



NEWS FROM KING TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY



KTHS 2024 AGM Update

The roster for the 2024 KTHS Board of Directors was presented and approved at the March 3rd AGM and is as follows:

2024 KTHS Board of Directors

- Richard Vien – President
- Murdene Pozdrowski – Vice President
- Beverly Flanagan – Programs
- Sharon Bentley – Membership
- Linda Similas – Treasurer
- Kim Sillcox – Newsletter
- Diana Armitage – *Director at Large*
- Ed Millar – *Director at Large*
- Tony Rolph – *Director at Large*

Bill Salter – *Director at Large*

Erica Baird – *Ex-Officio*

Liza Mallyon – *Ex-Officio*

Members of the **Fawcett Bequest**

Committee include: Ann Love, Diana Armitage, Linda Similas and Tony Rolph. Richard Vien and Ed Millar serve as *ex-officio* members.



Following the AGM, **Joe Karabin**, Manager of the King City Cemetery, gave a light-hearted and enjoyable talk about the history of the King Cemetery, people of interest who are buried there, the significance of the Dead House, and shared personal stories of his decades spent caring for this peaceful resting spot in King.

Thank you Joe for a very enjoyable afternoon!

Save the date for the next KTHS Speaker event October 20!



This year marks the **70th anniversary of Hurricane Hazel**.

The KTHS will host a speaker/author

TBD on **Sunday, October 20th** to recount what it was like to live through Toronto's deadliest storm. The event will take place in **Schomberg**. Location and details to follow.



Free admission for KTHS members, \$10 for non-members (option to purchase an annual KTHS membership for \$25 for individuals/ \$30 for a family at the door and attend for free).

Jay Willmot Shares History of Kinghaven Farms

On May 5th, the KTHS hosted Jay Willmot, President of Kinghaven Farms, for a fascinating discussion in the Walter Rolling Schoolhouse at the King Heritage and Cultural Centre. Mr. Willmot shared his family's story of how they relocated from St. Catharines and acquired the Kinghaven Farms in 1967 from the estate of JSD Tory.

Since then, the Willmot family has built a world renowned successful thoroughbred breeding and horse racing operation and owned or bred more than 150 stakes winning horses, earning nine Sovereign Awards as Canada's Leading Breeder and five as Outstanding Owner.

More recently, Kinghaven has transitioned into a honey producer, commissioned its first solar PV electrical generation facility, and is in the process of building a sustainable greenhouse operation for leafy greens.

From thoroughbreds to sustainable agriculture, Kinghaven Farms continues to stand the test of time.

KTHS Donates to Canada's Bomb Girls Banner Campaign



KTHS Board Member Beverly Flanagan attended a ceremony honouring the Canada Bomb Girls on the 80th anniversary of D-Day, June 6th, at The Hangar on Centennial College's Ashtonbee Campus.

Barbara Dixon, author of *Bomb Girls: Trading Aprons for Ammo*, was a KTHS guest speaker in 2021 and has worked tirelessly to share the story of the women who worked in munitions factories in Scarborough during World War II. As part of the commemoration, a banner campaign will feature nearly three dozen unique banners installed along poles from Pharmacy Avenue to Warden Avenue to honour Scarborough's Bomb Girls.

Each banner will depict a scene from the General Engineering Company Canada (GECO) factory, located just southwest of Eglinton and Warden. The extensive factory site employed more than 21,000 Canadians who filled munitions to support

Canada's armed forces during the Second World War. The majority of these workers were local women, who became known as the Bomb Girls.

In support of this commemorative project, Beverly proudly delivered a cheque to Ms. Dixon on behalf of KTHS for the non-profit Bomb Girls Legacy Foundation.

History of King Book Teasers

Ann Love and **Sharon Bentley** continue to work away on our History of King book project frequently coming upon additional stories and anecdotes that they don't want to leave out. We will continue to include a few stories by local guest authors in each newsletter as we approach the 2025 publication date.

The Story of the Three-Point Parish of Lloydtown by Gerry Alletson

In rural areas where there are several churches of the same denomination, it is often given to one incumbent to travel between the churches conducting services. In rural England, there can be four or even five churches in a Parish. Priests serve all the churches and parishes like this in a variety of ways. By alternating services in locations

and holding mid-week and/or evening services. It is a stretch in a large five-point Parish, but doable.

Reverend Featherstone Osler arrived in Bond Head with his family on June 20, 1837. This year was an auspicious one for England and Upper Canada. Queen Victoria came to the throne on this very day and in addition, this was the year of the Lloydtown Rebellion.

