

Message from the Director

Here we grow again! OMAH is pleased to welcome two new staff members on board! Programs coordinator and certified teacher, Katie Calcaterra, harks from North Bay and is presently commuting from Bracebridge. Katie recently left a front-line position at the Alberta legislature to join OMAH's growing team. She will be responsible for OMAH's curriculum-based programming for teachers and classes, as well as special events and public programming. Melissa Launchbury, a long-time supporter and volunteer, as well as a 2007 Orillia council contender, joins the museum as retail manager and administrative assistant in place of Carol Trinier, who left the museum in May to pursue other interests.

Behind-the-scenes, OMAH welcomes three new board members: Richard Oatway, who has taken up the position of treasurer, which he held previously from 2003-2006, Jane Tremblay, and David Jefferies (see page 3 for new board member biographies).

The past few months have been a whirlwind of activity. Since the last issue of Muse News, the Second All-Ontario Annual Juried Exhibition held in partnership with the Orillia District Arts Council, has come and gone. Participation was truly province-wide as the winners attest: Linda Finn of Elliott Lake for *Memory of Water #10* (first, contemporary), Paul Blanche of Orillia for his photograph *Red Alert* (honourable mention, contemporary), John Delves of Barrie (first, traditional) for his pencil and watercolour work, *Coldwater Farm*,

Shelia Davis of Beaverton for her painting, *Dogwood Trail* (honourable mention, traditional). From the tally of votes cast during the length of the exhibition, Peter Stranks took home the People's Choice Award for both his photographs, *When Last I Held Your Hand* and *The Man in the Tree*, which each garnered the most (and the same) number of votes for any one piece. Many thanks go to sponsor, the Meridian Credit Union and Kathy Shropshire, and the Orillia District Arts Council staff and board. Thanks go most notably to Bernie Haley, who stepped up to all administrative and organizational duties of the exhibition, and board members Maggie Buchanan and Chris Jackson, who arranged the financial and jurying aspects.

OMAH had a wonderful Doors Open weekend and would like to also thank all those volunteers who returned this year, or who participated for the first time, to give building tours, and greet and provide customer service to the hundreds of visitors who explored the architectural uniqueness of the Sir Sam Steele Memorial Building and learned about Orillia's history.

OMAH is also very proud to have had a hand in safely preserving the Liberty Restaurant sign when, on May 30, it was taken down from 99 Mississauga Street East, where it had hung since 1947 (see the amazing Letter to the Editor on page 6.) Thanks go to past councillor, Carl Garland, for bringing the issue to attention, the city's Planning and Culture and Heritage Departments for their co-operation and co-ordination of logistics, the Coldwater Canadiana Museum and

continued on page 4....

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Jacob Gill Gaudaur Focus in Orillia Sports Exhibition By: John Reesor

Trophies, a pair of oars, a few photographs and a watch stopped at 19 minutes, 1.5 seconds; these are the silent reminders of past glory. And what glory it was for Jacob Gill Gaudaur, “Champion of the World”.

His “not-so-silent glory” culminated in September of 1896. Referring to his reception at Queen’s Park, the September 24 edition of the *Orillia Times* reported: “Rome of old never accorded to a Caesar or an Antony, returning from the provinces, such a brilliant triumphal procession as that which the Queen City last night tendered Jacob G. Gaudaur, back from the scene of his prowess on the Thames. As at the Olympic games the Greeks greeted their heroes with acclamations and crowned them with wreaths of laurel, so did the people of Toronto, even as one man, yester evening do homage to the champion oarsman of the world.” “They Honour The Orillia Boy Who Has Brought His Native Country To The Front”... “[H]e was Escorted in Triumph, amid Fireworks and Music, Through the streets – Taken to the Queen’s Park, where He was Presented with a Complimentary Address and a Purse of Gold.”

One hundred and eleven years later, on 13 June 2007, Jacob G. Gaudaur’s son, Jake, reminisced about his father, “I remember him as a big, quiet, kindly man,” and that, “It was like pulling teeth to get him to talk about himself.” Jake remembered well his childhood home at The Narrows, the first floor, west side room that was filled with memorabilia of his father’s conquests, and he remembered the many visitors to the home - admirers coming to be inspired as we are now by the display at OMAH.

