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# Tilbury Times **REPORTER**

VOL. 01 | September 28, 2022

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COVERING TILBURY, ESSEX, BELLE RIVER, COMBER, EMERYVILLE, PUCE, RUSCOM, ST. JOACHIM, STONEY POINT, COTTAM, WOODSLEE AND LAKESHORE

## Author from Tilbury 'amazed' by reviews of his latest book

Staff Report

A Tilbury native who is now a published author is getting encouraging reviews for his latest book – a book that was inspired by a true story involving members of his family.

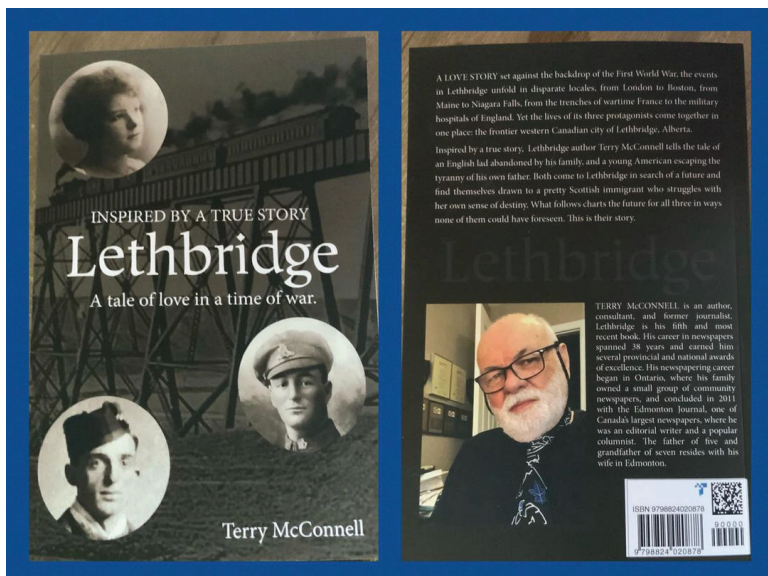
It's titled *Lethbridge: A Tale of Love in a Time of War*, and the author is Terry McConnell, who grew up in Tilbury, and returned to his hometown in the 1970s to be editor at his father's newspaper, the *Tilbury Times*. He was later the publisher of the *Times* and the former *North Essex News* in Belle River, and was the founding publisher in the '90s of *Shoreline Week* in Tecumseh.

*Lethbridge* pre-dates all that, however. It's a love story set against the back-drop of the First World War, unfolding in disparate locales, from London to Bos-ton, from Maine to Niagara Falls, from the trenches of wartime France to the military hospitals of England. Even Comber, Ontario, puts in an appearance. Yet the lives of the book's three protagonists come together in one place: the frontier western city of Lethbridge, Alberta.

"It's the story of two young men who would become my grandfathers," says McConnell. "One was from the east end of London and the other from Maine. Both come to Lethbridge in search of a future and find themselves drawn to a pretty Scottish immigrant – the woman who would later be my grandmother – and what follows charts the future for all three in ways none of them could have fore-seen."

McConnell says he is gratified to see that reviews of the book so far have been nothing short of "amazing."

"Lethbridge will be a book I will be reading it to my grandchildren. So well written," reads one. "I felt transported back to a place I never knew."

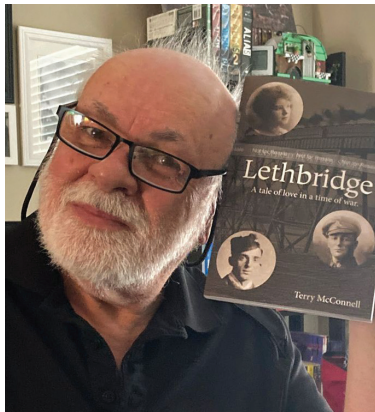


"I loved it. I sat down to read it and I didn't stop until I had finished," reads another. "I couldn't let it go. I caught myself with tears in my eyes many times."

"I was drawn in by the sympathetic and endearing natures of both male pro-tagonists. The engaging, often funny, and at times intense dialogue brings this story to vibrant life. Rich detail enhances every aspect of its telling," reads a third. "Ultimately, the author shows us all, through generational contrast and conscious decision-making on the parts of the protagonists that love – love of one's family and one's fellow human beings – is everything."

