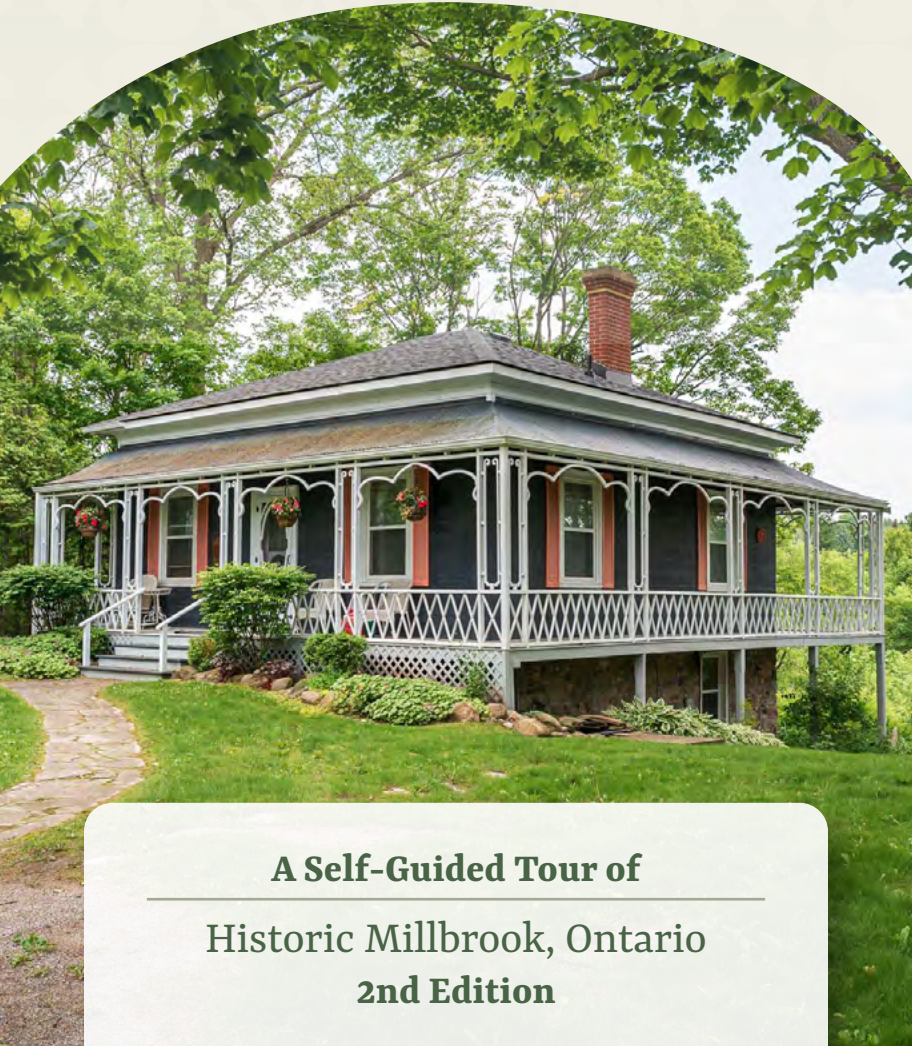


History
MILLBROOK AND CAVAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Heritage Millbrook



A Self-Guided Tour of

Historic Millbrook, Ontario
2nd Edition



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The properties featured in this Guide help to tell the story of Millbrook from the time of settlement in the early 19th century. The descriptions that accompany the photographs highlight the variety of architectural styles, and also sketch in some of the personalities and events that have shaped this Village in the Valley.

For additional content and a full list of properties in Cavan Monaghan designated as architecturally significant by the Ontario Heritage Trust, visit millbrookcavanhs.org. The first edition of this Guide is also available there.

Dedication:

This self-guided tour booklet has been produced in memory of Peter Ramsay, who was a tireless champion of local history and passionate about our rich architectural inheritance. Peter fiercely supported heritage designation as a way to safeguard the integrity of our local architectural legacy.





As a proud sponsor of this guided tour of our community's treasured historical homes, I am honored to help preserve the stories and character that make our town unique. My commitment to our community goes beyond real estate—it's about building lasting relationships and supporting the heritage that shapes our future.

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3 Bank Street North

The Ontario Cottage

Built in 1837, the Ontario Cottage is probably the oldest surviving house in Millbrook. The exotic architectural style is said to have been popular with retired British army officers who came to Canada after the Napoleonic Wars, bringing with them memories of foreign building designs.

This exquisitely preserved one and a half storey home with full length awning-roofed veranda, fanciful treillage, large windows and tall, decorative chimneys is built into the bank overlooking Baxter Creek, where the original south-facing front door would welcome visitors who came by boat or alongside the bank of the stream. The principal rooms are in the lower portion of the house, with bedrooms on the upper floor. The barn on the property is a reproduction of the original one on site.

The townships of Cavan and Monaghan were surveyed in 1817 by Samuel G. Wilmot with assistance from John Deyell. Irish-born Deyell settled in what is now the hamlet of South Monaghan. The house he built for his family in the mid 1800s still stands on the north bank of Squirrel Creek. He is credited with naming the two townships Cavan and Monaghan, granting land for the first school and what is now Centreville-Harmony Church, and establishing Cavan township's first grist mill where Millbrook's Needler's Mill stands today.



1 Dufferin Street

The Old Millbrook School

This imposing brick building, commanding a view of Needler's Mill, the millpond and beyond, was built in 1889 to accommodate a growing school age population. Consisting of just the four classrooms in the north half, it replaced a number of smaller schools scattered throughout the village, the largest of which was destroyed by fire in 1887.

In 1896 the School Board instituted the teaching of Continuation classes. The architecturally compatible four-room addition was completed in 1923, with a central staircase integrating the two sides. The Millbrook High School was classed as Grade A in 1934, allowing students to finish their high school in Millbrook instead of commuting or boarding in Port Hope.

