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MIDDLESEX CENTRE ARCHIVES

2022 AAO INSTITUTIONAL AWARD WINNER

The AAO Institutional Award is given to an archival institution that has contributed significantly to the advancement of the archival field or community, or has demonstrated a significant level of innovation and imagination in the establishment of outstanding or model programs or services. Recognition may be granted for an individual project of particular merit or for a program that integrates many facets of the archival enterprise.

The AAO is pleased announce that the 2022 Institutional Award was presented to the Middlesex Centre Archives.

Middlesex Centre Archives (MCA) is a volunteer-run archives located in Delaware, ON. It was founded in 2013 after a proposal to establish a county archives was rejected by the Middlesex County Council. Undaunted, a group of volunteers came together and garnered the support of the Mayor and Council of Middlesex Centre Township, and the Archives was established to preserve the township's at-risk documentary heritage.

MCA incorporated in 2015 under the Ontario Historical Society and obtained charitable status shortly thereafter, an important step that allowed the Archives to access grants, which are the only source of funding other than donations.

The Archives has been very successful in securing grants, beginning with a Trillium grant in 2014-2015 to fund a part-time archivist position. In subsequent years, funding was obtained from Trillium, the Documentary Heritage Communities Program, and other grants to continue funding the work of a part-time archivist.

The archivist directs a group of dedicated volunteers, ensuring that the archival work is done to professional standards. Ten volunteers work at the Archives on a regular basis, contributing over 23,399 volunteer hours between 2013 and 2021 and processing over 500 archival donations.

In addition to processing and responding to user requests, the volunteers also are actively involved in fundraising and outreach activities. They sell local history books, produce historical landmark driving tour books and calendars to raise funds, and, for the past two years, they have held very successful online auctions.

The outreach activities include writing a monthly column published in the local Villager magazines and active social media accounts. The Archives organizes the



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annual Middlesex County heritage fair, which brings together groups and individuals from throughout the region, and participates in community events throughout the year to promote the Archives and local history. The group also continues their advocacy working towards the establishment of an archives for Middlesex County.

In recognition of the exceptional work of preserving and making accessible the documentary heritage of the Township of Middlesex Centre, the Archives Association of Ontario is pleased to present the Middlesex Centre Archives with the Institutional Award for 2022.