*Lethbridge* is the fifth book for McConnell, who was an editorial writer and popular columnist for the *Edmonton Journal* after leaving *Tilbury*. His first book was *I'd Trade Him Again*, about another former *Tilbury* resident, Peter Pockling-ton, the one-time owner of *Westown Ford* in *Tilbury* and later the owner of the *NHL's Edmonton Oilers*.

McConnell, who still has family in the *Tilbury* area, says *Lethbridge*



is con-sidered historical fiction, but the truth behind the story is ever-present. "These are real people, and what happens to them is what happened," he says. "The lives they led make for a great story."

*Lethbridge: A Tale of Love in a Time of War* is available in paperback and e-book on Amazon.ca and Google Play (just type "Terry McConnell books" in the search field). It's also available at the online stores of Analog Books in Lethbridge (analogbooks.net) and Audreys Books in Edmonton (audreys.ca).

## God bless the queen, God save the king



Chatham-Kent Mayor Darrin Canniff, Chatham-Kent – Leamington MPP Trevor Jones and MP Dave Epp share wreath laying duties under the watchful eye of Legion Branch 642 president Len Maynard.

By Pam Wright  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The passing of Queen Elizabeth II was commemorated Monday with a special parade and wreath laying ceremony at the Chatham Cenotaph.

The march began at Royal

Canadian Legion Branch 642, and came down King Street to the cenotaph.

A five-plane flyover tribute, a three-gun salute by the Chatham-Kent Police Service Honour Guard, prayers and the singing of 'God Save the King' in trib-ute to new monarch King Charles III also took place.

## Taxed cut

By Pam Wright  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Couple charged for grass cutting on property they maintain

Chatham resident Paul Bowman is a man who prides himself on paying his bills.

But he recently received one from the municipality for \$369.06 that he has no intention of paying.

Sent out by the tax department July 27, the bill is for grass cutting on a vacant lot off Detroit Drive that Bowman and his wife, Lynn, own, along with six other residents.

He said attempts to resolve the issue have gone unanswered and he's frustrated.

"I'm confused," Bowman told The Voice last week. "The municipality is dragging their heels on this."

The Union Gas retiree, who has lived on the street since 2007, has been sharing the grass-cutting duties on the 70-foot-by-200-foot lot with neighbour Ross Moore for the past 15 years.

The lot is part of a vacant area located in the Mud Creek floodplain.

Bowman said he's been told there are at least four other lots located in the empty green space that he believes are owned by the adjacent Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

The lot, that's jointly owned by the Detroit Drive residents, used to house a communal septic system that serviced the homes, but Bowman said the system was no longer used after residents hooked up to sanitary sewers in 2012.

Ryan Brown, director of CK Public Works – the department that oversees long grass bylaw enforcement – said Friday he wasn't aware of the issue on Detroit Drive.

Brown explained that under the Municipal Freedom of Information Protection and Privacy Act he's not allowed to know the identities of property owners as they relate to bylaw issues.

But he said his department is willing to look at the Detroit Drive case.

"If the owner contacts me, I'll review if the process was followed," Brown said, adding that if there's a discrepancy the owner can appeal the decision.

"If a mistake is made, we'll try to correct it and if not, it can go to the appeal process," he said.

**TAX CUT, PAGE 06**

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# Canada's most photographed home could soon come crashing down



The Guyitt House, located on Talbot Trail, is said to be Canada's most photographed house. All you have to do is type the words Guyitt House on Google, and there are many, many photos and articles that appear. - Ridgetown Independent News Photo

**By Bird Bouchard**  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Canada's most photographed house could soon be demolished.

Constructed in 1842, The Guyitt house has been vacated since 1985 and is located along the Talbot Trail in Palmyra, Ontario. The house, which many call haunted, is known to be a tourist attraction.

Roy and Ethel Guyitt purchased the property in 1908, which is now owned by their grandson Peter Anderson. The 184-year-old home used to have a brick exterior. However, the bricks began to fall off through the years and were eventually removed for safety reasons.

Anderson said the house is beyond repair, and he is not able to maintain the property financially. However, he keeps the grass cut and enjoys how other people can appreciate the property. He said visitors are more than welcome to come and take photos, but they should not enter the building, which has now begun to collapse on the right portion.

Despite not having to do anything with the house for more than 40 years and never receiving a complaint, Anderson recently received a registered letter from the Municipality of Chatham-Kent informing him he had 14 days to tear it down – or they would at his cost.

