

History

CONNECTIONS

January 2026

millbrookcavanhs.org



Feature Story

Memories Preserve the Legacy of Millbrook's former Arena

First lessons on skates. School Phys Ed periods. Saturday night and Sunday afternoon free skates. OMHA Championships and Figure Skating Carnivals. Curling. First dates, wedding receptions, New Year's Eve parties. All stories attached to the Cavan Monaghan Arena that, over the past month, has been demolished.

From its construction in 1952, the arena served the community as a sports facility, a recreation center and social hub. It rose

from the ashes after the 1975 Distillery Street explosion, a symbol of resilience and community spirit. It witnessed countless milestones and was the nucleus around which memories formed for many. A cornerstone in the lives of so many local families for more than six decades has gone, but will not be forgotten. Send us your memories, the cherished moments, the triumphs and the thrills. Share photos and stories on our Facebook page or by emailing millbrookcavanhs@gmail.com.



Remember when THAT happened?

The fun and games, the events and the people that marked past decades: come tell a few tales or just listen in at our Lunch & Learn, Thursday, January 29, 1-3 pm., Millbrook Library.

Moments of Impact

A Tree for Peter Ramsay

The Millbrook Cavan Historical Society (MCHS) extends its heartfelt appreciation to everyone who joined us for the tree-planting ceremony honouring our good friend and colleague, past president Peter Ramsay.



Stay in Touch

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📍 Cavan Monaghan Libraries - Millbrook Branch

Past Events

Indigenous Peoples Talk

Guest speaker David Beauchage Johnson launched our season at the Millbrook Legion Hall with a dynamic talk on Indigenous Peoples — Then and Now, Here and Beyond.



Glenn Fallis Presentation

In November, the MCHS hosted Glenn Fallis, founder of Voyageur Canoe, who shared engaging stories about the company's evolution and Millbrook's significant role in that journey.



Community Spotlight

Remembering our History Project

Recalling the past is one of the objectives of our local Historical Society. One way to do that is to record in some way the stories that our residents tell.

On Thursday, January 29, MCHS will host a Lunch & Learn event, 1:00-3:00 pm, at the Millbrook branch of Cavan Monaghan Libraries, in the Old Millbrook School, so that together we can explore ways to preserve the memories of local events and personalities. Taking the lead on this project

is Karyn Swaffield who participated in the Library's very successful Collecting Our Stories program. With that experience, Karyn is looking forward to welcoming both storytellers and good listeners. "Remember," Karyn notes, "history is anything that happened before yesterday so we hope we have contributors of all ages."

All are welcome to this free event that will launch our Remembering our History Project.



Bernie Hancock Curates Historical Display

Bernie Hancock has been curating the Historical Society display at the Millbrook branch of Cavan Monaghan Libraries. From his personal collection, he has brought vintage games and memorabilia, including I Drive Safely, a 1930s board game published by the Ontario Department of Highways. Distributed to schools, it taught teens the rules of the road before they got behind the wheel.

A Snapshot in History

Preserving the Past in a Digital Age



MCHS Board member Dan Bourgeois has been taking the lead on our digitization project, photographing and scanning our photo collection, postcards and local newspapers to enable online research by the public. Volunteer help welcome! Above: Miss Davies' class, Carmel School, 1929.

Special Thanks

Millbrook Farm & Pet Supply

MCHS gives a special "shout-out" to Angela and Michelle at Millbrook Farm & Pet Supplies for championing the production of our second edition of the Heritage Millbrook Self-Guided Tour booklet.

Peterborough County Cultural Mapping Project

This past summer, MCHS archivist Kim McLeod worked closely with Cavan Monaghan Township staff, gathering and mapping information about our heritage properties and places of cultural significance for the Peterborough County Cultural Mapping Project.

Website Wizard

Volunteer Bruce Gazley, our website manager, is unendingly supportive and eager to expand the usefulness and accessibility of our online presence. Watch for it!

| Coming Up

Heritage Week Celebrates Local Arts



The Millbrook Gallery. Photo credit: The Ripple. October 1995.

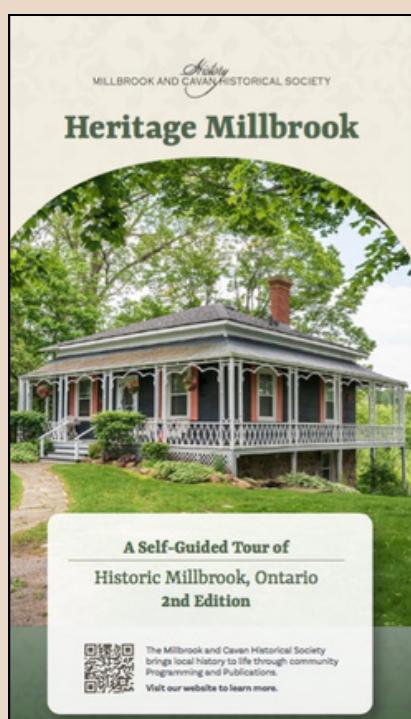
Save the date: Thursday, February 26, 2026, 7:00 pm, at the Millbrook Legion Hall. We look forward to welcoming four founding members of the Millbrook Gallery who will share their memories in an illustrated talk about this dynamic collective over its duration for the better part of a decade, beginning in the mid-90's.

