

HERITAGE CORNER

MOORE MUSEUM CURATOR LAURIE MASON RETIRING AFTER 36 YEARS OF SERVICE

One of St. Clair Township's long-time caretakers of local heritage is retiring after over 36 years of service. Moore Museum Curator Laurie Mason had her last day of work on April 29.

Laurie was honoured for her service at a Heritage St. Clair meeting in early April, where she was praised for her tireless commitment to the preservation of local history and her caring stewardship of the Moore Museum.

To acknowledge Laurie's love of the museum site and the heritage represented by the carefully preserved



Above: Retiree Laurie Mason is presented with a canvas photo of the old schoolhouse. Built in 1887 for School Section #13, Dawn Township, the one-room school served the education needs of local children until schools were centralized in the mid-1960s. The school was moved to the Moore Museum site on Aug. 13, 1991, and renovated back to its earlier appearance.

buildings that have been established there, Committee Member Dave Taylor presented her with a canvas print of her favourite building, the school house.

The group also assembled a memory album filled with photographs of the years she spent overseeing the operation of the museum. It recalled the many events held at the site, and the educational programs that introduced

school children and adults alike to the rich and varied history of Moore Township and, after the amalgamation of Moore and Sombra Townships, the newly formed Township of St. Clair Township.

Dave Taylor praised Laurie for her dedication to her role as curator. "Laurie's patience with volunteers and the public was wonderful," he said, adding, "Her knowledge of the Moore Museum and its archives of Lambton County history is extensive."

Laurie's excellent service to the Moore Museum was noted by Deputy Mayor Steve Miller. "Thank you, Laurie, for all your years of dedicated service to our community. May you have a long and happy retirement," he said. Linda Wood, a long-time staff member at the Moore Muse-

um, said, "I worked with Laurie for over 30 years. She was dedicated to the Museum collection and its educational programming, and for all that we provided for the public. We had sad times and lots of funny and joyous times. She watched out for the safety of her staff and volunteers, and we will miss her very much. We wish her blessings for her retirement."

Over the years, hundreds of school children have come to know Laurie as a brilliant interpreter of pioneer life as it was in the early days of what is now St. Clair Township. She was never on the sidelines when it came to the welfare of the museum, and was always willing to roll up her sleeves to help. From helping to prepare lunch for the Tuesday volunteers who make sure the museum site is always in good repair, to serving hot dogs to hungry Downriver Craft Sale visitors, she pitched in whenever needed.

Now that Laurie has more time to focus on other pursuits, she will, no doubt, have more time to focus her binoculars on the varying species of birds she loves to watch, and more time to work on the gardens she loves to plant and nurture. And come Sunday, she'll have more time to share her faith with the children she loves to teach at Sunday School.

Bonnie Stevenson photos



Above: Another special gift Laurie received was a book filled with photo memories of her career at Moore museum, plus notes from her many friends who share her love of local heritage.



Laurie and a museum helper joke around in the kitchen during food preparation (and quality control) for a volunteer appreciation dinner.

Museum gets new curator

As of May 30, the Moore Museum will have a new curator. Fiona Doherty will take over the position from retiring curator, Laurie Mason.

Fiona has worked at the Moore Museum as a

museum assistant for the past three-and-a-half years, so she is familiar with the operation of the museum and those who volunteer there.

Newly updated Heritage St. Clair page features map showing historic plaques and storyboards situated throughout the township

Heritage St. Clair has updated its page on the St. Clair Township website, and one of the features now on view St. Clair Township's Historic Points of Interest map. This interactive map points out the locations of these colourful and educational installations and includes photographs of them so you'll be sure not to miss them. Here's a link you can use to go directly to St. Clair Township's Historical Points of Interest page:

<http://stclairtownship.ca/st-clair-townships-historical-points-of-interest/>