

THE WACO INFORMER

QUARTERLY



DELEGATION TO QUINTE WEST COUNCIL

On 19 March 2025 WACO delegation presented to Quinte West Council with an overview of the Wooler Schoolhouse Project highlighting plans to renovate the historical building and return it to community services. WACO also asked Council to consider putting in place a program to provide property tax relief for groups maintaining a heritage property such as The Wooler School. Council voted to support the proposal, asking city staff to examine putting in place such a program in Quinte using guidelines provided by the Province of Ontario. Many thanks to the WACO members who attended to support our presentation:

Pictured Left to Right: Kelsey Powell, Jeanne Powell, Brenda Adams, Doug Adams, Laird Nelson, Bob Lawson, Jerry Osborne. Missing from photo: Heather Bonsell, Lindsay Wilson, Scott Pennington

WACO APPROVED FOR FEDERAL GRANT

On 22 March 2025 WACO received a letter from the Federal Minister for Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, the Honourable Nathaniel Erskine-Smith announcing that The Wooler Schoolhouse Project was approved for a \$1,000,000 grant under the Government of Canada's Green and Inclusive Community Infrastructure Program. The grant will support the renovation including the modernization of its building and energy systems and the addition of an elevator and new exit to bring the building up to modern safety and accessibility standards. WACO will work with the program over May and June to put in place a funding agreement through which 80% of eligible renovation costs will be paid by the Federal government.



WACO BUILDER MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

SINCE LAUNCHING THE WACO BUILDER MEMBERSHIP DRIVE IN THE LATE FALL, OVER 80 PEOPLE HAVE SIGNED WACO MEMBERSHIPS. WACOS GOAL OF HITTING 100 MEMBERSHIPS BY JUNE AND 200 BY DECEMBER IS GETTING CLOSER. HELP US HIT OUR GOAL AND SIGN UP BELOW!



<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfgt02yZLcRPNllvfwvUOsRDHF3scA-4Dp7l5yrqHL2uYzYLQ/viewform?pli=1>



JOIN US FOR OUR FIRST OPEN HOUSE

The Wooler and Area Community Organization is holding an Open House at the Wooler Schoolhouse.

Our goal is to encourage residents from the area and abroad to come tour our building, hear about renovation plans and offer ideas for programs and other future uses for the building and its property.

- ❖ 62 County Rd 5
- ❖ Saturday June 7
- ❖ 9AM-4PM

A SPECIAL THANKS

WACO Volunteers move Renovations Forward

Until building permits are in place we have been focusing our efforts on minor repairs, cleaning and painting the Schoolhouse interior. A huge thank you goes out to the brave crew who worked throughout the winter on the main floor which is now over 90% completed: Jerry Osborne, Kelsey Powell, Scott Pennington, Jeanne Powell and Bob Lawson. Also: thank you to Chris Rose, Laird Nelson and Scott Pennington who braved the crypt-like cold in the building to fix the lighting and install temporary heating which allowed the work to continue without freezing our volunteers.

Thanks to the many WACO volunteers who, to date, have invested over 700 hours in restoring the interiors of the schoolhouse and cleaning up the property around the building.



SCRAP METAL DRIVE A SUCCESS!

Thanks to the many donations from the community, WACO raised well over \$1000 through its spring Metal Recycling efforts. Huge shout out to the team that moved and packed all the metal into the 40-foot recycling bin on May 10- Laird Nelson, Dale Nelson, Bob Lawson, Greg Moran, Jose Sierra, Kelsey Powell and Scott Pennington.



HISTORIC BITS

The Creeks Cole or Cold Creeks

Written
by: Dianne
Brearley



Photo of trout fishers Cole Creek taken by D.S. Austin. Standing second from the right William Bell and third from the right Nicholas McColl, possibly late 1890's.

The Creeks
By Dianne Brearley

From the beginning the kids in Wooler never had a community centre with a hockey arena or a swimming pool. They were not deprived, however: they had something better. They had the creeks.

Wooler has two creeks, Cold Creek, a relatively deep and fast moving stream and Dead Creek, a tributary so called because it often almost dried up in the hot summers. When I was a kid at the beginning of the fifties, we called them "cricks" until our teacher, Mr. Tompkins, told us that was an illiteracy and they were "creeks". It was a good place to find painted turtles. We loved to pick up these gentle creatures, not to be confused with the fierce snapping turtles, and admired the beauty of the markings on their shells. We sometimes brought them up to the house and put them in the water trough under the pump in the backyard. We piled up stones so they could climb out. They humoured us, and when our backs were turned, they took off in the direction of the creek.

When I was searching for photographs taken by my great grandfather, D.S. Austin around 1900, I found several. The oldest one (above) dating from the late 1800's, shows ten men, a boy and a dog with a string of trout. I recognized two of the men: my great grandfather William Bell second from the right and my great great grandfather Nicholas McColl third from the right. The label says "Trout Fishers, Cole Creek, Wooler. For some time I thought D.S. had made an error writing "Cole" instead of "Cold".

Recently, however, a relative of the Cole family told me that she had heard the creek was originally named "Cole" possibly because the Cole family, who were early settlers, had farms on Old Wooler Road. Her grandfather was Caleb Cole and his farm was at the junction of Old Wooler Road and Lord Road next to the old Hennessy home. The Cole family homestead was about a mile west down the road from his farm, opposite the Catholic Cemetery. The homestead is now torn down but after her great aunt Zoa Cole passed away in the 1970's, it was the site of a Buddhist retreat for many years. At some point the name of the creek was changed to Cold Creek.

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<https://woolercommunity.org/>

About: The Wooler Informer is brought to you by WACO

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Photo credits: Lindsay Wilson