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## From Mayor's 2025 Year in Review Newsletter

(from <https://www.whitby.ca/news/posts/mayors-2025-year-in-review-newsletter/#Comingupin2026>)

- **Mid-2026 grand opening of the new Fieldgate Sports Complex.**

Final phases of work will include completing interior finishes, constructing park program spaces, and finalizing landscaping.

• Continued work with the Ministry of Transportation on the land disposition process for the **new Whitby hospital** as well as next steps for the hospital fundraising campaign

• **Transformation of the historic James Rowe House** at the Whitby Waterfront, into a restaurant and culinary hub. **Expected to open in 2026**, the restaurant – called 301 Rowe – will feature French cuisine and a bistro open daily offering homemade baked goods. The new concept will create an estimated 50 jobs.

• **Major investments** coming in 2026 include a new 48,000 sq. ft. Toromont Cat facility in Brooklin providing equipment sales, rentals, parts, and service. SoftMoc National Headquarters has also announced a new automated warehouse in Whitby,

further strengthening the town's growing industrial and commercial landscape.

- Town staff are developing a report that outlines the rationale, location options, and development process for a future **refrigerated outdoor skating facility**. The report is scheduled to come to Council in 2026.

- The Town's Economic Development team is developing Whitby's first **Intelligent Cities Action Plan** to guide smart technology adoption, digital infrastructure, and innovation partnerships. The plan is expected to go to Council in early 2026.

- **Anne Ottenbrite Pool** is scheduled to undergo significant upgrades including resurfacing of the pool lining, upgrades to the filtration system, new tiling and lockers, renovations to the change rooms and improvements to the viewing area.

- Design work is underway on a **Waterfront Trail extension** to connect Longwood Park to Thickson Road through a hydro power corridor, with construction expected in 2026

- A new, **commemorative dedication feature** will be introduced at the Whitby Waterfront, giving residents the opportunity to purchase metal plaques with nautical or fish-themed designs to be installed on the existing railing at Lions

Promenade

- A conceptual design for **Rotary Centennial Park** will be shared with the public to gather feedback ahead of construction in 2026.

- The grand opening of the **waterfront Visitor's Centre** will take place in Spring 2026, along with the installation of an accessible dock for kayaks and paddleboards.

- A new **Neighbourhood Microgrant Program** will be launched to support grassroots and neighbourhood-based projects with a grant of up to \$500. This initiative addresses a gap in funding for individuals or small groups that support projects like workshops for newcomers, community bulletin boards and little libraries.

- Improvements are planned for **Divine Park and Spencer Community Centre** including new play equipment designed to meet current accessibility standards

- Work will get underway on the **Whitby Marina Comprehensive Design Study** to guide long-term improvements to this key waterfront asset.

- The Invest Whitby team will continue work to **secure a new hotel and conference centre for Whitby**, including using the newly released Hotel Feasibility Study and **Marketing Booklet**, to pitch the opportunity to investors.

- With the recent release of 100+

acres of provincially owned land along the MTO corridor, Town staff will profile industrial space in key areas such as Port Whitby, Brooklin, and the Conlin Road and Garrard Road area, to expand **Whitby's commercial and industrial tax base**.

- A **new Downtown Whitby Action Plan** will be presented to Council in early 2026 and more placemaking enhancements are planned for Downtown Whitby and Downtown Brooklin, including tourism maps for both downtowns

- A **final report on the Brock Street Redesign Study** will come to Council in 2026, including a final concept plan, costing and phasing plan for Council adoption

- A new **public art piece** will be installed on Thickson Road between Dundas Street and Nichol Avenue. "Flutter" by Ontario artist Nicolas Crombach will beautify this key corridor, which sees about 22,000 vehicles pass through daily.

- The Town's first **Waste Management Plan** will be finalized and presented to Council in 2026, with the goal of starting implementation in the spring. A new Invasive Species Management Plan will also be developed.

The entire document can be read at: <https://www.whitby.ca/news/posts/mayors-2025-year-in-review-newsletter/>

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# Brooklin High Student Wins Bronze At World B'ball Tourney

By Robert Drury

Brooklin High School's Zach Drury won a bronze medal in a 3x3 Basketball Unified World Cup tournament in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on Dec. 5-7.

Special Olympics International (SOI) along with FIBA chose to run the tournament based on the FIBA World Cup format which began in 2012.

