

EDMONTON HISTORIAN LAUREATE

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

April 2018 to February 2019



MARLENA WYMAN



Detail of Prince of Wales Armouries sketch by Marlena Wyman

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3-5. PROJECTS

- Art Exhibits
- Urban Sketchers Edmonton

6-7. SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

7. ARTICLES/BLOG POSTS

8. CLASSROOM VISITS

8. MEETINGS

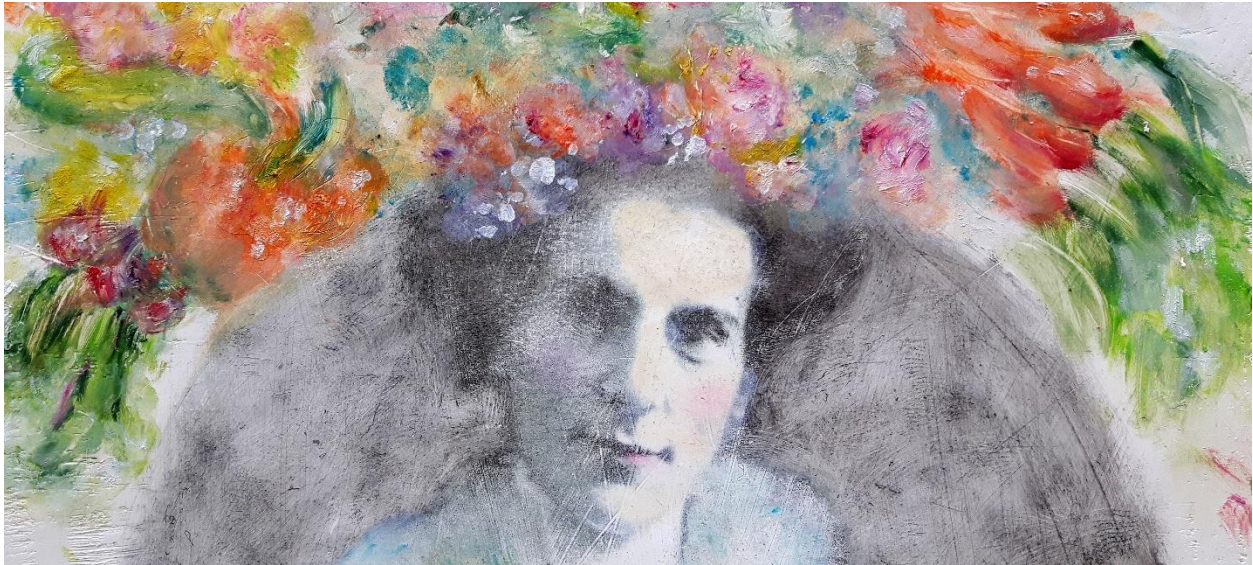
9. ATTENDANCE AT HERITAGE EVENTS

9-10. PUBLIC REQUESTS and COMMENTS

11. MEDIA

PROJECTS

ART EXHIBITS



Detail of "Back to the Garden" painting by Marlena Wyman

As a visual artist, one of my main goals for my Historian Laureate term is to shine light on lesser known Edmonton stories through my art practice. A different lens can be brought to how we see history and we can engage new audiences in the compelling stories of Edmonton's heritage.

We interpret our memories and identities in part through traces of past lives. A haunting photograph or a handwritten passage in the diary of a long dead stranger can create a profound personal connection. Through my research in archival records, I provide the viewer with both a written and visual history.

ARCHIVED LAND : TERRAIN ARCHIVÉ exhibit

- September 15 to 29, 2018 at Jackson Power Gallery, Edmonton
- Exhibit artists: Marlena Wyman, Sydney Lancaster, Paddy Lamb, Patrick Arès-Pilon, Conor McNally
- My art installation and paintings focused on early Edmontonian Gladys Reeves who advocated for Edmonton's beautification and defended our ravines and river valley from development.
- I wrote posts on my art blog regarding the exhibit that included historical background:
<https://theprairieline.wordpress.com/2018/08/28/archived-land-gladys-reeves/>
<https://theprairieline.wordpress.com/2018/09/25/archived-land-gladys-reeves-part-ii/>

PROJECTS

ART EXHIBITS (cont’)



