

# Red Door Gallery to leave downtown Georgetown location

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The Red Door Gallery will be closing its downtown Georgetown location at 69 Main St.

Last year, Silvercreek Commercial Builder president Doug Pattison and vice-president Don Jackson offered space at 69 Main St. for the gallery be housed, and gave them a one-year lease.

Around the same time, the gallery received a one-year grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to follow a model on programming for the gallery, its artists, and the community.

That one year is testing a model, and what we were testing was programming and what other ways a gallery can be sustainable, other than selling art, Kate McGowan, manager of the gallery, said.

To comply with the model, McGowan and her team came up with a number of different programs, including art classes for seniors in the afternoon, ladies paint nights, and created the URoom, which is a forum for the community's youth to participate in music.

Also part of the grant is creating an online presence for artists in the area.

By adding all those components to the practice of selling art, we're asking: can the gallery be sustainable in a town of our size? McGowan said.

The gallery opened in June 2016 and is scheduled to close this May. Over the summer, McGowan will be reporting back to the foundation and will decide whether or not to apply for a second grant.

If we do, we would look for a physical

premises to open in the fall, McGowan said. Really, the decision now, is can we, as a team, and can the town sustain a gallery in the downtown?

McGowan said those answers will come as they fulfill the original grant.

From 2014 into 2015, the Red Door Gallery was housed at the Georgetown Legion location. Ultimately, the gallery was forced to find another location. After having nowhere to go for a few months, Silvercreek offered a vacant storefront at 69 Main St.

If we do re-open, we would hope to re-open downtown, McGowan said.

In the meantime, we will continue programming and have some pop-up locations.

Those locations will be announced in the fall.

As a future endeavour, the Gallery will publish a brochure called the Halton Hills Art Route, and is set to hit the shelves by the Victoria Day long weekend.

Part of the Red Door's goal was trying to unite the art's offerings, whether that be people selling art or selling opportunities to make art, McGowan said. One of the ways we hope to do that is with this community-wide brochure.

As the lease for its current location comes up, McGowan and her team are thankful for the opportunity.

A community without artists is sort of like a park without trees, she said. You need artists, you need musicians, you need people involved in the theatrical presentations, you need literature and you need the arts in a community of any size, and by buying original art... we all need to contribute to and support our creative economy.

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