



Rideau Lakes

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MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Rideau Lakes Nominee Ken Watson wins Bill Thake Memorial Award

Chantry, ON – The Township of Rideau Lakes is pleased to share that resident Ken Watson is the recipient of the 2021 Bill Thake Memorial Award for Economic Development Leadership.

Each year, the United Counties of Leeds Grenville calls for nominations for this award, also called the Warden's Award, which recognizes and celebrates a volunteer who has shown outstanding commitment and leadership resulting in the growth and vitality of the Leeds Grenville economy. Following the passing of Mr. Thake in 2013, this is now a Memorial Award in his honour.

“We are thrilled that Ken Watson has received this regional recognition,” says Cathy Livingston, Chair of the Rideau Lakes Economic Development Committee, “Ken has placed Rideau Lakes on an international stage through his work to publish the heritage of the Rideau Canal and its communities.”

In a volunteer capacity, Ken has contributed countless hours dedicated to completing major research projects that showcase the history and heritage of our region, with special focus on the Rideau Canal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and The Old Stone Mill, a National Historic Site.

During Ken's research, he contributed to the archive/artefact project for the Delta Mill Society and has been helping to set up new displays at the Old Stone Mill. Ken's wealth of knowledge has been identified by his fellow members at the Delta Mill Society and often Ken is the point person for providing society members with information about the Rideau Canal.

As a local ambassador and active member of community groups including the Delta Mill Society, the Friends of the Rideau, the Rideau Waterway Land Trust, and the Chaffey's and Area Heritage Society, Ken has helped to publish his research in a way that inspires both residents and visitors to celebrate the region. In particular, publications include *Watson's Guide to the Rideau Canal*, the *Concise History of The Old Stone Mill*, and a series of Heritage Walking Tours. In addition, Ken designed and maintains the website for the Delta Mill Society, and recently published a book entitled, *Building of the 1810 Stone Mill*.

“The Township of Rideau Lakes would like to extend our congratulations to Ken Watson on his many accomplishments over the last 25 years, and thank him for his ongoing contribution to our community” says Arie Hoogenboom, Mayor of the Township of Rideau Lakes.

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