

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



**Ontario Heritage Fairs Association**

 [help@ohfa.ca](mailto:help@ohfa.ca)

 <https://www.ohfa.ca>



# Chair and President's Message

Welcome everyone.

As Chair and President of Ontario Heritage Fairs Association, and on behalf of the entire OHFA board, I want to thank you all for your participation this 2023-2024 year of the Regional & Provincial Fair program. A special thank you to our wide range of supporters: the wonderful and dedicated Coordinators, supportive teachers, parents, and community members. And a big thank you to all the students who shared their creative and excellent history projects that were filled with our diverse stories in Ontario and across Canada. I want to extend a very special thank you to the hard working and dedicated OHFA executive, whose tremendous work all year ensures the continuation and success of the Fairs program. And an extra special thanks to our outstanding Executive Directors Carol White and Liz Kerr, whose tireless and steadfast work ensures a positive experience for all.

This year we held Regional fairs across the province, involving more students, teachers, and communities, and we hope to expand even further in 2025. The fairs provided an opportunity to bring together students, teachers, parents, heritage educators and community members to celebrate our history and cultural heritage through workshops, presentations, and of course those fantastic projects! Our provincial fairs, which celebrate the award winners for their excellence at the Regional fairs were held this year in Ottawa and in Toronto. Both fairs offered special day events and brought together students, parents and teachers to historic sites and museums, providing additional opportunities to network with our outstanding heritage sector members here in Ontario. What we witnessed at the fairs was a real commitment to sharing both local and national stories. Students did a wonderful job at ensuring they engaged in critical analysis and explored diverse perspectives. Our Celebration video this year features the many parts of the OHFA program: diverse student projects, our collaboration with multiple communities and schools, and the hundreds of volunteers who support the fairs program by acting as judges, leading workshops, or making presentations. We want to also acknowledge our wonderful sponsors, who provided important support for our program, and allowed us to grow the fairs program. Congratulations to everyone involved in creating, sharing and supporting our OHFA projects this year!

Thank you!

Rose Fine-Meyer

# ONTARIO HERITAGE FAIRS TIMELINE



DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE  
ONTARIO FAIRS

**1995**

FIRST ONTARIO  
HERITAGE FAIR

**1997**

ONTARIO HOSTS  
NATIONAL HERITAGE FAIR

**2004**

FIRST ONTARIO  
PROVINCIAL FAIR

**2007**

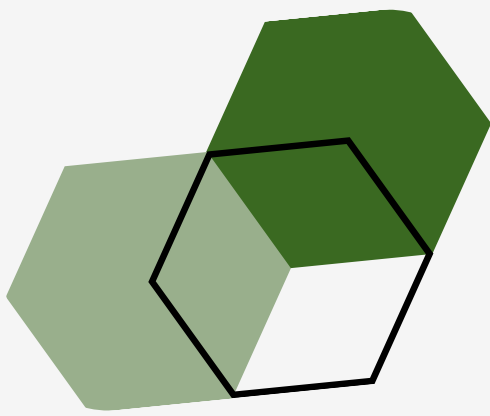
THE ONTARIO HERITAGE  
FAIRS ASSOCIATION IS  
FORMED

**2024**

YEAR 29 FOR ONTARIO  
HERITAGE FAIRS



Registered Charity  
BN 859478414 RR0001



# Guiding Principles

## MISSION

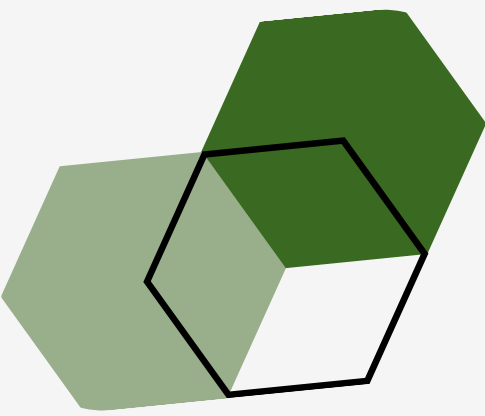
To promote public awareness and understanding of family, community, Ontario and Canadian history and heritage by facilitating and supporting the Youth Heritage Fairs program and other related initiatives.

