

Alberta Historical Resources Foundation announces 2014 Heritage Awards recipients

The outstanding efforts of Alberta's "heritage heroes" and the work of local organizations to preserve the province's rich history were recognized on Oct. 16 with the announcement of the 2014 Alberta Historical Resources Foundation Heritage Awards. Awards were presented during ceremonies held in Red Deer as part of the 2014 Municipal Heritage Forum.

Recipient: Oliver Glanfield (Fort Chipewyan)

Category: Outstanding Achievement

For more than 20 years, Oliver Glanfield has worked tirelessly promoting the community of Fort Chipewyan (the oldest European settlement in Alberta) and its central historical place in early explorations of the west and in the Canadian fur trade. He is a devoted and selfless volunteer who delights in educating the public about northern Alberta's rich heritage and vibrant past. Through his efforts within the Fort Chipewyan Historical Society, he was instrumental both in the creation of the Fort Chipewyan Bi-Centennial Museum and in reinforcing its outstanding reputation. Since the Museum opened in 1990, Oliver has volunteered countless hours as curator, tour guide, and caretaker. He was recognized by his community in 2009 with a Distinguished Citizenship Award; this Outstanding Achievement Award recognizes Oliver's faithful dedication to preserving his region's rich history.

Recipient: Marshall Rolling (Fairview)

Category: Outstanding Achievement

As the go-to historian, curator and archivist in the community of Fairview, Marshall Rolling continues to play a vital role in efforts to preserve and interpret the history of the Fairview region. A collector since the late 1950s, Marshall has helped fill two museums; the downtown RCMP Centennial Museum and the Pioneer Museum at Cummings Lake. His collections of photographs illustrate in vivid detail Fairview's past in the three-volume local history, Heart of the Peace. His mechanical handiness has been put to good use in rescuing, restoring, and displaying early pioneer tools and equipment. Marshall Rolling has been a vigorous participant in the Fairview area's growth and wellness, and is locally heralded for his accomplishments in interpreting its past.

Recipient: Glenys Smith (Camrose)

Category: Outstanding Achievement

Glenys Smith has been the volunteer caretaker, administrator, and operations assistant for the Camrose Heritage Railway Station and Park since 1999. Her commitment to sharing the story of Camrose history extends throughout the community as she has gone on to develop the Morgan Garden Miniature Railway and community historic gardens. Glenys is also the steward of local archival and artifact collections and researches, collects, and documents the stories of the region's past and historical personalities. With the help of her husband Bruce, Glenys established Prairie Fun Days – two-day exploration of Camrose County history involving local businesses, schools, government, and Tourism Camrose in heritage awareness. Involved in a long-list of heritage-related activities too numerous to mention in detail, Glenys enthusiastically shares her vast knowledge and love of the region's history, bringing the past to life for a new generation of Albertans.

Recipient: Wheatland County

Project: Gleichen Water Tower, Gleichen

Category: Heritage Conservation

The efforts of Wheatland County to preserve the historic Gleichen Water Tower are being recognized with the presentation of a 2014 Heritage Conservation Award. Designated as a

Provincial Historic Resource in 2008, the Gleichen Water Tower is an exceptional example of the conservation of an industrial structure. Wheatland County undertook a project that was particularly challenging given the size of the water tower, the advanced state of deterioration, and the limited potential for adaptive re-use. The project exemplifies conservation principles and practices through the extensive retention of historic fabric, replacement in-kind where appropriate, and the upgrading of structural components with negligible impact on the historic design. Conservation of this landmark has a far-reaching visual impact and the commitment of substantial financial resources and staff expertise from Wheatland County was instrumental in this project's successful outcome.

Recipient: CommunityWise Resource Centre

Project: Old YWCA, Calgary

Category: Heritage Conservation

Restoring the façade of the Old YWCA building to its original Georgian design addressed two issues: it remedied an unsafe, deteriorating porch and entryway, while creating an authentic interface with the streetscape that reinforces the historical importance of the Beltline area of Calgary. As the building houses and hosts the activities of over 80 community groups, the Old YWCA three level porch is a beautiful and welcoming feature that grounds 12th Avenue's heritage, even as the surrounding area undergoes rapid development. The Old YWCA was designated as a Provincial Historic Resource in 1980.

Recipient: Emerson Sanford and Janice Sanford Beck (Canmore)

Project: Life of the Trail Publication Series

Category: Heritage Awareness

This co-authored eight-volume series was completed by a father-daughter team sharing an exhaustive knowledge of the history of travel in the Canadian Rockies, from Jasper/Mount Robson in the north to the Kananaskis Lakes in the south. The history is told one trail at a time, providing extensive background information that enhances today's backcountry hiking experience. These volumes explore early Native use of the trails, and relate the period from the first recorded entry into the mountains by David Thompson in 1800 through the 1930's. The Life of the Trail series provides a unique description of the early travel and exploration of the Rocky Mountains.