A new high school opened in 1960 on Tupper Street. Primary-Elementary School classes continued here until 1982, when the building was deemed unfit. It was subsequently declared surplus and was threatened with demolition. Saved by community volunteers, funds were raised for repairs and renovations, and the Old Millbrook School became a community hub. The building was purchased from Friends of the Old Millbrook School by the municipality in 1993.



8 Dufferin Street

The Alexander Armstrong House

Horticulturist and implement merchant Alexander Thomas Armstrong built this house in 1880. He was the grandson of one of the township's first settlers, David Armstrong and his wife Violet who emigrated from County Tyrone, Ireland in 1818. This house remained in the Armstrong family until 1986.

A vernacular example of the Italianate style, it features contrasting coloured brick on the corners, ornate brackets under the eaves, and upper windows rounded at the top. Elements drawn from other periods include the Regency-style French windows that open to a long verandah, and the neoclassical elliptical fanlight over the front door.

The board and batten addition was added in 1998, and the picket fence is a faithful reproduction of the original. A miniature rendering of the house as a birdhouse was installed at the Community Garden, adjacent to the Old Millbrook School, in memory of former homeowner Bruce Lepper, deeply respected both as one of the premier songbird and wildfowl wood carvers in the world and as an earnest advocate for local heritage.



6 Gravel Road

The William Grier House

The land for this solid brick one and three quarter storey Regency Cottage was a Crown grant to James Hunter registered in February 1825. In 1863, William Grier purchased this property from Robert Medd.

This is, in many ways, a typical Regency Cottage with its square symmetry, centre hall plan and the characteristic cottage style roof. The Regency taste favoured congruency, and the large windows reflected a sensitivity to pastoral surroundings.

This style, well established in the province as early as the 1830s, retained its popularity through the mid 19th century. The small front gable with its rounded sectional window and the solid brick construction suggest this house was built in the 1860s.

Next door is the Clarry House, 8 Gravel Road. Watchmaker and jeweller Richard Guy bought this property in 1876. Of note are the Neo-Classical entrance with fan transom and sidelights and the Italianate brackets decorating the eaves of the low hip roof. The full verandah and front steps are recent. In 1892 the property was purchased by Harriet Clarry, and remained in the Clarry family until 1989.



74 King Street East

The Smith House

This 1885 yellow brick home displays the characteristics of Queen Anne Revival, as demonstrated by the decorative shingled gables. Some angular features suggest Stick style influence, a variation of Queen Anne, with its vertical emphasis, long slender windows and sharply pitched roofs. A large bay window on the front façade is decorated by wrought iron, and the west face has two smaller bay windows with balconies.

Originally part of a Crown grant to Thomas Hutchison in 1824, the first owners were likely the Smiths, a family of merchants. They sold the property to Frederick Pendrie, partner in Fowler and Pendrie's Dry Goods Store downtown, who eventually settled at 49 King Street East. In the 1980s, artist and illustrator Huntley Brown, with his wife Maureen, opened a studio here in their home.

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49 King Street East

The Pendrie House

This well-proportioned townhouse, built around 1880 of buff-coloured brick, displays Gothic Revival features such as narrow windows and a steep gable above the entrance. The verandah has decorative treillage above the posts, and the stepped brick treatment at the tops of the windows is striking. The main entrance includes a Neo-Classical fan transom and rectangular sidelights.

Mr. Fred Pendrie, partner in Fowler & Pendrie's Dry Goods Store, lived here with his sister in the late 1800s, and the house remained in the family for 94 years.

In 1947, Dr. and Mrs. Stuart became the owners. Dr. Stuart, who served as a dentist in the Canadian Armed Forces during WWII, continued providing dental care here in his home-based office for another 25 years.



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9 Bank Street South

The Kerr House

This charming frame house was built in the early 1900s and was originally located at the corner of Union and Centre Streets. For many years this was the home of the Kerr family. Hubert Anderson Kerr served as Manager of the Bank of Toronto in Millbrook.

The house was moved in December 1993 to allow for expansion of the grocery store, then an IGA, owned by Didi Calhoun. Klarer and Company, general contractor for the IGA expansion, undertook to have the house moved here to a vacant lot in response to Ms. Calhoun's offer of the house to anyone who would pay for moving it.

In addition to moving and renovating this home, Karl Klarer also built 7 Bank Street South and the reproduction Ontario Cottage at 11 Bank Street South, completed in 2008.

At 8 Bank Street South is the John Ball House, designated a heritage property in 1994. Built in 1866 for successful entrepreneur and craftsman John Ball and his wife Elizabeth, this double brick, one and three quarter storey house is a fine example of Ontario Vernacular architecture. The projected frontispiece would have been an "avant-garde" feature at the time the house was built.



64 King Street East

The Alexander Lang House

Designated as a heritage property in 1985, this buff-coloured brick home is described as an interesting example of Italianate architecture in a restrained manner. The land on which it sits was part of a Crown grant to Thomas Hutchison in 1824, sold to Thomas Kells in 1833. In 1873 Alexander Lang bought the property and is credited with building this house before once again selling in 1876.

The property slopes steeply down to the former location of Olan's Saw Mill, one of the later mills to operate in Millbrook. In 1941 Stan Olan and his wife Verna moved to 62 King Street East, next to the Alexander Lang House, and built a sawmill below the house, using machinery from another sawmill he had operated in Manvers Township. From 1948 to 1971 the mill produced lumber for many new homes built locally and in Oshawa, and timbers for Canadian General Electric in Peterborough from trees Stan Olan cut down himself in area woodlots. The mill site is now part of the Alexander Lang House property.



