

St. Marys Independent

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Issue #1192

Thursday, January 4, 2024

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OTF Grant will help seniors stay cool at the St. Marys Friendship Centre

\$144,000 grant will fund the installation of a new HVAC system



Perth-Wellington MPP Matthew Rae joined St. Marys Mayor Al Strathdee, Deputy Mayor Fern Pridham, Ontario Trillium Foundation Volunteer Bob Parker and Town staff to celebrate the upcoming installation of a new HVAC system at the St. Marys Friendship Centre. Pictured above from left, Fern Pridham, Deputy Mayor; Joannah Campbell, Recreation Manager; Bob Parker, Ontario Trillium Foundation Volunteer; Matthew Rae, MPP for Perth-Wellington; Al Strathdee, Mayor; Stephanie Ische, Director of Community Services; Amy Cubberley, Cultural Services Manager. (Contributed photo)

On Tuesday, MPP Matthew Rae met with the team at the St. Marys Friendship Centre to officially congratulate the Town on receiving a \$144,000 Capital grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) this fall. The grant will be used to replace the building's aging heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system,

and will be completed in 2024.

"The St. Marys Friendship Centre is a staple of the St. Marys community," said Matthew Rae, MPP for Perth-Wellington. "I am pleased to see our provincial government, through the Ontario Trillium Foundation, in-

Continued on page 3

Message from the Mayor ahead of the New Year

By Mayor Al Strathdee

As I reflect on 2023, I am first reminded of what a caring, prosperous, and generous town we live in. Acts of charity and volunteerism continue to be at the core of this community, and they are more important now than ever. I want to start this "look back" by thanking everyone who lent a hand to help a neighbour in 2023. Your actions make St. Marys strong as stone, year after year.

For our part, Town Council continues to support social services and wellness resources for our community. Our staff work with various not-for-profit organizations, churches, and other agencies to help those who are struggling.

We are grateful for the ongoing partnership with the United Way, City of Stratford, St. Marys Presbyterian Church, and other donors that supports our Community Outreach Worker. This position plays a critical role in helping connect community members to local social services.


If you are in need of assistance, or know of someone experiencing homelessness or in need of help, please contact Brittany Petrie at bpetrie@town.stmarys.on.ca or 226-261-0098.

Council also remains keenly focused on other key issues, like growth and infrastructure. We are committed to supporting new and existing businesses, which keep our community thriving and vibrant. We continue to collaborate with staff to close our infrastructure deficit and improve our asset management plan.

At the same time, we are investing in several exciting and strategic projects. Our capital budget this year is just over \$5.8 million.

Milt Dunnell Field Revitalization Project

Continued on page 2



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COMMUNITY

Message from the Mayor ahead of the New Year

Continued from page 1

- Opening of upgraded washrooms
- Release of updated master plan to prepare for future grant opportunities

- Installation of an accessible dock to improve our kayak loan program

14 Church Street

- Interior demolition and structural repairs
- Resumption of the Downtown Service Location Review to determine how the building should be used

Town Hall Renovation

- Opening of renovated first floor and Council Chambers, featuring modernized electrical and plumbing and new accessible washrooms

Pyramid Recreation Centre

- Final design and tendering for necessary repairs to HVAC system and dehumidification of the pool area (potential 6-to-8-month closure)
- Proactive asset management/condition assessment to start planning for future maintenance and major repairs

- Launch of Sports Wall of Fame, nominations, and intake

Public Works

- Reconstruction of Wellington Street (Park Street to St. Maria Street)
- Ongoing sidewalk repairs and street resurfacing

- Maintenance work on the Water Street/Green Bridge

- Masonry and repair work on the Sarnia Bridge/Grand Trunk Trail

Green initiatives

- Continued tree planting (400+ trees planted in 2023)

- Installation of Level 2 EV chargers in the PRC and Jones Street parking lots

- Submission of grant application for additional Level 2 chargers and a Level 3 charger

- Continued partnerships with regional partners on environmental initiatives

- Continued focus on walking trail improvements

- Promotion of our memorial forest tree planting program

- Ongoing tree assessment and maintenance

Public Transit

- Review of PC Connect project
- Continued work with private sector to launch a local transportation service, with hopes to launch in 2024

Childcare

- Continued efforts to expand childcare availability in the community

Tourism and Recreation

- Complete Recreation Master plan to review needs and wants of the community and help determine future

service levels

- Continued focus on improving the quarry as a tourist destination

- Increased special event offerings/tourism initiatives

Housing

- Exploration of a partnership with Habitat for Humanity to develop affordable housing on Town-owned land

- Launch of updated Community Improvement Plan with additional funds directed to attainable housing

- Continued implementation the Town's Opening Doors Housing Action Plan with additional funds allocated in 2024 budget

Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrades

- Continuation of work on critical upgrades that will accommodate future community growth, while making improvements to reduce concerns like odours, etc.

- This multi-phase project represents an investment of \$15 million in critical infrastructure

As we look ahead to these projects, we must also recognize the challenges before us. Issues like the rising cost of living, inflation, housing, healthcare and childcare shortages, homelessness and mental health concerns are affecting our community. Council is aware of these challenges and is working diligently with our partners

to find "made in St. Marys" solutions.

We are also working hard to position St. Marys well for the future by balancing infrastructure maintenance and strategic projects with fiscal responsibility. This year's budget cycle has been particularly challenging due to the pressures of inflation and the costs of services provided by external agencies, like land ambulance, social services, the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, policing, and Spruce Lodge. These external costs can amount to a 2 to 3% increase in the tax levy.

Downloading by upper levels of government continues to stress municipal tax levies, as towns like ours are asked to do more work with fewer resources and provide services not intended to be funded through property taxation. St. Marys is not alone in facing these pressures, and we will continue to find creative and practical ways to manage them.

I want to end on a positive note by acknowledging the many volunteers and employees that work tirelessly to make St. Marys so special. Together, we will tackle the challenges and opportunities of 2024 with optimism, and will continue to make this the Town Worth Living In.

If you ever need to reach me, please email astrathdee@town.stmarys.on.ca or call 519-284-2340, extension 246. I wish everyone all the best for health and happiness in the upcoming year.



Unit 1, 60 Water Street South
St. Marys, ON.
ph: 519.284.4448

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






Julie Swan
Office Manager



Cheryl Campbell, CFP
Life Insurance Specialist

jeffswan@stonetownfinancial.com

7 Day Forecast - Weather Sponsored by  **The HITCHING POST** 

Wednesday Jan-3rd	Thursday Jan-4th	Friday Jan-5th	Saturday Jan-6th	Sunday Jan-7th	Monday Jan-8th	Tuesday Jan-9th
Flurries	Sun/cloud	Mainly sunny	Mainly cloudy	Flurries	Sun/cloud	Snow
						
1°C	-4°C	-1°C	0°C	0°C	1°C	1°C
Feels Like -4	Feels Like -11	Feels Like -5	Feels Like -5	Feels Like -2	Feels Like -2	Feels Like -5

COMMUNITY

OTF Grant will help seniors stay cool at the St. Marys Friendship Centre

Continued from page 1

vest \$144,000 to help replace their HVAC system. These upgrades will ensure that local seniors can continue to access essential services right here in the Town of St. Marys."

The Friendship Centre provides critical services to older adults, people recovering from injury, and individuals of varying abilities. Thanks to the OTF grant, Friendship Centre clients will be able to access community meals, social and fitness programs, and health resources in a safe and comfortable environment.

"The impact of this Ontario Trillium Foundation grant cannot be overstated," said Stephanie Ische, Director of Community Services for the Town of St. Marys. "This grant will fund needed renovations that will better equip the building to meet the varying needs of our community."

About the Ontario Trillium Foundation: The Ontario Trillium Foundation's (OTF) mission is to build healthy and vibrant communities across Ontario. As an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada's leading granting foundations, last year, OTF invested over \$110M into 1,022 community projects and partnerships. Visit otf.ca to learn more.

Season of Giving



For Giving Tuesday 2023, the Rotary Club of St. Marys asked the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to donate all the leftover potatoes to the St. Marys Food Bank in return for a \$500 donation to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. From left to right is John Duizer from the Canadian Foodgrains accepting a cheque presented by Rotarian Andrew Middleton. (Contributed photo)



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2024 New Years Resolutions

- Exercise more
- Get organized
- Switch to a local, reliable internet service provider
- Spend time with family

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COMMENTARY

New faces, new era for the Independent



By Stewart Grant

The start of a new calendar year always feels like a good opportunity for positive change, but this first week of January has truly been meaningful for us at the St. Marys Independent as we have welcomed two seasoned media professionals to our team: Heather Dunbar and Galen Simmons.

Both Heather and Galen are "game-changing" additions to our Grant Haven Media team, and their arrival is symbolic of our changing industry where small independent companies like ours are working to restore journalism to communities that the conglomerates have abandoned.

Galen steps into a new role as Regional Editor, responsible for the St. Marys Independent, Stratford Times, and Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette. For the last eight years, he has done an outstanding job of reporting on news in Stratford and St. Marys within the pages of the Stratford Beacon Herald. He has a strong interest in municipal politics, and I know this will be one of many areas where he will improve our local coverage.



The Independent has long been a collaborative newspaper with many contributors, including Wendy Lamond, Spencer Seymour, myself, and others. We are all excited about learning from Galen who brings with him such a strong journalism background.

Speaking of learning and self-improvement, I can't wait to see how our growing organization evolves under the guidance of Heather Dunbar, who steps into a new position as our Director of Business Development. Heather brings over 15 years of experience at Metroland Media where she most recently served as Regional Director.

Dunbar has worked extensively with businesses to help them with various strategies to best reach their customers. She says of her role in St. Marys, "I am committed to tailoring our newspaper's offerings to meet the diverse needs of our community, and I am eager to embark on this journey of collaboration, growth, and success with each of you."

Please join me in welcoming Heather Dunbar and Galen Simmons to our growing team at the Independent.

Bravo

We have 2 Bravos this week.

1) Bravo to Harmony of Friends and to everyone who attended their fundraising concert before Christmas. As a result of the amazing turnout, a total of \$2,500 was donated to the St. Marys Library Food Bank.

2) On the evening of Thursday, December 21, a lone pedestrian wandered into the path of my vehicle on the main street of St. Marys. It was a dark night, and the individual was dressed in dark clothing so next to impossible to be seen. Bravos to: the kind people who stopped to assist myself and the pedestrian by providing care, direction, ensuring 911 was called while calming the pedestrian; the two St. Marys fire department members who helped the police and ambulance attendants while also clearing traffic; attending police officers who assisted with the unfortunate occurrence. Everyone involved were professional and very caring.

3) Bravo to the kind person who returned my drivers license that I had accidentally dropped on the path.

Boo

We have 1 Boo this week.

1) Boo to those that walk around Milt Dunnell field ring at night with no reflective clothing on. I was trying to look at the lovely lights but spent my time looking for walkers.



*Please note all Boos and Bravos must be signed in order to be considered.

Bravos and Boos are submitted by community members and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the St. Marys Independent

Quote of the Week

"The opportunity to join the PWHL, and continue to have an impact on the women's game, was one that I absolutely had to accept. I'm extremely pleased to take an active advisory role in the advancement of a top pro league that is so full of promise"

- Three-time Olympian Cassie Campbell-Pascall accepts the role of Special Advisor for the new PWHL Women's hockey league

St. Marys Independent

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The St. Marys Independent

THOUGHTS
OF THE WEEK

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The first of January is the first blank page of a 365-page book. Write a good one.

Approach the new year with resolve to find the opportunities hidden in each new day.