Detail of The “Beulah Home for Unfortunate Women and Girls” painting by Marlena Wyman

REAL WOMEN exhibit (in progress)

- Art Gallery of Alberta/Alberta Art Foundation Traveling Exhibition Program (TREX)
- Exhibit will travel through Alberta from August 2019 to September 2021 and will be on display in schools, libraries, museums, and other community facilities in rural Alberta communities.
- Exhibit artists: Marlena Wyman, Kasie Campbell, Allison Tunis, Lisa Brawn
- My paintings are inspired by the archival records of Edmonton women. Four paintings of my paintings will be included in the exhibit: two paintings illuminating First World War stories (based on Mary Capling Hyde’s diaries and Madeleine Jaffray’s scrapbooks), one painting based on the records of the Beulah Home for unwed mothers, and one painting based on early Edmonton women’s societies, depicting both the positives and negatives of these organizations’ initiatives.
- In the next few months, I will be writing historical content for the brochure that will accompany the exhibit.
- Further historical background on these paintings can be viewed on my art blog posts:
<https://theprairieline.wordpress.com/2018/11/10/mat-no-more-the-diaries-of-mary-capling-hyde/>
<https://theprairieline.wordpress.com/2018/12/06/bluebird-madeleine-jaffray/>
<https://theprairieline.wordpress.com/2019/01/24/the-beulah-home-for-unfortunate-women-and-girls/>

PROJECTS (cont')

URBAN SKETCHERS EDMONTON (in progress)



Marlena Wyman sketch - Ortona Armoury Arts Building



Irina Krughyakova sketch – Mill Creek Ravine bridge



*Karen Wall sketch – Old Walterdale Bridge
& Rossdale Power Plant*



Yvonne Rezek sketch – Minchau Blacksmith Shop

- Urban Sketchers Edmonton was formed in 2011 by two local artists and myself. Since my appointment as Historian Laureate, I have been organizing regular outings with the group to sketch Edmonton's architectural heritage.
- In the next year, I am hoping to curate an exhibit of these sketches to open potentially in late 2019 at the City of Edmonton Archives with a satellite exhibit in community centres in various areas of the city.
- I have been writing posts about our sketchouts on the Urban Sketchers Edmonton blog that have also been shared on heritage social media <https://edmontonsketchers.wordpress.com/>

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS



MADE (Media Architecture Design Edmonton) InSitu public event at Ortona Armoury

With my background as an archivist, I have focused on three key messages in my term as Historian Laureate, and have spoken on these subjects:

- One of the significant gaps in archival collections and in the historical record is that of women's contributions to our heritage. Other gaps are those of indigenous history and the history of non-white cultures.
- Archives are foundational to our heritage and serve as a valuable public historical resource. Many citizens are not aware that they can access archival records for their personal research interests, and that they can donate their personal documents to help to fill gaps in the historical record.
- Edmonton's built heritage is at constant risk, yet these buildings represent valuable symbols of our identity and the stories of our city. They add to Edmonton's vibrancy and culture and help create a desirable city to live in and visit.

I spoke at seven events:

- **Edmonton Regional Heritage Fair**, May 5, 2018
 - I introduced the event, and spent time chatting with students about their exhibits
- **City of Edmonton Archives website launch**, October 5, 2018
 - I was one of the speakers for the event, and spoke about the importance of archives
- **MADE (Media Architecture Design Edmonton) InSitu** public event, November 3, 2018
 - I gave a history talk and tour of the historic Ortona Armoury Arts Building
- **Historical Resource Review Panel**, December 11, 2018
 - I gave a talk and slide presentation about Urban Sketchers Edmonton, and my initiative for us to sketch Edmonton's architectural heritage

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS (cont')

- **WAVE (Women's Advocacy Network of Edmonton)**, December 18, 2018
 - I gave a talk/slide presentation about preserving women's history, and the interpretation of women's history through my visual art practice.
- **Let's Find Out Podcast Live Event**, February 9, 2019 (hosted by past Historian Laureate Chris Chang-Yen Phillips)
 - I spoke about early Edmontonians' advocacy to beautify and preserve Edmonton's green spaces
<https://letsfindoutpodcast.com/2019/01/07/feb-9-live-panel-on-how-nature-shapes-us/>
- **PhotoEd Magazine's Pecha Kucha night**, February 12, 2019 at Metro Cinema (hosted by PhotoEd magazine published in Toronto)
 - I spoke about Edmontonian Gladys Reeves: one of the first female photographers in western Canada
<http://www.photoed.ca/edmonton-2019>

ARTICLES/BLOG POSTS

I contributed to the Edmonton Historical Board newsletter, wrote posts for the Edmonton Heritage Council blog, Urban Sketchers Edmonton blog, and my own art blog regarding my Historian Laureate role and projects.