60 King Street East

Maplehurst

Thomas Christopher Kells, tanner and currier, purchased this property in 1827. He played a prominent role in the early development of the village and township, being instrumental in naming the village and establishing agricultural fairs that positioned Millbrook as the township's market town. This section of King Street was known for some time as Kells Street.

Thomas C. Kells' first wife Jane Henry died in 1834, leaving Thomas with five children. He remarried in 1835 and had another nine children including Thomas Gillespie Kells.

It was Thomas G. Kells, successful merchant and banker, who built the current residence after fire destroyed the original frame home in 1875. A row of mature maples sheltered the house from the street, giving it its name. A large verandah ran along the west side of the house where a more recent deck is now, and the property boasted a tennis court. Thomas G., who never married, lived here with his mother and two unmarried sisters, Mary Elizabeth and Annie. The house remained in the Kells family until 1928.



37 King Street East

The Robert Deyell House

Robert Deyell, one of five sons of John Deyell (the first settler in the township) built this beautiful two storey brick veneer and frame house in 1870. The property extends from King Street to Dufferin Street and once included a tennis court and summerhouse.

This house is a mature version of the Italian villa style described in Andrew Jackson Downing's pattern books. With clapboard siding, it features a Tuscan tower with wrought iron cresting, a hipped roof with deeply overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets, and a side verandah.

In 1945 the property was purchased by local furniture store owner and undertaker George T. MacPherson. The house became the village's funeral parlour and continued to serve that purpose when the property was sold to John Wallace Haw in 1954. The J. Wallace Haw Funeral Home was purchased by Comstock's of Peterborough in 1965, and continued operating until 1972, when the house became a private residence once more, with spells as a cooking school and fine dining establishment, and as a B&B.



14 Distillery Street

Hamilton House

Built between 1875 and 1885, this home is a fine example of Ontario vernacular architecture. Named for Percy Hamilton, a long-time resident and Elementary School principal, it reflects the craftsmanship and practicality of the late 19th century, with steeply pitched roofs and central gables.

Ontario vernacular architecture includes local styles like the Ontario Cottage and Classic Farmhouse, using regional materials suited to climate and community needs. The three bedroom home retains pine floors with stove pipe holes that once heated the upstairs rooms.

In 2015, a period porch was rebuilt and the home repainted in a Victorian colour palette, enhancing its historic charm.

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1 Needler Lane

Needler's Mill

The first mill in the township was built here in 1820, financed by John Deyell, on land owned by James Deyell. This flour and grist mill flourished, and Millbrook grew up around it. Destroyed by fire in 1857, the property was sold to Walker Needler who constructed an impressive three storey mill on the site, managed by son George. An illustration of the mill is featured in Belden's Atlas of Northumberland and Durham, 1878.

This landmark mill burned to the ground in 1911. A part of the Needlers' Cedar Valley Mill, built in 1830 by Adam Scott, was moved to Millbrook so that milling could continue. This is the mill that stands here today. It operated as a flour mill until the early 1970s. An adjacent sawmill, built in 1922, provided lumber for construction until 1959.

In 1967, Otonabee Conservation bought the mill but declared it surplus to its needs in 2015. With strong community support, the Historical Society bought the derelict mill. The purchase agreement required removal of the penstock, the machine shed housing the turbine, and the sawmill, and the mill to be lifted onto a new foundation. It stands as a reminder of the key role mills played in this area's development.



17-21 King Street East

The Wood and Kells Block

This magnificent set of buildings, built after “the Great Fire of 1875”, was designed by up-and-coming architect Cornelius John Soule (1851-1939) who had also drawn up the plans for the Town Hall (1 King Street East). The project was commissioned by Archibald Wood and Thomas G. Kells, both prominent local bankers and merchants. The block originally extended further west but two buildings were lost to fire in 1960.

This is a fine example of Second Empire design with French classical influence. The commercial block features a projecting parapet, decorative brackets and ornate brick designs under the eaves. The mansard roof is continuous with oval decorated dormers; heavy brackets are pronounced on either side of the windows.

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22-42 King Street East

The Turner Block

These commercial buildings date from after the 1875 fire that destroyed most of Millbrook's commercial core situated on King Street and extending up Tupper Street. The ground floor premises housed a variety of shops and services while often professional offices were located on the second floor, with apartments above. The Italianate façade of 42 King Street East is notable for the preservation of the original shape of the second and third storey windows as designed in 1876.

The block is named for Dr. Henry A. Turner who for 20 years operated a private hospital on the second floor of 34 King Street East, over his office, drug store, and his Turner Telephone Company. With eight beds to serve medical, surgical and maternity patients, Dr. Turner oversaw the birth of 350 babies here.

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MILLBROOK'S HOTELS

5 King Street East

The Former Victoria Hotel

The Victoria Hotel survived the 1875 fire, thanks to the efforts of members of Forepaugh's Circus, staying at the hotel at the time. It is one of Millbrook's five hotels catering to travellers in the second half of the 19th century and into the 20th. Three of the buildings remain.

Records show that in 1869, the Victoria Hotel hosted the village's gala New Year's Eve Ball. In 1941, it became the home of Millbrook's independent telephone company, known first as Docon Telephones, then Durham, becoming Nexicom in 1998.

Also still standing is the Queen's Hotel, at the corner of King and Tupper/Mill streets. It predates the 1875 fire and, with regular horse and carriage service, catered to commercial travellers arriving by rail at the west end of town. Its rival was the Dominion Hotel at the corner of King and Hay streets, which was taken down in 1936 and replaced by an up-to-date creamery.

At 6 King Street West is the property John Gillott built in 1876 to accommodate three shops at street level with apartments above. John Kells bought the building in 1914, naming it The Waverly Inn.



1 King Street East

Former Town Hall

The first town hall was built on this site in 1844-45, a frame building costing \$500. In October 1873, Cornelius John Soule was approved as architect for a new town hall building, which was completed in 1875. Soule, whose long and distinguished career took him across Canada, also designed the Wood and Kells Block, 17-21 King St. East.