Although no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending.

An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves.

Overheard at the Coffee Shop

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I hope the rest of 2024 is kinder to Japan than the first two days were.

This is the year that my New Year's Resolutions make it into the second week.

Have you heard something humorous around town that you think might be of interest to others? Either email them to us at info@stmarys-independent.com with the title "Overheard at The Coffee Shop", call 519-284-0041 or drop by the office to let us know!

COMMUNITY

A return to my roots



By Galen Simmons

For more than a decade – my entire adult life – I’ve worked in community news.

First in rural Saskatchewan and then in Stratford and Perth County, I’ve dedicated my life to telling the stories of the people, places and events in small towns and cities often ignored by media in larger urban centres – stories that play a big role in helping locals understand how their community functions and who the major players are within it.

Yet while I’ve worked to ensure friends, neighbours and total strangers are well informed, the media companies I’ve worked for and many others across the country are focused on profits.

When I began my career in 2013 in Nipawin, Sask. – a town of 4,100 people – I worked in a newsroom with one other general assignment reporter. While there were only two of us, I felt as though we had the tools we needed to do our jobs and keep residents informed.

In 2017, when I began working at the Stratford Beacon Herald, I was hired along with two other news reporters. Even though it was a far cry from the 12-14 reporters and photographers that once worked out of the print newsroom in this city, with an editor that was onsite at least twice a week and another reporter focused on sports, I felt we had the tools to do our jobs.

Since then and in the interest of slowing the rapid decline of traditional advertising revenue, larger corporate media companies like my previous employer have stripped away resources from newsrooms across the country, large and small.

In Stratford, I lost my newsroom and I lost my co-workers as a result of cost reductions and downsizing. Our advertising and administrative staff was also laid off, leaving me to field questions I don’t know the answers

to and feeling like a one-man show.

I no longer felt like I had the tools to do my job – at least not at the quality Stratford (and St. Marys) deserves.

At the same time that large news organizations are stripping local newsrooms of their resources, trust in mainstream media continues to erode. Whether it’s real or perceived, many people don’t believe journalists and the companies they work for have their best interests in mind, leading them to seek their news from alternate and often much-less reliable sources.

As trust in traditional media shrinks, the dangers of weaponized misinformation become more of a threat to communities and a free and fair democracy.

So that’s why I decided to return to the world of independent community news.

As the new regional editor of the Stratford Times, St. Marys Independent and Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette, I’m looking forward to leading a team of talented, local journalists in gathering the news and reporting the stories locals want and need to read about in a way that is both transparent and accountable to our readers and our communities.

I am committed to developing and driving an editorial strategy collaboratively with our reporters and with feedback from readers that gives locals what they need to navigate their daily lives and gain a better understanding of the communities in which they live.

Instead of settling for thinner and thinner papers with less local content, I hope our readers share my and Grant Haven Media’s vision for redefining what community news is and how it can serve the public.

If you have any questions, want to pitch a story, or just want to get to know me better, feel free to shoot me an email at galen@granthaven.com.

STONETOWN CRIER

The latest municipal news
from the Town of St. Marys



EARLYON MARVELOUS MONDAY

January 8, 12:30 - 2 PM | Pyramid Centre

A drop-in program for children aged 0-6 years and their parents/caregivers. Join in on engaging and interactive activities based on Mother Goose nursery rhymes.

townofstmarys.com/earlyon or 226-374-6544

SHOWER PROGRAM

Thursdays, 9 AM - 1 PM | Pyramid Centre

This program provides free showers to those in need. Showers are private, secure and accessible for individuals of all abilities.

Visit Guest Services or call 519-284-2160



EARLYON WINTER PLAY DAY!

January 13, 9:30 - 11:30 AM | Solis Park

Dress for the cold weather and join EarlyON for a morning of outdoor fun from 9:30 - 11:30 AM at Solis Park!

townofstmarys.com/earlyon or 226-374-6544

SWIM AND MOVIE NIGHT

January 5 | 4 - 7 PM | Pyramid Centre

Splash and kick, catch a flick at the Pyramid Recreation Centre from 4 - 7 PM. Start with a swim and then settle in for a movie with pizza and popcorn!

townofstmarys.com/activenet or 519-284-2160



EARLYON RUN, JUMP & CLIMB

January 15, 6 - 7 PM | Pyramid Centre

Come out for an hour of jumping, running, climbing and moving to help your child move through gross motor activities.

townofstmarys.com/earlyon or 226-374-6544

Contact us

519-284-2340

communications@town.stmarys.on.ca





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Senior of the Week



Our senior of the week is Wilma Duizer. Wilma was born in Alphen Ann Den Ryne, Holland and will be turning 74 in July. She has been married to John for 52 years. They have two daughters, two son-in-laws and three grandchildren. Wilma was a nurse for many years. In her spare time Wilma loves knitting and sewing and spending time with her family. She also loves babysitting her grand dog Duke.

If you would like to nominate someone for Senior of the Week, Contact us at 519-284-0041 or info@stmarysindependent.com.

Weekend Quiz

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- 1) When did the New Year's Eve ball first drop in Times Square?
- 2) Where is New Year's Eve known as Hogmanay?
- 3) Which Roman god is January named after?
- 4) What is the month of January called in Spanish?
- 5) What is the birthstone in January?
- 6) Who invented the 12-month calendar?
- 7) Rio de Janeiro translates to what?
- 8) In January 2009, who was inaugurated as U.S. President?
- 9) How many times do the bells ring on the Japanese holiday 'Shogatsu'?
- 10) On what day was the U.S. capitol stormed?

This week's answers are found on pg. 27

COMMUNITY

2024 Predictions from the St. Marys Independent

2024 Predictions – Stewart Grant

My 2024 Predictions are dominated by the U.S. Election cycle because it will be a very turbulent and news-making year with a domino effect occurring from a pivotal Supreme Court decision. Of course if I'm wrong about how Trump will be dealt with, than who knows where this year could end up.

1. Despite his current high standing in the GOP polls, Donald Trump will fail in his bid to become the Republican nominee. This could happen early in the year when the Supreme Court rules that Trump is ineligible under Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution's 14th amendment which bars anyone from office who has engaged in insurrection.

2. The United States will suffer significant instances of politically-motivated domestic terrorism in 2024 as the divide grows between Democrats and Republicans.

3. Nikki Haley will be the Republican nominee instead of Donald Trump, edging out Ron DeSantis.

4. Following Trump's removal from the ballot, Joe Biden will withdraw his candidacy for re-election.

5. Several candidates emerge to challenge for the Democratic leadership including Gavin Newsom, Pete Buttigieg, and Amy Klobuchar, but it is Michigan governor Gretchen Whitmer who is chosen as the nominee.

6. Without Trump on the ballot, or Obama in the pre-Trump years, the United States election will feature lower voter turnout (as % of eligible voters) than any of the previous 5 elections.

7. For the first time in American history, a woman will be elected President.

8. In Canada, Justin Trudeau will attempt to take advantage of an upswing in polling during the year and calls an early election. However, the move backfires on the Liberals and the Conservatives win a majority government. Pierre Poilievre becomes the new Canadian Prime Minister.

9. The wars between Russia/Ukraine and Israel/Hamas will each end in 2024.

10. Stock market volatility will be higher than normal as things evolve on the world political stage, but the markets will end the year higher.

11. After years on the rise, the St. Marys Lincolns will reach the pinnacle of the Western Conference and will emerge as playoff champions this spring.

12. In a rematch of the 2014 Stanley Cup finals, the New York Rangers will defeat the Los Angeles Kings in six games. It's another short playoff run for the Toronto Maple Leafs as they lose in the first round.

13. Though not as popular as pickleball, St. Marys Lawn Bowling will have its highest registration numbers in many years as many new people discover the sport.

14. The "Buck or Two" building and Andrews building remain vacant in the downtown, but the former Stonetown Coffee building finds a new tenant.

2024 Predictions - Spencer Seymour

Easily the most ugly and vile Presidential election

will take place in the United States, and despite his goofy personality, Joe Biden will once again defeat Donald Trump, who will spend next New Year's Eve in an orange jumpsuit behind bars.

Financial constraints and NIMBYism will dissipate and at least one more significant apartment building will be constructed in St. Marys, with the municipality stepping up to make sure the rents are actually affordable and dramatically lower than what rentals currently cost.

A new restaurant will join the list of great eateries already in St. Marys, one that continues to broaden the culinary offerings in town.

The movie world will be highly disappointing as many of the big titles, such as Joker: Folie a Deux, Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire, and Deadpool 3, will not be nearly as good as everyone may hope.

A white-hot second half of the season will put the Lincolns in first place in the Western Conference. After defeating the Komoka Kings and Strathroy Rockets in the first two rounds, the Lincolns will face off against the Chatham Maroons in the conference final. The Maroons will put up an incredible fight but the Lincs will claim their first conference title in almost two decades.

Sports leagues and broadcasters will finally realize how ludicrous and counter-productive regional blackouts are and they will become a thing of the past.

The Stanley Cup Playoffs will be dominated by Canadian teams with the Toronto Maple Leafs defeating the Carolina Hurricanes in the Eastern Finals, while the Winnipeg Jets will beat the Vancouver Canucks on the Western side. The Leafs will defeat the Jets in the most exciting Stanley Cup Final in recent memory, a series that will set the entire country on fire.

The Toronto Raptors will make a major shake-up to the roster after another mediocre finish to the season.

Meanwhile, the Toronto Blue Jays will make a significant move, but this will be in the General Manager and President's offices. The new regime will then add a major name in the offseason.

Lastly, and the prediction I have the best shot at being correct about, I will get a maximum of two of my above predictions correct.

2024 Predictions - Galen Simmons

-It will be a mild, short winter with record low snowfall, and Wiarton Willie will predict an early spring.

-Donald Trump will be barred from running in the 2024 U.S. election.

-Universal dental care will be implemented in Ontario by end of 2024.

-The Royals will announce a pregnancy.

-Britain's ban on cigarettes will spark similar conversations within the Canadian government.

-Bank of Canada will begin lowering interest rates in 2024.

COMMUNITY

Quality of life summary

By Amanda Modaragamage, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Kristin Crane, Director of Social Research and Planning, United Way Perth Huron, presented to City Council a Quality of Life Summary on behalf of United Way Perth Huron.

The presentation will be used as information for the Council to better understand and recognize issues related to socioeconomic challenges within Huron Perth and how to better manage funding to enhance the quality of life within the community.

Crane notes that affordable housing is a human right in Canada and internationally, but many households in Huron Perth are spending a substantial part of their income on shelter costs. "A median yearly after-tax income of 37 thousand dollars means that you're paying 46 percent of your income just to pay for a one-bedroom apartment or one-bedroom rental."

Food insecurity is a high priority, especially with new stats from Agri-Food Analytics Lab, which recently published its Canadian Food Price Report, noting that Canadian food costs will rise again in 2024, expected to cost the average family over seven hundred dollars more annually.

Crane notes that 63 percent of those who participated in the Social Research and Planning Council's survey experienced food insecurity, with families with children being the most affected. "We found that 24 percent of people's

incomes did not meet their needs," said Crane. "Of the respondents, 87 percent had to sacrifice their household food budget to pay for other expenses, such as rent or mortgage, utilities or transportation. 63 percent of respondents are employed full-time."

A highlight from the report found that in Perth County, most residents report being satisfied or very satisfied with their lives, with low levels of stress across all age groups. "Self-reported life satisfaction is one of the most direct measures of quality of life," said Crane, "Low levels of life satisfaction can be associated with poor mental health. Fortunately, in Perth, 97 percent of people report being either moderately satisfied or very satisfied with their lives. So that's very encouraging."

