



# NEWS FROM KING TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## KTHS Annual General Meeting

Sunday, March 6, 2022

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Join us on Zoom!

We will start right at 1:00 pm sharp and immediately following our 2022 AGM, we will be joined by a surprise guest (still TBA).

Please join us!

We will send you the link a few days in advance.

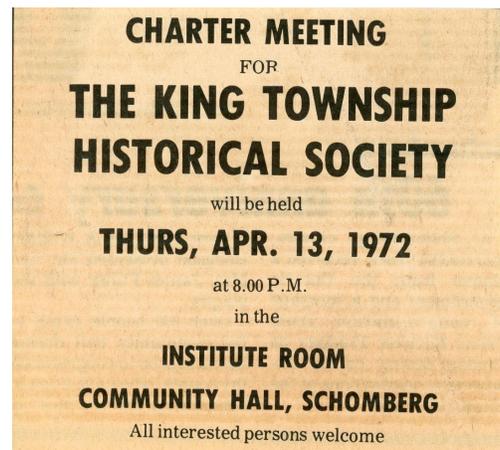
## KTHS Turns 50: Reflections on a 50th Anniversary

by Ann Love Reprinted with the permission of MOSAiC magazine

This year, the King Township Historical Society will celebrate its golden anniversary. And there are shining successes to remember.

The Society's first project focused on the Lloydtown rebels, linking their sacrifice in the Mackenzie Rebellion (1837) with the beginning of responsible government in Upper Canada. Subsequent big projects included marking the route of the Carrying Place Trail, founding the King Township Museum and later the Archives, and so on up until today with the commissioning of a Township history written by Kelly Mathews.

What a surprise when a friend – whose family reaches back to settler times – characterized the Society as “controversial!” But when I read news reports from the Society's early years, I did find some controversies among the successes.



**History of King Book Update:**

The Ontario Archives remain closed evenings and weekends and day-time access is still very limited. With these limitations in mind, the KTHS Board is in talks with author Kelly Mathews about the possibility of a book release sometime during the 50th year celebration by March 2023. Stay tuned!

**MEMORIAL TREES-**

**Dedication Ceremony  
April 10, 2022**

KTHS funded the planting of some memorial trees behind the King Heritage & Cultural Centre last fall. One is in memory of **Heather Robertson** (1942-2014), celebrated author and President of KTHS from 2012-2014. The other is in memory of **Fiona Cowles** (1939-2013), volunteer extraordinaire and lifetime member of KTHS.

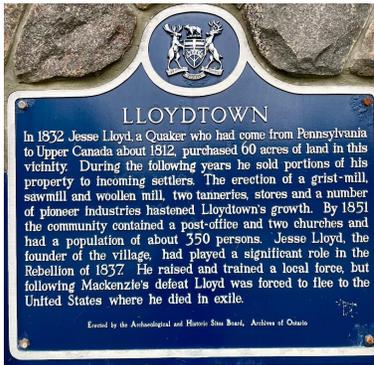
The **unveiling of these Memorial Trees** and grove of trees to honour and celebrate the founders, volunteers and members of KTHS will take place on **Sunday, April 10th**, and serve as the start of our 50th anniversary year 1972-2022.

**Bill Foran**, former KTHS President from 1979-1981, will be our guest speaker.

When the Society was less than a week old and Alden Winter (pictured on the right with his wife Doris) was the newly elected first president, *The Newmarket Era* ran a headline, April 19, 1972, “Historian is critical of Society founders.” Mr. Eric Scott, the historian, questioned, “whether anyone had given a thought to priorities” and predicted the Society may be “condemned before they start ...” Clearly, establishing the Historical Society ignited debate!



A second issue surfaced later that year. Before the Society existed, King Councillor Leonard Osin had initiated the restoration of the Lloydtown cemetery where families of the rebels lay buried. Osin and Council requested the Ontario Government erect a heritage plaque to recognize Lloydtown’s historical significance. When the plaque arrived in 1972, the newly formed Historical Society and Osin rejected the text outright, pointing to errors in facts and scant reference to the rebels including Jesse Lloyd, founder of Lloydtown and a leader in the Mackenzie Rebellion. The original text concluded: “With the construction of the Ontario Simcoe & Huron Union Railroad (1851-55), which by-passed Lloydtown, the village declined.”



At first, the Ontario Archeological and Historic Sites Board (AHSB) refused to change the text; but Bill Poulis, incoming President of the Society, headed to Queen’s Park and according to *The Era*, personally “thrashed out” a more acceptable text (see photo above).

