



## MEMORANDUM

To: Chair and Members of the Community and Corporate Affairs  
Committee

From: Catherine McLeod, Cultural Development Coordinator

Mem No. MEM-ADMIN-2019-0005

Subject: 2018 State of Culture Report

Date: March 7, 2019

### **PURPOSE OF THE MEMORANDUM:**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide Committee with the second annual update on the 'State of Culture' in Halton Hills. Information in the attached Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 presents a summary of cultural activity in Halton Hills led by the Cultural Services section, by the Halton Hills Public Library, as well as highlights of community-led initiatives and activities.

### **BACKGROUND:**

This is the second annual *State of Culture* report. The first report (ADMIN-2018-0010) included (i) highlights of 2017 activities; (ii) an extensive overview of the value of culture and its role in contributing to individual and community wellbeing, quality of life and economic prosperity; (iii) and the history and development of the Town's Cultural Services section. A visually attractive summary of that report was prepared and included in the Halton Hills Public Library's 'Culture Special' of *Wordsworth* to inform the public.

This current State of Culture report focuses on significant accomplishments and developments in advancing Halton Hills' cultural vibrancy in 2018 through: 1) Town-led; 2) Library-led; and 3) community-led initiatives. As in 2017, a condensed visually attractive version of this report will be created and distributed to the public in the Halton Hills Public Library's newsletter, *Wordsworth*, and also as a stand-alone piece of marketing collateral.

## COMMENTS:

### 1. Cultural Services

Activities of the Cultural Services section continue to be driven by core Town Strategies and plans including:

- Cultural Master Plan (2013)
- Cultural Master Plan Action Plan (2015)
- Public Art Policy (2016)
- Public Art Master Plan (2018)
- Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy (2013)
- Economic Development Strategy (2012)
- Tourism Strategy (2014)

Continued implementation and development of these plans ensures that the Town is in an optimal position to leverage the arts and culture sector.

The relationship between culture, tourism and economic development helps to raise quality of life and make Halton Hills an attractive location for investment.

The Cultural Services section is guided by the following:

- **Vision Statement:** To foster the development and celebration of Halton Hills' unique character, diversity, civic identity, rural lifestyle, natural and cultural heritage and to do so in a way that has the greatest positive impact on the quality of life in Halton Hills.
- **Mission Statement:** To implement the Cultural Master Plan by working collaboratively with a wide variety of internal and external partners to coordinate the delivery of cultural services, build strong cultural institutions, complete communities, support economic development and grow the Town's creative capital.

Cultural Services is responsible for providing overall corporate leadership and coordination related to cultural initiatives. It sets and champions a corporate vision for culture and uses culture as a catalyst for economic development. It maximizes partnerships, collaboration and synergies between internal and external stakeholders in order to deliver effective, innovative and engaging cultural policies, programs and events.

### 2. Arts and Culture Profile

Economic Development staff produced five sector profiles, including Arts and Culture to provide a snapshot of industry clusters in the Town. Clusters represent geographic concentrations of interconnected businesses, organizations, skilled labour pools and associated institutions in a sector. The profile (see Appendix 1) provides a quick

overview of arts and culture in Halton Hills. It will be updated as new and more detailed information becomes available.

### 3. 2018 Arts and Culture Highlights

Key 2018 successes and accomplishments in advancing the cultural portfolio included:

- **Continued implementation** of the Cultural Master Plan.
- **Formation** of the Public Art Advisory Board.
- **Completion and approval** of the Public Art Master Plan.
- **Producing the national and provincial award winning** third edition of Culture Days (includes Doors Open which is organized separately but in coordination with Culture Days).
- **Expanded program offerings** at the Helson Gallery resulted in a 30% increase in attendance at general programs and a 35% increase in attendance at school programs.
- **Securing a new theatre client to provide expanded programming for schools.**
- **Coordinating** cultural program communications through Town and Library communication systems.
- **Leveraging** the Tourism portfolio to market cultural offerings outside of Halton Hills to a tourism market.
- **Advancing** the Cultural Assets interpretive tour program through refinements to the cultural inventory data set.
- **Enhancing service coordination** with the first year of operations of the cross-departmental Cultural Services Coordination Committee.
- **Extensive Cultural programming** by the Halton Hills Public Library.
- **Extensive community-led cultural offerings**, including new cultural businesses, initiatives and programming.

### 4. 2019 Priorities

As outlined in the Business Plan for the Economic Development, Innovation and Culture division, Town staff will leverage the many successes realized in 2018 to continue to enhance Halton Hills' cultural vibrancy in 2019 and beyond. Key upcoming and ongoing projects include:

- **Continued development and enhanced marketing of Halton Hills' award winning Culture Days program.**
- **Implementing Phase 1 of the Cultural Assets Interpretive Tour program** (e.g. verifying cultural GIS data, determining tour branding, launching pilot tours, and developing marketing material). The completion of Phase 1 will provide a solid foundation for the undertaking of Phase 2 which has been approved as part of the 2019 Capital budget.