- **Edmonton Historical Board newsletter** (premiere edition – Spring 2018)
 - I contributed to an article “Three Questions With Your New Historian Laureate”
 - <https://mailchi.mp/c0dda625a9ef/spring-2018-newsletter?e=c769c81687>
- **Edmonton Heritage Council blog**
 - I wrote a post about the care of personal/family archives. I will be writing more posts on this subject. <https://edmontonheritage.ca/2018/06/09/a-guest-post-from-edmontons-historian-laureate-virginia-woolf-and-original-order-do-not-be-afraid/>
 - Republished my art blog post about my Archived Land : Terrain Archivé exhibit <https://edmontonheritage.ca/2018/09/14/from-the-historian-laureate-archived-land-terrain-archive/>
 - I was interviewed for an Archives Week post <https://edmontonheritage.ca/2018/10/01/archives-week-2018-meet-your-archivists/>
- **Urban Sketchers Edmonton**
 - I wrote several posts about our sketch outings to heritage buildings <https://edmontonsketchers.wordpress.com/>
- **The Prairie Line**
 - I wrote several posts on my art blog about my Historian Laureate paintings, exhibits and events <https://theprairieline.wordpress.com/>

CLASSROOM VISITS



Speaking at City Hall School class



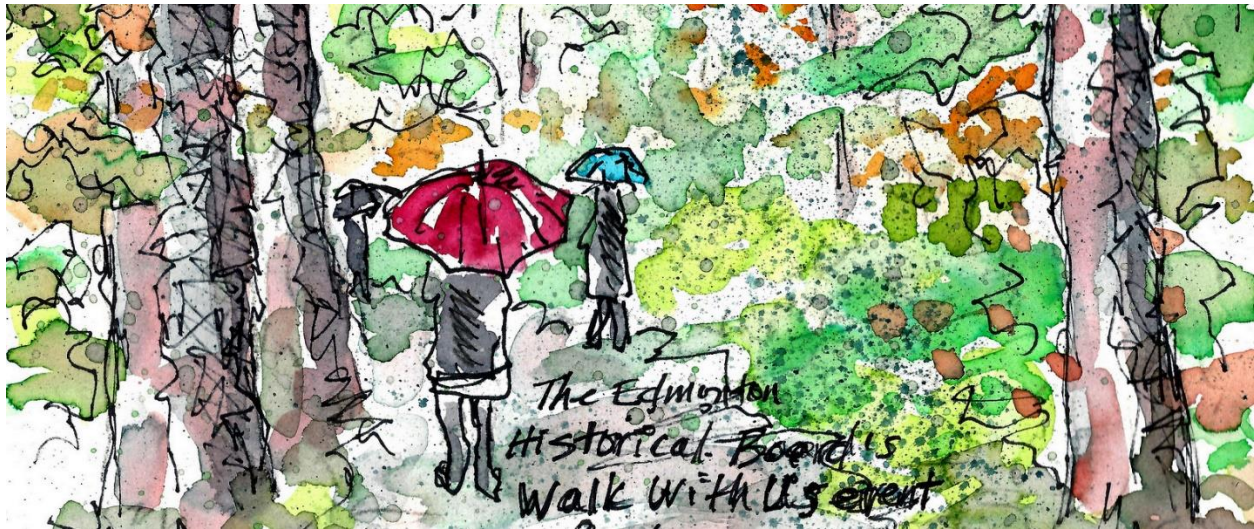
*"No Homesteads for Women" painting
by Marlena Wyman*

- **Lynwood Grade 5/6 class at City Hall School, September 26, 2018**
 - I spoke about the role of the Historian Laureate. The students were exploring the theme of quilts, so I talked about one of my paintings, *No Homesteads for Women*, which illustrates the visual quilt pattern of the prairie Dominion Land Survey, and how women had not been allowed the free homestead lands that men had been.
- **History 100 classes at MacEwan University, October 29, 2018**
 - The students asked me questions about the role of Historian Laureate and my interpretation through my art. I also spoke about the significance of oral histories.

