

The purpose of the Ontario Museum Association Awards of Excellence is to:

1. Recognize outstanding contributions to the Ontario museum community, with emphasis on innovation;
2. Advance the museum profession in Ontario;
3. Encourage high standards of excellence in the museum field.

The OMA is pleased to announce the following recipients of the 2016 Awards of Excellence!

Distinguished Career Award of Excellence

Mark Badham **Curator, Miller Museum of Geology**

The OMA Distinguished Career Award of Excellence is presented to individuals who, over an extended period of time, have created a lasting and meaningful legacy in the Ontario museum community.

Mark Badham has spent his career working tirelessly at the Miller Museum of Geology, and has been a crucial member of the broader Kingston museum community.

Mark has been the curator of the Miller Museum of Geology for thirty years where, in addition to developing its collections and outreach, and running traditional educational programming, he was instrumental in establishing, and hosting the pilot session of, *Beyond Classrooms Kingston*, a program which brings school classes into a museum or community site for a week, and which is currently in its third year.



Beyond this, Mark has also been an important figure in the development of Kingston's museum network, as a founding member of the Kingston Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites, Inc. (KAM), and through his various positions on its board. At the founding of KAM, Mark made sure that collegiality and community partnerships would be core elements of its vision, and helped ensure the development of the City of Kingston Heritage

Fund, which provides crucial funding to Kingston's heritage organisations. Mark is still active in the community, having recently been responsible for the establishment of two museum walking routes through Kingston, and continuing to work to establish collaborative events between Kingston museums and other organizations, including such creative events as "Loud Day," featuring the sounds of Kingston's museums' collections. Mark has been a leader in the Kingston museum community, with a hand in all levels of museum and heritage management. Kingston, and all of Ontario, has benefited from the work he has done to encourage community and museum partnerships and to promote the importance of local heritage engagement and education.

"Mark Badham (MSc) is a quiet leader and mentor for museum professionals.... Building Kingston's museum team through his dedication and hard work is Mark's legacy."

-Caroline Petznick, Managing Director, Kingston Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites, Inc.

Promising Leadership Award of Excellence

The OMA Award of Excellence in Community Engagement is presented to emerging professionals, of any position or institution, who have shown promising leadership within the museum community. An emerging professional is an individual within the first ten years of their professional career.

Kathryn Jamieson Goulbourn Museum



Kathryn Jamieson is the Curator Manager at Goulbourn Museum in Ottawa, a position she achieved after a rapid series of promotions by superiors who recognized her curatorial and leadership potential. With this now being the most senior position at Goulbourn Museum, Kathryn has successfully taken on the challenge of transforming the museum into a community hub whose attendance has increased by over 180% in the four years that she has occupied this position. She plans to expand and develop the museum even further.

In addition to this role, Kathryn is a member of the Ottawa Museum Network Board of Directors, on which she has been Treasurer, Vice-Chair, and Chairperson, and through which she is involved in multiple other committees. She is also the Co-Chair of the Ottawa Museum and Archives Collection Committee, and has recently begun teaching in the Applied Museum Studies program at Algonquin College. Kathryn is a leader in the Ontario museum community, dedicated to improving her museum at the community level, mentoring the next generation of heritage professionals, and advocating for museums and heritage to become a governmental priority.

"Since Kathryn took on the leadership challenge of running and managing a small, rural museum, she has taken every leadership challenge and opportunity that has been presented to her with integrity, a willingness to learn, curiosity and tact."

