

What's inside...

Amphitheatre
set for
launch

Artist
Marion Lewis

Youth
to star in
Gaslight Tours

Prime time
for the
BMFA

Events
and
Opportunities

Towards an artful community

Public Art Policy approved

Collingwood is on its way to becoming a more artful community, after members of Council unanimously approved a Public Art policy for the municipality on November 30.

A town with a commitment to Public Art is "a more enjoyable, more liveable place," says Eleanor Brownridge. "It benefits everybody."

Creating a policy that supports the installation of art in public spaces is the first step towards making that commitment, says Brownridge, a glass artist and member of the working group that drafted the Public Art Policy for the town.

"It's quite exciting," said ACAC chair Catherine Campbell, who presented the draft policy to council. "We really look at this as an opportunity for enriching public space and making Collingwood a really vibrant cultural place, improving the quality of place."

Why is public art important? After months of research, the working group - an ACAC sub-committee that includes Brownridge, Ron MacRae, Silann Kaduc, Chari-Lynn Reithmeier and Tanya Mazza - came up with a compelling case:

"Public Art has the ability to inspire, ignite, awaken, and animate. It can enrich and connect a community, and add or enhance a sense of place in a symbolic or creative way that reveals an aspect of the social, natural, physical or historical context of the location." Public Art is also recognized internationally as a significant economic development tool, with the power to draw both visitors and residents. Today, more than 50 municipalities in Canada and 300 American cities have public art policies or plans in place.



One of three carved posts by Paul McElroy located in the Arboretum. Photo: Ron MacRae

Public Art, as defined in the policy, "will be original art works of a permanent nature located inside or outside, but routinely accessible to the public at no cost."

"A perfect example in Collingwood would be our murals," says Campbell, "but there are other examples as well, such as sculptures located within our Arboretum. We see opportunities for more of this, such as along trails, incorporated into any new facilities the municipality may be developing such as parks or new buildings, and places like bridges and trailheads."

The point of the policy is to "encourage, fund, select and preserve Public Art" in public spaces. So, it was important, says Campbell, to include a line item in the municipal budget dedicated to Public Art. This will ensure that funding for this purpose is considered annually, even if the allocation is minimal in a given year.

"It's great to have a policy in place, but then if you've got a budget to allocate to bringing the policy about, that really gives it a whole lot more strength. The Arts and Culture Advisory Committee is delighted that Council has been so supportive."



This past summer, Ruth Hurdle restored worn sections of Collingwood's **Busy Wagons** mural by John Hood.

Tap our resources

Books and Magazines

A Handbook for Cultural Trustees

by Marion A. Paquet

Toward Greater Self Reliance Handbook

by Centre for Cultural Management, University of Waterloo

Making the Case for Culture

published by the Creative City Network of Canada

Ontario in the Creative Age

published by the Martin Prosperity Institute

Public Art by the Book

edited by Barbara Goldstein

Cultural Planning for Creative Communities

by Gord Hume

Boards That Make a Difference

by John Carver

The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability:

Culture's Essential Role in Public Planning

by Jon Hawkes

Human Resources Management: Recruiting

the Right People

published by Cultural Careers Council Ontario

Working with Volunteer Boards

published by The Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture

Mural Production: A Resource Handbook

published by Mural Routes

Advancing Philanthropy Magazine

published by the Association of Fundraising Professionals

Web Resources

www.muralroutes.com

www.creativecity.ca

www.imaginecanada.ca

ACACIA is published by the Town of Collingwood Arts and Culture Advisory Committee

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Message from the ACAC

These past few months have been a busy and productive time for the Arts & Culture Advisory Committee. An exciting highlight was approval by Council of the Public Art Policy drafted by the committee. The policy, which has been almost a year in the making, was unanimously approved by Council on November 30, 2009. The next step for the committee will be to finalize the Public Art Standards, which will outline call to artist procedures, and the Public Art Plan to identify potential sites for installation of public art.