However, over time things change as much as they stay the same. In our day, at Tudhope Park beach, very early on a spring or summer morning you will find rowers perfecting their skills, building their endurance, and increasing their speed. It is the same struggle against the clock, the competition, and exhaustion that Jacob G. Gaudaur overcame to become the very best racer in his time. For a brief time Gaudaur lived in St. Louis. The local paper reminiscing about him reported, “Jake Gaudaur was one of the greatest natural oarsmen the world ever knew... the build of a wrestler, the head of Adonis, the face of an Indian, and the muscles of pliant steel.”

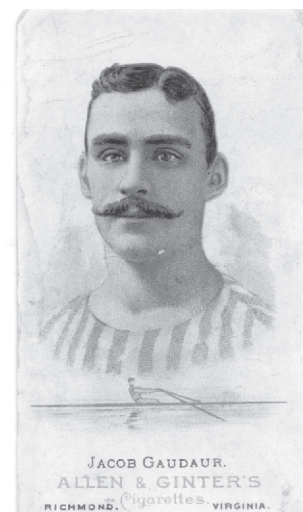
Consider the plaque, now missing, erected by the Ontario Archaeological and Historic Sites Board which read, “One of the world’s greatest oarsmen, Jacob Gill Gaudaur was born and lived in Orillia. With Hosmer of the United States he won the world’s championship in the double sculls on Lake Couchiching in 1892. He

established a world record for three miles with a turn at Austin, Texas, in 1893, and improved his own time for that event the following year. In 1896 he won the world’s single sculls championship on the Thames, England, and in 1898 successfully defended that title at Vancouver. Following his loss of the singles championship to George Towns at Rat Portage (Kenora) in 1901, Gaudaur, at the age of 43 retired from competition.”

But Jacob G. Gaudaur was more than a fine athlete - remember his son’s comment “a quiet kindly man”. Jacob G. Gaudaur, after retirement from rowing, operated a successful fishing guide business at the Narrows. As Stephen Leacock reminisced in 1942, “Among the pleasant memories of my life is the recollection of my fishing days on Ontario’s Lake Simcoe with Jake Gaudaur,” and as *The Packet and Times*, reported on 14 October 1937, “Jake Gaudaur probably did more to make Orillia famous than any other citizen the town has had. He was proud of his town, and the town was proud of him. It had reason to be. For he had a fine record, not only as an oarsman, but as a man.”

We are fortunate to have the artifacts of so fine an individual for display at OMAH. Though silent, they are evocative of exciting events in the life of the Orillian, Jacob Gill Gaudaur.

For assistance in preparing this article I thank, and acknowledge the help of Jake Gaudaur Jr., the Orillia Public Library and the Orillia Rowing Club. For more information consult *The Place of the Fence* (call number 929.1) in the Orillia Library, “Orilliana” – transcripts of some items from Orillia newspapers, and microfilm copies of the Orillia Papers. The really ambitious researcher can find fertile ground in the newspapers and sports journals of the 1890’s in England, Canada, Australia and the United States.



This card was a marketing strategy used by the Richmond Virginia cigarette company. The back of the card reads “the World’s Champions – One packed into each box of Ten Cigarettes.” My, how times have changed.



OMAH says goodbye and thank you to Marilyn Dennis who stepped down from the Board at OMAH’s AGM on June 20. Marilyn served six years on the board, the last two, as Chairperson. Goodbye and thank you also to: Wally Bremner and Elizabeth Schamehorn whose terms of service have been fulfilled, and Theresa Soper who has stepped down to pursue career-related interests this fall.

Orillia Museum of Art and History New Board Directors

David Jefferies grew up in Orillia and returned here in 2002 after spending many years in Kingston, Toronto and Vancouver. He completed an undergraduate degree in Economics at Queen's University in Kingston before attending the University of Toronto where he completed a Diploma in Music and a Diploma in Operatic Performance at the U of T Opera School. He then continued his education at the University of British Columbia where he obtained a Master's in Music.

His musical training began here in Orillia at St. Paul's United Church, continued at Park St. Collegiate with much music theatre experience, and expanded at Queen's University where he was involved with Queen's Music Theatre and the vocal department at the School of Music.

During his years of schooling, much of his time was spent in the construction industry gaining valuable experience, and of course, much needed income to support the educational process. As a result, after returning to Orillia, he worked with Eastern Construction out of Toronto, before joining the local company, Monteith Building Group, as a Project Manager. He now tempers the demanding rigours of managing institutional construction with involvement in the local theatre arts and music scene. Local projects completed by Monteith include the YMCA and many schools. David is currently working on the \$9M addition to Regent Park Public School.