- **Designation of the Helson Gallery through the Department of Canadian Heritage and Certification of the Helson Gift through the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board** (expected project completion in 2020).
- **Public Art Master Plan Implementation** (e.g. create additional policies and procedures to support implementation of the Plan, launch first public art project under the Plan).
- **Incorporate Innovation Techniques into section and division process with an intention to rollout across the corporation.**
- **Continue to Integrate Culture** (e.g. into planning processes, across Town departments, etc.) by working with the cross-departmental Cultural Services Coordination Committee.
- **Official Plan Amendments related to further integrating culture into land use planning.**
- **Improved awareness and coordination of cultural activities** (e.g. explore and develop a communication and promotional strategy for cultural programs, lead the workplan of the Cultural Services Coordination Committee, participate in regional cultural networks, etc.).

## 5. Appendices

This memorandum is supplemented by more detailed information contained in the following appendices:

- **Appendix 1: Arts and Culture Cultural Sector Profile**
- **Appendix 2: State of Culture – Details on Town, Library and Community-led cultural initiatives, projects and successes from 2018**

## CONCLUSION:

The 'State of Culture' in Halton Hills is strong. A wide range of initiatives, Town-led, Library-led and community-led, continue to make a measurable contribution to raising quality of life in Halton Hills. In turn, quality of life improvements are expected to contribute to the economic prosperity of Halton Hills. Building on the many 2018 successes, momentum will continue in 2019 with the continued development and implementation of the Cultural Master Plan, Public Art Master Plan, and the Economic Development, Innovation and Culture Business Plan.

Reviewed and approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Damian Szybalski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

Damian Szybalski, Manager of Economic Development, Innovation & Culture

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brent Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

Brent Marshall, Chief Administrative Officer



# ARTS AND CULTURE

## Halton Hills Sector Profiles

### A look into one of Halton Hills' most creative and diverse sectors

The cultural sector is thriving in Halton Hills. The Town recognizes the important role that culture plays in building communities, improving quality of life and contributing to economic development by attracting investment and cultural tourism. A wide range of initiatives offered by the Town, Halton Hills Public Library, cultural businesses and community groups and organizations provide rich and diverse programming for residents and visitors.

#### INDUSTRY OVERVIEW<sup>1</sup>



WITH OVER  
**30**  
BUSINESSES

Arts and Culture is a diverse and growing sector in Halton Hills.

#### EMPLOYMENT

**15%** of Arts and Culture employment is located in the public sector and **85%** in the private sector.



**59** Full-time  
**93** Part-time

#### TOP PRIVATE EMPLOYERS



Georgetown Dance Company  
Center Stage  
Pine Cone Music

The above businesses employ 30% of the sector's labour force.

#### WORKFORCE

##### TALENT<sup>2</sup>



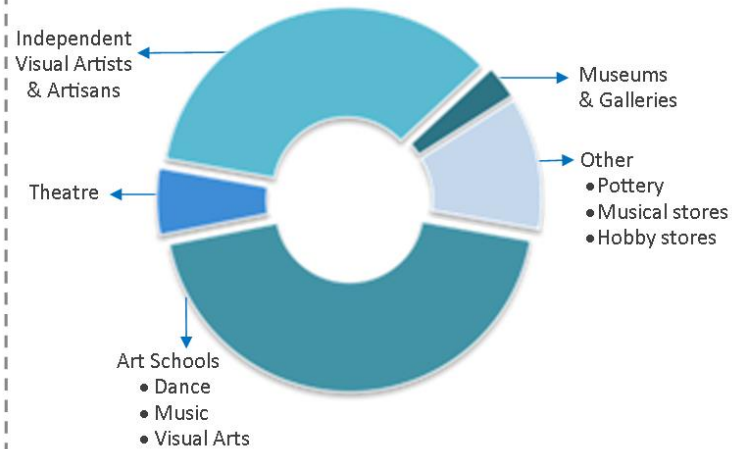
**60%** of the sector's workforce has post-secondary education.

##### TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Halton Hills' central location allows for convenient access to educational institutions:

- **11 universities** with interdisciplinary content, studio learning, and scientific inquiry
- **5 colleges** with programs in Arts Administration and Cultural Management
- **Secondary programs** with HDSB through the Arts and Culture Specialist High Skill Major.

#### BREAKDOWN BY DISCIPLINE<sup>1</sup>



#### LEADING COMPANIES Located in Halton Hills

Halton Hills Cultural Centre	Glazed Expressions
Artcast Inc.	Glen Williams Glass
Studio Fourteen	Academy of Music
Total Dance Innovations	C Sharp Music Academy

#### FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

Culture Days	Taste of the Hills
Doors Open	Leathertown Festival
Georgetown Fall Fair	Plein Air Painting Challenge
Halton Hills EcoFilm Fest	Georgetown Highland Games

<sup>1</sup> 2017 Halton Region Employment Data. July 30, 2018. Raw data. Halton Region, Oakville. <sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada. "Census Profile, 2016 Census." Census Subdivision of Prince George, CY (British Columbia). May 17, 2018. Accessed July 17, 2018. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>.