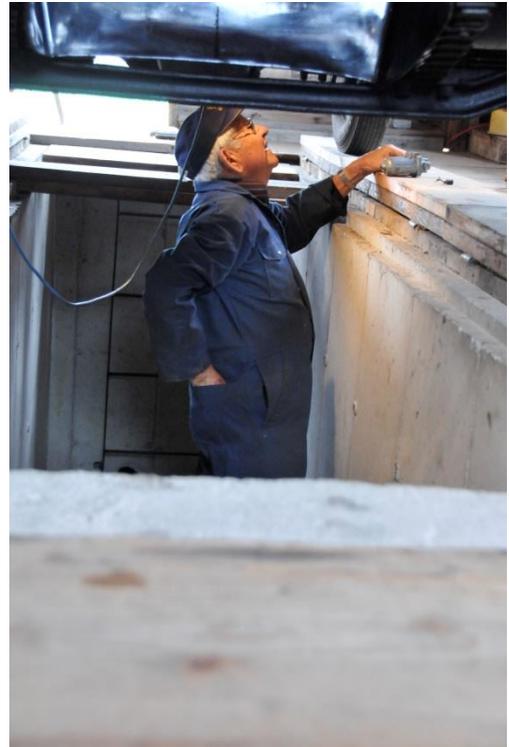
-Laura Gibbs, Museum Coordinator with the City of Toronto: Gibson House Museum and Historic Zion Schoolhouse

Volunteer Service Award of Excellence

The OMA Volunteer Service Award of Excellence is presented to individuals who have made a significant contribution to a museum or museums through volunteer work.

Gilbert Rice **Grey Roots Museum and Archives**

Gilbert Rice has been committed to Ontario's museums and heritage for over fifty years. Since he donated the contents of his father's blacksmith shop to the Grey-Owen Sound Museum (now the Grey Roots Museum and Archives) in the 1960's, Gilbert has maintained a dedicated connection with the museum, working hard to ensure the preservation of collections significant to the community, contributing heavily to restoration work on the area's built heritage, and serving on the museum board. Given his involvement in a broad range of heritage initiatives relevant to the Grey Roots Museum and Archives, Gilbert has been a truly indispensable member of the museum community, and it is widely acknowledged that without Gilbert's efforts, several significant pieces of Ontario history would have been lost.



In addition to a career as a mechanic and fire fighter and his behind-the-scenes work at the museum, Gilbert has served as an educator, both to the public and to those currently working in the heritage sector. Generous with his time, he has shared the stories and expertise he has gathered over his lifetime about many facets of local history with visitors, museum employees, and the volunteer blacksmiths who staff the replica of his father's blacksmith shop. He is a volunteer whose hard work has resulted in the preservation of Ontario's material and documentary heritage, and whose love of Ontario heritage is apparent, ensuring that the history he has helped preserve is enjoyed and appreciated.

"Gilbert Rice is the embodiment of selfless and tireless public service on behalf of community heritage.... His contributions have made significant improvements to what and how we understand and present our heritage, locally and as part of this province."

-Petal Furness, Manager, Grey Roots Museum and Archives

Volunteer Service Award of Excellence Honourable Mention

Tania Gilchrist Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre



Looking to make a meaningful contribution in her retirement, Tania Gilchrist came to the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre as a volunteer in 2002. Since then, she has contributed thousands of hours to the museum taking on major cataloguing tasks, and providing over twenty hours a week of support to the museum. Having begun volunteering with the museum while it was in the midst of a major move, Tania soon became a crucial member of the collections team, and was involved in the reorganization this move required. She has completed several multi-year collections projects, and continues to do so, in addition to lending a hand with other museum tasks. She works closely with museum staff, and has also been responsible for educating new staff and volunteers, ensuring that they are capable of completing the collections tasks to the same high standards the museum has come to expect during her time there.

Tania has the respect and appreciation of the museum staff, who acknowledge how much more difficult, if not impossible, their jobs would be without all the meticulous and thorough work Tania has done for the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre.

"Though all [her] projects take place behind the scenes out of the public eye, Tania's efforts directly affect what the public does see and experience... Knowing the story behind every object, and being able to access that story in a timely manner is key."

-Janice Mewhinney, Business Manager, Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre

Excellence in Community Engagement

Britt Welter-Nolan

The OMA Award of Excellence in Community Engagement is presented to individuals, institutions, corporations, or agencies that have increased the community's engagement with the museum or institution.

Britt Welter-Nolan receives the OMA Award of Excellence in Community Engagement for her work on Myseum of Toronto's *Myseum Intersections*, a Greater Toronto Area-wide festival of exhibits. This festival richly brought to life Myseum of Toronto's mandate to be a decentralized, community-driven museum of Toronto's past, present and future, involving participatory curation and producing a sense of ownership for all Torontonians.

