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MOSAIC

spring 2026

ArtsSocietyKing.ca



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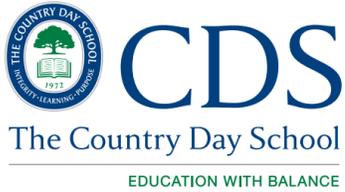
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King MOSAIC

King MOSAIC is produced and edited by Arts Society King



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ArtsSocietyKing.ca

King MOSAIC is produced by Arts Society King four times a year (March, June, September and December), by a dedicated committee of volunteers. The magazine is distributed by London Publishing Corp. to all households in King, as well as libraries, businesses, restaurants, offices and other public places.

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We welcome your feedback, contributions, and suggestions.

Write to us at
editor@artsocietyking.ca

FEATURED CONTRIBUTOR: ALYSHA ROCCA



Alysha Rocca is an emerging artist who holds a BFA from OCAD University. Working with the theme of sustainability, Alysha weaves together the threads of feminism and environmental consciousness. The diversity of her work demonstrates an exploration to create with many mediums, although she is strongly influenced by the tactile quality of fabrics and fibres. Each piece Alysha creates is not only a celebration of creativity but also a statement of solidarity with the feminist movement and a commitment to sustainability. Alysha investigates her personal identity and the themes of community, feminism, sustainability, desire and consumption. The textile industry, historically a site of women's labour, is central to her practice. Fabrics have a tendency to be fluid and malleable, constantly changing and adjusting. As she adopts this mentality, her practice constantly shifts in the materials that she uses.

ON OUR COVER

The striking cover image is a 30x30 acrylic on canvas abstract painting entitled *diversities standing on guard* by this issue's featured artist, Douglas Robinson. It is part of a series exploring the cultural mosaic of Canada through intentionally simplified, figurative forms that function as universal stand-ins for humanity. It examines how we coexist in shared spaces today, highlighting both the strength of the collective and the distinct presence of each individual. Applying contrasting vibrant colours to represent their unique cultures, with heads of one, emphasizes the diversity of individuals standing together in unity. The visible layering serves as a metaphor for the intricate, shared experiences that connect us all, even as we stand apart.



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DOUGLAS ROBINSON

A Life in Art

BY ANY METRIC, DOUGLAS ROBINSON HAS HAD A STELLAR CAREER.

WRITTEN BY **LESLIE HOBSON**
Award-winning writer and photographer Leslie Hobson has lived in King for nearly 40 years.

Douglas discovered his passion for art at a very young age. Born in Vancouver as one of four children, he lived in two cities as a child, until his family settled in Toronto.

His father, a senior executive in the package goods industry, was unsure about art as a way of life. However, his mother saw his talent and his drive at an early age and always supported his creativity. He was constantly drawing and sketching – at age 10, he was nearly washed away while sketching at Peggy's Cove.

This was also the age that his mother put him into private art classes. The class was held in a woman's home and he was the only child in an adult class that often lasted three hours. These classes not only honed his skills – he was doing palette knife paintings – but also improved his social skills and his ability to deal comfortably with people of all ages.

While thriving in the arts, Douglas was not socially isolated. Through sports, he was able to establish a strong network of friends. (It was these same friends who were extremely jealous at age 15 when they found out that his art classes included nude figure drawing, "She's like right there – naked – in the room with you?") While art continued to pull him to solitary pursuits, he worked to keep this social connection

with his peers, desperate as all high school kids are in wanting to belong.

His high school art teacher was a fan of his work and nominated Douglas for a program for young artists at the Art Gallery of Ontario. He was selected and worked in the AGO basement every Saturday morning for six months. This was yet another life-building experience that was both intimidating and empowering in equal measure.

Accepted into the Ontario College of Art and Design, he was drawn to the communication and design programs. He excelled in courses like Terry Iles' Creative Concepts and went on to win the prestigious McCann Erickson scholarship at the end of his third year. This entailed presenting samples of his work on large panels for a juried advertising agency creative panel to review.

That summer as an intern at the McCann Agency was a seminal time for the young creative. Under the tutelage of famed Creative Director Brian Harrod, he was involved in all aspects of the agency's creative process. He was invited to attend photographic shoots, recording sessions and even strategy meetings with clients where he was allowed to observe.

His time at McCann was so successful for both he and the agency that they considered offering him a full-time position. That might have soured the relationship between OCAD and the McCann scholarship program – as well



as disappointing his father by resulting in Douglas not formally graduating – so they found an excellent compromise. Douglas returned to OCAD to finish his final year, attending part-time, with two to three days a week still spent working at McCann.

What followed was an incredibly successful career in advertising. Continually offered new positions, his inherent loyalty kept him in each position for about 3½ years, building a strong portfolio, an excellent reputation and winning awards. His advertising career culminated in the founding of his own agency, doug&partners, which he ran successfully for 22 years.

When he made the decision to close his agency, he returned to art full time. His work now is primarily abstract. As an intuitive painter, he is "rooted in the language of penitenti," where traces of change are not errors but rather layers reflecting the complexity of human emotion. His work is stunning.

His current projects fall into four distinct series:

- pure abstract
- winter birch (his most realistic)
- diversities
- primitively speaking, AKA the bubble gum series, where he lets his inner child play again.

Working in his studios in Nobleton and Muskoka – which he describes as "controlled chaos" – Douglas often

moves from one piece to another as his mood changes.

He enjoys the time spent with artists that he meets around shows and the emotional response of people to his work. His four children and his wife Margie are huge supporters of his work.

In less than three years, Douglas has been selected for prestigious juried shows in Canada and the USA, has three galleries representing him, and his work can be found in private collections in Canada and the USA. It is only when he mentions that he has reached two of the major goals set out in his business plan that you realize his artistic brilliance is nearly matched by his business acumen.

His work can be found at: Blue Crow Gallery in Toronto, Britton Gallery in Bracebridge and Crown & Press Gallery in Hamilton.

And his website is outstanding, <https://www.dougrobinsonart.com/>

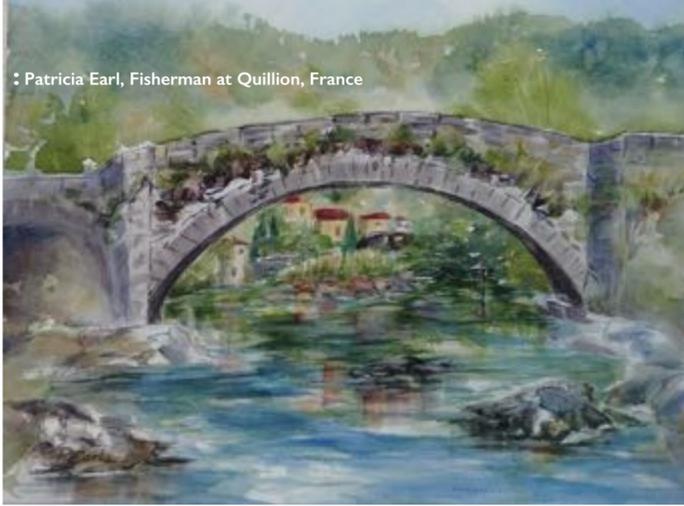




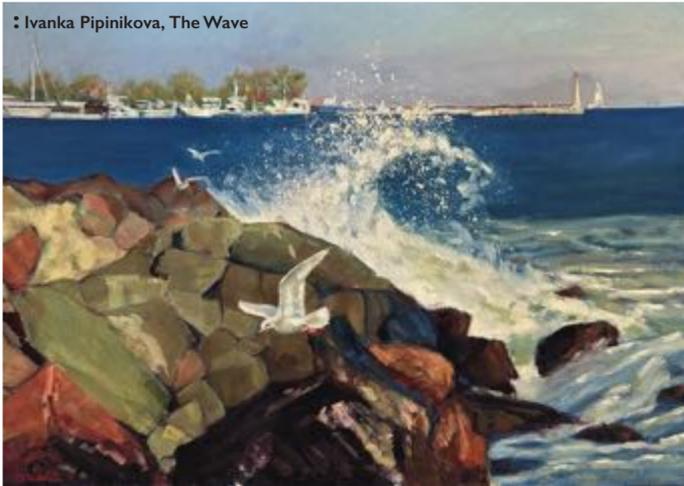
: Galina Lebedeva, Wildflowers



: Veronica Meloche,
: Sunrise



: Patricia Earl, Fisherman at Quillion, France



: Ivanka Pipnikova, The Wave



: Alexandra K. Conrad,
: Feelings

ARTROAM King 2026

A NEW WAY
TO EXPERIENCE
LOCAL ART

Mark your spring calendars! Arts Society King is proud to present the inaugural **ARTROAM King 2026**, taking place Saturday, April 11 and Sunday, April 12, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the King Heritage & Cultural Centre, 2920 King Road, King City, Ontario.



