

Step back in time and put your best foot forward at Home Show



By Brock Weir

?Bigger and better? has become something of a cliché in recent years, but this is 2017 and there are many reasons for things to actually be bigger and better.

Take the annual Aurora Home Show, set to open this Friday, April 21, at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Centre. Not only is it the 150th anniversary of Canada this year, 2017 also marks the remarkable 30th Anniversary of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce's most venerable event ? and organizers are pulling out all the stops to make this one a year to remember.

Usually people come through the doors of the Aurora Home Show to look ahead and get ideas for what they might do in the future ? whether next season or next week. While putting your best foot forward is still the order of the day, you will also have a chance to step back in time in a new ? well, old ? spin on the popular feature area.

?The feature area this year is going to focus on the 30th anniversary of the Home Show, which is a big deal, and also the 150th celebration of Canada,? says Home Show Committee Chair Robin Taylor-Smith. ?But, we thought it was more important, because it is a local event, to focus on the history of Aurora.?

Enlisting the help of the Aurora Historical Society and the Aurora Museum and Archives, the feature area will be a walk-through of historic Aurora, says the Chamber's Sandra Watson, including a number of curated pieces, including a vintage fire truck, to be a maze of life in Town.

?I think people will be amazed at the history of Aurora,? says Ms. Taylor-Smith.

Despite the milestone anniversaries on tap, the Aurora Home Show is invariably about moving forward, and moving forward as a community. It is a great opportunity for local businesses to get word out about their products and services, say the organizers, and a great opportunity for homeowners to get new ideas.

?Every year it is new,? says Ms. Watson. ?There are always new vendors to work with, new vendors who are excited about coming into the Home Show and I am always pleased for their excitement. If homeowners are looking to do any landscaping or any sort of renovations to their house, this is their one-stop-shop. There is something for everyone at the Home Show ? and even for the kids this year!?

Adds Ms. Taylor-Smith: ?We are finally putting in a kids' area for them to paint and take home birdhouses, right off the feature area. This is cool because it is right within the show and parents can walk through with their kids.?

Among the new vendors this year are Munro's Furnishings, which opened up a Yonge Street location, from Barrie, last year, along with Hardwood Your Home, which has also come on board as a Signature Sponsor for the Home Show; Sierra Kitchen, Geranium Homes, which is in the process of redeveloping Highland Gate; 9 Round Fitness, and Athletify.

Along with the new vendors, are those who have been with the Home Show since the very beginning. Organizers are excited to have the opportunity to thank these businesses with a special reception on Friday night paying tribute to their 30 years of support. And, of course, that 30 years of support also extends to the community as a whole.

?It is a great event for the local community,? says Ms. Taylor-Smith. ?It is great for local businesses and for the consumers. Along

with the street festival, it is one of the few events the Chamber hosts that caters to the consumer base and I think that is important. It is important for the reputation of the Chamber and the fact it has been going for 30 years, we have had so much support over the years it never seems to waver.

?It is important to acknowledge [the businesses with us from Day One] because it gives more credibility to the Chamber and to the Home Show itself, showing there is a huge value to it. Obviously these businesses are getting something out of it and that is key.?

The Home Show runs through Sunday afternoon. Signature Sponsors are Backyard Pool and Spa, Remax Hallmark Lind Realty, and Hardwood Your Home. Gold Sponsors include The Auroran, the Aurora Banner, and Highland Automotive.