This imposing brick structure first served as the council offices for both Millbrook and Cavan Township, and as the local courthouse. A six cell jail in the basement infrequently held prisoners awaiting trial. Into the 1950s, the tower bell announced the work hours, ringing at 7 am, 12 noon, 1 pm and 6 pm. The auditorium upstairs played a vital role in community affairs, hosting concerts, dances, film nights and political rallies, along with stage productions by both local groups and professional touring companies.

Of note architecturally are the two-storey pilasters on all four façades, the paired eave brackets, the portico on the north façade with balcony above, and decorative brickwork.

In 2005, the town hall was sold to local telecommunications company Nexicom.



2 Hay Street

The Old Fire Hall

With its dramatic Tuscan tower, this elegant, understated buff-coloured brick fire hall is a fine example of Italianate architecture, popular during the last quarter of the 19th century. Built in 1881, the building was used continuously as a fire hall until 1968. The three-storey tower allowed for the hoses to be suspended to dry.

The first piece of fire fighting equipment purchased by the village in 1880 was a six-man hand pumper. In 1884, a steam-driven pumper drawn by a team of horses was bought second-hand from London, Ontario and served the village for more than 40 years.

In 1993, the Firefighters Association established The Old Fire Hall Museum here, which features some of the antique engines and equipment.

An advertisement for Moody's Bar & Grill. On the left, a tall glass of dark beer with a thick head of foam sits on a white napkin. Next to it is a bowl of golden-brown fried food, likely chicken or fish. The background is a dark wooden surface. The text "GREAT BEER" is written vertically on the left, and "GREAT FOOD" is written horizontally above the bowl. On the right, the "MOODY'S BAR & GRILL" logo is displayed in a decorative, ornate frame. Below the logo, the phone number (705) 932-6663, the address 3 Tupper Street, Millbrook, and the website www.moodysmillbrook.com are listed.

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A photograph of a Home Hardware store exterior. The sign above the entrance reads "Home hardware" in white and yellow letters on a red background. A large red thumbs-up icon is overlaid on the right side of the image.

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The logo for Millbrook Home Hardware, featuring a red square with a white "hh" icon, followed by the text "Millbrook Home hardware" in black and red.

Millbrook
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A photograph of an outdoor seating area for Millbrook Mercantile. It features a large black umbrella, wooden tables, and several potted plants. A sign for "MILLBROOK MERCANTILE" is centered in the foreground. Two inset images show gourmet food and home decor items.

MILLBROOK MERCANTILE

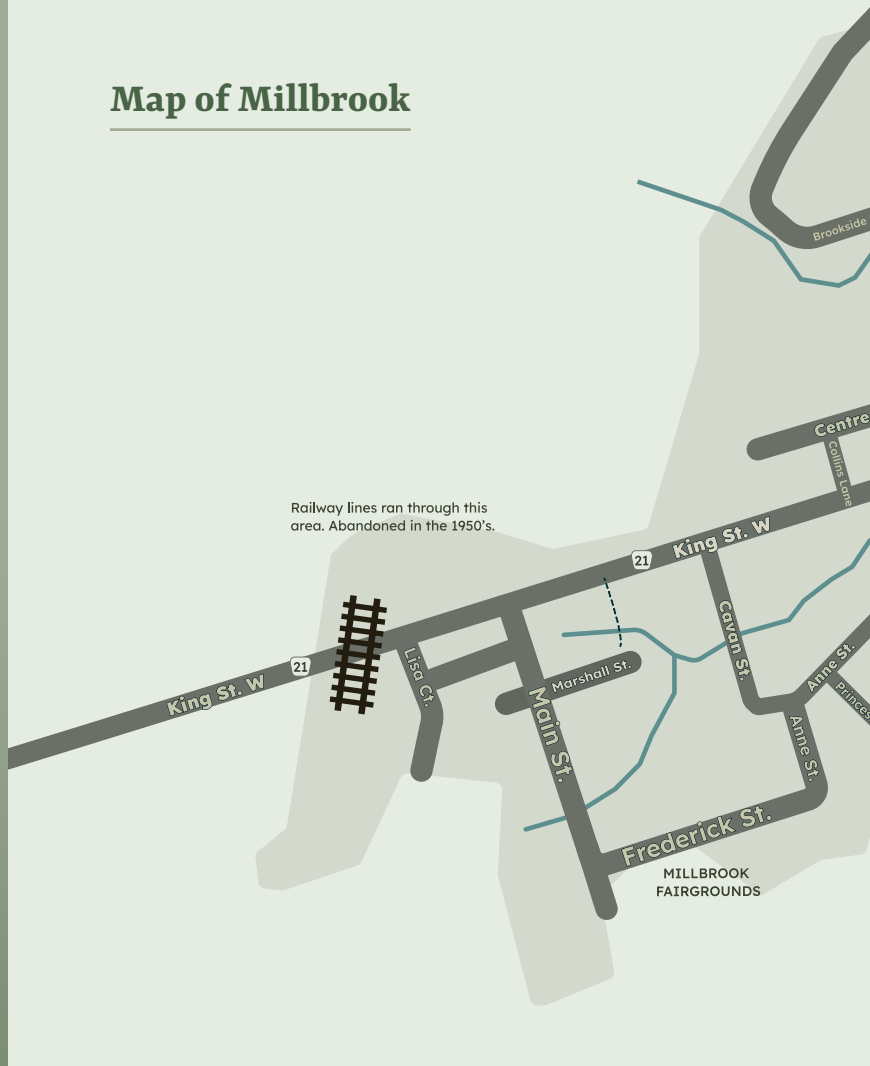
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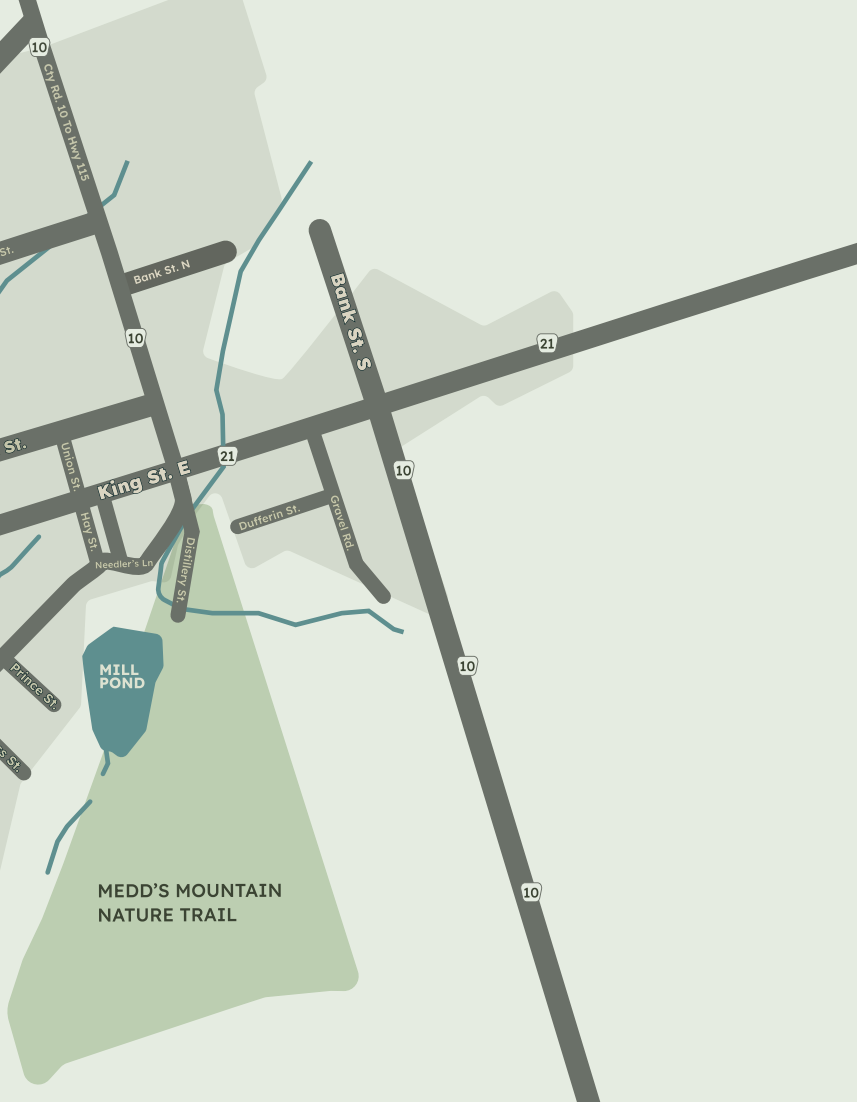
Map of Millbrook



