



Window to the World Mural at the Roxy Theatre photo: Heather Hughes

## Beyond the walls of the Gallery

Leanne Wright, Partnerships and Marketing Manager

The Tom Thomson Art Gallery has the unique, dual personality of both a cultural hub in a rural community as well as a national and international tourist destination. And while it is mandated in our vision statement to herald Thomson's work and legacy as well as our significant permanent collection to expand interest in the importance of Canadian art, it also states that we play a prominent role in our own community through supportive collaborations, partnerships and projects. The very fact that Thomson's family roots were planted in local soil makes this an essential part of the role the TOM plays in the community.

For this reason the TOM aims not only to create exemplary programming within the Gallery, we strive to bring programming outside of the four walls and into the community. We have many projects that strike partnerships with local groups and organizations such as our annual **Canadian Spirit** project which has developed integral relationships with the Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library, Sweetwater Music Festival, Summerfolk Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and Saugeen First Nation to name a few. Members from the Saugeen community were also involved in an international art project called "Inside Out" initiated by the TOM. Portraits from this project were installed around Owen Sound.

Our "**TTAG You're It**" programme, has brought much art into the community - Veronica Verkley's piece "*Feral*", still stands guard along the banks of the Sydenham River and the Window to the World Mural project created by local youth can be enjoyed on the rear wall of the Roxy Theatre.

"**The Legacy Project - How Deep Our Roots**" saw site-specific installations at community garden sites established by the Gallery throughout the city this summer. The public art projects were created by Canadian artists including Nyle Johnston, Gareth Lichty, Jim Hong Louie, and Mary Catherine Newcomb. Plans for next year include celebrating the 125th anniversary of Agnes Macphail and Norman Bethune being born and we are planning a project called "**With A Destiny**". Macphail lived here in Grey County

all her life and was the first woman elected to Parliament. Bethune, physician and medical innovator, lived in Owen Sound during his formative years, graduating from high school here and receiving early medical training. This project will involve outreach to senior homes and through organizations such as the Alzheimer Society and Community Living.

We are always seeking to build collaborative, community programs such as **The Blueprint Project**, an exciting new partnership between Autism Ontario Grey Bruce Chapter and the TOM. This free family session encourages children on the Autism spectrum to express themselves through art.

We are also grateful for the partnerships we have established with local businesses. It is our intention to create sponsorship packages that are tailor-made for each supporter with reciprocal benefit. Support from our Admission Sponsor Cobble Beach enables us to offer our "Admission by Donation" policy. Our Education department works closely with sponsors Bruce Power and Scotia Bank allowing schools from our region to visit the Gallery and our top notch contemporary exhibitions will be supported in 2015 by Owen Sound Transportation.

If your business or organization has relevant projects or ideas we would love to hear from you! We also urge you as members of the community to become a Friend of the Gallery. Memberships start at \$25 for Seniors/Students/Artists, \$35 for individuals and \$45 for family.