## VISION

To engage all youth: anglophone, francophone, Indigenous, and other cultures in learning activities that will help them to develop critical thinking while motivating them to explore their family history, make connections within their community, discover the history of their community, province and their country, and have the confidence to become active citizens who shape the future of Canada.

## CORE VALUES

Equity Accessibility Diversity Flexibility Collaboration Respect  
Creativity Growth Innovation Inclusion  
Positive Citizenship



# What is a Youth Heritage Fair?

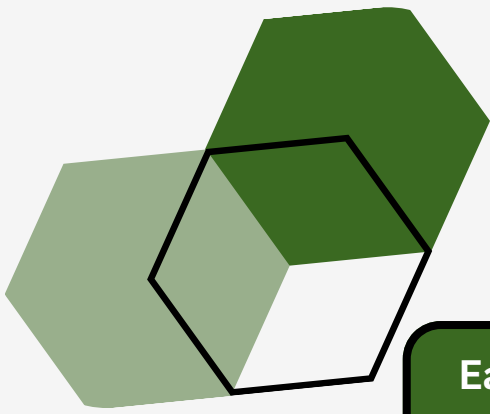
The Heritage Fairs program is a bilingual educational initiative that encourages students to explore Canada's heritage history in a fun and engaging learning environment. Participants use the medium of their choice to recount significant events, highlight famous people, or share family histories and present heritage items of personal value. In a series of public exhibits taking place across the country, students present their research findings to their classmates, families, and members of their community.

Founded as a pilot program in 1993, Heritage Fairs are now held in every province and territory of Canada. Each year, approximately 60,000 students aged 10 to 16 carry out research projects in the classroom. In addition, there are approximately 100,000 students who participate in the program by visiting one of the 900 school festivals fairs held across Canada. In April and May each year, the best projects are presented at one of the 85 regional, provincial, and territorial festivals fairs held across the country.

Source: Canada's History

Ontario was one of the first five provinces to join the heritage fair program. In 2024, we celebrated our 29th year.





# Heritage Fairs Bring Communities Together

Each Ontario Youth Heritage Fair is unique. Volunteer committees from schools, school boards, museums, and community groups plan learning experiences that reflect the diversity and uniqueness of their region.

