

2023 Board of Directors for the Yarmouth County Historical Society

PresidentRobert M.J.Prince

Robert M.J. Prince was born in Hamilton, Ontario on May 29th, 1956 and has lived in Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. He attended St. Thomas University from 1973-77 and received an Honours Degree in English and obtained a Law degree from UNB in 1980. He practiced law at Hood and Fraser in Yarmouth. In 1986, he was appointed to be Crown Attorney at the Department of Justice. In 1994, he was selected as a Judge of the Provincial Court of Nova Scotia and sat throughout the Province conducting proceedings in French during his 22 years. In 2010, he was the President of the Canadian Association of Provincial Court Judges. He currently lives in Yarmouth County.

Past President, Education and NominationsJohn Sollows

John Sollows was born in Yarmouth and is a seventh-generation Yarmouthian. After graduating from high school, he attended Dalhousie University, where he earned a Master's Degree in Biology in 1976. John was a summer student during the Museum's first year on Collins Street in 1969. He is a life member of the Yarmouth County Historical Society and joined the board in 2005 as Education Chair. John spent most of his working life in aquaculture and fisheries development projects in seven countries in Africa and Asia. He returned to Yarmouth in 2004 with his wife (boss), Nguyen Thi Nhung of Pleiku, Viet Nam. Besides his work with the Society, John is a Director Emeritus of the Tusket River Environmental Protection Association, Secretary of the Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve Association; Secretary of the Nova Scotia Heritage Fairs Society, serves on the Saint Ambrose Refugee Committee, helps others with immigration and settlement issues, and tutors kids, mostly in mathematics.

1st Vice President and HistorigramAnne Sweeney

Anne Sweeney is of Acadian descent. Originally from the Clare region, her grandparents moved to the Yarmouth area where her parents grew up. Anne was born and brought up in Ontario, but the family visited Yarmouth frequently. She moved back to her roots in 1985. She had a lengthy career in the federal government, with over 30 years at Fisheries and Oceans in Yarmouth. Anne is active in the community, including SHYFT, Toastmasters, Yarmouth Write Away Group, and the Kritosophian Club. She is a lover of history and has been the editor of our Historigram newsletter since October 2019.

2nd Vice President and HistorigramJanet Sollows

Janet Sollows was born in Halifax and raised in Dartmouth. She received an Integrated Bachelor of Arts and Education degree from Mount Saint Vincent University. In 1982, she moved to Yarmouth and taught at Arcadia Consolidated School. She is married to Stephen and has three children Jennie, Emily and Steen. She received two Masters of Education degrees from Mount Saint Vincent University (1995 & 2005). She was Principal at Carleton Consolidated and Arcadia Consolidated Schools. She retired in 2015. Janet is active at Beacon United Church serving various roles on various committees. In 2018, she graduated from the Atlantic School of Theology with a Certificate in Theological Studies. She is now a Licensed Lay Worship Leader with Region 15 of the United Church of Canada (Nova Scotia and Bermuda). She is secretary for the Division of Ministry Resources for Region 15 and secretary for the United Church Camp Meeting Association (Berwick Camp). She is also a Board member of YACRO. Janet is a member of the Kritosophian Club and plays recorder

with the Accidental Consort. She volunteers at the front desk of the Yarmouth County Museum. In her spare time, she enjoys making crafts and selling them at craft fairs.

Treasurer and FinanceMary Eldridge

Mary Eldridge, a life member, joined the Board of the Yarmouth County Historical Society in 1986. She has been treasurer since 1990 and has served as Finance Chair, Membership Chair and serves on the personnel committee. During 1997 to 2001 Mary was co-chair fundraising for, and administered, the \$2.4 million museum expansion. Mary has spent most of her life volunteering on many local boards in Yarmouth and in Halifax, currently with the Old Ladies Home Society, Yarmouth Public Library, Yarmouth Area Community Fund, Community Foundation of Nova Scotia and the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth. For her volunteer work she has been honoured by St. Francis Xavier University, the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth, and received the Governor General Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers.

Assistant TreasurerShawnda Parnell-Shaw

Shawnda Parnell-Shaw is a native of Yarmouth, NS. During her time at Dalhousie University for her bachelor's degree, and for several years after, she worked in tourism which she thoroughly enjoyed as she got to promote her hometown. After living in Halifax for over 10 years, she married and moved back to Yarmouth County where she lives with her husband, Kendall and their son, Duncan. She has worked in the financial industry since 1996 and has served on a variety of boards including the Big Brothers/Big Sisters board for over 20 years. Shawnda's keen interest in history began at a very young age with the telling of her Parnell grandparents' love story. They met during World War II when her grandfather was stationed at the Yarmouth Airport for RCAF training and were subsequently married in July 1945, bringing the first Parnells to Yarmouth. Also, her great-great-grandfather, Henry Doane, was one of the people killed in the Halifax explosion and her family still has the last postcard Henry wrote to his wife, Etta, discussing what they should get their son, Leslie, for Christmas. Leslie went on to be a well-known member of Yarmouth Town, as he was the bandmaster of the town band. Shawnda has been a member of the Yarmouth Historical Society for many years.