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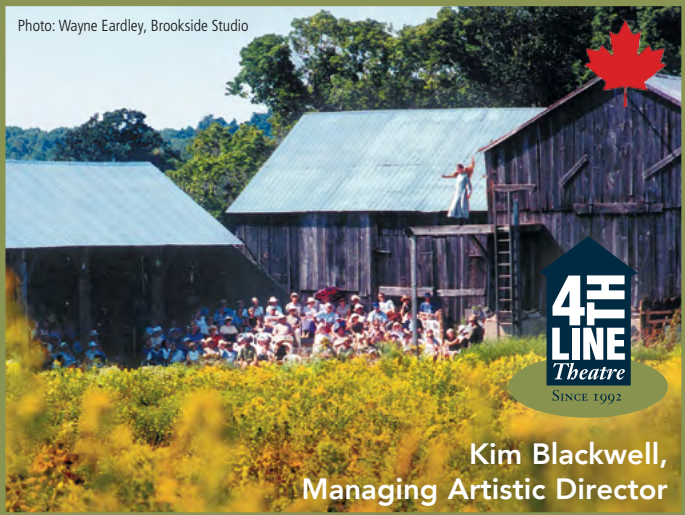
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7 Anne Street

The Needler House

In 1857, Walker Needler who owned and operated the Cedar Valley Mill, bought the Deyell Mill site and surrounding land, and constructed an impressive new mill. His eldest son George managed the enterprise and had this red brick house built, circa 1864, overlooking the fine, new three-storey flour mill.

The style is Ontario vernacular, combining elements of Gothic Revival, Georgian and Regency. Features of note include the peaked gable over the front door (facing east), pointed lancet windows in the back wing, symmetry of the bays and chimneys, and French windows that lead out onto the large verandah. The south lawn slopes down to the millpond.

Next door is the Samuel Richardson House, 13 Anne Street. This house built in 1880 is an example of late Victorian Gothic design. In contrast to the symmetry and balance of Georgian and Regency styles represented by 7 Anne Street, note the variety in size and shape of the windows, the signature kingposts and quatrefoils, and the dramatic bargeboard trim on the off-centre verandah.



8 Anne Street

Second Empire House

This fine example of a Second Empire home is distinguished by its characteristic cedar shake mansard roof, tall rectangular windows and elegant symmetry. It was built by carriage maker Alexander Ferguson in 1861. Carriage makers provided a much sought after service and earned respect for their craftsmanship. Fine carriages were a status symbol of the first order. Mr. Ferguson is credited with building several of Millbrook's heritage homes, each with its own distinctive style. He also served as reeve of Millbrook from 1883 to 1895.

To the east of this house is a barn quilt block, Peak Garden, a replica of the homeowner's appliqué quilt bursting with lupins, foxgloves, fuchias and forget-me-nots. It captures the memory of a family's treasured mountaintop garden, and is reflected in the colourful flower beds that surround the house.

