

2014 Arts Alive Awards celebrated community's cultural excellence

By JANE FOGAL

A gala reception was recently hosted at the glamorous Halton Hills Cultural Centre in recognition of the top contributors to the town's cultural vibrancy. Over 100 attendees including the nominees and their supporters gathered to celebrate a wide array of important contributions to the local arts and culture scene.

The Arts Alive Awards originated in 1991 and are now jointly organized by the Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable and Heritage Halton Hills.

The Award for Visual, Performing, and/or Literary Arts was won by Eric Knoespel, founder and owner of Artcast Inc. He was recognized for excellence in casting bronze sculptures since 1964. This local family business has earned an international reputation for quality, service and reliability.

The Award for Culture Development went to the Georgetown Legion. The Legion was recognized for its mural initiative which can now be seen on their building along Mill Street. The murals depict scenes from three major wars and peace-keeping by Canadian Forces. In addition the Legion recently partnered with other organizations to create a new visual arts gallery/teaching facility within their building.



Award recipients front row, from left, Eric Knoespel, Fred Helson, Lynn McPherson, Jack Harrison, Moya Johnson, Hayden Downes-Mills, Pat Farley. Back row: Frans Rood, Brenda Sisnett, Finn Poulstrup, Ray Clarke, George Elliott, and Lois Fraser.

The Award for Heritage was presented to Pat Farley for her work with Heritage Halton Hills and for successfully spearheading the local chapter of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario.

The Ralph Ussel Award for Volunteerism went to George Elliott for his long-term commitment to the Acton Citizens' Band and his involvement in the heritage sector. As conductor of the Band, he has mentored countless youth and adults over the decades and is also a founding member of Heritage Acton.

The Kenneth R. Harrison Award for Youth Mentorship was presented to Lois Fraser in recognition of her 22 years of volunteer leadership with the Georgetown Children's Chorus and Globe's Youth Group.

The Award for Patron of the Arts rec-

ognizes an individual or family who makes a significant contribution to cultural activities through their financial donations and awards were presented to both Fred Helson and Brenda Sisnett.

Helson was recognized for his years of generous financial support to a myriad of cultural organizations and the donation of his nationally significant art collection to the Town.

Sisnett was recognized for her leadership gift to the Library and Cultural Centre Capital Campaign and her decades of ongoing support for many local cultural and youth groups.

The Award for Local Business Partner went to Johnson Associates for their unfailing support of community cultural groups and initiatives such as the Halton Hills Sports Museum.

The Award recognizing a new Arts, Cultural or Heritage Event that has contributed new vibrancy to the community went to Doors Open Halton Hills. Established in 2012, this annual event showcases heritage buildings by inviting the public inside.

The Award for Established Arts, Culture and/or Heritage group went to the Credit Valley Artisans for its 38 years of nurturing local artists in a collaborative and nurturing setting.

The Award for Youth Leadership was presented to Hayden Downes-Mills in recognition of his leadership in founding, at the age of 11, Hayden's Rebicycling. This volunteer group, supported by family and friends accepts donated bikes, repairs them and then gives them away to those in need. Thus far they have repaired and given away more than 500 bikes.

The Arts Alive Awards kicked off the 6th Annual Halton Hills Cultural Symposium. This year's theme was Creating Culture. Lively sessions allowed participants to effectively network, discuss mutual interests and learn from experts in the areas of social marketing, cultural tourism and using apps to lighten your workload.

Workshop materials and photos of the event can be found at www.mychalton-hills.ca.

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