SecretaryGrace Amirault

Grace Amirault was born in Yarmouth, NS and raised in Ontario. Retiring in 2017, she returned to Yarmouth and began to actively explore her Acadian heritage. This led Grace to volunteering with the Yarmouth Historical Society, thus following in the footsteps of grandfather Simon Amirault. Grace is a Veriditas labyrinth facilitator and certified event planner. She founded Path Adventures in 2014 to host and teach labyrinth walks and events. Grace has more than 20 years' experience in event planning, including Christmas in the City (Ottawa and Kanata, ON), Kanata Seniors Centre, and week-long labyrinth retreats held at Mavillette, NS. Grace holds diplomas from Algonquin College in Recreation Leadership and Executive Secretarial Studies, and has certificates with the QC Career School Event Planners course as well as the Avalon Mystery School in Sacred Magical Arts.

Assistant SecretaryCharles Webster

The Rev. Charles M. Webster is a Yarmouth native from a family with long-standing ties to the medical profession. He is Grandson of the 2nd President of this Historical Society, Dr. Charles A. Webster. His strengths and interests were never the sciences but History and Theology. He Graduated from Mount Allison University with his B.A and

Major in History. He received his M.Div. from Emmanuel College U of T and initially ordained by the United Church of Canada and in 1991 received into the Reformed Church in America, the church the Dutch Loyalists left when they came to Tusket. He spent 10 years in Saskatchewan and worked towards an Education Degree at University of Regina in the early 1980s. He returned to Nova Scotia in 1985 serving the United Church's Port Mouton Pastoral Charge near Liverpool in 1985 and was a Member of the Queens County Historical Society. During 1993 -94 he taught Communicative English for the Hungarian Reformed Church in Romania, and in north-east China from 1997-2000 as a Mission Volunteer. He returned home in 2000 and became a Member of this Society shortly thereafter. He is intricately connected to the Doctor's Office in the Museum.

Gift Shopvacant

Historic SitesMichael Cunningham

Michael Cunningham joined the Yarmouth County Historical Society in 2004 and became a member of the board in 2018. Mike was born in Yarmouth and his family first settled in the area around Cape Sable Island in 1785. In 1978 Mike graduated from Dalhousie University with a Bachelors of Science (major in psychology). Mike retired in 2018 after a 38 year career as a commercial pilot, the last 22 years of which was spent as an aircraft accident investigator with the Transportation Safety Board. During his time with the TSB he became a specialist in the investigation of Human Performance and Organizational Error. The last 10 years of his career he was the TSB Atlantic Regional Manager for air investigations. In 2011 Mike received the TSB's Excellence in Investigations award for his leadership as chief investigator into the 2009 crash of Cougar 91, a Sikorsky S-92 offshore helicopter in the waters off St John's NFLD. Herbert Cunningham, Mike's grandfather, was chief Light-keeper at Cape Forchu Light Station between 1922 and 1952. His historical interests and research experience includes: lighthouses of southwestern Nova Scotia; Yarmouth in WWI; Yarmouth shipping and fishery history.

MembershipSeamus Murphy

Seamus Murphy is a Yarmouth native whose interest in this county's history was ignited when working as a summer student in the museum for two years. Seamus returned to the area in 2018 and works as the managing lawyer of the Yarmouth office of Nova Scotia Legal Aid.

Pelton-Fuller HouseSusan Winship

Susan joined the Yarmouth Historical Society in 1993 and immediately volunteered for the Costume Department. She is presently the head of the Department. When the Pelton-Fuller House became a part of the Museum in 1995, Susan became a committee member and later, after Audrey Kenney stepped down, Susan became the chairperson. Susan is also on the Ways and Means Committee and a Board member. Though born in Liverpool, N. S., Susan has always lived in Yarmouth, which is her Ancestral home. Her people came as Planters and Empire Loyalists. Susan has always had a passion for history and the Museum is the perfect fit.

ProgramsDavid Sollows

David Sollows is an eighth generation native of Yarmouth County where he developed an interest in local history early in his life. For five summers he worked as a summer student at

the Yarmouth County Museum before working in the field of education. Following his studies at Acadia University, he returned to teach in Yarmouth and later served as principal at Milton School, Central School and Meadowfields Community School. He has been a Pre-Service Teacher Advisor for the University of Maine at Presque Isle, Mount Saint Vincent, St. Francis Xavier, Acadia University and Cape Breton University. He is a past president of the Yarmouth County Historical Society and currently Program Chair. He has served as a volunteer on the Community Health Board, is now chair of the UNESCO Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve Association, a member of the Yarmouth Communities in Bloom Committee, Secretary to Beacon United Church Council and the Congregational Church of Chebogue Preservation Society, Vice-Chair of the Starlight Development Society, Board member of 100 Guys Who Share Yarmouth and a charter member of the Yarmouth Shantymen. He is interested in all aspects of Yarmouth's rich history and the people who made it the community it is today.