MEETINGS

- I attended and participated in a number of Edmonton Historical Board and Edmonton Heritage Council meetings.
- I attended the Edmonton Historical Board annual report presentations to City Council, April 17, 2018.
- I attended and spoke at City Council Executive Committee meeting, August 27, 2018. Along with a panel of heritage experts, I presenting a letter signed by all of the Historians Laureate re: the preservation of Hangar 11 at Blatchford Field.
- I met with Councillor Michael Walters to talk about the Historian Laureate role and the importance of history in Edmonton in general, August 30, 2018 and February 6, 2019 (I live in Councillor Walters' ward, which has prompted his welcome and appreciated interest).
- I attended and participated in the Edmonton Historical Board's City Council luncheon, December 7, 2019
- I met with Miranda Jimmy, co-founder of RISE (Reconciliation in Solidarity Edmonton) about the respectful inclusion of Indigenous culture in my Historian Laureate projects, February 15, 2019

ATTENDANCE AT HERITAGE EVENTS



Edmonton Historical Board's "Walk With Us" event sketch by Marlena Wyman

- Launch of the Historic Festival & Doors Open Edmonton, July 2, 2018
- Edmonton Historical Board's "Walk With Us" event, September 16, 2018
- Dedication ceremony for Constable Frank Beevers monument at the Edmonton Cemetery, October 11, 2018
- *Métis Talks* panel discussion on archival research and Métis histories on that was hosted by the Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research at the U of A, November 23, 2018
- Blanket Exercise at Capilano Library organised by RISE (Reconciliation in Solidarity Edmonton), January 21, 2019

PUBLIC REQUESTS

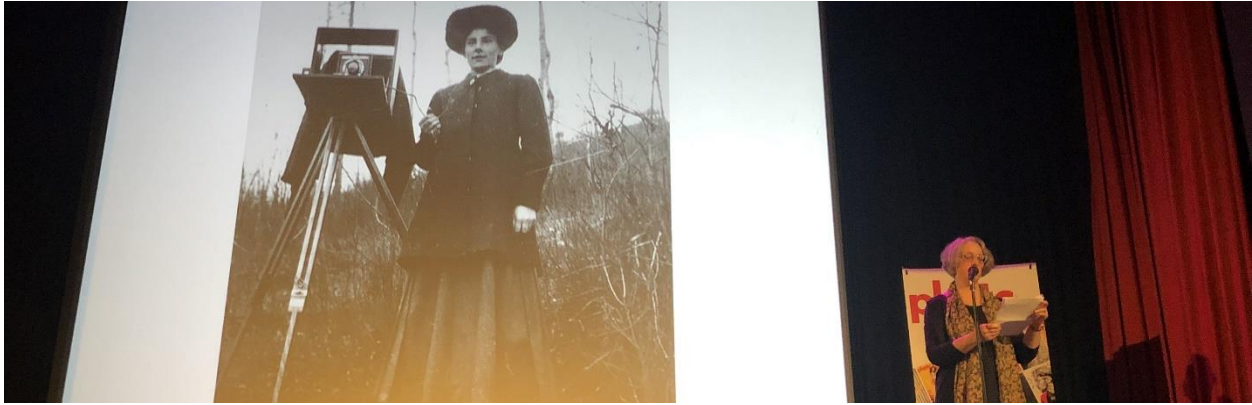
I am finding that there are some different expectations from the public about the role of the Historian Laureate beyond that of the City's stated role for the position. I have been gratified by the interest and have had many and varied requests from individuals and community groups with questions such as:

- Requests for speaking engagements
- Advice on family archives and general questions about Edmonton's history
- Requests for my advice and/or involvement in various individual and group history-based projects

I have accepted most speaking engagements and have provided advice as well as referrals to archives and other sources and/or names of people in the heritage field who may be able to assist with projects.

I am compiling an Excel spreadsheet of public requests. I will share this at the end of my term to help provide context regarding how the public views the role of Historian Laureate.