The Special Olympics format would include three Special Olympics athletes, who have some form of developmental delays, along with two neuro-typical Unified Partners per team. Each team was required to have two Special Olympic Athletes and one Unified Partner on the court at all times. The games were 10 minutes long and fast-paced as they played with a 12 second shot clock.

#### Sending two teams

SOI sent out the request for teams to all their members, with each country eligible to send one men's and one women's U22 team. Coaches who were part of the Special Olympics School Program pulled together teams, and submitted an expression of interest and were chosen by a lottery draw to attend.

Most of the athletes were from Albert Campbell CI in

Scarborough and J. Clarke Richardson Collegiate in Ajax as all of the coaches are educators at those schools, the exception being Zach, a 17 year old student at Brooklin High School. The team was notified in mid-September that they were selected to attend the event.

There were 20 countries in the men's divisions and 18 in the women's divisions representing Asia, Australia, Europe, Africa, South America and North America.

#### Strong round robin

The men's team started in a round robin group with Chile, Montenegro & Chinese Taipei. In the first game against Chile, Canada had a dominant 8-3 win. After a short recovery they had an afternoon game against Montenegro, a close fought match till Zach's late two-pointer put Canada ahead to stay 8-5.

The morning of December 6 featured a tough match against Chinese Taipei. Although Canada fell behind, they were able to battle back with strong shooting and ball movement, eventually winning 12-9 putting them at the top of their pool with a 3-0 record.

The teams were reseeded and Canada was placed in Division 2 (of 5 divisions) going into the semi finals and would face Namibia in the semi final.

Canada came out strong but ended up on the losing side of a 6-3 decision. This put them into the bronze medal game against a very strong Brazil team. Brazil's entire team was well over 6' with three over 6'5". Canada knew battling them was going to be a "tall" task with some of Canada's players being 5'8" and they were going to have to use their speed and movement to have a chance. Canada battled hard and stuck to their game plan and eventually were able to come out with a 7-4 victory to take home the Bronze medal.



As important as the competition itself were the bonds and friendships that were developed with other athletes from all around the world.

Robert Drury is Zach Drury's father

## St. Thomas Anglican Church Holiday Events



The 'Blue Service' is sometimes called Service of Hope and Healing. It's for people who have lost someone or who are struggling at Christmas.

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## What You Need To Know This Week In Whitby



### Support Operation Cozy Toes and Toy Mountain

Spread warmth and joy this holiday season by supporting Operation Cozy Toes and Toy Mountain. Donate new socks for community members experiencing homelessness and new, unwrapped toys for CTV's Toy Mountain in support of The Salvation Army. Donation barrels are available across Whitby through December 9. The campaign ends with a community event at Celebration Square (405 Dundas Street West) on December 9 from 5 to 7 p.m., featuring holiday performances, children's activities, and a live CTV broadcast. Special thanks to the Downtown Whitby BIA, Whitby Public Library, and the Salvation Army. Learn more at [whitby.ca/Calendar](http://whitby.ca/Calendar)

### Donations for Whitby Animal Services

Whitby Animal Services is collecting holiday donations for animals in their care. Drop items in the donation boxes at Town Hall, the Operations Centre, Whitby Civic Recreation Complex, McKinney Centre, 55+ Recreation Centre, Whitby Fire Headquarters, or the Brooklin Community Centre and Library until December 12. The most-needed items include dog and cat beds, large dog chews (bully sticks), collars, dog harnesses, dry cat food, and cat toys. [whitby.ca/AnimalServices](http://whitby.ca/AnimalServices)



### Enjoy Winter Drop-In Skates and Swims

Take a spin around the rink with your friends and family or enjoy a swim this holiday season. View the schedules at [whitby.ca/Skating](http://whitby.ca/Skating) and [whitby.ca/Swimming](http://whitby.ca/Swimming)



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## Brooklin Family Matters: by Leanne Brown

### A Mom's Wish List



Dear Santa,

This year, I'm skipping subtle hints and writing directly. I'm the mom of a 16-year-old ambitious, high-maintenance, Starbucks-fueled teenager who believes Santa won the Mega Millions and is ready to bankroll her entire wish list. I have roughly 14 seconds of quiet each day (usually while hiding in the car), so here it is: my official Santa Wish list.

First, a pause for all of December and her dramatic sighs which would be delightful. I'd love to create a warm holiday memory without eye-rolling, storming into their room, or pointing out that the Elf on the Shelf hasn't moved - again. I miss the days when she was three, squealing at Christmas lights like each one was a personal message from the North Pole. Now she critiques our décor as if she's the New York designer to the stars.