"I have 14 days to file an appeal from the day that letter was dated, the 15th day of September," he said. "Fourteen days isn't long at all."

According to Anderson, the letter he received informed him the house was in violation of bylaw 151-2015 and read as follows: "As in reference to the vacant two storey building at the above Miller property which has been left vacant in excess of six months to become dilapidated and partially collapsed and danger of further collapse, and insufficiently secured to present unauthorized entry."

The letter was signed by Travis Maxwell, building bylaw enforcer for

the Municipality of Chatham-Kent.

The bylaw number referenced in the letter states, "Whereas Section 15.1(3) of the Building Code Act, 1992, S.O. 1992, c.23, as amended, provides the Municipality of Chatham-Kent the authority to pass a bylaw prescribing standards for the maintenance and occupancy of property within the municipality and requires that any property not in conformity can be maintained to conform or be cleared and left in a levelled condition."

Anderson said the registered letter from the municipality states that due to a complaint, he is left with two options. Repair the house, or demolish it.

"I left it there for one reason so that people can appreciate the historical value of Talbot Trail," he said. "I didn't leave it there to make anybody upset or crazy."

The house owner said he is disappointed with the quick timeline given to him. He questions where the complaint came from as he had not received any in more than 40 years.

Anderson said the letter comes off as threatening. He said if the final say is the building must be demolished, they threaten even more by saying they will tear it down at his expense and the bill will be added to his tax.

"The municipality is going to call their friend, whoever that is, have them come in and start sending me a \$30,000 to \$40,000 bill for something that could be done by a friend or neighbour with an excavator," he said. "The whole process is very threatening. Give me a chance, but don't send me a letter telling me I have 14 days to appeal."

The frustrated homeowner said he is disappointed and unsure where the complaint came from, given that the house has been vacated since 1985.

"I would have thought 30 days would have been better, but three months would have been a whole lot better."

At the moment, Anderson said he is trying to buy himself time.

According to Anderson, Councillor John Wright had supposedly informed him he would create a motion to put the whole thing on hold until it's resolved.

Regardless of whether or not the motion passes, the frustrated homeowner said he has every intention to appeal the original letter before Sept. 29.

"They're going to say the bottom line is the law is the law," he said. "Half the population is going to say that thing should have been torn down a long time ago."

But for Anderson, that's exactly what brings historical value to the house. He believes the house should have a designation and be left untouched.

"The house is way beyond repair. That's what adds to its historical value," said Anderson. "There are people out there who would like to get the wood-work in the boards, the door frames, trim and everything inside that house. It stood the test of time this far. How much longer will it last?"

Anderson said in a perfect world, the house would be left untouched until the day it hits the ground. However, if the house must come down, he said he wants to do it on his terms. He admitted his biggest concern is to have no say in how things are done and still be left with a hefty bill.

"This is called fight city hall...I don't want to incur any expense to do it. I do not want the building destroyed at my expense by the municipality," said Anderson.

The Ridgetown Independent has reached out to Maxwell and officials from the municipality for comment but has not received a response back at press time.

On another note, it was also a strange coincidence that a group of old car enthusiasts, the Snapper's Club, passed thru Ridgetown last week on their way to an abandoned house on Highway 3 to take photographs – the Guyitt House.

## Taxed cut

TAX CUT, FROM PAGE 01

The grass trouble started earlier this year when the municipal grass cutting got behind because of contractor issues. The municipality was forced to put out requests for proposals and bring on new contractors.

In the meantime, the spring grass grew like wildfire, leading to unsightly areas that prompted a slew of complaints to the municipality. Many Chatham-Kent residents were especially angry that grass was out of control in local cemeteries.

According to Bowman, the grass in the vacant lots adjacent to the Detroit Drive homeowner's lot was about two-and-a-half feet high.

But the lot he helps cut was kept trimmed throughout.

That's why he can't understand why he's getting a bill.

"We have someone who saw that the municipality's contractor did not do anything to our lot," Bowman added. "They didn't even go on it (the lot)."

Bowman said he and his neighbours hope the issue can be settled.

"We own the property and we take care of it ourselves," Bowman added. "We shouldn't be getting a bill."

