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# The Enoch Turner Schoolhouse Foundation

*Celebrating Enoch Turner's vision of free schooling for all!*

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## 2025 Annual Report



### **Enoch Turner Schoolhouse 1848**

Owned and Operated by the Ontario Heritage Trust  
Supported by the Enoch Turner Schoolhouse Foundation  
106 Trinity Street, Toronto, Ontario M5A 3C6

[www.enochturnerschoolhouse.ca](http://www.enochturnerschoolhouse.ca)

Charitable Registration Number 11927 286

# Message from the Chair

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Beer and schooling are a surprising combination but when a school opened on Trinity Street in 1849, it was built and paid for by local brewer Enoch Turner. Turner had made his money from the brewing and sale of ale in Toronto, a thirsty town of 30,000 people. The school opened its doors to the children of the working poor, offering free basic literacy to those otherwise neglected by Victorian society. It was the first free school in Toronto and uniquely funded by its beer-drinking residents.

Over 175 years later, the Schoolhouse stands and we continue to honour Turner's generous gift of schooling. Since the restoration of the Schoolhouse in 1971, thousands of school children have experienced a lesson as it would have been taught in the 1850s and gained appreciation for their ready access to learning today.

This remarkable achievement is due to the big-hearted support of directors, members, donors and community leaders, and more recently in partnership with the Ontario Heritage Trust. We have benefited from the expertise and commitment of Foundation directors along with the guidance of Joe Martin, Chair of our Advisory Board. Their guidance on financial sustainability, strategic development, and community outreach is critical to the progress we have made toward our goals. Miriah Bough, our administrator, who works with us to create special events, to support virtual programming, to engage with social media and to manage the website, plays a vital role. My deep appreciation goes to the leadership team at the Ontario Heritage Trust and in particular to Erin Mander, Toronto Sites Coordinator, for her support and enthusiasm for our work. It is most encouraging.

Dr. Paul Axelrod, our consultant on the history of education, generously supports our goal to keep alive Enoch Turner's vision to give the needy children of Corktown a better future. Paul has coordinated five outstanding public programs on the current state of schooling, keeping our mission relevant and meaningful.

With the strategic guidance of the Chair of the Advisory board, the generosity of donors, the leadership of our board members and the support of the Ontario Heritage Trust, we can continue to achieve our goals.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynne Kurylo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lynne Kurylo  
Chair of the Board

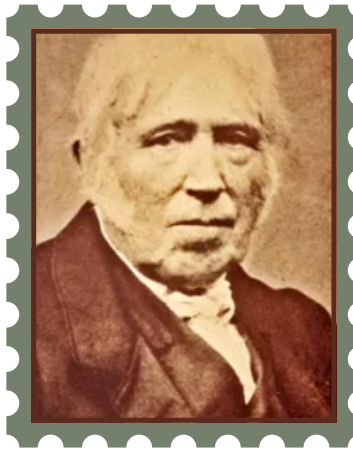
# Vision, Values and Goals

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Our **Values** are Canadian history, heritage preservation and community engagement.

Our **Vision** is to make the story of the beginnings of free schooling accessible to all.

Our **Goals** are to promote awareness of the struggle for universal access to public education, use donations to fully fund the school visit program, present public programs for information and discussion, engage the community in supporting heritage preservation and celebrate Enoch Turner's enduring gift of schooling to the children of Corktown.



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## Board of Directors 2025

### Chair

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### Treasurer

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Melissa GORDON

Irene BAKARIC

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Miriah BOUGH

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## Advisory Board 2025

### Chair

Joe MARTIN

A. Charles BAILLIE

Henry N.R. JACKMAN

Jim LEECH

Lynton R. WILSON

# 2025 Highlights

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## *Financial*

Thanks to the generous donations of charitable foundations and individuals, we funded admission fees to the Victorian school day program for the hundreds of school children who attended. We were also able to engage in audience development by hosting social events and presenting accessible public events to inform and engage the community about history and heritage.



