Landscape of Nations ceremony honours Indigenous veterans

Penny Coles
The Local

There was drumming, singing, laying of wreaths, a traditional tobacco ceremony around the sacred fire and a musket salute to recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by Six Nations and Native Allies that helped win the War of 1812.

Saturday’s memorial service held at the Landscape of Nations on a beautiful fall day at Queenston Heights was in honour of National Indigenous Veterans Day, not only recognizing generations of Indigenous peoples who played important roles in the history of our country, but also as a time to reflect on their experiences of today, and to better understand and reflect on the meaning of truth and reconciliation, explained Travis Hill of the Niagara Parks Commission, and emcee of the annual event. And the Landscape of Nations, he said, is perfect for such reflection.

He spoke of the fallen, the dedicated and the faithkeepers, “whose valiant efforts forged a lasting peace” for our country and the U.S.

Tim Johnson, now the senior advisor to the Niagara Parks Commission for heritage and legacy, led in the design and development of the Landscape of Nations memorial. He too spoke Saturday, as he has in each of the four years of the Indigenous Veterans Day Valour and Victory ceremony. At the first three, he said, he chose to speak of the memorial itself and “the missing pages of history” it provides.

Saturday, the Niagara-on-the-Lake resident best known for legacy projects that educate the public about the Indigenous experience, chose to speak of his own family’s contribution to Canadian military history — both the service and contributions of his father and his great-grandfather — his “personal connections and motivations” that led to who and where he is now.

For instance, he explained, when the Landscape of Nations Commemorative Memorial was unveiled, the colour guard at that event was the North American Iroquois Veterans Association, “an organization founded by my father, Harold P. Johnson, Mohawk, from Six Nations of the Grand River.”

His father was with the U.S. Army’s 11th Airborne Division as a radio operator, served 18 months in Germany and was active in the Army Reserve for five years, he said.

“Dad was very proud of his military history, and greatly enjoyed the camaraderie of his fellow veterans.”

Johnson’s other memorable family connection he shared is that of his great-grandfather Richard E. Johnson, Tuscarora, from Six Nations.
Regional Official Plan approved — looking good for NOTL

Penny Coles
The Local

Regional

There has been much discussion of the reason for the hold-up of the approval of the town's official plan. It was a promise by all candidates in the 2018 election campaign that it would be a priority, but once it was completed and sent to the region, it seemed stuck in limbo. No more, says Lord Mayor Betty Disero.

The reason given for the delay was that the regional official plan first had to be approved by the province, and late Friday, the region was notified that has been done.

“The Niagara Official Plan (NOP) is a new official plan adopted by Regional Council in June 2022,” the email to the town said. “The NOP, as adopted and approved, outlines a comprehensive land use policy framework to guide growth and development within the Region to the year 2051.”

As expected there were some modifications made by the province, as a result of provincial consultations, “which focus on clarifying matters rather than substantive changes,” the email said. “At a high level these policy modifications were in regards to natural environments and goods movement policies.”

The decision is final, and there are no appeals. This approval of the Niagara Official Plan helps the region prepare for the anticipated population of 694,000 people and 272,000 jobs by 2051, said the email from Ann-Marie Norio, the regional clerk.

“Through the new Niagara Official Plan and working with our local area municipalities, the approval helps us provide more housing and jobs for the Niagara Region.”

There has been some question of how the province would deal with increased density requirements, and whether the region and municipalities could choose where those higher densities would be located, as long as targets are met.

For example, in NOTL it has been discussed that increased density might not be necessary in the Old Town, if other areas, such as Glendale, are targeted instead.

That the province didn’t question that shifting of densities in the regional plan bodes well for NOTL, says Disero.

With the “top layer” of planning provided by the Official Plan, the town can continue working on amending its bylaws that address issues such as setbacks and contextual non-neg, says Disero.

Good news for rural residents — high speed internet coming

Penny Coles
The Local

Lord Mayor Betty Dise- ro was pleased to hear “fantastic news” from Rogers Communications.

She says for some time there has been interest in rural areas, “fantastic news for residents beginning in 2023.”

“Different carriers have been looking at it, trying to get it to the region for a speed of 1 Gbps,” says Romolo D’Angelo.

An email from the Rogers communications department indicated the project is still in the planning and design phase, but discussions will begin with the planning department to prepare the necessary permits.

Town welcomes new operations director

Penny Coles
The Local

Following what the town calls “a robust hiring initiative,” a new director of operations will become a member of town staff on Nov. 14.

Romolo D’Angelo has more than 30 years of leadership experience working in a municipal setting. He is coming from the City of Hamilton, where he worked as a director in public works. He also worked as a director in the community services department.

“Romolo’s D’Angelo has a significant amount of experience, and a proven track record of success in municipal operations,” says Lord Mayor Disero.

“The operations department, has held the position of manager of buildings and technical services, and supervisor of customer service and metered water operations. Additionally, from 2017 to 2022, D’Angelo served as the president of Hamilton Renewable Energy, a leading energy provider.”

“I look forward to seeing Romolo use his expertise and experience to optimize and enhance service delivery. The shift in roles will enable Romolo to bring his expertise in municipal operations to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.”

“Romolo’s strong leadership, extensive experience, knowledge, and goal-oriented mindset will make him a tremendous asset to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. These essential skills will help optimize operations and enhance service delivery.”

On behalf of town staff, Disero said in the news release, “we all look forward to working with you.”

D’Angelo holds an industrial engineering diploma and is a certified engineering technician.

He attended the Ivey Business School at Western University, where he completed an executive leadership development program.

At the University of Toronto, he completed a physical asset management certificate program and a facility management program. Other notable programs he has accomplished, the news release says, include high-performance management and an advanced management program through McMas ter University.

Romolo D’Angelo is the town’s new director of operations, beginning Monday. (Photo supplied)

Town welcomes new operations director

Romolo D’Angelo is the town’s new director of operations, beginning Monday. (Photo supplied)
Laying wreaths, tobacco ceremony part of service

Continued from page 1

Nations of the Grand River.

“Here, on this hallowed ground,” he continued. “I’m grateful to be able to honour and recognize my ancestors, my father, my great-grandfather, and all those through my family lineage, extending back to my sixth great-uncle John Brant, who fought here at Queenston Heights, and my seventh great-grandfather Joseph Brant (both recognized with statues at the entrance to the Landscape of Nations), who allied with the Crown during the American Revolutionary War.”

Saturday’s ceremony was about honouring “their commitment to the causes they believed in and the contributions and sacrifices they made,” he said.

Niagara-on-the-Lake historian Richard Merritt also put some interesting human context to the history of the Indigenous people’s connections with early settlers, before the laying of wreaths, and the tobacco ceremony, where one by one, those who wished to participate were encouraged to do a traditional walk about the sacred fire before sprinkling tobacco on it to honour the dead.

Métis Brian Kon, who led that tradition, is accustomed to speaking of Indigenous culture, history, and the impact of colonization on generations of Indigenous people, and has also taken part in the current Indigenous Lead School Board, is a natural to answer questions posed by veterans trying to understand the meaning of the day.

Chatting with two young people at the ceremony with their grandparents, he was able to tell them he had met and spent some time with Phyllis Webstad, the woman who lived and wrote the Orange Shirt Story about a time when his people were children taken from their families and sent to the Indian Residential Schools, when she was in Niagara recently, including a meeting in Niagara Falls with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

After listening to Kon’s explanation about the meaning of the sacred fire, Ellie Scholz, at the ceremony with her brother, asked Kon where he had learned all the information he had shared with them. He said it was through people, including his mother and grandmothers, who had told stories to him as he was growing up, stories that had been shared for generations.

He explained there was a time when his people were not allowed to talk about those stories, and when Ellie asked why, he said, “the people who came here didn’t really understand what had happened here, and they made some mistakes. We’re trying to correct those mistakes,” connecting what he was saying to what children have learned on their Orange Shirt Days at school.

Karl Dockstader, executive director of the Niagara Regional Native Centre, also spoke of family connections—his father, he said, was a veteran who served in Vietnam when the family lived in the U.S. Dockstader opened and closed the ceremony with a traditional honouring address, explained one repetitive phrase, which literally means “minds coming together,” is intended to recognize “a greater responsibility to understand the meaning of Remembrance Day.”