Talking about visual art in public spaces led to questions about a different kind of public art: street performance. The committee is working on developing a busking policy that would guide the Town in selecting and licensing performers.

"The idea here is to give the Town a decision-making framework and a way of dealing with people who want to perform in public spaces," explains ACAC chair Catherine Campbell. The recommendations are being brought forward, she says, to "stay ahead" of opportunities that are likely to develop as Collingwood continues to flourish as a tourist destination.

In a healthy community, children and youth enjoy many opportunities to express their creativity, participate in learning experiences, and gain confidence in their talents. Expanding those opportunities is the goal of the ACAC's new Youth Arts & Culture Working Group. Members Suzanne Alfano, Raymond Williams and Richard Marks are working closely with staff advisor Tanya Mazza and other local arts groups to determine how the Town can encourage youth to participate in the arts.

The ACAC also plays a role in assessing applications by cultural organizations to the Annual Municipal Financial Assistance Program. Recommendations from the committee are forwarded to Council for consideration in the final spring budget. And the result, so far, has been good news for local arts groups.

"The number of applications and the percentage of the total AMFAP budget that has gone to arts and culture have been quite substantial and we're really pleased about that," says Campbell. "We think this shows the Town's commitment to supporting Arts and Culture is strong."

The BMFA: Alive and well at 35

Founded in 1975, the Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts can rightfully boast of being the "largest, longest-running, most stable arts organization in the area." For many years, it was also the lone voice of the arts in the area.

"Thirty-five years ago, this was the only game in town as far as the arts went," says current BMFA chair Jennifer Macnaughton. Now, she says, there are many groups and galleries helping to nurture music, theatre, dance, and the visual arts in the region.

With some 325 members and more than 100 active volunteers, the Foundation remains a strong advocate for the performing, visual and literary arts. But the organization is evolving, as it takes stock of its strengths and the role it has to play in the booming "arts and culture business." The BMFA, whose membership includes patrons of the arts as well as artists, is becoming more of an umbrella organization, says Macnaughton. "I think our role is really to help promote the arts in the Georgian Triangle community and to be one of the groups that brings tourists in and brings prosperity to Collingwood."

As part of its strategic plan, the BMFA is focusing on expanding educational programs for adults and children; improving signature events such as its annual Studio Tour, Juried Art Show, and Juried Photography Show, and showcasing the work of local and visiting artists in the Arts Centre. Located in a restored building on Hurontario St., the street-level gallery, which up until last year also functioned as retail outlet for artists' works, is now exclusively an exhibition space. The Foundation is also working to improve communications and develop strategic partnerships with other arts-related groups, including the ACAC. To do all this, the BMFA is going to need more members, more volunteers and more money. Adding up the time spent on BMFA activities, Macnaughton figures volunteers put in a total of 13,000 hours last year. "That's pretty significant," she says. "We don't have enough volunteers. We have to be careful with volunteer burnout."

The BMFA has applied for a Trillium grant to improve infrastructure and help reach its goals.



ARTS CENTRE

Shipyards amphitheatre ready for launch

There will be music in the air this spring when a new amphitheatre is christened at The Shipyards development. The open-air theatre, constructed in three tiers using locally quarried limestone blocks, is part of a seven-acre public green space located in the northwestern portion of the former Collingwood Shipyards property.



The completion of the waterside amphitheatre, along with biking and walking trails that connect to existing trails, represents the fulfillment of a vision for many in the community, according to Tara Parsons, director of sales for The Shipyards.

"For over 100 years, the waterfront in the harbour area has been inaccessible to anyone," she says. "It was a vibrant shipyard and then an abandoned industrial site. To be able to give the waterfront back to the community is just a phenomenal opportunity for us."

The idea for an outdoor performance space emerged from a local charrette and focus group meetings hosted by the FRAM Building Group and Slokker Real Estate Group during preparations for the design of a master plan for the community.