## ***Ontario Heritage Trust Report from Erin Mander***

The Enoch Turner Schoolhouse welcomed 6 school groups (263 students) in the 2025-26 fiscal year. In Mrs. Henderson's Classroom remained the most popular program, and nearly all field trips included two or more classes. The schoolhouse also hosted several tours. Overall attendance is down in large part because of school board budget constraints, specifically in regards to securing transportation to/from the Schoolhouse.

The Trust supported the Foundation with the third-annual Pub Night and the annual Founders' Dinner. The Trust finalized the exhibit case update and worked with another University of Toronto intern to develop a "student card" program add-on for all incoming field trips, which will create more opportunities for field trip children to compare and contrast their experiences with those of real historic students. This program is set to launch in September 2026.

In the future, the Trust will be exploring new options to bring in visitors, including different advertising methods, and piloting other events like occasional lectures. With 2027 being the 180th anniversary of the Irish famine and ensuing migration, the Trust will explore specific related programming.

## ***Speaker's Corner***

Amid a swirl of controversies, institutions named for educators and politicians such as Egerton Ryerson and John A. Macdonald have been renamed in recent years. This standalone panel, *Memory and History: A Dialogue on the Politics of Commemoration*, grappled with the cultural and political significance of this and related subjects, including the role “re-naming” plays in reconciling relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.



## ***Community Participation***

Foundation directors participated in the activities of the Ontario Heritage Trust.

## ***Annual General Meeting & Inaugural Joe Martin Lecture***

Joe Martin is Chair of the Enoch Turner Schoolhouse Foundation Advisory Board and over the last many years has been central to the Foundation's success. The Annual Joe Martin Lecture recognizes this contribution and shows our appreciation to Joe for his valuable guidance and continuing support.

Esteemed Professor, David A. Wilson, presented *Double Lives: Irish Revolutionaries and Canadian Spies*.



## ***York University Student Teacher Award***

Again this year, a bursary of \$1,000 was donated to a student in the York University Faculty of Education. This bursary is for undergraduate students in the BEd program or the BA Educational Studies program. Our purpose is to encourage the teaching of history, heritage and public education. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we are playing a part in the development of leadership in the teaching of Canadian history.



### ***Victorian School Day Experience***

We sponsored free admission for children and community groups to the Victorian classroom experience in the recently renovated school room.

### ***Heritage Champion Award***

Ian Bandeen, a distinguished Canadian business leader, was recognized for his generous support for Canadian heritage and culture.





## ***Annual Founder's Dinner***

Our fifty-year tradition continued with a festive Canadian Christmas dinner and much good cheer as old friends and new joined in celebration of the opening of the Schoolhouse in 1848. We welcomed Ryan Manucha as emcee of a lively program of traditional Irish music performed by Dan MacDonald and North Atlantic Drift, a seasonal reading and spirited carolling led by well-known Canadian singer and actor Catherine McKinnon. The excellent catering by enVille Event Design and Catering added to the enjoyment. Ian Bandeen received the Heritage Champion Award. This traditional gathering is an important opportunity for the board of directors to acknowledge and thank our partners, members, volunteers and donors.

## ***Enoch Turner on Tap!***

The Schoolhouse community gathered for the third old-fashioned pub night in October. They enjoyed a menu of traditional Victorian fare, Victorian games, and sipped on a custom brewed beer good enough to impress Enoch Turner himself. Thanks to the generous support of Granite Brewery (Toronto), their brew master partnered with beer historian and event host Jordan St. John to approximate Enoch Turner's Ale. Leading expert in international trade in Canada, Ryan Manucha, shared excerpts from his book, *Booze, Cigarettes and Constitutional Dust-Ups*, which examined the historical, political, and legal forces that gave rise to the regulation of interprovincial commerce in Canada.





***The Enoch Turner Schoolhouse Foundation Board would like to extend their sincerest gratitude to all Friends and Members for their continued support. Thank you for joining us to celebrate the Enoch Turner Schoolhouse. Because of generous donations, we are able to sponsor school programming to elementary students in ways that celebrate the vision of Enoch Turner. We thank you for considering a donation to our Foundation or the purchase of a membership. Visit [www.enochturnerschoolhouse.ca](http://www.enochturnerschoolhouse.ca) for more information.***