## APPENDIX 2: MEM-ADMIN-2019-0005

### 2018 STATE OF CULTURE

The following sections highlight Town-led initiatives (Section 1), Library-led initiatives (Section 2) as well as Community-led cultural initiatives (Section 3). These sections illustrate the presence of a robust and thriving cultural community in Halton Hills, with strong partnerships and a wide variety of initiatives, programs and events.

#### 1. Town-Led Initiatives



*Photos: Culture Days Activities: Zentangle Workshop with Tracey Hagyard, Learn to Ballroom Dance presented by Active Easy, Chinese Calligraphy Class presented by the Halton Hills Chinese Association.*

The following are highlights of Town-led initiatives that are contributing to the Cultural Vibrancy of Halton Hills.

#### **Master Plans and Policies**

##### *1.1 Cultural Master Plan*

The Town's award winning Cultural Master Plan (CMP), developed and approved in 2013, and the Cultural Master Plan Action Plan (CMPAP), developed and approved in 2015, continue to drive the priority actions of the Cultural Services section. These plans include recommendations that impact multiple Town departments, as well as, community partners in the arts, culture, heritage and volunteer sectors. A detailed review of progress made in implementing recommendations of these plans is underway. Results will be presented in a separate report to Committee later in 2019.

##### *1.2 Public Art Master Plan*

- The Public Art Advisory Board was formed in February 2018. This Board consists of both Town staff and community members, and is the driving force behind developing and implementing the Public Art Master Plan.

- The public consultation process for the Public Art Master Plan concluded in March 2018 and a summary of the results was presented to Council in the “What We Heard” report (ADMIN-2018-0015).
- The Public Art Master Plan was approved by Council in June 2018 (ADMIN-2018-0021).

## **Community Engagement**

### *1.3 Culture Days*

Halton Hills received national and provincial acclaim for its third installment of the annual Culture Days event:

- Halton Hills made the Culture Days National Top Ten list for the first time, ranking sixth in the “Populations of 50,000 to 499,999” category.
- The Norval *KAIROS Blanket Exercise* won the Ontario Culture Days 2018 Spotlight People’s Choice award.
- The *Downtown Georgetown Corridor* was the runner-up for the Best Corridor award by Ontario Culture Days.
- *OnBeat in the Hills!* was the runner-up for Best Exemplification of the On Beat Theme by Ontario Culture Days.

Highlights and impact statistics are summarized in the infographic on the next page. Culture Days aims to increase public participation in arts and culture year-round through an annual three day event of free arts and cultural activities. In Halton Hills, Culture Days is planned and promoted by the Culture Days Committee comprised of Town and library staff as well as community partners. Individual events are presented by local artists, organizations and businesses. Doors Open, organized by the Doors Open committee, presented five heritage sites as well as tours of Downtown Georgetown. Cultural Services, in coordination with Corporate Communications, Halton Hills Public Library and with support from Recreation and Parks, implemented a multi-tiered marketing campaign that included a dedicated Town webpage, social media, facility signage, e-newsletters, 2400 Culture Days Brochures, digital and print ads in local papers, event posts on visitHaltonHills.ca, ads in the Recreation Guide and Wordsworth, lawn signs, posters and postcards.



Over 60 events in Halton Hills • Discover more at [culturedays.ca](http://culturedays.ca)



# culturedays

September 28-30, 2018



Over 1900  
Participants



18 Venues



37 Activity  
Organizers



17 Volunteer  
Opportunities



62 Activities



Over 200,000  
Marketing  
Impressions



96 Artists



## Activities by Discipline

170% Increase  
in Activities  
from 2017



Sixth Largest  
Culture Days  
Event in Canada  
(mid-sized community)



- Music (19.3%)
- Visual (19.3%)
- Other (19.3%)
- Heritage (15.79%)
- Craft (14.04%)
- Literature (5.26%)
- Theatre (5.26%)
- Dance (1.75%)



## 1.4 Helson Gallery Exhibits

- Attendance for gallery exhibitions and programs for 2018 was 5,648; the highest number to date representing approximately a 10% increase from 2017.
- Six Gallery Exhibits and 11 Lobby exhibits were organized for 2018, including an international exchange exhibition between the Canadian Society of Painters in Watercolour and the French Watercolour Society; *Antarctica: Passion and Obsession - The Photographs of Pat and Rosemarie Keough*; The Georgetown Rug Hooking Guild's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated with a major exhibition in the Helson Gallery and Lobby exhibitions featured local arts and cultural organizations, including the Halton Black History Awareness Society and the Halton Hills Camera Club.
- Volunteer docents staff the Gallery during its open hours and assist with exhibition installations and programs and special events. Approximately 1200 volunteer hours are logged annually.
- 42 works were sold through the gallery, generating \$5,300 in sales for local artists.
- 108 works of art were donated to the Town's art collection with a total value of \$41,430. This includes a major gift of 68 works on paper given by Gisela Sommer from the estate of John Sommer, owner of Gallery House Sol which operated in Georgetown for 40 years.



