



*Celebrating 50 Years*

## KING TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1972-2022

Happy New Year to our KTHS members!

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Join us for an In-Person  
**KTHS AGM**

**Sunday, March 5th**

**from 12:00 – 3:00pm**

**at the King Heritage &  
Cultural Centre**

**Enjoy a potluck lunch,  
followed by a meeting and  
guest speaker**

Our 2023 KTHS guest speaker will be **Lisa Gilbert**, General Manager of the Kingbridge Centre, who will present on the conference centre's history in King.

### Marion Singers Perform Magical Christmas Concert

It was a full house for the annual King Township Historical Society (KTHS) Holiday concert in Laskay Hall on December 2nd. In honour of our 50th anniversary, KTHS members and guests were treated to a free concert by The Marion Singers of Toronto a capella choral group that helps raise funds for humanitarian, non-profit organizations. It was wonderful to be back in person!



## KTHS Speaker Adam Shoalts Captivated Audience

by Bill Salter

Our second 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary KTHS Speaker series event held last October featured a marvelous presentation by **Adam Shoalts**, a national bestselling author, explorer and archaeologist. Adam discussed his long solo wilderness journeys, including crossing alone by canoe and on foot, nearly 4000 kilometers of the Canadian arctic, and his most recent book, *The Whisper on the Night Wind, the True History of a Wilderness Legend*.

The book, and his fascinating talk, describes his remarkable three-month journey with a companion, by canoe and on foot, through the wilderness of northern Labrador, in search of the abandoned ghost town of “Travestine”, described in stories by old trappers, but lost and hidden and not shown on any maps.

Adam’s journey is further impelled by the tales told around campfires by early travellers of the legendary “Travestine Gorilla”, a huge hairy beast some seven feet tall with long arms and footprints of two large two-toed feet about twelve inches long. This creature had appeared to and been described in detail by children in the early days of the village.

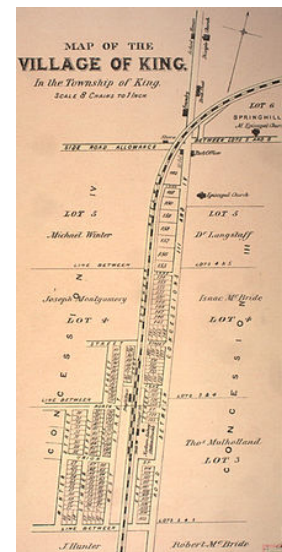
Adam ultimately finds the ruins of the ghost town, and also solves the riddle of the legendary giant creature. However, to know the whole of this fantastic story, you will have to read his latest book, available at the township Library, or for purchase online at Chapters for \$22. It’s a fascinating story and an easy read.



## History of King Book Teasers: Meant to Wet Your Whistle in Advance of Book Publication

As they toil away on the History of King book project, co-authors **Ann Love** and **Sharon Bentley** thought it would be fun to share a few “teasers” in the coming issues of this newsletter of what they have in store for us.

Over the coming issues, we will share one or two stories by our local guest writers in each to give you a flavour of what is to come! We will start you off this issue with two wonderful stories: ***Cilroy Was Here*** is about John Rumble riding his horse Cilroy in the 1956 Olympics, written by the late Susan Beharriell, and ***Colourful Characters of Nobleton***, written by longtime KTHS Director and King resident, Bill Salter.



## Cilroy Was Here

*By Susan Beharriell, Lieutenant-Colonel (Ret'd)*

Yes, he certainly was here at just the perfect time to lead the Canadian Concours Militaire Team to the 1956 Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden. Cilroy, the 10-year-old gelding from Caledon, was a thoroughbred coach horse cross and a big, bold hunter with the Toronto Hunt Club. Many people thought he would make a good lead for the Olympic team.

**John Rumble**, who had extensive riding experience, was a third-year engineering student at the University of Toronto but jumped at the chance to compete for Canada.

The sport of Concours Militaire was added to the modern Olympics in 1912. Its purpose was to test the obedience, strength, and endurance of both military horse and rider. The cavalry was still an important component of war.

On the first day of competition, each horse performed a set routine of dressage movements and exercises, testing obedience, suppleness, and calmness.