### Opening Ceremonies



### Adjudication



### Workshops

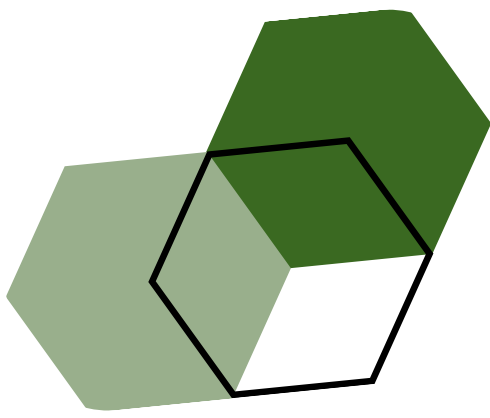


### Presentations



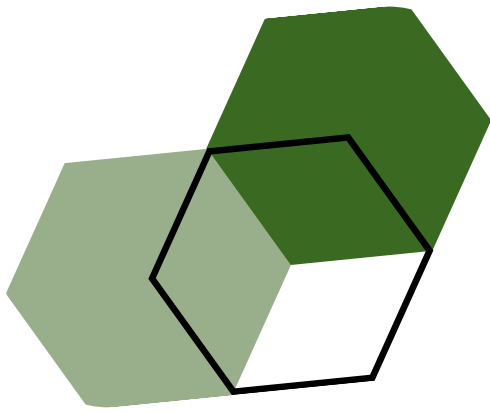
### Awards





# Ontario Regional Heritage Fairs 2024

| <b>FAIR</b>                         | <b>DATE</b>               | <b>LOCATION</b>   |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Ottawa Regional</b>              | <b>April 24,<br/>2024</b> | <b>Canadian Museum of History</b>   |
| <b>Simcoe County<br/>Regional</b>   | <b>April 24,<br/>2024</b> | <b>Simcoe County Museum</b>   |
| <b>Thames Valley<br/>Regional</b>   | <b>April 25,<br/>2024</b> | <b>Fanshawe Pioneer Village</b>   |
| <b>DSB Niagara Regional</b>         | <b>May 1, 2024</b>        | <b>The Exchange, Niagara Falls</b>  |
| <b>Independent Schools<br/>Fair</b> | <b>May 1, 2024</b>        | <b>Cairns Christian School<br/>Sudbury Christian Academy<br/>Biidaaban Kinoomagegamik<br/>School<br/>Quinte Mohawk School</b> |
| <b>Toronto Regional</b>             | <b>May 4, 2024</b>        | <b>Toronto Metropolitan University</b>  |
| <b>Kingston Regional</b>            | <b>May 10, 2024</b>       | <b>Queen's University Faculty of<br/>Education</b>  |
| <b>Durham Regional</b>              | <b>May 24, 2024</b>       | <b>Durham District School Board<br/>Education Centre</b>  |



The Ontario Heritage Fairs Association plans a special event each year to bring together Award Winners from Regional Fairs to celebrate their accomplishments and give students a chance to learn about another region of their province and meet young historians from other parts of Ontario. In 2024, two celebrations were held.

## Provincial Celebrations 2024

The Canadian War Museum and the Canada Aviation and Space Museum were highlights for the 19 students as they explored our nation's capital.



### Ottawa

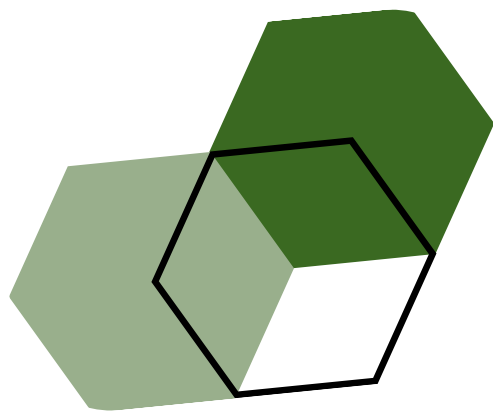


38 students showcased their team-building skills as they engaged in interactive activities at Black Creek Village.

### Black Creek Village







The most important element of Heritage Fairs is the students' research projects. The topics reflect the interests of the students, and their videos, slideshows, project boards and creative components showcase the research and communication skills learned in the classroom.