*Photos: Exhibition Talk by Gallery Curator Judy Daley (photo by Alan McCord), Arif Virani, MP Parkdale-High Park; Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (former) and Mayor Bonnette tour the Black History Awareness Society's show in the Lobby of the Cultural Centre with Dennis Scott, Chair, Halton Black History Awareness Society and Francesca Durham, Exhibition Organizer, Plein Air Painting Challenge at Prospect Park, Third Prize Winner Michelle Chen.*

## 1.5 Helson Gallery Programs

Programs at the Helson Gallery continued to be well attended:

- Spring 2018 marked the fifth season of gallery programming for local elementary schools. About 735 students participated, the highest level in five years and a 35% increase from the previous year. Students toured the Helson Gallery and then made a studio project based on the exhibition.

- The art mentorship program ran for the third year with students of GDHS. Students were introduced to the Town's collection of art and connected to local artists for inspiration.
- A number of Special Events were held at the Gallery, including Family Day, exhibition receptions, tours and exhibition talks, and a professional development workshop for artists. A highlight was a Public Lecture and Lunch & Learn Session with award winning nature photographer, Rosemarie Keough, who discussed her travels in Antarctica and the making of the Antarctica tome, a copy of which was donated to the Town.
- In August, a Plein Air Painting Challenge was held at Prospect Park in Acton: 25 local and GTA artists participated and 40 visitors attended. \$500 was donated and awarded in prize monies for the event.
- Total attendance at Gallery events and programs in 2018 was 1,210, an increase of about 30% over 2017.

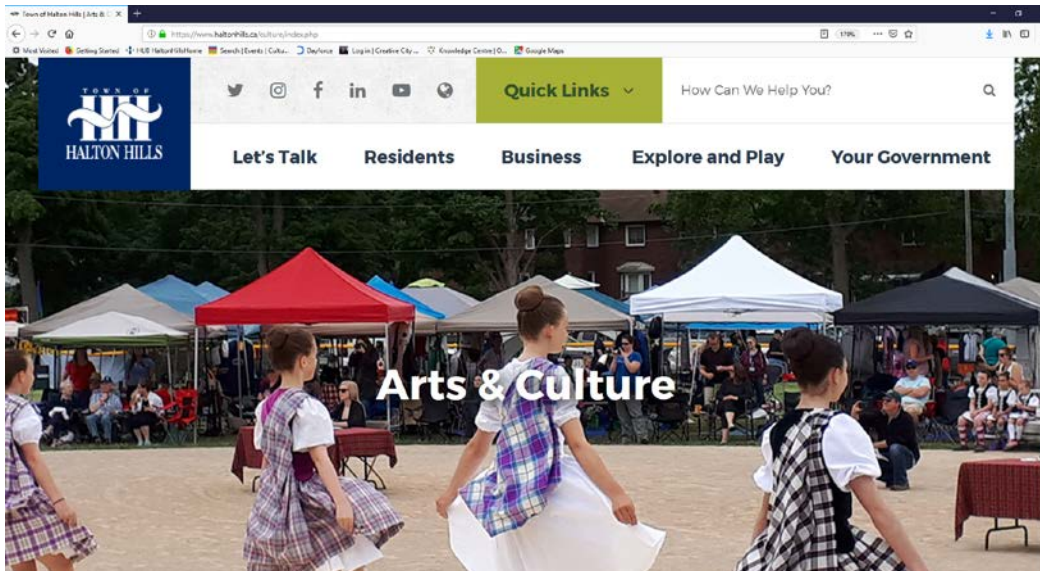
### *1.6 John Elliott Theatre*

The John Elliott Theatre, managed by Facilities (Recreation and Parks), is Halton Hills' only purpose built, fixed seating performance venue. It has become the regular stage for several local community theatre groups as well as for hosting TIFF Films, touring theatre companies, concerts, seminars, presentations and workshops.

- The theatre was used by registered groups for 577 hours .
- The theatre was in use for 209 days of 2018. This includes summer camps, rehearsals and other activities in addition to public performances and events.
- Number of tickets sold (not including complimentary tickets): 14,403.
- Total value of tickets sold was: \$303,736.
- The Town curates and runs one program out of the JET, the TIFF film series. Last year 9 films were shown and the average attendance per film was 75 patrons.

### *1.7 Cultural Communications*

A new and impactful Arts & Culture webpage (see screenshot on the next page) was developed in 2018 and launched in early 2019. The webpage is a one-stop location for all things culture in Halton Hills on the Town's website. The site includes links to cultural organizations and resources in the community in addition to Town-led initiatives. Visit [haltonhills.ca/culture](http://haltonhills.ca/culture) to learn more about Cultural Services, view its Council reports and policies, find festivals and events, explore the community cultural catalogue, access resources for the arts and culture community, and more. Cultural content was also included in Town and Library social media, newsletters, guides and other communications channels (e.g. Economic e-newsletter, E-Fun, Wordsworth, tax bills).