Richard Oatway is the Building Committee chair for the Orillia Museum of Art & History and served as OMAH Treasurer from 2003 – 2006. Richard was instrumental in raising funds in phase 1 of OMAH's Capital Campaign in 2003-2004 to finish the two lower floors of the SSSMB and replacing the building's mansard roof. For this, he was named 2004's Orillia Citizen of the Year. Richard is the former owner of an automotive service company. His past volunteer activities include serving as president of the Simcoe County Victorian Order of Nurses and as treasurer and then president of the Orillia YMCA. He currently sits on the Grant Review Team for the Simcoe-York Ontario Trillium Foundation. Richard is also the current record holder for largest lake trout pulled from the waters of Whitefish Lake, Algonquin Park (> 13 pounds).

Jane Tremblay has been in the financial services industry for more than thirty years operating for the past twenty in her own practice as Senior Financial Planning Advisor with Assante Capital Management Ltd. She has served in a voluntary capacity on several business-related and non-profit boards and takes a keen interest in the work to be done. Jane has a particular passion for the arts community which she has demonstrated in the past through the operation of a gallery in Cookstown and, more recently, in providing support for exhibitions at the Zephyr Gallery and mounting several art events in her own offices.

Our Two Cents' Worth

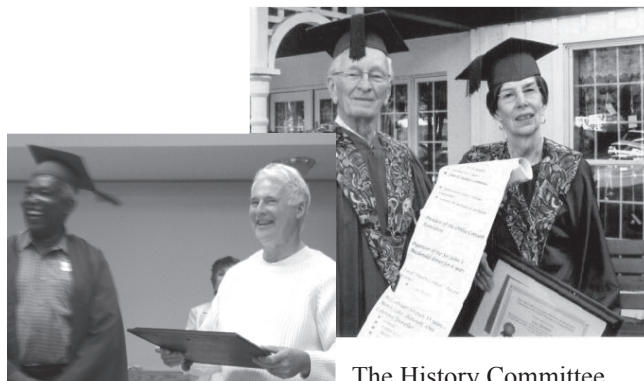
OMAH's History Committee continues to succeed in maintaining the activities of a historical society within the museum through the hard work of its many volunteers. During 2006 – 2007 the seven monthly History Speaker Evenings were well planned and well attended, and our reporters provided regular media reviews as part of the public profile of OMAH. The History Book Table, which sells new and second-hand historical publications, earned over \$400 for the museum.

OMA H history events are both educational and social, including a December reception and a June windup dinner. The June party featured entertainment and affectionately humorous volunteer tributes in the form of honorary degrees. In May, the museum opened to the public its Research Room, a project that was conceived and carried out by three long-time history committee members. Also this year, another small team collaborated on an updated version of the Heritage Downtown Walking Tour. The script for a one-hour tour has been submitted to the museum, following a successful test run with a class from Couchiching Heights Public School.

Our Adventure Tours Committee arranged its third annual bus excursion, this time to the McMichael Gallery and Magnotta Winery. The eighth annual Sir John A Macdonald Historical Dinner with guest speaker was once

again a sold-out event and allowed us to donate \$2000 to the museum from the proceeds. Now that graduation season is here, the Allan Ironside History Scholarships are being distributed to the four Orillia high schools; each recipient is given \$200 and a one-year subscription to the "Beaver" Canadian history magazine.

The History chair for the past year, Fayne Bullen, warmly thanks all the helpers who made these events possible, and all the supporters who attended.

