

Playing baseball at Pioneer Park

One of my favourite things about working at the museum is being the person that visitors share their memories with. Those conversations usually start with, "I remember this one time..." and every time it is a different tale about spending time playing on the grounds with family, showcasing their baking skills at a school fair, or managing to get up 'Jacob's Ladder' inside the Sharon Temple to marvel at the view of the changing landscape of East Gwillimbury.

After being purchased in 1917, the York Pioneer and Historical Society worked to restore the Temple and clean up the grounds ahead of opening as a museum in 1918. The York County Museum was a popular weekend destination for Torontonians looking to enjoy some time out of the bustling city. They would climb aboard the Metropolitan Railway and make their way north to East Gwillimbury.

In June and September, in line with the traditional events of the Children of Peace, the York Pioneers held large events that attracted hundreds of people. Typically, these events would also feature important speakers which included Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, Ontario Premier E.C. Drury, Sir William Mulock and Chief Lorenzo Big Canoe from the Chippewas of Georgina Island.

Looking to engage with more locals, they opened the grounds around the Sharon Temple. Residents began to picnic regularly on the lush grounds, and started playing regular games of soccer and baseball.

The local schools began to use the site for their annual fairs, which gave students an opportunity to show off their prized animals, crops, and their academic proficiency by



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competing in spelling bees and essay contests. It really started to become a hub for the community to gather.

An 'avenue of trees' were planted leading from Leslie Street to the main door of the building. Each of these trees were planted to honour or memorialize those important to the site including Children of Peace founder David Willson, former Toronto Mayor and rebel William Lyon Mackenzie, Mulock and Drury.

In 1923, the Sharon Athletic and Social Club was formed. They built a regulation tennis court, baseball diamond and horseshoe pits. They set aside a portion of the grounds for garden parties and outdoor concerts. Regular baseball games were set up between local teams with the most popular game of the season being played between the teams from Newmarket and Georgina Island. One of the local blacksmiths built a swing-set for kids in 1929. The property became known as the first recreation complex north of Toronto.

The management of the park became difficult for a group based out of Toronto, so in 1930, the community of Sharon entered into a long-term lease for the ground surrounding the Temple. The first of these leases was for 25 years, with the opportunity to renew. At the end of that lease, the Town opted not to renew and the York Pioneers decided to expand the museum by adding buildings

like the Doan House and Log Cabin, and they started offering programs to schools.

The Sharon Temple Museum is open for its 100th season starting May 19th. Drop by and learn more about the history in your own backyard!

Visit the website to learn more information about the history of the



Playing baseball at Pioneer Park, circa 1930s.

buildings and the museum, hours of operation and event information.

Megan Houston is the Education and Outreach Co-ordinator at the Sharon Temple Museum. Megan is available for onsite tours and outreach within the community. If you are interested in booking a school field trip, group tours or a talk for your organization, please call: (905) 478-2389.

Having a picnic outside the Temple, circa 1920s.



- Newmarket Stage Company presents - What do women really talk about on the golf course?

Get ready for lots of laughs and insights into life as the venerable Newmarket Stage Company presents 'The Ladies Foursome' by Canada's premiere playwright Norm Foster, at Stage 426-Newmarket Legion on April 26, 27, 28 and May 3, 4, and 5 at 8 p.m. with a 2 p.m. matinee on May 3.

Tickets at a mere \$15 are already selling for this uplifting, yet quite funny play starring four local women who meet weekly for a round of golf. The day after their friend Catherine's funeral Margot, Connie and Tate gather for a round of golf in honour of their recently departed fourth. At the golf course, they are joined by another woman, an old friend of Catherine's they'd never met before. Over the course of 18 holes, secrets and confessions unravel as the women discuss love, sex, children and everything in between.

Margot is played by Susan Lane; Connie is portrayed by Julie Wood; Tate is played by Jo-Anne Pulfer; and new acquaintance Dory is played by Joanne Kaufman – all are very seasoned actors who have many past credits on stage and they give it their all in this enlightening play by the celebrated playwright.

It's directed with enthusiasm by multiple award-winning director Jeff Burke. Sue Meacock is the producer – a veteran of the stage – and assisted by Diane Ament, the President of the Newmarket Stage Company.

This is only the second time 'The Ladies Foursome' is being performed since it was released for community theatre groups in April 2018. Don't delay – call the Box Office today at 905-727-3290 for this play, set in current times. It doesn't get more relevant than that!

Haven't you always wondered what women talk about on the golf course?

ENTER
— To —
WIN

The Newmarket Stage Company has provided us with a pair of tickets for 'The Ladies Foursome' to give away to one lucky winner! Show is Thursday, April 26th.

HOW TO ENTER: Email us (or send us a note via Canada Post) with your name, address, & phone number to: blair@egbulletin.com. We'll draw one lucky winner on April 15, 2018.

The fine print: one winner to be drawn at random; prize must be accepted as awarded.