

# Gibson House & Lake Lisgar



## The Current Context

Gibson House is an accessible, seasonally usable brick structure used for storage in the basement and small meetings. Built to serve as a pump-house, the building has an extremely thick concrete foundation and a brick exterior. There is only one entrance. The building envelope was rehabilitated in 2014.

The picnic area and docks adjacent to Gibson House get used daily by dozens of people of all ages. The site is high profile due to its location on one of Tillsonburg's main east-west arterial connections. It is used to access the water for fishing, RC boating, kayaking & canoeing, ice fishing and just watching.

## The Vision

Gibson House is a pleasant and accessible public space where families can enjoy a picnic beside the lake, or where small meetings or private functions can be held.

Indoors, exhibits developed and curated as part of and an extension to the Tillsonburg Museum hold memorabilia and interpretive signage that showcase the Gibson family and their contribution to Tillsonburg's development, the Tillsonburg Shoe Company, the history of the lake and its environs, Scouting in Tillsonburg and Camp Jackson.

Outdoor, there is an elevated outdoor viewing area accessible through the building. There is a series of floating and fixed docks and walkways that help preserve shorelines while giving access to the lake for fishing, RC boating, and enthusiasts who enjoy being outside. Interpretive signage helps educate passersby about the ecosystem of the lake and the efforts to keep it healthy. Under the elevated deck is secure, water-level storage for non-powered watercraft and equipment used by Scouts and others.

Used as a focus for activity during community events like Canada Day, Turtlefest, Family Day and others, Gibson House is an integral part of the cultural and historic fabric of Tillsonburg. Sustainable and off-grid technology is used to demonstrate its application and support building functions.

A well-resourced trust fund created from donations, fundraising and bequests generates annual income that supports the maintenance and operations of the facility.

## The Opportunity

As envisioned in the Master Plan for Memorial Park and Lake Lisgar, the Gibson House site can be revitalized and enhanced in line with the vision described above. Working with community leaders and generous supporters of Scouting and the Town, a campaign to realize the vision of Gibson House as an integral, well-used and appreciated part of Tillsonburg's community fabric could secure the necessary financial resources, design documents and community support.



## Contact

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