

Immigration stories wanted by Museum & Archives for new exhibition

Immigration is inextricably part of the Canadian story ? from individuals fleeing persecution in other parts of the world, to families wanting to find better opportunities for their children, and, as recent arrivals from Ukraine underscore, to those seeking safety in the face of war.

These stories are as rich and diverse as the country these individuals now call home, and they're now being sought for a new exhibition by the Aurora Museum & Archives set to launch next year in conjunction with the opening of Aurora Town Square.

?The Town is going to be opening up Aurora Town Square in 2023 and this is part of the greater efforts of the Museum and the Town to diversify and essentially decolonize,? says Lauren Ulbricht, Collections & Exhibitions Coordinator for the Aurora Museum and Archives. ?Especially with the museum, we have a lot of stories of White past-Aurorans and folks who have settled in the Town, but we don't have stories of individuals from different backgrounds.

?The Museum is always collecting ? that is what our goal and our mandate is ? and these are the stories that are missing from what has been collected in the past.?

This request to the community is not limited to just stories, either. Objects with very personal connections to today's Aurorans ? and Aurorans of the past ? are very much wanted as well.

?Our goal is threefold: there is a piece about adding these to our collection so these stories can be preserved for future generations to learn about and then at the Town Square opening we will have an exhibition on that which will mark the reopening of the Museum. Later in the summer, we're also planning on having a large theatrical performance that will highlight various stories that have come into us ? of course, with the permission and collaboration of the folks who share ? a theatrical performance to show these stories through movement, dance, song and dialogue.

?We're [seeking] anything that is of emotional value to the individuals who share their stories with us. If they choose to share those objects they have a connection to, it can help tell their story. It is important because Canada, Ontario, and Aurora are diverse places and to be able to share stories like this will help further generations that were, perhaps, in their position at one point and this is also an effort for the Museum to further represent our community and make our Museum a safe, accessible, and comfortable place for all Aurorans. By sharing their stories, they help open up that space for other newcomers as well.?

The upcoming exhibition on immigration is not the only iron in the fire for the Aurora Museum & Archives.

This Spring, the Museum will launch a new online exhibition that will be announced at the beginning of May while, this September, the Museum is set to host an event ? with the details to be announced over summer ? to mark the 100th anniversary of the former Aurora Horse Show & Agricultural Fair.

For more on the Aurora Museum & Archives, including a form to fill out to share your immigration story, visit auroramuseum.ca.

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