# Students Make Connections

## Community

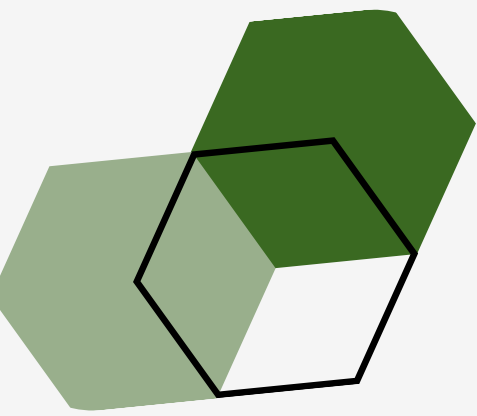


## Family and Culture



## Ontario and Canada

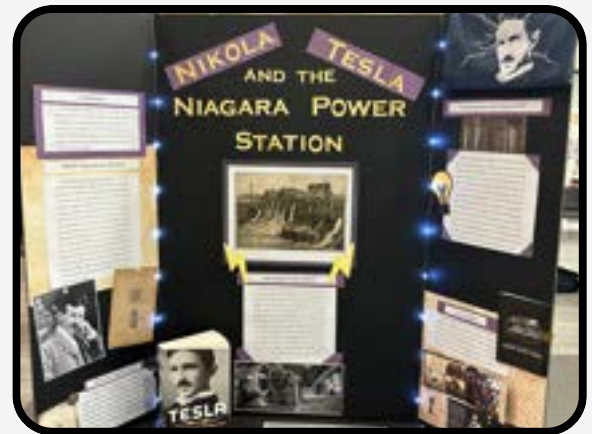




## Environment and the Land



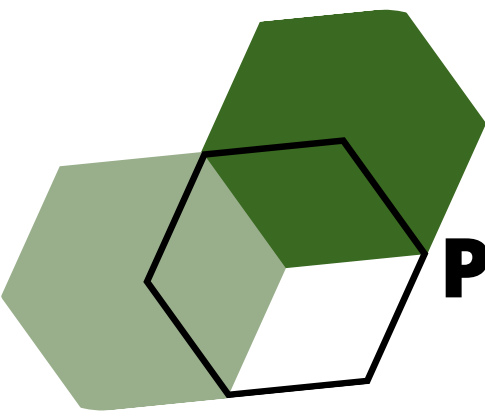
## Innovation and Progress



## Social Issues

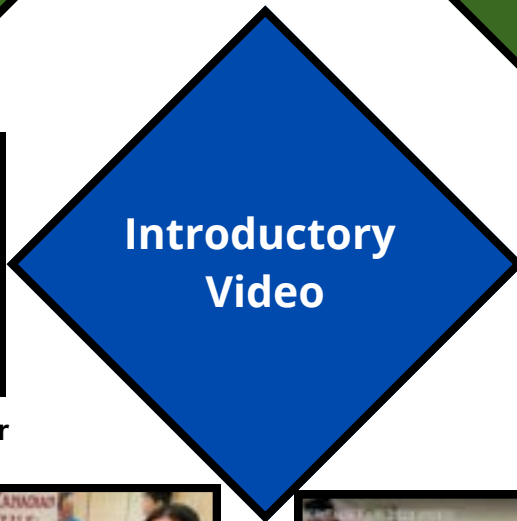
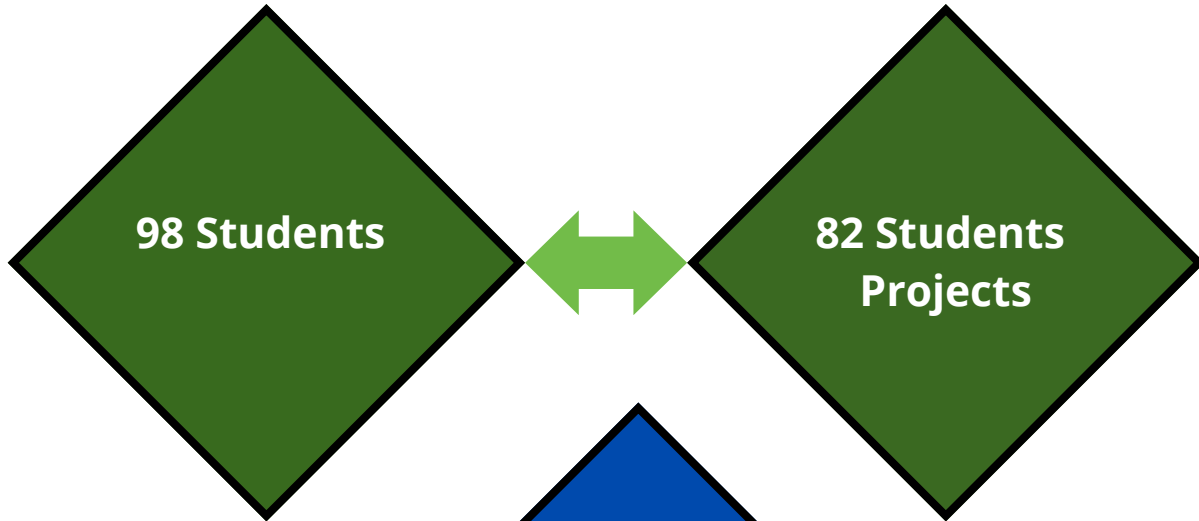






# Ontario Virtual Provincial Heritage Fair

<https://www.ohfa.ca>



Human Rights Commissioner



Student Interviews



Student Projects



Student Workshops

## SPONSORS

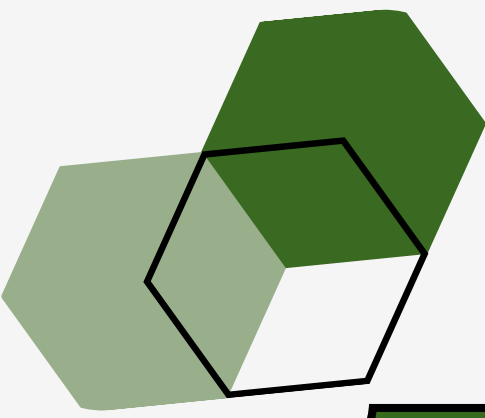
June 8, 2024



# Workshops and Presentations

51 Museum and community groups presented interactive workshops at OHFA Fairs in 2024.





# Young Citizens

Since 2012, the Young Citizens program has encouraged students to transform their Heritage Fair projects into digital stories, using primary sources, interviews, re-enactments, and other creative elements to engage viewers. More than 1,000 student videos have been posted to [YoungCitizens.ca](https://www.YoungCitizens.ca).