Making note of the robust, small business community in Huron Perth, Crane said that these businesses give back to the community, "We know that those small businesses and nonprofits contributed significantly to quality of life," she continued, "They have a high rate of participation in the community then purchase goods and services locally, and often hold fundraisers and volunteer at local events. They also employ many people in our region."

Looking ahead to 2024, Crane notes that the local workforce, government, nonprofits, and community organizations should engage in diversity and education training to reduce discrimination to help improve the quality of life in Huron-Perth.

Ask the Arborist

By Joel Hackett | 519 272 5742 | jtsquote@gmail.com



Dear Arborist,

2 years ago I removed a huge rotten tree on my property. Now its time to get the stump out, its about 4 to 5 ft across. For the past month when its not frozen I have been trying to dig it up, so far I have broken one shovel and my favourite hand saw. My wife says, "I am going to give myself a heart attack and there must be an easier way."

With Best Regards,

Too Old For This

Dear Too Old For This,

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The other option is to dig it out with an excavator. Although an excavator normally costs more and you still have to get rid of a stump, which in your case probably weighs 2 to 4 thousand pounds.

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Joel Hackett is a certified Arborist residing in the St. Marys area. Currently, he spends most of the year running Joel's Tree Service. For contact call 519 272 5742 or email jtsquote@gmail.com

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ARTS & CULTURE

Art Secrets at St. Marys Museum: Part 2

By Emily Taylor, Assistant Curator, St. Marys Museum, edited by: Alice Rixson

The St. Marys Museum's exhibit *Painting the Past: Artists of St. Marys* explores some of the local artists who have worked to capture St. Marys on canvas. After recently highlighting some of the important women who have contributed to the Museum's collection, we turn our attention to two male artists who have left their mark.

William Greason (1888-1945) is one such artist. Born in St. Marys, William appreciated art from an early age. He studied under London, ON artist John Powel Hunt (1854-1932) in his youth and attended art school in Philadelphia as a teenager.

William quickly made a name for himself and received numerous endowments. These scholarships enabled him to study in Germany, England and France.

Returning to America in 1910, he settled in Detroit, opened a studio and became part of the local art scene. William's art caught the attention of gallery curators and was prominently displayed in the Detroit Institute of Arts.

William painted hundreds of landscapes and portraits in oils during his lifetime. He took inspiration from many of the places he visited, often sketching and drawing in situ, meaning locally or on site.

While visiting his uncle in nearby London, ON in 1915, William aspired to paint the reflection of buildings in the Thames River. His *in situ* pattern of behaviour stirred uncertainties within locals who suspected him to be a spy and contacted the police! He refused to ride in the police car. Instead, he insisted on walking to the station to be questioned. He effectively defended himself, was judged innocent and permitted to return to his art.

William's life revolved around art. He shared his love of art by overseeing an art school, a summer school and a gallery. His incredible talent also earned William a Doctor of Arts degree in 1939.



Artist Myron Angus (1926-2003)

Though he avoided publicity, William's efforts attracted the eyes of many patrons and curators. His works have been exhibited in numerous world-class cities such as New York, Washington, Chicago, Toronto and others.

Myron Angus (1926-2003) was another astounding artist, also born in St. Marys. Sadly, he was afflicted with arthrogryposis at birth, a physical condition that causes permanent shortening of muscles, tendons and ligaments, rendering joints very stiff and inhibiting normal movement.

At age seven, Myron's parents became concerned

about his education. While attending the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto, they met author Bill Watson, who wrote books by holding a pen with his foot because he was unable to use his arms. He advised the Anguses to teach their son to control a pencil with his mouth and to "put him in school".

With practice, Myron's abilities and talents blossomed and soon he taught himself to paint. In 1940, St. Marys DCVI awarded him with a medal for "Moral Courage". The following year, the family moved to Toronto where Myron finished his formal education.

Myron's first art exhibit was in 1948 at a Toronto gallery. It was a huge success and people from all over the province flocked to see his paintings. He exhibited in major cities throughout North America. In the late 1950s, Myron acquired the Gallery & Picture Frame Shop on Yonge Street, which he operated until 1966.

In 1964, Myron joined the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists, an international for-profit organization owned and operated by disabled artists to help members with monetary challenges.

Acquiring financial independence, Myron bought a motor home and travelled through Canada giving lectures and demonstrations for numerous societies and charities at countless venues, advocating for those with disabilities to explore their passions.

Myron was an accomplished artist, winning numerous awards during his career. In 1992, while representing Canadian Artists at the International Convention of Artists in Rome, he was presented to Pope John Paul II. Even after death Myron's life and works of art continue to inspire many.

Both William Greason and Myron Angus contributed important works of art to the St. Marys Museum's collection and elsewhere. To learn more, visit *Painting the Past: Artists of St. Marys* during the Museum's hours, Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

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COMMUNITY

Looking ahead to 2024 with MPP Matthew Rae

By Amanda Modaragamage, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Perth Wellington MPP Matthew Rae is clear on his goals for 2024, "Affordability is the number one issue we hear in the office and when I'm out in the community," he said, "Ensuring that we continue to provide relief to individuals in the province is essential."

Discussing the Gas Tax cut, Rae notes that the Ontario Government is planning to advocate for the tax cut to be extended until June 30, 2024, which will help Ontarians keep money in their pockets.

Rae also discussed the GAINS Program, which ensures a guaranteed minimum income for Ontario seniors by providing monthly payments to qualifying pensioners. "In 2024, we're looking at expanding the GAINS program. This program provides seniors and low-income seniors with financial assistance." Rae says this will extend program eligibility for nearly 100,000 people across Ontario.

Regarding health care, Rae notes that although the province is working towards better working conditions and increased funding for Ontario Healthcare, it can be challenging. "In health care, especially rural health care, there are gaps, but we've invested 200 million dollars to help provide education and internships to nurses, especially those in rural areas."

Next, Rae discussed how the Ontario Government is investing in critical infrastructure to help support and maintain municipal water projects to help build more housing and spur economic growth. "Investing in wastewater infrastructure will ensure that small towns can work with nonprofits or work with a private developer to build a wide range of housing, and



this funding can help facilitate that."

In keeping in line with building more affordable housing, Rae also said the Ontario Government is supplying local communities with an opportunity to receive the Building Faster Fund. This fund supports local municipalities that meet housing targets. "120 million dollars is being allocated to rural municipalities," says Rae, "There is flexibility into how these funds can be used."

Regarding housing initiatives, Rae says the Social Relief Fund is a specific fund that is granted to municipalities at the provincial level. It is an annual fund that cities can count on year by year. "That money is essentially a lump sum given to the local service provider. They can decide

how they want to allocate the money."

Ontario is meeting its targets with regard to greenhouse gas emissions,

and Rae says, "I'm very committed to meeting our targets for greenhouse gas emissions," he continued, "Ontario is on track; we are committed to meeting the federal government targets."

Rae says rural farmers are top of mind and continues to advocate for business risk management for farmers. "I've been working with Lisa Thompson, the Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, to ensure we continue supporting our farmers."

In 2024, MPP Rae will be working on a Private Member Bill - Life Lease, which is going to the committee in early 2024. "As we discussed earlier, we are in a housing crisis, and there's no easy solution," said Rae, "The Life Leases Bill is one way that we can help people get into the housing market and help build equity for those that may not be able to afford a house."

The Life Leases Act will act as a housing model between renting and owning. "I see it as a way to potentially address some of the missing middle in the housing spectrum," said Rae.

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COMMUNITY

Fourth annual Christmas Dinner program feeds 93



By Rachael Roberts O'Neill

Well...another successful community Christmas Dinner went off without a hitch. This was our 4th year!! We were honored to make and deliver 93 dinners to our great community.

We also had a chat with Santa and he delivered a gift to the kids that were

on the list.

A very special thank you to the following that made this happen:

Chad O'Leary and his team from the Creamery for making the delicious meals, Heather Young for helping with the logistics, Donna Windsor for making the awesome pies, Dee Skeith for

making the cookies, Delmar Foods for donating the veggies, Joe's Diner for donating the cranberry and stuffing, the beautiful people that donated turkeys and other ingredients, Stonetown Supply Services for donating the take-out containers and Elaine Renzema for donating some special surprises.

We had a great team of drivers: Jim

Robson, Rob Stuart, Sandy Stephens, Jack Bullen and Pete Bushfield.

And finally, a HUGE thank you to the amazing people who donated their hard-earned money. The success of this program is truly down to you. Our incredible community starts with incredible people. THANK YOU.

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COMMUNITY

Quadro donates to Imagination Library



St. Marys Imagination Library recently received a \$1,000 donation from Quadro Communications, which will help cover the costs of getting books monthly in the hands of 300 children in our community. Pictured above, from left, Chantal Lynch of the St. Marys Imagination Library and Maggie Whitcroft of Quadro. (Contributed photo)



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SPORTS

Naylor wins CBHOFM's Tip O'Neill Award

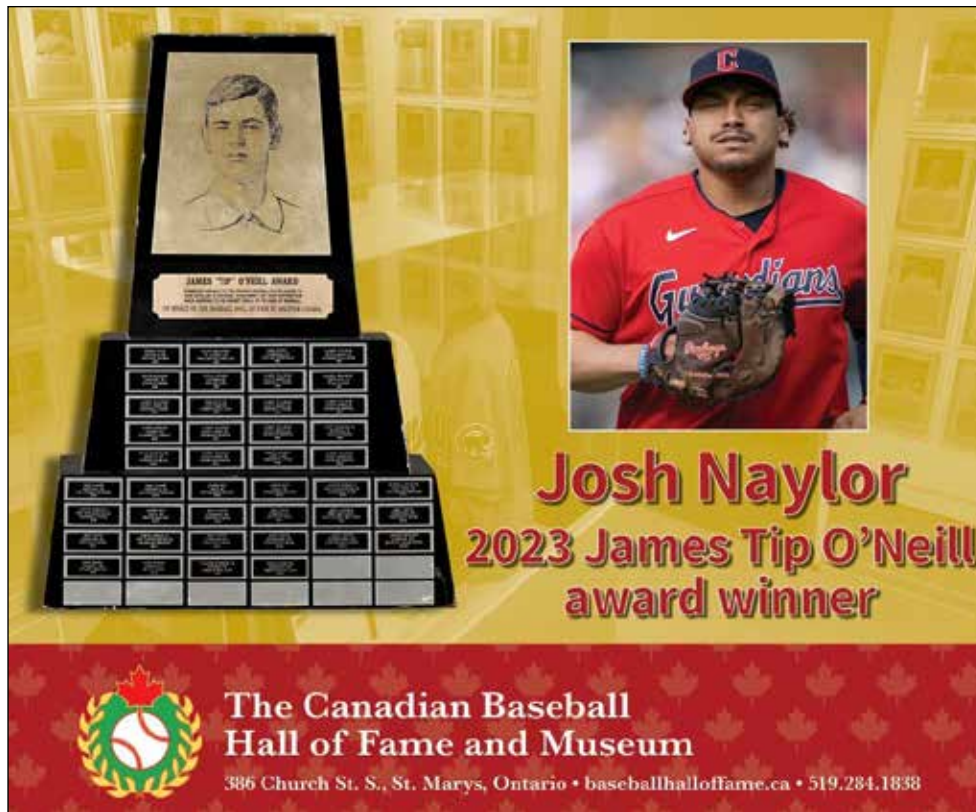
Cleveland Guardians slugger Josh Naylor (Mississauga, Ont.) has been named the winner of the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum's (CBHOFM) 2023 Tip O'Neill Award.

