



Township of Oro-Medonte Honoured with Provincial Heritage Award for Restoration of Oro African Methodist Episcopal Church

OHS President's Award presented June 10, 2017
York University Senate Chambers, Toronto, 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.

The President's Award recognizes an outstanding contribution to heritage conservation in Ontario's recent past. The Ontario Historical Society is pleased to present the 2016 President's Award to the **Township of Oro-Medonte** for its restoration of the Oro African Methodist Episcopal Church.



OHS President Caroline Di Cocco (far left) and Chair of the OHS Honours and Awards Committee Ian Radforth (far right) present Mayor of Oro-Medonte Harry Hughes and Oro-Medonte Supervisor, Communications & Customer Service Samah Othman with the 2016 President's Award.

In 2014, the long-neglected Oro African Church was in danger of collapse, notwithstanding the fact that in 2003 it was designated a National Historic Site. Oro-Medonte Township undertook a highly successful fundraising campaign to save the building. That campaign drew vital attention to the history of the early Black settlers of the area, many of whom defended Upper Canada during the War of 1812.

The conservation project re-established the building's structural integrity, moving it onto a new foundation. Much of the original fabric of the building was saved and the church's early appearance restored. In addition, the site was made attractive and visitor-friendly and the cemetery was restored. All this activity brought welcome national and international attention to an important aspect of Ontario history. The re-opening of the Oro African Church in August 2016 celebrated the way Canadians

came together to support the project and praised the strength of diversities of culture, religion, and race in Ontario.

The Honours and Awards Committee is proud to present the President's Award to the Township of Oro-Medonte. The award was presented at the Annual General Meeting of the Ontario Historical Society at the York University Senate Chambers in Toronto, Ontario.

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 <https://www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/index.php/categories> or contact the Society's offices by telephone or e-mail.

-The Ontario Historical Society-

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