WRITTEN BY ANNE
AHRENS-EMBLETON

Anne Ahrens-Embleton is the Heritage & Cultural Administrative Assistant at the King Heritage & Cultural Centre (KHCC), where she also supports Arts Society King with administrative tasks.

This year's exhibition showcases a dynamic range of artistic styles, voices and mediums. Selected artists for ARTROAM King 2026 include: Naghmeh Ahmadi, Lisa Allshire, Susie Cattedra, Alexandra K. Conrad, Nonie Dauphinais, Patricia Earl, Andrea End, Jacqueline England, Donna Greenstein, Galina Lebedeva, Olena Lopatina, Vladimir Lopatin, Hans Martin, Veronica Meloche, Mary Morganelli, Valeria Mravyan, Olga Muhortyh, Ivanka Pipnikova, Douglas Robinson, Olga Senyk, Ashraf Sheibaniaghdam, Joseph Shocrylas, Sylva Sroujian, Joe Trimmeliti, Mark Viola, and Susan Walker Ing.

ARTROAM King is a juried art show and sale featuring 26 exceptional local fine artists. For one weekend, the KHCC's four historic buildings will be transformed into vibrant gallery spaces, inviting visitors to roam, discover, and purchase original artwork in an inspiring heritage setting.

After more than two decades of artists opening their home studios to the public through Studio Tour King, ARTROAM King introduces a fresh, centralized format. By bringing all participating artists together in one location, visitors can experience the full event in a single stop – making it easier than ever to meet artists, browse their work and enjoy the creative energy that defines King Township.

ARTROAM King 2026 is a free community event, open to all. Whether you're an art collector, a casual browser, or simply curious, this immersive exhibition offers something to inspire every visitor. Bring a friend, spend the day and experience the creativity that thrives in our community.

For artist profiles, preview images, and event details, visit www.artssocietyking.ca.



SPRING 2026 MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

On behalf of King Township Council, welcome to the spring edition of the Mosaic.

As we welcome spring, I can't help but reflect on how our community showed up this winter at the fourth biennial Mayor's Cultural Gala to celebrate Local Legends on Thursday, Feb. 26. With your support, we've raised crucial funds to support arts, culture and heritage-based programming through Arts Society King and the King Heritage & Cultural Centre.

The event also served as the inaugural induction ceremony for the King Township Sports Hall of Fame, which can be viewed at Zancor Centre. I encourage you to visit and learn more about the inaugural class of 2026, whose achievements and athletic excellence have shaped King's sporting legacy.

With new beginnings, possibilities and warmer weather ahead there's plenty of opportunity to get involved and explore everything King has to offer.

RECREATION PROGRAMS

The spring session of recreation programs starts the week of April 7, with a variety of arts & cultural programming for all ages. Explore the Spring Recreation Guide at king.ca/recreation to find your new favourite hobby!

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Discover why life's better in King at these events:

Cold Creek Maple Syrup Fest: This family-friendly event takes place on March 14 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and includes a pancake breakfast, guided hikes through the sugar bush, tree tapping and evaporator demonstrations, face painting and magic shows, snowshoeing and more. Purchase tickets at coldcreek.ca/MapleSyrupFest.

Taste of King: Savour exclusive prix fixe lunch and dinner menus and special promotions at some of King's best local restaurants through March 14. This is a great opportunity to support local and experience fresh ingredients from King's farms. View participating restaurants and menus at king.ca/TasteOfKing.

Spring Cleaning Initiatives: Participate in Curbside Giveaway Days in partnership with York Region from April to October, Repair Cafes hosted in partnership with NewMakelt and York Region, the annual Community Yard Sale and Community Electronic Recycling event in May, and green your yard by purchasing a rain barrel, backyard composter, or wildflower kit! Learn more at king.ca/EnvironmentalEvents.

Victoria Day: Join us as the biggest kick-off to summer event: the annual Nobleton Victoria Day parade and fireworks on Monday, May 18. From a parade to mid-way rides and games, there will be plenty of family-friendly fun for all to enjoy.

176 Schomberg Agricultural Fair: celebrate local agriculture, rural life, and community talent through competitions, exhibits, rides, and family-friendly attractions at this long-standing community event, organized by the Schomberg Agricultural Society.

Volunteer Opportunities: If you're looking to get involved, volunteering at a King event is a great way to give back and meet people in the community—and a fun way to earn credits for the high school requirement. Learn more at king.ca/volunteers.

KING HERITAGE & CULTURAL CENTRE EXHIBITS

Delve into the world of arts, culture and history at these current and upcoming exhibits:

In Her Own Time: Running until March 31, this exhibition features work from 47 artists and explores the passage of time as an ever-present force in women's lives, marking growth, transformation and the stages of life.

Queen Victoria's Secrets: Starting May 9, this travelling exhibition features a selection of textiles and objects from the City of Richmond Hill artifact collection that explores changes in Victorian middle-class women's dress.

King City Secondary School Student (KCSS) Exhibition: Be on the lookout in mid-May as the King Heritage & Cultural Centre will be collaborating with KCSS to show a selection of Grade 12 artwork in the East Gallery – showcasing our talented youth artists in the community, with works selected from the Mayor's Celebration of Youth Arts.

Please continue to volunteer, support local businesses, follow King Township on social media and subscribe to receive our top stories directly to your inbox at king.ca/subscribe.



Sincerely,

Steve Pellegrini
Mayor, King Township



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Let me **ASK** you...

featuring **KEVIN BALL & ASHLEY HUG**

WRITTEN BY **PATTI SKRYPEK**
Patti is a retired communications professional and active volunteer who applies her creative skills to support a number of not-for-profit organizations within the community.



WHAT TECHNIQUES AND MEDIUMS DO YOU USE IN YOUR WORK, AND WHY DO YOU PREFER THEM?

Although I started years ago as an airbrush artist, my current medium of choice is coloured pencil with occasional watercolour or acrylic added. I think I like the control of that medium. Maybe it reminds me of colouring as a child! I also hope to explore more digital painting.

WHERE IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO LIVE AND WHY?

Although I lived more than 40 years in North York, as I grow older, I prefer life in the country. Anywhere free of the noise and chaos of city life. My wife Cathy and I are looking to retire to small-town life in Northern Ontario.

WHAT INSPIRES YOU TO CREATE YOUR ART?

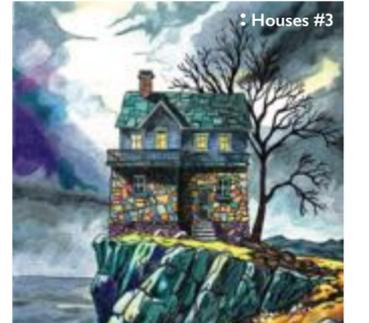
A desire to allow the creative spark to arise, be explored, flourish and be brought to fruition. I do this as an improvising musician, as well. I also plan to explore themes of social commentary more in the future.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

Stop waiting for that "perfect" moment to reveal your creative self to others. "I just need to practice more, to get a little better," is a self-defeating mindset. There is no "right" time. Just do it – NOW!

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR OTHER HOBBIES OR INTERESTS?

Buddhism, meditation, making music, reading, pickleball, archery and communing with our cats and the horses where we live.



KEVIN BALL Email: kman.ball@gmail.com • Website: <https://ballcreative.wixsite.com/artwork>
Kevin Ball has been a freelance graphic designer since the mid-1980s. In those early days, he also dabbled as an airbrush illustrator and even had a piece published. Nowadays, in his retirement, he is revisiting his artistic side and beginning to paint and draw again. Recently, he has taken to using coloured pencils and is also making a move into digital illustration using a drawing tablet and computer.

Kevin has a penchant for drawing people in interesting or amusing situations stemming from his deep admiration for the works of Norman Rockwell and the great illustrators of the 20th century. His piece *Boy and Dog* reflects this style. Kevin is also interested in the art of caricature and hopes to paint more in that style in the future.



HOW DID YOU COME TO DESIGN FAIRY FURNITURE?

I began creating fairy furniture in 2020. I was beginning to spend more time in nature, feeling a deeper connection to the earth. My mom loves fairies and had a small indoor fairy garden, and I wanted to make her something special for Mother's Day. That's where it began. I fell in love with the grounding connection to nature and the magic of creating. Each piece feels like a little portal to another world, blending nature, creativity and self-expression.

letting the materials guide me rather than planning everything. Twirly grapevine sticks are my favourite for adding a whimsical, dreamy touch.

creativity and the magic within themselves. The perfect medicine for our fast-paced, tech-focused world.

WHAT IS THE ONE THING PEOPLE WOULD BE SURPRISED TO LEARN ABOUT YOU?

