

CMA AWARDS | 2021

Celebrating excellence in Canada's museum sector



VOLUNTEER AT TORONTO'S FIRST POST OFFICE AWARDED CANADIAN MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION MUSEUM VOLUNTEER AWARD

Ottawa, May 17, 2021 – Jessica Lewis, a Special Events Volunteer at Toronto's First Post Office, was awarded the Canadian Museums Association's (CMA) Museum Volunteer Award, presented in partnership with the Canadian Federation of Friends of Museums (CFFM) at a virtual ceremony last Thursday. The award recognizes individuals or groups who generously volunteer their time and commitment to a museum or related heritage institution and have made a significant impact within the museum community.

Throughout her time at the museum, Ms. Lewis has dedicated her time to the creation, improvement and innovation of the Toronto Letter Writers Society, a community group which holds monthly meetups and socials at the Post Office — now virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Lewis is a dedicated and passionate volunteer, showing heart and warmth in connecting people through the love of letter writing and a shared sense of community.

After being notified of the win, Lewis said, "Winning this award was such a wonderful shock! I'm so thankful for my community of snail mail-loving friends, including Zoé and Kat from Toronto's First Post Office and my co-runner of the group, Andrea. Andrea and I love running our monthly letter writing events, and while we miss being in person at the Post Office, it's been an exciting new experience to move our events online, because now we can write letters with people internationally. I think a lot of people have come to appreciate mail more during the pandemic, and I hope that interest continues!"

An Honourable Mention was also given to the volunteer group at the Macdonald Museum in Middleton, NS. This outstanding group of museum volunteers works to support the museum in many ways – promoting visitation, enhancing exhibitions, creating and running events and fundraisers. With continued support from its hardworking group of volunteers, the Macdonald Museum has become a hub in the community of Middleton, hosting numerous workshops and meetings in the centre.

Volunteers perform many duties in the museum from conducting genealogical library searches, greeting visitors at the front desk, setting up exhibits, and recrafting exhibits for children with previously displayed artifacts. The Macdonald Museum is indispensable to the preservation of Middleton's history and to tourism in the area and its volunteers play an invaluable part in its continued operation.

Acknowledging the award, the museum's executive director Janice Slauenwhite said,

"The volunteers of the Annapolis Valley Macdonald Museum are so pleased to receive Honorable Mention from the CFFM and CMA this year. When the Museum is operating at full capacity, literally thousands of volunteer hours are needed to facilitate the many Community programs, events and exhibits taking place. Whether it be helping with the Farm Market, doing library research, baking for an event, manning the front desk, doing

exhibit set up, offering children's activities, or creating fundraising events, this tireless group of over 40 volunteers have given much for their love of this Museum and its Community. Thank you! "

In addition to celebrating achievement, the CMA Awards uplift and inspire by helping set community benchmarks of excellence. All are awarded following a competitive process and peer review by a volunteer jury.

The CMA conference brings together hundreds of museum professionals from every region of the country. It was held exceptionally online this year from May 3 to May 13.

For more information:

<https://museums.ca/site/awards/2021>

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The Canadian Museum Association (CMA) is the voice for Canada's vibrant museum community; from small, volunteer-driven organizations to cherished national institutions, and for the millions of Canadians whose lives are enriched by museums.

We advocate for public policies and support, we build skills across the profession, and we establish and inspire connections to strengthen and sustain museums.