The Millbrook Gallery was founded by eighteen local artists representing the rich artistic community in and around the Millbrook/Cavan area. Located at 19 King St. E., the collective

exhibited the best in diverse arts and fine crafts, including works in clay, wood working, painting and sculpture. Beyond regular member and guest exhibitions, the Gallery also sponsored live jazz concerts, vintage film evenings and a remarkable reading series that brought in such acclaimed authors as Mark Kingwell, Ronald Wright and Lorna Crozier.

This event celebrates the creativity and talents that make our community a rich cultural hub and an exciting place to be. All welcome at this Heritage Week special event.

New Heritage Millbrook Guide



MCHS produced a self-guided tour guide, *Heritage Millbrook*, in 2021, highlighting some of the heritage properties in Millbrook. The guide was distributed free of charge through local businesses and tourism outlets in the region. It was a hit!

The guide has been revised and updated, with the 2nd edition ready for distribution this January. MCHS acknowledges with gratitude the businesses that generously sponsored the guide. We thank them for their support, and in turn, we hope you will support them:

- NEXICOM
- MKennedy & Team, Royal Service
- REMAX Hallmark Eastern Realty
- Millbrook Home Hardware
- Millbrook Mercantile
- Millbrook Cathedral
- The Peddler Bistro
- 4th Line Theatre
- Millbrook Foodland
- IDA Pharmacy Millbrook
- Millbrook PC
- Mitchel's Cake & Chocolate Co.
- ReThink Hair
- Moody's Bar & Grill
- Field Day Art + B&B
- Blank Canvas Hair & Art
- Millbrook Farm & Pet Supplies
- Marjorie McDonald, photographer.

Board of Directors

Presenting the 2025-2026 Board Members



Alex Bushell took the lead in the campaign to save Needler's Mill, beginning in 2015, after Otonabee Conservation declared the mill surplus to its needs and it was threatened with demolition. Alex worked tirelessly as one of the two project managers as the mill was repaired and moved onto a solid, new foundation, and his focus on the Board is the continuing maintenance of this landmark.



Ashley Beamer brings nearly two decades of experience in project management and cultural heritage. She has worked on large-scale digital archive initiatives for the Scottish Government and, more recently, has been involved in technical and data projects for intergovernmental agencies. Recently, she and her husband acquired a historic property on Main Street and are thrilled to become active members of the community and the Historical Society.



Celia Hunter has been involved in the community over the years as sometime local newspaper contributor and editor and as Recreation Coordinator before amalgamation for both Millbrook and Cavan Township. Hooked on history, she has served as MCHS president since 2011 and recognizes that new opportunities and exciting ideas just keep presenting themselves, sustaining the momentum and keeping things fresh.



Chanelle Courville joined the Millbrook Historical Society through her role on the Municipal Revitalization and Heritage Advisory Committee for Cavan Monaghan. She seeks to connect both organizations by promoting initiatives that celebrate Millbrook's heritage. Along with her husband, she owns the David Chambers heritage home and believes in honoring the past while embracing the future to preserve Millbrook's character and guide its growth.



Dan Bourgeois and his family have been residents of Millbrook for more than 30 years. From a young age, he has had a passion for studying history, both in his local area and globally. Dan views his participation in the Historical Society as an excellent opportunity to deepen his understanding of local history and share this knowledge with the community. Dan writes a regular column for the Millbrook Times (also posted on our website) and leads our digitization project.



Jason Wraight moved to Millbrook eight years ago and, eager to get to know his new community, he became an active member of the Millbrook Masonic Lodge. Introduced to the work of the Historical Society when his property was featured on the Blocks & Blooms tour in 2024, Jason is interested in connecting with members to explore ideas on how to enhance the membership experience.



Karla Buckborough is the CEO of Cavan Monaghan Libraries and has been instrumental in establishing and maintaining the collaborative relationship that MCHS and the Libraries enjoy. Her extensive experience in inclusive and innovative programming is of great benefit as the Board explores new projects. She also takes the lead at our events on the tech front, ensuring the audio-visual equipment is up and running smoothly and effectively.



Kayrn Swaffield brings her experience and expertise to MCHS and the Board, skills evidenced by her effectiveness in the Collecting Our Stories project spearheaded by Cavan Monaghan Libraries as part of a Seniors grant in 2024. Karyn has developed the Remembering our History project for MCHS which launches this month. She looks forward to welcoming participants willing to tell their stories and volunteers eager to listen.



Rosemary Bushell ably fills the role of treasurer for MCHS. A long-time resident and formerly with TD Canada Trust, Rosemary has embraced retirement with energy and enthusiasm, and steps up to lend a hand wherever and whenever needed – often in charge of hospitality at our events. She is also active in the community as a member of the Decorating Committee for the BIA, and as a Sandwich Sister.