Canada's baseball shrine presents this honour annually to the Canadian player judged to have excelled in individual achievement and team contribution while adhering to baseball's highest ideals.

Naylor, who topped Canadian major leaguers in several offensive categories in 2023, is a first-time winner of the award. He staved off strong competition from fellow major leaguers Jordan Romano (Markham, Ont.), Edouard Julien (Quebec City, Que.), Vladimir Guerrero Jr. (Montreal, Que.) and Matt Brash (Kingston, Ont.) to secure the honour.

"Josh Naylor had his best major league season in 2023 and his energy and enthusiasm for the game of baseball make him so much fun to watch," said Jeremy Diamond, Chair of the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame's Board of Directors. "He has also become a wonderful role model through his work with the Ronald McDonald House and other charities. We're proud to recognize him with this award."

Despite missing more than a month with an oblique injury, Naylor topped all Canadian big leaguers in batting average (.308), slugging percentage (.489), OPS (.843), doubles (31), RBIs (97) and stolen bases (10). In all, in 121 games with the Guardians, he



had 139 hits.

His 97 RBIs were the eighth in the American League and he also ranked in the top 10 in the AL with seven sacrifice flies (seventh) and nine intentional walks (fourth). His .308 batting average was the sixth-highest batting average in the major leagues for players who suited up for at least 120 games.

For the Guardians, Naylor led the team in batting average, slugging percentage, OPS, OPS+ (133) and RBIs.

He also made major league history on July 14 when he and his younger brother, Bo, became the first brothers to belt home runs for the same team in the same inning. In the third inning of that contest against the Texas Rangers, after outfielder Myles Straw reached on a single to begin the inning, Bo hit a two-run home run to right field. Four batters later, Josh followed with a two-run homer of his own.

For his efforts in 2023, the older Naylor

garnered a 10th place vote in the American League MVP voting, which made him the 22nd Canadian ever to receive a major league MVP vote.

The 2023 campaign was Naylor's fourth with the Guardians. After honing his skills with the Ontario Blue Jays and Junior National Team, Naylor was selected 12th overall by the Miami Marlins in the 2015 MLB draft. After tenures in the Marlins and San Diego Padres organizations, he was traded to the Guardians, along with fellow Canadian Cal Quantrill (Port Hope, Ont.), on August 31, 2020.

Since joining the Guardians, Naylor has been a regular at charitable events. In 2023, he started the Cooking with Naylor program at the Ronald McDonald House which supplies baseball-themed boxed lunches to children and parents staying in the facilities and in Ronald McDonald Family Rooms in Cleveland-area hospitals.

In the off-season, Naylor has also supported the Shoe Box Project, which fills shoeboxes with gifts for women in emergency shelters and temporary housing in the Greater Toronto Area.

"Being on the same list as all those previous winners is an honour and what makes receiving this award even more special," said Naylor. "The fact I was even nominated was an honour knowing who this award represents."

Details about the presentation of the 2023 Tip O'Neill Award will be announced in the coming months.



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SPORTS

COMMENTARY: Sports have rules. Spectators do too

By Spencer Seymour

As everyone is making resolutions for the new year, I have one for every adult (parents, specifically) who regularly goes to youth sports games and isn't already following what should be unwritten rules for a spectator – get a grip.

One year into spending many hours at the local rinks, fields, and courts, one thing that has become painfully clear is the fact that far too many adults would get a failing grade on a behaviour test.

There is of course your standard fare of the people who scream and swear at everybody from the officials, opposing coaches and players, and occasionally even another spectator. I don't know what games you've watched, but in my experience, screaming obscenities at a referee rarely ever gets said official to change their call. Also, there are young chil-

dren in the crowd and while no one goes to an arena to watch the officials call penalties, they also don't go to listen to someone swear at a referee.

Then you have the rare but mind-boggling folks who seem to think they are at a heavy metal concert, not a youth sports event. During one game this year on the Rock Rink, a parent, every time their kid's team scored, would lean forward from the sitting area on the side of the players' benches to the dasher (yes, one foot standing on the dasher, the other on the first row of the spectator's bench), grab the top of a pane of glass, and vigorously shake it. The ridiculousness of this person's intensity was superseded only by the danger of what they were doing. One slightly slippery part of the dasher or their shoe and that person is taking a quick and painful drop.

And we can't have this discussion without noting the parents who drop their kids off at an arena with no su-

per vision or let them roam freely and unchecked while the parent sits in the stands. Kids are going to be kids, you can't expect them to always act the way they should, especially when they are under no adult supervision. It's a weekly occurrence that kids and teenagers will engage in wrestling matches in the walkways, wall-climbing up the stands, and throwing anything from food to accessories to balls.

At the time of writing this, I just returned home from a game I was taking photos of where I was hit in the upper back by an errant tennis ball being tossed around by two kids. Now, a ball hitting a 24-year-old in the back didn't exactly result in a hospital visit, but what if it hadn't been me standing where I was and, in my place, had been a 90-year-old grandparent, a few inches shorter than me? That ball could just as easily have hit the head of a senior.

But here's the thing – this isn't the

fault of the arena or the town. Private security or a permanent police presence are far too expensive for the municipality or any small-town sports organization to implement. There are already rules clearly posted on the wall at the PRC. The problem is that, practically, enforcement of a code of conduct has to come from the public themselves. The people have to collectively agree to be decent spectators.

You have to conduct yourself in a way that is respectful to everyone else. You have to watch the game, whether seated or standing, in a way that doesn't pose a safety risk to anyone, including yourself. You have to make sure your children are not treating a public sports arena like a jungle gym. The only kids who should be throwing a ball around at a game are the ones playing. Enforcement of the code of conduct falls on every individual and if you can't do that, then don't come.



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SPORTS

Lincs begin year tied for league lead



Luca Spagnolo celebrates after scoring one of his two goals during the St. Marys Lincolns' game on December 23rd against the Chatham Maroons. Spagnolo ended the 2023 portion of the Lincs' season as the hottest player on the team, tallying at least a point in each of his last seven games and in 11 of his last 12 games. Spagnolo also has goals in three of his last four outings and now sits just one point away from 70 career GOJHL points.



Ethan Weir moves the puck during the Lincolns' game on December 23rd against the Maroons. After returning to the Lincolns from a call-up by the OHL's Kingston Frontenacs, Ethan Weir picked up right where he left off, scoring a pair of goals in his return game on December 22nd against the Sarnia Legionnaires. With 41 points, the Lincolns currently sit tied for first place in the Western Conference. (Photos by McGinny Photography)

Western Conference Standings (as of January 2nd)

Rank	Team	Record	PTS	GF	GA
1	LaSalle Vipers	20-8-1-0	41	133	83
2	London Nationals	20-8-1-0	41	121	86
3	St. Marys Lincolns	19-8-2-1	41	120	74
4	Chatham Maroons	18-11-2-0	38	126	111
5	Strathroy Rockets	17-9-1-1	36	102	88
6	Sarnia Legionnaires	13-14-2-1	29	110	135
7	St. Thomas Stars	11-17-1-1	24	94	130
8	Komoka Kings	3-28-0-0	6	58	155

St. Marys Lincolns 2023-24 stats (as of January 2nd)

Rank	Player	GP	G	A	PTS
1	Cohen Bidgood	32	10	21	31
2	Luca Spagnolo	25	11	16	27
3	Chase MacQueen-Spence	29	13	12	25
T-4	Ethan Weir	16	11	12	23
	Jaden Lee	28	7	16	23
6	Noah VandenBrink	30	7	15	22
T-7	Billy VanSumeren	21	6	13	19
	Josh Cornfield	25	4	15	19
9	Ryan Cornfield	28	9	8	17
T-10	Adam Barkley	24	7	9	16
	Ryan Hodkinson	27	4	12	16
12	Luke Bogart	29	4	10	14
13	Matt Prendergast	25	8	5	13
14	Blake Elzinga	24	7	5	12
15	Owen Voortman	30	6	5	11
T-16	James Sigmon	22	1	8	9
	Jacob Montesi	29	0	9	9
18	Ryder Livermore	30	1	7	8
T-19	Marcus Dashevsky	13	3	3	6
	Jimmy Schiedel	24	2	4	6
21	Jaden Shiell	16	0	4	4
22	Ethan Sullivan	0	0	0	0
#	Goalies	GP	GAA	SV-%	Wins
1	Colby Booth-Housego	18	1.86	0.932	12
29	Brandon Abbott	3	1.34	0.946	2

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SPORTS

DCVI Curling team competes in first event



The St. Marys DCVI Curling team had a positive experience at their first outing held in December at the Stratford Curling Club with plenty of improvement and learning by many St. Marys players new to the sport. Pictured in the front row, from left to right, are Holly Black, Claudia Laino Salgado, Kaela Hymus, and Cora Weber. In the back row, from left, are Abby Martin, Niko Taylor, Ella Boersma, Rylee Nethercott, Megan Richardson, Danell Antenor, Mac Hern, and Coach Graham Rae. (Contributed photo)

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Cascades Recruitment Open House

11am - 12:30pm on Wednesday, January 10th

at the Cascades St. Marys Plant, 304 James St. South in St. Marys - front entrance.

Interested Candidates will need to be prepared to be interviewed on site and bring their current resume, two pieces of photo ID as well as current banking information (VOID cheque or direct deposit form).

Reporting to the Shift Lead, the Assistant Printing Press Operator is responsible for assisting with, set-up, operation, cleanup, and recommending improvements to operations. It's a rotational & continental shift that rotates on to evenings and weekends with a starting wage of \$23.82/hour. There are ample opportunities to get involved, learn and grow with Cascades.

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Experience:

Manufacturing: 1 year (preferred)

COLUMN

WHAT'S FOR DINNER: Soup's On



By Lauren Eedy

20-minute Vietnamese Chicken Pho

Pho (pronounced 'fuh') is a famous Vietnamese dish that is a type of noodle soup. It includes a savoury bone broth, bouncy noodles, an assortment of toppings including herbs, chillis, bean shoots and meat. This recipe has such a depth of flavour and richness, you will be amazed it came together in 20 minutes.

Prep: 5m Cook: 15 Serves: 4

1 rotisserie roast chicken

1 onion, skin on, halved

4cm (1.5") ginger, sliced
 1 cinnamon stick
 3 whole star anise
 3 tbsp fish sauce, or to taste
 2 beef stock cubes 400g (14oz)

Dried rice stick noodles

To Serve

½ onion, finely sliced

¼ spring onion (scallions)

Bean shoots

Thai basil leaves

Sliced red chilli

Sliced lemons

Hoisin sauce (optional)

Siracha sauce (optional)

Method:

-Remove the chicken meat from the rotisserie chicken. Shred, set aside until ready to serve.

-Place the bones of the rotisserie chicken in a large microwave-safe bowl. Add onion, ginger, cinnamon stick,

and star anise. Top with 2 litres of water. Microwave on HIGH for 10m. Crumble the beef stock cubes and stir to combine. Microwave on high for a further 5m. Remove from microwave and strain the broth, discarding solids. Taste and season with fish sauce and salt to taste.

-In the meantime, soak the noodles in room temperature water for 10-15m or until softened slightly. Cook in boiling water for 2-3m or until noodles are just tender. Drain and divide amongst bowls.

-To serve, top the noodles with onion slices, chicken meat, and spring onion. Ladle over hot broth (reheat in microwave if you need to). Serve with bean shoots, Thai basil, lemon, chilli, hoisin and siracha.