Wayne Gates, MPP for Niagara Falls, laid a wreath to honour Indigenous veterans.

Liv Houtby of the St. Catharines Grantham Optimist Club, at Queenston Heights Saturday to learn about a different kind of ceremony, participates in the traditional Remembrance Day ceremony, participates in the traditional tobacco ceremony. She said she learned Indigenous people played a much larger role than she had realized “in making Canada a home for us.”

“Here we are, laying wreaths on a day so many of us are affected by,” she said. “It’s important to be here.”

Tim Johnson and Richard Merritt, both speakers at the ceremony, lay a wreath at the memory circle. (Photos by Penny Coles)

Tim Johnson speaks of his ancestors’ involvement in fighting with allies, with John Brant and two Old Fort Erie soldiers in the background.

Freikkeeper Brian Kon explains the sacred fire and the tobacco ceremony to a group of people who attended Saturday’s veterans’ service.

Karl Dockstader, executive director of the Niagara Regional Native Centre, opens Saturday’s ceremony at the Landscape of Nations memorial.

Phyllis Webstad, the woman who lived and wrote the Orange Shirt Story about a time when her people were children taken from their families and sent to the Indian Residential Schools, when she was in Niagara recently, including a meeting in Niagara Falls with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Wayne Gates, MPP for Niagara Falls, laid a wreath to honour Indigenous veterans.
Parents stress the importance of educational assistants

Penny Coles
The Local

Schools in Niagara reopened Tuesday, but what happens next is anybody’s guess.

With educational support workers protesting provincial legislation passed last Thursday that imposed a contract on them and at the same time made striking illegal, employees of school boards across the province protested Friday and Monday. But once the province promised to repeal that legislation, all were back at work and students back to school Tuesday.

Representatives from the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) said Monday they hoped contract negotiations would begin again soon, but at press time no date had been set.

That means for the time being at least, parents can stop worrying about school closures due to protests, but some parents continue to be concerned about how this will end. It’s of special concern to parents of children who require educational assistants, a category of workers at the bottom of the pay scale to be negotiated.

Krista London is the mom of two sons with autism. Ryan, 16, is at Holy Cross, and Avery, nine, is at Crossroads Public School, in Grade 4.

Neither of the boys could do the work expected of them without an educational assistant, their mom says. For her boys and many other students, “EAs are essential.”

The first point London wants to make is that educational assistants “are the only ones who are allowed to help children if they have an accident. They can assist with that.” Those who don’t have special needs children in school might not realize this is just one part of an EA’s difficult job.

Ryan, says London, in addition to having autism, has a memory disorder. He is in an integrated class and requires assistance “to do any work at all.” He couldn’t be in a mainstream classroom without EA support.

“If he’s having a meltdown, his EA will remove him from the classroom, go for a walk, let him have a mental health break,” she says.

“AAs work with children who need help with everything they do — including going to the washroom and eating lunch. These children can’t attend school without them.”

Avery has autism, and also difficulty with his speech. He can’t read, because he can’t sound out letters. “He can’t look at the letter A and make an ‘a’ sound,” London explains.

“Most kids in his grade can read a chapter book. He can’t read instructions on the board. Without full one-on-one help, he can’t do anything. He can’t participate in anything without an EA beside him.”

The positive impact of the EAs can change the lives of students like Avery, she says. “They are the hardest workers in Ontario. They leave their families every day to come to school to look after our children. They’re so low-paid, they’re not doing it for the money. Many of them have struggled themselves when they were students, and had the help of EAs. That’s why some of them do what they do.”

Without them, her boys wouldn’t be able to go to school, says London — it would be up to her to homeschool them.

“In a perfect world we’d put them in a private school, but we can’t afford that.”

Instead, she would have to give up work and teach them, “but I don’t consider myself qualified for that.”

Continued on page 5
Also, the children thrive in school because of the socialization. They would miss that.

Although children with autism are often thought of as anti-social, that’s not always the case, says London.

“Avery is the life of the party. He’s a delightful little boy.”

If he had to stay home and miss out on that, “it wouldn’t be an equitable system.”

With Ford saying his government will present an improved offer when bargaining resumes with the union representing 55,000 education workers, London has a message for him.

“I would ask him to respect what these workers do. They are obviously not respected. It’s clear they have no clue what these workers do. They are obviously not respected. It’s clear they don’t feel they’re being paid a different job’ to those who do. They are obviously not respected. It’s clear they have no clue what these workers do. They are obviously not respected. It’s clear they don’t feel they’re being paid a different job’ to those who do. They are obviously not respected. It’s clear they have no clue what these workers do. They are obviously not respected. It’s clear they don’t feel they’re being paid.

Others might say ‘go get a different job’ to those who don’t feel they’re being paid enough, says London, “but we need these people in school. I’m grateful to be able to say I love my job. I have a unique opportunity to use my skill, doing something I love, to enhance these kids’ learning experience in an outdoor learning environment, which is needed now more than ever,” he says.

“The vast majority of educators want to be there for their kids, and do their jobs properly.”

For that, they deserve respect and fair pay, he says, “and the government has the power to make that happen.”

“Integration is “a fundamental right, but an incredible challenge, and in order for it to work, you need resources. There are a lot of excellent EAs in our school board and we want to keep them.”

Owen Bjorgan was outside of the equation, “the government’s over-reach is concerning. Who knows what they’ll do next?”

At the end of the day, what is important to him is to see kids back in school. “I’m grateful to be able to say I love my job. I have a unique opportunity to use my skill, doing something I love, to enhance these kids’ learning experience in an outdoor learning environment, which is needed now more than ever,” he says.

“The vast majority of educators want to be there for their kids, and do their jobs properly.”

For that, they deserve respect and fair pay, he says, “and the government has the power to make that happen.”

What is the purpose of your recent newspaper ads?

To make tourism an election issue so that we can come together as a community and maximize the benefits of tourism rather than blindly maximize the volume of tourism. We are glad to see all of the candidates now understand too much tourism is a problem for many and we need a town tourism strategy that works for the town’s citizens.

We can no longer deny there are any problems. Hiding and ignoring the problems is not conducive to cooperating and finding solutions. Educate the public, councillors, town staff and the industry that if mishandled even a small rate of planned growth will result in a doubling of tourism from 2020 to 2030 at a large cost to all of us. The net benefits of additional low yield tourism are minimal. Higher yielding tourism is better for the towns welfare. The invisible burden of tourism is explained at thetravelfoundation.org.uk/visible-burden or video at you.tube/ON_wVhJkVL0

The town’s time and money is better spent on creating housing, higher paying jobs and diversifying the economic base of the town.

Why did you not recommend candidates in the election?

Because, no matter who we elect, we need to let our representatives know what is expected of them. Our elected officials need to put the people first.

Who are you?

We are your neighbours. Like you we enjoy the benefits tourism has brought to our town but we know excess high volume tourism is a burden on our quality of life and our finances.

Sign up for our newsletter at weluvnotl.com or contact us at info@weluvnotl.com

Volunteers are needed to help with the cause. Please let us know if you are willing to help.
Friday, we will have a traditional Remembrance Day service, where we can all gather to pay tribute to those who served our country and made the ultimate sacrifice as they fought for freedom and democracy.

Last year Nov. 11 was a beautiful fall day, and attended a good crowd, but wreaths had been laid before the service and most of the seats set up for veterans and their families, as well as the seniors who have difficulty standing for any length of time, were empty.

The service was also shorter than usual, with none of the traditional speeches from government representatives, and the names of the fallen from NOTL were read during the two minutes of silence.

The small changes to ensure it was held as safely as possible, especially for the most vulnerable, offered another reminder of why these services are so important, why we are grateful to those who fought for future freedom we now enjoy.

It was a relief to be able to be able to gather, after the cancellation of the cenotaph services in 2020, when the only ceremony was a private one with a small group of dignitaries at the monument on King Street, in front of the Royal Canadian Legion hall. The rest of us were asked to leave our poppies at the cenotaph, to take some time to reflect on the sacrifices made by our ancestors, as we would if we were gathered at the cenotaph; and to talk to our children and grandchildren about the importance of Remembrance Day.