Source: Canada's History

In 2023, Avery, was one of four students to win national recognition.



In 2024, Ontario has 22 students registered as Young Citizens.

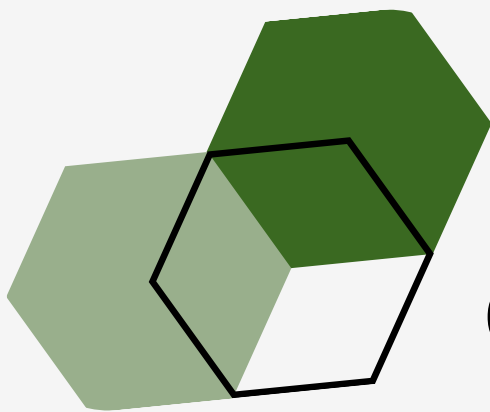
Avery J.

Niagara on the Lake, Ontario  
"Pier 21"

216 Ontario students have become Young Citizens.

View all the videos produced by Ontario students at [YoungCitizens.ca](https://www.YoungCitizens.ca).





# Outreach Programs

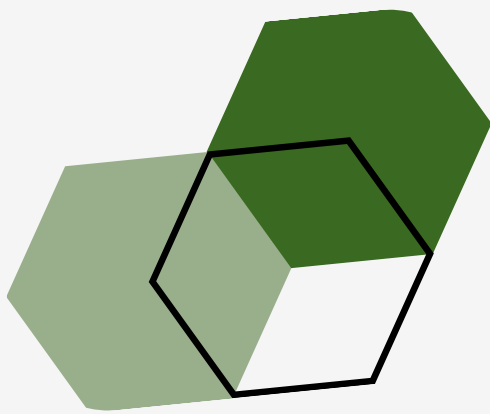
Thanks to funding from Canada's History and Ontario Power Generation, OHFA has been able to initiate a pilot outreach program for Indigenous schools without access to a Regional Fair and/or were unable to attend a Provincial Celebration due to distance. Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik School in Sagamok and Quinte Mohawk School in Tyendinaga were the pilot schools in 2024.



“Thanks to the funding provided, grade 8s were able to make their own water drums! Community member, Dustin Brant, volunteered his time and expertise to work with grade 8s. The shop was set up with the help of our Outdoor Educator, and the drums were made!

Grade 8s will use their drums for Mohawk socials as they move into secondary school. Many of the students have held lead singer and dancer roles this year at QMS. Weekly school-wide socials have been hosted in our gym.”

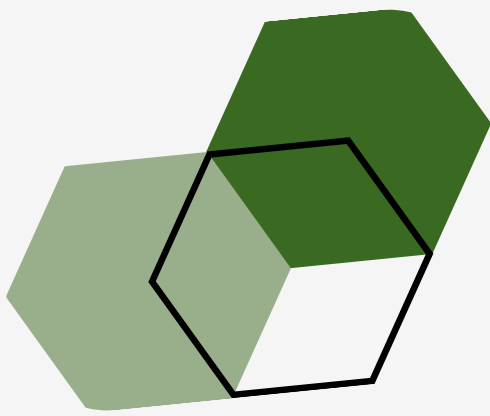
Quinte Mohawk School Teacher



**Biidaaban Kinoomaagegamik School used their funds to purchase cooking ingredients and supplies and hosted a drop in taste testing centre for their students to experience traditional Indigenous foods prepared and served by some of their community elders.**

**OHFA hopes to expand this program in 2025 along with the “Historians in Training” workshops that bring experts from local museums into classrooms to teach students about the importance of artifacts in preserving our local history and heritage.**





# Ontario Heritage Fairs Association

The Ontario Heritage Fairs Association (OHFA) was formed in 2007 to ensure the continuity of the Ontario Fairs program. The non-profit, charitable organization's volunteer Board of Directors is divided into committees and sub-committees and works to sustain the program.



The Human Resources Committee liaisons with Regional Fair Coordinators to support Regional Fairs and organizes Provincial Fairs. Celebrations and Outreach Programs.



The Communications Committee maintains the OHFA website and social media outlets and keeps the membership informed through newsletters, emails, website content, and Annual and Event Reports.



