



News Release

Official Arts Trail Launch

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY, Ontario, August 7th, 2008 – On Thursday morning, the Hon. Peter Fonseca, Minister of Tourism, and Leona Dombrowsky, MPP for Prince Edward-Hastings, joined Taste the County™ to officially launch the Arts Trail – the first cultural initiative of its kind in Ontario. To celebrate the opening, held at the impressive Fields on West Lake, the artists of the Trail showcased their work providing attendees with a glimpse of the Arts Trail experience.

Comprised of a bilingual print brochure/map, a website (www.artstrail.ca) and a media relations program, the self-guided Arts Trail links together the studios and galleries of many acclaimed artists in the County. According to Leona Dombrowsky, MPP Prince Edward-Hastings, "This funding for a new Arts Trail will showcase the talent and treasure of local artists in Prince Edward County."

To date, the Arts Trail has garnered tremendous attention from media and tourists, many of whom are visiting Prince Edward County specifically to explore the Arts Trail. "I am receiving lots of traffic...folks from Trois Rivières, the West Island, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Guelph, and Chicago. I have sold 11 paintings to date in July." says Margaret McFetridge from The Bloomin Barn Studio.

The genesis of the Arts Trail occurred in 2004 when a Strategic Economic Development Plan prepared for the County of Prince Edward identified arts, culture and heritage as a sector ripe for development relative to its economic potential. By 2005 County Council had adopted a Cultural Strategic Plan (CSP), including a working group entitled the Cultural Round Table, positioning Prince Edward County as a leader in municipal cultural planning.

The Cultural Round Table, working, in part, to raise the profile of local culture, chose to make one of its first initiatives the development the Arts Trail. To help make the trail a reality, it partnered with the Municipal Economic Development Department and the County's non-profit destination marketing organization, Taste the County™.

According to Rebecca LeHeup-Bucknell, Taste the County's™ executive director, "Expanding on our experience from developing the award-winning Taste Trail, we were able to work with community partners to create an arts and cultural experience unique to Ontario. This model was only made possible due to strong stakeholder support and funding partners that had faith in our ability to succeed in promoting the unique culture of Prince Edward County."

Funding for the project came from a variety of sources including the municipality, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Ministry of Tourism Investment and Development Office and 22 artist stakeholders.

The Arts Trail was developed by Taste the County™ in partnership with the Municipal Economic Development Department, the Cultural Round Table and the arts community to highlight local artists, studios and galleries while providing the consumer with a unique County cultural experience.

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Driving growth... promoting the County experience.

