

Artist-Historians Gifts to Communities

Read below Susan Ward's reminiscences of the kind of person her husband, Cameron Ward is, what he treasures, what he likes, what he values, what inspires him, what he is enthusiastic and passionate about, the kind of people and things or experiences that move him.

Cameron passed away, peacefully April 26, 2016, the day before the *Making History Together* party to officially launch the *Seedling for Change in History* and related initiatives you are reading about on this website.

I met Cameron December 4, 2015 at the Welland Historical Museum. I came with a big picture in my head to invite him to be part of it. An hour later, I was part of his; four hours later we had come up with an action plan to bring my research and teaching in Latin American history at Brock to bear on the work the Museum does, with activities filled with of color, sounds, stories, excitement, and promise.

Almost 5 months later, the *Seedling for Research in History* and the Welland Historical Museum have designed and laid down an action plan to mark the 150th Anniversary of Canada as a Confederation all though 2017. For me, December 4, 2016 and my encounter with Cameron marks the beginning of celebration of communion in diversity *Making History Together* stands for. My encounter with Cameron shines in full light and high in my memory.

A deep thank you to Susan for sharing with us Cameron's passion for art, history, people, and life.

Cameron remains among us.

Maria del Carmen Suescun Pozas

April 27, 2016

Cameron Ward, Director of Museum Studies Gifts to Welland and Pelham

Cameron Ward is a life-long learner in the truest sense of the term. Nothing is better than a new project, a new person to research, a new challenge to be bested. He is a voracious reader with a photographic memory and an ability to draw you into his passions. His passions are many, but themed...he likes old stuff, mostly old military stuff, stuff that has a meaning to someone, a story to tell, a glimpse into someone else's world. Thus he collects military artifacts – medals and uniforms, swords and photographs, paintings and ephemera – all to tell the story of people who lived before us.

When I first met Cameron in 1979, the focus of his interests were the War of 1812, the Napoleonic Wars and the Russian Revolution of 1917. We visited every War of 1812 site in Ontario and many in the U.S. We tramped battlefields, searched antique shops, researched in libraries and brought home treasures: swords and books and pamphlets all to better understand the past. Nowadays, his military research foci are WWI, the British in India, the 77th Wentworth Regiment (a Canadian militia regiment from Wentworth County around Hamilton) and the Queen's Westminster Volunteers. He probably knows more about the Wentworth Regiment than anyone else in Canada and he is inspired by one of its officers – Major Albert Edward Kimmins who killed at Ypres 1915.

Kimmins worked for E.D. Smith and was vice-president and the senator's right hand man on the farms and in the canning factory. He was an officer in the Wentworth Regiment. He was a school trustee for Winona. He sang in the Bach Choir in Hamilton. He was a proper Edwardian gentleman with a strong community commitment, not of noblesse oblige, but of a genuine belief that he was called contribute to society in any way he could. He was honest, observant and hard-working. So too is Cameron.

Cameron loves to people watch – on the street, in the mall, at a park. He sees the human condition as fascinating and watches people, not to be nosey, but to learn. It is one of the reasons he studies officers of the British, Indian and Canadian armies. He wants to learn about their lives, their families, their triumphs, their service to others. He wants to preserve their memory, to honour that service and gather the artifacts and ephemera that belonged to or described that man. He seeks to understand previous era through the very people who gave us that era.

But his interests don't stop at the military. There are the trains (particularly the old T.H.& B.), the watches (all mechanical, some new, some old), the furniture and the paintings. He is a collector who seeks to know everything he can about that which he has purchased. If it is a painting, he needs to know about the artist, when and where the piece was painted, exhibited, sold. Like I said, he is voracious in his search for knowledge.

Although a very friendly person who knows a lot of people, he does not have a great many close friends. He is loyal and honest with great personal integrity. He looks for the same in others. He bears much with no whining or complaining. He does not like to talk about his health, even as he lives with issues that can devastate and debilitate. He is stoic – like a good British officer. He loves deeply and is devoted to our daughter Carol and to me. He was Mr. Mom to Carol when she first came into our lives. As he worked from home, it made sense that he would be the one charged with the early morning tasks of getting her to school and home again, for lunch and at day's end. Did I mention that he took on this task at 47? Carol was just 7 when we adopted her and her new forever dad would do anything to see her smile. They were best buddies, always looking for the "road trip" opportunity. He has always worked hard to make life fun for us all. He is not all cerebral.

Cameron loves music and appreciates artists both new and old. Listening to the material on his phone you get a strange but interesting mix. You find King Crimson, Led Zepplin, Roxy Music and America. There are several songs from Jay and the Americans, Journey and Boston. But you also have the theme from Nicholas and Alexandra, as well as Robert Goulet singing "If Ever I Should Leave You" from "Camelot". "Camelot" is the only musical he has ever really liked, although he was tempted by "Les Miserables" – largely due to the time setting, not the story or the music. He likes his music loud and often has to turn the radio down before I get in the car. Carol likes it loud too. He is a big movie buff, especially – you guessed it – old war stories and good action films. His favourite actor – Errol Flynn. His favourite movie music – a toss-up between "Nicholas and Alexandra" and "Last of the Mohicans". He has taken me to see Gordon Lightfoot twice and actually enjoyed the performance – but would never have gone if it weren't for me. He likes to make sure we have fun.

He has done many kinds of work in his life, but the position at the museum is the one he was born to do. Director of Museum Studies is the title he would have preferred. It sums up his strengths – leading, researching, creating the big picture, moving forward

without forgetting the past. That's who he is. That is his passion. Hopefully, we will all be the richer for it.

Born – January, 1955

Raised in Hamilton by Grace (a nurse) and Don (an educator), with 2 younger brothers, Allan and Michael.

Attended Brock University Gr. 12 Summer program (1973).

Graduated with B.A. (Hons.) in Interdisciplinary Studies (History/Politics) 1977.

Susan Ward

Fonthill, 10 April, 2016