We’ve had two years of being asked to take certain precautions to keep people safe, to save lives, and although some were not happy with those restrictions, seeking another form of fighting for freedom, others sacrificed to ensure a safe future for our older generations, as well as a better future.

We live in a country where democracy is taken for granted, when there are so many corners of the world where there is still war, there are still people dying, some of them family of our friends and neighbours.

Friday is a time to remember, a time to be thankful, a time to consider others not so fortunate. Let’s hope for another beautiful day Friday, a good turnout at both cenotaphs, and take time to remember the lessons of the past, while hoping for a better future for those not as fortunate as we are.

Penny Coles
The Local

Gates: Bill 28 was wrong and worker unity stopped it

Wayne Gates, MPP Niagara Falls Riding

This last week we saw the power of community. When the Ford government decided to strip workers of their Charter rights to collectively bargain, we saw the strength of unity. As many are aware, Education Minister Stephen Lecce and Premier Doug Ford made the ill-advised decision to introduce legislation to pre-emptively strip CUPE education workers of their right to strike, and imposed a four-year contract

on those workers. They did this using the notwithstanding clause — the first time in Ontario history — to bar workers from striking. On Monday they back down.

As someone who has been a worker my entire life, I’m finding it hard to put into words the emotions I felt when this legislation was announced. Anger, frustration, worry — but when I saw the collective action of education workers in our community and across the province, I immediately felt hopeful.

With moments’ notice, education workers, parents, community members and other unions came together to tell this government it was wrong.

What this government did was not only unprecedented — it was cruel.

They attacked the lowest-paid education workers in this province, some having to attend food banks or take on a second job. They did it with heavy-handed legislation. They also did this to a group of workers who are predominately female, something that is becoming a pattern for this government after Bill 124. They refused to sit down and bargain fairly and created this crisis.

But what’s most concerning, the approach from this government could have serious negative affects on our education system as a whole. I’ve spoken with many education workers, across multiple classifications and they have said the same thing — people are leaving the profession, and it’s hurting our education system. That is the last thing we want for children right now in our province.

We should be investing in our students, our teachers, and our education workers because that is how you build an inclusive, world-class public education system.

These workers are the backbone of our education system, and we must get this right.

Monday’s announcement by this government to repeal Bill 28 was a step in the right decision, but make no mistake, this only happened because of the collective action of workers and community members in Ontario.

Going forward, we must remain focused. We need to be back at the legislature immediately and begin the work of repealing Bill 28 in its entirety. I’m hoping my colleagues across the aisle do this in an honest and straightforward way, avoiding any unnecessary legislative games. Protecting both collective bargaining rights and the quality of children’s education is paramount. It should be our sole focus at the legislature until we get a fair collective agreement for education workers in this province.

I’m ready to get back to Queen’s Park and get this right for our education system. Our students deserve nothing less.

Penny Coles
The Local

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Need Help? Make the Call

Distress Centre For depression, distress and crisis. 24 hour help line:
905-688-3711

Mental Health And Addictions Access (Toll Free) 1-866-550-5205

Kids Help Phone Service for youth 416-586-5437
1-800-668-6688 (Christine Line)
kidshelpline.ca

Alcoholics Anonymous Anonymous services provided Monday-Wednesday evening 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.
St. Mark’s Parish Hall 41 Byron St., NOTL or find a meeting 905-682-2140

Assaulted Women’s Helpline Mobile calls to: #SAFE (#7233) 1-866-863-0511
(Toll Free)

Crime Stoppers 1-800-222-8477
niagaratips.com Text 274673 (CRIMES), keyword: Niagara, then your tip
Thank you to everyone that bought pumpkins from our wagon on Concession 7. We didn’t have the abundance of pumpkins that we usually have because of dry weather, but everyone was very generous, and we sold out for the first time! We will be donating $1,000 to McMaster Children’s Hospital and $1,000 to Ronald McDonald House. Thanks for your support. We hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and a fun Halloween!

Brook, Reid, Steve and Peg Watson

A few years ago, I had an opportunity to visit Vimy Ridge and stand over my uncle’s military grave site. It was one of thousands that adorn the hills and valleys of Northern France. I was struck by the beautiful serenity of it all. Headstone upon headstone bearing the Maple Leaf, a sad yet beautiful tribute to the souls that lay beneath. It was one of my proudest moments as a Canadian.

Those heroes paid the ultimate sacrifice for the freedoms we enjoy today. The freedom to vote, to challenge the government and to peacefully protest. They unselfishly volunteered to defend our young nation’s freedom with no regard for personal agendas.

Let’s again pause this Remembrance Day and salute the true heroes of freedom.

Brent Longmoore
NOTL

Thoughts on Remembrance Day, and putting an end to more deaths

Ben Foster Special to The Local

I have started to see red poppies and I know that means Remembrance Day is nearly here.

I get to thinking about the World Wars and wars since and how it would be hard to find a family not affected by war and conflict. I found some large coins at home that my dad said were given to him when his great grandad died in the First World War. In the First World War, memorial plaques were made from bronze, and hence it was popularly known as the Dead Man’s Penny among UK and Commonwealth front-line troops, also becoming widely known as the Death Penny.

I got to thinking about these things, I wrote this poem:

I cannot imagine saying goodbye to some I loved, off to fight a war
I cannot imagine hearing that someone I loved has been hurt or killed
I cannot imagine my home being gone, blown up to pieces
I cannot imagine hiding somewhere alone, hurt, cold and in the dark
I cannot imagine not saying thank you to all those that serve in the military on land, sea and air to keep us safe and for their sacrifice
But I will try to imagine a world where their bravery and sacrifice is no longer needed.

A shout-out to our own local 809 Newark Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron. They will be having a Remembrance Day Sleepover followed by a Vigil at the Old Town Cemetery website at https://809cadets.ca.

Also visit the Niagara-on-the-Lake Legion website at https://legion124.ca where you can learn about the three cenotaphs, and the work the Legion does to honour those who have lost their lives and to help those that have and continue to serve. The site also has ideas to make remembrance a year round thing, like saying thank you to a veteran, planting a remembrance garden, or visiting the Canada War Museum. The Canada Legion website at https://www.legion.ca also has lots of information, including specific information for youth. Ben Foster is in Grade 11 at Eden High School, doing a co-op placement at The Local.

Letters to the editor should be submitted to theNOTL Local by email to penny@notllocal.com. Please try to keep it to about 350 words. Sorry, but we won’t publish anonymous letters. And please stick to the issue at hand, especially for your support. We hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and a fun Halloween!

Letters! We want letters! If you have a letter to the editor you would like to see published, please send it to penny@notllocal.com. Please try to keep it to about 350 words. Sorry, but we won’t publish anonymous letters. And please stick to the issue at hand, rather than attacking those involved. The deadline is Monday at noon.

Where is Ben?

The Local’s co-op student, Ben Foster, is discovering new locations in NOTL, and wondering how familiar other teens may be with them. If you know where this photo was taken, email penny@notllocal.com.
American conflict, fought by a young Canada’s involvement. Thoroughly researched history unearths the "Civil War," Martin’s thorough work of 2,000 men who were a spy working within a network of 2,000 men who were trying to hatch plot after plot to bring an end to prosperity. They seemed to have brought an end to prosperity. Lincoln started in Montreal, "Martin explained, "they would prompt 11 southern states to secede from the Union."

The photo Brian Martin is showing to a small gathering at his book launch is of a house on Mississagua Street he mentions in his book. The plot to assassinate Lincoln was added to the name Millionaire Cemetery, known as Millionaire’s Row. “They seemed to have been accepted by the prominent people of London,” Martin told The Local. “Then I did more research, and I discovered that Ku Klux leaders were wanted for murder also came to London. One of them stayed in London, and one of them went to Niagara.”

He was referring to J.W. Avery, the former Confederate Mayor and leader of the Ku Klux (the “Klan,” says Martin, had a member to the name in 1915) in South Carolina. Avery, who was wanted in the post-Civil War U.S. for conspiring against Black people and for murder, settled with his family in 1872 into a house that still stands at 392 Mississauga Street. The Averys moved back to South Carolina in 1880, four years after President Grant pardoned all those previously convicted under the Ku Klux Act. But the family held onto the house until 1899, seven years after their patriarch had died.