The story behind this, and other barn quilt blocks in Millbrook and Cavan Monaghan Township, is available on the Cavan Monaghan Barn Quilt Trails website, cmbqt.com.



10 Anne Street

Doak House

Alexander Ferguson purchased the land here in 1877 for \$150 from William H. Sowden, and sold it in 1888 to Mary Ann Doak for \$1,600, which makes it likely that this house can safely be attributed to Ferguson. R.J. Doak served as a Justice of the Peace, and on Millbrook Council through the early 20th century, and ultimately as Reeve in 1914-17. The Georgian elements of this red-brick house reflect the image of the solid citizen. Later whitewashed and divided into apartments with an exterior metal staircase across the face of the house, this property has now been significantly restored.

The properties here on the north side of Anne Street dip steeply down to a creek that flows from the northwest, under King Street, and down to Baxter Creek. It was once dammed to form what was called Factory Pond. Here, Gordon McIvor established his oatmeal mill in 1850. His story is featured on one of the panels at the information kiosk next to Needler's Mill. The pond drew skaters in the winter on Saturday afternoons and moonlit nights.



5 Prince Street

The Williams House

Carriage maker Alexander Ferguson bought the two lots that make up this property in 1866 and 1869, which suggests he was the original owner of this picturesque vernacular home.

The symmetrical design in the Victorian Vernacular style is combined with Gothic influences in the high-pitched front gable and woodwork.

This was home to naturalists and bryologists Claire and Harry Williams, who both taught in Millbrook. An internationally recognized expert on mosses and liverworts, Harry was awarded an honorary doctorate in 1980 from Trent University. A room at the Old Millbrook School is named in his honour.

Next door, at 7 Prince Street is the Wilgar House, the only example of a homestead-style house in the village. Accented by a large bay window and front verandah with decorative brackets, the land it occupies was sold to Margaret Wilgar in 1877. A brick beneath one of the windows bears the initials WW and the date 1886, perhaps the completion date of this house.

Descriptions of 19 and 21 Anne Street, and 29 Cavan Street, are found in the first edition of *Heritage Millbrook*, available on our website, millbrookcavanhs.org.



6 Prince Street

The John A. Nattrass House

This Victorian Farmhouse style home was built in 1865 for dentist John Abraham Nattrass. The Victorian elements include the large, open verandah with railings and decorative columns, and the semi-circular window and shutters in the front gable.

The Nattress family name (same family, different spelling) is legend in Millbrook, with three generations serving Millbrook and the area as barbers for over a century. Following the lead of an uncle, Harold Nattress opened his shop in 1901 and barbered for 61 years before handing on his clippers to son Lyle, who continued the tradition. Lyle barbered in downtown Millbrook for 63 years.

Next door, 10 Prince Street was the home of Needler's Mill miller Henry C. Attwooll. Built in 1885 by David Chambers, this substantial home commands a view of the millpond, with property that originally extended south to meet Baxter Creek at the end of Prince Street. In the late 1960s, Jim and Elsie McMaster, who ran the Stedman's store next to Lyle Nattress' barbershop, purchased the property. Their son Ashton recalls that, until the municipal water system was installed, the water for homeowners on Anne and Prince Streets was piped under the pond from an artesian well on Medd's Mountain.



41 Main Street

McDowell Farmhouse

Built in the late 1800s, this two storey red brick Italianate style farmhouse and surrounding land is recorded as having been home to early Millbrook residents including George Needler (miller), as well as other farmers and merchants. By 1919 the property was owned and run by the McDowell family who farmed poultry and other livestock until the late 20th century. Recently, based on early photographs of the house, the front porch wrapping around the gothic L-shape layout was reinstated to match the original verandah and eave corbels. The home features reconstructed rounded windows, ten-foot ceilings, and the original curved staircase.

Main Street was so named because William Henry “Squire” Sowden determined that the commercial hub of Millbrook should be situated on property he owned at the west end of the village. Perhaps he had a part in having the railway station built on or adjacent to his considerable land holdings (where the Millbrook Medical Centre stands now). In the late 1860s or early ‘70s, he built a grand home, known as the Mansion, overlooking Baxter Creek just southwest of the current Fairgrounds. At the north end of Main Street, where it meets King Street, he had a fine, three storey business block constructed. Both buildings burned to the ground; the grand commercial property before it had a chance to open, and the Mansion in 1893.



10 Main Street

Ivy Cottage

Nestled behind its signature white picket fence at the corner of Main and Marshall Streets is Ivy Cottage.

It is said that this modest wood frame house was matched with a similar one on the southeast corner of Marshall Street. Built in 1901, this property originally extended east along Marshall Street to include a barn and other out buildings, and was known for its beautiful gardens.

At the east end of Marshall Street, number 10, is the William O'Brian House, built in 1892. This Italianate townhouse is red stretcher brick with contrasting yellow brick quoins. Large double brackets are evenly spaced under the eaves. The main entrance is off centre of the front façade and features a flat wood door with coloured glass transom, decorative mouldings, and semi-circular windows. The second storey has a balcony with decorative railing and a segmented Second Empire door. A graceful verandah sweeps around two sides of this house that remained in the O'Brian family until 1962.

Next door to Ivy Cottage, at 6 Main Street, is the William Sowden House, built in 1875-1880, in the style of an Ontario vernacular farmhouse. The front entrance features a Loyalist-Revival fan transom and uncommon divided sidelights. Both the front and side gables show unusual tracery designs.



60 King Street West

The Westacott House

This house was built by Robert J. Armstrong sometime after 1870 when the property was assessed at \$75, but before 1878 when it appears on the Belden Historical Atlas map of Millbrook.