The family of Oslers contributed much to Canadians, beginning with Featherstone and his brother, Henry, and followed by Featherstone's son, William, born on July 12, 1849, in Bond Head. William, a brilliant doctor, was knighted for his work in the field of medicine. Thus, he became Sir William Osler and is remembered as the Father of Modern Medicine. Many descendants of the family Osler are key members of life in Canada today, including the business law firm Osler Hoskin and Harkin in downtown Toronto.

Featherstone Lake Osler, was an officer in the Royal Navy and his adventures during this time included a tour on Lord Nelson's flagship H.M.S. Victory, and being shipwrecked twice. Still, in his twenties, he retired from the Navy and studied Theology at Cambridge University. With his family, he set sail for Quebec, where his ordination took place on June 1, 1837.

On his arrival in Bond Head, he soon discovered that the older generations were deeply saddened by the lack of clergy over the preceding 30 years. By this time basic needs, like food shelter, and water had been met and the need for spiritual sustenance had become uppermost in people's hearts and minds. They missed gathering together to learn more and practice their faith in God. Marriages, burials and baptisms were all lacking in their lives. The children knew little of the faith of their parents and grandparents, and few children born in Upper Canada had been baptized. With great zeal and love, Featherstone set about tackling this by getting the consent of the Bishop in Toronto to open a School of Theology in Bond Head where he trained more than a dozen priests, including his brother Henry. He was instrumental in the building of at least a dozen churches and about 20 congregations throughout two townships 'King, Albion and parts adjacent'.

This is how the three-point parish of Lloydtown began, with a much-loved and adventurous man of great faith - Featherstone Lake Osler.

Featherstone's brother, Henry Bath Osler was still a student in August 1842 when he set about leading the congregation in Lloydtown to erect a mudbrick building, **St. Mary Magdalene. This was the first church of what was to become the Three Point Parish.** The opening service took place on January 1, 1843. In the fall of this same year, the ordination of Reverend Henry Osler was appointed the first incumbent of the Parish of Lloydtown. He remained here for 34 years, a wise and much-loved priest. Continuing the vision of his brother Featherstone, he laid the groundwork for mission outposts in Nobleton and Pinegrove (which is in Woodbridge today). The

current St. Mary Magdalene is the second of two Anglican churches that were built. The first building deteriorated making it necessary to erect a new church. The opening service took place on December 13, 1925.

In addition, he created mission outposts in Kettleby. Congregations met in the building known as the Orange Hall in Nobleton, two schools in Kettleby, Terry's Schoolhouse and Proctor's schoolhouse on the 4th and 5th concessions respectively. Once the Temperance Hall was built in Kettleby in 1850, the services took place there. It is said the priest wore out more than one horse making all these trips.

In 1874, Canon Henry Osler was called to serve as Rector of St. Johns, Toronto. Several priests served for the following 13 years before Reverend E.W. Sibbald became Rector of the Parish in 1887. He brought fresh enthusiasm to the original vision to establish churches in this area. **In 1889 St. Albans**, a redbrick church was erected with the assistance of parishioners in Nobleton. **This was the second church established in the Parish of Lloydtown.** Sadly, this beautiful old church was deconsecrated in June 2013, a heartbreaking time for many and especially those parishioners who remembered their fathers and grandfathers being involved in the building of the church in 1889.

In 1891, Christ Church in Kettleby was the third church to be built. It is the only one of the three original churches that have held continuous services since they were first built. This beautiful Norman church is built of local fieldstone. Reverend Sibbald and many in the community pitched in to help in any way they could.

There is a stained-glass window over the altar honouring the memory of the Tyrwhitt family. The village and church owe their existence to this family. Around 1835 in England, the brothers Tyrwhitt, Reverend Richard Tyrwhitt, Septimus and William had a vision to build an Anglican Church in Canada. Reverend Richard became a chaplain in Bombay but provided the money to buy the land for this endeavour. Septimus bought 46 acres which with his help became the booming village of Kettleby, named at the request of Septimus' wife after a village in England where the family originated. The park in the village is named Tyrwhitt Conservation Area.

William married in Lloydtown and sadly died young. His son Richard became the ward of his brother Septimus. Over 50 years later, Christ Church was built and completed. Richard became a great benefactor helping to get the church built. His portrait hangs at the entrance to the church, and most of the Tyrwhitts are buried in the cemetery on the 6th Line in New Tecumseh. This is close to Bond Head, which is where the story of the Osler family and the Three Point Parish began.