"Through these meetings, we formulated a presentation which included a naturalized gathering place to view performances and concerts under the stars at the water's edge," Parsons explains.

"The actual design concept is similar to High Park in Toronto

where they hold *Shakespeare under the Stars*."

Designed by landscape architectural firm MBTW Group, and wired for sound and light, the amphitheatre will be used for "summertime events, concerts, maybe a few musical festivals," says Parsons.

The Shipyards will get the ball rolling, she says, organizing and hosting the first events at the new venue. "Then eventually it will be turned over to the Town so they can utilize it and I imagine they will want to name the whole space. (2010) will be the first year this will all be coming together."

The inaugural season will be kicked off in style. "We're having a celebration in late spring 2010 as we open up the Promenade along Wheelhouse Crescent and Sidelaunch Way, the green space and the amphitheatre," says Parsons. "It will be a fairly significant event. We're really looking forward to showcasing that and getting everybody out there."

Built into a landscaped berm, the terraced amphitheatre overlooks the harbour and commands spectacular sunset views.

The transformation of the industrial site, which incorporated public spaces, wetland areas and fish habitat into a large-scale residential development, earned The Shipyards a 2009 'Brownie' Award as one of the top brownfield redevelopments in Canada.

Photo courtesy of The Shipyards.

Artist Profile: Marion Lewis at the AGO

Artist. Writer. Actor. Singer. Producer. Publicist. Teacher. Marion Lewis has been all of these – and more. But first and foremost, she's an artist.

"I've been an artist all my life," says Lewis. "I'm a real example of the creative child." A multi-media trailblazer who has been involved in many facets of the Canadian art scene, from protests to policy, she left downtown Toronto a decade ago to join the wave of artists moving to Collingwood.

From acting in films, television and theatre, including the Stratford Festival, Theatre Passe Muraille, and TVO, to producing and promoting independent Canadian video, music, poetry, art and theatre, Lewis's long list of credits reveals a fascination with creative expression both behind and in front of the camera. In 1970, she co-founded 'A Space,' literally a space in the heart of Toronto where artists and writers could come together, challenge each other and share ideas. The unique artist-run media centre became a cultural hub, along with Coach House Press, the Isaacs Gallery, and Pilot Tavern. A Space helped to transform the exhibition and dissemination of contemporary art in the 1970s and led to the creation of more than 50 similar spaces across Canada. It was there that Lewis began experimenting with the first portable video camera, and developed a ground-breaking fusion of video, theatre and music.

"It was the forerunner of YouTube," says Lewis, who is acknowledged as a seminal influence in the development of video as a live entertainment form in the music industry. "It was a huge trendsetting thing."

Today, her work as a performance artist and video pioneer is being showcased as part of a permanent exhibit at the Art Gallery of Ontario. The installation, unveiled in February 2009 in the Signy Eaton wing, features art, video, photography, posters, and film from the AGO's collection and Coach House archives.

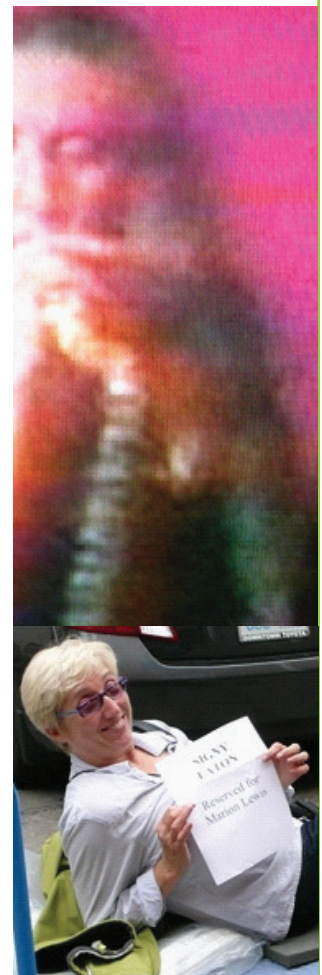
"*Canadian Art in the 1960s and 1970s through the lens of Coach House Press* is an innovative exhibition that gives visitors the chance to step back to a pivotal time in the Toronto art scene when cultural barriers were being broken and new rules established," according to an AGO news release.

