

Volunteers

The Heart and Soul of the Trust

By Al Smith

Entering its 21st year the Board of the Tantramar Heritage Trust can indeed be proud of the organization's many accomplishments.

The Trust has:

- **grown** its membership to be one of the largest community organizations in the Town of Sackville.
- **acquired** six highly significant historical buildings.
- **restored, retrofitted and now operates** two Museums (both opened in the first 10 years).
- **established** a Tantramar History and Genealogy Research Centre.
- **published** 30 books on local historical topics and publishes a regular, member driven, Newsletter filled with historical articles – 74 issues to date.
- **maintained** a comprehensive website filled with extensive historical materials on the Tantramar Region.
- **acquired** thousands of artifacts now organized into interpretative exhibits at the two Museums.
- **accumulated** a capital asset value in our buildings, artifacts and equipment of \$1.17 million.
- **organized and sponsored** historical gatherings, plays, lectures, themed dinners, heritage day events and a wide range of programming for children.
- **organized and hosted** a major gathering (Yorkshire 2000) of descendents of settlers from the Yorkshire Immigration to Chignecto and which **attracted 3000 attendees**.

How was all this possible in just 20 years? Along with our very generous donors it was the contributions of dozens of volunteers contributing thousands of volunteer hours. Back in 1995/96 it was a small group of volunteers who had the vision and energy to create the organization and draft the required documents to establish a non-profit charitable Trust. Acquiring the old Campbell Carriage Factory buildings and artifacts in February 1998 a group of dedicated volunteers undertook the massive task of recording, sorting, mapping and storing the over 6000 artifacts prior to a major restoration.

To give some idea of the extent of volunteer participation I will single out a single project – the Boultenhouse property that the Trust purchased in July 2001. During a single fiscal year (1 April 05 to 31 March 06) on that project close to 50 volunteers logged some **2014 hours of volunteer time**. During that year volunteers did everything from planning, creating exhibits, fund-raising, property maintenance and major retrofitting. On retrofitting the building to become a museum a group of 14 volunteers contributed 819 hours of work.

Looking at our annual programming, in addition to the volunteer Board of Directors, the Trust has numerous volunteers contributing. Events like our annual Heritage Day breakfast

(25+ volunteers), Taste of History Fund-raising Dinner (7-10), annual clean-up days spring and fall (6-8), capital campaigns (10-20 volunteers), then there is the Trust's many programming committees, etc.

Simply stated, the Trust is our volunteers as their collective vision and energy over the past 20+ years brings us to where we are today. To all of our exceptional volunteers, a very sincere thanks.

To recognize the exceptional contributions of volunteers to the Trust the Board initiated a *Volunteer of the Year* award in 2011. To date eleven of our outstanding volunteers have been recognized:

2011 – Leslie Van Patter
2012 – Joanne and Gene Goodrich
2013 – Charlie Scobie
2014 – Ray Dixon
2015 – Nick Rodger, Emma Kean-Sanchez
2016 – Margaret Fancy, Donna Sullivan, Vanessa Bass, Mike Bass

We all look forward to the next twenty years!

Want to Help?

Areas Where Volunteers Are Needed

- **event planning**
- **publicity**: writing articles on the Trust's activities, future plans or on our significant artifacts (i.e. articles for newspapers and for social media)
- **photography**: creating photo essays to be used in our interpretive programming and on our website.
- **property maintenance**: landscaping and lawn care
- **data entry** in both Collections and the Research Centre
- **transcribing and scanning archival documents** to make them accessible to the public
- **committee participation**: join a committee: Events, Research Centre, Discovery, Exhibits, Publications, Fund-Raising, Building maintenance
- **assist with sales control and inventory** for our Publications and Gift Shop items
- **become trained as a volunteer guide** at one or both of our museums
- **create items** for our gift shops

If you are interested in assisting in any of the above please contact the Trust Office at 536-2541 or email tantramarheritage@gmail.com

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