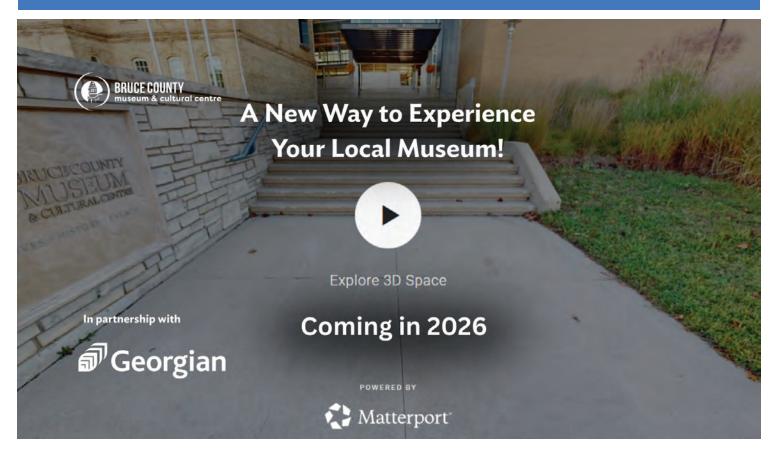
brucemuseum.ca



### **INSPIRING NATURE: BIOMIMICRY AND TRANSPORT**

Summer 2026 - Opens May 14

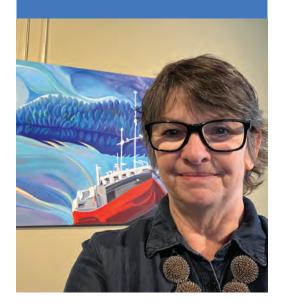
The exhibition is a production of the Museum of Ingenuity J. Armand Bombardier in collaboration with the Musée de la nature et des sciences de Sherbrooke, the Granby Zoo and the Institut de biomimétisme. This project was made possible thanks to the contribution of the Government of Canada.



### THE YEAR IN REVIEW

As we close out 2025, we reflect on a year defined by celebration, innovation, and deepening community connections. This year marked a significant milestone—the BCM&CC's 70th anniversary—and we embraced the opportunity to honor our history while looking boldly toward the future. Our commitment to reconciliation, inclusivity, creativity, and meaningful engagement remained at the heart of everything we accomplished.

Together,
we continue to
celebrate the
power of culture,
creativity, and
community."



Guided by our 2025 Business Plan, we advanced key priorities, including the creation of a Digital Content Strategy which will strengthen our use of technology and innovation initiatives and continued progress on the museum archives expansion plan. Additionally, two strategic priorities that support the Saugeen Anishnaabek Pathway and Action Plan were completed. The archaeology inventory project will support repatriation to Saugeen Ojibway Nation of a long-held collection by the BCM&CC since 1989. The policies review project will ensure museum standards reflect the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Our continued focus on taking action in our reconciliation efforts allowed for deepening of relationships and continued to provide a variety of opportunities for everyone to advance their own reconciliation journeys. Whether it was through the Cultural Demonstrations, Sugarcane, Secret Path and A Sisters Promise film screenings, Residential School Exhibition, Community Conversations, Treaties Recognition Week, Walk for Wenjack, Buffalo Woman Display or the TRC Book Nook, we strive to make learning engaging and accessible for all. We extend heartfelt gratitude to the Saugeen First Nation and Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation community members for their guidance, knowledge, friendship, and support.

This year's programming was vibrant and diverse, and fostered dialogue, creativity, and inclusivity, filling our spaces with energy and purpose. Whether you were taking in a TIFF film, attending a Muse Talks, learning about life in the 160th Battalion or about the Secret Agents of the Underground Railroad, trying a new skill like Pysanky, or joining us for a trip to Stratford — we are glad that you chose to include the BMC&CC as part of your cultural experience.

We have another great slate of programming, events and exhibitions lined up for 2026 and we hope you continue to make the BCM&CC part of your plans as we all work towards strengthening cultural and social connections in our communities.

As we look ahead to 2026, we remain committed to innovation and excellence in service delivery, programming, and community engagement. Thank you to our visitors, members, donors, volunteers, sponsors, and partners for making 2025 a truly remarkable year. Together, we continue to celebrate the power of culture, creativity, and community!

