

The Township Empire: three heritage buildings

by Conrad Boyce, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

In this series about the properties that belong to you, the taxpayer of the Township of Uxbridge, so far

we've discussed our community halls, libraries and museum, as well as all the outdoor recreation spaces with which the municipality is blessed. But in addition to the eight restored buildings at the Historical Centre,

the Township owns three other buildings of significant heritage value; two of them at opposite ends of downtown, the third set in the rolling hills on the way north to Leaskdale.

as well. Until a few years ago, it had a long-term tenant, the Uxbridge Dance Academy, but now is rented exclusively in the short term to a variety of performing arts groups. Unlike the similar Town Hall in Port Perry, the Music Hall has no fixed seating on the main floor, meaning it can continue to host one-off events like wedding receptions.

There is an advisory board to assist the Township in planning for future



Interior of the Uxbridge Music Hall. Photo by OnStage Uxbridge, one of the many user groups of the Music Hall

improvements, as well as a part-time technical manager, paid on an hourly basis, who ensures the building's sound and lighting systems are properly used and well-maintained. In addition to paying rent on the space, users must apply a surcharge on tickets, which goes toward a fund for improvements.

The Township budgeted about \$90,000 for the Music Hall in 2022, expecting to receive about half of that back in rental fees.

The Railway Station: Our "witch's-hat" station, so often used as a set for historical films and television shows, was opened in 1904 by the Grand Trunk Railway. The primary user, the York Durham Heritage Railway (YDHR), leases the train station from the Township and covers all the utilities. The YDHR has greatly expanded its programming

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STUDENTS

Earn Community Service Hours

The Uxbridge Lions Club is looking for 20 high school students to help out with the 2nd Annual Hallowe'en Parade at Elgin Park on Sunday, October 30 from 1 - 4:30 p.m. Students will assist with the set up of games, support participants, manage simple games and help with the parade. Several students will be able to earn an extra 5 hours for work that will need to be done prior to the day. If you are interested please contact Sally Kotsopoulos at sallykprodev@gmail.com or by text at 647-206-8645 before October 16.

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Durham District School Board Trustee

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Dominic

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WARD 1 CANDIDATE

1,000+ km, 100 hours and 3 inches off my pant size.

I have met so many different community members and heard your views on the future of our ward. I truly hope the level of engagement that I met at the door translates into engagement with ballots.

From road issues to the trails to development, it is your opportunity to decide what you want our town to look like.

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How this town moves forward should be our top priority.

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On October 24th, make your VOTE COUNT.

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Our heritage buildings, from page 8

over the last several years, and has its own staff, both paid and volunteer, to manage its activities. It's important to note that the Township owns only the station; the train cars are owned by YDHR, and the tracks by Metrolinx out of Toronto.

The Township budgeted about \$29,000 to maintain the station this year, expecting to recover about two thirds of that in rentals.

The station received substantial damage to roof and windows during



The iconic "witch's hat" of the Uxbridge Railway Station, moments after a tornado went through Uxbridge and blew out most of the station's antique windows.

Photo by Conrad Boyce

the May 21 tornado. Because of its heritage character, replacement windows and shingles can be difficult to source; it's expected that repairs will be completed next spring.

The Thomas Foster Memorial: It's safe to say that not many municipalities include a majestic mausoleum (it's one of the largest in North America) on their roster of properties. To cut a fascinating history short, the memorial, about 10 minutes north of town on Conc. 7 (Reg. Rd. 1), was built during the Great Depression by a former mayor of Toronto with roots in the Leaskdale area. Foster built it as a memorial to his late wife and daughter; on his death in 1945, he joined them inside, and ownership was transferred to a trust company.

After years of neglect, the building was taken over by the Township in 1992, at the instigation of a volunteer group called the Friends of the Foster, which continues to play a large role in fundraising and programming of events (including a popular Friday night concert series from spring through fall). A note that the Friends would very much like to swell their diminishing ranks; see

their website for how you can help.

The Township undertook a refurbishment of the roof recently, and



The Thomas Foster Memorial.

Photo from thomasfostermemorial.com

has a number of major improvements planned, including painting of the interior domes and repairs to the exterior stonework. An improvement fund of \$10,000 is set aside every year. In 2022, about \$50,000 was budgeted for the care of this unique building, of which only a tenth is expected to be recovered through rentals or donations.