20-Minute Dumpling Noodle Soup

Noodles, broth, dumpling, egg - these all come togeth-

er quickly in this warm and comforting soup. This can also easily be made vegetarian by using vegetable stock instead of chicken and choosing frozen vegetable dumplings.

Prep: 10m Cook: 10m Serves: 4

6 cups chicken broth (or broth of your choice)

2 slices fresh ginger

2 spring onions (scallions)

2 tbsp soy sauce

2 tbsp miso paste

250g dried udon noodles or another noodle of your choice

200, choy sum, or bok choy or another green vegetable of your choice.

12 frozen dumplings of your choice

2 boiled eggs, halved

Chili oil to serve (optional)

Method:

-In a large saucepan, place

the chicken stock, ginger, spring onions, and soy sauce. Turn the heat on to a simmer. In the meantime bring a large pot of water to a boil.

-When the broth starts to simmer, place a ladle of the warm broth in a bowl. Add miso paste and whisk until smooth. Then transfer the miso mixture back into the simmering broth. Turn heat off.

-Cook the noodles in the large pot of water until al dente. Use tongs to transfer the noodles to serving bowls. Keep the water boiling and add the dumplings to the water. Cook 4-5m. Transfer dumplings into serving bowls. Use scissors to chop your desired vegetables into the boiling water and blanche for about 30 seconds.

-Ladle the broth into serving bowls. Top with boiled eggs and drizzle with chilli oil if using.

Happy New Year!

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TOWN OF ST. MARYS

2024 Municipal Budget

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Notice is hereby given that Council will host a meeting to receive public input on the 2024 municipal budget on **January 9, 2024, at 6 PM at the Municipal Operations Centre (408 James St. S).**

AND further that Council will consider a by-law to adopt the 2024 budget on **January 23, 2024, at its regular 6 PM meeting.**

Anyone may attend the meetings and/or make written or verbal statements about the budget. Both meetings will be livestreamed on the Town's YouTube channel.

Council held open meetings to review and discuss the 2024 operating and capital budgets on November 21, 2023, and December 5, 2023.

Draft budget documents can be viewed online (www.townofstmarys.com/budget) or in person at the Municipal Operations Centre.

QUESTIONS?

Andre Morin, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer
 519-284-2340, ext. 217
 amorin@town.stmarys.on.ca

How to Listen to St. Marys Radio

1. Go to www.stmarysradio.com
2. Click play on the online player



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Large Displays

Jim Stacey, Tradition Mutual Insurance - Truck, Train, Caboose
 (Founder: St. Marys Kinsmen Club)

Trouw Nutrition Canada/Shur-Gain - Barn with Farm Animals
 (Founder: Veterinary Purchasing)

IG Wealth Management, Jeff Smith and Associates - Nativity Scene
 (Founder: Canada Packers/Shur Gain)

Medium Displays

Hubbard Pharmacy Ltd. - Seasons Greetings Sign
 (Founder: St. Marys Kinsmen Club)

St. Marys Landscaping - Leaf and Logo*

Harris-Greig Automotive - Eastern Star
 (Founder: Eastern Star)

Community Living St. Marys & Area - Animated Bells
 (Founder: Conestoga Rovers & Assoc.)

Small Displays

Andrew L. Hodges Funeral Home - Dachshund with Presents*

Amy and Patrick Brennan - Dog Paddling Canoe*

Stone Home Creatives - Candle with Leaves
 (Founder: WinterLights Elves)

St. Marys Veterinary Clinic - Blues Clues
 (Founder: Early Learning Centre)

Science Hill Drifters Snowmobile Club - Snowmobiler*

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HISTORY

HISTORIC ST. MARYS: The Eatons

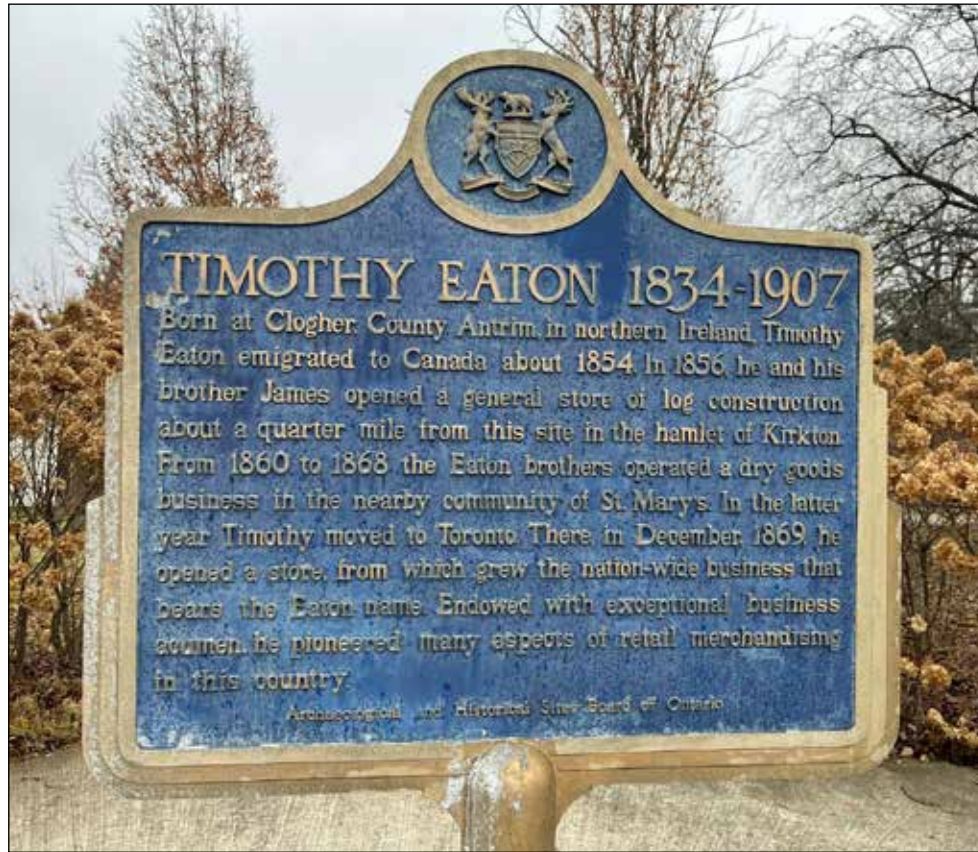
By Mary Smith

About two weeks ago, just before Christmas, CBC Radio in London broadcast an interview with Dr. Tom Peace, a history professor at Huron University College. He and his students at the Huron Community History Centre have created a website called Hidden Histories in Southwestern Ontario. An interactive map allows users to find locations of historic sites in this area along with a brief explanation of their significance. Events associated with these sites have been submitted by users of the map, edited and then posted. A sidebar lists them in chronological order. The radio interview described an event in 1856: the year Timothy Eaton set up his first general store in the village of Kirkton. Dr. Peace outlined the history of the Eaton retail empire and, because this was seasonal programming, noted a number of ways Eaton's shaped how Canadians celebrate Christmas.

Coincidentally, the St. Marys Museum currently has an exhibit about Timothy Eaton in the Citizens Gallery on the second floor of the public area. Many area residents know the story: Timothy decided that Kirkton was too small for his store to thrive, relocated first to St. Marys and, a few years later, to Toronto, the provincial capital and the city with the greatest retail potential. What is less widely known is the extent of the Eaton family presence in St. Marys. The 1861 census lists three Eaton brothers: Robert, James and Timothy, all involved in local retail. Robert owned his own store. Aged 44, he was married with four children. His younger bachelor brothers were James, age 27, listed as a store clerk and Timothy, age 25, a grocer and a baker.

These three ambitious brothers were all born in County Antrim in the north of Ireland. Their parents, John and Margaret (Craig) Eaton, had a family of nine children: four sons and five daughters. The eldest, Robert, was born in 1816. The youngest, Timothy, arrived in March 1834, two months after the death of his father. At the age of 13, he left school to be apprenticed to the owner of a general store. Following his apprenticeship, he worked until he had earned enough money to emigrate. His brother, Robert, had gone to Canada ca 1840, settling in the Georgetown area where he had relatives. Robert was followed by James and three of their sisters. In 1854, Timothy, also came to Canada and took a position as a clerk in a general store in Glen Williams, a village close to Georgetown.

It was an exciting time for Canada



The Archeological and Historical Sites Board of Ontario installed this plaque in Kirkton to commemorate Timothy Eaton's first store in that village. The plaque stands in a small park at the northeast corner of Kirkton's main intersection, just across from the current general store.

West: the building of the Grand Trunk Railway brought great changes. With the railway line pushing west from Montreal across Toronto and onward to Sarnia and the US border, the area now known as southwestern Ontario became very attractive for entrepreneurs. The Eaton brothers relocated just ahead of the railway with Robert, the oldest, arriving in St. Marys first. By the time the rail lines were completed in 1859, he had an established grocery store on the north side of Queen Street in the block between Church and Wellington Streets. James and Timothy moved slightly farther west, setting up in Kirkton. James became postmaster there with the contract for the mail service between Kirkton and St. Marys while Timothy managed the day-to-day operations of their store. But Kirkton was not on the railway and so, by 1860, the two younger brothers had moved to St. Marys, a community enjoying the benefits of the GTR service on both the Sarnia and London lines. Timothy abandoned groceries for dry goods and rented premises for his store in Milner Harrison's stone block on the south side of Queen, near the intersection with Church Street – a good location, close to the market square.

A milestone for Timothy was his marriage to Margaret Beattie in May 1862. Their first three children were born in St. Marys. Although busy with her young family, Margaret took an

active interest in the store, suggesting, for example, that it should add a millinery department. In 1869, with Margaret's encouragement, Timothy moved to Toronto where he would be able to conduct business the way he preferred – cash payment rather than credit. It was customary – and necessary – to extend credit in rural areas of Canada where income was seasonal. In the city, many workers received regular weekly wages and thus could pay cash. Within a decade, Eaton's was an established department store on Yonge Street in Toronto with plans for further expansion. James Eaton also left St. Marys for London and eventually Toronto. Robert Eaton, however, remained in St. Marys for 20 more years, a prosperous businessman. He retired in 1890 and then moved to Toronto. All three brothers and their families kept ties with friends in St. Marys, especially with fellow members of the Methodist Church.

As the T. Eaton Company Limited retail empire grew, a number of young St. Marys men with experience as store clerks, found employment with the company. The most famous example was George Graham, a member of a well-known St. Marys family with members still living in the community today. Born in 1873, George was the sixth of seven brothers. After working as a clerk in various stores in southwestern Ontario, he joined T. Eaton

Co. in 1903. He did well there and advanced to become head of crockery and fine china for the Winnipeg store. Although his wife was unwell and he was reluctant to leave her, he went on a buying trip to Europe for Eaton's in the spring of 1912. Anxious to return home as soon as his business was accomplished, he booked a first class ticket on the speedy new liner, Titanic. When it sank in the Atlantic after striking the famous iceberg on April 14, 1912, George Graham was not among the survivors. His body was recovered; Eaton's sent their special railway car to convey his coffin from Halifax to Toronto for his funeral.

St. Marys and area residents were proud of the Timothy Eaton connection. A trip to Toronto to visit relatives or to attend an event such as the Royal Winter Fair would customarily also include a streetcar ride to Eaton's store at Queen and Yonge for some city shopping. A chance to visit before Christmas to see the store's animated window displays was a special treat. And if the visit coincided with the annual Eaton's Santa Claus parade, so much the better. The very first Santa Claus parade, organized as a marketing opportunity by Eaton's, was held on Saturday, December 2, 1905. Santa arrived at Union Station where one of the parade floats picked him up and conveyed him, with other floats and marchers, to Eaton's store. A similar parade was held in Winnipeg to highlight the new Eaton's store that had opened that summer. The parade became longer and increasingly elaborate each year. It was so firmly entrenched in the celebration of Christmas in Toronto that there was great distress when Eaton's withdrew sponsorship in 1982. A special not-for-profit organization was created to salvage the event and, with corporations underwriting the many floats, it continues to this day. Eaton's Santa Claus parade was the prototype for the many, smaller, but equally enthusiastic, parades in communities across the country.