The Strategic Partners Committee liaisons with Ontario and National Partners to manage the OHFA Awards Program, and sustain, grow, and promote the programs and outreach of OHFA.



The Fund Development Committee maintains the financial records of OHFA, seeks new financial opportunities and manages fund-raising applications and funding reporting.



# Human Resources 2024



Outreach Pilots



Independent Fair

101 schools and 248 classes participated in eight Regional Fairs and the Provincial Virtual Fair in 2024

Virtual Provincial Fair

6,931 students participated at the school level and 963 represented their schools at a Regional Fair. Fairs reported over 1,500 visitors.



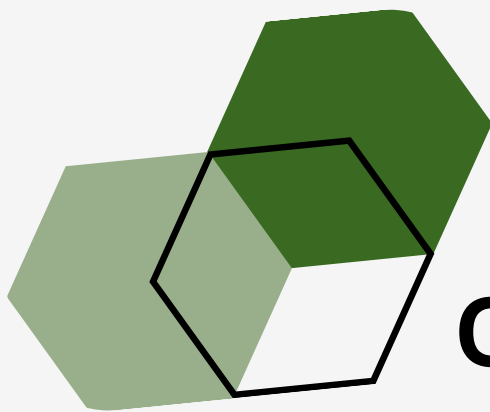
Regional Fairs



Provincial In-Person Celebrations







# Communications 2024



<https://www.ohfa.ca>  
with over 3,000  
visitors per year, and  
regular emails,  
continue to be the  
main communication  
tools for OHFA.



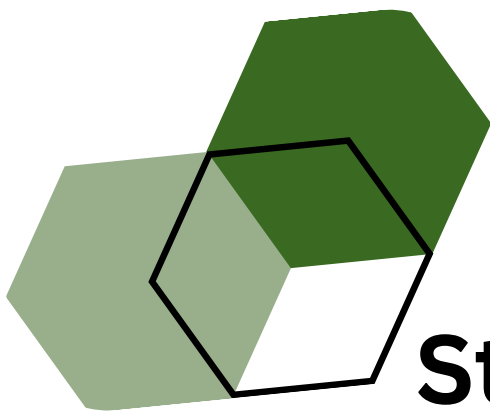
Regular  
newsletters  
keep members  
up to date with  
OHFA news.



OHFA distributes its  
Event and Annual  
Reports to all of its  
stakeholders







# Strategic Partners 2024

Eight Provincial Organizations provided 11 prizes to each of our regional heritage fairs to recognize excellent achievement in the research and communication of a variety of research skills.



54 Community groups presented workshops and presentations at OHFA Fairs in 2024

Canada's History provided free sets of Kayak Magazines and Inquiry Teaching Materials to Ontario teachers and Ontario Heritage Fairs.



## Fund Development 2024

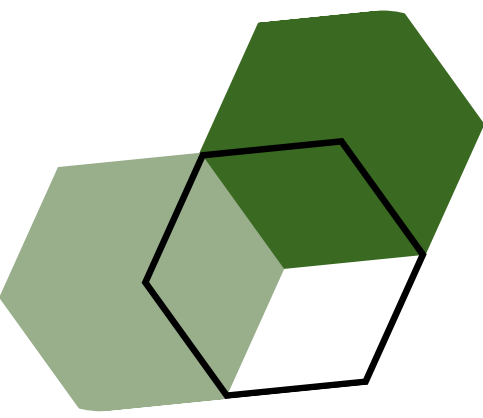
**\*The fiscal year of the Ontario Heritage Fairs Association is September 1 - August 31 and the official audit will be available for our fall AGM. The audit only covers revenue and expenditures of the Association and does not cover funds of the Regional Fairs or in-kind donations at either level.**

### Main Revenues

- **Funds from Canada's History and Ontario Power Generation to sustain OHFA and its Regional Fairs**
- **Pilot Project Funds from Canada's History deferred from 2023**
- **Funds from private donors and Provincial funders**

### Main Expenditures

- **Transfer of Funds to Regional Fairs**
- **Outreach Pilot Project Expenses**
- **Provincial Virtual Fair/Provincial Celebration Expenses**
- **Operational Expenses**