Architecturally, the house is a combination of styles but displays many of the characteristics of Vernacular Gothic with steep gables and prominent kingposts. The verandah posts are topped by intricate trellage that harmonizes with the delicate bargeboard, giving a “gingerbread” look to the house. The large bay window further enriches the front façade. Most of the windows are of a long, rectangular shape.

The house was built in stages, probably expanding as money allowed and size of family demanded. The original owners must have been prosperous as the interior is very spacious and carefully constructed.

Among the former owners were the Rev. A.G. Westmacott, rector at St. Thomas’ Anglican Church from 1911 to 1922, and his wife Caroline. They employed not only a maid but also a full-time gardener who landscaped and maintained a formal English garden.



57 King Street West

Former Presbyterian Manse

Formal and solid, this large two storey house exhibits elements of the Classical Revival and Georgian styles with a square portico supporting a balcony on the front façade, striking yellow brick quoins, and a hip roof. Built between 1867 and 1883, a full verandah once extended across the front with smaller verandahs on the east and west sides. The entrance features an elliptical fanlight and arch-topped sidelights.

This symmetrical, red brick home was the Presbyterian manse until 1965. One of the first ministers, Rev. William Johnston, resided here with his family from 1894 to 1914, followed by Dr. Lee, 1915-1921. The last minister to live in the manse was the Rev. Gerald Graham, 1959-1965.



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40 King Street West

Millbrook Cathedral

Formerly St. Andrew's United Church

Renovated and updated as a non-denominational wedding and events venue called Millbrook Cathedral, the cornerstone of this Gothic-style church, originally the Millbrook Methodist Church, was laid in 1881 and opened in 1882. Built by the masons, carpenters and ironworkers of Millbrook, it was heralded as the largest village church between Toronto and Montreal, and was described as “one of the finest church buildings east of Toronto”. It could accommodate 450 on the floor of the auditorium and another 350 in the balconies that extended around the auditorium, supported by cast-iron pillars.

In 1925, it became the Millbrook United Church when the union of churches occurred, and in 1930, was renamed St. Andrew's United Church. The balconies were taken down, except at the south end, in 1940. The original wooden steeple had to be removed due to rot, and the ornamental spires and sweeping front steps have been lost.

The church served the local United Church congregation until 2004.



32 King Street West

The Archibald Wood House

This impressive home was built in 1861 for prominent merchant and banker Archibald Wood who, in partnership with T.G. Kells, owned the private banking firm that bore their names as well as a commercial enterprise in the downtown set of buildings they commissioned after the downtown 1876 fire.

Wood and Kells invested heavily in the Millbrook Colonization Syndicate that saw a major exodus of Millbrook's population in the early 1880s, moving west under Squire Sowden's leadership to settle what was to become Souris, Manitoba.

The private bank of Wood and Kells sold to the Bank of Toronto in 1912. In banking circles, the Wood name lives on in the Wood Gundy Brokerage firm.

This spacious house was constructed of white brick four layers thick, and originally had a verandah around three sides. The interior afforded plenty of room for the Wood family of five daughters and four sons. Interior details include an intricately designed metal ceiling in the drawing room. The exterior was covered with white stucco in 1954.

The two red-brick homes on either side were built for two of his daughters. They are one and a half storey, vernacular-style homes built in a "T" shape with a cross gable roof.



33 King Street West

Dr. Henry A. Turner's House

Matthew Hunter is credited with building, circa 1840, the one storey cottage that now makes up part of the first floor. The second storey and additions to the main floor were undertaken in 1858 when James M. Brodie bought the property from William Sowden who had purchased the land from James Deyell in 1852.

This house can be described as Regency style in a Georgian frame. The importance of the relationship with nature that characterizes a Regency house is evident in the long windows, the full-length verandah with balcony, and the low profile of the roof.

Dr. Henry A. Turner bought this house in 1893. His father, also called Dr. Henry Turner, practiced medicine in Millbrook and Cavan from 1853 to 1900. The younger Dr. Turner set up practice in 1898 and served the area until 1937. He had the brick garage constructed to house his automobile, the first in the village. He is also credited with glassing in the east verandah to create the village's first solarium. He opened a private hospital in 1915 over his office and drug store downtown at 34 King Street East and established a very efficient telephone system to better serve his patients.



24 King Street West

Fairweather

Described as “an exuberant example of Victorian Gothic”, this impressive family home, originally called Glenhaven, was built in 1876 for merchant Thomas Baxter Collins, owner of the private bank of T.B. Collins, which was sold to the Bank of Montreal in 1913.

Known as Fairweather, the design of the house is said to be modeled on a castle in Ireland. It sits on a fieldstone foundation with full basement. The triple-layered blonde brick came from the brickworks at 62 King Street East. The plan of this two and a half storey house is irregular, with both square-headed and segmented arched windows, trimmed with heavy moldings. Fretted bargeboard decorates the gables, and the brickwork is inset with a trefoil design.

T.B. Collins is credited with hosting Canada’s first prime minister here on several occasions. The second of the families to own this property, Dean and Gwennyth Cutmore, welcomed Canadian novelist and journalist Robertson Davies here often in the 1950s and ‘60s.

Collins Lane, now a walkway, links King Street with Centre Street.



28 King Street West

St. Thomas More Catholic Church

The first Presbyterian church to serve Millbrook was located to the west of Grace Presbyterian Cemetery (County Road 10 at Fallis Line); the second where the Millbrook South Cavan Public School is located. Both churches were destroyed by fire.

The site for this third church, opposite Fairweather on King Street West, was purchased in 1896 from Dr. Henry A. Turner by Miss Elizabeth O'Brian and donated to the Church. After viewing the Presbyterian Church in Fenelon Falls, plans were drawn up and the new Grace Presbyterian Church was built in an astonishing four and a half months, using both skilled and volunteer labour. The official opening was held on January 17, 1897.