Marion Lewis was among a group of major players approached to work with AGO curators to develop the exhibit. A Space, which incorporates Lewis's original footage, is one of five distinct installations that reflects the spirit of the era.

"It's a really neat show," she says. "I'm quite honoured to be in an exhibit that includes Joyce Wieland, Michael Snow, Greg Curnoe – these icons of the era."

An active promoter of the arts, Marion continues her work as a publicist – currently she's promoting the upcoming CD of the iconic musician-artist-activist Mendelson Joe. But her real passion these days is her work as art director of The Magic of Children in the Arts. The intensive program, now in its 15th year, aims to provide artistic opportunities to all children through art shows held in local schools.

"Children are all born creative, but they don't get the techniques in school," says Lewis. The program, started by artist Lory MacDonald, helps to build confidence and self-esteem by providing students with the tools, techniques and motivation to express themselves through art. "Everyone wins a prize," says Lewis.



Top: Marion Lewis plays a faux leopard-skin kazoo sax in a 1973 video, part of her 'A Space' installation at the AGO. Still from video by Laurel Lane-Moore. Bottom: Marion outside the Art Gallery of Ontario, after setting up her 'A Space' installation in the fall of 2008.

Events & Opportunities

King of Pride Rock

A one-hour musical presented by Jean Vanier Catholic High School
January 6-8, 10:30 a.m., or January 7, 7 p.m.
Tickets sold at the door (\$5 adult/ \$4 child)
Contact jmorin@smcddb.on.ca or 445-2043

Codetta Children's Chorus – Christmas Concert

December 15, 7 p.m.
All Saints' Anglican Church
codettachildrenschoir@gmail.com
Conducted by Selina Ree; accompanist: Ethan Lacey

Christmas in OZ

Collingwood School of Dance
December 19, 7 p.m.
Meaford Opera House
(705) 321-0175

Annual Winter Exhibition

Georgian Bay Association for Creative Arts (GBACA)
Until January 1, 2010
Collingwood Public Library
info@gbaca.com or www.gbaca.com

Winter's Gift

Until January 3
Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts
163 Hurontario Street
www.bmfa.on.ca, (705) 445-3430

Etsuko Kimura and Megumi Okamoto

January 9, 1 p.m.
Violin and Piano
Presented by the Collingwood Music Festival
New Life Brethren in Christ Church
28 Tracey Lane
www.collingwoodmusicfestival.com, or (519) 599-5641

The Joseph Lawrence House

January 11, 7 p.m.
Collingwood & District Historical Society
Presenters: Darrell and Janet Reeder
Leisure Time Club

Arts Members' Exhibition

Until January 31
Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts
163 Hurontario Street
www.bmfa.on.ca, (705) 445-3430

Collingwood: 150 Years Plus

February 1, 7 p.m.
Collingwood & District Historical Society
Presenter: Melissa Shaw, Collingwood Museum & Mountview Public School students
Leisure Time Club

Ernie Taylor: Artist

March 1, 7 p.m.
Collingwood & District Historical Society
Presenter: Ron MacRae
Leisure Time Club

Annual Magic of Children in the Arts Show

March 1-25
Collingwood Public Library
Contact Marion Lewis (705) 444-0911
info@magicofchildren.ca

HEART!

