

people

# BAND OF BUILDERS

BY ADRIENNE BROWN

In business, there's something to be said for longevity. That bodes well for the Grey-Bruce Home Builders and Trades Association (GBHBTA), celebrating its 50th year in 2013.

The GBHBTA is a regional organization that's part of a larger network of home builders' associations – the Ontario Home Builders' Association and the Canadian Home Builders' Association. Each level is important, but the GBHBTA is the group making a difference in your community.

Grey-Bruce area builders, renovators, land developers, manufacturers, lenders, sub-trades, suppliers and other types of professionals working in the residential building industry come together through this association to discuss current issues in their profession, stay on top of events, codes and changes, and discover ways to give back to their communities.

Most importantly, the association represents professional, reliable companies. "If you're hiring one of our members, they're a professional business," says Tim Clancy, the GBHBTA President. "If people take the time to join and get involved in the local association initiatives, it says something about their business."

The fact that local homebuilders and other businesses have thrown their support behind the GBHBTA for so long says a lot about the group as a whole, as well. First formed in about 1960 (with a few "missed years" according to Clancy, making 2013 its anniversary year) the organization is always growing and changing, but many businesses – and families – have been members for a very long time. In fact, Clancy's father was the association president in 1996-1997. Clancy says there are plenty of other family connections. Businesses have been passed on to children and other family members, they've gone through changes and they've grown, but they've maintained their membership in the GBHBTA. *Continued on page 56*

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**BACK ROW LEFT TO RIGHT:** Henry Post, Greg McArthur, Ken Fraser, Bill Corbett, Rick Corbett, Bill Harwood, Doug Sowerby, Tom Clancy.  
**FRONT ROW LEFT TO RIGHT:** Mark Annably, Glenn Gray, Tim Clancy, Louise Batut, Betty Ann Fawcett, Tara Hall, Bryan Duncan, Jason McNamara



BONNIE FOX PHOTO

They've also maintained the same good values on which the founding members established the association. They strive for top-quality and affordable products and embrace volunteer projects in the communities in which they work. "They support our livelihood," says Clancy, "and we want to give something back."

And do they ever. The list of community initiatives and projects goes on and on. Last year, the group along with other local volunteers, rebuilt the Queen's Park bandstand in Owen Sound. "Our members donated the materials and their time," says Glenn Gray, the Executive Officer for the GBHBTA, "and with our contributions, the estimated \$100,000 project came in at under \$10,000 total!" The GBHBTA and Bandstand Committee have been nominated for two cultural awards for this project in particular.

The association's key fundraiser is the annual Home and Cottage Expo, which it organizes and hosts in conjunction with the Knights of Columbus Council and the City of Owen Sound. This year's show runs April 20 and 21 at the Harry Lumley Bayshore Community Centre in Owen Sound.

Some proceeds from the Home Show will go towards the GBHBTA bursary program. Its annual award is granted to a promising student entering a skilled trade program and is intended to help him or her purchase tools. The association has also helped subsidize equipment in high schools. This year, it will help replace a table saw at Warton High

School. After all, the first step to getting involved in carpentry or any kind of trade is trying out the tools.

"We encourage the next generation to get involved in trades," says Gray. "We want to get high school students to think of trades as a possible career option."

Similarly, the association encourages ongoing training for its members. Members are constantly upgrading their skills and keeping up with the latest building laws, but also learning more about marketing and business as their industry evolves.

At their monthly meetings, members discuss everything from changing building codes to new technologies. They can participate in course upgrades on topics like building law, marketing and business principles – they're a group of lifelong learners.

They also know that banding together makes them stronger. The association undertakes educational, economic and technical research on behalf of its members, markets their businesses and handles industry promotion and consumer relations. When necessary, the GBHBTA also represents its members' best interests and shares their views with all three levels of government.

According to Gray, "the more members we are, the stronger a voice we have." And right now, the association sits at a strong and healthy membership of over 50 businesses. **OH**



Tom and Theresa Clancy with a family receiving a new home at the OHBA Humanitarian Build in Dominican Republic in November 2011. One hundred and eighty OHBA members flew to the Dominican to build six houses in four days for local families in need.



Grand opening of the Owen Sound Bandstand.

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The Grey-Bruce Home Builders and Trades Association is a voluntary organization committed to high standards of business practice and products within the residential construction industry in the Grey and Bruce County area. We represent various disciplines from builders, developers, renovators, trades, suppliers, financial institutions and utilities.

Contact us today for a list of members or to register as a member.

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