South Kent Coun. Anthony



Paul Bowman stands on the lot he co-owns with six other Detroit Drive residents in Chatham. Bowman recently received a bill from the municipality for grass cutting it says its contractor carried out. However, Bowman, and another neighbour have kept their portion tidy, using their own gas and riding lawnmowers this year, just as they have since 2007. - Pam Wright, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Ceccacci said he had second-hand information about the Detroit Drive grass cutting and he's willing to help if the affected property owner reaches out to him. - The Chatham Voice

## Annual Randy Atkinson Memorial Golf Tournament raises \$18,000 to assist cancer patients



The 16th annual Randy Atkinson Memorial Golf Tournament took place in July to raise funds to help people in the local community with financial aid during their journey with cancer.

This year's tournament raised over \$18,000 and was held at the Tilbury Golf Club.

"We help people with financial help that are fighting cancer. We help with travel and other related expenses related to cancer," said Ken Rivard, an administrator of funds for the Randy Atkinson Memorial Fund.

Rivard shares that the organization has a targeted area of Stoney Point, Comber, Tilbury, Merlin and Wheatley. They also help financially support the Windsor Cancer Patient Assistance Program and Chatham Kent Hospice.

"We have been doing this for 17 years. Our Fund has raised over \$235,000 mostly from an annual golf tournament and memorial

donations," he said.

"We have helped 140 families in our target area along with donating \$38,000 to Windsor Cancer Patient Assistance, \$31,000 to Chatham Kent Hospice and another \$22,000 to cancer related services."

The tournament started 17 years ago "After Atkinson had a short fight with cancer and our town came together to help his family. He had moved jobs and benefits had not started so they needed help. He passed the first week of January 2006. The prior summer he chaired a golf tournament to help raise money for Community Living and Tilbury Help Centre," added Rivard.

Rivard was co-chair and the tournament raised over \$7,000. This tournament was organized under the Knights of Columbus umbrella.

"After his passing I asked the Knights if we could continue the tournament in his memory to help other people fighting cancer with financial help as we did for Randy. They gave their blessing and after contacting his wife the fund was started," said Rivard. "The tournament this year raised over \$18,000 for our fund. Craig Bonneau and his committee did another bang-up job. I believe he had 164 golfers this year."

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# Takwihleew Orange Shirt Pins honour National Truth and Reconciliation Day

By: Bird Bouchard  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A local woman has partnered with Come Together CK to honour National Truth and Reconciliation Day.

Also known as Orange Shirt Day, Sept. 30 is National Truth and Reconciliation Day. It is a day to honour the children who survived Indian Residential Schools and remember those who did not. While many Canadians across the country wear an orange shirt, many will now have pins to wear as well.

Lana Parenteau of Moraviantown, Delaware First Nation is Chatham-Kent's Indigenous Peer Navigator. Along with the help of her granddaughter, she first started making pins a few years ago. She said she felt compelled to make even more pins last year when the 215 children were recovered at Kamloops Residential School.

Parenteau and her granddaughter started off by making 30 pins and shared them evenly at Family Services and United Way. Eventually, Brent Wilken, Executive Director with Come Together CK, approached her about sharing the pins.

"Our history, our present moment and these pins belong to everyone," said Wilken.

Parenteau admitted how difficult it was to let go of the pins because of how personal the project was to her.

"I let it go. And now there are over



80,000 pins out. There are more than 5,000 pin makers. It's all about recognizing that these pins can be worn every day. We don't have to wear an orange shirt. We can wear these pins. We can recognize our history together. It's our shared history. It's not just one or the other. And then together, we can learn."

Parenteau said she is committed to Truth and Reconciliation work because of her own personal experience and family's experiences in Residential Schools.

"It's our dark history," she said. "I was taken from my home and family and adopted into a non-Indigenous family and not knowing where I was from for quite a while."

She added she feels people need to know this part of Canadian history that was never talked about.

"I encourage everyone to understand that I am not the only person. There's a lot of indigenous people you

can go to to learn from," she said.

According to Parenteau, the Takwihleew Orange Shirt Pins means Come Together in Lenape (Moraviantown's language), but the pin can also have many more meanings.

"Together, we learn. We all have something to learn, so whatever the pin means to you at this moment is right," she said.

While Parenteau said she hopes the pins can help encourage everyone to learn the history, she added it is vital everyone works together to get the truth and come to a reconciliation.