Recipient: Edmonton Historical Board

Project: Edmonton's Architectural Heritage website

Category: Heritage Awareness

Launched in November 2013, Edmonton's Architectural Heritage website is an excellent example of outreach work within the heritage field. The site explores architectural traditions in the city through various images of local buildings and styles, while historical context, informed by archival sources is supplied for each time period. Providing basic information that increases the public's historical and architectural literacy means users engage more fully with their surroundings and with the city's past. Cleanly designed and easy to use, the site is an entertaining wealth of information for history buffs, from beginners to veteran historians.

Recipient: Fort Saskatchewan Historical Society

Project: Peoples of the North Saskatchewan Festival

Category: Heritage Awareness

For the past six years, the Fort Saskatchewan Historical Society has organized the Peoples of the North Saskatchewan, a two-day festival celebrating the vital role of the North Saskatchewan River and its people in the development of Alberta. The festival continues to grow in popularity, particularly among area students. The 2014 edition of the festival welcomed 700 young Albertans each day of the event. Offering a variety of outdoor stations, the festival encourages attendees to participate in many pioneer activities including blacksmithing, candle making, laundry and wood sawing. The festival also features a First Nations and Métis component, enhancing awareness and knowledge of both the pre-contact and post-contact periods. Supported by 200 volunteers working for months in advance to prepare information, costumes, music, and equipment, the Peoples of the North Saskatchewan Festival has quickly become a must-see Fort Saskatchewan summer tradition.

Recipient: Jonathan Koch (Olds)

Project: Forgotten Alberta Project

Category: Heritage Awareness

Forgottenalberta.com is making a valuable contribution to preserving Alberta's rich heritage by chronicling areas of the province often overlooked. Many of the towns, villages, schoolhouses, and railway sidings that once dotted the southeastern Alberta landscape over a century ago are either gone or in considerable disrepair. Jonathan Koch's efforts in researching the varied aspects of this history and telling their stories online through photographs, blog postings, and an interactive map is expanding our understanding and appreciation of Alberta's past. Koch continues to grow the Forgotten Alberta audience by contributing articles to in a number of newspapers and journals while assisting organizations and municipalities in identifying important sites in southeast Alberta for inclusion in the Alberta Government's Heritage Marker program.

Recipient: Honourable Mention: St. Jean Baptiste Historical Society, McLennan

Project: Retrouvailles 100th Anniversary Homecoming, 1912-2012

Category: Heritage Awareness

The St. Jean Baptiste Historical Society prepared for Retrouvailles 100th Anniversary Homecoming by doing research on the first pioneer families in the area. To mark the occasion, the society also worked to develop a history book, designed and produced souvenirs, assembled exhibits, set up bus tours of key sites and organized a celebratory parade. The public outreach was exceptional with over 6000 people in attendance over the course of the three-day event honouring Smoky River pioneers. The society's event engaged the public, other organizations, and the surrounding municipalities while enhancing the understanding and awareness of local history to a broad audience.

Recipient: City of Medicine Hat

Category: Municipal Heritage Preservation

From its four National Historic Sites to its diverse local inventory of 63 sites with seven Municipal Historic Resources, the City of Medicine Hat has, in challenging circumstances, made great strides in recognizing and managing the community's rich heritage. Through the Heritage Resources Committee along with significant public engagement, the City has undertaken a complex group of projects to protect and promote its built heritage and landscapes. This included establishing a Municipal Historic Area on 1st Street, identifying the city's heritage trees, and implementing the Centennial Certificate program to commemorate century-old buildings. Medicine Hat has worked hard to bring heritage to the forefront in the aftermath of the June 2013 flood and support owners of damaged historic buildings. The City's commitment to built heritage was underscored by its purchase of the McKenzie Sharland Grocery - saving this rare and important structure from demolition following the flood.

Recipient: Honourable Mention: Town of Peace River

Category: Municipal Heritage Preservation

In 2010, the Town of Peace River embarked on a heritage program to preserve the wealth of historic resources within the community, capturing the period from the fur trade through to the 1960s. The program enjoys the support and involvement of a number of stakeholders, including the Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre (the PRMA); town staff and council; the Heritage Places Committee; and a wealth of local informants and community members. Laura Gloor, Museum Coordinator, and others have led the charge in managing the Northern Alberta Railway Station, refurbishing the Twelve Foot Davis Gravesite, and promoting the identification and restoration of local heritage resources.