A metal detector recently revealed the source of what was causing the punctured tires of the lawn mower on the church grounds. Log nails, dating back to 1891 when Christ Church was built, give us a wonderful glimpse of the past. This discovery was particularly gratifying to one of the



Parishioners who often quotes this mantra: “A nation who does not care about its past – has no future.”

Want to Know How Arts Society King Began? ... Just ASK! By Judy Craig

In the early years of the 21st Century, a confluence of King Township events led to the formation of Arts Society King (ASK).

In Fall 2003, internationally acclaimed *Holland Marsh* sculptor, Brett Davis unveiled his 8’ bronze statue “The Rebel” commissioned by the Loydton Rebellion Association and documented by renowned film director/producer Christopher Rowley, Schomberg, for distribution to libraries and schools.

In 2004, the new mandate of the Parks Recreation and Culture (PR&C) department led to volunteers attending the Ontario Ministry of Culture’s Municipal Cultural Planning workshops at Galt, Strathroy and Orillia.

*“Major determinants of quality of place are cultural -
unique history and natural & built heritage with a lively diverse arts & entertainment scene”*

“It must be grass roots with support from Government”

Workshop leaders, Greg Baeker and Glenn Murray

At the Mayor’s Summit luncheon, a keen group of individuals representing diverse community groups, wanted to further explore the above comments. This led to the FIRST MEETING of the as-yet-unnamed group on August 31, 2005, around the dining room table at Judy and Gordon Craig’s home with five representatives from the arts, and five from heritage and naturalist groups, the museum, library and Chambers of Commerce. Invitees were Sharon Bentley, Marianne Broome, Judy Craig, Brett Davis, Kathleen Fry, Andrea Loeppky, Helen Lucas, Ernestine Tahedl, Barry Wallace and Cathy Webster.

The energy was palpable and *ideas flowed*:

- Celebrate King’s rural character and natural & heritage environment
- Actively promote the arts community
- Organize an annual summer Fine Arts Festival
- Use the many unique facilities of King
- Promote Kings’ restaurants, caterers, brewery and winery
- Support local talent, and
- Offer special events/speakers throughout the year

A week later the SECOND MEETING hosted by Seneca College’s Dean Judith Limkilde, attracted more volunteers and led to the decision to hold the first ASK Festival at Seneca College from July 15 - 23, 2006.

Arts Society King (ASK)

The name Arts Society King (ASK) was chosen; the logos designed; the Mission

and Constitution written; and ASK was officially incorporated by January 2006. President Garry Conway, Laskay and VP Bert Duclos, *Kettleby*, oversaw a board of 13 Directors (representing 27 community affiliations), and 12 Honorary Directors (15 community affiliations).

ASK Mission

To establish and maintain an organization in King that fosters inspiration, understanding and appreciation for the arts, heritage and environment.

- Organize an annual arts festival for King Township
- Provide support services to the arts, heritage and environmental communities in King for the purpose of enhancing communication, education and promotion of their respective activities.

ASK Festival Plan

Festival Co-Chairs, Judy Craig, *Schomberg* and Cathy Webster, *King City Business Owner* along with the ASK Board decided on a framework for all festivals: *Mayor’s Cultural Soirées*, “Discover the Creative You” Workshops, *Heritage Walking & Bus tours*, Nature and Photographic Hikes, *guest speaker forums*, ending with ASK Studio Tour King.

The Festival grew each year from nine days to two weeks and settled at four weeks as fundraising increased and the Canadian Heritage Grant - *Building communities through Arts and Heritage (BCAH)* was successfully applied for and received annually.



ASK Festival - Cultural Soirées

At the first Soirée, outdoors by stunning Lake Seneca, a beautiful backdrop of artwork was on display with Studio Tour King artists showcasing their creations. While enjoying music from local, talented singers, guests sipped beverages served by King Brewery and Pine Farms Orchard & Fruit Winery. ‘King Caterers’: *BECCS, Sheena’s Kitchen, Sweet Surrender of Schomberg; Cappuccino Bakery, The Country Bake Shoppe, Roslyn House of Nobleton; Dorio’s Kettleby Italian Bakery* and *Pine Farms Orchard* of King City, delighted all with delectable hors d’oeuvres.