Screenshot of the new Arts and Culture webpage

### 1.8 Cultural Services and Helson Gallery SWAG

In 2018, the Cultural Services section, in collaboration with Corporate Communications, started a new branding and promotions project in order to:

- Raise the profile of the Helson Gallery and the Helson Collection – comprised of 103 works
- Continue to raise the profile of the relatively new Cultural Services section
- Commemorate Fred Helson
- Create branded materials to distribute at special events, conferences, etc.

To achieve these goals, a SWAG package composed of a branded tote bag and packages of notecards, bookmarks and postcards was created. Each one features one of five works from the Helson collection. The materials feature logos of the Town of Halton Hills, Helson Gallery and Helson Collection, and include the Cultural Services section webpage ([haltonhills.ca/culture](http://haltonhills.ca/culture)) and hashtag ([#hh1sCulture](https://twitter.com/hh1sCulture)). The works selected feature both Canadian and European artists, and demonstrate a range of styles and subjects. Different works from the collection will be featured in future years. To start, 500 tote bags and 250 of each note card, bookmark and postcard were produced. Distribution of the packages began in 2019.



## **Cultural Assets**

### *1.9 Cultural Assets Interpretive Tour*

In 2018, significant work was undertaken with the Town's GIS Coordinator to review and analyze the existing Cultural Inventory data set which was collected in 2013 during the Cultural Mapping process of the Cultural Master Plan. Significant updates and changes were made to the organization of the data. Cultural Services staff will continue the process of updating and validating the entire inventory in 2019. The next stage in the project will be to finalize the parameters of the data set, import all data from all sources into the GIS system, and then develop one pilot tour to ensure that the data parameters are correct and function well within the Story Maps software (the software being used to promote the tours). Once this testing is completed, additional tours will be developed and a study undertaken to determine the infrastructure needed to launch the full tour program.

## **Service Delivery:**

### *1.10 Cultural Services Coordination Committee*

The Cultural Services Coordination Committee completed its first year of operations in 2018. This cross-departmental committee ensures the integration of culture across Town departments. In 2018, the Committee reviewed and provided input into the Public Art Master Plan, reviewed and updated tourism assets for the Credit Valley Trail Arts, Culture and Tourism Working Group, and supported Culture Days marketing and communications.

### *1.11 Regional Cultural Working Group*

The Regional Cultural Working Group completed its first year of operations in 2018. This Working Group shares best practices, coordinates regional cultural offerings and leverages culture for regional tourism. It includes representation from cultural staff in Burlington, Oakville and Milton as well as Regional Tourism Organization #3 (RTO 3), and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport regional representative. Some of the issues explored by the Working Group in 2018 included: public art policies, cultural communications, Culture Days implementation, Cultural Services structures within municipalities, cultural tourism and cultural funding opportunities.

### *1.12 Southern Ontario Cultural Managers*

This group, on hiatus since 2015, will be reinstated in 2019 as an outcome of the 2018 Creative Cities Conference in Mississauga. The first meeting was in February 2019 in Waterloo with an attendance of 21 cultural managers from Barrie to Peterborough, to Windsor and all points in between attending. The main topics discussed included: cultural planning trends and the next phase of cultural planning, cultural communications, forming relationships with Indigenous communities and moving the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) recommendations forward, and public art

processes and policies. This group is a valuable information sharing network and resource base.

### 1.13 Credit Valley Trail

The Cultural Development Coordinator represents the Town, along with the Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator, on the Arts, Culture and Tourism Working Group of the Experience Planning Committee of the Credit Valley Trail. The Working Group is exploring three potential pilot tours along an existing trail that will form part of the overall Credit Valley Trail including one in Halton Hills related to the Credit Valley Footpath. A launch event for the Credit Valley Trail is tentatively scheduled for fall 2019.

### 1.14 Innovation

The Cultural Development Coordinator attended “Innovation in a Box”, a comprehensive four day advanced practitioner Innovation training course at Juice Inc. This training allows the Cultural Development Coordinator to train other municipal staff as innovation facilitators. Cultural Services will practice the techniques first within the Economic Development, Innovation and Culture division, and then present a plan to rollout training opportunities and facilitation support across Town departments. Implementation of innovative approaches to business will contribute to the effective and efficient delivery of Town services.

## 2.0 Halton Hills Public Library-Led Initiatives



*Photos: Library Programming: Boardgame Night, Virtual Reality, Repair Cafe*

The Halton Hills Public Library enriches the community with extensive cultural programming throughout the year, often in coordination with community partners. Highlights of 2018 successes include:

## 2.1 Sustainability

The Halton Hills Public Library held its inaugural **Repair Café** in April. Volunteers taught people how to repair and reuse their possessions including small appliances, clothing, and upholstery. A second Repair Café was held as part of Culture Days.

**Seed Libraries** were also launched at both branches in June with financial support from the Downtown Georgetown Farmer's Market and the Town of Halton Hills Office of Sustainability. To teach patrons more about our agricultural heritage, the following activities were offered:

- Seedy Saturday – seed-saving workshop with the Georgetown Horticultural Society.
- All About Herbs – workshop at the Georgetown Farmers' Market as part of Culture Days. Families planted herbs in a small pot to take home and grow.
- Workshop with the Acton Community Garden – on how community members can grow food and native plants together.
- Pumpkin Carving at the Youth Drop-in Centres – attendees harvested seeds from their pumpkins to donate to the seed library.

