

Alberta Historical Resources Foundation announces 2016 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 October 14 at the 2016 Alberta Historical Resources Foundation Heritage Awards.

Recipient: Dr. Don Hepburn (Red Deer)

Category: Outstanding Achievement

One of the founding members of the Central Alberta Historical Society, Don Hepburn has served two terms as the organization's president. His knowledge and passion have helped to sustain the organization as one of the most active in the province. A mainstay on the Programs Committee, Don contributed to numerous initiatives and was a driving force behind the popular Spring Heritage Bus Tours. Preserving and creating awareness, Dr. Hepburn also helped to bring the story of Central Alberta to a broader audience, assisting in the marketing efforts for six publications dedicated to local history. His dedication is seen in numerous heritage related efforts volunteering his time freely for projects including the Central Alberta Heritage School Fairs, Red Deer Centennial Committee and Remembering the Children.

Recipient: Dr. Howard Fredeen (Lacombe)

Category: Outstanding Achievement

The Lacombe Globe has described Dr. Howard Fredeen as "one of Lacombe's most gifted historians" and that talent and passion has shone through in the six volumes of local history he has been involved in as writer and editor. Dr. Fredeen's dedication to preserving and sharing the rich history of Lacombe is evident as both a founder and committed member of the Lacombe and District Historical Society. Dr. Fredeen has not only worked to preserve history, but has made some of his own, recognized with both the Genetics Society of Canada Award for Excellence and the American Board of Human Development's National Health Development Award for his work in the human genetic fields. Dr. Fredeen's research in specific gene functions in cattle and swine at the Lacombe Research Station, as well as his work on the Human Genome Project are among the hallmarks of his illustrious career and a source of pride for the community.

Recipient: Jean Johnstone (Lethbridge)

Category: Outstanding Achievement

Jean Johnstone has played an integral role in the preservation and awareness of Lethbridge history in her many roles within the local heritage community. Jean currently serves as co-chair of the Plaques and Monuments Committee of the Lethbridge Historical Society as well as vice-chair and founding member of the City of Lethbridge Historical Places Advisory Committee. Her commitment to preserving Lethbridge history is further evidenced in her participation in the Save Chinatown Committee and the Galt Museum and Archives Cultural History Committee. With her depth of knowledge and enthusiasm for local history, Jean has also stepped up as guide for the Downtown Lethbridge History and Beer Tour. Jean is also a past president of the Lethbridge Historical Society and a past vice-president of the Historical Society of Alberta.

Recipient: Nancy Millar (Calgary)

Category: Outstanding Achievement

After years spent digging for stories as a reporter, editor and broadcaster, Nancy Millar now employs her journalistic skills to uncover the stories of Alberta's past. Her first effort, a cookbook featuring historical photos and anecdotes, was co-authored with members of her family and became a bestseller. That early success led the development of Deadwood Publishing and a further nine titles including "The Famous Five" and "The Unmentionable History of the West". Much of the research compiled during the writing of the books now resides in Calgary's Glenbow Museum, donated by the author. The author and playwright also contributes her time, energy, creativity and passion to the YWCA, Grace Hospital Board, Calgary Knights of the Round Table and the Famous Five Foundation.

Recipient: Honourable Mention – Elizabeth and Bill Bullick (Coronation)

Category: Outstanding Achievement

Elizabeth and Bill Bullick are stalwarts of the Coronation and area heritage community volunteering countless hours as members of the Coronation and District Historical and Museum Society since the organization's inception in 1993. From the care and collection of artifacts to maintaining the museum building and the grounds of Heritage Park, the couple's dedication to preserving and sharing the region's history is abundantly clear.

Recipient: Glen Leslie Church Preservation Group (County of Grande Prairie)

Project: Glen Leslie Church restoration

Category: Heritage Conservation

Serving as both a house of worship and the local school house, for 49 years the Glen Leslie Church near Bezanson was the centre of its rural community. The same cooperative spirit that led to its construction in 1915 is as strong as ever as more than 100 years later, with the Glen Leslie Church Preservation Group undertaking the painstaking restoration of the cherished landmark. Designated a Provincial Historic Resource in 2011, the Glen Leslie Church continues to bring the story of settlement of the South Peace Region to life, thanks to the efforts of the conservation minded citizens of the County of Grande Prairie.

Recipient: Empress and District Historical Society (Empress)

Project: Canadian Pacific Railway Station restoration

Category: Heritage Conservation

For those wishing to be transported back in time, a visit to the Canadian Pacific Railway Station in Empress is a good place to start the journey. Thousands of hours donated by members of the Empress and District Historical Society, have been spent crafting the high quality Douglas fir lumber salvaged from derelict farm buildings, with tools and time contributed by the local woodworking shop. From the original maple floors and baseboards to the window millwork and picture rails, every detail of the station has been carefully restored, right down to the matching of traces of original paint found intact on the exterior walls. Designated a Provincial Historic Resource in 2002, the station relates an important chapter in the region's history, keeping the past vibrantly alive for area residents and visitors.