“By the time the Confederacy had settled in Niagara-on-the-Lake,” added Martin, “the small Black community that had settled here had much further to go toward St. Catharines and elsewhere. There didn’t seem to be any friction between Confederate leaders and the people who had been enslaved.”

Interestingly, Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederacy, also spent three days in Niagara-on-the-Lake not long after he was released on bond from Fort Monroe in Virginia. He even delivered a public speech from the Wellington Street house rented by James Mason, the former Confederate commissioner to Britain, in which he thanked Canadians for their hospitality to him and others who committed “no crime at all.”

There were many other fascinating connections between Canada and the Confederacy during that time. “The plot to assassinate Lincoln started in Montreal,” marveled Martin. “The plot to have yellow fever spread began, in Montreal. The plot to break open a prison where all the Confederates were held was started too.”

From Underground Railroad to Rebel Refuge also delves into the role Canada played due to its close proximity to a country experiencing inner turmoil over those five years. “We don’t usually think that the Civil War has much connection to Canada,” said Martin. “But we were in fact heavily involved. London sold to both sides of the conflict. We had 40,000 people coming north (draft dodgers, known as ‘skedaddlers’), we had 20,000 going south, signed up for both sides. We weren’t just spectators, we were participants.”

Martin’s research also shows that many newspapers in Canada at the time were sympathetic toward the struggles of the southern states. He points to the Toronto Leader and even William Kirby’s Niagara Mail as such publications. Kirby, in fact, lived right next door to Breckinridge on Front Street.

Furthermore, Martin feels that the American Civil War was a crucial factor in the formation of Canada as a country in 1867. “We were so sympathetic to the south and worried that if the north defeated them easily, he explained, “they would turn their guns north and annex us. William Seward, the secretary of state, had been urging that for a long time.”

John A. Macdonald and George Etienne Caron soon pushed for a union between Canada East and Canada West (Quebec and Ontario), Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, founding the Dominion of Canada on July 1, 1867.

“It was largely for mutual defence,” said Martin, “to protect themselves in the event the Americans might try again to take us over. The Civil War was a factor in creating Canada.”

Martin’s book is fast-paced, informative, jaw-dropping and revelatory. It’s a non-fiction volume that reads at times like a thriller, with each chapter leaving you waiting for the surprises to come in the next.

And it’s an important book. As Martin explained Friday night, there have been at least 60,000 books written about the Civil War. There are only a handful, though, that refer to any involvement by Canada, or Canadians, in the conflict.

From Underground Railroad to Rebel Refuge thoroughly rights that wrong. It’s published by ECW Press and is available at The Old Niagara Bookshop on Regent Street in Niagara-on-the-Lake.
Kids can have fun making pizza with Santa

Ryan Crawford was at the recent open house for the Niagara-on-the-Lake Youth Campus in Virgil, and was blown away by what he saw. The chef and owner of Ruffino’s Pasta Bar and Grill and BarBea has decided he wants to help.

He and his wife Martha Brett Rumble are expecting their first child in April, so while their boy or girl (they’re waiting to find out the old-fashioned way) is a few years away from enjoying the youth hub, this is a cause they are embracing, and are planning a fun Christmas fundraiser for kids that will benefit kids.

Each Sunday in December, with the exception of Christmas Day, his Mary Street restaurant will be open for families, by reservation. Kids will make their pizza with Santa, and have it with a drink and ice cream, while parents can order off the menu if they desire.

Photographer Betty Loo will bring her airstream and set up a photo booth in the restaurant so kids can have photos of the event. The charge for each child, including the photo, will be $20, with proceeds going to the Youth Campus.

Maria Mavridis of Cork’s is helping with some of the food, says Crawford.

He is pumped at how successful a fundraiser this could be. He expects to take reservations every 30 minutes from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. so kids can make their pizza with Santa and then sit down to eat, while a new group begins.

“We’re going to make it as much fun as we can,” he says.

And Santa, who loves kids, will make sure it is fun, Crawford adds.

He got the idea from Steve Gilchrist, the Santa of the family, who retired to Niagara-on-the Lake from Thornbury, where he was Santa for 36 years. He has 12 grandkids, and he is well-equipped to entertain children. He even has a new outfit, and is really looking forward to the event.

Crawford is predicting he can raise about $10,000 over the month. “It’s going to be awesome,” he says.

For reservations call 289-819-0179.

Santa will be on-hand to help kids make pizza at Ruffino’s Pasta Bar and Grill on Mary Street Sundays in December. (Photo supplied)
The poppies are attached to cards showing the name, rank and dates of birth and death of local soldiers who did not return home. (David Gilchrist)
REMEMBRANCE DAY DAY

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH

Lest We Forget

Lest we forget.

Lest We Forget

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM
November 11
Old Town Cenotaph

6:00 am Cadet vigil starts. Cadets will follow protocols as listed in their operations order.

9:30 am Queen Street closed to vehicular traffic.

10:50 am Play O Canada, followed by a prayer.
Reading of In Flanders Fields.

11:00 am Play Last Post, lower flag to half mast.
Play Rouse, raise the flag, and the Legion banner will return to its original place.
Remarks from M.P. Tony Baldinelli.
Place Wreaths in order.
Benediction.
Play God Save The King.
The gathering departs.

November 11
Queenston Cenotaph

1:00 pm Members will gather on the lawn in front of the Cenotaph, official dignitaries will gather along Queenston Street.

1:05 pm Play O Canada, followed by a prayer.

1:10 pm Play Last Post, lower the flag to half mast.

1:12 pm Play Rouse, the flag is raised.
The Act of Remembrance.
Benediction.
Remarks from M.P. Wayne Gates.

1:14 pm Place Official Wreaths one at a time, followed by family and institution wreaths, two at a time.

1:30 pm Play God Save The King.
The gathering departs.
In Flanders Fields
by John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.
This photo of the cenotaph was taken early Tuesday morning as Dave Gilchrist chased the blood moon. A report by students of Willowbank School of Restoration Arts says although the cenotaph might not have changed in appearance, there is work that needs to be done to repair it so that it remains a community focal point.

**Penny Coles**
**The Local**

The Queen Street Cenotaph, the most recognized landmark in town, marked its 100th anniversary in June.

But it’s showing its age, and as a 40-page report from Willowbank Restoration Arts students indicates, it needs some repairs, and they should be done immediately.

The cenotaph was unveiled June 23, 1922.

Al Howse, president of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124, spoke to councillors just before the anniversary celebrations, explaining the military history of the town, and training conducted up to 1966, including major concentrations of troops during both world wars.

“The town cenotaph is a reminder of the community’s service to the nation,” he said, and is dedicated to members of the community lost in war.

At that time a town committee was formed, and Willowbank was asked to look at the cenotaph.

The 40-page report on the Queen Street clock-tower and cenotaph, prepared by Alec Latham, Alexandra Moss and Christine Rier, Class of 2024 Willowbank students, provides some insight into the work needed to restore the iconic landmark, and the priority of the repairs that need to be undertaken.

The cenotaph is a community focal point commemorating those who lost their lives in service to Canada, the report says, and its exterior appearance has changed little over the last 100 years.

However, “it needs immediate repairs, and to be restored, maintained and protected for present and future generations.”

The report provides recommendations for how to proceed with its restoration, and says Willowbank supports the Royal Canadian Legion, the town, which owns the structure, “and all stakeholders as they continue to work together to fully secure the future of this unique built and cultural heritage.”

“"The most pressing issues found on the structure," it says in its recommendations, "are related to water damage, stormwater management, and the need for regular inspection and maintenance."

The report lists 12 recommendations for work that is "urgent" and should be carried out immediately.

The recommendations don’t have costs attached, notes Howse, and although there is a fundraising campaign underway, which since June has raised about $15,000, the report has been passed to town staff to identify priorities, and come up with a dollar figure. “We have no idea at this point. We don’t even have a guesstimate. We don’t know the bottom line. We do know we have a long way to go.”

The report is very detailed, and had some surprises about repairs “you don’t necessarily see,” added Howse.

In addition to the 12 recommendations for work that needs immediate attention, “there were other repairs also suggested that aren’t as urgent.”