People might be surprised that I often work in total silence. It helps me focus and enter a flow state, even though my work looks playful and magical.

DREAM PLACE TO VISIT?

Germany, to connect with my heritage and feel closer to my roots.



WHAT TECHNIQUES AND MEDIUMS DO YOU USE, AND WHY?

I work mostly with natural materials like wood, bark, moss, stones and dried flowers because I like to connect with nature through art. My process is intuitive,

HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR ART EVOLVING?

I want to keep growing workshops, especially in my Richmond Hill home. I hope to continue offering birthday parties, school and corporate workshops, and add forest bathing walks. This art helps people of all ages reconnect with nature, their



ASHLEY HUG Email: info@fuchsiaandfae.com • Instagram: [@fuchsiaandfae](https://www.instagram.com/fuchsiaandfae)
Ashley Hug owns Fuchsia & Fae, where she creates handmade fairy furniture out of nature. Each piece is unique and carefully crafted. For her creation *Warmth in the Woods*, Ashley was inspired to make the cozy cabin chairs and table to express the warmth and comfort that comes from being in nature. She wanted it to feel like a cup of hot chocolate sprinkled with love, capturing the joy of togetherness and the feeling of being with loved ones. *Believe in Yourself* was inspired by her calling to create fairy art and by imagining a tiny fairy artist at work. The hot chocolate and cookies capture the warmth felt when tapping into creativity, and the little painting on the easel symbolizes the drive to keep going. Together, they celebrate the joy, focus, and magic it takes to believe in oneself.

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THE ARTS

Art in Motion

THE CREATIVE DRIVE OF CATHY BALL



WRITTEN BY **JOANNE BAILEY**
Joanne is a retired college professor and registered nurse. She is an active volunteer with Arts Society King and the Nobleton Seniors' Centre.

For Cathy Ball, watching her mother sew Barbie doll clothes and do folk art as a child encouraged her to explore a creative career.

Born in Orillia, Ontario, Cathy enrolled in an adult art class at age 10 due to the limited availability of children's art lessons in her community. Cathy recalls, "I started to take an interest in art at that early age, and I remember telling my mom how much I disliked 'paint by numbers.'"

After moving to Newmarket in 2008, Cathy says, "It was at that time that I



realized that art was a vision and passion for me. After meeting (her now-husband) Kevin, who was a jazz drummer, musician and graphic designer, his love for the arts encouraged me more."

Cathy relocated to King Township in 2016 and started painting with water colours and mixed media. She also became a member of Arts Society King.

When Cathy is asked about her art, she says, "I love nature, the outdoors, all the greenery around us – plants, trees, gardens, waterfalls, lakeshores." Many of Cathy's paintings are of landscapes. Her painting *Untouchable Mountains*, which is featured on the ASK website, demonstrates her love for nature. The mixture of blue and green in the painting evokes the majesty of the mountains, with peaks pointing high and immense jagged forms dominating the skies. *Untouchable Mountains* is now

hanging in the Mill Pond Medical Centre in Alliston.

Besides her love for art, Cathy manages a full-time janitorial business. On her own property, Cathy can often be found cleaning out the stalls of her 13 horses with the help of her landlords. Cathy describes this physically demanding, hands-on job as "musical stalls, one horse out and one horse in."

Inspired by her horses, 13 wagons and one sleigh, Cathy designed the winning painting for Schomberg's A Main Street Christmas in December 2025. "A horse drawn sleigh – it just reminded me of an old-fashioned Christmas," she said. Cathy's painting, *Old Main Street*, highlights the strength and endurance of the horses as they draw the old wooden sleigh through the snow-covered streets against a background of trees covered

with frost and a hidden moon reflecting its glow upon the snow. Along with the monetary award Cathy received, her painting is now hanging in the Grackle Coffee Company at 208 Main Street in Schomberg.

For those who attended the Schomberg Main Street Christmas Parade, the adorable miniature horses who delighted the crowd at the start of the parade belong to Cathy and Kevin Ball.

Through the years, Cathy's artistic skills and techniques have been largely self-taught. One can certainly see the extent of Cathy's self-motivation and discipline in successfully following her passion for art.

Cathy's artwork can be found at www.ballcreative.ca and on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ballcre8ive>.

HELLO my name is **LAURA SMITH**



I am a ceramicist based out of Mount Albert. I hesitate to call ceramics my work, as I see the art of clay as a soul expression. Every one of my clay creations begins with a daydream, a walk in the woods, or moments spent noticing the simple things that make me happy in this world. I sit with my sketch pad, plan each piece, and move through several iterations before it ever sees the light of day.

Clay found me during a time of physical breakdown and personal metamorphosis.

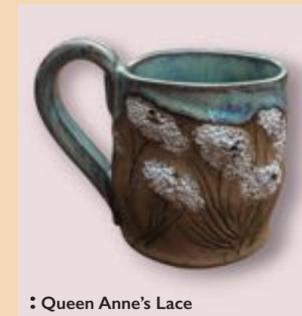
Sculpting brought me great joy through kinetic expression. It moved me through many dense layers of emotion, becoming my own personal life coach. The process taught me to accept change, to practice unending patience, and to love the version of myself that now exists. I often muse that

the clay is sculpting me, rather than me sculpting it.

This is why I endeavour to spark joy in those around me – if only to share a small fragment of the gift I have found in this unique art form. I strive to bring life to my pieces by recognizing the richness of nature and the beauty in all things, and by sharing that perspective through the incredible art of clay. I am grateful to share this journey with other great artists who embrace beauty, dare to dream and are bold enough to know their worth, yet vulnerable enough to share it with the world.

I see you. Thank you for seeing me. With love, the Green Thumbed Potter.

If you wish to share my love of artistry, you can find me on Instagram: @greenthumbedpotter.



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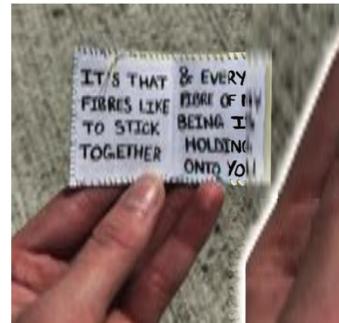
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THE ARTS

WORD HAS IT

WRITTEN BY **ALYSHA ROCCA**
Alysha Rocca is an emerging artist who studied in Toronto at OCAD University, earning a BFA in Drawing and Painting. Alysha's work weaves together the threads of feminism and environmental consciousness, crafting a narrative of resilience and empowerment through recycled materials.



ZINE
Artistry

WEAVING POETRY & EMOTION

"Zine" is short for "magazine," and refers to a self-published, non-commercial publication covering any topic, such as art, music or personal experiences. This zine explores poetry, heartbreak and delicacy. The hand-stitching on the borders leans into the fibre theme in the poem.



KING TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY

• Knitted hats for 360 Kids

AROUND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

• Volunteers assembling milk bag mats

PROJECT KINDNESS
A COMMUNITY SERVICE INITIATIVE

WRITTEN BY **NICOLE GNEO**
Nicole is the Interim Program Supervisor for the King Township Public Library.

who are seriously ill, have experienced trauma or simply need the comfort of a warm hug. Participants continued to expand their skills by knitting soft, cozy baby hats, which were donated to Aid to Women, a crisis pregnancy centre offering compassionate support to women in need.

Did you know your local library is about far more than books? At the King Township Public Library, we're proud to offer Project Kindness – a hands-on, community-driven program dedicated to supporting individuals in need through creative, meaningful work.

To wrap up the 2025 fall session, the group created colourful, textured "fidget muffs" designed for individuals living with dementia. These knitted sleeves provide sensory stimulation and comfort. As a gesture of thanks to the King community, Marna has made a selection of these fidget muffs available to patrons who have loved ones who might benefit from them.

Launched in early 2025 by Marna, our Nobleton Branch Programmer, Project Kindness is designed to bring people together while making a tangible difference. Since its beginning, the group has crafted and donated items to organizations such as 360 Kids, Milk Bags Unlimited, Project Linus, Aid to Women and several local nursing homes.

Looking ahead, Project Kindness has big plans for its 2026 sessions, with more opportunities to craft, connect, and contribute. The program thrives on the generosity and skills of local residents, and we are always eager to welcome more knitters and crocheters, of any skill level, who enjoy collaborating with others for a good cause.

The program's first initiative focused on knitting hats for teens, which were donated to 360 Kids, an organization that prevents homelessness for at-risk youth. This then evolved into milk-bag mats for people experiencing homelessness. Community members were invited to drop off their clean milk bags rather than throwing them out. Volunteers learned how to weave and stitch the bags into durable sleeping mats. The group completed two mats last year and continues to work on more. Fun fact: one mat requires roughly 500 milk bags!