As part of the compromise, the AHSB stipulated that no press be present for the exchange of plaques. When Poulis reported to the Society, Ann McWilliam – a member and journalist for *The Aurora Banner* – grew so incensed she wrote an editorial on March 21, 1973, headlined, “Freedom of the Press.” She declared, “By refusing to allow coverage, the AHSB exhibits a petty, retaliatory attitude [... that] smacks uncomfortably of ‘Big

Brother,' police state, and should have no place in either the province or the country.” *The Era* called members of the Society “modern day Lloydtown rebels” and quoted Osin, “Last time we surrendered a little too easily.”

In 1982, a third controversy erupted around the moving of the King Christian Church from its original site north of Kettleby to the King Museum (now King Heritage & Cultural Centre). Built in 1851 by local Quakers, the King Christian Church thrived for eighty years until membership dwindled. The Baptist Convention bought the building and Emanuel Baptist Church congregates worshipped there until numbers dropped again and the last elector, Erma Little, died in 1978. Vacant for years, the Baptist Convention gave the building to the Township under the care of the Historical Society, with the recommendation it be moved to a safe location. In the last years on its original site, the caretaker had found the door open several times, with snow drifts inside.



As news of the move spread, a group of Kettleby residents took exception and formed the King Heritage Association, started raising money, circulated a petition, wrote letters to the editor of the King paper, and met with the Historical Society and King Council to try and keep the church in place. But in May 1982, with the building’s safety still a nagging question, Mayor Jessup broke a tie vote in Council finalizing the move. Rumours spread that hay bales, strewn along Jane Street the morning of the move, were a final gesture of protest.

If 40 years ago were today with wireless alarms and surveillance cameras, perhaps the church would be safe on its original site. Certainly, today’s heritage best practices support keeping structures in place whenever possible, adding flavour and depth to streetscapes. However, the King Christian Church survives on its new site (photo above), is further protected with heritage designation, has hosted services since the move including weddings for Erma Little’s daughter and granddaughter, and will be restored under the new King Heritage & Cultural Master Plan.



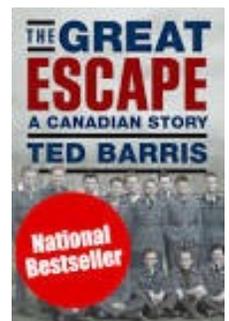
My friend was right – the Historical Society has seen controversy alongside major successes over its 50 years. Hopefully, healthy debate led to greater understanding of our shared landscape and of those determined and resilient people who came before us.

*Thank you to Helen Poulis, Bill Foran and Doris Willoughby, KTHS Life Members, and Sharon Bentley and Elaine Robertson, current and past Board members, whose memories and papers helped prepare this article.*

### KTHS Speaker Series - Ted Barris joins us on May 1!



Join us on **Sunday, May 1st from 1-2 pm on Zoom and hopefully in-person too!** Renowned Canadian author and popular CBC journalist, **Ted Barris** will be discussing his book, ***The Great Escape: A Canadian Story***.



## As we embark on our 50th Year - here's a look back at KTHS Presidents from 1972-2021:

1972 – Alden Winter  
 1973, 1974, 1975 – Bill Poulis  
 1976 – Jack McBride  
 1977, 1978 – Fred Coburn  
 1979, 1980, 1981 – Bill Foran  
 1982, 1983 – Murray Sheardown  
 1984 – Walter Graham  
 1985, 1986 – Bill Poulis  
 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993 – Helen Poulis  
 1994, 1995 – Carl Finkle  
 1996 – Phil van den Heuvel  
 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 – Helen Poulis  
 2007, 2008 – Virginia Atkins  
 2009, 2010, 2011 – Carl Finkle (resigned mid-year)  
 2011 – Virginia Atkins (appointed to complete term)  
 2012, 2013 – Heather Robertson  
 2014, 2015 – Elaine Robertson  
 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 – Ann Love  
 2020, 2021 – Richard Vien

### *Banner Year for Trees of Giving*

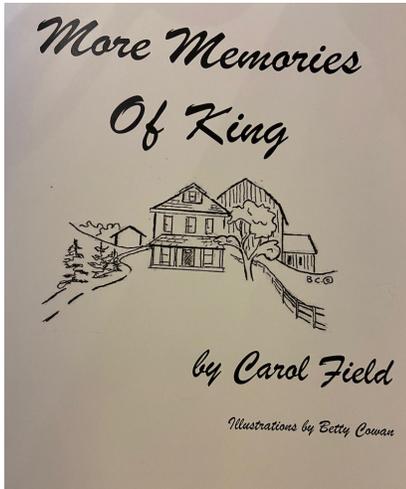
Last year's Trees of Giving display, which ran five weeks leading up to Christmas, brought more than 650 visitors to the **King Heritage & Cultural Centre** leading up to Christmas. With that, organizers were beyond thrilled to announce the total raised for Trees of Giving 2021 was **\$2,838** - by far the most ever raised! Thank you to Diana Armitage, Murdene Pozdrowski, Richard Vien and Liza Mallyon for helping with the KTHS train theme display this year.