Another valuable connection with Eaton's, when it wasn't possible to get to the city to shop, was the regular arrival of the Eaton's Catalogue. Mail order shopping had such an impact on everyday life a century ago that it is worth a future column of its own. In the meantime, the St. Marys Museum has re-opened following last week's holiday period. The Timothy Eaton exhibit alone is worth a visit. Paying a virtual visit to the Huron Community History Centre's project is also worthwhile. Do an internet search for Hidden Histories in Southwestern Ontario and think what stories about St. Marys could be added to this website.

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Expanding Thorndale & Area Youth Opportunities

By Nancy Abra

Last month 'I Love Thorndale' (ILT) made the hard decision to close the Thorndale Youth Club at 160 King Street, Thorndale. This youth club began over two years ago with a conversation with area youth about what they wanted in their community. After connecting with a group of young leaders, applying for funding, developing community engagement and partnerships, searching for a location in Thorndale, cleaning, painting, and moving in furniture, the Thorndale Youth Clubhouse officially opened on July 16th, 2021. It was envisioned by the area youth to be a place where they could gather, meet new friends, engage in social activities, and learn new skills. Over the past months, this clubhouse wasn't sustainable for all the area youth and financially impractical. Therefore, the decision was made by the ILT Board of Directors to close the clubhouse.

"We are grateful for the vision provided by youth leaders and the support from local businesses, the London Community Foundation, and commu-



From the West Nissouri Manor...cheers and best wishes to the community for a healthy and happy 2024. Pictured, from left to right ~ Darlene Madge, Helen Doan, Valerie Degaust, Gayle Ivins, Darlene Tipping and Dorothy Dicker (on the right), in front Johanne Smith and Pat Redman.

nity members to fund and setup this space" ILT Director, Arden McClean stated. "We believe that this project proved to young people that Thorndale cares about what they need, and that we are prepared to work together to support them to reach their goals."

To bring a wider range of activities and programs to Thorndale for area youth, ILT is supporting the partnership between the Municipality of Thames Centre and the BGC London. "We are excited about this next stage and opportunities for our youth." Mc-

Clean remarked. "We believe that the Thorndale Lions Community Centre will provide more spaces with the opportunity to cater to more area youth."

Two winter programs offered through the BGC London at the Thorndale Lions Community Centre is an 8-week gymnastics program for children between the ages of 4 to 10 years, starting on January 12th. Also being offered is a 9-week skill development Volleyball program, including the fundamentals, drills, and lots of gameplay for ages 10 to 13 inclusive, starting on January 18th. Registration for these programs and other youth opportunities can be found at <https://bgclondon.recdesk.com/Community/Program?category=34>

"We would like to acknowledge the youth leaders who had the idea to create a youth clubhouse," McClean stated, "and many thanks to the community members and residents who donated and helped to bring their vision to a reality and to the businesses that made it possible to create so many opportunities for our local community youth."

Thames Centre unveils 2024 Budget

By Nancy Abra

Thames Centre Municipal Council unanimously approved its 2024 Budget at a Special Council Meeting on December 12th. According to Thames Centre website, Council kept community development and sustainability at the forefront, working collectively to achieve value for residents and businesses while maintaining service excellence. With an inflationary tax levy increase of 3.4% as well as holding the line with a 0% on Water/Wastewater rates, this marks the second budget of Council's four-year Term and main-

tains Thames Centre as the lowest taxes in the London/Middlesex area.

The approved 2024 Budget will result in a 3.4% property tax increase on the local Municipal portion of the tax bill. The breakdown of this increase is as follows: 1% relates to municipal operations, and 2% as a direct result of borrowing costs for the Senior's Centre renovation project at the FlightExec Centre in Dorchester that was approved last year. The remaining 0.4% is for the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) mandatory increases to Thames Centre.

The total 2024 Budget is \$33 million, consisting of a \$24M operating budget which includes staff salaries, maintenance contracts, office expenses and reserves plus a \$9M capital budget for major repair and replacement of assets: roads, buildings, etc. This budget further enhances annual contributions to capital infrastructure reserves, strengthens its financial position to prepare for future contingencies and emergencies, supports infrastructure and aligns with Councils 2024-2027 Strategic Plan.

"We were committed to engaging

residents as part of the 2024 Budget process, and they made their voices heard – wanting service levels maintained, while keeping tax bills affordable" stated Sharron McMillan, Mayor of Thames Centre. "Crafting the 2024 Budget was about striking a balance between responsible fiscal stewardship and fostering sustainable growth. This budget embodies our commitment to driving Thames Centre forward with advancements while maintaining financial responsibility."

Source: <https://www.thamescentre.on.ca>

Happy New Year from the Thorndale Library

We have a lot of great programs planned for January. Crochet There! runs January 10 at 6:00pm. This intro to crochet class is for beginners. All ages are welcome, and registration is required. Family Movie Night is January 18 at 5:00pm. We'll provide the movie and popcorn, you bring along a drink, snack, and pillow/blanket.

Chilling Dry Ice Experiments is on January 19 at 11:30am. This program introduces families to a few simple science experiments using dry ice and common household items. Registration is required.

'Don't Worry Be Crafty' is our monthly adult paint night, which returns on January 24 at 6:00pm with water

colour birch trees! Registration is required.

Please join us at our drop-in programs in January. Starting on January 2, Storytime is the place to be for little ones and their caregivers on Tuesdays at 10:30am. Afterschool Hangout will be back on January 11, on Thursdays from 4:30-5:30pm.

As always, feel free to drop in, call us at 519-461-1150, or email us at thorndalestaff@middlesex.ca with any questions or to register for upcoming programs visit library.middlesex.ca/events. We hope to see you at the library!

COLUMN

HOSTING UKRAINE: Reflections

By VJ Knutson

I prefer reflection over resolution at this time of the year, and there is no shortage of things to reflect on. What a year it has been! I don't think there is a week that goes by that Ric and I don't comment on how fortunate we are to have met so many new and wonderful people. Our Ukrainian family has grown and grown, and our community connections have as well.

I actually met Stewart Grant in person recently and told him this was all thanks to him. His advice to write a weekly column really fuelled the process.

I could not be doing the work I am without the support of so many, and definitely not without my husband. I always knew he was big hearted, but he continues to surprise me. He continually complains about the hoard of donations in our garage (yes, it continues) but I know deep down, he is pleased that we can help out. I am the one who sometimes has to reign him in. Who knew?

This Christmas was extra special. We make a point of hosting Christmas dinner for the guests who have lived with us, plus a few extras. It is a bit overwhelming in the planning phase, but this year we were smarter



and rented a room at our local clubhouse. Twenty-eight of us gathered to celebrate, and we started with the children opening presents. After that excitement, dinner was ready to be served, so I called out for people to find a seat.

Five-year-old Anna, dressed in princess attire, asked me where she should sit. I suggested she sit where she wanted to sit. She proclaimed

she wanted to sit beside me, and before I knew it, several children had joined me and I found myself seated at the children's table. The conversation was incredibly lively as each child had something to tell me. It was hard to keep up, and all I could think was that not very long ago most of these children could not speak a bit of English, and here they all were talking my head off.

The honesty of children always delights me. They wear their hearts on their sleeves, and these little ones, with their giggles and hugs, spoke volumes to me that night.

More than that, we received so many good wishes from the Ukrainian community. Wishes for our good health and notes of gratitude for our kindness, or compassion, or as one person put it, for being guardians.

Lesia and I spent some time talking about the last year, as she came to us last January. She told me her story of leaving Ukraine, and making the decision to come to Canada, and the problems with her documents, and long lines in Warsaw, and eventually connecting with me. There's a book in their somewhere, we agreed.

As everyone gains independence, I am gradually able to take more of a back seat and bask in the warmth of being a part of all this...

That is until the phone rings, and the voice on the other end says: "There's an emergency situation. Can you help?"

Next time.

(Love to hear from you at english.knutson@gmail.com)




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COLUMN

FROM THE GARDEN: Repurposing Christmas Leftovers



By Nancy Abra

After the holidays, some of us have lots of leftovers. There are dozens of ways and clever recipes for the turkey dinners excess. With many people having a natural evergreen tree for Christmas, what do we do with this leftover?

There are countless craft projects to basic garden ideas to repurpose the natural Christmas tree after last month's traditional duty. For instance, from the trunk and bigger branches, simply cut into various thickness depending on what you want to incorporate them into. Let these sit for a couple of months so the wood will dry out more evenly and quicker. Large thicker wooden discs can be used for trivets

or coasters. Smaller discs can be used for different wooden items such as tree ornaments or name cards at next Christmas' gift giving.

Your Christmas tree can be repurposed to benefit wildlife and your garden. For instance, you can create an outdoor bird feeding station. Once you have removed all your ornaments and tinsel from the tree, take it outside and secure it upright to a post or fence. Now you can decorate the tree for the birds with birdseed ornaments, dried seed heads, strings of cranberries and popcorn, and suet or peanut butter seed balls. Your tree will also make a sanctuary for birds and other small animals to use for cover against predators and harsh winter weather.

From the trunk, make a hanging bird feeder. Cut off 20cm to 25cm from the rest of the tree. Drill 1cm to 2cm deep holes spaced randomly on the sides of this trunk section. Fill each hole with a mixture of peanut butter or almond butter and bird seed. (Note - products such as Nutella

should not be used for birds.) Then hang this feeder outside with your other feeders for the birds to enjoy. The holes can be refilled when needed throughout the winter months.

As for your garden, your repurposed tree can be used in many ways. Cut off the branches from the trunk and lay these over your perennials. These evergreen branches will add a layer of protection, catch the snowfall, insulate the plants' roots from harsh winter temperatures and help prevent from frost heaving.

If you have an outdoor firepit, your tree can be saved for that. The smaller branches will make good kindling, and the rest can be cut up in useable lengths. By spring it will be dry enough to burn. You can also cut up the smaller branches into chunks and pile them by your composter. Let this pile sit until the needles have fallen off and the small branches are dry and brittle. Then put this brown material in your composter for a source of carbon. The



rest of the tree can be left to be chipped up in the spring and used as mulch in your garden beds.

For over the past ten years the Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG) in Hamilton has been using Christmas trees donated by area residents as part of their stream restoration project. These trees are strategically placed in critical areas to aid in the rebuilding of the Chedoke and Grindstone Creeks, that has been destroyed by invasive Common Carp. The tree branches collect and retain sediments to

help the riverbanks become fortified and stabilized and builds a strong soil bed. This also helps to channel the flow of water during high-water events. This project continues to be a success with the evidence in the restored wetlands. (<https://www.rbg.ca/pledge-to-donate-your-christmas-tree/>)

As we embark on a new year, may your leftovers be few and garden blooms be many.