If you'd like to learn more or get involved, please reach out to your local branch. And the next time you finish a bag of milk, don't toss the packaging—consider dropping it off at the library to support our ongoing mat-making efforts.

From there, Project Kindness turned its attention to knitting blankets for Project Linus, a charitable organization that provides handmade blankets to children

The Project Kindness group meets every Wednesday from 12:00 to 2:30 p.m. at the Nobleton branch, with breaks between each session. Join us in building community, one stitch – and one act of kindness – at a time.

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ANNA ROBERTS
MP | KING–VAUGHAN



: Cecil Maynard



: Clara Harris Self-Portrait



: Girl Guides at Pellatt House, Lake Marie

Uncovering Hidden Histories

LOCAL LEGENDS

WRITTEN BY KHCC STAFF

Lady Mary Pellat, Philanthropist

Lady Mary (Dodgson) Pellatt (1857–1924) was the childhood sweetheart and first wife of Sir Henry Pellatt (1859–1939), of Casa Loma fame. In the early 20th century, the Pellatts purchased over 1,000 acres of land near Eversley in King Township and established *Lake Marie Farm & Estate* as a summer and weekend retreat; their former estate is now known as *Mary Lake*.

Lady Mary Pellatt is best known for her work with the Girl Guides of Canada. In 1912, she was named the very first Chief Commissioner of the Dominion of Canada Girl Guides. Lady Pellatt used her social position and financial resources to promote Guiding across Canada. She hosted large rallies and events at both Casa Loma and Lake Marie, encouraging outdoor experiences and community bonding.

Lady Mary served as Commissioner until 1921 when she resigned due to ill health. In 1922, she was awarded the Silver Fish Award, the highest adult award in Guiding, for her outstanding service and dedication.

Hunter in King Township. Clara had two sisters and one brother, who was killed in WWI. She attended art school at both the Ontario College of Art and the Art Institute of Chicago, and received instruction from several working artists.

At a time when most artists were men, Clara followed art as a career. Inspired by the Group of Seven, she sketched and painted on location year-round; she travelled across Canada and the U.S. to study, paint and visit family as a single woman. Over her lifetime, Clara produced more than 300 known pieces of art but, when she married Frederick W. Harris in 1918, the marriage register listed his profession as “commercial artist” and her profession as “stays at home.”

In the 1960s, Clara contacted Toronto antique dealer Lillian McLean about selling a collection of her own art and that of her husband. Realizing the historical importance of the works, McLean purchased about 100 items but died soon after. Years later, Lillian McLean’s daughter Verna discovered the paintings in storage; she curated a website so Clara’s work – and Lillian’s vision – would not be lost. For more information, visit www.claraharrisart.com

Clara Isabella (Perry) Harris, Artist

Artist Clara Harris (1887–1975) was born to Richard Perry and Elizabeth

Cecil Maynard, Inventor

Cecil Maynard (1897–1966) was born and raised in Uxbridge but spent

much of his life in Schomberg. Despite leaving school after Grade 3 and being unable to read or write, he became a prolific inventor: Maynard operated the Schomberg Alfalfa Mill, a facility that produced pellets and meal for livestock feed that was later managed by his grandson, Kevin Maynard.

During the 1950s, Cecil invented and built one of the earliest self-propelled alfalfa harvesters to make the harvest more efficient. Longtime residents of Schomberg may recall the sweet smell of alfalfa during summer harvest periods.

Maynard also invented an ice-shaving, or resurfacing, machine that was designed to be pulled by a farm tractor. Marketed to arenas across the country, this machine was in direct competition to Zamboni machines. Local lore suggests that Maynard was sued by Zamboni and won, but no official records were located.

Maynard Drive in Schomberg was named for this local inventor. To see Cecil Maynard’s alfalfa harvester in action, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=9RHXPOTZ4EE. The video clip from the 1950s was posted by Terry Maynard.

Charles Carleton Crossley, Pilot

Born and raised in King City, Carleton Crossley (1891–1974) was an experienced

pilot. He joined the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) in WWI, worked as a mechanic and bush pilot for the Ontario Provincial Air Service (1926–1939) and served with the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) in WWII.

Crossley’s flight experience was put to the test at age 64, when he took off on a routine solo flight over the Foxe Basin in the Canadian Arctic. Forced to land on an ice floe due to dangerous headwinds, he began a 12-day saga of survival. During the first few days, Crossley remained optimistic as he radioed for help, rationed supplies and moved his gear when cracks formed in the ice. Day 6 was stressful as his ice floe broke free and began to drift toward the open sea. During the second week, things must have looked grim as he battled freezing rain, soaked gear and exhaustion. Incredibly, he was able to use a *Gibson Girl* radio and an improvised balloon antenna to signal rescuers at regular intervals. Finally on Day 12, Corporal Al Savage of the RCAF arrived, expecting a recovery mission, and was amazed to find Carleton Crossley alive!

After his rescue, Crossley travelled back to King City, where he was reunited with his wife and family. Despite this misadventure, he continued to fly for mining and commercial companies until his retirement in 1960.



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NOW AND ONGOING – WRITENOW!@KING

WriteNow!@King is a writer's group partnering with King Township Public Library who meet on the first and third Thursday afternoons each month from 2 – 4 PM. New and experienced writers are welcome to participate in stimulating writing exercise, guest speakers and feedback from peers. Location: King City Public Library, 1970 King Road, King City
Contact: info@kinglibrary.ca for more information

MARCH 23 – HEALING OUR SOILS AND CLIMATE WITH COMPOST – NOBLETON & KING CITY GARDEN CLUB

Glenn Munroe will discuss the healing properties of compost.
Location: Laskay Hall, 2920 King Road, King City
Time: 7:30PM
Contact: nobletonkingcitygardenclub@gmail.com
Website: https://gardenontario.org/society-listing/entry/635/

MARCH 24 – CONTAINER GARDENING – SCHOMBERG HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Master Gardener Maria Shtemberg will take a fresh look at this growing trend with tips and tools to make your containers spectacular year-round.
Time: 7:30PM
Location: Schomberg Community Hall, 325 Main St, Schomberg
Contact: schomberghortsociety@gmail.com

MARCH 28 – WIRE DRAGONFLY WORKSHOP – KINGCRAFTS STUDIO

Join us and enjoy creating your own whimsical wire dragonfly. Your sculpture measures approx. 24 inches long and can grace your garden throughout the year. All materials are included; painting of the dragonfly is not included.
Time: 10AM – 1PM
Location: 12936 Keele Street, King City
Contact: info@kingcrafts.ca
Website: www.kingcrafts.ca

MARCH 28 – HOOT, HOWL & SQUEAK – TOWNSHIP OF KING AND TRCA

Join us for Earth Hour to enjoy a talk about owls and coyotes, followed by a trip into the woods.
Time: 6:30PM – 8:30PM
Location: Cold Creek Conservation Area, 14125 11th Concession, Nobleton
Website: https://www.king.ca/EnvironmentalEvents

APRIL TO JUNE – SPRING SKATING – NOBLETON SKATING CLUB

Spring skating lessons -- Canskate, Starskate and Power Skating
Time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Location: Zancor Centre, 1600 15th Sideroad, King City
Website: nobletonskatingclub.com

APRIL 4 – EASTER EGG HUNT (FREE EVENT) – KING TOWNSHIP LIONS

Hosted by King Township Lions (King City, Schomberg and Nobleton), children under age 10 are invited to gather plastic eggs and exchange them for a free chocolate bunny and hot chocolate. Coffee and hot chocolate will also be available at no charge to accompanying adults.
Time: 10AM
Location: Tasca Park, 49 Parkheights Trail, Nobleton

APRIL 7 – MAY 8 – MAYOR'S CELEBRATION OF YOUTH ARTS – ARTS SOCIETY KING

Join Country Day School, King City Secondary School and Villanova College art students and faculty as we celebrate the opening of this unique art show on April 16. Vote for your favourite pieces for the "People's Choice Award." Exhibition continues through May 8. Location: King Township Municipal Centre, 2585 King Road, King City
Opening Reception Time: 6PM – 8PM
Regular Hours: 8:30AM – 4:30PM
Contact: info@artsocietyking.ca
Website: ArtsSocietyKing.ca

APRIL 11 & 12, 2026 – ARTROAM KING

Discover the finest works of 28 exceptional visual artists in this juried fine art show and sale. Roam through four historic buildings – just steps apart – transformed into vibrant galleries. Let your curiosity guide you to art that inspires.
Location: King Heritage & Cultural Centre, 2920 King Road, King City
Time: 10 AM – 4 PM
Contact: info@artssocietyking.ca
Website: https://artssocietyking.ca/events/artroam-king/

