



NEWS FROM KING TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!



For the **KTHS Annual Christmas Concert** featuring Jazz Great, **Adam Saunders and The Hammered Brass** on **Friday, November 29!**

We are pleased to bring back King resident and jazz pianist Adam Saunders to Laskay Hall on Friday, November 29th for a great evening performing a range of jazz spanning the decades with six of his esteemed jazz colleagues.

Tickets may be purchased at the King Heritage and Cultural Centre for \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door. KTHS members will receive a \$10 discount. There will be a cash bar and light refreshments served. Join us on Friday, November 29th at 8:00 pm, Laskay Hall, 2920 King Road.

Introducing the New Faces at the Heritage & Cultural Centre!

Erika Baird - Prior to starting as the *Heritage and Cultural Centre Supervisor* at the KHCC in September 2019, Erika Baird was the Executive Director/Curator of the Aurora Historical Society at Hillary House National Historic Site. Experienced in overseeing the day to day operations of community museums, including collections, exhibitions, communications, fundraising, staff and volunteer management; she has prided herself on her ability to form partnerships and works to be a positive force for culture in the community. Erika has an Honours B.A. in History with a minor in Anthropology from the University of Guelph, with a post-graduate certificate in Heritage and Cultural Site Management from Centennial College.



To date, we have received 28 donations to the history of King book fund and are getting closer to reaching our fundraising goal!

THANK
YOU!

KTHS is still looking to raise \$6,005 toward the History of King book fund. Will you join us in funding this project?

Please consider a donation of \$50, \$100, \$500 - any amount is appreciated. Donation by credit card is also an option through **Canada Helps**, available on the KTHS website.

As a registered charity, we provide a receipt for income tax purposes, and those who donate \$250 or more will be listed in the book as patrons if they wish.



Liza Mallyon - joined KHCC in early July as the *Collections & Exhibits Coordinator*, coming from Gibson House Museum in Toronto. With over twenty years of experience in municipal museums, Liza's expertise lies in collections management, exhibit development, research and anything creative. She also has considerable experience

in managing daily operations, supervising staff, organizing special events, hearth cooking and developing education programming. Liza has an Honours B.A. in Anthropology from Trent University and a post-graduate certificate in Museum Management & Curatorship from Fleming College.

Walter Rolling Schoolhouse Gallery Now Open!

On October 19, King celebrated the reopening of the Walter Rolling Schoolhouse Gallery in **SS#23 Kinghorn School** located at the King Heritage and Cultural Centre.

Between 1895 and 1936, the one-room Kinghorn Schoolhouse was run by a no-nonsense principal named Walter Rolling. As a teacher and a community leader, Rolling shaped the minds of three generations of King Township young people.

At the opening, the late Doris Jean and John Fawcett of Kettleby were recognized for their incredible generosity that helped make this project possible. When Mrs. Fawcett passed away in 2010, she left over \$400,000 to KTHS to spend on *enhancing* the Museum and its exhibits.

About \$170,000 of the Fawcett Bequest monies have been spent or committed so far to this new exhibit space, in addition to archival storage units, display cases, mounting all five of the WWI exhibits and other exhibits over the last seven years.

Stop in to see the Walter Rolling Schoolhouse Gallery and its changing displays at the King Heritage and Cultural Centre, 2920 King Road, Tuesdays-Saturdays, 10am - 4pm.

U of T Professor Shares History of Jokers Hill

by Kim Sillcox

The KTHS's second speaker of the year was Professor Art Weis of the University of Toronto who shared the history of Jokers Hill to a sold-out audience at Hogan's Inn on October 19. Among the attendees was Moffat Dunlap, who contributed invaluable history and photos to Art for his presentation, as well as past members of the Toronto and North York Hunt Club and Pony Clubs.

Known today as the University of Toronto's Koffler Scientific Reserve, Jokers Hill has a rich history stretching back nearly 150 years.

Situated between Bathurst and Keele Streets north of the 19th Sideroad, this property was acquired in the early 1950s by the late General Churchill Mann and his wife Billie (nee McLaughlin), the daughter of Col. Sam McLaughlin, founder of General Motors, Canada. As members of the Toronto and North York Hunt Club, the Mann's had a passion for horses and ultimately created a premier equestrian facility at Jokers Hill where Canadian Olympic hopefuls trained on a cross-country course that General Mann personally helped build, including a 12-mile cross-country course and 50 miles of groomed trails.

Billie Mann named the 889-acre property Jokers Hill after her hunter horse Joker, who Billie said would run up to the highest point of the property (1,100 ft above sea level) where they eventually built their home, and overlook the surrounding countryside.

The Mann's were extremely generous with Jokers Hill and regularly hosted the Toronto and North York Hunt Club, as well as aspiring members of the Canadian Equestrian team, for hunts, training and steeplechases.