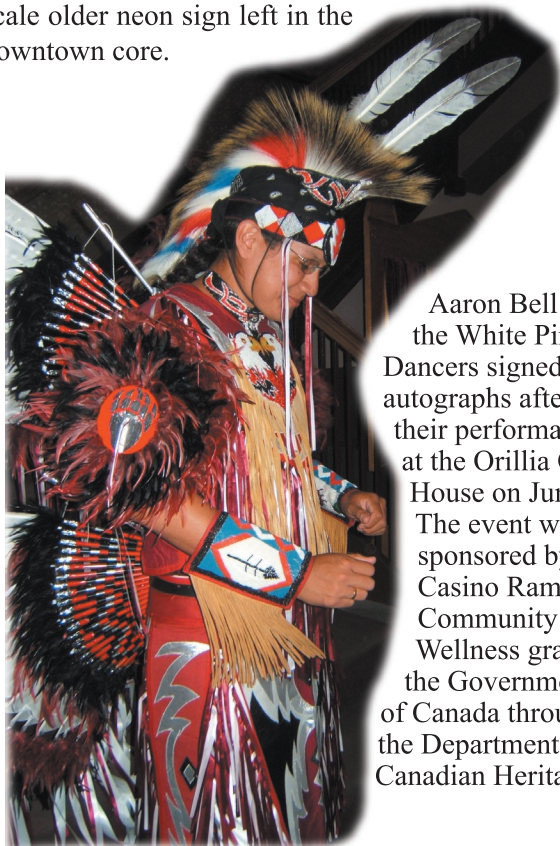


The History Committee presented honorary degrees to Wally and Coco Bremner and Qennefer Browne (in absentia) at the Annual Spring Potluck Dinner at Swanmore Hall on June 20. Top: Honoured volunteers Wally and Coco Bremner, bottom: Fayne Bullen and Bob Browne, who accepted on his spouse's behalf.



Oro-Medonte blacksmith, Richard Joliffe, who generously lent his I-beam trailer for sign transportation, Councillor Tim Lauer and his brother Ralph for storing it, history buff and budding photographer, Stephanie Duff, for taking documentary photos of the removal, Norweld Welding for unloading the trailer,

and all those volunteers who showed up and carried approximately 40 pieces of glass tubing to OMAH between 9 and 11p.m. With all this help, the removal of the sign was thoroughly documented, approximately 80% of the glass tubes were detached intact, and the sign was transported and is being stored off-site until such a time when it can be restored and moved back to OMAH to be put on display as part of Orillia's history. If you want proof of the number and importance of neon signage to Orillia, please visit the museum's research room where a photograph copy of Mississaga Street E. in its neon hey day can be purchased. The Golden Dragon Restaurant sign is now the only large scale older neon sign left in the downtown core.



Aaron Bell and the White Pine Dancers signed autographs after their performance at the Orillia Opera House on June 22. The event was sponsored by Casino Rama's Community Wellness grant and the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage.



Conservator Miriam Harris took possession of OMAH's two 1914 Champlain monument maquettes at the end of June. The small plasters will undergo cleaning and repair, as well as a treatment to reduce the staining that has occurred over the past 93 years. Sponsorship for this project has been generously provided by the Orillia Champlain Seniors' Club (small maquette by Maurice Favre) and the Community Foundation of Orillia and Area (large maquette by an unknown sculptor).



Exhibition Schedule and Upcoming Events 2007

Bewabon and Travis Shilling: New Works

June 26 to September 3

Belonging: A Celebration of Place

September 4 to October 24, 2007

Opening reception: Thursday, September 13, 7 to 9:30p.m.

Scout Valley Artist's Talk, Nature Walk and Sketching Workshops

Saturday, September 22, 10a.m. to 12:30p.m. with Juliana Hawke & Marlene Bulas

Saturday, September 29, 10a.m. to 12:30p.m. with Prudence Smith & Joanna McEwen

History Speaker: Ed Rutherford, "First Map of the World"

Wednesday, October 17, 7:30p.m., St. Paul's United Church

Orillia Festival of Banners Viewing

Friday, October 26 and Saturday, October 27

Orillia Festival of Banners Gala and Banner Auction

Saturday, October 27, time TBA

Iroquois Beadwork (a travelling exhibition from the Royal Ontario Museum)

October 30 to January 5, 2008

Members' reception: Saturday, November 3, 1-3p.m.

History Speaker: Dan Byers, "The Human Experience in the Trenches of World War I"

Wednesday, November 21, 7:30p.m., St. Paul's United Church

History Speaker: Mary Mick, "The Palantines"

Wednesday, January 16, 7:30p.m., St. Paul's United Church

History Speakers: Ron and Ann Harrison, "The Underground Railroad"

Wednesday, February 20, 7:30p.m., St. Paul's United Church

History Speaker: Bob White, "The Haida"

Wednesday, March 19, 7:30p.m., St. Paul's United Church

History Speaker: Lloyd Johnston, "Blacksmithing"

Wednesday, April 16, 7:30p.m., St. Paul's United Church

History Speaker: Heather Kirk, "Mazo de la Roche"

Wednesday, May 14, 7:30p.m., St. Paul's United Church

From the Museum's Collection

OMAH received a wonderful donation recently, including a number of scrapbooks, some photographs and a top hat. The top hat is a spectacular piece, with its elegant lines, superior finish, and incredibly ornate tooled-leather hatbox. It was obviously an expensive hat, and a prized possession. Made by Scott & Co. ('Hatters to HM the King and Royal Family'), it was retailed in Canada exclusively through Holt & Renfrew in Toronto, and the workmanship on it is exquisite.