Later main courses were served under the tented buffet by the ‘Chefs of King’ from Cardinal Golf Club, Daniel’s of Nobleton, Da Roberto Ristorante, Eaton Hall, Hogan’s at the Four Corners, and The Kingbridge Centre. The scene was set for the evening entertainment: Singer Brian Roman, Environmental Entertainer Martin Galloway and Canadian historian and reggae musician, Jason Wilson & Tabarruk.

Every two years the **Soirée** moved to different venues: Seneca College, King Township Museum (now King Heritage & Cultural Centre), University of Toronto’s Koffler Scientific Reserve (KSR), *Kettleby Pottageville* Lions Community Hall, The Country Day School (CDS), and Cold Creek Conservation area (CCCA).

At each Soirée, MC Don Fenn, *King City* dapperly dressed in his top hat and tails, introduced the incredible entertainers: local singers, dancers, artists, bands, comedians, First Nations and an African drumming group.

At the Museum Soirée, *The Evolution of Music and Dance through the 20th Century*, was performed with classical guitarists Hugh Barnett & Ian Tushingham and Tom Walker & The Kingpins accompanying Daniel Celebre and his Dancers. Daniel, a professional dancer from Nobleton was selected by Michael Jackson, YES - THE Michael Jackson, to be one of the principal dancers on his "This is it" tour.

ASK Festival - "Discover the Creative You" workshops introduced participants to crafts and skills where everything was supplied - "Try It! You'll Like It!"

Workshop samples: painting - watercolour, acrylic, encaustic & folk art, clay sculptures, pottery, dreamcatchers, stencilling, jewellery, floorcloths, stained & fused glass, funky birdhouses, papier-mâché animals, floral arranging, rug hooking, Yoruba Drums, blacksmithing, vocal & guitar, fascinators, cartoon pet drawings, quilting, greeting cards and outdoor cement leaves. Something for everyone.

ASK Festival - Heritage Walking Tours were led by local historians in a different village of King each year. Some celebrated anniversaries like 100th of *Nobleton's* Women's Institute and 150th of Laskay Hall. The King City 'History Lovers' Sextet was dressed in historical garb and Ansnorveldt's Bierling and Rupke families unfolded the history of the Holland Marsh settled in 1934 by 15 Dutch families. Who will ever forget the two barber shops in *Schomberg* - one for Catholics, and across the road, one for Protestants and 'never the twain shall meet'.

ASK Festival - Heritage Bus Tours were led by local historians: King historic buildings, One Room Schoolhouses, Churches, Working & Historic Barns and the Locavore 50 Mile 'Diet'. Fiona Cowles showcased the spectacular Mary Lake Shrine of our Lady of Grace, originally the farm/summer home of Sir Henry Pellett. Its 1928 pipe organ, a combination of Aeolian-Skinner Duo-Art organs from the Seagram House and the Eaton estate had 3000 pipes. The William McElcheran intricate bronze sculpture "Our Lady's Role in Salvation History" was inspiring.

ASK Festival - Nature and Photographic Hikes were held at Cold Creek Conservation area, Happy Valley Forest, Koffler Scientific Reserve, Humber Trails Forest & Wildlife Area, Seneca Lake, Mary Lake and Thornton Bales Conservation Area.

ASK Festival - Studio Tour King. Co-chairs Garry Conway and Marianne Broome, discovered many talented King artists. This juried Fine Arts show began as the Grand Finale of the first ASK Festival King in July 2006 and was later moved to April in 2008.

In 2009, Co-chairs Mara and Tom Wray, initiated the juried *Schomberg Street Gallery* on the third Sunday in September, on Main Street, under tents, for more than 40 local, regional and internationally renowned artists.

Some Events - During the Year

A hike to preeminent American Sculptor Richard Serra's site-specific installation "Shift"; local youth's Next Stage Theatre performance of Talley's Foley; Cory Trepanier's first expedition video "Into the Arctic: An Artist's Journey to the North" at the Aurora Movie Theatre; the private Canadiana collection at The Vogans' restored 1873 Wesleyan Methodist Church in Kettleby; Afternoon Tea at Crawford Wells General Store watching models from "Bustles and Bows" being clothed in fashionable Victorian garments; and outstanding published authors, Heather Robertson, Gavin Watt and Ann Love's Creativity, Censorship & Credibility in Writing.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS WITH ASK

The ASK Board recognized a need for enhanced communication among community groups to share upcoming activities, avoid conflicts and establish partnerships. The Community Groups' meetings held in January led to a Community Calendar created on the King Township Public Library (KTPL) website.

