

Tweedsmuir Report

Tweedsmuir Coordinators Win Award of Excellence

By Peggy McLeod

During the FWIO Provincial Conference at Durham College in Oshawa in June, I happily accepted the Scadding Award of Excellence on behalf of the past and present Tweedsmuir Coordinators in Ontario. The Ontario Historical Society (OHS) presented the Award. In 1967, the OHS established an awards program to honour individuals and organizations that have contributed significantly to the preservation and promotion of Ontario's heritage. The Scadding Award of Excellence recognizes a historical society or heritage group "which has made an outstanding contribution to

the field of history." Among previous winners are the historical societies of York, Milton, Brampton and Waterloo. The Wellington County Historical Society proposed the nomination of the Tweedsmuir Coordinators, with support from the following individuals: Bonnie Callen – Wellington County Museum and Archives; Lorne Bruce – Archives and Special Collections, University of Guelph; Bill Hughey – Archivist, Guelph Public Library; Dr. Linda Ambrose – Chair of the History Department, Laurentian University and author of *For Home and Country – The Centennial History of the Women's Institutes in Ontario*; and Dr. Elizabeth Bloomfield – author of two comprehensive reference volumes detailing the printed and archival materials in Wellington County.

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Peggy McLeod (left), FWIO Provincial Tweedsmuir Coordinator, received the Scadding Award of Excellence from Jean Murray Cole (right), Past President of the Ontario Historical Society.

Lifelong Passion for Local History

For generations, the Mays, who lived at 525 Ontario St. kept firewood in the room off the kitchen of the big brick farmhouse. Now the old place, known as Mayholme is being fuelled by a passion for history and this fuel that is a passion for history is again being kept in the woodshed. Corlene Taylor, the fifth generation in her family to own the land granted to her Loyalist ancestor Peter May in 1801, has made the house in which she was born into a centre for genealogical research and transformed the old shed into a library.

She and the five other members of the Mayholme Foundation Board have started filling the shelves with books and binders from their personal collections and are now ready to help visitors unearth their own roots. The Foundation is also acquiring several private collections, including extensive materials on the Secord family.

The enormous paper trove is being amassed by venerable Thorold historian and 70 year DeCew Falls WI member Esther Summers (shown right). "I didn't know where I was going to put it," Summers said of the collection of documents that currently takes up four rooms of her home.

"It's wonderful to know it's going to be here." Over the years, she said she's become a "gathering place" for historical materials that had nowhere else to go and those curious about their past often come knocking on the door of her farmhouse. While some of her collection will be going to Mayholme, the rest will have to wait until she hangs up her magnifying glass. "As long as I can let them in, I want them to come," she said.



Extracted from an article by Erik White, *The Standard*, St. Catharines.

Photo courtesy of Denis Cahill, *The Standard*.