The hat belonged to none other than one Joseph Patrick Downey. Born in January of 1865, Downey was a native of Puslinch and long-time editor of the *Guelph Herald* (1885 to 1907). An Irishman, "Joe" held strong political views, and eventually ran for public office. He was the Member of Provincial Parliament at Queen's Park for the riding of South Wellington between 1902 and 1910.

It was in 1910 that Downey was appointed to the position of Superintendent of the Ontario Asylum for Idiots, the forerunner of the Huronia Regional Centre. His constituents in Guelph were reported to have given him \$1000 in gold as a farewell present. There was much opposition to his appointment to the Superintendency, as many people felt the position required a man with a medical degree and extensive medical knowledge.

According to the *Orillia Packet* of April 22, 1926, Downey

proved his critics wrong: "Before he could get further in the application of his ideas than enlargement of the scope of the Hospital Farm to a degree which won him the sobriquet 'Farmer Joe', the war came on..." Following the war, however, the hospital doubled its accommodations to 1,500 patients. "Much of the construction work, under Mr. Downey's inspiration, has been carried out by the patients, and the saving to the Province has probably run into hundreds of thousands of dollars," continues the *Packet*. *The Mail and Empire* said of him "Sir James Whitney knew what he was about when he

selected Mr. Downey for the appointment at Orillia. "Joe" Downey will be mourned by all who were entrusted to his keeping, for he was truly a father of them."

An extremely gifted speaker, poet and writer, Downey was much in demand. The *Orillia Newsletter* notes, "As a platform speaker the late Mr. Downey stood without a peer."

J.P. Downey died at Orillia in 1926. His funeral, held in Guelph after his absence of 15 years, had well over 2,000 mourners at it, and the funeral procession was two miles long.

Following his death, Dr. Stephen Leacock wrote in a letter to Mayor Sinclair "I have been terribly distressed to hear of the death of my dear old friend Joe Downey. We have had in our town no greater loss in a long time."

News From the Gallery Shop by Melissa Launchbury

Summer has arrived! Nowhere is this more obvious than in OMAH's Gallery Shop. Several new artisans' and suppliers' wares have been added to the mix, bringing refreshing, whimsical and visitor-friendly gift and home décor items to Orillia. Whether you're a first time visitor or a veteran volunteer, this season is all about growth. Waterproof playing cards (great for the cottage or boat), life-like rock magnets and old-fashioned stick candy make a welcomed addition for young and not-so-young alike.

New to the Gallery Shop is *Heritage Gallery Designs*, a family-owned Ottawa business run by Rick and Emily Filler. Emily, a Fine Arts graduate of Queen's University, works with oils and acrylics to create dreamlike interpretations of flowers to capture the memory of them in the observer's mind. Rick Filler approaches the beauty of nature through the lens. His simple and sometimes solitary photos entice the viewer to "evoke an emotional



response to something familiar". The Fillers' works grace their wonderful cards and framed art. The cards are produced on recycled paper and combine, paint, photography and a phrase that conveys a beautiful message from the giver to the receiver. The framed art consists of Rick's photography printed on Arches water colour paper. This paper is framed between two layers of glass and outlined with a silver trim. The effect of framing in this manner is that the picture appears to float. Some of the framed art contain a word and a Zen symbol, while others stand alone. There are over 19 prints to choose from at the Gallery Shop.

OMAH is adding to the Gallery Shop weekly. In short, it is my hope, that with quick merchandise rotation, that visitors will see the Gallery Shop as their first stop for gifts for all occasions and budgets. If you have a hard time deciding which piece of jewellery or framed art to buy for that special someone, remember that OMAH has gift certificates too!