All the best,

Cathy McGirr

Cathy Milling

Director, Museum & Cultural Services

### **EXHIBITIONS**



### For the Birds

For the Birds featured a whimsical collection of custom birdhouses created by 81-year-old folk artist Graeme Chalmers. A lifelong lover of folk art, Chalmers transforms thrifted treasures into brightly coloured, one-of-a-kind homes for some very privileged birds. Presented in the Museum's OPG Gallery, the exhibition delighted visitors with its creativity and charm — and saw twenty of Graeme's unique birdhouses find new homes.

### Realism in Fantasy

Realism in Fantasy marked local artist Yükselle Hassan's second exhibition at the BCM&CC, showcasing her distinctive blend of realism and imagination. Her collection featured vibrant colours, organic forms, and flowing patterns inspired by the natural magic of her surroundings. Each piece reflected the moods and hues of the Great Lakes — the beautiful Sweet Water Sea-Huron and Georgian Bay — as well as the serene romance of Ontario's Muskoka region. The exhibition was well received, drawing an enthusiastic opening crowd and several art sales.

### Alan Weinstein – The Bruce County Collection (Digital Publication)

In 2021, the Museum received a remarkable gift from Canadian artist Alan Weinstein — a collection of 525 works representing the breadth of his artistic career. Recognized for his contributions to the Modernist movement, Weinstein's work holds significant cultural and historical value.

In March 2025, the Museum launched an extensive online publication dedicated to Weinstein's life and works, the result of a yearlong collaboration between Museum and County IT staff. The digital experience features 141 images from the collection and shares Weinstein's artistic journey, while 266 works are now accessible through the Museum's Online Collection, with more to come in 2026.

266

of Weinstein's donated works available for viewing now within Online Collections 141 included within the new digital publication



### **EXHIBITIONS**



### Disheveling! An ExtraordinHAIRY Exhibition

Throughout the summer,
Disheveling! offered visitors a fun,
hands-on exploration of the science
of hair. Through interactive displays,
guests discovered how humans,
plants, and animals use hair in
remarkable and unexpected ways.

The exhibit was produced by the Sherbrooke Museum of Nature and Science in collaboration with Télé-Québec, with support from Heritage Canada, and sponsored by Ontario Power Generation and media partner 101.7 The One.

3,000+

people experienced the Disheveling exhibit this summer.

### Homage: Inspired by Outstanding Canadian Women

This nationally touring exhibition featured a series of framed neckpieces created by renowned metal artist Don Stuart, C.M., O.Ont., RCA, inspired by the remarkable achievements of women who have shaped Canada's cultural and social landscape. Each piece was accompanied by sketches and a short biography that told the personal stories of the woman it was inspired by — from artists and athletes to scientists and philanthropists.

"Loved that you featured jewelry as art and such an extraordinary artist with wonderful insights into his process."

#### —Artist Talk attendee

The exhibition was sponsored by Blair Law Firm and media partner 97.9 The Bruce.

### Kayoshk

This year, the Museum welcomed a significant marine artifact donated by George Heigenhauser—a decked sailing canoe called the Kayoshk, which is now permanently showcased on the third floor. Named from the Ojibwemowin word gayaashk, meaning "seagull," the vessel was built in Wiarton around 1890 and spent her life zipping around Oliphant Bay, sailed by various families and generations, and even claiming multiple Oliphant Regatta titles.

"Everyone enjoyed working on the restoration project and are thrilled that the restoration is well recognized"

### —Wayne Kaufman, Marine Heritage Society, Board Chair

Restored by the Marine Heritage Society of Southampton over the winter of 2024–25, the Kayoshk was showcased at the Artisans & Tastes Friday Market before being installed in time for the Marine Heritage Launch Festival Event in July.

### **EXHIBITIONS**

336

students from school groups across Bruce and Grey County visited the exhibit to learn about Residential School History



### Legacy of Hope, A National Crime: The Residential School System in Canada, Local Saugeen Ojibway Nation Impacts

This exhibition from the Legacy of Hope Foundation looked at the ongoing impact of Residential schools across Canada. The exhibition shared information and personal stories from Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) community members that survived Residential Schools. The exhibition also highlighted Indigenous Excellence, celebrating the important contributions of Indigenous peoples, nationally and locally, across major sectors —from notable actors and artists, to politicians, activists, and leaders.



### Art and Soul: Watercolour and Batik in Harmony

Art and Soul: Watercolour and Batik in Harmony showcased the vibrant work of Hanover artist Bev Morgan, whose distinctive blend of traditional watercolour and Batik techniques captivated visitors throughout the fall exhibit season.