APRIL 11 – MAY 30 – TIMELESS TALES VI WRITING CONTEST

Participate in ASK's sixth annual all ages writing contest! Open to writers from York, Peel and Simcoe Regions with the best in each age category awarded a prize and a copy of the anthology. All entries are eligible for publication in the anthology. Contest runs April 11 to May 30. For rules and entry forms, visit www.ArtsSocietyKing.ca
Contact: info@artssocietyking.ca
Website: ArtsSocietyKing.ca

APRIL 18 – STAIN GLASS SUN CATCHER – KINGCRAFTS STUDIO

Working with a choice of pre-cut coloured or textured clear glass parts, you will learn grinding, foiling and soldering. Soldering involves lead so it is not recommended if you are pregnant. All materials are included.
Time: 10AM – 1:30PM
Location: 12936 Keele Street, King City
Contact: info@kingcrafts.ca
Website: www.kingcrafts.ca

APRIL 22 – MAY 29 – GREEN YARDS PROGRAM – TOWNSHIP OF KING

Take a step towards greening your yard and supporting pollinators this spring by purchasing a wildflower kit, rain barrel or backyard composter.
Time: Pickup available during operating hours
Location: Pickup at Trisan Centre (25 Dillane Drive, Schomberg) and Zancor Centre (1600 15th Sideroad, King City)
Website: https://www.king.ca/greenyards

APRIL 23 – FROG WATCH – TOWNSHIP OF KING & TRCA

Learn about Ontario's frogs and toads and how to identify them by their unique calls.
Time: 6PM – 8PM
Location: Cold Creek Conservation Area, 14125 11th Concession, Nobleton
Website: https://www.king.ca/EnvironmentalEvents

APRIL 24, 25, 26 – KINGCRAFTS SPRING ARTISAN SALE – KINGCRAFTS STUDIO

Join us for our first Artisan Sale of 2026

— one weekend only, April 24–26, 2026. Discover a wide selection of unique handmade items and gifts created by over 40 talented artisans. Meet our members, explore our studio, and learn more about our creative community. You may even be inspired to become a member yourself.
Time: 10AM – 8PM
Location: 12936 Keele Street, King City
Contact: info@kingcrafts.ca
Website: www.kingcrafts.ca

APRIL 25 – BEST OF THE RUMMAGE SALE – ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH

Shop an amazing collection of clothes, jewellery, linens, treasures and white elephant items.
Time: 9AM – 1PM
Location: All Saints Anglican Church, 12935 Keele St, King City
Website: www.allsaintskingcity.ca

APRIL 25 – KING COMMUNITY CLEAN UP – TOWNSHIP OF KING

Do your part and help pick up litter to keep our parks, streets, ditches and neighbourhoods clean and green.
Time: 10AM – 2PM
Location: Township-wide
Website: https://www.king.ca/CommunityCleanUp

APRIL 27 – THE MONARCH: AN ICON ON THE EDGE – NOBLETON & KING CITY GARDEN CLUB

Lisa Massie will inform us about the plight of the monarch butterfly and why we should all pay attention to it.
Location: Laskay Hall, 2920 King Road, King City
Time: 7:30PM
Contact: nobletonkingcitygardenclub@gmail.com
Website: https://gardenontario.org/society-listing/entry/635/

APRIL 28 – 20 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT BACKYARD BIRDS – SCHOMBERG HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Birder and naturalist Kristen Martyn promises to delight us with her insights into the birds we see in our own backyards.
Time: 7:30PM
Location: Schomberg Community Hall, 325 Main St, Schomberg
Contact: schomberghortsociety@gmail.com

MAY 2 – SPRING INDOOR COMMUNITY YARD SALE – TOWNSHIP OF KING

Sellers, secure a table today. Buyers, browse for a unique item or a special find. Free admission for buyers!
Time: 8AM – 1PM
Location: Trisan Centre, 25 Dillane Drive, Schomberg
Contact: events@king.ca or call 905-833-5321
Website: https://www.king.ca/communityyardsale

MAY 2 – COMMUNITY ELECTRONIC RECYCLING EVENT – TOWNSHIP OF KING

Bring your unwanted electronics to ensure they are disposed of safely, recycled and kept out of landfill.
Time: 9AM – 12PM
Location: Trisan Centre, 25 Dillane Drive, Schomberg
Website: https://www.king.ca/electronicrecycling

MAY 2 – ANNUAL SPRING TEA – CHRIST CHURCH KETTLEBY

Enjoy a traditional cream tea featuring freshly baked scones with Devonshire cream and

homemade jam. Browse our famous bake table, along with a curated selection of artisan treasures and preserves. \$10 per person.
Time: 1:30PM – 4PM
Location: 292 Kettleby Road, Kettleby
Contact: Call 905-955-2765, email: ChristChurchKettleby@gmail.com
Website: www.anglicanparishofloydtown.com

MAY 9 – ANNUAL PLANT SALE – SCHOMBERG HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Heirloom tomatoes, vegetables, herbs, hard to find perennials, annual baskets for Mother's Day and native plants sell out quickly so come early! Cash only, rain or shine. Time: 8AM – 2PM
Location: Schomberg Community Farm, 210 Western Ave. Schomberg
Contact: gorsline@sympatico.ca or call 905-939-2505

MAY 10 – COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING – TOWNSHIP OF KING

Join us along the Bluff Trail in Nobleton for a tremendous afternoon of planting native trees and shrubs in partnership with LEAF.
Time: 1PM – 3PM
Location: Bluff Trail, Nobleton
Website: king.ca/EnvironmentalEvents

MAY 18 – NOBLETON VICTORIA DAY – TOWNSHIP OF KING

This year's event will begin with the annual parade, starting at the Nobleton Library and ending at Nobleton Arena & Community Sports Park where the festivities will include a vendor's market, midway rides, a main stage with musical acts throughout the day and a spectacular fireworks show to end the event.
Time: 11AM – Dusk | Location: Nobleton
Contact: events@king.ca or call 905-833-5321
Website: king.ca/nobletonvictoriaday

MAY 19 – SQUARE FOOT GARDENING – SCHOMBERG HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Master Gardener and revered member of our Society Kathleen Gorsline will explain how we can grow wonderful food and flowers in a limited, organized and manageable space.
Time: 7:30PM
Location: Schomberg Community Hall, 325 Main St, Schomberg
Contact: schomberghortsociety@gmail.com

MAY 23 – ANNUAL PLANT SALE AND SEEDY SATURDAY – NOBLETON & KING CITY GARDEN CLUB

There will be plants for sale and many other vendors, including the York Food Network, which will have many seeds available to swap or take.
Location: Laskay Hall, 2920 King Road, King City
Time: 9AM - 1PM
Contact: nobletonkingcitygardenclub@gmail.com
Website: https://gardenontario.org/society-listing/entry/635/

MAY 25 – NATURAL GARDEN DESIGN – NOBLETON & KING CITY GARDEN CLUB

Shaun Booth will walk us through the elements of creating a natural garden.
Location: Laskay Hall, 2920 King Road, King City
Time: 7:30PM
Contact: nobletonkingcitygardenclub@gmail.com
Website: https://gardenontario.org/society-listing/entry/635/

KING HERITAGE & CULTURAL CENTRE PROGRAMS

Location: 2920 King Road, King City
Website: www.kingheritageandculture.ca
Phone: 905-833-2331

MAY (DATE TBC) – FASHION HISTORY GUEST SPEAKER

Join us at the KHCC to learn more about fashion history and view the Queen Victoria's Secrets exhibition – speaker TBC. Please see our website for more information.
Time: TBC
Website: kingheritageandculture.ca/

KING HERITAGE & CULTURAL CENTRE EXHIBITIONS

ONGOING TO MARCH 28 – IN HER OWN TIME ART EXHIBITION
Fifth annual exhibition in recognition of International Women's Day featuring the work of 48 women artists from King Township and beyond.
Time: Tuesdays to Saturdays, 10 AM–4 PM

APRIL 29 TO MAY 3 – ARTSPACE EXHIBITION: KEVIN & CATHY BALL

Exhibition featuring the artwork of Kevin and Cathy Ball. Time: TBC

MAY 9 TO JULY 4 – QUEEN VICTORIA'S SECRETS

This travelling exhibition explores the various changes in Victorian middle-class women's dress and features a selection of textiles and objects from the City of Richmond Hill artifact collection.
Time: Tuesdays to Saturdays, 10 AM–4 PM

NOBLETON SENIORS 55+

Location: Nobleton Arena, 15 Old King Road, Nobleton
Time: 10 AM – 12 PM
Contact: Joanne Bailey, 416-706-9375
Email: jbailey133@yahoo.com
Website: www.king.ca/seniors

MARCH 5 – FRESHEN YOUR HOME WITH A FRAGRANT MIST – HANDS ON PRESENTATION

Angela Del Borrello will do a presentation on essential oils (citrus, peppermint, lavender & rosemary). You will take home your own spray bottle. Cost is \$10, which includes all materials. Register by February 26. May not be appropriate for anyone sensitive to these fragrances.