Donations can be made at the Virgil town hall at 1593 Four Mile Creek Rd., or the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124 located at 410 King Street, via cash or cheque (made payable to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake) or online at notl.com/recreation-events/community-initiatives-events. Tax receipts will be provided for all donations above $25.
A CHRISTMAS CAROL

By Charles Dickens
Originally adapted and directed by Tim Carroll

IRVING BERLIN’S WHITE CHRISTMAS

Celebrate the holiday season at The Shaw in beautiful Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. Featuring Irving Berlin’s White Christmas and Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol.

SHAWFEST.COM | 905-468-2172
Now that we’re more used to living with COVID-19, common colds are back, and they might last longer than they used to. Ensure illness doesn’t linger longer than it needs to with these recovery tips and tricks.

**Blow your nose**
Congestion is a frustrating symptom of cold and flu. Lift congestion sooner by blowing your nose regularly, otherwise sniffing can keep mucus in the body and prolong a stuffy nose. One of the best ways to loosen congestion is a warm, steamy shower. Steam helps moisturize nasal passages and open airways.

If you're too sick for a shower, try humidifying your home. Dry environments can be harsh on the body during recovery. Pro tip: try adding vapour rub to the humidifier or eucalyptus drops.

**Hydrating**
If you feel dehydrated, try Florida Orange Juice. It’s a source of vitamin C, an antioxidant that supports immune function. Fortified orange juice may also include vitamin D.

**Say ahh**
Sore throats are such a pain: swallowing and eating is difficult, and sleeping is challenging with a dry, sore throat. While lozenges may temporarily soothe a sore throat, they aren’t a cure-all solution. With few options available to target a sore throat directly, also try gargling with warm salt water. It’s an effective remedy to moisten the throat and bring temporary relief. Gargling up to three times a day may aid in speedy recovery.

**Drink up**
Hydration is essential to beat a cold or flu. Try these 3 things to speed up cold and flu recovery.

1. **Squash**
Squash is packed with vitamin A, C, D, E as well as zinc, protein and prebiotics. Try it in your fall and winter dishes to boost your immune system. Squash is a great source of beta-carotene which gets converted into vitamin A. You can also find beta-carotene in carrots, sweet potatoes, spinach, kale, cantaloupe and bell peppers. So go ahead and eat in colour.

2. **Eggs**
Eggs are a quick, versatile and convenient way to get some vitamin D through the cold winter months. Eggs are an economical source of protein that help build antibodies. Try them in the morning with breakfast, at lunch or even at dinner.

3. **Florida Orange Juice**
Florida Orange Juice provides key nutrients such as vitamin C, folate, potassium and thiamin. Fortified juices also contain vitamin D to help support the immune system during cold and flu season and all year long.

4. **Nuts and seeds**
Nuts and seeds are foods filled with antioxidants such as vitamin E and zinc. Zinc contributes to the normal function of the immune system. Bonus: nuts and seeds are terrific for plant-based protein.

5. **Garlic, onions and leeks**
Garlic, onions and leeks all belong to the alium family of veggies and contain prebiotics which act as food for the good, probiotic bacteria in your gut. Prebiotics are important for both our gut and immune health. Add these savoury ingredients to your fall and winter dishes not just for flavour, but for a delicious dose of prebiotics too.

Find more nutrition and recipe information at floridacitrus.ca/oj/recipes.

**Try avoiding caffeine and drink mostly water.** When your appetite is low however, it is important to get minerals and vitamins from drinks.

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**Lifelong Seniors Guide**

Try these 3 things to speed up cold and flu recovery.

**Five foods to get you through cold and flu season**

1. Squash
2. Eggs
3. Florida Orange Juice
4. Nuts and seeds
5. Garlic, onions and leeks

Find more nutrition and recipe information at floridacitrus.ca/oj/recipes.
During a severe exacerbation, symptoms like shortness of breath and increased phlegm are at greater risk of having another lung attack within a year. It just takes one moderate exacerbation to increase the risk of hospitalization, so if even something seems like it “wasn’t as bad as it could have been,” never let it go unreported.

To learn more about COPD, visit lunghealth.ca/COPD.

www.newscanada.com

Be wary of phone, SMS and email messages: there are many scams that target people via social media, dating sites, email or phone calls. Generally, these attacks attempt to acquire banking info for an immediate or urgent payment. Other types ask for an individual to confirm and/or reset their login ID and password in order to steal account credentials. You can become more cyber aware with resources like The Vault, a downloadable guide to cyber security, available at rbc.com/cyber.

www.newscanada.com

As we go through the holidays and the busiest shopping season of the year, many of us opt for online shopping for the best deals and the convenience factor. However, it’s an important time of year to be alert and prepared for a heightened risk of cyber attacks, such as unauthorized access to online accounts, and becoming the victim of an online scam or even identity theft. In fact, it turns out these are the top concerns for Canadians when it comes to cyber threats, according to a recent poll on cybersecurity. “As Canadians increasingly shop, communicate and live more of their life online, there’s a need to be more proactive when it comes to their cybersecurity,” says Adam Evans, chief information security officer at RBC. “The holidays are a peak shopping time when people are buying online more frequently. With the distractions of everything on the to-do list, it may be easier to fall victim to potential online criminal activity without precautions in place.”

Despite concerns, only half of Canadians say they use antivirus software or have multi-factor authentication on their accounts - two basic security precautions. Moreover, younger people between 18 and 34 are less likely than older generations to take protective measures such as updating antivirus software installed on their devices or changing their passwords quarterly.

Here are three tips for protecting yourself online and increasing your cybersecurity:

Keep your banking details secure: use a unique and strong password for each account. Consider using a strong password generator or create long passwords or phrases that you can remember.

Be careful when using public Wi-Fi: avoid shopping online over a public network even if it is reputable and password protected. Consider using a virtual private network (VPN) if you plan to use private information on a public network. Be aware of people looking over your shoulder or surveillance cameras when entering information in a public setting.

Three ways to protect against cybercrime during the holidays

Leaves to worry behind and embrace vibrant seniors living

The Royal Henley offers a lifestyle of activities and services designed to help make every day fantastic!

- Gourmet meals
- Calendar of activities including CLUBfit programs
- Care team on site 24/7 & Emergency response system
- In-suite kitchenette with fridge & microwave
- Washroom with reassuring grab bars, walk in shower
- Weekly housekeeping and flat linen services
- Individually climate controlled and much more!

CALL TODAY 905 935 1800
Plans for vineyards not yet made public

Continued from page 1

tunity and we look forward to learning more about this iconic wine region.”

With Stratus and Jackson-Triggs currently anchoring the tiny enclave on one of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s most travelled stretch of wineries, there are also some enticing properties within easy walking distance. Oast House Brewers is a huge draw for beer lovers, the new high-end Oast House on Niagara Stone Road, as well as an assembly hall, a grocery store, and small shops. As one source said, with Mark Anthony joining the drinks industry, Anthony's obsession with best-in-class taste is rooted in the family's organic vineyards and distinctive, award-winning wines.

In addition to owning Mission Hill, Martinis Lane, Check Mate, Cedar Creek, Road 13, and Liquidity wineries, Mark Anthony also owns White Claw, Beatrice Canadian Whisky, Glendalough and Dilleo's Distillery. At the same time, his drinks company whose hallmark is high-end winemaking in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley.

Anthony von Mandl, founder and CEO of the Mark Anthony Group, has purchased the vineyards between Status Vineyards and the Jackson-Triggs Winery, fronting on Niagara Stone Road. Duc is originally from Jordan and was dating (and later married) Jack’s daughter, Linda, in high school. When he graduated from college, Duc started working on the Forrer farm to make ends meet, and never left. Duc said he put the vineyard up for sale earlier this year and by the time the deal was done, Mark Anthony wanted more than the 44 or so acres, so Duc ended up parting with more than 70 acres under vine. “It was all about location for them,” Duc said. He has a deal in place to run the vineyards for von Mandl while they decide on a plan going forward. Other details of the deal, including price, were not disclosed.

Duc’s father-in-law sold Jackson-Triggs a portion of the original vineyard when that iconic winery was just getting established in the late 1990s. To this day, Duc sells his grapes to Arterra Wines Canada, which was originally Vincor, founded by Allan Jackson and Donald Triggs. Duc took the proceeds from the sale to purchase the family’s first homestead and vineyards on East and West Lane, and will continue farming as the new generation of family members takes over the business.