The pieces in this collection celebrated the everyday and the extraordinary alike, featuring everything from intricate depictions of food to sweeping, iconic landscapes inspired by Bruce County.

## COMMUNITY DISPLAYS



In Past natures Press (see Section of Association o

COMMUNITY DISPLAY: TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION DAY

Displays included Buffalo Woman, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), and Truth and Reconciliation Day.

### **COLLECTIONS**

Over the past year, more than 160 artifacts were digitized and added to our online collection, bringing the total number of online objects to just over 3,410. Collections received over 18 donations, comprised of roughly 74 artifacts.



### Nurses Uniform

This Nursing Sister uniform belonged to Annie Mae Ferguson (1890-1976), who was a registered nurse and served with the Canadian Army Medical Corps (CAMC) during the First World War. She graduated from the Stratford School of Nursing in 1916 and enlisted that same year. She was born in Wingham and lived most of her life in Walkerton and Teeswater.

### Paisley

Butter" Trophy. This trophy was awarded to the donor's grandfather, John A. Logie, proprietor of Paisley Creamery, at the Royal Winter Fair in 1928.





### Post office Stamp

This postmark stamp was used by the Harrisburg & Southampton Railway Post Office, which operated from 1897 to 1917 along the Grand Trunk Railway between Harrisburg and Southampton. A postmark like this was used to nullify postage and mark envelopes with information about the date and place at which they were mailed. The interchangeable type still specifies a date of March 25, 1907, likely the last day this stamp was used.

## PROGRAMS & EVENTS

In 2025, the Museum's events and programs offered a vibrant celebration of creativity, learning, and community connection. Throughout the year, visitors of all ages engaged in hands-on cultural workshops, artist talks, film screenings, and family-friendly experiences that brought history, art, and storytelling to life.



NIV MENON-SABERI PROVIDES INSTRUCTION DURING A BAKING WORKSHOP FOR MULTICULTURAL DAY

Artists, filmmakers, and adventurers brought stories to life, transforming the Museum into a hub of creativity, insight, and imagination."

Visitors experienced culture through a variety of hands-on workshops that celebrated global creativity and tradition. Participants learned the intricate art of Ukrainian egg-making and discovered new culinary flavours during the Indo-Persian baking workshop led by Great Canadian Baking Show contestant Niv Menon-Saberi, which filled the Museum with the warmth of shared food and culture.

Film enthusiasts enjoyed a cinematic journey through both Canadian and international stories. In April, the Museum joined communities across the country in celebrating National Canadian Film Day, while the Fall TIFF Film Series brought a global lens to Bruce County with thought-provoking international films. From powerful documentaries to moving dramas, each screening encouraged conversation and reflection on shared human experiences.

Exhibitions came to life through a series of artist talks that offered engaging insights into creative process and inspiration. The year began with Graeme Chalmers, who shared the story behind his whimsical birdhouses crafted from found objects. Later, renowned metal artist Don Stuart, C.M., O.Ont., RCA discussed the muses behind his touring collection Homage: Inspired by Outstanding Canadian Women. Bev Morgan welcomed audiences into her world of vibrant watercolour and Batik with Art and Soul, while Yükselle Hassan explored the imagination and detail behind Realism in Fantasy.

Audiences were transported beyond Bruce County through inspiring stories of adventure and exploration in our Muse Talks series. Photographers Willy Waterton and Audrey Armstrong shared striking images and reflections from their Arctic travels, revealing the beauty and fragility of Canada's North. Awardwinning photographer Sandy Nelson shared her journey into nature photography — a passion sparked by a transformative trip to Antarctica that led her to capture breathtaking wildlife and landscapes around the world. The spirit of exploration continued with the Elora Adventure Film Festival Highlights with lan Evans, celebrating remarkable achievements from adventurers across the globe.



# PROGRAMS & EVENTS (cont.)



Families once again found a welcoming place to explore, create, and play at the Museum. Family Day, March Break, and summer programming offered an engaging mix of nature exploration, science demonstrations, crafts, and storytelling — experiences that encouraged curiosity and connection across generations.

The Museum also continued its commitment to commitment to include Indigenous narratives and culture through programming that deepened understanding and fostered meaningful dialogue. Cultural demonstrations, guided tours, and conversations throughout the year provided visitors with opportunities to learn about Residential Schools, treaty history, and ongoing pathways toward reconciliation. The Walk for Wenjack once again brought the community together in reflection and solidarity, while screenings of The Secret Path and the powerful documentary Sugarcane encouraged audiences to engage with these important stories through film.