Next, a unified school holiday calendar. Monday: Dress Festive. Tuesday: Twin Day. Wednesday: Cozy Flannel (but "aesthetic"). In elementary school, she proudly wore mismatched socks. Now I'm decoding cryptic emails at 6 am while she panics because her flannel "isn't the right vibe." Santa, a simple calendar, in English, not Teen.

How about a break from the hockey schedule that's consumed our lives. Santa, my sweet jolly friend, we have games, practices, "optional" skills training and holiday events every night. Shopping is now something I do in seven-minute power sessions in the rink parking lot, bathed in the glow of my dashboard light, praying my phone battery holds out. I miss when the only December activity was watching her toddle around in footie pajamas, trying to sneak Christmas cookies. Now I'm

eating rink fries at 9:45 p.m. and calling it dinner.

I could use a clone. One of me can manage the hockey chaos while the other wraps gifts, meets work deadlines, and decorates the house. I used to have a tiny helper who added ornaments in clumps and called them "pretty." Now she supervises from the couch, offering brutally honest fashion consultant feedback.

Add a magical storage closet, somewhere to hide gifts from a teen who's developed spy-level snooping skills. Evidently sneaking cookies was training for the big game. This closet must also automatically restock tape because, somehow, we go through 47 rolls each December.

Stress-free family photos. Remember when she used to grin with all her baby teeth showing? Now it's influencer pout, sarcastic smirk, or "Ugh, hurry." I just want one picture that says "holiday joy," not "hostage negotiation."

A solitary quiet holiday moment. Just once, I'd like to sit by the tree, cocoa in hand, remembering when she curled up beside me to listen to Christmas stories, without her bursting into my room at nearly 11 pm saying she needs \$40 for Secret Santa - tomorrow.

Finally, please remind me that perfect isn't the point. The gingerbread house may only be decorated on one side, but I'm there for every 9:30 pm game and somehow Christmas still happens. Even if the moments aren't the same perfect ones as when she was little, I know she'll remember that Christmas is still a special time of year. Footie pajamas may have been replaced with satin ones, but on Christmas eve, she still has that same glimmer in her eyes. We snuggle to watch *Home Alone*. That's what makes it all magical.

Love,  
Mom

## Brooklin TOWN CRIER.com

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Next Issue Friday, January 9, 2026

Deadline: Friday, January 2, 2026

# Brooklin's History

## Remembering those snowstorms

By Jennifer Hudgins



These days we measure winter's clout in the number of school cancellations and the length of commute delays. However, there

was a time when Brooklin's residents measured it in cordwood, depleted food stores, and whether the plow would reach their concession line before the livestock ran out of feed.

Imagine facing drifts higher than a house, roads that disappeared for weeks, and temperatures that froze household wells solid. That was winter in Brooklin years ago, a season not of mild frustrations but of survival. Before snowblowers, salt trucks, or weather alerts, a storm could shut down the entire village - and sometimes did. Among the many storms that swept through the village, three winters stand out for their impact.

### The stuck bus

In December, 1959, Brooklin was hit by a heavy snowfall that stranded travellers and tested the hospitality of local residents. A passenger bus bound for Lindsay was stuck on Highway 12, which was impassable under deep, drifting snow. With nowhere else to go, passengers sought shelter in the village. Many homes were open to them, including that of the Willman family, who operated a shoe store on Baldwin Street.

Gerald Emm, former Whitby Deputy Mayor, Regional



Councillor, and Chair of Regional Works during major storm years, recalled that the blizzard closed Highway 12 for five days, requiring snow-clearing machines to be brought in from Toronto.

"Motorists, including myself," he said, "had to find shelter inside Brooklin Marine and Storage, once located across from Brooklin Concrete, and in the Halfway Restaurant (later Lyle's cut rate gas), once about a kilometre north of Brooklin on Highway 12."

### Huge drifts

Seven years later, in January, 1966, southern Ontario faced a far more severe blizzard and Brooklin felt its full force. About 40 centimetres of snow fell, and strong winds piled it into towering drifts that closed rural roads and isolated homes and farms. Travel became hazardous, prompting farmers and neighbours to help stranded motorists, dig out driveways, and check on schoolchildren and the elderly. Outdoor activities were cancelled and, for many Brooklin families, this one became their first truly unforgettable blizzard.