# Moving Forward



- **Fill gaps in expertise at the Board level**
- **Hold a Provincial Fair/Celebrations in 2025**
- **Increase participation of Regional Fairs, schools and students**
- **Continue and increase participation in the Outreach programs**



- **Add additional teaching resources in both English and French to the website**
- **Promote the Fair's programs and initiatives of our Strategic Partners**



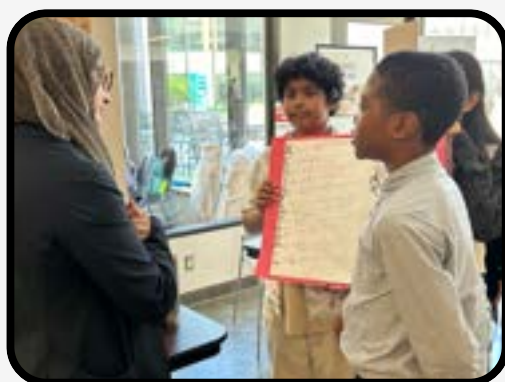
- **Devise strategies to further engage strategic stakeholders**
- **Facilitate partnership goals through zoom meetings**
- **Strengthen current recognition programs for all OHFA stakeholders**



- **Devise strategies to effectively increase and utilize funds for sustainability of OHFA and Regional Fairs moving forward**
- **Seek opportunities for further diversification of funding**

# Thank you Volunteers!

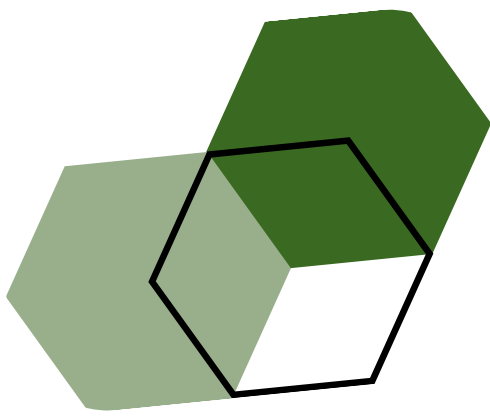
The 2024 Ontario  
Heritage Fairs would not  
have happened without  
the 388 community  
volunteers who  
dedicated over 3,000  
hours.



Historical groups, museum personnel, teacher  
candidates, seniors, active and retired  
teachers, university students and staff, alumni,  
plus interested community members of all  
ages, make the fairs happen.







# Thank You Sponsors!



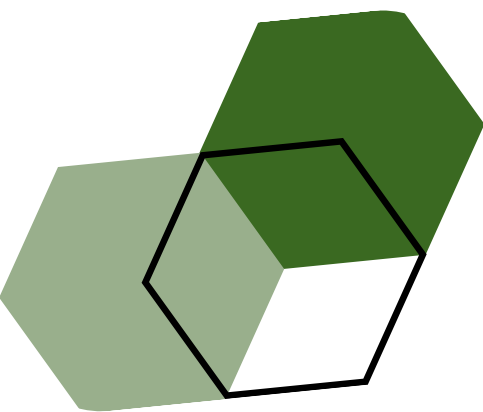
PERSONAL DONATIONS

Regional Fairs had an average of 17.4 sponsors and partners, including OHFA's, in 2024.



Thank you to the Rotary Club of Cataraqui- Kingston for your generous support of the Kingston/Ottawa Celebration.





# **Board of Directors 2023-2024**

## **EXECUTIVE**

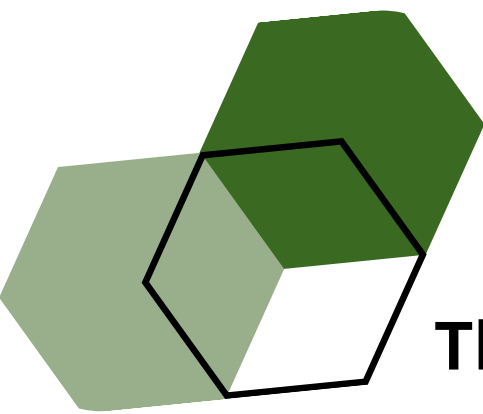
**Dr. Rose Fine-Meyer, Chair and President**  
**Dallas Rocheleau, Treasurer**  
**Carol White, Ontario Coordinator and Executive Director**  
**Liz Kerr, Past President**  
**Laura Bebee, Webmaster**