Environmental Movie Nights held throughout the year involved a partnership with Cold Creek Stewardship, Dufferin Marsh, ASK, TRCA and hosted at KTPL. “Who Killed the Electric Car”? or Christopher Rowley’s documentary “Aftermath Population Zero” - what happens to earth when no humans are left?

Humber River Days were organized by Cold Creek Stewardship, sponsored by TRCA and supported by PR&C, ASK and HRSC. At the 2010 event, families enjoyed Scienstational Ssnakes, a bog walk, nature photography show, ending with Taming of the Shrew by the incomparable HRSC.



Humber River Shakespeare Company (HRSC)

Mission: to bring Shakespeare to outdoor locations along the Humber River. In 2008, this professional, classical touring company came to the Schomberg Fairgrounds and later to CCCA, Tyrwhitt Park and The McMichael Canadian Art Collection. People filled the stands; others brought their own chairs; and children were found lying on the ground in front of the stage, totally mesmerized. ASK helped arrange venues, advertise events and supported them through the BCAH grant.

Kidsfest started in 2009. Grade 5 students from all the elementary schools in King were bused to the Museum during the last week of school in June. Three sets of activities: Arts, Heritage, Nature were offered by ASK, King Museum, and KTPL with support from TRCA, Arcadia Academy of Music and The McMichael. To watch the faces on the kids at lunchtime while a Grade 6 Rock Band entertained them was just awesome. A great end to the year.

King Travel Diaries, a partnership of KTPL and ASK, took place at the library sites in King Township. Many residents were happy to share their excursions: Mt. Everest Base Camp, India, Arctic, Iran, Peru, Australia, and Camino de Santiago Walk.

Post Master House & Gallery, a partnership of ASK, King Music Centre, HRSC and TRCA, was initiated by the Barnett brothers with the grand opening September 2011. This new ASK home with a two-room Gallery was the site of many fun evenings. On March 17th, Five Line Rhyme Time with Irish Stew and Beer & Wine made many a hilarious St. Patricks’ Day.

SUPPORT AND PUBLICITY

King MPPs and MP supported successful grant applications to the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) and Heritage Canada (BCAH).

In 2007, Nancy Stenhouse, Editor of Tapestry magazine gave ASK two pages to promote local events which expanded to five pages in 2009.

When Tapestry magazine was discontinued, King MOSAiC was created by Judy Craig and Sue laboni. The free, 24-page quarterly magazine, delivered to all homes in King, was supported by local ads. The covers showcased ASK artists; articles about Arts, Heritage and Nature were written by Write Now @ King and regulars Virginia Atkins, Kathleen Fry, Kelley England, Gordon

Craig, Art Weis & Cheryl Uhrig; and ended with “Events in and Around King...just ASK”. Graphic artist Penny Gilbertson brought the first dream to life in Winter 2011.

EVOLUTION

Over the years, the ASK boards have made changes to reflect the desires of the community. The revised Mission Statement - “ASK promotes, supports, advocates for arts and culture, through effective membership and innovative events and programs” continues to promote King Township as a cultural destination in the GTA.

“We got to know our community and the treasures it holds.” -Former ASK President, Zohreh Zandvakili

A Brief History of King

By Bill Salter

The history of King Township began 236 years ago on September 23, 1787, with a meeting between the Mississauga of the Credit First Nations, a subgroup of the Ojibwa Nation and the British Crown, who met to arrange the purchase of the land. With the payment by the Crown of 200 gun flints, 24 brass kettles, 120 mirrors, 24 laced hats, a bale of flowered flannel cloth, 96 gallons of rum and a small amount of money, the British believed that they had purchased 250,808 acres of land which included the 53,240 acres that became what is now the Township of King.

The Indigenous peoples did not think that they had sold the land, rather that they had only rented it, and expected to continue receiving payment of gifts and goods as rent in perpetuity.

The 1787 failed purchase became known as the Johnson-Butler Purchase and required further negotiations in 1805 to confirm the agreement. The disagreement continued with further meetings and what became known as the Williams Treaties in 1923. In 1986 the Mississauga of the Credit First Nations filed Land Claims arguing that the British had received more land than discussed in 1787 and had not paid adequately for the land. Finally, on June 8, 2010, to settle these land claims, a settlement between the Government of Canada and the Mississauga’s was finally reached with the cash payment of \$145 million dollars with each of 1842 adult band members receiving the sum of \$20,000 each, with the balance held in trust for the construction of housing and to provide water and other necessities of life for the Indigenous people.

