

# OPINION

## Black history is our history

Every February, Canadians are invited to participate in Black History Month festivities and events that recognize the contributions of black Canadians, past and present.

During Black History Month, Canadians can gain insight into the experiences of black Canadians and the vital role this community has played throughout our shared history.

We encourage you to learn about the many black Canadians that helped shape and forge this nation.

They include:

- The first named black person to set foot on Canadian soil, Mathieu Da Costa, a free man who was hired as a translator for Samuel de Champlain in 1605;
- Mary Ann Shadd, the first woman publisher in North America, establishing the Provincial Freeman, an abolitionist newspaper;
- Anderson Ruffin Abbott became the first Canadian-born man of black heritage to become a licensed physician in 1861. He was born to a prominent family in Toronto.

Through their contributions, and those made by many other black Canadians, our country and our world is a richer place to live.

Celebrate our shared history this month.

### WEB POLL RESULTS (Go to [www.theifp.ca](http://www.theifp.ca))

Do you think the Olympics Games are a waste of time and money?

No (55%)  
Yes (45%)

### The Independent & Free Press

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## Letters to the editor

### Town has mandate to protect heritage

Dear editor,

Re: Local realtor wants residents to be aware of Heritage Register changes (Jan. 30)

Mr. Poulstrup is entirely correct in that owners need have no "issue with Town Staff or Council" nor, I might add, with the Town's Heritage Committee. Along with other Ontario municipalities, Halton Hills is required by law to comply with The Ontario Heritage Act, and its subsequent amendments, as enacted by our elected representatives at Queen's Park.

In keeping with the 2005 provincial policy statement: "Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved." The Ontario Heritage Act requires the clerk of each municipality to keep a register of properties that are of cultural heritage value or interest. The Municipal Heritage Register may in-

clude an inventory of "listed" properties. Citizens, who own "listed" properties are free to alter, extend, or renovate as they see fit. The only constraint placed upon such properties is that the owners must give council at least 60 days notice if they plan to demolish.

For more details, visit [www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/InfoSheet\\_Listing\\_Final.pdf](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/InfoSheet_Listing_Final.pdf)

Pat Farley, president

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, Halton Hills Branch

### Parents must think safety first

Dear editor,

We recently went to a public skate at Mold-Masters SportsPlex. I was appalled to see a man carrying a baby (less than a year old) in his arms as he skated around. He even went around with her on his shoulders.

The child had no helmet.

The man was a very good skater, which to me means nothing as anyone could bump him or fall in front of him. I would hate to see what would

become of that poor child if her head slammed against the ice.

I asked a young guy that was working there to have a word with the man. I saw him talking to him but the man continued to skate with the child in his arms—just not on his shoulders.

I complained to the front desk also and hope that there is a rule implemented to protect these children

Cindy Wood,  
Georgetown

### Clarification

A letter by Bob Desjardins to the editor published on page 6 Feb. 6, regarding ice storm branch cleanup requires clarification.

The Town had, in fact, rectified the situation Mr. Desjardins referred to prior to the letter appearing.

### Letters policy

Letters must include the author's name, address and daytime phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

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