## **DIRECTORS**

**Rosemary Sadlier, Director**  
**Jacinthe Caron, Director**  
**Marthe Poirier, Director**  
**Allan Hux, Director**  
**Kerby Waud, Director**  
**Hugh Barnett, Director**  
**Bryce Honsinger, Director**  
**Garrett Hajnal, Director**

## **PARTNER REPRESENTATIVES**

**Archives of Ontario, Hafiz Printer**  
**Canada's History, Jean-Philippe Proulx**  
**Multicultural History Society of Ontario, Elizabeth Price**  
**Ontario Ancestors, Coral Harkies**  
**Ontario Historical Society, Daniel Dishaw**  
**Ontario Human Rights Commission, Shafiza Gangji**  
**Ontario Library Association, Melissa Macks**  
**Ontario Womens' History Network, Victoria Cosby**



## Thank You Notes from Participants

Dear Ontario Heritage Fairs Association,

“I am the grateful recipient of the Reading and Remembrance Project Award. I would like to express my sincerest gratitude for this incredible opportunity and for your generous sponsorship in the gifts you presented me with. My project was titled "Canada and the Cold War". It included many sections on the Canadian political aspects that contributed to the outcome of the Cold War including the Avro Arrow project and Canadian missile defense systems. I thoroughly enjoyed this project and the experience of the Heritage Fair. It was an honour to receive this award and I am looking forward to the experience at the Provincial Celebration at Black Creek Pioneer Village on June 8th!”

Sincerest Thanks, Regional Fair Student

“Thank you for sponsoring the OHFA so we could experience the Black Creek Village. We were able go in depth about primary sources and have a nice look at this wonderful living museum. We hope you continue to invest in the events we have.”

Black Creek Celebration  
Participant

“Thank you for paying and making this possible for me and others. I’ve had so much fun at Ottawa. I never knew Ottawa was such a beautiful place because it’s my first time here! The museums were super cool and I’ve learned so much. Thank you.”

Ottawa Celebration  
Participant



**“I am ever so grateful for your efforts in fostering a bright future for us and sponsoring the heritage fairs. I enjoyed and will forever remember this experience. Thank you dearly. My project was on the Belcher Island Massacre and this entire experience has been an opportunity to learn and grow.”**

**Student**

**“Thank you so much for the wonderful day yesterday! Our daughter had a lot of fun and was really excited to spend the day at the event. Thank you to the Heritage Fair for organizing such an amazing experience for these kids and for taking such great care of them.”**

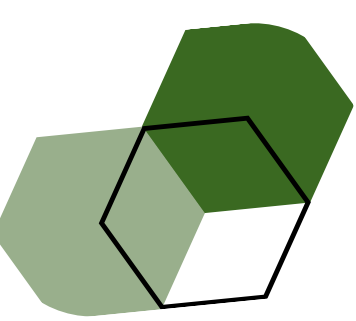
**Parent**

**“Thank you very much! I’m glad that both students and teachers enjoyed the activity. It is by far one of the most popular activities that we offer in programming. I look forward to participating again next year.”**

**Workshop Leader**

**“Thank you for another wonderful Heritage Fair. We know it comes with countless hours of work behind the scenes. We also appreciated your willingness to allow our grade 8 students to share their musical skills with the rest of the participants.”**

**Teacher**



**“Thank you for another successful Heritage fair. It was great to be part of it. The four members of our club who participated thoroughly enjoyed meeting the classes and talking with individuals, as many as we could, about their work.**

**Our club hopes to continue our support for the Fair in the coming years.”**

**Local Sponsor**

**“The Regional Fairs , Outreach Activities and the Provincial Celebrations were exceptionally well received by everyone involved: organizers, chaperones, site guides, workshop leaders, parents, special guests and our students. The Ottawa Celebration bus driver even said that the students were wonderful, and that he hopes he gets to work with us again. Personnel from all the sites were amazed at the excellent questions and attentiveness of the participants.**

**Thank you, organizers, for all your work in planning such great days. Thank you, chaperones and volunteers for supporting our students.**

**You made the days run smoothly. We didn’t lose anyone and most importantly, the students never lost their smiles or their enthusiasm. That was because of all of you. Thanks again for a wonderful fair year! ”**

**OHFA Board**