Asked if the family ever considered using the coveted Niagara Stone Road for a full-fledged winery, Duc answered, “I like the family life on a farm.”

“It’s a great family life … until you become a winemaker.” —Wine in Niagara

Local grower Ray Duc has sold more than 70 acres of Forrer Farms, a family-run business that has been growing grapes and tender fruit in NOTL since 1960. (Photos supplied)

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Local grower Ray Duc has sold more than 70 acres of Forrer Farms, a family-run business that has been growing grapes and tender fruit in NOTL since 1960. (Photos supplied)
Joan King asking for help with stocking project

When Joan King decided she wanted to help local seniors celebrate Christmas in 2020, her plan was simple and modest — she would deliver about 80 stockings stuffed with goodies to the residents of Upper Canada Lodge — she was afraid it would be a lonely, difficult time for seniors, that first Christmas during a pandemic.

However, as the outpouring of support from those who wanted to help swelled daily, so did her project. Overwhelmed by the generosity and enthusiasm from those who reached out to her, her plan grew to include all three long-term care homes in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Last year, more than 200 people were part of this initiative, some filling stockings, others contributing items to fill them with. Cards were created by Amika Verwegen’s young children, and special gift tags were made by Sheri Ruby. Hand-knitted hearts were made by the ladies at Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care Service and included in cards designed by students, and printed by the town. At Crossroads Public School, Kindergarten classes put together 54 stockings. The Niagara Lions Club, under the direction of Dorothy Soo-Wiens, put together 23 stockings. The Wind group of restaurants had 40 to fill, and on the day the deliveries were to be made, a St. Davids woman dropped off bags of large stuffed animals she had collected by ordering online and driving around to various stores.

King is now planning for this Christmas, again planning to deliver joy to seniors at Upper Canada Lodge, Pleasant Manor and Niagara Long Term Care. She says she’s not sure what will be included in the stockings — it seems every year there are surprises — but she is hoping for 212 people to purchase a Christmas stocking and fill it with items that seem to be appreciated: small packs of Kleenex; a hat, mittens or scarf; large socks; a travel pillow; a small blanket or shawl; toothbrush and toothpaste; a magazine and calendar; unscented lotion and lip balm; a large print word search book, puzzles of 100 pieces or less; colouring book, sketch pad, pencil crayons and sharpener, pencil case, pens, and pad of paper; a magnifying glass; a stress ball; and candy, mints or chocolate.

Once the stockings are filled, they can be dropped off at her home in Queenston. The final drop-off day will be at the community centre Friday, Dec. 16, when the stockings will be delivered.

Anyone interested in helping can reach King at joankemp10@yahoo.ca, Facebook message Joan King, or call her at 905-262-5898.
The annual Candlelight Stroll, hosted by the Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club Holiday House Tour is approaching, tickets are selling quickly and the club is promising the 23rd annual event will be better than ever. There will be two days to tour six beautiful, exquisite-ly decorated homes, there will be historic and cultural sites included on the tour, and complimentary tast-ings at three local wineries.

There will also be spe-cially-priced lunches and dinners for those on the tour.

There are some changes to improve logistics for par-ticipants — Rotary is sell-ing separate tickets for the Holiday House Tour and the two-day house tour event, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. also Dec. 2 and 3, can be used to see all six houses either day or over the two days, with sales capped at 3,000 to reduce line-ups, and it will be possible to check on social media throughout both days to see the houses to visit each of the homes.

Betty Knight and Fran Boot are excited about this year’s event — Knight is the lead organizer of the McAr-thur Estate tours, and Boot of the house tours.

The stroll can ‘shut a light’ in the candle at the farm that he can use to get around, and on the evening of the stroll, but he may not be able to climb into a carriage, she said.

“Don’t want him to do anything that might risk his healing,” Buxton-Cox, the found-er of The Farmworker Hub, said. He told him about the Candle-light Stroll. He was amazed at the number of people who will be at the stroll, said Bux-ton-Cox, and really hon-oured and touched by the support the community is showing him.

Buxton-Cox has visited him at the farm where he is staying, and told him about the Candles-troll. She is told what a gift she has in Reid, a farmwork-er who was injured on his bike the day before he was due to return to his home in Jamaica, will be introduced as the recipient of half the proceeds collected from the sale of candles. Reid must stay in NOTL at least until after his next medical assessment in mid-Decem-ber, and is unable to work or send money home.

Typically he would make his way down the Court House steps, light candles of those gathered, and lead the stroll in a Sen-tinal horse-drawn car-riage through the streets of the Old Town, but plans are still up in the air about how much, with his badly-in-jured hip, he will be able to participate.

Julia Buxton-Cox has visited him at the farm where he is staying, and told him about the Candle-light Stroll. He was amazed by the pictures she showed of previous years, includ-ing 2019, when farmwork-er Delroy Castella was the recipient of candle sale proceeds and led the stroll. Castella had suffered a stroke and had remained in NOTL for medical treat-ment, with plans to be home for Christmas. Reid was amazed at the number of people who will be at the stroll, said Bux-ton-Cox, and really hon-oured and touched by the support the community is showing him.

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The rotary club is promising to give guests a memorable Christmas experience as they enjoy the stroll.

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Continued from page 20

Town, one on Shaw’s Lane. The others are a little more spread out, with one on the Niagara River Parkway, one on Ricardo Street, and a little further afield, Wall Road, and York Road in St. Davids. The Lowrey House on York Road is being decorated by British interior designer Karl Pacey, who shares the home with his partner Richard Mell. Built in 1896 by the Lowrey family, whose descendants own Ravine Vineyards next door, Pacey and Mell have made only a few structural changes but have changed up the décor, and Pacey, says Boot, has already completed much of the decorating for the tour — “he wants to make sure he does it right, with some of the decorations he has made himself. ‘It’s just breath-taking,’ she says. Also included in the tour are the NOTL Museum, McFarland House, decorated inside and out by the Garden Club of Niagara, the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre with its Holiday Market, Riverbrink Art Museum, and St. Mark’s Church.

Boot says there are more than 200 volunteers signed up for the Holiday House Tour, separate from the list of those helping out at the McArthur Estate. Not all are Rotary members, she says, although they help out every year. Some are at the houses all day, others take shifts, and there are a small number of people who sign up every year, all day, both days, making it easier as they get to know the houses and the routine.

However, Boot says, volunteers are still needed for outside to act as greeters, in four shifts, if anyone is interested in signing up — send an email to notlhh@rogers.com, with “Volunteer” as the subject. Rotary member John Boot has recently returned from Kenya — one of many trips as a Rotarian taken to help the poorest of the poor, with the drought, there hasn’t been enough water. Now, water is trucked in and stored in the drums, to be used by the village, he says.

John explains the NOTL Rotary Club built rainwater drums to collect water, but with the drought, there hasn’t been enough water. Now, water is trucked in and stored in the drums, to be used by the village, he says.

Boot. His most recent trip was to Kenya where the Kenyan water project is just one of many, including the drive to eradicate polio worldwide, improving medical facilities, a project in Mali, one of the larger, most remote and impoverished countries in West Africa, that involved maternal health and infant mortality, and providing clean water and food from another group of Rotarians.

About five years ago, the NOTL club built rainwater drums to collect water, but with the drought, there hasn’t been enough water. Now, water is trucked in and stored in the drums, to be used by the village, he says.

Account of Fran Boot, lead organizer of the Rotary House Tour, and Betty Knight, who is heading the McArthur Estate tour, and Betty.

And those who participate in the tour are helping, she adds. “You can have a really good time, seeing some really beautiful homes, and while you’re doing that, you’re making a difference.”

For more information on the tour, how to purchase tickets, and where to make reservations for lunch or dinner or to drop by for wine tastings, visit niagaratourismlakebayrotary.ca and click on events.
With Christ Church closed, questions arise about cemetery

Mike Balsom
The Local

As the former congregation of Christ Church McNab awaited the outcome of a discernment process to decide the fate of the buildings and the cemetery on the grounds near Lakeshore Road, one man from Toronto is watching it all with keen interest.

James Russell, the man behind the campaign to recognize the members of Niagara-on-the-Lake’s Black community buried at the “Old Negro Burial Ground” on Mississauga Street, is concerned with the condition of a set of graves located at the farthest reaches of the Christ Church grounds, situated perilously close to the ravine’s edge.