March 12 – A FUN DAY OF SINGING AND ENTERTAINMENT BY A MUSICIAN

This event will be sponsored by Richview Manor of Maple under the direction of CEO Joseph Gulizia. Snacks will be provided.

MARCH 19 – THE RED CARPET IS READY FOR A MOVIE ON OUR TV SCREEN

Sit back, relax and enjoy the snacks provided. Movie will be selected by the group.

MARCH 26 – EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, PRESENTED BY DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF KEVIN RITSON

CPR will be demonstrated and the seniors will be able to participate and review the technique of CPR. Be informed and know what to do when an emergency arises.

APRIL 2 – "BUNNY WOOD DÉCOR" BY ARTIST ANGELA DEL BORRELLO

Easter is coming and artist Angela Del Borrello will provide instructions on how to create a "Bunny Wood Décor." Cost is \$10 per person, which includes all materials. Be sure to register by March 26 so materials are available for you.

APRIL 9 – "LAUGHING FOR THE HEALTH OF IT: CONNECTING THROUGH JOY" PRESENTED BY CATHY NESBIT, CERTIFIED TEACHER

This heart-warming session will alleviate isolation and foster connection. Event will be sponsored by Kristen Egan, Community Outreach Manager, Delmanor, Aurora.

APRIL 16 – CHAIR YOGA VIA YOUTUBE WITH KIERSTIE PAYGE (LEVEL 3)

Improve your flexibility, strength, balance, and mental well-being as we participate in this session together.

APRIL 23 – CHAIR ZUMBA WITH FRANK DE-BARTOLO

This fun, low-impact workout will improve cardiovascular health, strength, flexibility, balance and mood. Surprise Frank and wear your favourite hat.

APRIL 30 – "FABLES, FAIRYTALES AND RHYMES" PRESENTED BY LIANA HARRIS, HISTORIAN

Turn the pages of classical fairytales and Mother Goose rhymes and see how they give us the lessons to navigate in real life.

MAY 7 – FLORAL PAINTING FOR MOTHER'S DAY WITH ARTIST ANGELA DEL BORRELLO

Cost is \$10, which includes all materials. Please register by April 30 so materials are available for you.

MAY 14 – ENERGY RESET – 5 NATURAL WAYS TO RAISE YOUR ENERGY WITH GUEST SPEAKER BRIAN DECASTRO, HOLISTIC HEALTH PRACTITIONER, REIKI MASTER

Brian will lead us into an experience of feeling grounded, mentally clear and re-energized. Cost is \$5 per person. Please register by May 7.

MAY 21 – BOOK ART BY JOANNE: TRANSFORM AN ORDINARY BOOK INTO A DECORATIVE SCULPTURE

Bring in a book and meticulously fold the pages to create a design to display on your own shelf. Books available for \$5 if you do not have one.

MAY 28 – EXECUTIVE FINANCIAL CONSULTANTS REID SPENCE, ROB LOCKIE & RICK SPENCE OF IG WEALTH MANAGEMENT WILL TALK ABOUT ESTATE PLANNING

Learn the strategies to optimize your estate and reduce tax. Topics will include tax exemptions, assets, probate, wills and more.

SCHOMBERG SENIORS 55+

Location: Curling Lounge, Trisan Centre
Times: 10:30AM
Contact: Email kbird@hotmail.com unless otherwise stated.

MARCH 9 – MARIE LOUREIRO, THE ART OF BECOMING

Ideas on navigating change as a natural and empowering process — to reflect, create and become.

MARCH 16 – ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION

A sing-along with the Tightly Wound Ukulele players.

APRIL 13 – LYNN HOLDEN, BEYOND THE SITES

Adventures through all of Canada's World Heritage sites.

APRIL 20 – BILL ANDERSON

Stories behind the flag of each stop on a Caribbean cruise.

APRIL 27 – TERRY TURNER

Research tips on British family ancestry. A screening of the film Silver Screammers with a one-hour film-making workshop. Registration required – please call 905-833-6565.

MAY 11 – WHAT'S MY LINE!

Guess the mystery guest's line.

MAY 25 – PROFESSOR MARK RECTOR

Author of "Oh Canada, Our Home and Inventive Land"
Location: King City Seniors Centre, 1970 King Road, King City
Time: 10 AM – Except May 3rd and May 22nd
Contact: RSVP to King City Seniors Centre at 905-833-6565

MARCH 6 – COOKING DEMO

Alma and her crew will be teaching us how to make cheese tea biscuits and soup. Cost is \$5 per person.

MARCH 13 – WORKSHOP

Artist Angela Del Borello will provide a hands-on creative workshop. The theme is hydrangea flower painting. Cost is \$10 per person.

MARCH 20 – COOKING DEMO

Serena will make wild mushroom risotto and Sicilian fennel and orange salad

with black olives. Cost is \$5 per person. Registration required.

MARCH 27 – PRESENTATION

A representative from York Paramedics will walk us through what happens after you call 911. This important topic will provide information on dealing with an emergency medical situation in your home.

APRIL 10 – WORKSHOP

Artist Angela Del Borello will provide a hands-on creative workshop. Theme to be announced. Cost is \$10 per person.

APRIL 17 – PRESENTATION

Lianne Harris will present an informative and entertaining history lesson entitled "Undressed." This look at the history of underwear is not to be missed.

MAY 3 – A MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY

This afternoon social will be an opportunity to wear your best hat, enjoy refreshments and be entertained by the music of Alex Toskov, violinist. Registration is required. Time: 2PM – 4PM

MAY 22 – POTLUCK LUNCH

Come out and enjoy a delicious buffet. This will be the last potluck lunch before the summer. Each attendee is asked to provide an item for the table – entrée or dessert. Time: 11:30AM



ARTS SOCIETY KING PRESENTS

The Mayor's Celebration of

YOUTH ARTS

**An art exhibit featuring secondary students from
Country Day School, King City Secondary School and Villanova College.**

APRIL 7 – MAY 8, 2026
King Township Municipal Centre, 2585 King Rd., King City

Opening Reception: Thursday, April 16, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Vote for the People's Choice Award

Scan QR Code for more information or go to www.ArtsSocietyKing.ca

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Northern Leopard Frog

NATURE



Muskrat



Dufferin Marsh Sign

Four-Season Nature Connection

Did you know that there is a wetland in the heart of Schomberg?

WRITTEN BY
JOANNE BAILEY
 Joanne is a retired college professor and registered nurse. She is an active volunteer with Arts Society King and the Nobleton Seniors' Centre.

The Dufferin Marsh is located in the centre of the Village of Schomberg, just steps away from Main Street. The marsh is a remnant feature of the Schomberg river, isolated when the river was channelized in the 1800s. The riverbed developed into a wetland and has flourished over the years.

The Dufferin Marsh represents a healthy ecosystem, which in turn promotes a healthy community for the residents of Schomberg. Mary Asselstine, Ward 4 Councillor for King Township, is a founding member of the Dufferin Marsh Nature Connection, a dedicated group of volunteers who have been helping to maintain the Marsh since 1989 in partnership with the township and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority. The Nature Connection organizes events and workshops to familiarize the community with the marsh's features. Mary's efforts contributed to her winning the prestigious Canadian Wildlife Federation Roland Michener Conservation Award in 2022.

Along Dr. Kay Drive adjacent to the marsh, there are display panels depicting

the many frogs, wildflowers, birds, grasses, and sedges that are associated with the wetland. These panels provide a good history lesson for those not familiar with the inhabitants of the Dufferin Marsh -- for example, the Northern Leopard Frog, which is active from April to October. Black pupils and golden irises make this frog appear mysterious, not to mention its bright green colouring with distinctive gold-outlined black spots that provide good camouflage. After a feast on spiders, worms, crickets, grasshoppers or flies, the Northern Leopard Frog retires for the night, but not before broadcasting its call, a soft snoring sound followed by what sounds like a chuckle. Unfortunately, the Northern Leopard Frog's presence is rare in the Dufferin Marsh today due to habitat changes.

The Green Frog, a large active frog, tends to hide among the grass, which provides a good source of food for many animals. If you hear crickets nearby, you can assume the Green Frog is close, since crickets are a favourite meal. The marsh's waters create an ideal breeding environment for the Green Frog and help to keep its skin hydrated. The Green Frog's call is a loud "glump," like the plucking on a banjo string. The frog inflates its lungs and shuts its nose and mouth, causing these odd sounds to be emitted as the larynx vibrates.

The Spring Peeper, another frog species, is tiny -- about the size of your thumbnail.