Day two, the cross-country phase, consisted first of five miles of roads and tracks – a timed trot and canter through villages and countryside. Next, a two-mile steeplechase course with huge, vertical jumps and ditches of water, all at a full gallop. This was immediately followed by another 10 miles of roads and tracks. The riders often ran beside their horses to ease the burden. The final leg of day two was a gruelling five-mile cross-country course with huge jumps over combinations of high walls and log piles with jumps in and out of water and up and down steep slopes. Competitors collected penalties for refusals

and time faults – timing was crucial and galloping necessary. All this in a day was a true test of the cavalry horse and rider.

The third day of competition was stadium jumping, testing resilience, accuracy, and endurance.

There were a few big challenges for the Canadian Team. Cilroy had been taught some basic dressage but had neither run a steeplechase course nor competed at all! With only four months to prepare, work began in earnest.

But first, a 10-hour flight to transport the horses overseas. The horses had to be coaxed up steep, rickety wooden ramps into a KLM freight plane. During the flight, if one of the horses panicked and kicked, the pilot would have to shoot it rather than risk the safety of the plane.

Then came training in England with one opportunity to show before the Olympics. The young Canadian team had a lot of work to do. Finally, the first day of Olympic competition arrived!

Cilroy and John had a very good dressage test and stood 16th out of 60 at the end of day one.



That evening, the team attended the official reception. John met the Queen, and after her chat with him, the Queen changed her schedule to watch his cross-country round the next day. Not bad for a 23-year-old student from Canada! The Queen's staff were not amused that they had to be with her two hours earlier than originally planned.

The day two cross-country course of 33 obstacles was a real test of horse and rider. Cilroy was one of only 12 horses to complete a clean round and the Canadian team had no falls or time penalties. Twenty teams entered the competition. By the end of day two, only eight were still able to compete in the stadium jumping phase.

At the end of the competition the British team, including a horse owned by the Queen, won the Gold Medal and the team from Germany took the Silver. Cilroy, John and his teammates **Brian Herbinson** and **Jim Elder** had good rounds and won the Bronze! This was an extraordinary accomplishment for such a young team and the only medal win to date for Canada in the sport!

Over the years, what is now called the Three-Day Event has been considerably modified. The steeplechase and road and tracks elements have been removed, the courses are much safer, and women have competed since 1964.

After the Olympics, John went back to his studies and became a successful businessman. He has lived in King for years and periodically provided a horse for the Canadian Eventing Team leading to Canada winning the silver medal at the 2011 Pan Am Games and



success at the World Equestrian Games qualifying the team for the 2016 Olympics. In 2017, John and his wife Judy, were awarded the Equestrian Canada Owner of the Year Award in recognition of their dedication, commitment, and support to ensure that Canadian athletes have access to world-class horses.

Throughout his Olympic adventure and life, John has always reminded himself that YES, I CAN.

Cilroy was here, and he certainly could too!

## Colourful Characters of Nobleton

*by Bill Salter*

In the 1950s and 1960s, Nobleton was a small village of 300 to 350 families. Some of the most colourful characters ever known, anywhere, lived or worked at the main intersection of town on the corners of Hwy 27 and King Road.

Don Kaake was the owner of the General Store located on the southeast corner of Hwy 27 and King Road. Don was familiar with everything in the store and seemed to have at least one of everything. Once someone asked for a “chicken sticking knife,” and sure enough he had one. He knew all his customers by name and all their business. Don was also the “go-to handyman” who could fix anything from the tap in the bathtub to the trap for raccoons.





For the newcomer from the city, Don was just a phone call away, would be there in five minutes, fix the problem in ten, but stay the rest of the day to talk.



John Sheardown, who ran the Feed Mill located behind Kaake's store was an original! One day a "city dweller turned farmer" ordered a bag of oats for his pony and said he would pick it up but might be a minute or two after closing time. He arrived just when John was locking up, but the feed was on the dock for him. The newcomer said, "Thank you Mr. Sheardown, but let me in to pay you." John replied, "What fer? Yuh plannin' on goin' some'ers?" That was the newcomer's introduction to trusting country folk.

