

OHS Cemetery Preservation Award Presented to Ed Janiszewski for the Lakeshore Asylum Cemetery

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Cemetery Preservation Award recognizes individuals or a not-for-profit heritage organization that have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the preservation and protection of cemeteries in Ontario. The OHS is pleased to present the 2019-20 Cemetery Preservation Award to Ed Janiszewski for his extraordinary efforts to restore, preserve, and maintain the Lakeshore Asylum Cemetery.



Since 2004, Ed Janiszewski has been committed to reclaiming the names of some of society's most vulnerable citizens through his work at the Lakeshore Asylum Cemetery in Toronto. Largely forgotten after the psychiatric hospital closed in 1979, only a few of the more than 1,500 burials of those who died at the Mimico Asylum/ Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital were marked. Through his determination to ensure all those buried there were remembered, Ed transcribed all the death and burial records. Later, he helped organize the Lakeshore Asylum Cemetery Project, a group of volunteers dedicated to help maintain and improve the cemetery site. Their work resulted in the installation of a new entrance gate, black steel fence and historical plaques on the site. Ed's dedication to the Lakeshore Asylum Cemetery will ensure the names and memories of those who died at the former psychiatric

hospital will not be lost to history. The OHS Honours and Awards Committee is pleased to present the 2019 Cemetery Preservation Award to Ed Janiszewski.

IN ACCEPTING THE AWARD, MR. JANISZEWSKI RESPONDED:

I am honoured to receive this award, and thank the Honours and Awards Committee for selecting the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital Cemetery for distinction.

This project would not have been successful without the contribution of the many hours spent by volunteers and organizations. The members of the Psychiatric Survivor Archive of Toronto, led by Geoffrey Reaume, provided the impetus to organize the Lakeshore Asylum Project, and to include the members of "Among Friends", a program of the Lakeshore Area Multi-service Program. The initial director of Among Friends was Ms. Nancy Barkman, ably succeeded by Ms. Deborah Quiggin to the current day. Their organizing skills for the spring and fall visits to the cemetery have kept the community informed of the importance of respectful remembrance of those who were buried from the Lakeshore Hospital.

OHS's own pioneer of the preservation of Ontario's cemeteries, Marjorie Stuart, was a constant source of inspiration and encouragement.

I thank the researchers of the Ontario Genealogical Society, without whose 1992 publication about the grave markers, the project would have been much more difficult.

Support was appreciated from the New Toronto Historical Society member Paul Chomik; members of the Friends of the Archives at CAMH, especially archivist John Court and Board member Shirley Morriss; and Liberal MPP Ms. Laurel Broton, who was instrumental in having the Province reclaim, restore and maintain the property.

The tremendous efforts of the Last Post organization, whose researcher Judy Stockham revealed that 24 WW1 veterans had been buried at this paupers' gravesite, must be acknowledged. This not-for-profit organization paid for the installation of 23 new headstones to acknowledge their service to Canada. We await the public opening of the WW2 records to identify other veterans worthy of such recognition.

The future will involve collaboration with the "Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre" at Humber College's Lakeshore Campus, the former Hospital site, curated by Ms. Jennifer Bazar. With these individuals and organizations as well as the dozens of volunteers who over the years continue to memorialize this site, I share this honour.


I hope that our efforts have helped to reduce the stigma of mental illness and remind us of the contributions to society of those buried at the cemetery.

Sincerely, Ed Janiszewski

Founded in 1888, the Ontario Historical Society is a not-for-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://ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/honours-awards/> or contact the Society's offices by telephone or e-mail.

-The Ontario Historical Society-

Contact: Daniel Dishaw - ddishaw@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca - 416.226.9011

 @ONTARIOHISTORY  /ONTARIOHISTORICALSOCIETY  [ONTARIOHISTORICALSOCIETY.CA](https://ontariohistoricalsociety.ca)