



TLR

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If approved, would King Street condos become short-term rentals? ALPEREN ALBAYRAK

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Contributed by Patty Garriock

“Be happy with being you. Love your flaws. Own your quirks. And know that you are just as perfect as anyone else, exactly as you are.” - Ariana Grande

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Editorial

Preserving NOTL's historic past

Kevin MacLean
 Managing Editor

Niagara-on-the-Lake is a town steeped in history.

In fact, we honestly wonder if any other community of similar size can boast nearly as many connections to significant historical events and individuals.

We think not.

The stories can, and do, literally fill books.

From being Upper Canada's first capital, to Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock and the War of 1812, to Laura Secord's famous walk, to Indigenous roots that run long and deep, the Underground Railroad and stands taken against slavery, Fort George, Fort Mississauga and numerous associated military sites, significant burial grounds, historic Old Town plus St. Davids and Queenston, the clock tower cenotaph and the dozens of commemorative plaques around town that help us remember.

And, of course, that list barely scratches the surface.

Thanks to forward-thinking history-keepers like Janet Carnochan and to all those who came after her, who recognized the importance of remembering, collecting and cataloguing the past, Niagara-on-the-Lake has a museum that is the envy of many other communities.

Through its collection and its programs it keeps history



A rendering of the NOTL Museum's expansion project. SUPPLIED

relevant and vital.

Tucked away on Castlereagh Street in Old Town, where it is led by the visionary Sarah Kaufman, the museum is bursting at the proverbial seams.

Its long-awaited expansion plans, envisioned by Kaufman for a decade or more, are now moving ahead.

The construction of a large new two-storey exhibits building and addition of a basement under historic Memorial Hall are two of the key components of the Building History: Strengthening Community campaign. It all will mean more display space and more storage for the museum's burgeoning collection, better accessibility for all visitors.

This is no small potatoes project. It's a \$10-million expansion and revitalization, one of the largest such undertakings in town in recent memory.

As Kaufman summed it up: "I think that we have a world-class town and we have world-class residents that live here and I think they deserve a museum that is fitting for them."

Half of the money will come from government grants, but the other half needs to be raised by the community.

Fittingly, the historical society, which runs the museum, to lead the campaign has turned to a resident with an exceptional track record for community building.

Sean Simpson is a well-known NOTL pharmacist,

but aside from that, whether it's helping with kids sports, supporting local charities, leading the United Way or many other endeavours, he has led by example when it comes to the community he calls home.

His task is a tough one – to help the museum raise \$5 million over the next year or two or three.

That's a big ask of small community, but we are confident that, as they have shown before, the individuals and businesses of Niagara-on-the-Lake recognize the significance of this special town and will step up to help preserve our history.

After all, how many other towns can boast such a storied and colourful past? It is well worth preserving.

editor@niagaranow.com

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