## 2.2 Skills Exchange

This program provided cultural programming from April to December for seniors and youth to teach each other skills. All activities took place in a one day workshop format unless otherwise noted below. The *Skills Exchange* was supported by the New Horizons for Seniors Grant and included the following activities:

- Skills Expo - Community groups set up tables at the Georgetown Branch where the public could try out a range of skills. Participants had a passport that was stamped after they tried out each skill. Skills included: origami, jump rope, piano, loom work, sewing, robotics, and Karate.
- Build a Bird Feeder - Youth learned basic woodworking skills while making a bird feeder.
- Teen Paint Nights – Multiple one day art workshops where youth were guided through creating a specific painting.
- Cupcake Decorating – Youth were taught cake decorating techniques.
- Quilting – Two day workshop, in partnership with The Sewing Café, where youth designed fabric squares then worked together to cut and sew a quilt.
- Tote Bag and Silk Screening – This program was presented in partnership with The Sewing Café, where youth created a tote bag then designed their own image and used silk-screening techniques to put the image onto the tote bag.
- Cosplay – Youth learned some basic techniques for designing and making Cosplay outfits.
- Temari Balls – Youth learned the art of Japanese thread balls.
- Scale Models – Youth were taught the skill of scale model building.
- Pottery Painting – A program presented in partnership with Glazed Expressions where youth were taught about pottery painting.
- Glass Fusing – a program presented in partnership with Glazed Expressions where Youth were taught how to make glass art.



### 2.3 Halton Hills Lecture Series

The second Halton Hills Lecture Series is supported by the Friends of the Halton Hills Public Library and the Town of Halton Hills. The 2018-2019 season began with two lectures:

- "Bringing Lucy Maud Montgomery Home to Norval"
- "The Role of Music & Emotion in Celebration"

*Photo: Halton Hills Lecture Series with David Leask*

### 2.4 Virtual Reality (VR) Programming

A variety of VR programming was offered to people of all ages, including outreach to senior and youth centres. VR programming was also brought to residents in long-term care facilities:

- 194 children and youth used VR in 2018. This included outreach to the Youth drop-in centres, special events, pa days, drop-in days and bookable times.
- An additional 785 people experienced VR through Community and Adult Services, including outreach visits to Extendicare and Mountainview Seniors Homes, Hillview Seniors Centres, in-house programming, and large-scale events such as the Fergus Scottish Festival and At Home in the Hills.

### 2.5 One Book One Halton Hills (OBOHH) 2018

This popular program, now in its 8<sup>th</sup> year, included a range of programming:

- "An Evening with Shari Lapena" – featured bestselling OBOHH author, popular for her domestic thrillers.
- "A Stranger in the Library" – escape room for adults and teens that challenged groups to reseat the crypt beneath the Georgetown Branch before the ghost of HHPL's first librarian was released.
- Murder Mystery Night – masquerade-themed event for adults that took place after-hours and featured a cash bar.
- "Crime Writers of Canada" – guest speakers at the annual Wines & Spines event at Acton Town Hall.



*Photo: Shari Lapena at the John Elliott Theatre.*

### 2.6 STEAM Programming

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics) programming included:

- The ongoing and popular 'Lego Robotics'.
- 'Robo-Geek', which provides more diverse learning opportunities such as coding. This program is produced in partnership with a local agency Robo-Geek.



- 'Mini-Makers', which is a program incorporating construction, technology and art for younger children.

## 2.7 Additional Cultural Programming

Additional cultural programs offered by the Library included:

- Horticultural workshops
- Board Game Nights for families
- Knitting Circles at both branches
- Summer book clubs for adults
- Summer Reading Challenge
- Winter Reading Challenge
- Wines & Spines
- Researching Your Family History
- The Writers Circle - monthly meeting of local writers at the Georgetown Branch
- Family Day activities
- Culture Days activities (including Preschool Dance Parties and Community Journaling at both branches in addition to many other activities hosted in and by the Library)
- Three book clubs for Children and Youth
- Teen Writers Circle – monthly meeting of teen writers at the Georgetown Branch
- Ink Writing Project – annual creative writing contest for children and youth

## 3. Community-Led Initiatives



*Photos: Highland Games, Leathertown Festival, Anne of Green Gables Day*

The following are highlights of community-led initiatives that are contributing to the Cultural Vibrancy of Halton Hills:

### 3.1 Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable (HHCR)

In 2018, the Roundtable's major focus areas included:

- Planning and hosting the 2018 Cultural Symposium on the theme of Innovation.

- Participating in various community events and initiatives including, the Norval Steering Committee and the Public Art Advisory Board.

In February 2019, the HHCR decided to dissolve as an organization. A joint media release was issued by the Town and the Roundtable to highlight past HHCR accomplishments and to inform the community of the decision. The media release is available here: [www.haltonhills.ca/media/MediaRelease.php?id=220](http://www.haltonhills.ca/media/MediaRelease.php?id=220)

A staff report with recommended next steps will be brought to Committee/Council in the near future.