That section of the cemetery is known as Negro Point. It’s the final resting place for a few Black residents of the former village of McNab. Some of those graves are unmarked, other than a small plaque with updates on the progress of their ancestors buried on the site of something new or something revitalized.

It’s the final resting place for a few Black residents of the former village of McNab. Some of those graves are unmarked, other than a small plaque erected in 2003 stating “In memory of the unknown souls buried here.” (Photos by James Russell)

Russell is disturbed about monuments so close to the ravine they appear to be falling in, and hopes something can be done to save them.

Some graves in the Negro Point corner of the cemetery are unmarked, with just a small plaque erected in 2003 stating “In memory of the unknown souls buried here.” (Photos by James Russell)

As the former congregation of Christ Church McNab awaited the outcome of a discernment process to decide the fate of the buildings and the cemetery on the grounds near Lakeshore Road, one man from Toronto is watching it all with keen interest.

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Great Lake Swimmers’ Tony Dekker to play at Ravine

Mike Balsom
The Local

“The Concert Series at Ravine Vineyard continues Wednesday, Nov. 16, with a hometown show of sorts for folk-rock group Great Lake Swimmers.”

Tony Dekker, song writer and accordion player, is coming back to the area he says is familiar with, where he says he can hear his voice. “I could be playing for the crickets for a little while,” he says.

Some friends encouraged him to pursue music over time, with some help to do on it, Dekker says, by a member of Laura Secord’s band.

Dekker was born in Queenston and his family, including his Dad, Ken Dekker, who is a member of Laura Secord’s band, was spawned with the ecstasy of live recordings and a passion for the crickets.

Dekker recalls, “I had shifted my focus on keys and accordion, having been more into singing and the guitar in the first part of my career.”

His haunting voice and lyrics with only acoustic guitar has marked a big departure for the band.

Dekker promises that a new Great Lake Swimmers album will be coming in 2022.

In 2019, they took a trip to Sleeping Giant Provincial Park on Lake Superior with the aim of finding inspiration from the landscape for a collection of songs to be released in 2020. The pandemic put that on hold for a while, but it also allowed Dekker to take that inspiration in other directions.

“By the time we were able to start recording at the end of 2020,” Dekker recalls, “I had shifted gears and wanted to do something that would be almost comfort listening. In between lockdowns, we were humbled by the tickets for the show were $55.20 and available through ravinevineyard.com.

Great Lake Swimmers’ next local appearance will be at Ridgeways’ Sanctuary Centre for the Arts on Dec. 9.

The full page is made up of a HALF PAGE AD and HALF PAGE ARTICLE

Article word count: 450–500

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Mike Balsom
The Local

Students from all 17 District School Board of Niagara secondary schools gathered at Laura Secord last Thursday for the second DSBN Art Battle.

Second’s visual arts program leader Chelsea Wilcox organized and hosted the first Art Battle in 2019 and was eager to bring the event back to the school for another run. “Last time we had 17 teams,” said Wilcox. “This time, we had 42 teams and every school in the DSBN participating.”

When students arrived, they were asked to develop prompts — short, specific questions to be answered by other teams. Then, they selected prompts randomly with the task of incorporating elements of design, including Brooke Hedden and Fiona Bell.

One participant, Payten Lambert of Niagara-on-the-Lake, is a Grade 12 student at A.N. Myer in Niagara Falls. The St. Michael Catholic Elementary School graduate loved the atmosphere in the cafeteria Thursday.

She and her group, including Brooke Hedden and Evelyn Simonics, had the prompts ‘turtle,’ ‘bed’ and ‘bed frame.’ They created an underwater scene with a sea turtle swimming near a sunken bed. They may not have won a prize, but they enjoyed the collaboration.

“I’ve been very fun,” Lambert told The Local. “Every one has been very nice. It’s not about how good you are as an artist. All the groups worked together and found their compromises. Everyone was having the same experience, and we all shared the same amount of stress.”

The collaborative element of the Art Battle was a selling point for Lambert’s teacher, Rena Burns. “It’s so great to see the different approaches each team takes to responding to the prompts,” said Burns. “And to see the teamwork not just between the teams themselves but also their teamwork with the other schools here as well. The great part is to watch them travel around to see what each other did.”

Izzy Schiff-Malins, also from Niagara-on-the-Lake, is in Grade 12 at the host school. He collaborated with Jean Collins and Milo Rappitt on a painting of a snail held inside a locket, with broken glass covering an image of a woman on the other side.

The major challenge for their group was the word ‘underappreciated,’ an answer to the prompt of “write the most powerful word you know.”

“The woman’s silhouette is behind cracked glass,” Schiff-Malins explained. “It’s just lying there in the locket. It’s forgotten about. This love has been underappreciated. And the snail is metaphorical. It’s coming out of the locket from this kind of toxic love that it’s created.”

After graduating in June, 2023, Schiff-Malins plans to take a gap year, then attend the University of Guelph to study psychology or sociolo- gy. But he hopes to continue practising his creative pursuits as a hobby.

“I was really happy to give Izzy the opportunity before he graduated to partake in something like this,” Wilcox said. “He’s a really strong artist, a lot of great, creative thought, and works so well with others. He’s a staple in the art room.”

Three awards were given at the end of the full-day event. Judges’ awards were won by a Westlane Secondary School team for their image of a rat on a throne, and by a St. Catharines Collegiate team for their painting of a pufferfish.

The grand prize winner was chosen by a group of students, who judged based on how their composition told a story, was consistent, incorporated elements of design and displayed a sense of unity.

A team from Eden High School took that prize with their finished composition showing a lonely elephant at a birthday party. They were awarded the coveted golden Art Battle trophy.

Wilcox hopes to make the DSBN Art Battle an annual event from this point on. With the massive increase in student and teacher interest since the first one three years ago, she predicts that in 2023, the Laura Secord cafeteria may be too small to host it.

“Usually art battles are for older, established artists in larger cities,” Wilcox said. “I want to continue to bring the idea of a high-speed, live-action collaborative event to our students as a way to push and promote the arts.”

For Remembrance Day this year, Crossroads School is honouring those who have served in the military by creating luminaries in a candy-coloured cast. The luminaries, created by students in Grade 3 to 12, will be placed in large windows in the front of the school on Thursday, Nov. 10. Members of the 3C Club (Crossroads Caring Coyotes) will be preparing luminaries for each of the school windows on the eve of Remembrance Day so that as community members drive or walk by they will see the luminaries in remembrance of our current serving military personnel. In the morning, these luminaries will then be carried into the gym during the Remembrance Day ceremony. Working on the luminaries are Camryn Wiens, Ron Stoitska, Holden Powell, Arwyn Kirker, Ella Edgecombe, Keira Dexter and Fiona Bell. (Photo supplied)

Next year the popular Art Battle may outgrow the Laura Secord space.

Remembrance Day Luminaries

Jean Collins, Milo Rappitt and Izzy Schiff-Malins collaborated on a painting reflecting the word ‘underappreciated.’

A.N. Myer students Evelyn Simonics, Payten Lambert and Brooke Hedden didn’t win a prize but they had fun in the Art Battle at Laura Secord.
Two local teams earned medals in Harvest Classic

Mike Balsom
The Local

Thirty-six hockey teams from across the province, including five from Niagara-on-the-Lake, took over both rinks at Virgil’s Centennial Sports Park for the annual Harvest Classic hockey tournament hosted by the NOTL Wolves.

When it was all over, too Wolves teams had captured medals — a gold for Joe Pagnotta’s Under-11 rep team and a silver for Adam Whyte’s Under-16 contact team.

Pagnotta was ecstatic following his team’s 2–1 win over the Barrie Colts, led by six goals from Tennyson Powell, backstopped by goalie Nello Pagnotta, Eli Perng, Ben Bayne, August Felice and Miller Davis. The coaches are Joe Pagnotta, Glen Davis, Sean Simpson, and missing from the photo, Derek Nichols.

“As it was a fun tournament, but we had a pretty sick team,” Pagnotta said Monday night. “We’ve only had a shaft into the season and we’ve already made a lot of progress. That’s really important win because it got us higher in the standings.”