With a record amount raised, that also means a record number of votes for *Best in Show*. This year's winners were: **Third Place:** *Tim Horton's King City*; **Second Place:** *Climate Action King*; and the **First Place:** *King for Refugees*. Thanks to the Southlake Foundation, who not only provided a beautiful tree, but also promoted the event.



### Local Author Publishes her second book - 'More Memories of King'

Fourth-generation King resident and local author, Carol Gellatly Field was back at it again this past year writing and self-publishing her second book, *More Memories of King*. Following on the success



of her first book, *Memories of King*, Carol has created another page-turner chock full of her endearing recollections as a child growing up in King Township in the 1940s; a very different place than it is today.

As a member of one of the few original farming families still in King, Carol writes about her memories of daily living and division of chores, family holiday traditions, medical care in the 1940s and homemade remedies, life on the family farm, the arrival of hydro in 1948, and school years from elementary to university. These moments are presented as short vignettes that people of all ages, including young children and great grandparents, will find delightful and charming.

Her latest book features more than 50 page-long stories, many of which are illustrated by local artist and friend Betty Cowan. Much of what propelled Carol to keep writing was the overwhelmingly positive feedback she received from family and friends in response to her first book. According to Carol, "They just didn't want the stories to stop."

KTHS members were treated to a reading of some of Carol's stories at last year's AGM. **Her second book, *More Memories of King*, is available for purchase for \$7 at King City's Guardian Pharmacy as well as Humber Valet Cleaners.**

## Help KTHS Grow Our Membership!

Are you interested in joining the King Township Historical Society? Would you like to help support and preserve the history of King? Join today for only \$25/individual, \$30/family membership. Submit your membership online at [www.kingtowshiphistoricalsociety.com](http://www.kingtowshiphistoricalsociety.com) or by mail. Questions? Please email us at [kinghistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:kinghistoricalsociety@gmail.com).



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 Happening in King?

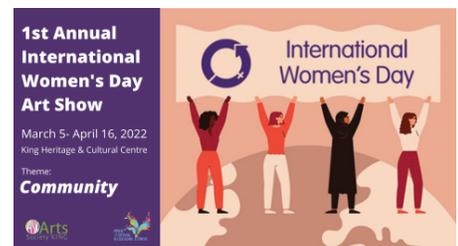


The **Mayor's Cultural Gala**, a fundraiser in support of the King Heritage & Cultural Centre, Arts Society King (ASK) and KTHS, was originally scheduled for next month, but has been postponed until **Thursday, September 29th**. Plans are to hold it in-person at The Manor. More details will become available in the near future.

### First Annual Int'l Women's Day Art Show

March 5 -April 16th

The **King Heritage & Cultural Centre** is hosting the first annual art show in celebration of International Women's Day (March 8). Each piece and accompanying story reflects the artist's personal interpretation of community. The Call to Artists is now open for this exhibit. Visit the King Heritage & Cultural Centre website at [www.kingheritageandculture.ca](http://www.kingheritageandculture.ca) for more details.



### WriteNOW!@King

1st and 3rd Thursday of each month from 2-4pm

New and experienced writers alike are invited to participate in stimulating writing exercises, hear guest speakers share their knowledge, read their works and receive feedback from peers. Email [k.secord@kinglibrary.ca](mailto:k.secord@kinglibrary.ca) to learn more.

### STUDIO TOUR KING 2022, brought to you by ASK

Saturday & Sunday, April 23 & 24 from 10:00am-5:00pm

Enjoy one-of-a-kind work from various genres in fine art, sculpture, textiles and more. Map and brochure provided and available at the King Heritage and Cultural Centre. This is a self-guided art experience throughout beautiful King Township and open to all ages! Free admission to all. [ArtsSocietyKing.ca](http://ArtsSocietyKing.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 may be found on our website at [www.kingtowshiphistoricalsociety.com](http://www.kingtowshiphistoricalsociety.com).*