

ASK Summer Festival 2015 offered some real gems

Arts Society King celebrated their 10th anniversary with an outstanding 2015 Summer Festival, June 27 to July 9.

This year's activities and events highlighted all that is special about King Township: our natural heritage, our unique local businesses, our artistic gems and, as a tribute to the Pan Am Games, our equine culture.

Having nature close by is a well-loved feature of living in King. This year participants went on a garden tour and admire beautifully manicured gardens, or took a hike through Happy Valley Forest and saw plants in their more natural state through the eyes of a Nature Conservancy guide. They learned about butterflies and their habits from butterfly artist Grazyna Tonkiel, who raises butterflies in her garden to use as subjects in her paintings. Visitors to the King Heritage and Cultural Centre saw artists' renditions of every flower imaginable at the art show, Summer Blooms.

King has many specialized local businesses, so there's no need to drive into the city for unique items. This year four businesses had a chance to show off their specialties. Students learned how to chop ingredients to create fresh sushi at Paper Crane in King City. On another day, participants practiced arranging flowers from this summer's floral harvest at Seasons Floral Studio in Schomberg. Andre Flys gave an informative presentation about bees, and the honey-making process at his business, Pioneer Honey, north of Nobleton.

We are also fortunate to live near some art treasures here in our rural landscape. The McMichael Canadian Art Collection, located in nearby Kleinberg,

is always worth a visit. This summer's Lunch and Learn program featured First Nations artist Norval Morrisseau, who survived a difficult childhood and went on to become a world-class artist. On another occasion, at Kingbridge Conference Centre, guests learned more about King's hidden gem, SHIFT, created by renowned sculptor Richard Serra. They even got a sneak look at SHIFT from a helicopter's perspective, through a unique film, A Shift in the Landscape by documentary filmmaker, Simone Estrin. And they shared in a discussion about the value of outdoor public art, with art experts Victoria Dickenson (McMichael), James Adams (Globe and Mail) and Shelley Falconer, (Art Gallery of Hamilton.)

And horses! Horses grace the hills and meadows all over King. And they were featured at the Festival, too. There were horse puppets made out of work socks for the kids, or horse photography at a local stable for teens and adults using every kind of camera; from an iPad, to a film camera, to a high-end digital. There was a session on how to draw horses, at a stable with live models and students sitting on hay bales. And there was horse history from Olympic winner John Rumble, a local resident who rode his horse, Cilroy, to a 1956 bronze medal in "The Ride of a Lifetime."

The ASK Summer Festival concluded with a live music concert organized by musician John Ebata and other local performers. The music had the audience clapping their hands and stomping their feet with so much spirit that even the portable bleachers of Country Day Performance Centre were rocking! During the intermission ASK took time to recognize a 10-year history, with an anniversary cake, photographs and bubble-blowing.

This list of events does not include the abstract collage painting workshop by popular artist Karola Steinbrecher, the Canada Day kite-making session for kids, or the informative talk by archivist Elsa Ann Pickard who shared her own personal history of her father's boat building during World War II.

The 2015 Summer Festival was the result of hours of work put in by countless dedicated volunteers. ASK is proud to support our great Township, and all that it has to offer. The next 10 years of ASK appear to be starting off in the right direction.



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