

CULTURAL MOMENT FOR AUGUST 12, 2024 CELEBRATING THE LYNES BLACKSMITH SHOP'S 'LET'S RAISE THE ROOF' CAMPAIGN

The expression, "Let's raise the roof," probably originated in a local dialect of the United States south sometime in the mid-1800s. It means 'to raise a ruckus or make an uproar.'

In this case, it literally means to raise the roof, take it off, and replace it with a new roof.



The Lynes Blacksmith Shop is an historic gem in Kenilworth. It had been fully working with two forges from 1885 until 1955, with owners James Lynes Sr. and James Lynes Jr. It sat undisturbed in its original state for the next 60 years. Dr. Frank Lynes, the son of James Jr., had a vision to restore the blacksmith shop and share it with the public. With the help of his daughter Kryisia and a newly formed committee, the blacksmith shop was donated and became the property of the Township of Wellington North in 2017.



The Lynes Blacksmith Shop Committee is dedicated to restoring the facility to its historical purpose. The committee and a local heritage stonemason, Steve Walker, have restored the façade and reconstructed the primary forge. In 2018, the doors were open to the public, and artisan blacksmith Tony Moore demonstrated how to forge tools.

Since then, the following improvements have been implemented to meet the Ontario Building Code: new windows, lighting and electricity have been upgraded, replicate doors have been fabricated. New hardware for the doors has been forged to look authentic.



The last major project will be a new roof. Grants have been applied for and received. They have helped with the other historical upgrades but will not cover the cost of the new roof. It is the intent of the committee to replace the roof with one that has both a dormer and a chimney as seen in the original photographs. The roof will also look authentic for the time period.

In order to open to the public and to be able to provide attractions and programming, the roof is a must. With the help of donations and fundraising, which will start soon, the roof should be raised this year.

As this is a community project for the enjoyment and benefit of the community, the committee hopes that the public will help "to raise the roof."

To make a donation, visit lynesblacksmithshop.org or contact Kate Rowley at the Mount Forest Museum and Archives: 519-323-4755 or archive@mfheritage.ca.