According to Brian Herbinson, who won Bronze in the three-day event alongside teammates Jim Elder and John Rumble at the 1956 Olympics, the Canadian team would not have had the success it did were it not for the Mann's generosity.



In the early 1960s, the Mann's parcelled off their property east of Dufferin and eventually sold the remaining property between Keele and Dufferin to Brian and Nancy Benitz of Toronto in 1964. The Benitz family owned the property for about 10 years before selling it to Murray and Marvelle Koffler, the founders of Shoppers Drug Mart. The Kofflers were members of the Toronto and North York Hunt Club and purchased it as a weekend retreat.



Among the many refurbishments the Koffler's made to the main house and property, was a stunning glass gazebo adjacent to the larger of the two ponds on the property and designed by well-known architect, Ray Moriyama.

Over the years, guests to Jokers Hill have included Prince Philip and Princess Margaret, Pierre and Margaret Trudeau, as well as other eminent leaders from the Canadian business and arts world.

Shortly after Murray and Marvelle sold Shoppers Drug Mart in the early 1990s, they spontaneously decided to gift Jokers Hill to the University of Toronto while hosting a party with U of T's President Robert Prichard in 1995. It was the largest-ever land gift to a Canadian university and made U of T one of the largest landowners on the Oak Ridges Moraine – and steward of a site of regional, provincial and national significance.

According to Art Weis, an Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Professor and former Director of U of T's Koffler Scientific Reserve, this land is special not only for its rich history but its breadth of biological diversity.

"From my point of view it's a jewel because while it's only 880 acres, Jokers Hill contains patches of just about every habitat type in Southern Ontario," explains Dr. Weis. "It is a rather biologically diverse area including everything from recently cultivated fields going back to nature, to old growth forest that has never been cut since the last glacier. This has got to be the largest old growth forest left in southern Ontario."

At any given time there could be up to 35 research and scientific studies at the facility, including research in climate change, ecology, evolution, migration patterns, genetics, environmental science and cognate areas of study.

The site is being considered for a much-needed renovation over the next 10 years, with improved infrastructure and housing for the influx of researchers. A hidden and slightly forgotten gem in King, this facility is quickly becoming one of the leading environmental research centres in North America.

The Brilliant Leaves of Staghorn Sumac, *Rhus typhina*

Story by Ann Love

Early autumn leaves of the staghorn sumac boast fluorescent oranges, yellows, and reds seemingly impossible in Nature. And one stem will reveal several tones, as if strip teasing to lay bare a vivid primal colour.

I was so taken with leaves out my back door a couple of years ago that I thought to paint them ... and then to look up if they had a story.

The fruit of the staghorn sumac is legendary for its medicinal and dying qualities. More than 15% of all wild plant seeds found in the Iroquoian archeological site at Crawford Lake Ontario, dated 1380, proved to be sumac. But what of the leaves?

I found a lovely 1979 paperback called “The Uses of Plants for the Past 500 Years” by Charlotte Erichsen-Brown, ethnobotanist, that offers clues for uses of sumac leaves over the past 500 years in North America. Seems that staghorn sumac leaves rivalled seeds for importance ...

Records from Green Bay, Lake Michigan in 1778, describe how to prepare autumn-red sumac leaves for cutting with tobacco leaves, 50:50, to make a sweeter smoke, especially for the peace pipe. In Delaware, a writer notes that women preferred to smoke straight sumac, no tobacco.

In 1871, the Canadian Pharmaceutical Journal reported that dye made from young staghorn sumac leaves, when the flower is in full bloom, makes a rich and stable yellow.

And sumac leaves were believed by early peoples to be helpful medicine for diabetes. Sir Frederick Banting, co-discoverer of insulin, collected 2 bushful's of sumac leaves to test the claim. He had a high regard for indigenous medicinal knowledge and wanted to put sumac leaves to modern scientific scrutiny. He was unable “to learn the secret of their reputed cure.”

A brilliant and storied leaf.



Kathleen Fry's Retirement Celebration

Story by Ann Love

On August 29, about 75 King Township residents gathered at Pine Farms Orchard Gallery to celebrate Kathleen Fry's 16 years as curator of the King Township Museum. Kathleen's friends shared tea, cake, and stories of her many contributions to the Township community, its heritage, and history.

Attendees included staff from summer camps and holiday programs that Kathleen ran at the Museum, engaging hundreds, maybe thousands, of Township kids in history fun and learning. Also present were her roster of hardworking and loyal volunteers to whom she always offered useful and rewarding work. Representatives of other local groups with whom Kathleen and the Museum partnered were also present including ASK, the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail Association, King Library, King Township Historical Society, and more.

