

# Helson given key to town for 'generous' art donation

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Helson, his wife Rosanna, Mayor Rick Bonnette and Wellington-Halton Hills MP Michael Chong cut the ribbon officially opening the gallery following words of appreciation from the mayor, Councillor Jane Fogal and Chong to Helson for his generous gift. The Helson Collection is valued at approximately \$800,000.

"The Helson Collection is a great addition to the Halton Hills Cultural Centre," said Bonnette. "And we are fortunate to have a local resident with such generosity and foresight. The Helson Gallery will be another venue where local residents may be exposed to the arts."

Bonnette thanked Helson for "sharing his love of fine art" with the community and said it's something "we will treasure for many years to come."

Fogal said "the Town of Halton Hills has been truly blessed by the generosity of Mr. Fred Helson."

Helson was presented with a framed poster advertising the Collection and the key to the Town.

Helson said he was overwhelmed by the number of people who came out for the event and thanked everyone who "had a part to play in all this, particularly members of Council and members of Town staff."



Fred Helson receives the key to the Town of Halton Hills from Mayor Rick Bonnette Friday.

Photo by Jon Borgstrom

"I thought I would just give them the paintings and they would hang them on a wall somewhere and that would be the end of it," said Helson, to laughter from the crowd. "But I've had so much enjoyment out of what's happened."

Helson said neither he nor his late wife Marg knew much about collecting art—but they made a good pair because while he is colour blind, Marg had good colour vision.

Helson said it was friends of theirs that got them started in collecting about 50 years ago when they gave them a gift of an A.Y. Jackson painting.

"That really started it," he said. "An A.Y. Jackson original, we couldn't believe it."

They talked to artists and dealers for about a year before they began buying art, and they learned a lot, he said.

"The end result of that is we ended up with what I think is not a bad collection of paintings.

"We had a lot of fun with them and I couldn't think of anything better to do with them than give them to the municipality so that everybody can enjoy them," said Helson.

He gave the painting to the Town "without any restrictions, they can do with them what they like," he said. "What they've done, putting them in a gallery, I think that is just tremendous," he said.

"I hope everyone that comes here enjoys the paintings as much as I have over the years. It's been a great pleasure and I hope it lasts an eternity."

Chong thanked Helson for the gift and announced an investment of \$350,000 from the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage for upgrades to the Halton Hills Cultural Centre to support Canadian arts and culture.

The investment has contributed to the renovation of the Helson Gallery.

"The Government of Canada strongly believes in Canadian arts and culture," said Chong. "That's why we are proud to support this collection of iconic Canadian art that includes paintings from the Group of Seven. Local residents will now be able to see these works for years to come," said Chong.

For a full listing of donated works or to read the full appraisal of the Helson Collection visit [haltonhills.ca/gallery](http://haltonhills.ca/gallery).



NORMA CHASE

OLG photo

# Acton woman wins \$100K

Georgetown resident Norma Chase's bank account is looking a lot healthier today after her lottery numbers came up recently.

Chase won \$100,000 on ENCORE in the Feb. 22 LOTTO MAX draw.

A regular ENCORE player, Chase bought the ticket at Ballinafad Farm Market on Trafalgar Rd.

"Years ago, I missed out on a lottery win because my husband didn't play my numbers for me and sure enough, they

came up. I've been waiting for another winning ticket since then!" explained Chase, at the OLG Prize Centre in Toronto to claim her prize.

She checked her numbers online, but didn't know she had won for sure until she validated her ticket at the store.

"I'm still on cloud nine! I tried to do my 'happy dance' but no-one noticed!" she said.

She added she has no plans just yet for the windfall but will think about it.

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