In March, 2016, Britt facilitated Myseum of Toronto's engagement with twenty-five different community partners to co-create projects which were presented across Toronto. Including talks, tours, programs, exhibits, and other events, these projects presented the art, music, culture, social issues, stories, folklife, and history of Toronto. Britt Welter-Nolan worked hard to ensure that *Myseum Intersections*, described as an "all-you-can-eat buffet" of Toronto culture, featured a broad cross-section of Toronto life, showcasing the many places where cultures meet, interact, and grow. Receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback, *Myseum Intersections* reached approximately 15,000 people, and inspired visitors to become involved in the negotiation of the city's understanding of its cultural heritage and legacy. Having achieved so much in its first year, we look forward to seeing what Britt and Myseum of Toronto will produce next.



"Myseum Intersections... demonstrates an innovative approach to city museum building that is nimble enough to consider past, present and future and creates a platform for Torontonians to share infinite perspectives."

-Christina Zeidler, Chief Alchemist, Gladstone Hotel

Excellence in Exhibitions

Breaking the Silence: Stories of the British Home Children, 1869-1948 **Black Creek Pioneer Village**

The OMA Award of Excellence in Exhibitions is presented to individuals, institutions, corporations, or agencies for the creation of an exceptional and engaging exhibition.



Launched in July 2014, Black Creek Pioneer Village's exhibition *Breaking the Silence: Stories of the British Home Children, 1869-1948* presented the untold story of the Home Children, children and teenagers who were sent from orphanages and workhouses in the United Kingdom to serve as indentured domestic and farm labourers in Canada, and from whom approximately 10% of the population of Canada is descended.

This exhibition is notable for the scholarship required to access these stories. Partly due to the shame many former Home Children felt, as a result of the stigma and abuse they had endured, very little research had been done on the subject. Black Creek Pioneer Village had certainly never addressed this element of Canadian history, and, having nothing relevant to the Home Children's stories in their collections, they partnered with the British Home Children Advocacy and Research Association and reached out to the surrounding community, sourcing all of their material from community members and descendants of Home Children. This project has proven to be an excellent example of how Black Creek Pioneer Village's work to develop and expand the definition of what it means to be a pioneer allows it to continue to strengthen its connection with the community.

Praised for its emotional impact, *Breaking the Silence: Stories of the British Home Children, 1869-1948* featured personal accounts of the Home Children's little-talked about experiences, bringing to life voices and stories which had long been silenced by shame and secrecy, but which are directly relevant to a large portion of Ontario's population.

"As the exhibition title suggests, 'ordinary people' who previously had no voice now speak for themselves, recounting their experiences, struggles and accomplishments. Although they are now deceased, BCPV has, through this exhibition, enabled British Home Children to reclaim and affirm their lives."

-Elizabeth Price, Development Manager, Multicultural History Society of Ontario

Excellence in Special Projects *WOW Distinction*

In Flanders Fields at 100: Time to Remember Guelph Museums

The OMA Award of Excellence in Special Projects is presented to individuals, institutions, corporations or agencies for innovative initiatives, or new approaches or techniques that advance the museum profession.

With 2015 marking the centenary of the publication of Guelph-born John McCrae's poem, "In Flanders Fields," Guelph Museums embarked on a special project to commemorate McCrae and the writing of his poem. This project encompassed an extraordinary number of projects and initiatives, earning it the OMA's WOW Distinction for being truly exceptional. These projects, requiring partnerships with a diverse set of community organizations, other museums, and sectors of the municipal government, included the installation of a new statue of John McCrae, a new permanent exhibition gallery at McCrae House, a digital story map, a juried art show, a theatrical production, a tea and tour program, multiple publications, a travelling exhibit, and a remembrance ceremony shared by live webcast with the In Flanders Fields Museum in Ypres, Belgium.