Meanwhile, the American Revolution lasting from 1775 to 1783 caused many Americans loyal to the British Crown to flee North to the safe haven of Canada and to settle in Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Quebec.

The first survey of King Township was carried out by Johnathon Stegman in 1800 at which time the area’s residents totalled 20 people. The first child born in the Township is thought to have been Sarah Rogers born in April 1800.

By 1801, Timothy Rogers, a Loyalist from Vermont, had applied for and received a grant totalling 8,000 acres consisting of 40 parcels of 200 acres each. He then returned to Vermont to recruit



families to emigrate and to operate these farms and returned by 1802 with the first group of settlers followed by a second group a month later. By 1809 the population was 160.

The area settled by Rogers became known as Armitage in honour of its first settler, Amos Armitage. This was the first settlement in the Township and is now a part of Newmarket. Soon after the establishment of Armitage, the settlements of Kettleby and Lloydtown came into being and settlers began arriving from New York, Pennsylvania, and the New England states.

Settlers soon began to arrive from Great Britain and by 1850 the population had grown to 5,574 and the residents were principally Irish, English and Scottish.

The early settlements in the area were developed primarily along the waterways, which provided water power for gristmills and sawmills. By 1842, there were eight gristmills and 12 sawmills operating in the area, and the settlement of Schomberg (then Brownsville) was established.

King Township was incorporated in 1850 as the Corporation of the Township of King. The Township was named King by Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe for John King who was an English Under Secretary of State for the British Home Department from 1794 to 1801.

In 1851, the Township annexed from West Gwillimbury the portion of land north and east of the Holland River, now the Holland Marsh, as a result of the formation of Simcoe County. The Township then consisted of 86,840 acres until 1973 when lands east of Bathurst Street were ceded to what are now known as Newmarket, Aurora and Oak Ridges, the total remaining now is 82,000 acres.

Beginning in 1800 with a total of 20 settlers, the population has since grown over the years to 160 by 1809, 13,120 by 1971, 27,333 by 2021, and by present time close to 30,000 residents.

The original settlers were Loyalists fleeing the USA during the American Revolution in the late 1700s. Over the years, however, the population has become very diversified.

At the present time, only 40% of the residents claim English as their Mother Tongue, mainly people from England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Another 35% are of Italian origin. The remaining 25% have come from many countries around the world, and are mainly German, Polish, Dutch, Portuguese, Chinese and East Indian.

King Township remains predominately rural, and the majority of its population resides in the communities of King City, Nobleton and Schomberg. Situated on the Oak Ridges Moraine, the rolling hills, waterways and verdant fields have been an attractive destination not only for settlers from far away Britain and other European and Asian countries, but, in more recent times, for many from Toronto and other major Canadian cities looking for a quieter life, as well as for young Canadians wanting a more affordable place to start their home and family.

How much do we owe to those hardy and courageous early pioneer settlers, many of whom now lie in one or other of the 26 pioneer cemeteries in King Township? Names like Kaake, Trainor and Rogers, who braved the rigours of travel, mostly on foot for miles, with all of their worldly goods in an ox cart on the back of a horse or mule and even on their own backs to come make their lives in this land. They struggled to clear the forests, build their homes, plant their

crops and raise their children. All without chain saws, without tractors or motorized vehicles of any kind, without telephones, without television or any of those things we now take for granted.

Each of us should pause for a moment now and then look around and reflect on all that has gone on before us and the sacrifices that early pioneers made to give us this beautiful Township in which we live.

Lifelong Resident Urges King to ‘Do the Right Thing’ and Keep the Designation of the Nobleton Community Hall

Lifelong King resident, **Nancy Broad’s (nee Chamberlain)** shared her personal view of the historical significance of the Nobleton Community Hall at King Town Council on February 26, 2024. **Excerpts from her deputation are as follows:**

“My name is Nancy Broad and my paternal family name is Chamberlain. My husband and I are lifelong residents of King Township, born and raised. During our nearly 80 years in King Township, we have participated in many exciting, community activities at the Nobleton Community Hall (aka The Hall).



“We are very passionate that The Hall remain on its existing site and be maintained by the Township, as an historical building. Constructed by dedicated community volunteers, I believe **this is the very last Depression era heritage institutional building in Nobleton! The very last! This is a truly important decision! Please do not take this lightly!**

"I would like to share with you my Chamberlain family history, and focus on the unique commitment of busy farmers and the community to build the Nobleton Community Hall. It was officially completed in 1936, about 88 years ago.

