



BLUE MOUNTAINS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BOARD DIRECTOR NOMINEE BIOS

Blair Almond

Raised on a farm in the former St. Vincent township, Blair has been a resident of Thornbury since 1993. Through his maternal lineage, he is a descendant of the Reekie, Clendenan, Wensley, Cumming and Rourke families, all early pioneers and settlers of the former Collingwood Township.

After employment in the public sector, Blair founded and owns Bruce Street Technologies Limited in 2004, a local Internet Service Provider and technology support company. As part of a planned, multi-generational project to preserve and promote the past Reekie contribution and involvement in the community, in 2018, Blair founded Reekie Heritage Farms Limited. Located on family land obtained in 1900, the original orchard has now been re-planted with primarily heirloom varieties of apples, many of which were known to, and would have been planted by, his great-great grandfather, John Reekie, the first European settler in Camperdown who arrived with his family in 1848. As well as the preservation of family land, Reekie Heritage Farms aims to promote and preserve an extensive collection of family artifacts, correspondence and memories.

A graduate of Georgian Bay Secondary School, Blair has completed degrees and programs from St Lawrence College (Municipal Administration Program), University of Waterloo (Bachelor of Environmental Studies) and Athabasca University (MBA). He is a former National Lifeguard Instructor/Examiner, Red Cross Water Safety, First Aid & CPR Instructor and has taken courses in a wide variety of subjects including Aquatic facilities management, Basic Refrigeration and is a Certified Fiber Optic Technician.

Blair is a past board chair of Breaking Down Barriers in Collingwood was a board member of Independent Living Services Simcoe County.

Audrey Deyman

Audrey Deyman earned an honours B.A. from the University of Guelph while running the family orchard in the community of Union on the western border of the Town of Blue Mountains. Her mother was passionate about Ontario history and no road trip was complete without a stop at a local museum which led to work at the Collingwood Museum and Barker Veterinary Museum. Her fascination with language and folklore resulted in pursuing graduate work in Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto. Today, with her husband, Michael Osmann, a rural historian, she runs a translation agency and is actively rewilding the family property.

Joanne Fallowfield (nee Bell)

In 1971, my parents bought a chalet at The Georgian Peaks Club and joined the ski club. I was 11. My husband and I eventually bought our own chalet in 1997 and continue to come up Thursday through Sunday year around. We still ski at The Peaks. Our work keeps us in the city, but our hearts are in The Town of Blue Mountain!

My personal memories from the old days include dining at Randy's (now Alphorn) and staying overnight at The Other Place (now Winnifred's). I remember the original Home Hardware location! We used to shop at Bernie's for clothes. I remember the other Chinese food restaurant across from Wong's!

I have served on three volunteer boards. My first board was with the North American Plant Society, and I was a member at large and served for 1 year. My second board experience started with the Treasurer role at the Etobicoke Horticultural Society. I served for 8 years and ended up as President for that Society. I currently sit as a board member of The Georgian Peaks Foundation.

I currently volunteer for three art related ventures: I coordinate the Local Art Showcase at Georgian Peaks; I am on the Art Selection Committee for the Kingsway-Lambton Art Show and Sale, and I am a Lead for Art Sales at the Kingsway-Lambton United Church Charity Flea Market. I am not an artist but like to organize and coordinate. I am an avid fan of genealogy and enjoying building my family tree.

I was the producer on a video The Georgian Peaks Foundation supported called Stories From The Hill. The director, Clarksburg resident Blair Locke and I interviewed and filmed as many of the original Peaks members as possible and gave them an opportunity to tell their stories of the early days. This is now a treasured record of times gone by as well it gives context to our club's culture.

I also produced three events at the Peaks: 1. Buck Talks where our founder Ian 'Buck' Rogers gave a talk to the membership on the early days, our highs and lows and everything else in between; 2. Lively Talks where Jim Lively, son of Bill Lively, gave a talk to the membership on our infamous year-end party called The Lively Cup and how his father was an integral part of popular event and 3. Beehive Talks which was about the first ski race in Canada with a money prize was held at the club in 1961 and the stories surrounding that race. It was sponsored by the St Lawrence Starch Company who made Beehive Corn Syrup. Various people who were there in 1961 talked to the membership of their experiences.

I believe that focusing on and celebrating the history of a place is important as it connects generations, deepens commitments, preserves important spaces and explains and maintains the character of the place.

Angela Marritt

I was born and raised in Clarksburg. My father's (Gordon Marritt) family settled in the Heathcote area in the early 1800s; the Marritt family has a long history in the Blue Mountains area. My Mother (Mary Marritt) emigrated from England to Collingwood in 1924 at a year old. As a result, I have deep roots in this area and want to ensure that we take care of our historical background and acknowledge it.

I currently hold the position of Secretary, for the Blue Mountains Historical Society (BMHS) and have been a member and Board Director since the incorporation of the BMHS in 2020. I have spent my career working in the Information Technology field in the Financial Services industry. My career experience includes running the business of Technology, managing large programs and procurement for Technology, governance and reporting as well as the integration of many partners to represent their individual requirements. My Board experience includes President and CEO of a Seniors Social Housing complex in Durham region, Condo Board and Health & Fitness Board. I will continue to leverage the compliance and governance components from my Professional experience as well as my Board experience to support this growing historical society.

I look forward to representing all of you should you choose to accept me as a participant on the Board of Directors.

Alex Maxwell

Born in 1955, I completed my formal education locally and have been actively involved in the apple industry since the 1970s. During the 1980s and 1990s, I expanded into the construction and development sectors, along with other ventures—many of which still maintain a connection to agriculture today.

I previously served on Thornbury Council prior to amalgamation. During that term, we initiated several key projects—many of which remain ongoing today. These included the development of the Georgian Trail in partnership with Collingwood Township, upgrades to the water plant and the construction of a new water tower in coordination with the Ministry of the Environment, restoration of the old Town Hall, improvements to Thornbury Harbour in partnership with the federal government, and various other soft and hard infrastructure initiatives.

On the community side, I am a member of the Lions Club, a founding member of the Beaver River Watershed Initiative (BRWI), and played a role in developing the local curling centre. I currently serve on Town Council and represent the municipality on the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA).

Paul John Reale

Since I was a child, I've always had a profound fondness for any period of history. I pursued undergraduate studies at the University of Toronto and graduate studies at both the University of Toronto and the University of Chicago, focusing on the history of Victorian Canada, particularly the rise of mass schooling in rural Ontario. I've also taught history at the University of Toronto, specifically at St. Michael's College, where I lectured undergraduate students on schools, culture and society, and the history of Catholic education in Ontario. Today, I run an afterschool educational academy, Mindbridge Education, where I use history as a vehicle to teach students the tools of historical thinking.

On a personal level, my wife's family, the Hoggard Family, has very deep-seated roots in the Town of the Blue Mountains. Our family heritage dates back to at least the 1890s, when the Hoggards had a residence in Slabtown before moving to Lora Bay around the time of World War I. My father-in-law, Kenneth Cardwell Hoggard (1917–2005), built several cottages along his Lora Bay property that he would rent out to cottagers. His photo album autobiography is held at the Craigeleith Heritage Depot, along with other records connected to him, his parents, and his sister, Odessa. His parents, Thomas Hoggard (1883–1947) and Ruby Graham (1891–1953), were a prominent family in Lora Bay who operated the stoning machine used to clear boulders from the soil and built two sawmills on their property.