In November, Bruce Remembers honoured the 85th anniversary of the Battle of Britain with an insightful presentation by acclaimed historian and author Ted Barris. Drawing from his extensive research, Barris shed light on the often-overlooked stories of Canadian airmen who played a vital role in defending Britain during one of the Second World War's most defining moments.

The Museum has yet to disappoint. You do an amazing job at providing great events...Thank you for what you add to the community."

-Museum Visitor



## EDUCATION & CHILDRENS PROGRAMMING

THIS YEAR, APPROXIMATELY...

**2,000** students

took part in our education programs both onsite and through our Mobile Museum in classrooms.



Across
13
programs

290

teachers and parents



Students experienced hands-on activities, design challenges, outdoors exploration, artifact identification, gallery visits, visual art, and more.

We were especially proud to relaunch our in-person Ancient Civilizations program for the first time since 2019, and to debut our new digital visual art program for grades 9-12, Mining for Gold, complementing the Alan Weinstein digital collection. Summer programming connected with Disheveling! An ExtraordinHAIRY Exhibition through demonstrations featuring objects and natural artifacts made of hair and keratin.

Our digital Earth Week program, Our Power, Our Planet, was presented in partnership with Bruce Power. Students examined renewable and non-renewable energy, climate impacts, and sustainable solutions.

This fall, students had meaningful opportunities to engage with community members from Saugeen Ojibway Nation during discussions in the Residential Schools exhibit and during Treaties Recognition Week programming. These conversations helped students connect local history to ongoing learning about truth and reconciliation.

For six PA days, budding creative minds attended our Maker Day programs. This STEAM-based series had kids designing, experimenting, and creating around themes like Make it for the Birds, Make it Painted, Wearable Wonders, and Make it Move.

We also launched a new Museum Munchkins Concert Series for families with children ages 1-6, featuring performances by musicians Pete Moss, Erik Traplin, and Lauren Best. These high-energy performances followed by themed activity stations were a fantastic way to introduce our youngest visitors to the Museum.



## EDUCATION & CHILDRENS PROGRAMMING (cont.)



Move how much the kids love this program. They are always so excited for the new themes each morning and coming home with their bag of memories at the end of the end."

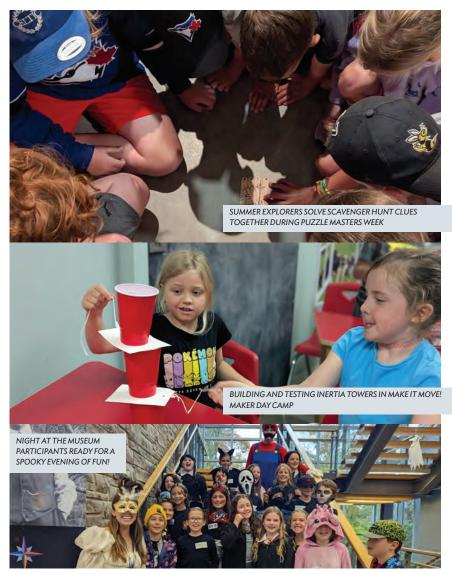
—Parent of Explorers Camper



Four weeks of specialty Summer Explorer Camps brought together children ages 5-10 for action-packed days of discovery, creativity, and fun. Each week featured themed crafts, field trips, games, and special guest appearances inspired by Time Travellers, Treasures of the Deep, Hair-Raising Science, and Puzzle Masters!

LEGO® Fridays were a hit once again, with a new "Ask-The-Expert" feature with LEGO® expert Rankin MacGillivray and his remarkable models, from historic landmarks to spacecrafts and the Southampton Range Light!

Throughout the year, we also hosted popular seasonal and special events including Ukrainian Egg Painting, our annual Easter Egg Hunt, Night at the Museum, and School's Out movie days. Together, these programs and events made 2025 a year of connection, creativity, and meaningful learning experiences for our young visitors.



## ARCHIVES AND COLLECTIONS BY THE NUMBERS

FROM PHOTOGRAPHS TO PHYSICAL ARTIFACTS, OUR TEAMS CONTINUE TO EXPAND ACCESS TO BRUCE COUNTY'S RICH HERITAGE.