Caring for the Departed: Although the Township owns the Memorial, it does not own the cemetery beside it, nor any of the other major

ones in the municipality. Cemeteries are usually administered by a volunteer board, or a particular church congregation. Sometimes an older cemetery will be "abandoned" for various reasons. Under the provincial Cemeteries Act, ownership of the cemetery then reverts to the municipality. There are a handful of such grounds in Uxbridge; the Township parks department cuts the grass regularly, and does other minor maintenance, or contracts this responsibility to a third party.



Richard DAMIANOPOULOS
for Catholic School Trustee

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Robyn Baker, a Grade 12 student at USS, is vying for one of 30 coveted positions on RBC's Training Ground. *Photo submitted by Robyn Baker*

Heading for RBC Training Ground, from page 1

Ontario team and I just went on from there."

After applying to the RBC Training Ground regional testing day, Baker competed in front of many different sporting scouts, including one scout who showed interest in her joining a track cycling team. Baker says that, while she knows of athletes who have been scouted for other sports and become Olympians, with her busy rugby schedule and passion for the sport she hasn't yet explored cycling.

While most of her rugby competing took place over the summer, Baker is playing on the Uxbridge Secondary School Rugby 7s team this fall, working towards LOSSA, as well as the Rugby 15s team in the spring, hoping to get to OFSAA.

This summer, Baker played at the Ontario Summer Games as well as the Canada Summer Games.

As far as next steps, Baker will continue her training through the winter months. "I do hope to play varsity rugby in university and want to represent Canada at the national level in the future," she says.

Baker will be heading off to Ottawa for the RBC Training Ground Final on Friday, Oct. 21. The final testing includes trials such as a 40m sprint, jumps from a stand still and endurance stationary cycling.

Baker says that while she would love to be chosen as one of the 30 athletes, she's not really setting any expectations for the finals.

"I'm definitely looking forward to meeting new people from around the country who are all at the same level. I think it'll be a really great experience and I'm excited to learn from everyone else who's there too!"

RE-ELECT

John Henry

For Durham Regional Chair

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The Township Empire: for young and old

by Conrad Boyce, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

In the *Cosmos's* series on the funding and management of the Township's various properties, we've talked about everything from museums to mau-

soleums, swimming pools to concert halls, tennis courts to train stations. Most of those facilities are accessible to all ages of the Uxbridge public. There is one building, though, that was created with one particular age group in mind.

The Uxbridge Seniors' Centre, on Marietta Street around the corner from Uxpool, was built in the early

1990s, and designed in conjunction with the local seniors association. Besides a spacious lobby, it consists of four areas, each of which can be accessed separately. There is a large hall, complete with a large kitchen and small stage, which is the only space available for booking by the general public (although the seniors have

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Dominic

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- Gordon Shreeve

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Councillor Ward 2
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gordonshreeve@gmail.com
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A place of their own, from previous page

first call on a number of time blocks during the week). There is a lounge and activity area for exclusive use by the seniors, and another space housing the Uxbridge Youth Centre, which moved several years ago from Brock Street. Each of those rooms has a small kitchen area. Both the seniors and Youth Centre operate their own programs independently from the Township, although the Recreation Department also has a few programs aimed at seniors.

Lastly, there is a small office area, recently vacated by Durham Community Care (which moved to the Testa building beside the hospital). The offices are currently occupied by Township staff from various departments, but Trinity United Church, which lost its home in the tor-

nado and is currently using the Seniors Centre hall for its Sunday morning services, is negotiating with the Township for use of at least some of the offices (its staff are now working out of their homes). The new church is hoped to be complete by the fall of 2025.

All four spaces share the washrooms in the lobby area, which are looked after by Township staff; there are no staff dedicated exclusively to the building. In 2022, the Township budgeted about \$50,000 for the operation of the Seniors Centre, expecting to recover about \$15,000, mostly from the rental of the hall (the Seniors Association contributes \$2,000 to the building's maintenance, the Youth Centre nothing). Although Trinity received free use of the hall for a few weeks after the tornado, it now pays a regular rental fee.

Letters, from page 4

least) one lane with no regard whatsoever to vehicular traffic. Please, please, PLEASE show some consideration and courtesy by always riding SINGLE FILE for your safety (because you're not invincible), thereby allowing cars and trucks to pass you. It's also using common sense. The conversation you're engaging in

while riding abreast of one another can wait until you reach an appropriate location. Don't act as though you own the road, because you don't (you may not even be a local taxpayer).

Again, SHARE THE FREAKIN' ROAD.

The fact that this needs to be asked is disturbing and frightening. Enough said.

