

Money would maintain historic collections

In your story regarding Council's deliberations on the acquisition of the 'Aurora Collection' of artifacts and documents from the Aurora Historical Society, I noticed a quotation attributed to Councillor Evelyn Buck, stating that 'The collection is already owned by the people of Aurora. They have already contributed to it, they have already paid for it, and they are being asked to pay another \$179,000....?'

For over forty years, I was involved as a volunteer in helping the Aurora Historical Society to build that collection. In the absence of a municipally operated museum, the AHS has held that collection in trust for the people of Aurora and managed it, cared for it and exhibited it to the best of its abilities.

The \$179,000 Councillor Buck refers to is the amount suggested in a joint report from the AHS and Town staff to properly maintain and display the collection. It has never been suggested that the Town should purchase this collection which, as she states, has been put together by the people of Aurora.

Ownership of the collection would be transferred to the Town by the AHS if the Town is able to make a commitment to operate a museum.

All of Aurora's neighbours, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Markham, Richmond Hill, King and Newmarket, have museums or heritage centres which are owned and operated directly by municipal governments. Their collections were begun by historical societies which gathered materials, in trust, on behalf of their communities.

The Town of Aurora is being asked to decide if it wishes to follow these models or not.

John McIntyre

Aurora