### *3.2 Doors Open*

In 2018, Doors Open featured six heritage sites and two walking tours in downtown Georgetown. The event was organized by the Doors Open Committee, chaired by Councillor Lawlor. Halton Hills has participated in this world wide program for six years. Marketing in coordination with Halton Region, included a Doors Open brochure, posters, social media and listings on the Provincial Doors Open website. Since Doors Open in Halton Region coincides with Culture Days, the Doors Open sites were also extensively promoted through the Culture Days marketing campaign. This helped maximize community awareness and event attendance. On Sunday September 30th, there were 350 visits to Halton Hills' Doors Open sites and programming.

### *3.3 Lucy Maud Montgomery Heritage Society (LMMHS)*

The Lucy Maud Montgomery Museum and Literary Centre project continues to be developed. In 2018, LMMHS applied for a federal National Heritage designation for the Manse. The Heritage Foundation of Halton Hills was awarded an Ontario Trillium Foundation Seed Grant of approximately \$75,000 to assist with planning of the project and the design of the museum. Implementation of a feasibility study is now underway. While the Museum and Literary Centre project is under development the LMMHS continues to host events in Norval. Key activities in 2018 included:

- 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Montgomery Christmas involving four churches in Norval.
- Anne of Green Gables Day, a garden party held in the Lucy Maud Montgomery Garden of the Senses which featured garden tours, costumed characters from LMM's Anne of Green Gables series and children's games from the books' time period.
- The second annual Not-So-Empty-Bowls fundraiser in partnership with the Credit Valley Artisans.

### *3.4 Norval Community Association (NCA)*

The Norval Community Association is a non-profit organization with a mandate to foster strong community spirit, preserve historic values, and promote beautification. Formed in 1974, CVA has a long history of hosting special events and undertaking projects to

enhance, celebrate and preserve the natural and distinctive built environment of Norval. Some of the projects that NCA initiated or were involved with in 2018 include:

- The Pollinator Canoe was installed in McNab Park and unveiled in partnership with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This event included a dedication and a water ceremony.
- Special events hosted include Norval-on-the-Credit, Pioneer Days, Norval's first Hot Dog Day, and the Second Not-So-Empty-Bowls, in collaboration with the Credit Valley Artisans.
- The KAIROS Blanket Exercise (KBE) was presented twice in 2018 by NCA with a total of 65 people taking part. This activity was presented as part of Culture Days and won the Ontario Culture Days 2019 Spotlight People's Choice Award. Blanket Exercise participants take on the roles of Indigenous peoples in Canada; when they move onto the blankets which represent the land, they move through the history of treaty-making, colonization and resistance that resulted in the nation we today call Canada. Participants discuss their learning experience, process their feelings, ask questions, share insights and deepen their understanding during a debrief following the exercise. The KBE both educates and creates understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada.

### 3.5 Ambition Performing Arts Centre

Ambition, a new multi-discipline performing arts facility had its grand opening in Acton in August, 2018. Ambition offers classes in dance, singing, music, and theatre, as well as stage and screen acting for all ability levels and ages 3 to 18.



*Photos: Grand Opening of Ambition Performing Arts Centre*

### 3.6 Credit Valley Artisans (CVA)

Credit Valley Artisans, formed in 1975, is a community group comprised of four guilds: the Heritage Hand Weavers and Spinners, the Palette and Pencil Guild, the Potters and Sculptors Guild, and the Stained Glass Artisans. Throughout the year, the CVA organizes art classes and workshops and holds annual Sales at Cedarvale Cottage. Main activities in 2018 included:

- **CVA Farmers market booth:** from June to October members from all guilds took part in promotion and sales at the Georgetown Farmers' Market.
- **Not-so-empty-bowls** (second annual) – at Norval Presbyterian Church. CVA Potters made and donated 102 bowls and provided the volunteer power to make this fundraising event a success. All proceeds went to the Lucy Maud Montgomery Museum and Literary Centre fund. Plans are to continue this successful event in 2019.
- **Plein Air** - held the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Norval Plein Air competition with Ontario Plein Air Society in August. Contestants from as far away as New York State took part in the competition judged by Helson Gallery Curator Judy Daley. Results can be found at [www.norval-on-the-credit.ca/PleinAir.html](http://www.norval-on-the-credit.ca/PleinAir.html).
- **Culture Days / Doors Open:** approximately 100 visitors from all over Southern Ontario came to take part in hands-on art activities and view demonstrations by all four guilds.
- **Canada 150 Sign** – a sign honouring CVA's Canada 150 project of creating 150 small paintings by local artists was erected in LMM gardens in Norval.
- **Local CVA Art Displays:** Exhibitions and displays of work by CVA artists were presented in the Halton Hills Cultural Centre, Young's window, Heather's Bakery, North Star Cleaners window and Southpaw Café.
- **Classes:** CVA offered a range of classes including: Pottery on the Wheel, Pottery – Handbuilding (new course), Stained Glass, Weaving, Oil Painting, Watercolour Painting, and Plein Air Painting. Over 100 community members took part in these classes.