Source: <https://www.gardenbetty.com/repurpose-old-christmas-tree/>

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PRC & Friendship Centre events - See the Stonetown Crier on Page 5

Thorndale Library January events - See Page 19

St. Marys Public Library events - See Page 27

Friday, January 5

- Royal Canadian Legion hot dog/sausage lunch at Noon

- A.N.A.F. meat draw - 6 pm

- St. Marys Lincolns vs Komoka Kings at the PRC - 7:30 pm

Saturday, January 6

- Royal Canadian Legion meat draw - 5 pm

- St. Marys Lincolns vs Komoka Kings at Komoka Wellness Centre - 7:15 pm

Tuesday, January 9

- Town of St. Marys public meeting on the 2024 municipal budget at the Municipal Operations Centre (408 James St S) - 6 pm

Wednesday, January 10

- St. Marys Lincolns vs LaSalle Vipers at Vollmer Culture Rec Centre - 7 pm



The Presents

Riddle Kid OF THE WEEK

What is full of holes but still holds water?



A sponge!

Jack Becker (7)

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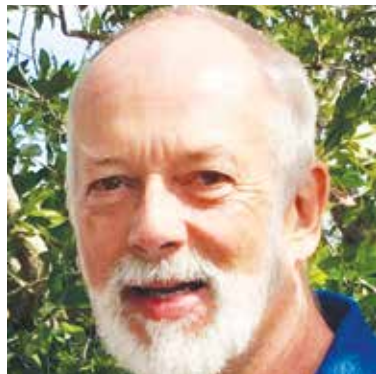
May 2024 bring you and your furry friends good health, happiness and countless tail wagging moments.

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COLUMN

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: A historic home furnished with ethical questions... and inspiration



By Paul Knowles

For me, no travel experience is complete without a visit to an historic house or two. Especially if that particular travel experience is in a country like England, where heritage buildings are thick as Canada geese on a Canadian golf course.

But I have to qualify this by pointing out that there are at least three categories of historic homes. There are the ancient buildings that are preserved, more or less, as an architectural structure and furnished with period pieces, not originally related to the site, supplied by the National Trust or English Heritage. (The same thing happens in Canada, by the way – Woodside, Mackenzie King's childhood home in Kitchener, is mainly furnished with items typical of the era but not original to the house.)

Then, there are the great homes opened to the public by the aristocratic families who still live there who frankly need the money. These often make for rather awkward visits, although there are certainly exceptions, where you are ushered through a limited number of rooms while the family sits unseen, but resenting the need for the income

from visitors, in another part of the house.

But my favourite places by far are the homes where a well-known person was the final occupant and where today, visitors can tour the place as it was when that person lived there, experiencing not only the building and appropriate décor, but actually getting a sense of the former owner.

There are some spectacular examples of these homes all over the United Kingdom. I have written about a few of them over the past months – Churchill's beloved Chartwell for example, and Sissinghurst, the home (and gardens) of Vita Sackville-West. These are places where you feel the presence of these former residents.

And one of my very favorites of this kind is Bateman's, now a National Trust property in East Sussex. Bateman's (named for its builder) is a beautiful 17th-century home, but for me, the most interesting stuff doesn't come from the 1600's, it's much more recent. Because Bateman's was the home of English author Rudyard Kipling. He and his wife Caroline lived here from 1902 until he passed away in 1936. After he died, Caroline bequeathed the house to the National Trust, furnishings and all.

So a tour of Bateman's takes the visitors through Kipling's completely furnished writing studio, his library, and outdoors, his gardens. Perhaps it's obvious why this Canadian writer, who among other things has written four gardening books, finds this destination so appealing.

I simply can't think of a more

enthralling visitor experience. To use an over-used term, it's an holistic encounter with Rudyard Kipling – you discover his taste in décor, his love for the outdoors, and his chosen environment to spark creativity.

But let's be honest here. Rudyard Kipling has rather fallen out of favour in our more enlightened times. The author of "The Jungle Book", "The Man Who Would Be King" and the often-quoted poem "If" was also a man who said and wrote a lot of problematic stuff. An Englishman of his time who was born in India, and who lived and worked as a journalist there during Imperial Rule, he has been quite correctly accused of racial prejudice.

In fact, noted author George Orwell was flat-out blunt: "During five literary generations, every enlightened person has despised him... a jingo imperialist... morally insensitive and aesthetically disgusting."

This, of course, raises a familiar question, yet again. How do we, in 2024, judge a writer from another era? There is no easy answer. We obviously cannot condone racism or defense of colonialism which has been the cause of enduring suffering around the world including right here in Canada, among indigenous people from coast to coast to coast. On the other hand, we would be hard pressed to find any man or woman writing a century or more ago who would satisfy our current demand for absolute political correctness.

I apologize for this digression into ethics but it is an issue that crops up as we travel. My personal bottom line is – ev-



The 17th century home, Bateman's, fronted by a garden pond. (All photos by Paul Knowles)

ery experience that helps me to understand the history of culture, of politics, and of social mores is an experience that helps me to be a more informed, perhaps even better, person today.

So back to Bateman's. As I lingered in Rudyard Kipling's study, I did feel inspired. Not inspired to defend British rule in India, but inspired by the spirit of creativity that still infuses the room.

As I perused the samples of Kipling's work on display throughout the house, I was able to recognize the sheer talent of the man.

As I wandered around the gardens and walked through the woods on the path that leads to an old water mill, I reveled in the sense of peace and tranquility that was undoubtedly the reason Rudyard and Caroline purchased the place more than 120 years ago. More than a century... yet there is something about them that lives there, still.

Paul Knowles is an author and travel writer, and President of the Travel Media Association of Canada. To contact Paul about travel, his books, or speaking engagements, email pknowles@golden.net.



Rudyard Kipling's study, where he created many of his well-known books.



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OBITUARY

Smith



Winston Barry Smith
Aug. 18, 1940 – Dec. 20, 2023
Winston peacefully passed away at Victoria Hospital on Dec. 20, 2023 at the age of 83 with the love of his life by his side.

His is survived by his cherished wife Donna Mae (Aldis) of 60 years, loving father of

Paul (Laurie) and Terry (Bev), a Proud Pappa of Nathan (Rebecca), Matthew (Amanda), Dawn and Laura (Peter) and a super Poppi to Mackenzie, Graylyn, Harley, Hayden, Jack, Waylon and Cal. Winston is survived by his two sisters Wonetta, Phyllis and brother Allison (Jean) and many nieces and nephews. He was a special brother-in-law to Jo-Ann, Diane, Cindy and their families. He is predeceased by his parents Victor and Annie Smith and many siblings and by his in-laws Earl and Helen Aldis.

Winston worked at the St. Marys Cement plant for 34 years where he took pride in being a maintenance foreman. His passion was watching the Toronto Maple Leafs and Toronto Blue Jays. He loved golfing and fishing. His family meant everything to him the time spent with family always brought a twinkle to his eye and smile on his face. No one deserved the title of Poppa/Poppi more than Winston.

A private family graveside service will be held. If you wish to make a memorial donation, please donate to the charity of your choice. The Best there is, the best there was and the best there ever will be. In our hearts forever. Online condolences at www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca.

OBITUARY

Daykin



Bob Daykin passed away at Stratford General Hospital on Wednesday, Dec. 20, 2023 in his 81st year surrounded by his family.

Husband to Sharon (Vessie), married 58 years. Survived by his children Lori Ford (Ken Ballantyne), Karen Kraemer

(Garnet), Chris Palmer (Wes), Kim Pearson (Ken), Rob Daykin (Brenda), 11 grandchildren Matt, Adam, Stacy, Bret, Stephanie, Justin, Ben, Kyle, Kaleb, Drew and Mallory. Also survived by nine great-grandchildren, known as Big Papa to Aubree, Jill, Kinsley, Kane, Kash, Paisley, Oliver, Nix and Olivia. Brother of Janet Castrenis (George), Rosemay Boyes (Ken) and brother-in-law of Darlene Goodman (Don), Dave Vessie (Val) and Robert Vessie (Geraldine). Predeceased by his parents Robert and Lucille Daykin, Andrew and Olive Vessie, brothers-in-law Donald, Vernon, Jim, Russell Vessie and sister-in-law Barb Vessie.

Bob worked at Cooper Standard for 43 years, where he started as a machine operator. He worked his way to maintenance, millwright, lead hand and finished as maintenance supervisor at his retirement. Bob was active in his early years helping with St. Marys Minor Ball and St. Marys Ringette, serving on committees and coaching. The last few years Bob helped the St. Marys Lincolns, sitting on the board of directors. He had a love for his family and loved to go on family camping trips; being an avid camper for years.

Cremation has taken place. A Celebration of Life Open House will be held at the ST. MARYS LEGION, 66 Church St. N. St. Marys, on January 13, 2024 from 2 to 4 pm. Memorial donations may be made to the Ontario Heart & Stroke Foundation. Online condolences at www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca.

OBITUARY

Bruinsma



Diane Bruinsma, age 81, of Lakeside, formerly of Goderich, passed away peacefully with her family by her side at Stratford General Hospital on Saturday, December 23, 2023. Born in Drenthe, Holland, daughter of the late Koob and Jantje (Bergman) Drost.

Diane is survived by her true love and soulmate Cecil Bruinsma of 61 years. Loving mother of Ronald (Karen), Jeffrey (Kathleen), Karen (Anton) Van Maar and Robert. Proud Granny of fourteen grandchildren and Great Granny of twenty-two. Diane will be fondly remembered by her siblings Roely, Henny, Coby, Steff and the Drost and Bruinsma families and nieces and nephews. Besides her parents, Diane was predeceased by her sisters Jane, Stein, Jenny and her brothers Henry and John.

Cecil and his family would like to sincerely thank all the wonderful doctors, nurses and staff that cared for Diane with compassion and dignity, at St. Marys Memorial Hospital, London Regional Cancer Clinic and Stratford General Hospital. Your thoughtfulness will never be forgotten.

Family and friends attended Diane's Visitation on Thursday, December 28, 2023 from 7-9 p.m. at Stratford Christian Reformed Church, 190 Athlone Crescent, Stratford and again on Friday, December 29, 2023 with visitation from 10:00 a.m. until 11:45 a.m. The Funeral Service took place at the church at 12:00 noon. A time of fellowship and refreshments took place immediately following the service. A private family Interment will take place in Clinton Cemetery.

As expressions of sympathy memorial donations may be made to Stratford House of Blessing through the W. G. Young Funeral Home, 430 Huron St, Stratford. www.wgyoungfuneralhome.com

OBITUARY

Neufeld



Una Linda Ann Neufeld (Jones), after a long struggle, passed away peacefully at Stratford General Hospital on Dec. 27, 2023 at the age of 69.

Beloved wife of John. Loving mother of Jacquie Wynands (Chris), Jason (deceased,

2005), Jeremy (deceased, 2015), Jordan, and Jarret (deceased 2004). Grandmother of Tanner Neufeld (Kaity) and great-grandmother of Malakai. Sister of Steve Jones (Teresa) and sister-in-law of Cheryl Chesla (Bob, deceased) Gwen Hansford, Michele Hiedi (Peter), Jim Neufeld (Marg) and Brad Neufeld (Brenda). Also remembered by nieces, nephews and cousins. Predeceased by her parents John and Aleatha Jones.

Many thanks to the doctors and nurses at Stratford General Hospital. The Funeral Service was conducted at the Andrew L. Hodges Funeral Home on Dec. 30, 2023. Interment took place in St. Marys Cemetery. Memorial donations may be made to a charity of choice. Online condolences at www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca

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Solutions on page 27

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OBITUARY

Johnson



Elma (Perrin) Johnson

Elma passed away peacefully on December 14, 2023, twenty years to the day after her beloved husband Don passed in 2003. Elma was born at the Perrin farm near Prospect Hill to parents Haysel and Verna Perrin in 1927. In 1945, after high school in St Mary's, she

ventured to Galt where she met Don, an Airforce veteran just back from WWII. They married in 1947 and lived in east Galt the rest of their lives. In the late 1950's, Elma took a part time job in the Sears store on Main St. in Galt and eventually became store manager in Galt and then Preston until retiring. She was a conscientious, hard-working lady who was talented in many ways but always remained humble and kind.

