

MUNICIPAL HERITAGE COMMITTEE DEPUTATION

2015 HERITAGE CONSERVATION AWARD – KEN CASSAVOY

Joyce Johnston, Chair

Mayor Smith, Members of Council, Staff, Members of the Press, Ladies and Gentlemen. I am pleased to be here this evening representing the Saugeen Shores Municipal Heritage Committee to present **The Municipal Heritage Conservation Award**. This award is presented in recognition of heritage minded individuals within Saugeen Shores. We seek nominations from the public by requesting their nomination of individuals that are involved in conserving our heritage either by protecting our original buildings, surroundings or through educating others. The Committee received nominations in late spring and used the following criteria in making our recommendation. We consider individuals who:

1. Voluntarily promote the importance of preserving significant heritage structures;
2. Those who show leadership in restoration and preservation of heritage buildings, sites, etc.;
3. Acknowledge individuals for long standing service in an organization dedicated to maintaining heritage locations;
4. Or show appreciation for personal collections of local artifacts, heritage photographs or memorabilia – which they share with the community to promote appreciation of heritage.

The Municipal Heritage Committee is extremely dedicated to preserving heritage elements throughout our Municipality. There are many houses and barns and other structures that tell wonderful stories that take us back to the early days of Southampton, Port Elgin and Saugeen Township. People lived in these homes and worked and gathered in these places. Maintaining these physical reminders of our history is an absolutely necessary contribution for us to give to future generations. Each year the Town presents an award that lets us promote and celebrate the valuable role that individuals and organizations play in ensuring that structures and stories from the past continue to be present in our community.

The award this year is being presented to Ken Cassavoy for his exemplary contribution to marine heritage conservation and preservation in our town. Nomination and information was received by Mr. Duncan McCallum, as follows:

The finding of a ship's wooden ribs on the Southampton beach in the spring of 2001 was the start of an incredible and fascinating archeological project that has extended right to the present time and throughout the long journey, Ken Cassavoy's commitment and leadership of the project have been the hallmarks of this highly successful marine heritage undertaking.

Drawing on a wide and always expanding circle of professionals and volunteers, Ken assembled his team and commenced to plot the vessel's exact location and begin the painstaking removal of sand that had covered the boat since it had foundered on the beach (later determined to be in 1816).

There were two actual "digs" undertaken – the first being a partial excavation to establish the ship's outline which would be used to help size the ship and the second complete excavation right down to the top of the hull.

It was during the second "dig" that interesting findings started to come to light – a cannon, cannon balls, military buttons etc (all of which have been properly conserved and are on display at the Museum).

The uncertainty of which vessel had ended up on our shore (in fact there were two lying next to each other but one was quickly determined to be a working skiff probably from the building of the docks towards Chantry Island) took considerable time and much research to determine. The persistence of many researchers paid off when it was confirmed that it was HMS General Hunter that had come to her end on our beach.

This determination brought great energy and enthusiasm to the project because the General Hunter had been captured by the American Navy at the Battle of Lake Erie in 1813. Its military history extended interest in our finding throughout Canada and among marine archeologists in the United States.

The marine history of Southampton has long been well recognized and appreciated in our community and beyond. The finding of HMS General Hunter adds much to the richness of marine heritage and the success of this archeological project is a testament to Ken Cassavoy's persistence and professionalism.

The legacy of this undertaking lives on in the memories of the many volunteers, the careful archiving of the findings, the scaled representation of the ship's quarterdeck at the Museum along with the showcasing of the HMS General Hunter history to the thousands of visitors to our community, Ken's many speeches and detailed reports, the tremendous national publicity that the project brought to our community, and above all the learning of important history that had been lost for almost 200 years.

Congratulations to Ken Cassavoy for a job well done.

Would you please come forward and receive the 2015 Municipal Heritage Conservation Award.