### 3.7 ThatGoodLife

ThatGoodLife is a faith-based organization created to speak life and spread the good news of hope and love through the arts. ThatGoodLife came to Acton in 2018 when producer Promise Shepherd re-located from Toronto after identifying Acton as having the quality of life and housing options that best suited his growing family. In 2018 ThatGoodLife produced a series of music focused events mostly out of the ROXY; keeping the space animated as a community hub even after the café closed. Highlights from 2018 include:

- **Our House:** family-focused community night created to encourage relationship/fellowship amongst community members in Acton. This event is held

the last Saturday of each month. Ten events were held in 2018 with an average of attendance of 15 – 20 people per event.

- **LFTD** (*pronounced lifted*): youth-focused live DJ party night that highlights local acts and provides the opportunity to share the stage with professionals while rejuvenating the local youth scene. Three events were held with an average attendance of 100 at each event.
- **Culture Days**: Special presentation of Our House and LFTD along with DJ/Production/Beat-Making Workshops with DJ Lagit and Lord Quest.
- **Acton Fall Fair Stage**: presented local artists including Ellie Ellsworth, Dru Bex, Liya and Michael Austin Harris.
- **Leathertown Musical Performances**: Presented local artists including Ellie Ellsworth, Jennie Laws, Comeunitë, Janée Olivia, JL and others.



*Photos: DJ Workshop with DJ Lagit, Ellie Ellsworth performs at Our House*

### *3.8 Halton Hills Concert Band (HHCB)*

Halton Hills Concert Band is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary season in 2018 - 2019. With 89 performances since 2009, HHCB has celebrated and supported many community events over the past decade, including the arrival of the Olympic Torch, the Concert for Haiti, Canada Day and Remembrance Day Services. HHCB focuses on promoting music, volunteering in the community, forging partnerships and supporting community endeavours and promoting a fun, healthy leisure activity for youth and adults (14+). Founded by President Roper Galloway and directed by Daniella Baryla, the HHCB performs a variety of music including swing, classical, marches, Broadway, TV, movie and popular music and creates custom programs for any occasion. 2018 highlights include:

- 27 volunteer members rehearsed for 2 hours weekly throughout the year
- Over 40 rehearsals in 2018 alone to prepare for events
- 11 performances in 2018
- *OnBeat in the Hills!* was the runner-up for Best Exemplification of the On Beat Theme by Ontario Culture Days. This event included a conducting workshop, percussion “petting zoo” and a joint performance with the Georgetown Choral Society and The Gaudeamus Choir.

- The Sixth Annual *With Glowing Hearts Musical Tribute to the Armed Forces*, a unique hybrid show that brings the pomp of the military tattoo to a concert setting, featuring guest performers The Lorne Scots Pipes & Drums, Georgetown District High School Symphonic Band and solo vibraphonist, Dean Veneruz, from Christ the King Catholic Secondary School. A portion of the proceeds were donated to the War Amps to support area residents.
- Hollywood Hits: Movie Music Favourites, St. Andrews United Church- 60th Anniversary Concert, Georgetown.

The band is currently preparing for a few of this year's performances, including a Spring Concert, Classic and Iconic Car, Toy Drive 2019, 7<sup>th</sup> Annual 'With Glowing Hearts – A Musical Tribute to the Armed Forces'. Later on this year, rehearsals will prepare for the annual Remembrance Day Services, Georgetown and Milton Santa Claus Parades as well as the annual Christmas Concert at Market Place Mall.



*Photos: On Beat in the Hills! Instrument Petting Zoo and Performance*

### *3.9 The Georgetown Rug Hooking Guild (GRHG)*

The Georgetown Rug Hooking Guild celebrated 50 creative years in 2018 with special exhibitions at the Helson Gallery and Sisnett Lobby of the Cultural Centre. Since 1968, the Guild has promoted this popular craft through its exhibitions, workshops and community advocacy. The extensive showing featured the work of past and present guild members and was on view in the Helson Gallery September 12 – October 28, 2018. In conjunction with the exhibition, noted Canadian textile artist Michelle Sirois-Silver from British Columbia discussed her innovative approach to hooked and mixed media craftworks.

The guild is comprised of 80 members and is a Branch of Ontario Craft Guild. An annual convention is held in different communities in which GRHG takes part by displaying their hooked rugs and wall hangings. The Georgetown Guild offers beginner lessons, and during the year new classes on a variety of designs and subjects.

### *3.10 Halton Hills Chinese Association (HHCA)*

The Halton Hills Chinese Association incorporated as a not-for-profit in 2018 with a mission to promote multiculturalism, help new Chinese immigrants, and build a wonderful community in Halton Hills. HHCA has over 100 members. Activities in 2018 included: Chinese New Year celebrations, Saturday Chinese School, and a Q&A with Municipal election candidates. HHCA also worked with Halton Hills Public Library to organize Chinese language workshops and Culture Days activities, including calligraphy and paper cutting.