

FEATURE

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The Forgotten Flemings: Milton brothers led fascinating lives

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From their humble beginnings on Main Street to Caltech, Paris and beyond, John McDonald has discovered the fascinating tale of a set of brothers who grew up in Milton and went on to lead incredible lives across the globe.

"For more than 100 years, the Flemings have more or less been forgotten," said McDonald. "Their achievements are very noteworthy."

Oscar and Arthur Fleming were born in 1861 and 1856, respectively, and grew up in Milton, before their entire family uprooted and settled in Windsor, which at the time was called Sandwich.

Oscar made his roots in that community and became the mayor of Windsor.

He was close friends with Sir Adam Beck, the founder of Ontario Hydro, and became instrumental in the development of the channels along the St. Lawrence seaway.

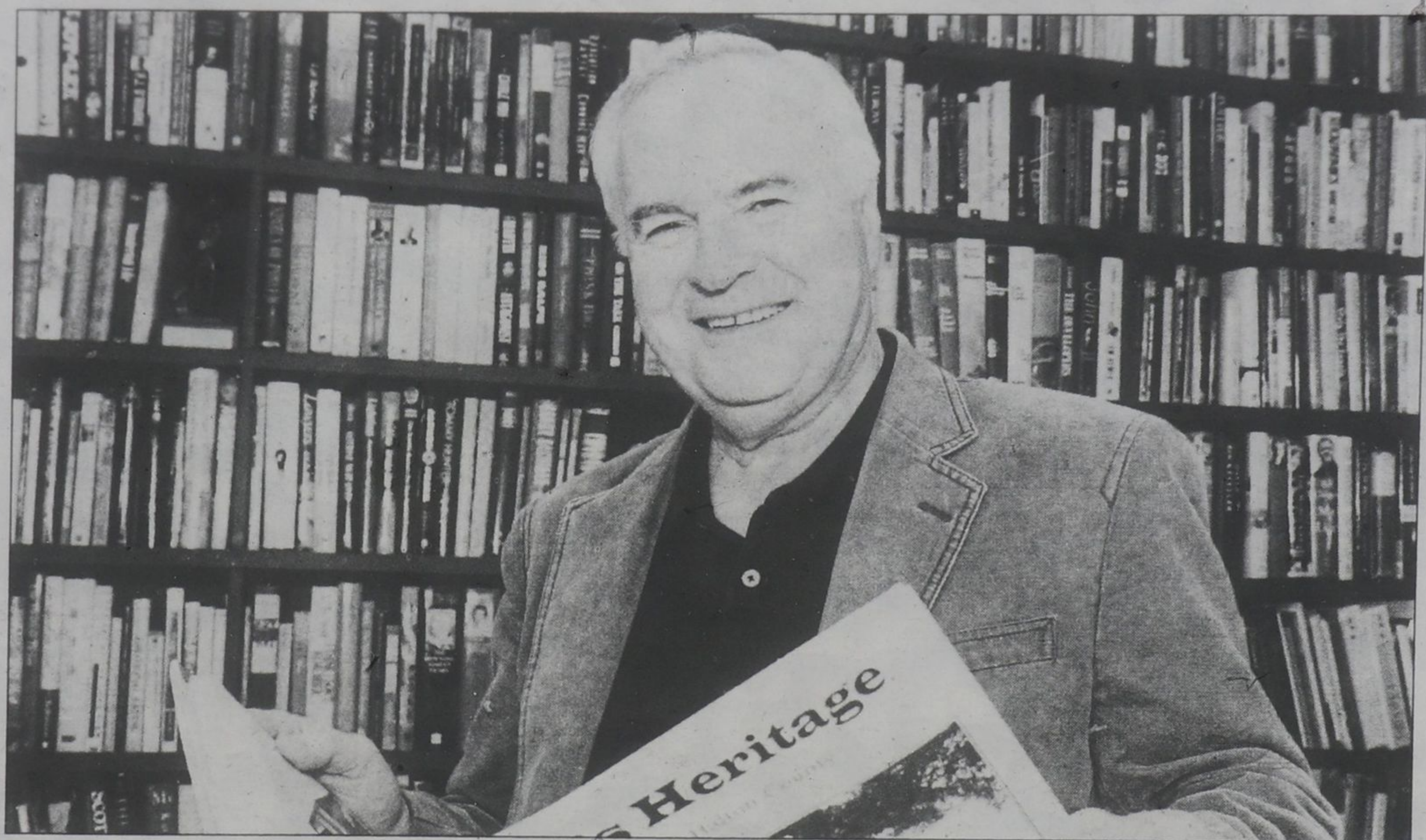
Fleming Channel, which lies between Windsor and Detroit, is named after him.

Arthur too started his career in Windsor and went on to become a prominent lawyer in Detroit. He married Maria Fowler, the daughter of an American lumber and mining tycoon. They moved to Pasadena, Calif.

Maria and her father passed away, not even a month apart, leaving Arthur as the heir to the Fowler family fortune.

"He was instrumental in founding the California Institute of Technology," said the local historian, who explained that after he inherited the funds, Arthur poured his inheritance into developing the school, and even played an instrumental role in bringing Albert Einstein to the United States after the Second World War in order to teach at the school.

"People are absolutely amazed," said McDonald, talking about the responses he gets when he tells people in Milton about the



Photo/GRAHAM PAINE

John McDonald will be presenting his research on the Fleming brothers, who grew up in Milton in the mid 1800s.

brothers. "Yet, they've never been recognized."

McDonald hopes that the brothers can be included

in the Milton Walk of Fame, alongside notable figures like Mathew Banks of the Blue Man Group, and

William C. Anderson, a developer of the early electric car.

McDonald will be host-

ing a presentation on his research at Waldie Blacksmith Shop on May 17 at 7 p.m.

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