

## President's Report for 2021 Annual General Meeting

The past year has been one of irreversible change, loss, persistence, and hope. We all continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in so many different ways. During this past year, the OBHS has continued to operate remotely and due to our committed staff and volunteers, we have been able to sustain our operations, deliver programming virtually, and have continued to increase our collaborative efforts.

Our 33rd annual Black History Month Kick-off was a virtual event this year due to the pandemic. A great addition to BHM was the well-received Speaker's Series. Guests included Lawrence Hill, Cheryl Foggo, Sandra Whiting, Yolanda Marshall, Kesha Christie, Shannon Prince of Buxton Museum, Steven Cook of Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site, Mary - Katherine Whelan and Lorene Bridgen-Lennie of Amherstburg Freedom Museum, and Kween of Guelph Black Heritage Society. We will again host a virtual event on Sunday, January 30, 2022. Stay tuned for more information. The OBHS held our annual Emancipation Day commemoration virtually with funding from Canadian Heritage. This year as we marked the 187<sup>th</sup> August First, it was the first time that the occasion was nationally recognized after the passage of Bill M-36 in the House of Parliament.

Our Leaders of Tomorrow program will be offered in 2022. The OBHS received a generous donation of \$10k from Universal Music Canada's B.L.A.C.K Label Coalition to support this youth-oriented program. During the past year, our public engagement continued to be robust. We have provided virtual Black history presentations across Ontario and Canada as well in the United to a range of audiences including school groups, organizations, and corporations. The OBHS has secured a number of grants and donations to help us deliver our programming including the Summer Experience Program, Young Canada Works, Cadillac Fairview, United Way, New Horizons Senior Grant, and the Toronto Foundation. In late September, we launched our virtual Toronto Black History Walking tour on the Engage ART app. You can download the app on your device, scan the QR code, and experience the tour in person or from your home. The OBHS is excited for what's in store for the rest of 2021 and in 2022. As always, our sincere appreciation for your support and confidence abounds.

Note: the OBHS is grateful for the continued funding support by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries through the Provincial Heritage Organization Operating Grant, the continued sponsorship of TD Bank for our Black History Month Kick-Off Brunch/Event, and for the increased donations we have received from our members and supporters.