The fact that McCrae is a beloved, but well-worn, subject for Guelph residents makes the level of engagement *In Flanders Fields at 100* received from locals, as well as visitors from elsewhere in Ontario, Canada, and abroad, all the more remarkable. Guelph Museums saw significant increases in visitation, revenue, memberships, and online access to their collections database, and in addition to having to develop further initiatives in response to the high degree of engagement from the community, *In Flanders Fields at 100: Time to Remember* inspired separate community organizations to develop their own related programming. The many approaches Guelph Museums took in working to connect visitors to John McCrae's legacy set an excellent example for museums in Ontario.

"The approach of the 100th anniversary of the writing of McCrae's iconic battlefield poem presented an enormous and unique opportunity to commemorate it and its impact in the birthplace of its author. Guelph seized this opportunity passionately and with impact that will endure."

-Guelph Mercury, November 5, 2016

Excellence in Programs

Discovering Kaná:ta: Exploring the Culture and History of the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations) Niagara Falls Museums & Chiefswood National Historic Site

The OMA Award of Excellence in Programs is presented to individuals, institutions, corporations, or agencies for programming that creatively engages new audiences, or provides exemplary service to existing ones.

The *Discovering Kaná:ta: Exploring the Culture and History of the Haudenosaunee* program, described as Niagara Falls Museums' "first step in polishing the covenant chain" with the Niagara region's First Nations communities, was an innovative educational initiative, bringing First Nations-led programming to local schoolchildren. Characterized as a true partnership between Niagara Falls Museums and Chiefswood

National Historic Site, the two organizations built on one another's strengths to ensure that high-quality, engaging programming could be presented by First Nations educators. Running for a week, the program featured half-day sessions about various elements of Haudenosaunee culture, which were facilitated by Niagara Falls Museums, but led entirely by First Nations Chiefswood staff. The staff of the Niagara Falls Museums had initially intended to be able to lead the program themselves, but quickly realized that the Chiefswood staff's ability to use first-person language when talking about First Nations culture had a much greater impact on both their First Nations and non-First Nations students, and adjusted their plans for the program accordingly.



The development of this program will have a lasting effect on both the Ontario museum community, and on the local Niagara community: the program is highly replicable, and can serve as a template for programming in which First Nations voices are heard, and the success of this partnership has led to a commitment by the Niagara Falls Museums to include First Nations content in their programming whenever possible.

"It was a great activity. The students were able to meet and listen to First (Six) Nations presenters that made all of what we are learning so relevant. Wonderful for them to participate in the centres!"

-Deborah Zelic, Teacher, Cherrywood Acres

Excellence in Programs Honourable Mention

The Travelling Museum St. Catharines Museum & Welland Canals Centre

Recognising the need for accessible, affordable museum-based education in the schools in and around St. Catharines, the St. Catharines Museum & Welland Canals Centre developed *The Travelling Museum*, a free program which brings museum content to schools. As many of these schools do not have the resources to conduct field trips to museums, and as the St. Catharines Museum & Welland Canals Centre is difficult to access by transit even within St. Catharines, *The Travelling Museum* is an effective way to address this need.

By creating a museum program which is responsive to schools' needs, and tailoring activities to each location, *The Travelling Museum* has done an excellent job of engaging new audiences. This program continues to take into account the needs of its audiences, and has recently expanded to include programming designed for a broader range of student ages, as well as programming for seniors. *The Travelling Museum* is particularly notable for delivering hands-on programming in which students "become the curators." After learning about how museums tell stories and maintain collections, students get to handle artifacts from the education collection, catalog them, and present them to the class, explaining how the artifact fits in with the story of the community. This approach, which not only brings the museum to students, but allows them to try out the work that museums do, and learn the importance of museums to the community, will have a lasting impact on the students, and on the future of museums in Ontario.

"Handling artifacts from the Museum's education collection (with their white gloves on) gave students a different picture of Museums – instead of places full of old things they couldn't touch, they got an up-close look at the artifacts and realized that these objects were made and used by people like them."

-Kaitlin Paddock, Teacher, Harriet Tubman Public School