Ross Hunt, another "city boy come farmer," moved to Nobleton and bought the Post Office building across the street from the Feed Mill. One day Ross saw John Sheardown walking home and ran out to introduce himself, "Mr. Sheardown, I'm your new neighbour and I'm pleased to make your acquaintance." John paused for a moment and then said quietly, "Well, I hope you're not to be giving us any trouble," and walked on.

Doc Kenney was the local veterinarian, his practice was located a couple of houses from the Post Office. Another "city boy come cattle rancher" had a young steer with "shipping fever," a pulmonary viral infection brought on by the stress of shipping. He called Doc Kenney who came right up. But Doc wouldn't get out of his car until the gate to the pasture was opened so that, as was his habit, he could drive right up to where the animal lay. He got out of the car and took out a large bottle of grey fluid with a hose and a needle attached. He looked at the steer laying on the ground breathing heavily, said, "Well, this will either cure him or kill him," pushed the needle into a vein, and drained the bottle. The animal stopped breathing all together to which Doc Kenney said, "Well, it killed him!" and drove away!

There was no shortage of colourful characters in the early days, but the name Lorne Cherry will be fondly remembered by older residents of Nobleton.

Lorne lived with his Mother Annie Maude Cherry in their house on the northeast corner of Hwy 27 and King Road, now known as Cherry Park. Lorne occupied his time by cutting lawns in the summer and clearing snow in the winter for residents. Occasionally he would cut a lawn in the morning, forget that he had cut it, and return in the afternoon to cut it again.

John Bragg, the Pharmacist in Nobleton at the time, described the game of "pump handle" which he said that Lorne and his mother Annie would play. Annie would leave the house in her apron to run across to the General Store to buy something she needed. Passing the well in front of the house, she would stop to put the handle down. Later, Lorne would arrive home, stop, and put the pump handle up! This would be repeated every time one or the other came or went!

## ***In our Memories ...***

### ***LCol (Ret'd) Susan Beharriell***

It was with great shock and sadness that we received the news of LCol (Ret'd) Susan Beharriell passing on December 1, 2022, at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto after a lengthy battle with cancer. Susan was a passionate volunteer, community activist and regularly voiced concerns at King council meetings. She was also a LCol (Ret'd), having enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces at the age of 19 before attending Queen's University and one of the first women to complete in the same Basic Officers' Training as men.

She was also the first woman accepted into the Security Branch and later the Intelligence Branch. Susan had extensive experience in Canada at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels, in Colorado with NORAD, and in Germany with NATO. In Ottawa, she was seconded to the Privy Council office writing intelligence assessments for the PM, Cabinet and our Allies, and supported numerous peacekeeping missions and ran Intelligence for the entire Air Force. For her efforts in improving Canadian/American Intelligence cooperation post-9/11, she was awarded the U.S. Meritorious Service Medal. Finishing her career on the National Security and Strategic Studies staff at the Canadian Forces College in Toronto, she retired in the fall of 2008 after more than 35 years of service. The Governor-General inducted her as an Officer of the Order of Military Merit, the military version of the prestigious Order of Canada.

In retirement Susan was a fierce advocate for all things environmental and was committed to women's rights and gender equality. She continued to travel extensively, developed a love of gardening and delighted in watching the birds at her various feeders. Susan was perhaps happiest riding her horse. A Celebration of Life for Susan will be held at a later date.



## ***Banner Year for Trees of Giving***

The Trees of Giving annual display in the KHCC raised more than \$2400 for the Canadian Mental Health Association in South Simcoe and York Region.

Thank you to Diana Armitage and Murdene Pozdrowski for organizing KTTH's contribution once again and bringing the display to life. They would like to thank Liza Mallyon, the KHCC collection's curator, for permitting the use of many of Bert Ezard's beautiful miniature buildings and carved animals.

*(Photo credit: Kelly Lavis)*



## Secret Trifle Recipe Revealed

At the Arts Society King, Museum and KTHS Volunteers Potluck dinner in November, longtime KTHS member **Ed Millar's blueberry trifle dessert** was once again one of the most sought-after dishes of the evening.

Held in Laskay Hall as a way to become reacquainted after sheltering in place during COVID, this lovely evening was enjoyed by members of all three groups.