“My Grandfather, John Grant Chamberlain owned and operated a dairy farm on the land from the 10th Concession of King Township to the 11th Concession on the south side of the King Road, approximately 150 acres. Presently, the King Township Waste Treatment facility is located on part of this property.

“This John Chamberlain information can be found on pages 35 and 36 in the ***Nobleton Heritage Publication 1800-1976***, compiled by The Nobleton Women’s Institute.

“My father, John Austin Chamberlain, was born on this farm. As time passed, my father and mother owned/farmed on Lot 4 Concession 10 and this is where I was born. My mother describes the location of my birth, as the farm house, Lot 4 Concession 10, with Dr. Wylie from Bolton and my aunt attending.

"My husband, Glen Broad, was born in Schomberg at a birthing home on Main Street. The midwife, who supervised birthing, was named Mrs. Lister and Dr. Delaine was available to assist

if required. In those days, the 1940's, new mothers stayed at Mrs. Lister's for about two weeks to be well rested before returning to their farm homes and busy lives as farmers' wives.

"For the next 22 years, I lived on the farm on the 10th Concession with my siblings. My father and mother both worked very hard. We had a small Holstein dairy herd. Farmers never took a day off nor had a holiday. While our farm life was very humble, in the forties and fifties it was very similar to all the other families who lived on the 10th Concession, and in Nobleton and surrounding area.



"Remember, in this time period after WWI and WWII, times were tough for everyone. The country was trying to recover from a commitment to long wars overseas. This was the post Depression era. Folks did not have a lot of money but they were hard working, resourceful, innovative and excellent volunteers!

"While farmers had their expansive vegetable gardens, orchards, milk, eggs and meat, they still required dry goods. Nobleton was the closest town for farmers to purchase supplies. Nobleton was the gathering place for local folks. People needed to socialize. They went to church, sporting events and congregated at the Nobleton Community Hall.

"During the spring and summer, as young adults, we helped our parents with the farm crops of grain/wheat, hay and corn. I also participated in the 4H club for many years, part of the homemaking and cattle showing groups.

"As youths, we helped with planting, weeding and harvesting of the huge vegetable gardens that farmers maintained on their farms.

"By contrast, my adult grandchildren are well connected with internet, television, and cell phones, as they browse grocery super stores and malls, order meals from Uber Eats and cannot believe me when I share these long ago memories.

"As you can understand, there was very little opportunity or time for folks to gather socially, as our farms were quite isolated; there was a lot of work to be completed by both adults and children. Communication was very limited - one telephone per household and that telephone was attached to the wall and connected to a party line.

"When there were occasions to gather at the local Hall, in Nobleton, many families turned out. Nobleton folks were eager to share the community news, to socialize and to celebrate.

"Life was very difficult for farmers and yet, before I was born, Nobleton area residents and farmers gathered together and **volunteered** to build a meeting place. The land was **donated** by Martin Snyder. Local farmers and residents of Nobleton volunteered their time and skills to make this local dream a reality. The Women's Institute completed outstanding fundraising during this time! In the years 1935-1936, you need to understand that money to build The Hall was very scarce; \$3,578 was a financial mountain. The incredible sacrifice this community and farmers made to build this structure, the Nobleton Community Hall, may seem insignificant by today's standards. Nevertheless, these willing rural volunteers had to scratch out a living for their families and maintain their farms. At the same time, unselfishly, when called upon to help



build this community meeting place, this Nobleton Community Hall, the volunteers answered the call without hesitation!

“An opening banquet was held on January 15, 1937, and Norman Robb, who was part of the building steering committee, attended the official opening. Norman Robb’s descendants saved this valued menu as a memento of this historic achievement. This keepsake menu is over 87 years old. Why would it be kept and handed down generation to generation? You

know why, because it was a significant part of Nobleton

volunteer history, it was the real cement blocks, with pink mortar and the shiny hardwood floors and ceiling, a visible achievement of volunteerism in Nobleton. Dignitaries like Reeve J.F. Jefferson and Chief Justice Honorable Newton W. Rowell attended, recognizing the significance of the Nobleton Community Hall to the entire community.

“The Women’s Institute always prepared wonderful meals. This special occasion was no exception. Ham, roast beef and meat loaf, potatoes, green peas were on the list, and of course those famous pies.”

