

Bellbrook Museum Welcomes Kemp Wagon

In January 2021, Bruce and Joann Shadrach donated an old horse-drawn wagon to the Bellbrook Museum. The wagon is a relic of the past with a personal tie to Bellbrook. This wagon was previously owned by the late John Kemp, a long-time resident of Bellbrook. The wagon was his pride and joy. It was reported that he treated the wagon like others might treat a treasured sports car. For example, he never took it out in the rain and stored it under cover. Mr. Kemp's prized Belgium horses, similar to the famous Budweiser Clydesdales, pulled the wagon. The team appeared in various town events such as the Sugar Maple Parade.



Photo of Mr. & Mrs. Kemp with wagon



Wagon loaded on trailer ready for transport

Dwight Bartlett, President of the Bellbrook Museum Board of Trustees stated, *"We greatly appreciate the Shadrachs' donation of this special piece of Bellbrook history. We plan to restore the wagon to its former glory and bring it back for community events."* Dwight praised the City Maintenance Crew for completing the difficult task of hauling the wagon to the Museum warehouse. Said Dwight, *"Many thanks to Jerry Burgan, Alex Fabrick, Brett Woeste, Jon Dalton, Matt Sanderman and Josh Burns for the safe delivery of the wagon. They handled the task with professionalism and the wagon was delivered without incident."*



Wagon in warehouse



Wagon delivered to warehouse

The Kemp wagon is in fairly good condition. The green paint, fancy lettering, and John Kemp's name painted on the sides appear to be in excellent condition, defying its true age. According to Dwight Barlett, *"The wagon is in far better shape that I imagined, but it still needs some work. Once the pandemic is over we hope to enlist support from the community to rehabilitate the wagon."* The work likely entails replacing worn/broken wood pieces and repainting parts of the wagon. Dwight envisions folks from the community volunteering their time to help with this effort. It would be a great opportunity to learn about this piece of history and to give back to Bellbrook.

Judy Carr, the Museum Curator, summed up the excitement surrounding the acquisition of this new artifact, *"I was thrilled when the Shadrachs' decided to donate the wagon to the museum. I look forward to showcasing the wagon at various events."* How nice that this piece of Bellbrook history found a new home at the museum. Restoring the wagon to its former glory will be a noteworthy achievement and honor Bellbrook history!