Elma will be dearly missed by the large loving family that she nurtured and supported so unselfishly through the years. She was a caring matriarch and an excellent example for her family in every way. A person of compassion, patience, sound judgement, good values, generosity and strength. Elma leaves her sons Terry (Carolyn), Glen (Sylvie) and Ralph (Janice) as well as six grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.

The family thanks the hard-working team at Hilltop Manor in Cambridge for their friendship and care for Mom for the past two and a half years.

Elma has been laid to rest with Don and her parents at her family's plot at St James Cemetery near Lucan.

OBITUARY

Dufton



Murray LeRoy Dufton passed away peacefully, with family by his side, at Stratford General Hospital on Friday, December 29, 2023, at the age of 75. In leaving his earthly body, Murray entered joyously into the glorious presence of his Lord and Saviour. He is home.

A dedicated hard worker, Murray served as a property assessor for the Province of Ontario for almost 29 years. He went on to use his talents as a loss prevention specialist in the mutual insurance industry for 15 years. "Born a farmer", Murray's foremost passion was agriculture and running his beef and cash-crop farming operation over the years. Murray cherished his relationship with Jesus, and shared God's love with anyone he crossed paths with, both inside and outside of the church. As a "people person", Murray found immense pleasure in conversation and laughter, especially over a good meal or cup of coffee.

Murray is survived by his loving wife of 48 years, Shirley Margaret (Facey), and their two sons, Kevin (Sarah) Dufton and Ryan (Jenn) Dufton. Much loved grandpa of Kyle, Lizzie, Jordan, Micah, Phoebe, Naomi, and Sophie. As the proud eldest, Murray's siblings are: Linda (deceased 2022) (Fred Clendinning), Bill (Janet), Brian (deceased 2000) (Jani), Bob (Debbie), Alice (Barry Hoskin), and Elaine (Rodger Scheuermann). He also leaves behind many nieces, nephews, extended family members, and friends. Murray was predeceased by his parents, Roy and Jean (Sterritt) Dufton, and his in-laws, Wilbur and Margaret (McGuffin) Facey.

Visitation will take place at Community Bible Church, 24294 Adelaide Street North, Lucan, on Thursday, January 4, from 7-9pm and Friday, January 5, from 10-11am, with the funeral service being held at 11am, officiated by Pastor Andrew Longmire. Following the reception, burial will occur at St. Marys Cemetery, 150 Cain Street, St. Marys. Memorial donations may be made to Community Bible Church, Child Witness Centre of Waterloo Region, or the charity of your choice. Arrangements entrusted to the Andrew L. Hodges Funeral Home (519-284-2820). Online condolences at www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca.

OBITUARY

Sherwood



Judith Diane Sherwood, age 82 of Avonton, passed away peacefully at Spruce Lodge Nursing Home on December 29, 2023.

Born in London, November 22, 1941, the daughter of the late Winnifred (Anderson) and Jack Banks. Beloved wife of Al Sherwood for 45 years. Loving mother of Karleen Glanville (Roy), Doug Rodwell (Cathy), Karl Rodwell (Bonnie), Richard Sherwood (Shari), John Sherwood (Susan), Robert Sherwood (Lalitha), Cynthia Sherwood, Ruth Davis (Dan), Irene Bearss (Dan), and Yvonne Vernon (Jim). Grandmother of 20, Great-Grandmother of 24, Great Great-Grandmother of 5. Survived by sisters Carol Anderson, Bev Grigg (Ted), and Ruth Anne Kammerer (Willi); sisters-in-law Mary Carol Sherwood, Carol Bridges, Cathy Reilly, Susan Quintana and many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by sister Christine Eggett, sister-in-law Sheri (Norma) Sherwood, and great granddaughter Sienna Kok; and brothers-in-law Don Bridges, Ralph Clark, Bob Hoffmann, Bruce Eggett, Ed Reilly, Bernie Quintana and Harry Sherwood.

Diane worked many years as a nurse at St. Joseph's Hospital, then owned and operated Windmill Trailer Park with her husband Al near Fullarton prior to retiring to the house they built in Avonton.

Cremation has taken place. Friends and family are invited to a visitation at the Andrew L. Hodges Funeral Home, 47 Wellington St. S. St. Marys on Friday, January 5 from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. A Memorial Service will be held at St. Marys Presbyterian Church, 147 Widder St. E., St. Marys, on Saturday, January 6, at 1 p.m.

The Service will be livestreamed on the St. Marys Presbyterian Church Facebook page: www.facebook.com/stmaryspresbyterianchurch Reception in the church hall following the Memorial Service. Interment in Avonbank Cemetery at a later date. As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer Society of Perth County or to the Canadian Cancer Society. Online condolences at www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca

OBITUARY

Evans



Entering into the arms of our Lord and Saviour, Jean Elizabeth (Stevenson) Evans, passed away peacefully at Wildwood Care Centre on December 23, 2023 at the age of 91.

She is predeceased by her loving husband Jim Evans and their daughter Elizabeth

Anne. Mom will always be cherished by her children, Jane and George Foley, Susan and Ian McKechnie, and Faye and Gord Eybergen. Grandma will be dearly missed by Brent and Sharon Foley, Bryan and Christy Foley, Karen McKechnie, Julie and Scott Godkin, Paula and Liam Whitelaw, Amanda and Jason Frayne, and Cory Eybergen. Great Grandma truly treasured Peyton, Olivia, Cameron, Blair, Ryan, Nathan, Lydia, Will, Gavin, and Ella. Jean is survived by her sister Marguerite Garrett. She is predeceased by her parents, Lisle and Margaret Stevenson and her twin brother Mack.

Mom made a devoted family of friends during her past couple of years living in Wildwood Care Centre, while receiving exemplary care there. A heartfelt thank you to all of the dedicated and nurturing staff! A private, family graveside service will be held in St. Marys Cemetery at a later date. Mom was always very generous and thoughtful of the need of others, so if you wish to make a memorial donation, please consider Heart and Stroke or your favourite charity. Online condolences at www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca.

THANK YOU

Evans

The family of the late Jean Evans wishes to thank the caring staff and Mom's wonderful friends in Wildwood Care Centre, the assistance from Andrew L. Hodges Funeral Home, the exemplary service from both Lyric Flowers and The Flower Shop, and the compassion shown by the Rev. Marc Fraser.

Herbert

Thinking of our friend Carol Herbert. She has been down and out for a bit due to an ankle break. Her friends want her to know we are thinking of her. She always volunteers and helps others and we want her to feel the love being returned to her. Wishing you a speedy recovery. We miss you and thank you!

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QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1) 1907
- 2) Scotland
- 3) Janus
- 4) Enero
- 5) Garnet
- 6) Julius Caesar
- 7) January River
- 8) Barack Obama
- 9) 108 times
- 10) January 6, 2021

SUDOKU ANSWERS

3	2	1	6	8	9	7	4	5
7	4	8	5	1	2	3	6	9
6	9	5	7	4	3	2	1	8
9	8	7	4	3	6	5	2	1
4	5	3	1	2	8	6	9	7
1	6	2	9	7	5	4	8	3
5	3	9	2	6	1	8	7	4
8	7	6	3	9	4	1	5	2
2	1	4	8	5	7	9	3	6

COLUMN —

**Straight from
the Shelves**

By Laura McAsh, St. Marys Public Library

Attention readers 12 and under: the latest edition of Read. Track. Win! is live! Read for at least 1 hour each week to earn tickets to put towards exciting monthly prizes. Spread your tickets out over multiple prizes or put all your eggs in one basket to increase your chances of winning a particular prize. Log as much reading as you can between January and June to be in the running for our grand prizes, which will be awarded to the top three readers at the end of the challenge. Sign up today at stmaryspubliclibrary.beanstack.org.

This Week's Recommendation

Bonjour! You can now find books in French, Ukrainian, and Cree in our children's section! Our language books have a pink "L" sticker on their spines and are located above the board games. Explore exciting titles such as "Un coquin chez les Vavaloooyas" ("A Rascal Among the Vavaloooyas"), "Ripka" ("The Turnip"), and "Okawisimaw Omekiwin Askihkanihk Ohci" ("Auntie's Rez Surprise"). Check them out today!

Up This Week

- Friday, Jan. 5th: Open 10:30am-5:00pm
- Saturday, Jan. 6th: Open 10:00am-4:00pm
- Monday, Jan. 8th: Open 10:30am-8:00pm
- Tuesday, Jan. 9th: Open 10:30am-8:00pm
- Wednesday, Jan. 10th: EarlyON Play & Read (9:30am-10:30am), Mahjong Intro (1:00pm-2:00pm, 6:00pm-6:30pm), Mahjong! (2:00pm-4:00pm, 6:30pm-8:00pm), Books & Brews* (7:00pm)
- Thursday, Jan. 11th: Scrabble (6:00pm-8:00pm), FOL Social (6:30pm)

*Registration required

^Held at Broken Rail Brewery (480 Glass St., St. Marys)



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off right**
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**LOOKING
BACK**



BY AMY CUBBERLEY

Ainslie's angels

25 years ago (1999)

John Field of St. Marys has been hired by the Perth County Pork Producers as a Stress Management Counsellor for farmers experiencing difficulties due to the crisis in the hog industry.

Mary Ainslie, 97, a resident of Kingsway Lodge, has been collecting angels for more than 20 years. Some of the 100+ angels in her collection have been set up in the display case at the entrance of the Lodge for residents and guests to enjoy.

Jenine French spent her Christmas in Brazil this year as a Rotary exchange student, sharing her Canadian traditions with her host family.

50 years ago (1974)

Stewart Grant, born January 4, is this year's New Year's baby at St. Marys Memorial Hospital.

The girls from North Ward School managed to end a five-year grip on the invitational volleyball championship by South Perth Centennial. The team consisted of Nancy Wood, Christi Blackman, Kathy Werden, Sue Felkar, Linda Richardson, Jill Richardson, Laurie Graham, Jane Harrison, Susan Hiscock, Ginny Vanstone, Dawn Bennett and Jane Newton.

While road and sidewalk clearance downtown is in general an efficient job, we have heard a few complaints from older citizens regarding ice and slushy areas adjacent to the curbs at the various intersection corners.

One of the more interesting aspects of 1973 has been the ever-increasing number of enquiries regarding the securing of living accommodations in St. Marys by persons residing in other communities. The recent "face-lift" of the Stone Town is evidently paying dividends.

75 years ago (1949)

The weekend of guests and good eating laid the cupboard bare in more households. Tuesday was a very busy day in local food stores.

Twenty-three members of the St. Marys Rod and Gun Club enjoyed the most successful rabbit drive they have had yet on Boxing Day. Sixty-nine rabbits were bagged and many more got away. The hunters found the bunnies plentiful in the Motherwell area.

C.A. Ruthig & Sons have purchased a purebred Jersey herd sire, "Brampton Sir Beacon" from B.H. Bull & Sons of Brampton. He was delivered on Monday.

100 years ago (1924)

The entry for the Ladies' Hockey team of St. Marys was forwarded to the Executive of the Ontario Ladies Hockey Association this week. The team was organized rather late last winter and therefore did not engage in as many games with outside teams as would have otherwise been the case. The girls are prepared to put up a hard fight for the championship this season if there ever is any available ice.

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