However, the most dramatic of Brooklin's winter trials arrived on January 26-27 during the Great Blizzard of 1978, which extended across southern Ontario and into Buffalo, New York. After an already heavy season in 1977, 79.5 cm of snow fell in November, 150.2 cm in

December, and 152.3 cm in the first two weeks of January.

### And another blast

But the village was hit with another 60 cm on January 26. Drifts reached three metres, and winds up to 100 km/h turned Highways 7 and 12 and local roads into impassable corridors. Schools and businesses closed, and residents sheltered indoors. Yet Brooklin's community spirit prevailed. the Community Centre on Cassels Road, the fire hall on Vipond Road, and church basements became warming centres while farmers with tractors and local snowmobile clubs rescued stranded travellers. Members of volunteer groups, including Lynda and John Darling, active in both CB radio and snowmobile networks, helped deliver food and supplies to residents who were cut off by the storm.

These winter storms are remembered for the trials they brought, the roads they closed, and, most importantly, the stories of care, resilience, and neighbourliness that define the village of Brooklin.



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### PRICES FORECAST TO DECREASE IN 2026

As 2025 nears its end, inventory levels remain healthy and market conditions continue to favour buyers, according to the Central Lakes Association of Realtors® (CLAR). "Strong inventory levels and steadier price trends are creating solid opportunities for those entering the market for the first time and for buyers planning their next move," says CLAR President Christine Riley. (CLAR covers Durham, Hastings, Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland and Peterborough Regions and Prince Edward County) Durham recorded 822 home sales in November, down from 715 in October, CLAR reports. The average selling price was \$40,833, a 1.28 per cent month-over-month decline and 7.01 per cent below November 2024's average of \$404,226. Despite that adjustment, prices remain 10.24 per cent higher than in November 2020, when the average price was \$282,739. Homes spent an average of 30 days on market, with 1,186 new listings added in November.

What's on the horizon? A new real estate report forecasts an uptick in home prices for 2026, saying the Canadian housing market is primed for a 'reset' with more buyers making their move. The report projects the national aggregate home price will increase one per cent year-over-year to \$423,016 in the fourth quarter of 2026. Single-family detached home prices are forecast to increase two per cent to \$476,934 and condominium prices are expected to decrease 2.5 per cent to \$68,918.

The country's two most expensive cities are notable exceptions to that forecast. The aggregate price of a home in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) is forecast to decrease 4.5 per cent to \$1,064,129 year-over-year in the fourth quarter of 2026, while the aggregate price of a home in Greater Vancouver is forecast to decrease 3.5 per cent to \$1,147,888 in that same period.

Though GTA home sales, new listings and average selling price were down year-over-year in November, the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board (TRREB) sees positive change on the horizon. "There are many GTA households who want to take advantage of lower borrowing costs and more favourable selling prices," TRREB President Bechta Barry-Spole says. "What they need most is confidence in their long-term employment outlook. Fortunately, we saw encouraging news on jobs and the broader economy in November.

This positive momentum continues, consumer confidence will strengthen and more people will be in a position to consider purchasing a home in 2026."

In 2025, the Bank of Canada reduced its target for the overnight lending rate four times, ringing the key rate down to its current level of 2.25 per cent. The next scheduled date for announcing the overnight rate target is January 26, 2026.

The King Home Team: Royal Heritage Realty is here to offer valuable advice as the market continues to evolve and will work with your budget to meet your needs. As we reported in a recent edition of Brooklin Town Crier, the Bank of Canada reports an estimated 60 per cent of all Canadian mortgages are expected to come up for renewal in 2025-2026. Many of those are five-year fixed mortgages taken during 2020 and 2021's ultra-low-rate environment. If you find yourself in a financial bind when it comes time to renew your mortgage and are considering downsizing, please know we'll provide valuable advice and will work with your budget to meet your needs.

As 2025 draws to a close, we extend our very best wishes for a joyous holiday season and Happy New Year!

We're so grateful to Maurice and Eleanor King for their incredible support, and guidance over the years. From helping us with rentals to buying our first home in Canada, and now finding what we hope is our forever home, they've been with us every step of the way. They are a wonderful couple who were focused and determined to help us. From staging, open houses, viewings of other houses, inspection advice and recommendations, their professionalism, kindness, and genuine care are unmatched. We appreciate their patience, understanding, attentiveness and encouragement. We wouldn't consider working with anyone else and recommend them wholeheartedly. - K and D

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