PUBLIC COMMENTS



My PhotoEd Pecha Kucha talk about Gladys Reeves

Archived Land : Terrain Archivé exhibit/Gladys Reeves installation (inspired by Gladys Reeves work to preserve Edmonton's green spaces)

- *I was so moved by your exhibit and had such a good talk about the exhibit and your work. The work of Gladys Reeves seems to be at the root of my attachment to Edmonton.*
- *Thank you for your research and for writing this; you have brought the very interesting Gladys Reeves to my attention, and made me realize the fight to protect our river valley has been, and still is, a long one.*

History 100 class at MacEwan University:

- *I just wanted to thank you again for coming and speaking to my history classes a couple of weeks ago. Several of [the students] commented specifically on how nice it was to see the different ways that you have incorporated history in to all aspects of your work. It also seems that there are 2 or 3 budding archivists in the classes, so your talk was a real eye-opener for many of the students.*

Mat No More painting (inspired by WWI era diaries of Mary Capling Hyde):

- *This is a profoundly powerful piece intertwined with this story. With this focus on 'one', makes the incomprehensible numbers of so many who are 'no more' somewhat more comprehensible.*
- *Thank you for sharing this very touching memorial to just one of the many brave men that did not come home. They may be unknown at their final resting place but they shall never be forgotten by those they left behind. Lest We Forget.*

The Beulah Home for Unfortunate Women and Girls painting (inspired by early Edmonton home for unwed mothers)

- *I'm so glad you are digging up this history. This organization deserves to be remembered.*
- *I so enjoyed reading this. What a pleasure to know that there were and are compassionate people willing to help others. Thanks for sharing.*

PhotoEd Magazine Pecha Kucha Night (I spoke about early photographer Gladys Reeves)

- *I had so many people come up and tell me how inspired they were by your presentation and had no idea archives existed in Edmonton where there would be amazing photography stories like this in their own backyard!*

MEDIA

June 2018	7	Parkallen News
<h3>Edmonton's 5th Historian Laureate</h3>		
		<p>2011, she received a Historical Recognition Award from the Edmonton Historical Board for her contributions to archives and visual arts.</p> <p>Marlena has several history-based visual art exhibits planned for her term as Historian Laureate. In her exhibits, she will shine some light on lesser known stories through her archival research, and she encourages her fellow Edmontonians to help fill the gaps in our</p>
<p>Parkallen resident Marlena Wyman is the City of Edmonton's</p>		<p>the people, places and events that have created Edmonton's</p>

CBC News

- April 15, 2018: My appointment as Historian Laureate
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/edmonton-historian-laureate-1.4619611>
- April 17, 2018: live interview on CBC Radio 1 *Radio Active* drive-home show

Edmonton Star Metro

- April 17, 2018 re: my appointment as Historian Laureate (accessible through Press Reader)
<https://www.pressreader.com/canada/starmetro-edmonton/20180417>
- October 8, 2018 re: Edmonton City Archives website launch
<https://www.thestar.com/edmonton/2018/10/04/website-upgrades-give-edmontons-city-archives-a-digital-dusting.html>

NAIT News Watch

- October 5, 2018 re: Edmonton City Archives website launch
(at 9:35 on the clip): https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=623&v=58lXlSyaIOQ

Edmonton Prime Times

- June 2018 issue re: my role as Historian Laureate

Edmonton Journal July 1, 2018 issue

- Canada Day feature about Edmontonians' favourite moments in Canadian history. I highlighted the work of prairie women in achieving the right for women to vote.

Parkallen Newsletter (September 2018 issue of my neighbourhood's community league newsletter)

- Re: my appointment as Historian Laureate <https://bit.ly/2MI0JJP>

Vue Weekly magazine, September 12, 2018 issue

- Story on my exhibit *Archived Land : Terrain Archivé*, featured as their Visual Arts Pick of the Week
<http://www.vueweekly.com/jackson-power-galleries-final-exhibit-will-explore-land-and-history/>

Alberta Views magazine, January/February 2019 issue

- Photo and announcement of my upcoming March 26th public talk and slide presentation for the Edmonton & District Historical Society. I will be speaking about my first year as Historian Laureate.