“Over many decades, the hall has been the site of celebrated events such as: presentations/dances for newly married couples (fundraisers), showers for new brides, teen dances, piano recitals, wedding receptions, school concerts, fundraising suppers organized by the Nobleton Women’s Institute, curling banquets, hockey celebrations when Nobleton teams won the All Ontario championship, a voting poll for Municipal and Provincial elections, annual Anglican and United Church bazaars and teas, pancake suppers hosted by the Nobleton Lions Club, a home base for the Nobleton Lions Club’s monthly meetings, Nobleton horticulture meetings, and the list goes on. These events were all significant Nobleton community builders.

“On January 2, 2024 the Toronto Star wrote an article about the status of heritage buildings in Toronto. In this article, they quote Christopher Hume, architecture critic, who points out, “We don’t have a culture in this city, province, or country where we believe our history is worth saving. If a buck can be made by knocking something down, people will do it.”

“Let’s recognize and honour the significance of the many sacrifices made by the Nobleton community, who entrusted this special building to all of us. We are the stewards, of this historical Nobleton gem and we must ensure that the heritage and memories are passed along to future generations. Let’s slow down this process; let’s gather more information from the community and experts. As stewards of the Nobleton Community Hall, let’s ensure that we get this right! Removing the heritage designation flies in the face of volunteerism and celebrating our wonderful heritage.

“In the winter edition of the *King Mosaic*, page 15, under the heading, The Mayor’s Cultural Gala I quote, “King Township is a vibrant and exciting community and part of what makes it unique is its **heritage** and **culture**. The Township of King is committed to keeping that spirit alive.”

“Mr. Mayor and Councillors, **honour** these words. Do the right thing! Keep the historic designation of the Nobleton Community Hall and let’s maintain its present location! Our

Nobleton history needs to be valued and celebrated for generations.” -Nancy Broad, Feb. 26, 2024

Grow Our Membership by Joining KTHS Today!

Are you interested in local history and learning more about how to support and preserve the history of King? Maybe you are new to King and looking to meet like-minded people. Consider joining the King Township Historical Society for just **\$25/individual and \$30/family annual membership!** You may submit your membership online through our website at www.kingtowshiphistoricalsociety.com or by mail. We look forward to meeting you!



Follow us on Instagram @kinghistoricalsociety



King Township Historical Society, 2920 King Road, King City ON L7B 1L6
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
 (PLEASE PRINT INFORMATION AND MAIL CHEQUE TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS)

NAME(S) _____ PHONE _____
 ADDRESS _____

 EMAIL _____ POSTAL CODE _____
 _____ NEW _____ RENEWAL _____

INDIVIDUAL \$25 _____ FAMILY \$30 _____ DONATION _____
 ENCLOSED \$ _____

What’s New In and Around King?

Standing in the Doorway at the KHCC

August 3-November 2

The King Heritage & Cultural Centre is pleased to be hosting **Standing in the Doorway** from August 3-November 2. Created by the Markham Museum and the YRDSB Museum & Archives, this traveling exhibiting explores the history of Chinese immigration to York Region. **Opening Celebration – Saturday, August 24 – details TBA.**

Stop by to see the **ASK Artist Steve Silverman Photography Exhibit** at King Township Municipal Centre on now through **July 26th, 8:30-4:30 Monday – Friday.**

King Theatre Company presents *Salt-Water Moon* August 14-17 & August 21-24 from 7:00-8:30pm at Pine Farms Orchard

Synopsis: It's a splendid moon-filled night at Coley's Point in August, 1926. Jacob Mercer has returned from Toronto hoping to win back his former sweetheart, Mary Snow. But Mary has become engaged to wealthy Jerome McKenzie, and she is still hurt and bewildered by Jacob's abrupt departure a year earlier. She will not be easily wooed.

This production will be performed outdoors, site-specific at Pine Farms Orchard, 2700 16th Sideroad, King City – for eight performances on August 14-17 and August 21-24 7:00-8:30 pm. Written by David French and Directed by Chloë Rose Flowers, a resident of King and CDS alumna. Tickets are \$30 and can be purchased at www.kingtheatre.ca



History of KTHS in Brief:

The KTHS dates back to 1972 when a group of dedicated residents, with interests in preserving the history of their Township, gathered to form the King Township Historical Society. In 1981 ~1982, the KTHS was incorporated by the Ontario Historical Society under a Provincial Letters Patent. Our goals and objectives are to encourage research into the history, to secure and preserve an accurate account of the progress and development, and to promote public interest in the history of King Township. More information, including details on membership, may be found on our website at www.kingtowshiphistoricalsociety.com.