Still, they finished first in their pool, and played Innisfil Sunday morning in the semi-final. James Froese scored twice and Nello Pagnotta added a single as the Wolves punched their ticket to a rematch against the Avalanche with a 3–1 victory.

In the final, Luke Simpson scored midway through the second period, but Toronto tied it up just a few seconds later Simpson followed up with the game-winning goal in the third to ice the victory.

Pagnotta credited his fellow coaches, Sean Simpson, Glen Davis and Derek Nicholson for their help with the team. Their next tournament is April 8–9 in Midland in the semi-final. NOTL fell behind 2–1 in the third to ice the victory. The Local. “We got a great goal in the second period (from Noah Whyte) to take a 2–1 lead and shut them down the rest of the way. That was a really important win because it got us higher in the standings overall.”

Their semi-final game against Halton Hills featured a number of nail-biting moments before it ended in a 3–3 tie. NOTL fell behind 2–1 with just a few minutes left. Whyte pulled goalie Quinten Davis and the Wolves were able to tie it up.

Thinking they needed to win to get to the final, Whyte pulled Davis again, and they gave up an empty net goal to fall behind 3–2. Then, with seven seconds left, Davis back on the bench in favour of the extra attacker. Noah Whyte got the puck off the faceoff and buried it behind Halton Hills goaltender Josh Frost. After the faceoff that followed the tying goal, Frost was called for a delay of game penalty, and NOTL was awarded a penalty shot and a chance to win the game. Frost made a great save to preserve the tie. But they made it into the final anyway against Stittsville, based on head-to-head competition.

The two teams traded goals, skating to a 2–2 tie in regulation time. In the second three-minute, four-on-four overtime period, Stittsville’s Owen Vezina scored the winning goal for the win.

“We haven’t had two Niagara-on-the-Lake teams in the finals in this tournament in a long time,” convenor Gino Patterson said. “It was exciting to see. Unfortunately, they were both scheduled to play at the same time, but luckily one of the games got delayed. And that was a good thing, because Glen Davis coaches both teams and had to run from one arena to the other.”

The U13 Wolves lost their three tournament games, to Paris, Lindsay and Fort Erie, while the U15 contact team had a 0-4-0 record. The U18 Wolves beat Sarnia, tied Innisfil, and lost games to Lambeth and Haldimand.

More than 275 volunteers were involved in making the tournament run smoothly. And about the same number will be needed in four months’ time to help Patterson run the annual March Break Classic for House League teams.
Mike Balsom  
The Local

After a humilitating 9–0 loss on the road in North York, the Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League’s Niagara Predators have a chance to right their ship this Friday night when the Renegades come to town.

But according to head coach Kevin Taylor and team owner and president Robert Turnbull, it’s going to take some work. The Local caught up to both Taylor and Turnbull prior to this Tuesday evening’s practice. The message was clear—a better effort needs to be seen on all fronts.

“We’re not going to change what we’ve been teaching,” Taylor said Tuesday afternoon.

“Our game plan is good. It works. They’ve just not been competing right now. The guys need to buy into the system.”

“We got spanked playing some tough teams,” Turnbull added, referring to Saturday’s North York game and an 8–1 loss to the Bradford Bulls on Oct. 28. “The way the schedule is set up right now, we’ll be playing top teams often. It’s going to be difficult to win.”

Though his team is currently in seventh place in the GMDHL nine-team South Division, Turnbull believes the Predators have a lot of time to chip their way into the top four.

“In order to get to there, everybody has to do their job,” Turnbull explained. “Right now, I’m seeing a lot of selfish hockey. A better effort is needed all around. The boys have to work both ends of the rink to impede the progress of the opposition. We’re not playing well on the defensive side.”

Saturday’s game started out fine. The Predators were down 2–0 by the end of the first period but were getting some chances, despite being outshot 20–10.

Nolan Wyers took a big hit in that period, one that Taylor isn’t sure was a clean hit, knocking him out of the game. It seemed to shake up the Preds.

“It rattled our guys,” Taylor said. “It threw them off their game. But we shouldn’t be losing like that.”

The Renegades exploded with six goals in the second period, and added a single in the third. As a team, they notched four short-handed goals and two on the power play.

Nikolai Salov had four goals on the evening and one assist for North York.

“Giving up a short-handed goal is always demoralizing,” added Taylor. “When you have four of them, it’s just a bad, bad game.”

“I deflated the players,” agreed Turnbull. “But in order to compete with better clubs, our top players have to play like top players. They have to lead by example. That’s just not happening right now.”

Turnbull lauded the play of goalie Ryan Santini, who bore the brunt in both lopsided losses. He faced 49 shots against Bradford and 50 Saturday off the sticks of the Renegades.

“Our goaltending has been better,” Turnbull added, referring to Saturday’s game. “It deflated the players, “

Santini stood on his head. “Giving up a short-handed goal is always demoralizing,” added Taylor. “When you have four of them, it’s just a bad, bad game.”

“We’re not going to change anything,” Turnbull continued. “We just have to do our job and play to their level. I always say you don’t have to be the best, you just have to do your best job.”

The Predators host the North York Renegades this Friday night at the Meridian Credit Union Arena at 7:30 p.m. They travel to Windsor Sunday for a 3:30 p.m. start against the Aces.

Defenceman Ryan Carey joined the Preds on Oct. 24. He’s a returnee from the days when the team played out of the same North York complex as the Renegades. Carey joins the team after having played for Nybro in Sweden’s HockeyEttan league.

“They’ve also picked up two players with Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League (Junior B) experience. Twenty-year-old forward Dedan Fogarty skated for both the Welland Junior Canadians and the Thoold Black Hawks last year. And 21-year-old defenceman Joe Calasurdo captained the St. Catharines Falcons to their Sutherland Cup championship in 2021–2022.

“He can be the best defenceman in the league,” Turnbull raved about Calasurdo, a student at Brock University. “There’s an abundance of talent on this team.”

Turnbull continued. “They just all have to do their job and play to their level. I always say you don’t have to be the best, you just have to do your best job.”

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WERNER, ERNA—On Monday, November 7th, 2022, at the age of 96 our Mom, Oma, and Oma Oma passed away peacefully to her eternal home into the presence of her Lord and Savior. We rejoice in a life well lived and with faith in her Lord. She was a blessing to us and thank God for the gift of Mom in our lives.

Erna’s memory will be cherished by her children Linda (Ron) Wiebe, Fred, Margaret (Jack) Sell, daughters-in-law Diana Werner and Susan Werner, sisters Katharine (Richard) Kront and Betty Stafford, sister-in-law Myrna Friesen, 13 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren. As well as many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by her husband George, sons George and Bill, grandson George, daughter-in-law Lorraine Werner, grandmother-in-law Karen Wiebe, sister Mary, brothers Peter and Harry and brother-in-law Ken Stafford.

Mom was a farmer’s wife and worked hard alongside her husband George for 40 years on the family farm. Mom had a green thumb and enjoyed her garden every year. Mom was a wonderful cook, a fan of the Toronto Blue Jays and Toronto Maple Leafs. Mom enjoyed crocheting while watching her favourite TV programs in the evening. She cherished visits from the grandchildren and eventually the great-grandchildren. Mom loved them all very much.

We are forever grateful for the loving and compassionate care Mom received from Dr. Greenway and all the staff on the 4th Floor at Tabor Manor.

The family will receive friends at MORGAN FUNERAL HOME, 415 Regent St., Niagara-on-the-Lake, on Thursday from 6-8 p.m. A service to celebrate the life of Erna Werner, will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church, 2027 Niagara Stone Rd., on Friday, November 11, 2022, at 10 a.m. Burial to follow in the life of Erna Werner, will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church, 2027 Niagara St., Niagara-on-the-Lake, on Thursday from 6-8 p.m. A service to celebrate the life of Erna Werner, will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church, 2027 Niagara Stone Rd., on Friday, November 11, 2022, at 10 a.m. Burial to follow in Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery. In lieu of flowers donation to Radiant Care Stone Rd., on Friday, November 11, 2022, at 10 a.m. Burial to follow in Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery. In lieu of flowers donation to Radiant Care Tabor Manor, Alzheimer Society of Niagara or Trinity Lutheran Church would be appreciated by the family.

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