

UELAC National Conference - Cornwall, ON (June 2024)

Event Name: United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada (UELAC) National Conference

Location: Cornwall, Ontario

Date: June 2024

Key Highlights:

- **Event Planning and Coordination:** Extensive preparations took place to ensure the smooth execution of the conference. The planning team coordinated with local authorities, vendors, and volunteers.
- **Opening Ceremony:** The event kicked off with an engaging opening ceremony featuring speakers and dignitaries.
- **Workshops and Sessions:** Several pre-conference events were held, covering topics such as genealogy, heritage preservation, and historical research.
- **Keynote Speakers:** Prominent figures in the field of history and heritage delivered insightful keynote addresses.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Attendees had many opportunities to network and connect with fellow members and enthusiasts.
- **Exhibits and Displays:** The conference featured various exhibits highlighting historical artifacts while attended pre-conference occurrences; re-enacting events, and visiting the UELAC Library & Archives genealogical records, and educational materials.
- **Awards and Recognitions:** Outstanding members and volunteers were recognized for their contributions to the organization and the community.
- **Gala Dinner:** The conference concluded with a grand gala dinner, celebrating the achievements and camaraderie of the UELAC community.

Outcomes and Impact:

- **Increased Membership:** The conference attracted new members, leading to a significant increase in UELAC membership.
- **Enhanced Community Engagement:** The event fostered stronger community bonds and encouraged active participation in future UELAC initiatives.
- **Raised Awareness:** The conference successfully raised awareness about the importance of preserving Loyalist heritage and history.

Loyalist Directory Enhancements (2024)

Website: uelac.ca

Key Highlights:

- **Addition of New Records:** Numerous records of Loyalist ancestors were added to the Loyalist Directory, significantly expanding the database.
- **Contributions from Members and Researchers:** The updates were made possible through the dedication and hard work of UELAC members and researchers who meticulously collected and submitted new information.
- **Enhanced Research Resources:** These new additions have greatly enriched the resources available for historical research, providing valuable insights and data for genealogists and historians.
- **Improved User Experience:** The directory enhancements have made it easier for users to access and navigate the wealth of information available.

Outcomes and Impact:

- **Increased Engagement:** The updated directory has attracted more users and researchers, fostering greater community involvement.
- **Advancements in Research:** The expanded database has facilitated new discoveries and research projects related to Loyalist history and heritage.
- **Preservation of History:** The continuous effort to update the directory ensures the preservation and accessibility of Loyalist records for future generations.

UELAC Scholarships Awarded (2024)

Scholarship Committee: United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada (UELAC) Scholarship Committee

Key Highlights:

- **Long-standing Tradition:** The UELAC Scholarship Committee has been awarding scholarships to deserving scholars for many years, supporting academic research in Loyalist heritage and history.
- **2024 Recipients:** This year, two deserving students, Blake McGready and Graham Nickerson, were awarded the UELAC Scholarship.
 - **Blake McGready:** A resolute scholar pursuing a Ph.D. in historical Loyalist research.

- **Graham Nickerson:** Another exceptional student committed to advancing our understanding of Loyalist heritage through his Ph.D. studies.
- **Scholarship Funds:** The funds allocated to Blake McGready and Graham Nickerson will support their academic pursuits, enabling them to continue their research and contribute valuable insights to the field of historical Loyalist research.

Outcomes and Impact:

- **Academic Advancement:** The scholarships will help the recipients further their education and make significant contributions to Loyalist historical research.
- **Encouraging Scholarship:** By supporting these scholars, UELAC fosters a continued interest in the study and preservation of Loyalist history.
- **Community Engagement:** The scholarships also strengthen the connection between the academic community and the broader UELAC membership, promoting collaborative research efforts.

Loyalist Gazette Publication (2024)

Publication: Loyalist Gazette

Leadership: Vice President Bill Russell UE and the Editorial Committee

Key Highlights:

- **Insightful Editions:** Under the leadership of Vice President Bill Russell UE and his Editorial Committee, several insightful editions of the Loyalist Gazette were released throughout the year.
- **Rich Content:** The Gazette provided members and institutions with rich content on Loyalist heritage and history, enhancing the knowledge and appreciation of this important historical period.
- **Association Updates:** Each edition included updates on association activities and events, keeping members informed and engaged with UELAC initiatives.
- **Upcoming Spring 2025 Edition:** The forthcoming Spring 2025 publication is highly anticipated, as it will feature contributions from the Prairie and Pacific Regional branches, focusing on Loyalist history.