The BMFA is very pleased to announce its inaugural Valentine's event, **HEART!** on Saturday, February 13th, 2010. This intimate gathering will be held along the shores of Georgian Bay in the newly renovated grand ballroom of the Bear Estate at Cranberry Resort. Designed to become an Annual Gala Event in support of the Arts in the Georgian Triangle, the evening will include:

- Passed hors d'oeuvre and welcome cocktail
- An artfully themed, scrumptious 3-course dinner
- Poetry and Music: a fiery and seductive composite of the arts
- A unique opportunity to acquire a limited release of twenty truly important, themed and original paintings by well-known member artists

The romantic setting offers a unique and special way for you to share a Valentine's date with friends and loved ones, while supporting the Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts.

Tickets available at the Arts Centre in December – a perfect gift idea for someone special this Holiday season.

\$100.00 per person

The Prime Ministers' Project

March 1-31
What would you say if the ears of the nation were listening? A photographic and auditory installation. Collingwood Public Library, Murray Clerkson Room. Contact Harry Posner: zencha.teabar@sympatico.ca.

MusicFest Canada Band Competitions

March 4-7, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily
Collingwood Collegiate Institute
Over 3,000 musicians compete in concert bands and jazz ensembles
Free

Ottawa Central Band of the Canadian Armed Forces

March 6, 7 p.m.
Collingwood Collegiate Institute
Regarded as the top concert band in the entire country
Tickets: \$15
khamlin@ccimusic.com for further details.

30th Annual Juried Art Show

April 3-30
Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts
Collingwood Public Library
55 St. Marie Street
Reception and Awards Ceremony April 1, 5-7 p.m.
www.bmfa.on.ca, (705) 445-3430

Captain of the Great Lakes

April 5, 7 p.m.
Collingwood & District Historical Society
Presenter: Captain Bruce Sheppard
Leisure Time Club

Collingwood Music Showcase

April 15-19, throughout the day
Moguls Bar and Grill
Contact: Kelly Hannigan
houseofmusic@sympatico.ca

Wanted: Help with Gaslight Tour



People of all ages are quietly coming together to create Collingwood's own 'magical mystery tour' in support of youth theatre. Organizers remain tight-lipped about the details of the Gaslight Tour, which is set for Nov. 4-7, 2010. What we do know is this: Production of the intriguing fundraising event will involve local young people at every stage. And proceeds from ticket sales will go towards an annual theatre project, geared to teens.

The Tour will take participants and spectators on a journey through Collingwood's colourful past. Five original short plays - so mysterious they have yet to be written - will be performed by up to 100 local 'actors' at five historic downtown venues.

"I can't tell you where those venues are - they're secret," says Carole Stuart, one of 18 volunteers on the organizing committee. "We want to build suspense."

The event, sponsored in part by The Rotary Club of Collingwood, is modelled after similar Rotary projects in Lincoln and Waterford, Ontario. The idea, says producer and Rotarian Arlene Noble, is to foster community spirit, develop local talent, and showcase the rich heritage of Collingwood.

Noble says she has already recruited Julie Morin, a drama teacher at Jean Vanier High School, to direct one of the plays, which will be created by students as a creative writing project. The committee is seeking other 'persons of interest,' including volunteers to research, write, direct and act in the plays, as well as people to work behind the scenes. Noble is also looking for the key to the case: an overall artistic director. For more information, contact Noble at arlene@gaslighttour.com.

Calling all graphic designers

The Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts is seeking a qualified Graphic Designer to redesign the 20-year-old BMFA logo. Designers interested in this project should visit: www.bmfa.on.ca or email: admin@BMFA.on.ca for submission details.

Planning your event

To avoid conflict with another event, check out the events calendar on the Town of Collingwood's website: www.collingwood.ca. For a list of annual or recurring Arts & Culture Events go to www.collingwood.on.ca/arts-and-culture. For more details, click on the name of the organization.

Home for Christmas?

We've got a pile of unique tiles left over from the recent restoration of the mural located on the southern wall of the Eddie Bush Memorial Arena. The tiles were created by members of the community during the summer of 2001. If you'd like your tile back, call Tanya Mazza at 445-7450, or stop by the office at 45 St. Paul Street.