House Kenneth Cleveland

Ken joined the Historical board in 2020. He was born and raised in Yarmouth and “semi-retired” back to Cape Forchu in 2019, after a career mostly as an electrician with the last 23 years at a Toyota factory in Ontario. He started a retirement career at Southwest Lobster Science Society as project manager. Besides raising a family, he’s been involved in various organisations. His full-time job is the large drooling St. Bernewf puppy you'll see leading Ken around, Frankie, who demands most of his time. His father, Paul Cleveland, was instrumental in creating the Firefighters Museum in Yarmouth, and also a keen railroad history buff.

Publicity/PromotionCandice Phibbs

Intending to stay in Yarmouth for just one year, Candice fell in love with life by the sea and has called Yarmouth home since 2010. Prior to 2010 Candice was born and raised in Waterford, Ontario. She attended post-secondary education for media broadcasting and clinical nutrition which led her to a position with Nova Scotia Health.

Candice works in various capacities in the region including a position in clinical nutrition with Nova Scotia Health, as an on-air personality with local radio station Y-95 CJLS and co-owns an event production company Mile East Productions. Since her relocation Candice has immersed herself in the community and done her best to learn about the rich history of the region. In 2016 Candice began offering walking tours to locals and tourists on various topics surrounding Yarmouth's history. The Yarmouth County Museum & Archives was an integral piece in the research to put together these tours which have become a five-star rated attraction in the Yarmouth & Acadian Shores region.

Outside of her work activities you'll find Candice walking with her dogs, working on various community projects or enjoying a meal at a local restaurant or cafe. Yarmouth may not be where she was born but she is proud to call Yarmouth home.

PublicationsDebra Amirault Camelin

Debra Amirault Camelin is an author and poet with Acadian ancestral roots in Pubnico and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. Her first novel, “Nathalie: An Acadian’s Tale of Tragedy and Triumph” (Ronsdale Press) tells the love story of her 4th great-grandparents who were teenagers during the expulsion of the Acadians. As a poet, Debra is published in numerous anthologies and won prize money for several poems. In 2019, she released a self-published

book of poetry, "Light in the Mist," (a Baret Days book). Debra is currently associated with Path Adventures, an organization that promotes walking labyrinths as a meditative and spiritual tool. She has a Bachelor of Journalism degree from Carleton University in Ottawa and more than 30 years of experience working in the area of adult performance and learning for both public and private organizations.

Ways and Means/HospitalityGertrude Sweeney

Gert, as she is commonly known, is of Acadian descent and moved to the Yarmouth area in 1977. A retired nurse of over 40 years from Yarmouth School of Nursing, she worked at Yarmouth Regional Hospital and Family First Medical her entire nursing career and as clinical instructor for nursing students. She is a serving Sister of St. John Ambulance and was an instructor for many years. Gert started volunteering at the age of 13 in her home town and has continued to present day. She first worked at an antique and quilt shop and loved the history surrounding each article that passed through her years there. Saving the Cape Forchu Light was her main passion and served several years on the Board of Friends of the Yarmouth Light Society. She has been on the Historic Sites Committee of YCHS for the last 4 years and enjoys the historical connection of the Yarmouth Area. Gert has been instrumental in her own community of Cape Forchu with many projects including, The Litter Ladies.

Member at Large Livinus Numfor Nkwenti

Livinus Numfor Nkwenti obtained his undergraduate degree in Biochemistry in 2007 from the University of Buea, Cameroon. After that, he taught high school Biology and Chemistry for 5 years before he immigrated to Canada in 2012 via the Quebec Skilled Workers Program. From 2012-2013 he did odd jobs in order to acclimatize himself to a new country and environment. He completed a Food Security Certificate Program at Ryerson University in 2014 and has a Master's in Public Health with a major in Health Promotion and minor in Epidemiology from the University of Guelph, Ontario. He returned to Cameroon after graduation where he did volunteer work in mass immunization against Poliomyelitis. In 2018, he returned to Canada where he began working part-time as a health promoter in a Smoking Cessation Clinic. In June 2019, he accepted the position of a Health Promotion Specialist with Mental Health & Addictions with Nova Scotia Health Authority, where he currently works in the Tri-County of Yarmouth, Digby and Shelburne to promote positive mental health and reduce harms for substance use and gambling in the community.

Member at Large.....Kendall Shaw

Kendall Shaw is a native of Sandford, NS where he still lives with his wife and son overlooking the world-famous smallest drawbridge. He is from a long line of lobster fishermen, and he was also a lobster fisherman until his retirement. He is enjoying his retirement with gardening, building a chicken coop and wrangling the chickens as well as home renovations. He has always had an interest in history which began with the experiences his father shared such as, seeing the airships flying overhead and hearing the noise from the German U-boats overnight. As well, his father witnessed the launching of the Bluenose II and the movie ship the Bounty. Kendall's grandfather witnessed the lights of the Shag Harbour UFO event while he was out fishing. Kendall has been a member of the historical society for many years.

Honorary MemberBill MacConnell (Bio not available)