



Personal excellence

Three Uxbridge High School students were on hand last week for the Durham Board of Education's Student Recognition Night in Ajax. Honored for personal excellence were (from left) Doug Irvine, 19, Grade 12; Beth Sheridan 18, Grade 13; and Amanda Dacey, 18, Grade 12.

— Jim Thomas

Museum curator's job is in capable new hands

By KATE GILDERDALE
When Mary Hopkins retires as Curator of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum at the end of July, she can rest assured that she will be leaving her job in capable hands.

Curator Designate Karen Edwards has been involved with the Museum on and off since 1981, when she worked there as a summer student.

She returned to university to complete her BA and in the summer of 1982 she took a job at the McMichael Gallery in Kleinburg. "After that I was on a year's contract with the gallery, working in the industrial unit at Concord," she said.

In January 1984, she returned to the Museum on a year's contract. From the following January she worked part-time until this February.

"I had a degree in archeology from Laurier and a Master's degree in museum studies from the University of Toronto. I was trying to decide where I wanted to go from here."

Fortunately for everyone concerned, Karen was in the right place at the right time and was offered the opportunity to take over when Mary retired.

She is currently learning all aspects of the Museum's opera-

tion, with Mary providing advice and guidance. Mary's work in getting the Museum organized and running smoothly enables Karen to concentrate on future events and projects.

The restoration of the historic Brown house is currently underway at the site, and it will be open to the public when work is completed.

"Timing depends on funding sources," Karen explained. "We are funded by the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communications and by the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, with other funding coming in the form of grants."

With Mary and Karen being the only two employees at the Museum, an active volunteer contingent is a necessity. "We have perhaps 20 to 25 people involved on a regular basis, with others who help out with special projects. Many others are enrolled as Friends of the Museum." Events like the recent pancake lunch, which far exceeded expectations, are run by the volunteer workers.

Karen hopes to introduce bi-monthly events at the museum this year. "In the past they have been somewhat sporadic," she said. Next year she is planning to increase them.

An exhibition entitled "Women's Work" is currently

being set up and will be opening on April 27. It will cover the period from the early settlers until Victorian Times.

On June 19th the museum will host a concert in the park featuring the Whitchurch-Stouffville Concert Band. "We hope to set up croquet on the grass and of course the Museum will be open," noted Karen.

The Museum offers schools educational kits for a normal weekly fee and also allows them to rent the Bogartown schoolhouse, where teachers can conduct classes for a day or half day in the authentic century-old schoolroom.

When Karen worked as a summer student in 1981, she certainly didn't envision that she would one day be curator and she is delighted to have found a job she loves.

As the mother of a one-year-old, she particularly appreciates being close to her home in Newmarket. In the little spare time she has, she enjoys reading. "I really enjoy a good murder mystery," she said, pointing out that she's ready for some light relief at the end of the day.

Karen wants to encourage more people to visit the museum. "We seem to have a problem getting people from Stouffville to come up," she said.




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