



Long-Time Newmarket History Advocate Recognized with Heritage Award

OHS Carnochan Award presented June 20, 2015
Aga Khan Ismaili Centre, North York, Ontario

For Immediate Release

In 1967, The Ontario Historical Society (OHS) established an awards program to recognize individuals, organizations, corporations and authors who have contributed significantly to the preservation and promotion of Ontario's heritage.

Dr. Ian Radforth, Chair of the Honours and Awards Committee of the OHS, is pleased to announce that the 2014 Carnochan Award, which recognizes an individual who has contributed many years of service to the heritage community, was awarded to **Athol Hart** of Newmarket.

Athol Hart has been an outstanding champion of historical preservation and heritage within his community of Newmarket and beyond. He has worked with the Chippewas of Mnjikaning First Nation and as a dedicated volunteer for many community organizations.



As a founder 35 years ago of the Alexander Muir Community Association, Hart has led its long campaign to protect Newmarket's Prospect Street residential neighbourhood, one of the town's oldest, by warding off threats of commercial encroachment and the loss of its wetland.

A member and former chair of Heritage Newmarket, Hart helped lead the charge to win the town's approval in 2014 to establish a Downtown Heritage Conservation District. His work as an activist and fundraiser has been instrumental in efforts to preserve heritage buildings such as the former Post Office and the Old Town Hall, and to prepare a heritage inventory available both in print and online.

Hart believes strongly in connecting younger generations to Canadian history. As such, he helps keep history alive through historical re-enactment. Foremost among his achievements is the highly successful production "Rebel Heartland," which brings alive the dramatic confrontation of 1837 in the Newmarket area. Hart has served variously as researcher, script-writer, performer, and promoter of this event, which has become part of Newmarket's branding and tourism initiatives.

Athol expresses his own Aboriginal heritage as "White Eagle" and he has worked to bridge the Aboriginal and archaeological communities in Ontario, particularly in connection with the Mnjikaning Fish Weirs National Historic Site near Orillia.

Athol's work as a volunteer extends into nearly every aspect of community life in Newmarket, having represented Elman W. Campbell House and Doors Open Newmarket; he is also an Elder in Residence at Seneca College.

The award was presented at the annual meeting of The Ontario Historical Society at the Aga Khan Ismaili Centre in North York.

Founded in 1888, the Ontario Historical Society is a non-profit corporation and registered charity dedicated to the preservation and celebration of Ontario's history for people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. To learn more about the OHS's Honours and Awards Program, or to submit a nomination, please visit www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/awards or contact the Society's offices by telephone or e-mail.

Photo caption: Pictured on June 14, 2014 (centre) is Athol Hart, flanked by OHS directors Robert Leech and Ian Radforth. *Photo Andrea Izzo, OHS*

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