

Book launch kicks off King's 175th celebrations

The King community has a lot of reasons to celebrate this year's 175th anniversary of the Township of King. This milestone is being commemorated by the King Township Historical Society at their much-anticipated book launch for *The History of King Township: A Community Shaped by the Land*. The community is invited to attend the free event on Thursday, April 24 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the King Township Municipal Centre, which will feature book signings, light refreshments, a half hour of presentations starting at 5:10 p.m. that includes comments from Mayor Steve Pellegrini, author presentations, and two short dramatic readings by Arts Society King. All are welcome. Please RSVP via email to kinghistoricalsociety@gmail.com. Many years in the making, the historic, 476-page hardcover book tells the story of King from the Ice Age to present day and is authored by local writer and long-time resident Ann Love and researcher Sharon Bentley, the retired Deputy Chief Librarian of King Township Library. Ann and Sharon feel deeply privileged to share the stories of so many remarkable people who made King their home over multiple generations. The authors enjoyed weaving that rich human narrative with current scientific understanding of how the land formed and the natural world responded to change over time. Pre-order your copy for \$30 online at kingtownshiphistoricalsociety.com. The books will be available for pick-up at the book launch, and copies will also be available for sale during the event. After April 24, copies can be purchased online for \$40 and picked up at the King Heritage and Cultural Centre, located at 2920 King Road in King City.

A rich history

King Township, named by Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe for John King (1759-1830), an English Under-Secretary of State for the Home Office, has a rich and storied history. The Township was created as part of the subdivision of York County, following the acquisition of lands from the Mississaugas through the Toronto Purchase Act of 1787. Early settlements in King Township developed around gristmills and sawmills, which were vital economic engines during the 19th century. The first settlement, Armitage, was established in 1802 by Timothy Rogers, a Loyalist from Vermont. Other communities, such as Kettleby and Lloydtown, soon followed, attracting settlers from New York, Pennsylvania and other Loyalist enclaves. The Township of King was officially established through a Provincial Statute in 1849 to take effect on January 1, 1850. It functioned as an unincorporated municipality until the Municipal Incorporation Act, 2001 was passed in 2003. King Township has been home to several notable events and figures. In 1852, the Northern Railway built the King Train Station, which remains one of the oldest surviving train stations in Canada. The King Township Agricultural Society began holding its annual fair in Schomberg in 1872, a tradition that continues to this day. Benjamin Rolling, one of the first African Canadian postmasters in Canada, served the village of Laskay until his death in 1897. Throughout the 20th century, King Township continued to grow and develop. The Eaton family built Eaton Hall, a Norman chateau-style mansion, in 1939. The Holland Marsh became Canada's most significant vegetable producer, earning the nickname 'Ontario's Soup and Salad Bowl'. Since the establishment of the Township, the area has retained much of its original landscape, with minimal sprawl and growth until recent years. As King Township celebrates its 175th anniversary, we reflect on its rich history and the vibrant community that has flourished here. From its early settlements to its modern developments, 2025 is about honouring our past and looking forward to our future.

Guided tours of King Heritage and Cultural Centre

Delve deeper into King Township's history. Guided tours of King's historic buildings - including the renovated King Rail Station and King Christian Church (reopening summer 2025) as well as Laskay Hall and the 160-year-old Kinghorn School - are available at the King Heritage and Cultural Centre, offering interactive activities and insights into local stories and traditions. Peruse antique artifacts, vintage photos and a timeline of King's history, go on a scavenger hunt, and (a fan favourite) practice a traditional Victorian dance. The cost is \$5 per person and includes admission. To book a tour, call 905-833-2331. The facility is open Tuesday to Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 905-833-2331, email heritage@king.ca or visit kingheritageandculture.ca.

175th anniversary logo and events

In January, King Township unveiled its 175th anniversary logo at the official opening of Zancor Centre. The commemorative logo --? featuring a clean, modern design that aligns with the Township's branding and colour palette while giving prominence to the number 175 and year of incorporation ? will appear on Township communications for the remainder of 2025. A series of free events dedicated to celebrating King's anniversary are also being planned for the coming months, and were made possible with funding from the Government of Canada's Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage program. Save the date for: National Indigenous Heritage Month: Truth and Reconciliation Mural and Medicine Garden Unveiling at the King Heritage and Cultural Centre on Saturday, Jun. 14 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Preregistration is available online. Canada Day Celebration at Memorial Park in King City on Tuesday, July 1 from 5 p.m. to dusk. Raspberry Social at King Heritage and Cultural Centre on Saturday, Aug. 9. More information about these events will be shared as they become available. For regular updates, visit king.ca/175. ?As we celebrate the 175th anniversary of King Township, we are reminded of the rich history and vibrant community that has flourished here. Its picturesque landscapes, historic landmarks and close-knit villages and hamlets make King a special place, a true community of communities. The book launch for *The History of King Township: A Community Shaped by the Land* is a testament to the dedication and perseverance of Ann Love and Sharon Bentley. Their meticulous research and heartfelt storytelling have given us a treasure to enjoy during our milestone year and for generations to come, ? said Mayor Steve Pellegrini. To receive updates on King Township news, follow the official corporate social media channels on X and Facebook and Instagram, subscribe to the King Bulletin newsletter or visit king.ca.