*K. Stiles
Goodwood*

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The Township Empire: The nerve centre

by Conrad Boyce, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Uxbridge's Township Hall on Toronto Street South is bustling right now, with hundreds of voters bringing in ballots to ensure they're counted for the municipal election on Oct. 24. But even on a regular weekday (as one of the few Township buildings that keeps typical office hours) the hall sees its fair share of citizens coming through the door. Even if you don't swim or play hockey or have a library card, you still need to pay your taxes, or get a permit for that beautiful new deck, or have a heart-to-heart chat with an elected official.

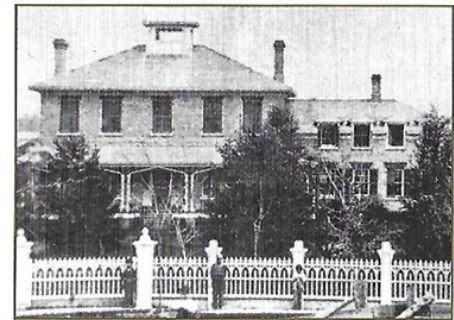
This building is really the nerve centre of the township. In addition to

council chambers and offices for the mayor and chief administrative officer - CAO Kristi Honey, the boss of the Township's 130 staff - the hall houses the municipality's three "red tape" departments (its other buildings and properties are mostly for programming and operations). The Clerk's Office, for almost two decades under clerk and director of legislative services Debbie Leroux, is the Township's legislative arm, drafting and enforcing its bylaws (and running elections!), as well as supporting the work of council and the Corporation. Treasury, under treasurer Donna Condon, collects taxes, oversees the Township budget, and manages accounts payable and receivable. You'll find those two departments on the main floor, to your right as you go through the Toronto Street doors. Council chambers are to your left. We highly recommend you drop by a council meeting some time, and see how your municipal government works. There are also two conference rooms on that floor, as well as the office of Public Works director Ben Kester.

Downstairs, accessible by a separate door off the rear parking lot, is the Planning Development Services Department, under director Kyle Rainbow, overseeing the planning, permitting and inspection of new or renovated development in the Township, including helping you with permits for that new deck. In all, 24 Township employees can be found in the hall, far more than in any of its other buildings (except perhaps the

firehall when an emergency is in progress). And the three departments here take up about 24 per cent of the Township budget.

If you're an Uxbridge oldtimer, you'll know that prior to 1990, this site was the first home of St. Joseph's Catholic School, before the new school was built on Quaker Village Drive. Part of the school was used for the southern portion of the town



The house of Uxbridge founder Joseph Gould inhabited the site the current Town Hall for more than a century. The look of the upper storey is reflected in the windows above the council chamber addition.

hall. But prior to the school, the site was the home for more than a century of Uxbridge's founder, Joseph Gould. The lines of his house were preserved in the architecture of the northern half of the hall, where the council chambers are housed.

Just One More: In the past few weeks, we've introduced you to the wide variety of properties owned by the Township of Uxbridge. But there is one property that you as a taxpayer own (all right, partly own), that's not located in the township at all. It's the Animal Control Centre, where you may have adopted your Siamese cat or German Shepherd, on Reach Street in Scugog. The property is owned by the Township of Scugog, the building half-owned by them, the staff half-paid by them, but the administration is totally Uxbridge's responsibility, and the four animal control officers are our employees, though they work, and have legislative authority, in both jurisdictions. This arrangement may be amended when (or if) the long-anticipated new animal shelter is built on its projected site on our side of Lake Ridge Road.

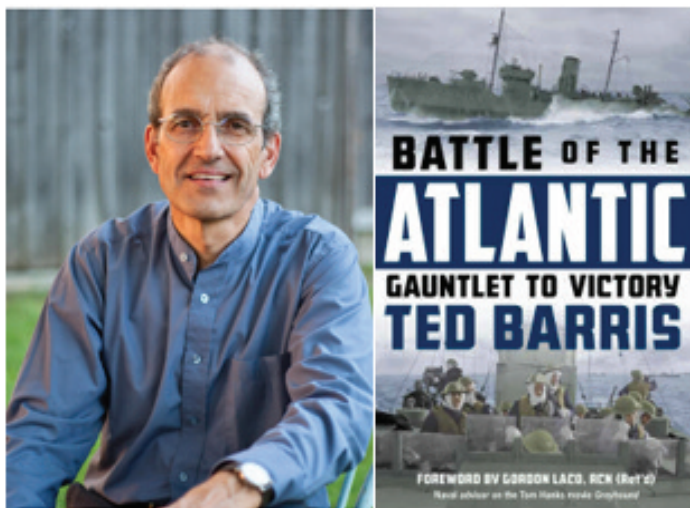
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