

# Queen for a Year: Kailey Donaldson Starting a conversation: St. Albans' new Reverend

By: Vivien Fleisher

The Ontario Plowman's Association (OPA) has chosen their "Queen of the Furrow" for 2017. It's Acton resident Kailey Donaldson, who went up against 24 other "very qualified" women from all over Ontario to take the crown in September. Kailey, 23, grew up on a hobby farm, and though she's always loved agriculture, it wasn't until her sister started learning to plow in Halton that she got really interested. And though queen sounds pretty regal, even a tad cushy, it's anything but. Part of the judging criteria included "appearance and deportment". Appearance is how the furrows look: straight and tight, with nice high crowns and no stubble showing. Deportment is about the 'ins and outs', how well the operator gets the plow into the row and makes each turn. Done over three days, participants were interviewed by three "very nice judges" in order to demonstrate their awareness of agriculture today. Speeches covered topics like "Your Definition of Agriculture" and how it's changed over time. Kailey

drew on her time volunteering with the Acton Junior Fair Board, where she gets kids thinking about agriculture and their definitions of it.

There's no "King of the Furrow", and for 13 years there wasn't a queen either. The program had lapsed but after much demand, the OPA president recently reinstated it, giving Kailey the distinction of being one of the first recipients. The program was originally brought to Canada in 1960 by Halton resident Kay Wilson, who saw it first in the U.S.

A 2015 graduate of the Agriculture Program at University of Guelph's Ridgetown Campus, Kailey works fulltime at Stewart's Equipment in the New Holland section, and her goal is to become an equipment appraiser. She laments that the money to

buy a farm is steep, but if she "could buy a farm, I'd do it in a heartbeat." She's going to be busy from now until next fall though, with networking, parades, conventions, and of course, planning next year's program. The gala where she was crowned was held September 22 in Brussels, Ontario. She says it was exciting, but that she "was pretty surprised. There are a lot of great girls in the competition."



Competition judges Amy Cronin, Janice Anderson and Henry Oosterhof stand behind Anita Rastapkevicius (left) last year's Ontario Queen of the Furrow and Kailey Donaldson. - Submitted photo

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Naomi Kabugi, the new Reverend at St. Albans the Martyr Anglican Church in Acton, takes great inspiration from a book called "The Wounded Healer". The term was created by Carl Jung before the book by Henri Nouwen, a Catholic priest. It's based on the fundamental principle that "if you want to be a healer, think about your own wounds" and was the heart of her very candid "get to know" her talk on Sunday night at the church, a month ahead of her induction on October 29. As she said, grab a coffee and sit down because "this is not worship. This is a conversation."

In order to open up to her new congregation, Rev. Kabugi spent over an hour telling her story which was by turns fascinating, informative, and heartbreaking, answering the question of where she was from. She has lived

in Canada for many years, returning to her home for stretches. Using slides, she showed a map of her childhood home in the slopes of the Rift Valley in Mount Kenya, the second-highest mountain after Kilimanjaro in Africa. Part of the Kikuyu

central Kenya when Naomi was young and land was being opened up in the Rift Valley for purchase, but because of education reforms, her oldest sister had to stay behind. Her mother, whom Naomi was very close to, never recovered from the

sadness of losing her eldest. A woman of deep Christian faith, she bought a leather-bound bible on credit when the children were young, selling their beloved chicken in order to settle the debt, and read to the children every night. This became their storybook, and her mother instilled in them the belief that "God will always provide" She died when Naomi was only sixteen and she forty, but Naomi had decided by then to live her life



in a "community of faith", even at a time when women did not take on such roles. Reverend Kabugi is many things: a priest, an immigrant, an African, a woman, and she cites the "Book of Ruth"—a journey of immigrants—as her reason for coming to Canada.

tribe, her parents farmed coffee there in the high altitudes, which she and her siblings picked. Naomi pointed out that Kenya, situated on the Indian Ocean, was the entry point of Christianity into Africa, and a major trade hub. The family had moved from

# Culture Day's "Roots and Routes" craft show and sale canceled

By: Alex Hilson

The "Roots and Routes" Craft Show and Sale, scheduled to take place on Sunday, was canceled. The event was a partnership between the Acton BIA and Heritage Acton at the Acton Town Hall Centre.

The goal of the event was to create a "local handcrafted market in Downtown Acton for Culture Days," said Acton BIA manager Sheena Switzer.

Culture Days, according to their website, is "a

national celebration of Canada," running the Friday, Saturday and Sunday of the last week in September. Based off "Journées de la culture", a Quebec event organized since 1997, Culture Days started in 2010 and "has generated enthusiastic interest, participation and support from a rapidly growing network of artists, organizations, municipalities, as well as the private and public sector and media across the country".

The concept behind the

Acton event was to explore the importance of fibre arts in the Acton community. "In Leathertown for example—what does our heritage mean today? What connection do we have to leather or leather work? In Halton Hills, where mills and knitting factories are so tied into our history,

what is our connection with that today?"

Despite the connection to Culture Days and Acton's past, the organizing committee knew they were up for a challenge when they took on the project. "Our vision to align with Culture Days was an aggressive

time-line from the beginning so we decided to step back, re-evaluate and see how we could do a really good job of things in the future."

For those looking forward to the event, there is

hope. Heritage Acton and the BIA are looking at dates to reschedule. Until then, the next BIA event is "Trick or Treat on Mill and Main" on Saturday, October 28 from noon to 2 p.m.

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