

Hillary House stands tall in new exhibitions



By Graeme Allison

The rich history was on full display this past weekend in Aurora, and considering the formation of Aurora dates back nearly 170 years, the pickings are all but slim.

More specifically, however, this weekend featured an outstanding exhibit. Looking to promote and encourage the preservation and appreciation for the history of Aurora, the Aurora Public Library Camera Club, in connection with the Aurora Historical Society, turned their focus towards one of Aurora's most outstanding historic buildings.

Hillary House has a full year on the official formation of this Town, and has remained a constant presence on Yonge Street ever since. Originally a residence and dispensary for medical professionals, the Aurora Historical Society now owns the building, and it is regularly open to the public.

Doors, however, were briefly closed over the winter when members of the Camera Club were allowed free access to transform the house into a personal canvass in which to explore their creative visions while emphasizing historical significance.

Camera club founder Ronen Grunberg and several other members displayed their works in the ballroom of the Hillary House in an open house exhibition on Saturday afternoon.

Mr. Grunberg's passion for the project was evident as he thoughtfully spoke about the connection between the House and his photographs.

"It allowed me to view the house in ways that I would not have been able to otherwise," he said at the House on Saturday.

"The challenge was to capture the essence of the place," he continued.

He accomplished this by framing several pictures into a collage of eras, with each slice of the overall photograph representing a different period of time in the house's existence. The effect was visually and creatively magnificent.

All in one picture the viewer could see the connection of a historic house to a modern world. It accurately represented the usefulness it represented in times gone by, and the significance of historical context in the present day.

The preservation of that cultural history of Aurora was a major theme for Grunberg and the club. They would love to see all Aurora residents take to learning and appreciating the history of the town.

?Yonge Street is getting busier and the house is easy to miss?, said Grunberg.

With continued effort such as this one, more and more Aurora residents will be learning about the heritage that plays such an integral part of the legacy of this town.

The Aurora Historical Society is consistently running events devoted to the preservation of heritage and more information can be found at aurorahistoricalsociety.ca.