

■ BUSINESS: Cramahe waits to hear from Brighton organization

Council holds funds pending chamber update

NORTHUMBERLAND TODAY MAY 7/15

MANDY MARTIN

For Northumberland Today

CRAMAHE TOWNSHIP — The \$18,000 Cramahe Township has budgeted to support the Brighton and District Chamber of Commerce this year is on hold until an update is received from the organization.

On May 4, Brighton municipal council pulled \$40,000 flagged for tourism promotion to be paid to the chamber. On May 5, Cramahe Township council debated continuing support of the organization.

"What are we going to get from a Brighton chamber of com-

merce?" Councillor Tim Gilligan said just before Cramahe council voted to finalize its 2015 budget.

"We have a contract for the information kiosk at the Big Apple and tourist promotion," Mayor Marc Coombs said.

"Do we have an actual signed contract?" Deputy Mayor Sandra Arthur asked.

The contract will be signed after funding is approved for 2015, chief administrative officer Christie Alexander said.

"With our new organization chart, there will be an events and promotions person" who could take on promotion, Councillor Tim Gilligan suggested. "It

would be another \$20,000 that could go into the Cramahe coffee" if chamber support is axed.

"Brighton's the tourist destination, I hate to break it. We're just here to promote visiting The Big Apple or a trip to the quarry. The chamber of commerce should be for businesses who buy into it."

"They've worked hard these last three years to work together," Councillor Ed VanEgmond said of the Brighton / Cramahe alliance.

"Can we cut (support) back some?" Arthur asked. "If Brighton pulls out \$40,000, are we guaranteed our \$20,000 will go to Cramahe (promotion)?"

"Let's not have a knee-jerk

reaction," VanEgmond said. "Tim (Gilligan), you're right, Brighton has things Cramahe does not, but we have Music in Park, the Queen's Hotel."

"I think it's a sink or swim. If it's truly a chamber of commerce, then it's for businesses," Gilligan said. "At the kiosk, people ask 'Where's a place to stay?'"

Brighton. "Where's Presqu'ile?" - Brighton. I go with Sandra: cut it down."

"Are they (the chamber) cutting the office?" VanEgmond asked.

Coombs said, "I've been involved in tourism for 17 years here. I think this is good value for

the money. In Brighton, there's one member of the council trying to stir the pot."

Further, he said, he has not yet seen a tourism plan to replace the chamber effort come forth from the Brighton council.

"We're four months or more into the year. Let the support continue on for the year and see if there's value."

Arthur, seconded by Gilligan, moved the \$18,000 budgeted for the chamber remain in the budget with the caveat no cheque will be signed until Cramahe receives a plan from the chamber that outlines how it will proceed.



Marc Coombs

Opening night gala at new Warkworth

gallery goes Hollywood



Judy Kaufman, president of the Arts and Heritage Centre of Warkworth, and Clive Russell, creative director and co-founder of the group of dedicated volunteers that have worked hard for the past year to open the gallery, are spreading the word about their gala opening which is happening Saturday, May 16, at 6:30 p.m. Photo: Sue Dickens

By Sue Dickens
News - Warkworth - Rolling out the red carpet for the gala opening of the new Arts and Heritage (Ah!) Centre will mark the culmination of a year of hard work by a group of dedicated volunteers whose vision is now a reality.

"The gala will be a Hollywood-style red carpet event," said Clive Russell, creative director and co-founder of the group.

Ah! is located in Warkworth's historic Memorial Community Hall leased to this non-profit group by the Municipality of Trent Hills.

Led by local developer David Pollack, costume designer Delphine White,

textile artist Sheree Rasmussen and Russell they proposed that the building, which was going to be designated by the municipality as a storage facility after the historical society closed down, become a centre for art and history.

Trent Hills' council unanimously voted to allocate funds for renovations to make the hall more suitable as a gallery including a restored hardwood floor, track lighting and refinished walls.

Over time a board of directors was assembled that includes local business and community leaders as well as artists.

With charitable status pending they are moving forward with their program of

exhibitions and events for the inaugural season which begins with the gala.

The Independent met recently with Russell and Judy Kaufman, president of the group, to talk about the evening and some of the shows.

"We're invited the community as well as dignitaries including the mayor [Hector Macmillan] and his wife [Sandy] to the gala," noted Kaufman.

"We will have two people interviewing with lights etc. for the red carpet night. They will interview a cross-section from the community including artists," said Russell.

Music, dance and a few surprises will be part of the gala celebration which "will open with a bang!" according to Russell.

"The Campbellford high school jazz band will be playing and as well there will be a performance by Olivia Rapos and San Murata, on opening night," he added.

Rapos is a young jazz singer from Warkworth described as "a star in the making."

Murata is an artist from Grafton who is also an accomplished musician.

The gallery season will officially begin the night of the gala as Ah! kicks off its first show with indigenous art and 1,000-year history of art in this area from the early Iroquois village near Richardson Road to J.D. Kelly, The Conqueror Worm, local artist Paul Portelli and a popular event begun last year called Sunday Drive which features art installations.

"We will promote excellence in the arts and in heritage awareness through a variety of shows and events that look at history through the eyes of artists and art through the eyes of the present," Russell explained.

Summer shows will focus on the work of three artists, Murata (mentioned previously), Lisa Johnson (teacher and artist), and Simon Schneiderman, a playwright, author, lawyer and artist.

In early June the gallery will be part of Doors Open.

Concerts, community events and talks are planned in conjunction with the gallery shows.

Delphine White will be putting on a show about film arts, hopefully in October as the season winds down.

Exhibitions include the art of farming, the art of youth, to name a few.

The gallery will be open weekends from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The gala takes place Saturday, May 16, at 6:30 p.m.

"We want it to be a celebration

and fun. That's my mission," said Kaufman.

More information is available on the website at <www.ahcentre.ca> or email <info@ahcentre.ca> or check them out on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/artsandheritagewarkworth>.

BRIGHTON INDEPENDENT