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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NOTL Museum Capital Campaign Spotlight on Donors:  
Lauren and Vaughn Goettler**

When philanthropists Lauren and Vaughn Goettler arrived in Niagara-on-the-Lake, their passion for history, preservation, and community engagement immediately found a home. And not only in the 1908 four-level cottage heritage home they purchased in 2015, but also in their desire to champion projects that would improve, inspire, and challenge the community. In 2020 they formed the Goettler Family Foundation to do just that, and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum received the very first gift from the Foundation.

“I’ve always been a history buff,” said Vaughn Goettler, “and museums are a vital connection to our past – to the stories and people that remind us of the good as well as the bad. Museums actually help us understand the roots of our community and gain a sense of who we are. ”

It was that commitment to history that convinced the Goettlers of the necessity of the NOTL Museum’s expansion plans, and so they became one of the first donors to the Capital Campaign. “ This museum is already the little heartbeat of the town,” said Lauren Goettler. “But it really needs to be a bigger heartbeat.” By spear-heading the campaign, their six-figure donation created exactly what the Goettler’s intended, and that heartbeat continues to grow.

Jodey Porter, Director of the Goettler Family Foundation, echoes the sentiment expressed by the Goettlers. “It’s very important to champion the activities of museums, and of the NOTL Museum in particular. The sanctuary of history is beyond valuable today, because there are very few places where that can happen.” Porter, herself a descendent of United Empire Loyalists, has overseen The Goettler Family Foundation’s philanthropic projects, from supplying water to villages in Africa, creating fish farms in Bolivia, planting pollinators along Niagara’s Heritage Trail, to supporting countless local art groups. “If Niagara-on-the-Lake didn’t treasure its history, which is what the Museum does for us, we would be just another suburb of St. Catharines. Our history is what makes us different.”

Both Goettlers acknowledge the role the NOTL Museum holds in preserving and protecting treasures of local history, and for sharing that knowledge through its outreach programs and decades of archival collecting. “If we didn’t have the Museum,” said Lauren Goettler, “just think of what we would lose. I love the fact that our history is there, and we know it’s safe.”

As retired entrepreneurs, Lauren and Vaughn Goettler believe philanthropy is a social enterprise, with huge rewards. Said Vaughn, “This is an affluent town. It shouldn’t be difficult to support cultural activities here and humanitarian projects overseas. Those of are who are able, should stand up and be counted.”

Which is exactly what Lauren and Vaughn Goettler do, with a passion. And as the NOTL Museum knows, that kind of commitment turns dollars into critical improvements, preservation, and a future expansion that will honour the unique history of Niagara-on-the Lake.