In 1998, the church was purchased by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough, and renamed St. Thomas More. The Presbyterian congregation joined with the Centreville Church family in the nearby hamlet of South Monaghan, where in ecumenical fellowship, the United Church congregation also meets.



16 Centre Street

St. Thomas Anglican Church

The first Anglican church, built of red brick and facing east, rather than south, was erected here in 1858, but the congregation quickly outgrew it. A new St Thomas' Church, described as "a superb example of Ontario high church Gothic revival architecture," was constructed on the same site and opened in 1885.

The Rt. Rev. G.B. Snell, when he served as Bishop of the Diocese of Toronto, used to refer to St. Thomas' as "his little cathedral" because of the beauty of its stained glass windows, oak beams and wooden ceiling design, and the frescoes. Eighteen of the 23 windows were installed at the time of construction. The adjoining Church Hall was built as a Sunday School in 1878.

The Royal Canadian College of Organists has designated the St. Thomas' 1889 Lye Tracker Organ as a Historic Classification A instrument. Only five other instruments in Canada share this honour. A Tracker Organ is characterized by its mechanically driven action whereby pressing the keys directly activates a complex network of wood and metal levers and arms. The wind supply for this organ is now powered electrically but the original blowing system is still intact.



20 King Street West

The J.R. Eakins House

This unique two and a half storey house was probably built by Charles A. Weller in or about 1890. It features well-lit and generous reception rooms on the main floor and an elegant staircase. The detailing on the top storey and the curious windows, as well as the second floor cladding distinguish this home.

Records show that Weller, who practiced law in Millbrook and went on to become a distinguished judge in Peterborough, sold the property to barrister-at-law Robert Ruddy in 1908. In 1914, J.R. (John Robert) Eakins bought the property.

J.R. Eakins was a drover, as was his father before him. From the farm on the 4th concession, south of the village, Samuel Eakins dealt in cattle and purchased breeding stock in Scotland. He involved his sons J.R. and Ted, who accompanied their father so that they could supervise the livestock on the voyages home to Canada. J.R. became a widely known businessman and served on Millbrook Council for many years, from 1919 almost continuously until 1942. His wife, Mary, was one of the first leaders of the War Relief in Millbrook 1914-1918, and compiled 'A Brief History of Cavan Township and Millbrook Village from the Year 1816 to 1937'.



14 King Street West

The Millbrook Bank

Alexander Ferguson is credited with building this unusual property in the style of an Italian villa, in 1880. He leased it to the Millbrook Banking Company (probably Wood and Kells Bank). It was later the Methodist Church manse.

This Italianate structure features a pedimented projecting frontispiece that extends beyond the roof line, an enclosed balcony with decorative wrought-iron railing, a variety of window styles, and decorative mouldings and brackets. The heavy safe with its brass combination lock is still on the premises. Now divided into apartments, the east door opens to an elegant staircase leading to the second floor.

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10 King Street West

The Richard Howden House

This house was built in 1876 by William O'Brian for Richard Howden and his wife Eleanor. Richard Howden was the first reeve of Millbrook, serving in 1880.

This residence has many fine architectural features of the Gothic Revival style including its steep vertical lines and arched windows. Of particular interest is the wide variety of window styles unique to this home, including one on the east side described as "prairie style" with a rounded head and offset muntins, dividing the glass into grids. Also notable are the decorative eave brackets. The mature spruces are thought to have been planted at the building date.

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8 King Street West

Dr. Wright's House

Built in the 1880s by Archibald Wood, this red stretcher brick residence on a fieldstone foundation is a fine example of the Queen Anne Revival style of architecture. The exuberance of the style is exhibited in the angled frontispiece and asymmetrical styling. The high gabled roof, straight topped windows and abundance of dormers are all features of this style, as well as the multi-storey projecting bay. The intricate brickwork extends to the signature tall chimneys.

Dr. John W. Wright, known as Jack, began his practice in Millbrook in 1933. In 1939 he purchased this house, using the front entrance as his office. His examining room was in what conventionally would be the living room. Dr. Wright practiced here for 40 years, serving also as village coroner for many years, and as reeve from 1948 to 1953.

Until the Millbrook Medical Centre was opened in 1972, local doctors practiced in their own homes. Dr. Maurice E. Hobbs came to Millbrook in 1937 to take up the practice of the retiring Dr. Henry A. Turner, and settled at 25 Tupper Street. After working from Dr. Turner's office for the first year, he moved his practice to his home, where he continued until his retirement in 1972.



11 King Street West

The Archibald Armstrong House

Archibald Armstrong is credited with constructing several houses on King Street West in the 1880s, on properties he acquired as a developer and builder, including this vernacular Ontario farmhouse. Crisp, clean proportions distinguish this buff-coloured brick home built in 1885.

Next door, 9 King Street West is the beautifully restored Burnham House. The Burnham family came from New England as United Empire Loyalists and settled in Belleville, Cobourg and Port Hope. One branch of the family moved to Peterborough, playing a significant role in the development of that city. From that family came Elias L. Burnham, 1865 winner of the Gold Medal in General Practice Medicine at the University of Toronto, who moved to Millbrook about 1877 and practiced here until retiring in 1908. His son George lived in this house with his wife Jenny Nattress, and for 50 years ran a General Grocery Store at 17 King Street East. He also served on Millbrook Council. His daughter, Jean Burnham, began her teaching career in 1927 at Zion and then Fallis Line School before coming to Millbrook, where in 1970, she completed 43 years of teaching. She succeeded her father as homeowner, living here until her death in 1998.

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Marjorie McDonald, a resident of Millbrook since 1999, has been photographing the local area's people, events and natural landscapes for over 20 years. Find her work, including a gallery of the images in this guide, at marjoriemacdonald.ca.

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For information on other publications available from MCHS, visit our website, millbrookcavanhs.org

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