

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 2015 Awards of Excellence!

Distinguished Career Award of Excellence

Cathy Blackbourn

Instructor, Museum Studies, University of Toronto

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.

Cathy has used her career to champion education and community engagement in every role she has filled: as an Instructor in Museum Studies at the University of Toronto, as Museum and Heritage Advisor for the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (2011-2014), at the Ontario Museum Association as Professional Development Program Manager (1998-2011), at the Joseph Schneider Haus Museum as Education Coordinator (1987-1998) and in other roles.

Always a champion of collaboration, over the past 30 years, Cathy has shifted the professional development landscape, redefined standards and guidelines for Ontario museums, she has been an educator, produced timely resources, and has assumed the unofficial role of mentor to all.



"Her longstanding interest in and commitment to mentoring and the development of the next generation of museum workers has clearly borne fruit... So often the age cohorts in our field keep themselves apart from one another... Cathy Blackbourn has been able to bridge that gap again and again."

- M. Christine Castle, Ph.D. Consultant & Educator

Excellence in Programs

Conflict Resolution Workshops The Diefenbunker: Canada's Cold War Museum

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 Diefenbunker's conflict resolution workshops are an immersive program to help youth in Ottawa learn important conflict resolution skills and the lessons of the Cold War. The Diefenbunker worked with schools to develop an approach that goes beyond a single visit, to have multiple components at school and in the museum, and ultimately to be effective within the community. The principles, designed by program partner YOUCAN, are "Respond Not React," "Know Your Stuff," "Listen, Listen, Listen," and "Judgement, not Judgement." At the Diefenbunker, the students participate in a world conflict lockdown scenario. They are given roles of members of the Canadian Government in scenarios adapted from actual training materials used in the 1980s to prepare politicians and civilians to operate Canada's government from inside the Diefenbunker. Back at school the students participate in a dialogue peace circle where they reflect on what they learned and how these skills can be used in their day-to-day lives.

From September 2014 to February 2015, the Diefenbunker trained over 750 youth in grades 7 and 8 in conflict resolution. This program demonstrates the Diefenbunker's commitment to creative programming and the museum's social work role.

"The Diefenbunker's Conflict Resolution program stands out as an exceptional, effective and innovative program that exceeds accepted standards of both museum and educational practice."

- Diana Carter, Ottawa Museum Network



Excellence in Exhibitions

Dear Sadie: Love, Lives and Remembrance from Ontario's First World War

Archives of Ontario *Dear Sadie* Exhibit Team

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



The exhibition, *Dear Sadie: Love, Lives, and Remembrance from Ontario's First World War*, opened in October 2014. This exhibit demonstrated that learning about wars through archives is more than just using war records to tell a story. The unique archival collections, with diaries, photographs, and ephemera, tell a human story of war through the words and images of families and people who lived in the time. In a busy commemorative space, *Dear Sadie* stands out and tells Ontario-based stories that inform, intrigue, and engage.

The theme of *Love* in the exhibit is represented by a series of letters between Sadie Arbuckle, an office worker, and Lieutenant Harry Mason, who wrote to each other until Mason was killed in action in 1917. *Lives* features Medical Corps records from Toronto surgeon Lawrence Bruce Robertson who chronicled stories from the men and women who tended to the injured and severely wounded. *Remembrance* is invoked by using the memoirs of Private John Mould who fought in some of the most famous battles of WWI.

Through media exposure, the Archives was able to connect with Sadie's family and have them attend the launch of the exhibit. In addition to the on-site exhibit, *Dear Sadie* is an online exhibit that has averaged over 2,000 visitors per month since its launch in 2014 and a travelling exhibit that is booked through 2016.

"Bravo. My compliments to all your team – you made history relevant, attainable, tangible, and about the individuals that made up a 'world' war."

- Dear Sadie exhibit visitor

Excellence in Publications

The Manual of Museum Exhibitions, 2nd Edition Barry Lord and Maria Piacente, Co-editors

The OMA Award of Excellence in Publications is presented to individuals, institutions, corporations or agencies for materials that are distinguished by their design and content.

