

## 2019 Prince Edward County Heritage Award Winners

### Heritage Awareness and Advocacy – Terry Sprague

Terry Sprague's interest in the natural world around him began at an early age. Raised on a farm on Big Island, Terry was introduced to the natural rhythms of the seasons and their impact of agricultural life. He credits an elementary school teacher with encouraging his early curiosity, and in shaping his career path as an author, speaker, tour guide, newspaper columnist, and conservationist.

Over his working career, Terry was employed as a resource technician with the Glenora Fisheries Research Station, as a park interpreter at Sandbanks Provincial Park, and as a naturalist and outdoor event coordinator with Quinte Conservation. He operated an extensive outdoor program of nature hikes, kayaking and photography experiences for nearly 20 years through his company Nature Stuff Tours and Things started in 1989. The company website still attracts attention with over 30,000 hits for the Quinte Area Bird Report.

Terry wrote a nature column that appeared in the *Picton Gazette*, the *Tweed News*, the *Napanee Beaver*, and the *Belleville Intelligencer* for more than 50 years – a total of more than 6,200 columns. He has been an active member of many local organizations including The Friends of Sandbanks Park, The Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory, The Prince Edward Field Naturalists, and other community organizations.

He has been recognized for his significant contributions with numerous awards and honours including:

- The Arthur D. Latornell Conservation Pioneer Award (2002)
- The Richards Education Award from Ontario Nature (2004)
- The Gold Quill Award from the Canadian Community Newspaper Association (2015)
- A Certificate of Recognition from the Municipality of Prince Edward County (2015)
- The Education Award from the Prince Edward Field Naturalists (2017)

Terry is the author of two books: *Up Before Five – The Family Farm*, and *Naked In The Sand*. Today at age 74, Terry is still a frequent guest speaker, tour host, and is on “speed dial” for the many nature lovers in the area. He is a very deserving candidate for his lifetime of public education and advocacy for all the natural places and spaces that make The County so special.

## **Conservation of Built Heritage – Jonathan Kearns and Corrine Spiegel**

347 Picton Main Street East is a large and historic property that has dominated the streetscape since its construction in 1864. Constructed for Lt.-Col. Walter Ross, a prosperous merchant, commander of the County's first Regiment of Volunteers from 1863-1883, and councillor and mayor of Picton for four years, this spacious home with its gracious front yard was purchased in 1884 by the McMullen family. Native to the United States, the McMullens were involved in the newspaper and railway businesses in both Canada and the United States. In November 1948, the property was later purchased by Prince Edward County and gifted to the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 78. By 2016, the Legion – which once had 2,000 members – was no longer able to maintain the 13,000 square foot building and it was once again put up for sale.

Despite a fire on the first floor of the building in July, 2016, the building was purchased by Toronto architect and County resident, Jonathan Kearns and his wife, Corrine Spiegel. Jonathan is a founding principal of Kearns Mancini Architects Inc. of Toronto with many projects on his resume including design of the George Brown College Centre of Hospitality and Culinary Arts and its renowned Chefs' House. The couple began restorations originally intending to open a culinary arts school. But as the project evolved, the new future of the building is as a culinary-themed space for events, conferences and weddings of up to 500 guests.

The primary goal of the restoration was to not only breathe new life into the building but act as a community hub – bringing people together and nothing brings people together quite like food. Sharing a meal as a way to bond transcends culture, religion, and ethnicity.

## **Preservation of Cultural Heritage Landscapes – Marc Seguin**

Marc Seguin is an author, historian, and County resident who has tirelessly promoted the case for preserving the country's heritage lighthouses including six County lighthouses – Scotch Bonnet, Point Traverse, False Ducks Island, Point Petre, Salmon Point, and Main Duck Island. Marc is a founding member of Save Our Lighthouses, a County heritage advocacy group, author of two books on the maritime history of the area, and a former Chair of the Prince Edward County Heritage Advisory Committee.

As a result of his group's efforts, two lighthouses at Scotch Bonnet and Point Traverse (also known as Prince Edward Point) were granted heritage designation in 2015 by the federal government, ensuring their maintenance and preservation.

His website, OntarioHistory.ca, has been presenting and preserving aspects of the history of the Province of Ontario, Canada since 2002. Marc has French-Canadian roots in the province dating back to the 18th Century when his ancestors settled in the region of Le Détroit in what is now Essex County, Ontario, where Marc was born and raised. He later lived in York County, Ontario and the Toronto region, and currently resides on the shores of Wellers Bay in Prince Edward County, Ontario.

Marc's keen interest in local history has led him to discover fascinating historical fragments in each of these areas of the province. Many of these fragments have, in turn, led him to larger discoveries and involvement in larger projects such as establishing the heritage preservation organization, Save Our Lighthouses, and publishing books on topics related to his historical research under the banner of Ontario History Press. His most recent works include *For Want of a Lighthouse: Building the Lighthouses of Eastern Lake Ontario 1828 – 1914* and *The Cruise of the Breeze, The Journal, Art and Life of a Victorian Soldier in Canada* based on the 1863 journal of Henry Edward Baines.

### **Lifetime Achievement Norah and Chris Rogers**

Dr. Norah Rogers, a Picton physician, and her husband Chris, a local veterinarian, have conserved several historic properties in The County re-purposing them as inns, restaurants, spas and destinations while pioneering the concept that heritage properties are all part of the ambiance and charm attracting visitors to visit, stay, retire and live here.

Their efforts began in 1995 when they bought the Waring House, an historic farmhouse (built by Irish immigrants circa 1860) converted to a restaurant they often frequented. They missed the places so much when it closed, they decided to buy it and re-open it. That was the beginning of a 25-year journey as they gradually expanded the facilities and transformed the site into a restaurant, pub, inn, and cookery school – and took on new restoration challenges.

They purchased several other properties over the years that followed, including the Picton Harbour Inn in 1997, the former brick home of the Hepburn Family, coal and shipping merchants. During the same period, they purchased and renovated 100 Picton Main Street, an historic home (circa 1835) re-opened as Loyalist Antiques.

In 2001, they bought the Claramount, a colonial revival mansion built in 1903. This spectacular property on Picton's harbour front was built by lawyer Edward Young and named after his wife Clara Boulter. At the time of purchase, the Claramount was in a sad state of repair along with its surrounding buildings like the former coach house. It took three years of restorations to carefully restore the property using some 200 artisans to re-create original architectural details. The building re-opened as a high-end inn with 10 luxury suites, a spa, and restaurant showcasing local produce and food products. Norah and Chris have also painstakingly restored their own home near Bloomfield (circa 1835).

They have received past awards from the Loyalist Parkway Association and The Prince Edward Builders' Association for their efforts. The couple have used their heritage properties to host numerous fundraising events for many local charities and have been instrumental in developing successful tourism initiatives such as The Taste Trail, Countylicious, etc.