Recipient: Crowsnest Heritage Initiative

Project: “Discover Crowsnest Heritage” Signage Program

Category: Heritage Awareness

A thoughtfully designed initiative, this coordinated signage program supports a self-guided heritage driving route and walking tours throughout the Crowsnest Pass. The program employs a comprehensive scope that includes multimedia, printed maps, brochures and a web portal with bold professional branding. Highly visible, the signage stands out to visitors travelling on the highway and is easily identified on buildings and orientation kiosks. Well-written and presented with illustrations from the exceptional archival resources of the Crowsnest Museum, locals and tourists alike will discover much of the region’s rich history.

Recipient: Haying in the 30’s Cancer Support Society

Project: “Haying in the 30’s” annual event

Category: Heritage Awareness

Since 1999, the Haying in the 30’s Cancer Support Society has been showcasing and celebrating Alberta’s heritage and robust farming traditions while raising funds to assist area residents fighting cancer. The Society has acquired, preserved, and restored a growing collection of buildings, farm equipment, tools, and other miscellaneous artifacts, staging their grounds to appear as it did in the 1930s. Numerous demonstrations highlight this annual event, showcasing historic harvesting techniques and approaches to educate and entertain visitors and allow younger generations to marvel and experience Alberta’s rich cultural heritage first hand. Attracting more than 7,000 visitors in 2015, the growing popularity of Haying in the 30’s is evidence of interest in the region’s rich history.

Recipient: Honourable Mention – Bear Lake Canuck Historical Society

Project: “Canuck Classic: The Story of a Treasured One-Room School”

Category: Heritage Awareness

No stone is left unturned as the reader learns of the history of the community, the origins of the one-room schoolhouse, and what it was like to grow up in Alberta between the 1920’s and 1950’s. Those looking for historical facts will not be disappointed and those looking for warm remembrances and first-hand historical accounts will be richly rewarded, thanks to the exhaustive research of Bear Lake Canuck Historical Society members. The story of Bear Lake’s schoolhouse is one that will strike a chord and rekindle the memories of many Albertans.

Recipient: Honourable Mention – Milo Library Archives

Project: Milo Library Archives On-Line Access Project

Category: Heritage Awareness

Milo is a village of 123 people. If you look it up on Google maps, you find a town three blocks by three blocks. This makes their achievement all that more remarkable. In designing the community’s new library in 2007, one basement room was set aside in hopes that a new archives would take root. Those hopes were realized as residents began dropping off boxes of historical material, each carton providing a glimpse into the past. The success of the effort has resulted in that one room growing to become an accredited archive; a member of the Archives Society of Alberta. The task of organizing those boxes of historical materials is complete and the results of that work is now available to the Milo residents and Albertans beyond the community borders online via AlbertaonRecord.ca.

Recipient: Municipal District of Big Horn No. 8

Category: Municipal Heritage Preservation

The Municipal District of Big Horn No. 8 continues to demonstrate its commitment to the conservation of the municipality's built heritage and the preservation of local history with a range of successful projects. The municipality's Heritage Resource Committee has completed work on the municipal heritage survey and inventory as well as a comprehensive management plan which will guide regional heritage preservation efforts. Conservation of local built heritage has included projects like the designation of the Morleyville Methodist Mission and the restoration of the Reddy Kilowatt floor from Seebe Settlement. The municipality has also worked to document and create greater awareness of the region's past through initiatives like a recent oral history project and the installation of memorial plaques at the Exshaw cemetery, honouring the region's early pioneers.

Recipient: Yellowhead County

Category: Municipal Heritage Preservation

Since 2011, Yellowhead County has been actively engaged in preserving and creating a greater awareness of the region's long and storied past. The County has established a Heritage Advisory Board that has completed work on a municipal heritage survey and inventory of local historic resources and has developed a heritage management plan for the municipality. The process of identifying suitable candidates for heritage designation is now underway. Recognizing the growing interest in heritage tourism, a bus tour of the region's historic Coal Branch area was initiated in 2015, capitalizing on the rich history and heritage of the Yellowhead region.

Recipient: Honourable Mention: Town of Raymond

Category: Municipal Heritage Preservation

The Town of Raymond established their Historical Resource Committee in 2011. Employing the principles of values based management, committee members developed a comprehensive context paper that was included a range of perspectives, focused on the history of Raymond's landscape. The context paper is held up as one of the most comprehensive produced by an Alberta municipality.