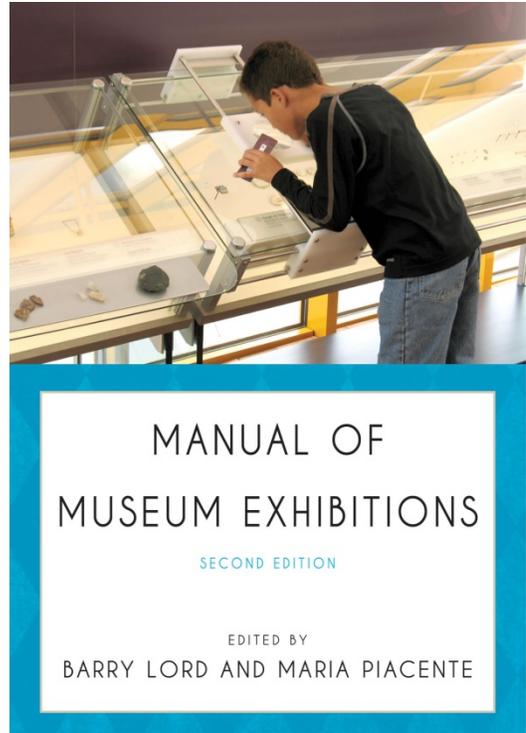
The Second Edition of the Manual of Museum Exhibitions (2014), edited by Barry Lord and Maria Piacente and published by Rowman & Littlefield, is a comprehensive, accessible, and practical manual that outlines the exhibition development process from inception to opening day. It provides the technical and practical methodologies museum professionals need today. The second edition was written to address the rapidly changing landscape of modern museum exhibitions and the tools that are required to make any exhibition, of any budget and size, a success.

Lord Cultural Resources created the concept and outline for the book which includes definitions, theory, tools, explanations, and case studies from all over the world of different exhibit types to illustrate the exhibition development process from diverse angles and perspectives. Barry Lord and Maria Piacente of Lord Cultural Resources are the co-editors of the book. Seventeen museum professionals from Canada and the United States, in addition to the co-editors, contributed chapters for the book.

The Manual of Museum Exhibitions has been out for a little over a year, and has already sold over 1,500 copies worldwide – a major milestone in the museum publishing field.

"I see it as a valuable source of proven knowledge that can be immediately used by just not all museum organizations and museum professionals but is a contribution of knowledge to any professional or organization that is planning and developing a visitor experience in a three-dimensional space."

- James C Hungerford, CEO Xibitz Inc.



Excellence in Community Engagement

Sikh Heritage Month at PAMA, April 2015 Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives

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.

The Spirit of the Sikhs was the theme of Sikh Heritage Month at Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives (PAMA). This month-long series of exhibits and events was organized through partnerships with the Sikh Heritage Museum of Canada, sikhmuseum.org, and the collaboration of community volunteers. There was much brainstorming, dreaming, imagining and creative ideas for using the PAMA spaces - all in historic buildings - in new and creative ways.

The Art Gallery, Museum, and Archives were all engaged in the month's events, including 9 lectures; 7 workshops; 2 performances, 3 one-day exhibits, and one film showing. In total they drew an attendance of 4,500 visitors. As a lasting legacy, there are now two permanent panels in the Peel Gallery describing the contribution of Sikhs to winning WWI and II, with a focus on Private Buckham Singh, the first Sikh to serve in the Canadian military.

This event was accomplished through an amazing amount of goodwill, hard-work, creativity and determination. It had a true community spirit. Sikh and non-Sikh visitors alike shared art, heritage and culture with each other, gaining a better understanding of the history and culture of their local community.

" [This project was a] model for true community partnership and shared authority."
- Jayme Gaspar, Heritage Mississauga



Excellence in Community Engagement – Honorable Mention

The Kenora Great War Project Lake of the Woods Museum



The Lake of the Woods Museum, with its partners local genealogy group the Ancestor Seekers of Kenora and the Kenora Public Library, embarked on a World War I centenary commemorative project. A comprehensive database as part of the Canadian Great War Project and a temporary museum exhibit entitled *Husbands, Sons and Sweethearts: The Kenora Great War Project*, were created based on research conducted by 29 community members. Production of the exhibit

involved local high school students and members of the community who donated artifacts, models and documentation. The exhibit and database were a heart-rending record of the community's involvement in a war that claimed the lives of 176 local lads and forever changed the lives of over another 1,400 local men and their families.