It is tan to gray in colour, with an X-shaped pattern on its back. The Spring Peeper climbs the wetland trees with its enlarged toe pads in search of insects, such as ticks, ants and caterpillars. Garter snakes love to feast on the Spring Peeper.

Each of these frog species and others in the Dufferin Marsh wetlands have their own distinct sounds and calls. Male frogs sing to attract their own kind, and it is more common for males to have vocal sacs than females. The frogs' chorus resembles sounds like a creaking door opening, a duck quacking, chickens clucking or horns honking. They can scream, grunt, peep, croak, bellow and chirp, among other sounds. Our Dufferin Marsh frogs have their own little band, and their melody generates feelings of joy, amusement, triumph and sometimes annoyance.

Among the other interesting residents of the Dufferin Marsh are the turtles. These reptiles are a prime concern on the roads in Schomberg. Female turtles often cross the road heading to a nesting site, typically in May through July. The volunteers of the Dufferin Marsh Nature Connection work with King Township to create and maintain artificial nesting sites and habitat restoration for turtles, preventing roadkill and promoting local conservation through citizen science. The nesting sites are covered in spikes to deter foxes, raccoons, coyotes and other predators from digging into the nest to eat the eggs.

Jim Wall, retired fire chief of King Township and a resident of Schomberg since 1966, recalls the enjoyment he found in the marsh as a child: "After school with friends, we always found something to do in the Dufferin Marsh. If not riding our dirt bikes or driving our snowmobiles, we were either skating or playing pick-up hockey on the Dufferin Pond or just getting into all sorts of fun and mischief -- either building play forts or rafts out of old wood to use in the pond."

"It was just a great place to hang out as a kid growing up in the Village of Schomberg. Back then, the town was small, and it was the normal thing to do as a kid."

Events and activities are planned each year by the Dufferin Marsh Nature Connection, including organized walks, bird watching, community skating, corn roasts and building bird houses. New for 2026 is the Bird Watching Club. All of this can be found on the website www.dufferinmarsh.ca. New members and volunteers are welcome.

The Dufferin Marsh is a unique community asset and the centrepiece of a healthy ecosystem in Schomberg. When you next walk along Dr. Kay Drive, take a moment to enjoy the inspiring and educational literature amidst the tall grasses, sedges and bulrushes and listen for the sound of muskrats or beavers swimming in the waters.

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NATURE



Children exploring nature



Even flowers can teach math

MATH OUT OF THE CLASSROOM



Nature's classroom (Photo by Nick Fewings)

Dear Reader, when I first confessed that my garden seemed to be doing math behind my back, some of you may have assumed I'd fully embraced whimsy or wandered a little too far down the garden path.

WRITTEN BY

ANNA SANTAROSSA

Anna is a retired teacher and the founder of ARYCT (Active Retired York Catholic Teachers.) She is also highly active in the community, serving on King Township's Heritage Advisory Committee, and as co-president of the Nobleton and King City Garden Club.

I'll admit, I thought I was cheeky myself. That is, until I attended an Indigenous Awareness workshop at Rose Gallery in Aurora and discovered that the idea that math can be taught in the natural world was not fanciful at all. In fact, it has now been incorporated into the Ontario Math Curriculum. You can imagine how excited I was to hear this. So, I decided to read the Grade 9 mathematics curriculum, and I was both astounded and delighted to see an emphasis on the importance of discovering the beauty of math in a new way, by going outside.

If you're anything like me, this is not how mathematics was taught when we were in school. Math lived in neat rows of desks, on lined paper, and inside right-or-wrong answers. And I must confess,

even as a teacher tasked with teaching mathematics, it was presented to me — and by me — as fact and logic, efficiency and correctness. Rarely did it invite curiosity. Rarely did it ask us to notice, to wonder, or to slow down.

My interest in nature led me to explore what was happening at the intersection of mathematics and the natural world. What I discovered was encouraging. Many educators and school boards are embracing land-based learning, rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing and observing nature. The University of Toronto, for example, offers courses at its experimental learning hub, while the University of British Columbia provides math resources for younger students through programs such as Nature Quests and Numeracy. These initiatives teach numeracy, data collection, measurement and multiplication simply by being outdoors and counting what students can see. Suddenly, math has dirt under its fingernails, and honestly, it's better for it.

I found myself thinking about the connections being formed: between the lesson and the learner; and the learner and

the land. This approach does more than teach numbers; it nurtures respect for the environment and a growing understanding that we are all stewards of the land. It also invites students to see the land as Indigenous peoples have long understood it to be — living, relational, and deserving of care.

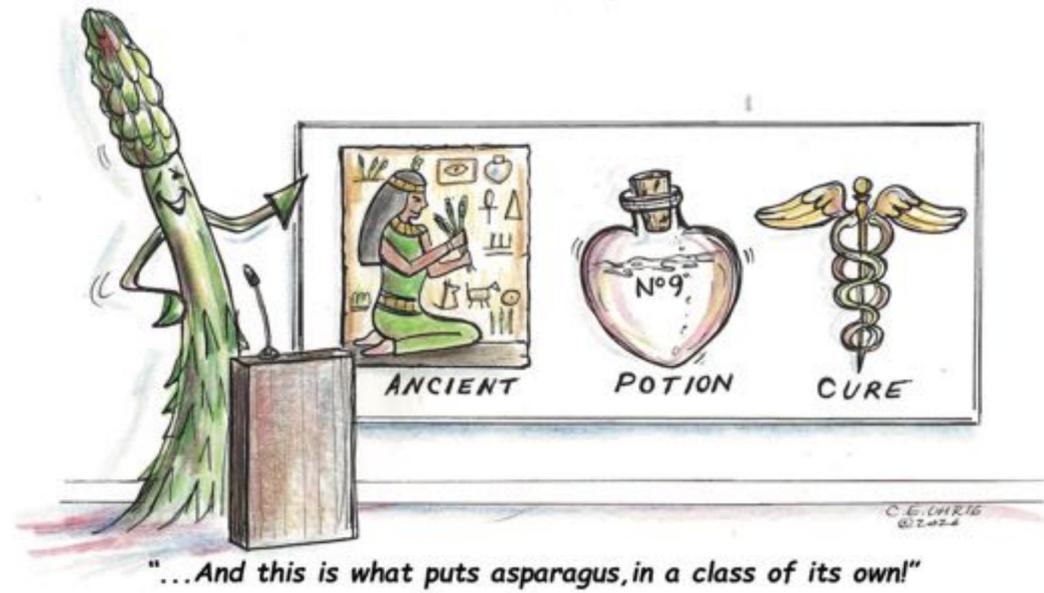
With that in mind, what might mathematics look like when it is learned outdoors, in conversation with land, water and living beings? It can be as simple and as beautiful as this: creating symmetrical designs with stones and leaves; counting sticks and measuring paths and tree stumps; mapping familiar spaces and building shelters while learning direction and scale. Collecting items like pinecones, rocks or colourful leaves, then sorting them by attribute, counting them, and creating pictographs or bar graphs. Use your imagination; the activities are endless — and also online!

And of course, the outdoors can teach us much more. Nature, it turns out, is doing a lot more than looking pretty in the background. It quietly keeps us alive, supplying the air we breathe, the water

we drink, and the soil that grows our food, while pollinators buzz around, ensuring that food ends up on our plates. It regulates climate, cools our cities, filters water, softens the blow of extreme weather, and even provides many of the medicines in our cabinets. Overachiever, really!

On top of that, nature is excellent for our mood and bodies: it lowers stress, sharpens focus, boosts immunity, encourages us to move, and helps us sleep better (all without charging a membership fee). Parks and green spaces bring people together and spark creativity. So, whether you're walking in a park, digging in the garden, or just enjoying a tree outside your window, know this: nature has your back.

And so, Dear Reader, I return to my garden, now just a little smug. It turns out that my realization that nature was doing math behind my back was one others had made long ago and are now beginning to apply in classrooms. I'm excited that a whole new generation of learners will have the opportunity to make this connection. I simply hadn't been invited to the lesson yet.



"...And this is what puts asparagus, in a class of its own!"

ASPARAGUS IN A CLASS OF ITS OWN.

You know it's truly Spring when **asparagus** appears at the farmers' market.



WRITTEN BY
ART WEIS

Art is Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Toronto, and former director of the Koffler Scientific Reserve at Jokers Hill.

What better way to banish all thoughts of winter than a taste of those tender spears, steamed in butter, with a squeeze of lemon and a pinch of salt? Sumptuous. You must admit, asparagus is the lobster of the vegetable world.