46, 935

images are viewable in Online Collections



32,470

items are **described** in Online Collections



13,000

**newspaper issues** are online, newspapers.brucemumseum.ca



8,182

**soldiers** are recognized on Bruceremembers.org



115+

donations of archival materials and historical artifacts were received.



95

boxes of municipal government records were received

66

After seeing all the exhibits, we went into the archives where the Archivist brought out some of the original deeds for a farm owned by my great great grandfather so my son could see them and hold a piece of our family history in his hands."

## ARCHIVES & RESEARCH ROOM (cont.)

#### REFERENCES SERVICES

In the past year, the Archives added over 5,000 item descriptions and images to Online Collections (collections. brucemuseum.ca), including images reflecting many aspects of life across the County, newspaper inventories, organizations' records (such as the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW), Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire (IODE), Grey Bruce Agriculture & Culinary Association, and Women's Institutes), early municipal government records (Brockton and South Bruce areas), church history booklets, genealogy-related books, maps, and more!

Staff directly assisted

1,700+

individuals.

60,000

users accessed virtual resources, including:

Online Collections, Bruce Remembers, and Bruce County Historic Newspapers. The Research Room was redesigned to provide better accessibility and an additional intern/volunteer workstation.

#### DISCOVERING MILITARY HISTORY

April's Archives Awareness Week focused on the value of the Archives' military collection, which reflects the experiences of individuals, families, and communities during times of military conflict. Speaker Kent Kraemer, founder of the 160th Bruce Battalion Facebook page, presented on the lives of 160th Bruce Battalion WWI soldiers, and some of their amazing accomplishments. Following the presentation, a tour featured unique items preserved in the Archives, with information about behind-the-scenes work.

Ten donations of military-themed items were received. Donations continue to be accepted. One excellent donated resource is Jim Kelly's book "Letters from Overseas," a compilation of Bruce County WWI soldier letters published in local newspapers. The PDF version may be read online in Online Collections. Digitization of original military diaries, letters, and photographs continues, thanks to the generous assistance of our volunteers. Visit BCM&CC's Research Information web page for links to these types of military items.

BruceRemembers.org is a resource recognizing veterans with a connection to Bruce County. 80 names were added this year, along with edits to many more soldier profiles.

#### **DISCOVER INTERESTING STORIES**

Archives and Collections added 11 articles to the Stories & Artifacts page of the Museum's website, bringing the total to 121 stories featuring more than 460 images and objects. New topics include 160th Battalion, Nursing Sister A.M. Ferguson, cinema, fossils, the Kayoshk boat, binnacle compass, and Women's Institutes.

#### **GOVERNMENT RECORDS**

Archives intern and co-op student work focused on improving accessibility of County government records, including minutes, bylaws and financial records from the early years of County development, starting in the 1850s. It may sound dry, but these records contain plenty of interesting details! This work also included military references, with letters from the Bruce Preparedness League, Navy League of Canada, Soldier's Aid Commission, and internal memo references to support for the 160th Battalion.



### **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

The volunteer program welcomed 13 new volunteers in 2025. The Museum has 68 volunteers who gave over 3,000 hours of their time collectively this year, working on special events, collections, tours, exhibits, children's programming and archives.

Museum volunteer Muriel Shular was the recipient of the King Charles III Coronation Medal. This distinguished honour acknowledged Muriel's exceptional dedication and outstanding service to the Museum and the broader community through her volunteerism.

The annual volunteer appreciation event was held during National Volunteer Week in April. Several volunteers received recognition for surpassing overall service hours including:

Paul Van Fleet and Ross Robinson 100 hours

Madelene Robinson 200

Joanne Vogel and Muriel Shular 800 hours

Garth Campbell 1,500

Randy Schnarr and Craig Dolbeer were also presented with their 1000 hours of service pin in recognition of their many years of volunteering in the exhibit hall.

**1,000** 

68
volunteers

Over 3,000 volunteer hours

I like giving back to the community, paying it forward as they say, meeting new and interesting people, learning new and interesting things, gaining different perspectives..."

—John Park, BCM&CC Volunteer

If you are interested in volunteering or know someone who might be, contact Matt Smith, Volunteer Coordinator **masmith@brucecounty.on.ca** 



## DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO

#### **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

### 64 COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN 2025 12 SPONSORS IN 2025

Enjoying the museum more and more now....[I] have a yearly pass as I now have time to visit more with my granddaughter. Thank you all for the great work and efforts in providing educational and entertaining events."

