



# OHS Cemetery Preservation Award Presented to The Cemetery Guardians for the Restoration of Wilson's Hill

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Ontario Historical Society is pleased to present the 2020-21 OHS Cemetery Preservation Award, which recognizes individuals or not-for-profit heritage organizations that have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the preservation and protection of cemeteries in Ontario, to The Cemetery Guardians for their outstanding efforts to restore, preserve, and maintain Wilson's Hill Cemetery.

Established as a joint committee of the Tecumseth and West Gwillimbury Historical Society and the Bradford West Gwillimbury Local History Association (BWGLHA), the Cemetery Guardians is a group of local citizens that came forward over five years ago to restore two important local heritage cemeteries, Wilson's Hill Cemetery and Christ Church Cemetery. At Wilson's Hill Cemetery, the Guardians have reinstated the Victorian charm of the grounds by removing old shrubbery and dead trees, clearing fallen logs and brush piles, tidying the monuments and tombstones, reinstalling the original metal enclosures complete with their chain garlands and cast-iron drops, and installing new visitor benches at the top of the hill. As well, the Guardians and their Researcher have dedicated many winter hours to documenting the history of the Cemetery, researching best practices of cemetery restoration, tracking down the obituaries of unmarked burials, and collecting the stories of those buried at Wilson's Hill Cemetery during its active years of 1839-1958.

## Take a Tour of Wilson's Hill Cemetery with The Cemetery Guardians



The group is almost completely self-sufficient. With the exception of monetary assistance from BWGLHA for special projects, the members have donated and provided all their own tools, supplies, fuel, and time in order to restore this cemetery to a state where both descendants and local residents can enjoy the grounds and pay their respects.

The Cemetery Guardians are an outstanding example of what can be accomplished when a dedicated group of local residents volunteer their time, energy, and resources to restore a public asset that has been neglected. Thanks to their efforts, this historic burial ground is now being looked after the way it should be.

The OHS Honours and Awards Committee is pleased to recognize The Cemetery Guardians.

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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