The event was MC'd by Elsa-Ann Pickard, long-time King Township Museum and Archives volunteer. King Township Historical Society President, Ann Love, spoke of the Society's fruitful partnership with the Museum under Kathleen's management over the years. In particular, Kathleen's successful and recent brokering of a \$100,000 grant from the Federal Heritage Ministry that she matched with funds from the Fawcett Bequest administered by the Historical Society plus significant support from the Township to renovate the old schoolroom in the Heritage and Cultural Centre and mount a permanent display of the history of King Township.



Museum Community Board member and past-chair Bob Peavoy spoke of Kathleen's many successes including her recent acquisition for the Museum of a magnificent Wedgwood China collection that includes \$100,000 in cash to support it.

Among the recent exhibits remembered were King brides, Wedgwood China, Winter in King, and the five exhibits commemorating World War One during its 100th anniversary years. Over her tenure as curator, Kathleen built the confidence of the community to store their treasures and, at the same time, add to King's story.

Liza Mallyon, the new Collections & Exhibits Coordinator who will carry on in Kathleen's stead, was introduced to attendees. Liza and Kathleen have worked together in the past.

Elaine Robertson Receives Special Recognition Award

by Murdene Pozdrowski



At a King volunteer night last spring, King resident and former KTHS President, Elaine Robertson was praised for her volunteer service as a member of Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee for more than 30 years.

She served as President for eight of those years, and is long time member of the King Township Historical Society, York Pioneers, Arts Society King, active in preserving the hamlet of Kettleby, and volunteer at the Kettleby Fair.

Congratulations Elaine – we are so grateful for all you do!

Help KTHS Grow Our Membership!

Are you interested in becoming involved with the King Township Historical Society? Do you have friends who would like to support and preserve the history of King? Do you have suggestions for upcoming speakers? Please help us grow our membership by spreading the word and encouraging membership. Only \$20 for an individual and \$25 for a family membership. Join KTHS Today! We look forward to hearing from you.



KING TOWNSHIP
Historical
SOCIETY

King Township Historical Society, 2920 King Road, King City ON L7B 1L6

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2019

(PLEASE PRINT INFORMATION AND MAIL CHEQUE TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS)

NAME(S) _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ FAX _____

_____ POSTAL CODE _____

EMAIL _____ NEW _____ RENEWAL _____

INDIVIDUAL \$20 _____ FAMILY \$25 _____ DONATION _____

ENCLOSED \$ _____

What's Happening in & Around King?

MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!

One of a King Handmade Holiday Market

Sat., November 16, 10am-4pm, King Heritage & Cultural Centre, 2920 King Road

Find one-of-a-kind gifts at our annual handmade holiday market. Food, drinks and a silent auction. FREE Admittance.

kingmuseum@king.ca



Country Day School Holiday Fair

Wednesday & Thursday, November 20 & 21, 13415 Dufferin Street

The Country Day School invites you to their annual Holiday Fair held on Wed., November 20 from 2:30-9:00pm (Sip & Savour evening from 6:00-9:00 pm) and Thurs., November 21 from 8:30am-5:00 pm. Find your winter floral arrangements, specialty food, seasonal decorations, and hostess gifts all in one place! FREE Admission. More information at www.cds.on.ca

Kingcrafts Annual Studio Sale 2019

November 22-24 and December 1, 12936 Keele Street

Handcrafted quality gifts made by local artisans. Sale runs from 1:00-7:00pm November 22 and 10:00am-4:00pm November 23, 24 and December 1. Free admission and parking. www.kingcrafts.ca

Trees & Treats

Sat., November 23, 3pm-7pm, King Heritage & Cultural Centre, 2920 King Road

In celebration of the holiday season and the opening of the Trees of Giving display. Featuring tea and cookies with Santa, food and drinks and a merry good time! FREE Admittance with the donation of a non-perishable food item to the King Township Food Bank.

kingmuseum@king.ca



A Brief History of the KTHS:

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 may be found on our website at www.kingtownshiphistoricalsociety.com.



KING TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Annual Holiday Concert

with musical guest

Adam Saunders
& The Hammered Brass



Friday, November 29th at 8:00 pm

Laskay Hall

**King Heritage and Cultural Centre,
2920 King Rd, King City**

*Get into the spirit of the season with performances of Jazz greats such as Louis Armstrong, Eddie Condon and Jack Teagarden! Adam is quite at home adapting audience requests of various types of music to his Jazz style and will be joined on stage by **Al Cox** (trumpet), **Scott Poll** (clarinet), **Mike Lawson** (trombone), **'Doc' Mike Walmsley** (Guitar/Banjo), **Ron Johnston** (bass) and **Jamie Aug** on drums.*

Tickets

\$35 at the door

**\$30 purchased in advance, available at the King Heritage
and Cultural Centre
2920 King Rd, King City**

\$10 discount for KTHS members