—BCM&CC Member

We are grateful to our sponsors and community partners who have enabled us to bring over 18 events and programs to the Bruce County community! Local businesses, service clubs, and organizations stepped forward to help us bring history, art and culture to life. From hands on family events to featured exhibitions, these collaborations ensured our programs remained educational, accessible and engaging for all. In 2025, we welcomed West Wawanosh Mutual Insurance Company as a new sponsor to our list of supporters!

#### **MEMBERSHIPS**

### OVER 595 MEMBERSHIP HOLDERS

In 2025, our membership community grew, welcoming new families, individuals, and supporters who believe in the importance of our community museum.

Members enjoyed exclusive access to exhibition previews, discounts for events, and an exciting members-only Grinch themed dance party. We extend our heartfelt thanks to each member who renewed, joined, or shared their BCM&CC experience with others this year.

Thank you for being part of our museum family!

#### **DONORS**

This year, we were deeply moved by the generosity of donors who made gifts in support of our mission. Their contributions enhanced exhibitions, supported our archives and permanent collections, and ensured our education and outreach programs engaged more students, families, adults and seniors in Bruce County and beyond.

2025 marked another successful speaker's event with over 225 participants in attendance. The event featured a talk by acclaimed Canadian journalist and broadcaster, Anna Maria Tremonti and included a Q&A and photo opportunity. Anna Maria delivered a powerful talk about the commonalities that connect us, the compassion that sustains us, and how these insights have guided her personal path towards growth and change. All funds raised at the event supported the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre's archive expansion.



### **THANK YOU!**

We are deeply grateful to our sponsors, donors, members and community partners who believe in the power of culture and community. Your continued support allows us to preserve our shared heritage and inspire curiosity in future generations.

As we look ahead to 2026, we're excited to grow these relationships and welcome new supporters into the BCM&CC family. Together, we will continue to make a lasting impact – one story, one partnership, and one visitor at a time.

If you're interested in learning more about sponsorship opportunities, membership or ways to donate, please visit us at **www.brucemuseum.ca**. Thank you for your continued support!

## COMMUNITY IN ACTION





#### ADOPT A HIGHWAY PROGRAM

Museum staff participated in Bruce County's Adopt-A-Highway program, a community-driven initiative empowering individuals, families, community groups and local organizations to help keep our County roads clean by removing litter from roadways. Acknowledgement signs were installed at each end of the 2km section of Bruce County Road #3 from Burgoyne to Bartley Sideroad.

### SUPPORT FOR SAUGEEN AMPHITHEATRE PROJECT

After winning the corporate challenge at July's Marine Heritage Festival Cardboard Boat Races, the Museum donated its \$300 prize from the Marine Heritage Society to the Saugeen Ojibway Nation Amphitheatre & Gardens Renewal Project. This contribution supports the renewal of a cherished gathering space at Saugeen First Nation, reflecting the Museum's ongoing commitment to Reconciliation through community partnerships and collaboration.

### **NEW STAFF AT THE BCM&CC**



**Matthew Weickert** *Exhibitions and Collections Curator* 

Thing you like the best about BCM&CC? Our incredible exhibits! We have a great combination of engaging and interactive displays that keep our visitors coming back again and again.

Where are you from? Milton, ON.

Where were you before you started with us? Fanshawe Pioneer Village, London, ON.



**Sydney McArthur** *Program Coordinator* 

Thing you like the best about BCM&CC?
Being new to this area entirely, I love how the
Museum showcases natural history and the current
ecosystems/geology of the region! I am excited to
learn more about that, and Tara the mammoth.

Where are you from? Oro-Medonte, Ontario

Where were you before you started with us? Muskoka Heritage Place, Huntsville, Ontario



**Elizabeth Matthews** Services Supervisor

Thing you like the best about BCM&CC?
The incredible people who work here, the services we provide to the public, and the beautiful location.

Where are you from?

I'm originally from Mexico City, but I've made the Bruce Peninsula my home away from home for many years. Where were you before you started with us? I worked in the child welfare sector for many years at both the local and provincial levels.

### THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 PARTNERS































































































































In 2026, the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre is thrilled to reintroduce Tara the Woolly Mammoth, our beloved mascot and ambassador for curiosity, discovery, and family fun. Tara will be stomping back onto the scene in a big way — inviting visitors of all ages to explore Bruce County's past, present, and future together.

Stay tuned. Tara returns soon.





www.brucemuseum.ca

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