Letter to The Editor by Sharon Seto

Re: "Old signs evoke Orillia's gaudy past...." by Colin McKim May 24, 2007

We were overcome with nostalgia when my family saw the photo of the Liberty Restaurant sign in your paper. My father, Hoy Seto, recounts the history of that sign:

My father, Dock Seto left Guangdong Province, China and came to Canada in 1915. He was a Head Tax Payer. He arrived, as a teenager, to join his older brother who owned and operated the Sunrise Cafe in Barrie. In 1947, Dock moved to Orillia and in partnership with his cousin George Seto and friend, Howard Yee, opened the Liberty Restaurant at 99 Mississaga Street East. Liberty was named after a successful restaurant on Lakeshore Road in Toronto. They hoped the good fortunes of that establishment would follow its namesake. The sign was made by Roy's Sign Company*, located on the street just north of Mississaga.

In 1951, my late brother Sam and I, left China to join our father in Orillia. Our mother, Joan Woo Seto followed three years later. I worked with my father at the Liberty, Sam worked for our Uncle Gin Seto, a few doors down, in the Star Cafe (years later, it became the Shangri-La). We all lived together in a house our father bought in 1954, at 47 Elgin Street.

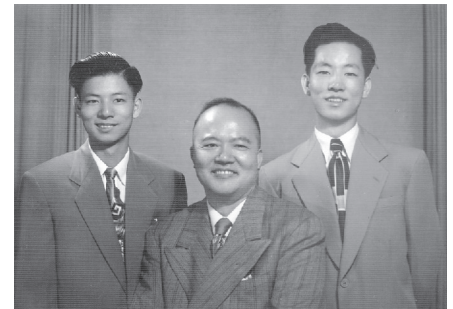
In 1957, Sam and I, with advice from our Uncle Gin started looking for a good location to open our own restaurant. We ended up in Streetsville (a lovely village along the banks of the Credit River, now a part of Mississauga). Uncle Gin

said it looked like a booming area and a great place to open a business. He was right! That year, Sam and I opened Hoy's Cafe and in 1963, Dock sold his share of Liberty to Howard and his son and joined us in Streetsville. We will never forget the support and kindness of our many friends and customers in Orillia who came to Streetsville to visit our new business and help make it so successful.

We had the restaurant until my retirement in 2000. Dock passed away in 1980, my brother Sam, in 1976. Hoy's Cafe operated for 43 years and we left with many wonderful friendships and memories, which all began at the Liberty Cafe. I remember Liberty being a very busy place, full of local families and teeming with tourists in the summer. I returned in 1999, almost 40 years later, to show my daughters the place their grandfather opened. It had changed a lot since he ran it, and like its sign, a bit well worn. We are overjoyed to hear the sign may live on in the Orillia Museum of Art and History. Thank you very much for your story.

Sharon Seto
(daughter of Hoy
and first-born
grandchild of
Dock)

*Roy's sign company was
later found to be Annis-
way Signs owned by
Lloyd (not Roy) Annis.



Dock Seto, with his sons, Hoy (on left) and Sam

Wish List

Magazines
Cardboard tubing
(the type used for making
fence posts.)
Paper grocery bags
Plaster of paris
Hodge Podge medium

OMAH GOES TO EXTENDED SUMMER HOURS

On June 22 Canadian Heritage Minister Bev Oda announced a \$5 million increase to the funding available for student summer jobs in museums through Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations. This directly affects OMAH as its application for summer student funding was initially turned down in May.

We are very pleased that with the announcement of this funding, that OMAH is able to bring third-year Algonquin College museum studies student and Orillia native, Diane Francis, back on board this summer. With this extra staff, OMAH IS OPEN EXTENDED SUMMER HOURS: MONDAY - SATURDAY, 10AM TO 4PM, AND UNTIL 8PM THURSDAYS TO BETTER SUIT SUMMER VISITORS AND RESIDENTS

To date, OMAH has received \$22,840.05 from its generous donors since launching its second sustaining fund campaign in October 2006. If you have not yet made a donation to this cause, please do so. Our goal again this year is \$25,000, to support museum programs while meeting our operating budget.

Muse News is published by the Orillia Museum of Art & History six times a year. *Muse News* is available free of charge with a current membership. The museum gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of its members and supporters. The museum is a registered charitable organization No. 13723 0587 RR0001.

The Orillia Museum of Art and History gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, receives annually \$100 million of government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative. The Foundation provides grants to eligible charitable and not-for-profit organizations in the arts, culture, sports, recreation, environment and social service sectors.



THE ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION
LA FONDATION TRILLIUM DE L'ONTARIO