



Staff photo/Brink

Past winners of the Citizen of the Year award gather under the new arch in Lamoureux Park. The monument is designed to look like a tree, and each winner's name is etched onto a leaf.

Monument shows vandals they didn't win: Cotnam

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"I think it's beautiful," said of the tribute to George and other community pillars. "They did a great job."

"I just feel loved," she added about the invitation to participate. "I get very emotional."

VANDALISM

Though the vandals that removed the original plaques were severely condemned by the community, Cotnam said the new monument is a way to show the culprits they didn't win.

She included the rocks that used to hold the plaques in her new design: they are gathered around the base of the archways.

"It offers continuity," she said. "(It shows) we could rise above what hurt us. You can't stop us."

For Louise McLellan, the theft wasn't as personal as it was for other Citizen of the Year winners. She took home the award in 2007, but the plaques were stolen before hers could be placed in the park.

But that didn't mean she wasn't frustrated by the act.

"What a shame they were stolen," she said. "I can't understand people taking it."

"I was devastated," said Roy about the incident. "Who would want to do that? What would they gain from that?"

Despite a \$3,000 reward for information, the culprits were never caught.

Now, more than two years later, the new memorial will be a lasting reminder of the contribution of Cornwall's citizens.

"It's a reminder of the past and motivation for the future," said Mayor Bob Kilger. "(The recipients) didn't do it for the recognition, but it's right and

proper to recognize unselfish service."

'HONOURED TO BE A PART'

Cotnam said she spent three months working on the project, including more than three weeks of welding eight to 10 hours a day to put it all together. It was created in three pieces, so Cotnam said she was excited to see it all together when it was finally erected this week.

"I'm honoured to be a part of this, to see it up in the park," she said.

Strasser from the Chamber spent even more time – nearly two years – making sure the award winners were remembered, heading up a committee charged with creating a new monument.

"The time it took to do this was well worth it," she said, adding that the arches have space to add new winners for up to 20 years.

The Citizen of the Year memorial is in place, but Strasser isn't finished her campaign to recognize extraordinary residents. She wants to see tributes to the winners of the Chamber's Dr. Garth Taylor Humanitarian Award also included in the pathway.

For the Citizen of the Year recipients, the new monument is a nice reminder that recognition wasn't lost along with the old plaques.

"We just love to help the community," said Roy.

"Volunteering is my passion," said 2004 winner Sue Tarle, adding that none of the recipients worked for the honour, but from a simple desire to help the community.

"I do what I do because I love people," she said. "To be thanked is just awesome."

Past Citizen of the Year Winners

- 2009 - Sylvia Whitaker
- 2008 - Tom and Gail Kaneb
- 2007 - Louise Ann McLellan
- 2006 - Roy Perkins
- 2005 - Bob Peters
- 2004 - Sue Tarle
- 2003 - Sean Adams
- 2002 - Tom Wallace
- 2001 - Val Shannon
- 2000 - Chuck Charlebois
- 1999 - George Sawinski
- 1998 - Rudy Roy
- 1997 - Bruce Maynard
- 1996 - Joyce Miller
- 1995 - Bill Dickie
- 1994 - Peter Morgan
- 1993 - Bill Willis
- 1992 - Gerry Grant
- 1991 - Don Derry
- 1990 - Angelo Towndale
- 1989 - Beth Davidson
- 1988 - Jake Lamoureux
- 1987 - Sr. Pauline Rheume
- 1986 - Alf Lee
- 1985 - Loraine Robertson
- 1984 - Dr. Nat Shah
- 1983 - Thomas J. O'Brien
- 1982 - Bud Guilbeault
- 1981 - Norm Lalonde
- 1980 - Larry Keen Sr.
- 1979 - Sultan Jessa
- 1978 - George Assaly
- 1977 - Laura Sabourin
- 1976 - Dr. Ian Gourley
- 1975 - Rev. Gordon Bryan
- 1974 - Hurley MacDougall
- 1973 - George Tyo
- 1972 - Fr. Rudolph Villeneuve