

# Perth and District Historical Society

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Perth and District Historical Society - News Release – June 2024

## **The Perth and District Historical Society June 20, 2024 Meeting: Library and Archives Canada – Collections & Resources**

The Perth & District Historical Society's last meeting for the season on June 20, 2024 takes us to the world of Canada's own repository of Canadian history – Library and Archives Canada. And from this world, we introduce Rian Manson, Smiths Falls own railway historian and train enthusiast.

Library and Archives Canada (LAC) is a must see for the local historian, genealogist, or anyone who is interested in researching history whether it be local or national or family-oriented in scope. This presentation will explain how LAC works and show how to navigate through the collections and order material. We will then explore two collections that have a deep connection to the counties of Lanark and Leeds & Grenville.

First, Merrilees Collection of transportation-related records: Andrew Merrilees was an avid collector of anything Canadian-related to railways and marine transportation. This collection, including records of the Rideau Canal, is the largest single private donation of material at LAC. Second, the CN, the largest company collection at LAC: This contains records from across Canada and throughout the world dating back to the 1820s. Over 300,000 boxes of material, this is an ongoing processing project that is making previously inaccessible material available.

Our guest for this meeting, Rian Manson, is a railway historian and archival assistant at LAC. He has extensive experience in museum curatorial, conservation, and archival departments in institutions such as the Museum of Science and Technology, Canadian Aviation Museum, and the State Museum of Technology and Work in Mannheim Germany. Published works can be found in a variety of railway publications as well as the Smithsonian Institute of Scholarly Press. Notable projects are: Railway research which includes locally, the CPR in Smiths Falls, the former Canadian Northern Ontario Railway line between Ottawa and Napanee, and the Brockville and Westport Railway; Co-authoring of an academic paper on Indian steam locomotives built at the Kingston Locomotive Company; Archival material from the Science and Technology Museum for a documentary on CPR steam locomotive #1201 awarded the Carleton University's Frank Underhill Prize for best documentary; A published LAC blog on the Dominion Bridge Company's shipbuilding activities during WWII.

Reflecting back over the past season our presentations have given us an interesting variety of topics and we look forward to new, intriguing and interesting guests for the next season. We are very fortunate to have guests who are willing to share their own interests and passions with us, each taking the time to prepare their presentations.

The Perth and District Historical Society is dedicated to learning about and popularising our history and is a forum for discussion and celebration of our area's rich culture and heritage. The meetings are held the third Thursday of the month and are open to the public, at 7:30 pm at the

Royal Canadian Legion, Perth-Upon-Tay, Branch 244, home of the Hall of Remembrance, 26 Beckwith St. E. in Perth. The usual “Toonie Fee” applies for each meeting. For information, contact Ellen Dean at 613-264-8362. Our website at [www.perthhs.org](http://www.perthhs.org) has additional information about us and items of interest related to Perth and district.

*Article submitted by the Perth and District Historical Society*