Ed was happy to share his recipe when asked. "I first started taking it to work on the last day before Christmas each year before I retired in 1995, as it proved quite popular. Each year (up until COVID) the Trail Association would hold a potluck lunch before Christmas and it got a bit ridiculous as people would fill their plates with the main course and head for the dessert table to add on a scoop of trifle just so they wouldn't miss out."

This 'out of this world' recipe, which hales from the Corner House Restaurant in Toronto (closed in 2014), can be easily adjusted to a nut-free environment simply by leaving out the almonds.



## What's Happening at the King Heritage & Cultural Centre?

**2nd Annual Art Show in recognition of International Women's Day**  
**January 14-March 18, 2023**

In partnership with Arts Society King (ASK), the King Heritage & Cultural Centre is pleased to present **STEREOTYPE SMASH**, the 2nd annual Art Show in recognition of **International Women's Day**. Some images and societal beliefs (regarding gender roles and equality, ideal bodies, sexuality and aging, for example) have outlasted their usefulness, are dated, inappropriate or just plain untrue. Artists were challenged to take a stereotype and reinterpret it – recreate, reimagine, recontextualize ... smash it! Local artists have used both the artwork and stories to interpret the theme.





## Also happening in February and March at KHCC ...

**STEREOTYPE SMASH  
ARTIST FORUMS**

Visitors are invited to attend forums where up to a dozen artists will discuss the meaning and inspiration behind their works.

Artist Forums will be held:

**Saturday, February 4th  
1 to 3 pm**

**Saturday, March 4th  
1 to 3 pm**

RSVP preferred [kingmuseum@king.ca](mailto:kingmuseum@king.ca)  
905-833-2331  
King Heritage & Cultural Centre  
2920 King Rd., King City

Arts Society KING

KING HERITAGE & CULTURAL CENTRE

The King Heritage & Cultural Centre is pleased to present a night of comedy in celebration of International Women's Day

**AWARD-WINNING COMEDIANS**

**MARTHA CHAVES**  
**AND LAURIE ELLIOT**

**ON TOUR**  
**YUK YUK'S**  
**STAND-UP COMEDY**

Wednesday  
March 8, 2023  
Laskay Hall

Ticket  
information  
coming soon!

[kingmuseum@king.ca](mailto:kingmuseum@king.ca)  
[kingheritageandculture.ca](http://kingheritageandculture.ca)  
905-833-2331

**DROP-IN  
KIDS' HISTORY DIY**

King Heritage & Cultural Centre

**NEW!**

[KING.CA/RECREATION](http://KING.CA/RECREATION)

Every Saturday  
1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.  
\$7 Per Participant  
Ages 5-12

**New Drop-in Kids' History DIY Series:** Are you curious to explore history behind-the-scenes at the KHCC? Dive into our artifact collection, learn a new historic skill, and participate in some old-fashioned fun during the **Drop-In Kids' History DIY Club** every **Saturday** at the KHCC! Participants can arrive anytime between 1 pm to 2 pm and enjoy new activities each week. Pay at the door, \$7 per child, ages 5-12.

## What's Happening Around King?

**Maple Syrup Festival at Cold Creek  
Conservation Area in Nobleton**  
**March 11th from 10am-2pm**  
**\$10 per person or \$35 for a family of 4**



Come out to Cold Creek to join us for a day filled with fun activities. Enjoy a pancake breakfast, learning about the process of syrup making, guided hikes to the sugar bush, tree tapping demonstrations and a variety of vendors. This event is intended for all ages. For more information, visit [coldcreek.ca/MapleSyrupFest](http://coldcreek.ca/MapleSyrupFest)



## Renew Your KTHS Membership Today & Tell a Friend!

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 annual membership.** You may now submit your membership online through our website at [www.kingtownshiphistoricalsociety.com](http://www.kingtownshiphistoricalsociety.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 <b>MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION</b> (PLEASE PRINT INFORMATION AND MAIL CHEQUE TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS)	
NAME(S) _____	PHONE _____	
ADDRESS _____	POSTAL CODE _____	
_____	YEAR <u>20</u>	
EMAIL _____	NEW _____ RENEWAL _____	
INDIVIDUAL \$25 _____ FAMILY \$30 _____ DONATION _____		
ENCLOSED \$ _____		

### 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.kingtownshiphistoricalsociety.com](http://www.kingtownshiphistoricalsociety.com).*