

Committee to Establish a Middlesex County Archives

OFFICERS

Chair – Carol Small
proposedmiddlesexcountyarchive@gmail.com

Secretary – Bev Hughes

Archivist –Carolynn
Bart-Riedstra

MEMBERS

Ekfrid Community
Museum

Glencoe & District
Historical Society

Komoka Railway Museum

London & Middlesex
County Branch, Ontario
Genealogical Society

London & Middlesex
Historical Society

Lucan Area Heritage
Society

Middlesex Centre
Archives

Middlesex Centre
Historical Society

Mossley Post Heritage
& Citizenship Society

Strathroy Historical
Society

Wardsville Historical
Museum

Westminster Township
Historical Society

Representatives from all
Middlesex Communities

What Is An Archives?

The word “archives” is taken from the Latin word *arca*, which originally means a place to store things, a box or a chest. ¹

“Archives” can also be interchanged with “archive”. This is the singular noun used by some archivists but also by IT people for computer storage. There continues to be discussion about which word is correct, but given that multiple collections of records are stored in a physical building, the term “archives” is most common.

The word “archives” can be mean several things.

- It can be the **physical place or institution** that stores the records for corporation, community or culture. Archives provide the records to help politicians and corporate entities remain accountable to their constituents by providing access to records that document governing body decisions.
- It can also be the **collection of records** that are kept for cultural, historical or even intrinsic value. Archives document cultures, societies and communities and may even include personal records. Records that are saved include those that have fiscal, operational, legal, informational and/or administrative value to the organization or society. When records are scheduled for destruction following a Records Retention Schedule, some records may be retained for their historical value instead of destruction. This indicates that the original administrative value, or the reason the records were first created, is no longer necessary but research or historical value becomes more important.
- It can also be the storage space where records reside. The verb **“archiving”** is from the IT definition of archives which identifies storage space – whether on the cloud, servers, or other electronic formats. It does not directly relate to the actual documents. “Archiving” is also the process of working with the records to ensure they are accessible.

A Middlesex County Archives would incorporate the plural form of archive and would include multiple collections of records – including government and personal.

¹ Richard Pearce-Moses, *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*, Society of American Archivists.