

From the August 2013 Beacon
Dedicated volunteers receive Ontario Heritage Awards

Two deserving volunteers from St. Clair Township were recently honoured with Ontario Cultural Heritage Awards during the July 3 meeting of St. Clair Township Council.

Catherine Bouman was recognized with the Certificate of Achievement for over 10 years of volunteer work as a dedicated volunteer member of the Sombra Museum board and the Sombra Historical Society. She undertook the reorganization of the Reference/Research room at the museum and updates the files when information becomes available. She assists visitors with genealogy research and spends many hours answering email requests. The value of her work helping visitors discover the missing pieces of their roots is obvious from the appreciative reactions her efforts receive.

Catherine's greatest achievement was participating on the Vision Committee for over two-and-a-half years, assisting with the arduous task of moving artefacts from the old Sombra Museum building into the new facility, helping assemble the exhibits and then assisting with the grand opening of the facility. She helps with fundraising efforts as well. Outside the museum, Catherine is involved in the community, participating in the conservation and preservation of the Sombra area. She and her husband recently planted 100 trees in a local natural habitat area.

Bob Johnson received the Certificate of Lifetime Achievement for his exceptional contributions to cultural heritage during his 20 years as an outstanding volunteer at the Moore Museum. Bob has played an important role in helping to double the number of historic exhibit buildings on the museum site. He has volunteered thousands of hours to moving heritage buildings onto the site and to helping restore them. Some of the buildings he has worked on include the blacksmith shop, the former Mooretown railroad station, the former Trinity Anglican Church in Mooretown, the wooden CNR caboose, and the Basswood Block.

Bob is also involved in general maintenance, an ongoing job that includes the care of 13 buildings. And for 19 years, Bob served on the Moore Museum Advisory Committee, as well as the Building Sub-Committee. Even though he recently retired from this role, he continues to actively volunteer.

Moore Museum programming also benefits from Bob's involvement. He has demonstrated rope-making for hundreds of visitors over the years and is a useful helper in the fundraising food booth when there is barbecuing to be done.

During the presentation of these awards, Mayor Arnold said, "It is an honour to recognize people who have worked so hard and done so much for the community over the years."