Outcomes and Impact:

- **Enhanced Engagement:** The quality and depth of the content have fostered greater engagement among UELAC members and the wider community.
- **Educational Resource:** The Gazette serves as an invaluable educational resource, supporting both historical research and public interest in Loyalist history.
- **Community Cohesion:** Regular updates on association activities and events have strengthened the sense of community within the UELAC membership.

UELAC Committees Progression (2024)

Key Highlights:

1. UELAC Library & Archives:

Significant progress has been made in organizing and cataloguing the UELAC Library & Archives, ensuring that valuable resources are preserved and easily accessible to members and researchers. If you need help with any aspect of your research, please call/email the National UELAC Office-

1- 416-591-1783; OR email (Rodney Appleby- <uelac.office@gmail.com> or contact me as National Archivist at <archivist@uelac.org> **OR** Leon Wu (Assistant UELAC Archivist- <leonwwu@gmail.com>).

2. 2025 UELAC Conference Planning:

- Preparations are underway for the 2025 UELAC Conference, scheduled to take place from July 10-13 in Saint John, New Brunswick. The planning committee is diligently working to create an engaging and memorable event for attendees.

3. Scholarship:

- Continued support for academic pursuits through the UELAC Scholarship program, with scholarships awarded to deserving students who are conducting research in Loyalist history.

4. Education and Community Engagement:

- Various educational initiatives and community engagement activities have been implemented to promote awareness and appreciation of Loyalist heritage. This includes workshops, presentations, plaquing Loyalist

Cemeteries across Canada, and collaborative projects, with schools and community organizations.

5. UELAC-Family Search Project:

- Progress has been made in the UELAC-Family Search Project, aimed at assisting National and Branch Genealogists in their collaboration and enhancement towards members applying for their ‘*UE*’ Certificate. The database created by the UELAC-Family Search Project will enhance the application process. Results will be readily available for UELAC branch genealogists in helping members receive their UE certificate and will preserve Loyalist family history.

6. UELAC Volunteers Recognition:

- Recognition of the invaluable contributions of UELAC volunteers. Their dedication and hard work have been acknowledged through various awards and appreciation events, fostering a sense of community and gratitude within the organization.

7. UELAC Website (uelac.ca):

- Ongoing updates and improvements to the UELAC website have been made to ensure it remains a comprehensive and user-friendly resource for members and the public. The website serves as a central hub for accessing information about UELAC activities, resources, and events.

Outcomes and Impact:

- **Enhanced Access to Resources:** The efforts in organizing/cataloguing the library and archives, as well as the website updates, have made it easier for members and researchers to access valuable information.
- **Community Building:** The recognition of volunteers and community engagement activities have strengthened the bonds within the UELAC community.
- **Support for Research and Education:** The scholarship program and educational initiatives continue to support the academic and research efforts related to Loyalist history.

- **Anticipation for Future Events:** The upcoming 2025 UELAC Conference promises to be a significant event, with preparations ensuring it will be a success.

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2025 Directions for the UELAC

2025 UELAC Conference Planning (July 10-13, Saint John, New Brunswick)

Conference Details:

- **Location:** Saint John, New Brunswick
- **Dates:** July 10-13, 2025

Mission and Goals:

Insight on UELAC Conference Planning Viability

- The 2025 UELAC Conference will continue advancing the Association's mission of preserving and promoting Loyalist history. This event will provide a valuable opportunity for members and guests to engage in insightful discussions, share groundbreaking research, and celebrate the rich heritage of the Loyalist community.
- Following the 2023 Pacific Region UELAC Conference, the National Conferences sponsored by UELAC have been designed to assess the viability of future conferences. Both the 2024 Cornwall and 2025 Saint John Conferences are being treated as key test cases. Their attendance numbers, participant engagement, and budget outcomes will be critical indicators in determining the feasibility and sustainability of hosting UELAC National Conferences moving forward.

Planning and Preparation:

- **Conference Planning Committee:** The committee, composed of resolute UELAC members, has been diligently working to ensure the success of the conference. Their efforts include coordination, securing venues, organizing speakers, and planning engaging activities.
- **Exciting Lineup for 2025:** Attendees can look forward to a variety of sessions, workshops, and presentations that will cover a wide range of topics related to Loyalist history and heritage.