While asparagus tastes of luxury, this garden vegetable is little changed from its humble, wild ancestors. This contrasts with other vegetables. If you saw a teosinte plant growing wild in the Mexico mountains, you would never guess it gave rise to sweet corn. Cauliflower, for all its intricacy, was bred from a little weed so non-descript that I have no words to describe it. But if you came across a wild asparagus growing alongside a Mediterranean stream, you would know exactly what it is, and it would taste very nearly the same as garden grown. So far as we know, Egyptians, Greeks and Romans of the classical era brought it into cultivation. While it fell out of favour over most of Europe in the early Middle Ages,

monks kept it going in their medicinal herb gardens. Asparagus was reborn as a luxury food during the Renaissance but soon made it to every table. English peasants loved it, and as is their way, gave it a nickname – sparrow grass.

Asparagus is anatomically unusual among food plants. We routinely eat leaves (e.g., spinach, cabbage), roots (radish, carrot), tubers and bulbs (potatoes, onions) fruits (green beans, tomato) or seeds (rice, peas). But a spear of asparagus is the plant's unmodified stem. The spear's head is a bundle of buds. Stems begin emerging from the root stock a few weeks after snowmelt. These early birds get picked and eaten while still young and tender. As June wanes, picking stops and the later emerging stems are left to grow tall, approaching two metres. And each bud atop those spears gives rise to a slender branch, which in turn gives rise to many side branches, each bearing short, delicate, needle-like leaves. These photosynthesize to replenish the root stock. Summer visitors to my garden are often surprised that those exotic, airy, fern-like fronds are simply asparagus all grown up.

In Canada, we eat green asparagus. But in parts of Europe, white asparagus is

prized. These two colour forms are not only of the same plant species, they can be of the same genetic clone. It's all a matter of growing environment. When the grower simply lets the spears emerge from the soil and into the sunlight, the asparagus grows green. But if they want white, they "blanch" the crop by mounding up soil or mulch over the emerging spears. Deprived of light, the spears can't photosynthesize and don't even bother making chlorophyll. Blanching imparts a slightly more subtle flavour profile. Purple is the third asparagus type. To grow it, you first blanch the spears, then pull off the soil topping a few days before harvest. Exposed to sunlight, the white spears quickly produce a protective purple pigment – think of it as the asparagus version of a suntan.

Asparagus presents an opportunity to talk about one of my favourite topics, plant sex! As you may know, most flowering plants are hermaphrodites – each flower contains both male (pollen-producing) and female (egg-producing) organs. Not so with asparagus. Like animals, it has distinct male and female individuals. On male plants, the small, white flowers produce only pollen, while the flowers on females produce ovules down in their

QUICK AND EASY ASPARAGUS SOUP

Here's something to make when you rediscover that forgotten bundle of asparagus in the vegetable bin.

INGREDIENTS:

½ lb asparagus; 2 T butter (or olive oil); 1/2 t dried tarragon; 4 C chicken stock; salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS:

- Remove and discard the spear's woody bottoms. Cut into ½-inch sections but keep the heads intact.
- Sauté in butter in a pot until lightly browned and slightly soft, about 10 min.
- Remove the heads and set aside. Add broth, bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer about 15 min.
- When the asparagus is quite soft, puree with the broth in blender. Return to pot to reheat for a minute.

Ladle into bowls and garnish with the reserved spear heads. Serves 4.

HAPPY SPRING!

ovary. And like animals, asparagus has sex chromosomes, as in the human XY system. Sex chromosomes arose at the very beginning of animal evolution and there are no surviving intermediate species to illustrate the process of transforming an active regular chromosome into the mostly inactive Y. Plants to the rescue! Separate sexes have arisen in plants several times – some long ago, some recently, at least in evolutionary time. By looking at the Y chromosomes in plants like asparagus, a picture is emerging. Species groups that went to the XY system long ago have the expected "degenerate" Y. But there are still many functional genes on the Y in groups that recently shifted to separate sexes.

So, why did those Medieval monks plant asparagus among their medicinal herbs? Many were inspired by what scholars call the doctrine of signatures. This is the belief that God gave some herbs physical traits – signatures – that mirror ailing organs. Eat the herb to cure the ailment. Have a headache? Eat some walnuts...they look like a little brain. Hair falling out? Try a tea made from maiden hair fern. Tired blood? Looks like a job for red wine. Impotence? Well, a long, stout spear of asparagus...

Ever seen a GREEN GOAT?

"You've got to see them!" Denny's excited voice comes over my phone. "Fifty of them!"



WRITTEN BY
DORITA PEER

Dorita is a poet, writer, sculptor, painter, musician, and gardener. She made her living first as an optician, then as an equestrian trainer, coach, breeder, and international official.

The very next day, on a magical hidden 40 acres of towering forests and rolling glades with its own kettle lake, there they are – goats! My friends, the owners, have honoured nature's own artfulness while indulging polite landscapes of lawn, shrub and flower; a vista to move the heart – were it not for naughty thistle, dog-strangling vine and horsetail.

Goats for hire, said the ad. For a few hundred dollars, delivery included, "Goats in the City" – launched in 2020 in Amaranth – will settle a flock of living weed-whackers on your offending patches. What price conscientiousness?

"You must visit the farm," says Denny. So I do...

We watch a kaleidoscope of 30 or so – mostly females and some cute kids – on break, chewing their cud in the midday sun. Now feral goats (like pigs and camels) have a checkered past in colonies where they were introduced. But these ones, fenced in, are performing a good deed. And the with-it land stewards can rest proudly on their green laurels in a world all too tempted to make chemical warfare on weeds.

Ian Matthews, father of the idea, quit the mortgage/financing life after his wife's aneurysm to be with her and daughters Alyssa and Sorayah. He grew up in Jamaica where goats, staked out to graze, are well-known roadside-wanderers helped home by caring neighbours. We know goat is a popular meat in the islands. "The most eaten meat worldwide," Ian confirms. Indeed, goats have saved nations with their easy keep, prolific baby-making and their healthy milk and flesh.

But Ian's purpose is "Goat Haven," a sanctuary launched in 2024. Like 14 of this herd – once living in a bus, horns mutilated, urine-soaked and ailing because the owner could not afford their care – all of his rescues have found forever homes and a higher purpose in life doing what goats do best: cleaning up greenspaces greenly. Agile climbers and browsers, not fussy, they devour notorious invasives like phragmites, buckthorn, hogweed

and garlic mustard. Even poison ivy! No pollution, only fertilization. Winters mean supplementation, like hay. Ruminants, they offer high-quality manure, enough to share. And tons of charm. Small, gentle, inquisitive groupies, their bleating sounds rather human. How can you not love goats?

Even as the farm fences get rejigged from horse to goat-worthy/coyote proof, the forward-looking Ian has plans to go fenceless using digital technology as in Sweden. He already has the means to monitor his wards through GPS and drones, and to assess, target and map vegetation. His vision sees the herd grow from 120 to 500 and franchising the operation. The non-profit relies on the grace of a philanthropic landlord and volunteers like Jamoi and Rayyan to chauffeur them to their jobs in a donated stock trailer. And to spread good practice around urban as well as rural spaces. Even city folks know a magical beast when they see one. The herd's debut at Toronto's Brickworks instantly netted 139.4 million hits online! What is good for the goat is great for human kids, who come alive in contact with warm, breathing animals. Ian also has plans to get seniors into goating.

"It about relationship," Ian emphasizes. His goats are his tribe, each with a personality and a name. Ashley is the leader of the herd. Gangsta is the enforcer none dare take on, yet she does not covet the lead. Homebreds bond through bottle-feeding; the rescues quickly learn to trust their keeper/friend. All obey his commands to "come, come, come!" Even the two breeding bucks, Baba and Thunder, keep their imposing horns to themselves. As we move them to pasture, first riding the ATV, then on foot, that many hungry goats is like herding cats. "What about a border collie?" I ask. They are also rescued, from lives of abject boredom. Win, win. He agrees. What he does have are two fabulous young Kangal guard dogs, Amara and Kalahney, named by his daughters, and who live with the herd, there to win verbal battles against coyotes. They will kill if need be.

Ian Matthews has authored a book. In its first draft, based on life lessons they taught him, *Whispers from the Herd* dedicates each chapter to one of his beloved goats. I can't wait!

I leave just as the happy home-comers spill out of the stock trailer.

• A goat can eat two to four per cent of its body weight in grass and hay per day



• Ian Matthews and his goats





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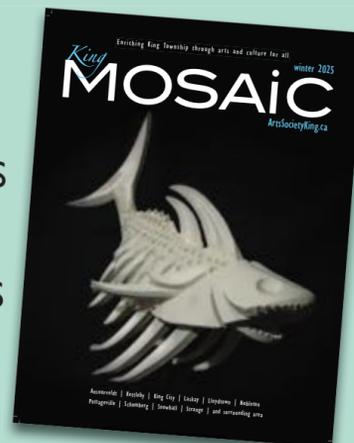
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