Outcomes and Impact:

- **Educational Opportunities:** The conference will provide numerous opportunities for learning and networking, fostering a deeper understanding of Loyalist history.
- **Community Engagement:** By bringing together members from across the country, the conference will strengthen the sense of community within UELAC.
- **Preservation of History:** The event will highlight the importance of preserving Loyalist heritage, encouraging continued research and education in this field.

This conference promises to be a significant and memorable event for all attendees.

Enhancing Membership Engagement (2025)

Key Issue: Enhancing Membership Engagement

Committee: UELAC Membership Committee, comprised of UELAC Board Members and all branch membership chairs

Goals and Initiatives:

- **Encouraging New Memberships:** Developing strategies to attract new members by highlighting the benefits of joining UELAC, such as access to exclusive resources, events, and networking opportunities.
- **Renewal Memberships:** Focusing on retaining existing members by offering renewal incentives and emphasizing the value of continued membership.
- **Member Involvement:** Promoting active member involvement at the branch, regional, and national levels to keep the Loyalist legacy alive. Encouraging participation in events, committees, and projects.
- **Engagement Activities:** Organizing a variety of activities and events that appeal to members' interests, including historical tours, lectures, workshops, and social gatherings.
- **Communication and Outreach:** Enhancing communication channels to keep members informed and engaged. Utilizing newsletters, social media, and the UELAC website to share updates and opportunities for involvement.
- **Feedback and Improvement:** Gathering feedback from members to understand their needs and preferences. Continuously improving engagement strategies based on this feedback.

Outcomes and Impact:

- **Increased Membership:** The UELAC Membership Committee and the UELAC Board of Director's efforts are to attract and retain members. It is the vision in 2025 to expect results in a larger and more active membership base.
- **Stronger Community:** Enhanced member involvement will strengthen the sense of community within UELAC, fostering a collaborative and supportive environment.
- **Preservation of History:** Active membership engagement is crucial for preserving and promoting Loyalist history and heritage. By encouraging participation, UELAC ensures that the Loyalist legacy continues to thrive.

By focusing on these initiatives, the UELAC Membership Committee aims to enhance engagement and build a vibrant and active membership community.

Recognizing Our UELAC Volunteer Contributions (2025)

Award Nominations:

- The Association is calling for nominations for various UELAC Awards to recognize the exceptional contributions of its members and volunteers. These awards include:
 - **Honorary Fellows:** Appointments to be made during the upcoming 2025 AGM scheduled for Saturday, May 24, 2025.
 - **UELAC Dorchester Award:** Celebrating outstanding service and dedication to the Association.
 - **Suzanne Morse-Hines Memorial Genealogy-Family History Award:** Honoring excellence in genealogical research and family history documentation.
 - **Regional Vice President and Councillor** Nominations are also being called.
- **Nomination Deadlines:** All nominations are due by **February 28, 2025**.

Key Highlights:

- **Celebrating Volunteer Contributions:** Recognizing the invaluable efforts of UELAC members and volunteers who have significantly contributed to preserving and promoting Loyalist history.

- **Encouraging Participation:** Inviting members to submit nominations and participate in the recognition process, fostering a culture of appreciation and acknowledgment within the Association.
- **Annual General Meeting (AGM):** The awards will be presented during the 2025 Conference in Saint John, NB, a significant event that brings together members to celebrate achievements and plan the future of the Association.

Outcomes and Impact:

- **Boosting Morale:** Acknowledging the hard work and dedication of volunteers boosts morale and encourages continued contributions to the UELAC's mission.
- **Strengthening Community:** The awards and recognition foster a sense of community and belonging among UELAC members.
- **Promoting Excellence:** Highlighting the achievements of members sets a standard of excellence and inspires others to strive for similar accomplishments. By recognizing and celebrating these contributions, UELAC continues to build a strong and engaged community dedicated to preserving Loyalist heritage.
- **UELAC's Commitment to Preservation and Community Needs (2025)**
- **Key Initiatives:** These initiatives highlight UELAC's dedication to preserving the legacy of the United Empire Loyalists and addressing the evolving needs of its members and the broader historical community. By focusing on these priorities, UELAC ensures that Loyalist heritage continues to be celebrated, researched, and appreciated.

Prepared by:

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