The pin creator said the pins are free and easy to get. This year, Come Together CK has partnered with Chatham-Kent Public Library. All 11 locations have pin-making kits available for pick up.

"The libraries across Chatham-Kent have kits. You can put together

yourself, or you can do it with your family, talk about it and learn," said Parenteau.

Pins and pin kits are also available by visiting the Community Shop at the Downtown Chatham Centre, by emailing [in-fo@cometogetherck.ca](mailto:in-fo@cometogetherck.ca) or visiting [@ComeTogetherCK](https://www.facebook.com/ComeTogetherCK) on Facebook.

Also supporting Parenteau's Truth and Reconciliation efforts in Chatham-Kent is local business Planet Print. Orange shirts are available for purchase at Planet Print, located at 46B Richmond Street or the Community Shop, for \$25, with proceeds going to Lana's efforts.

"It really touches my heart when I see all these pins being worn," said Parenteau. "It's not just one day a year. It's ongoing. It's nobody's fault. It's just thinking about forgiveness and doing it together. And that's how we heal for truth and reconciliation."

- *The Ridgeway Independent News*

## Firm shutting six Southwestern Ontario grain elevators, irking farmers

By Calvi Leon  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A Montreal-based company is closing six grain elevators in Southwestern Ontario, a move that affects area farmers and raises concerns about growing concentration in the market, industry leaders say.

Sollio Agriculture says it made the "difficult, but necessary decision" to wind down its Ontario Grain operations, closing its elevators in Chatham-Kent and Lambton, Essex, Elgin, Oxford and Wellington counties.

"The decision essentially came about because we were unable to generate return or profit on those business activities," Casper Kaastra, chief executive of Sollio, said Thursday.

The company's financial challenges were amplified by "increased volatility in commodity prices" during the last few years, in part caused by the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a major grain producer, he said.

"Not having that tie to deeper in the value chain put us in a position where we're unable to compete or generate a profit any longer," said Kaastra, who noted Sollio doesn't have Ontario terminals to export grain directly.

The agri-business arm of Sollio Cooperative Group, Sollio became the biggest shareholder in the Ontario Grain partnership in 2018. The company plans to continue serving clients during this year's harvest season at reduced capacity and will "initiate a sale process of its assets with prospective buyers," it said in a statement.

The elevators closing are in Florence in Lambton County west of Bothwell, Staples in Essex County north of Leamington, Wallaceburg in Chatham-Kent, Talbotville in Elgin County north of St. Thomas, Palmerston in Wellington County north of Listowel and Princeton in Oxford County east of Woodstock.

Ontario Grain's sudden departure raises concerns about having one less player in an already-concentrated business, some industry observers say.

"It's unfortunate that Sollio is moving out. We don't know who's coming in so that's a big concern at the moment," said Gus Ternoey, the Chatham-Kent director of Grain Farmers of Ontario, an umbrella group for producers.

While he's hopeful it will be business-as-usual for farmers who have contracts with Sollio, closing all of the company's Ontario operations raises questions about the fallout, Ternoey said.

"Certainly, moving forward, there's a lot of concern about what this is really going to mean," he said. "One less player. Does that mean it will be difficult to deliver grain? We don't know at the moment."

Phillip Shaw, a farmer and agricultural economist, sees the move as a "major fracture for farmers" in Southwestern Ontario.

# Duben's on the job in C-K

By Pam Wright  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Learning the ropes is priority one for Chatham-Kent's new Chief Administrative Officer.

In a meet-the-media event only three hours into his new job, Michael Duben told reporters that getting to know staff and exploring the municipality's large geographic area are at the top of his to-do list.

Duben noted Chatham-Kent is a "big organization" and that while he has a lot of knowledge about municipal government, Chatham-Kent has its own unique opportunities and challenges.

Meeting people and getting to know senior staff is crucial, Duben said.

"I don't believe you can be good leader if you don't know what your people are saying," Duben explained, adding he plans to get a first-hand look at as many of Chatham-Kent's work stations as possible.

"I always try to surround myself with people that are smarter than me," Duben said with a smile, noting he is not qualified to do the wide variety of jobs within the organization.

"To be able to lead those individuals is really kind of rewarding," Duben said, because "every day you learn something" from the employees.

"There are some really

hardworking people here who really know what they are doing."

Duben's knowledge of municipal government is deep and he brings both public and private sector experience to the job. He most recently served as the CAO of Oxford County for 21 months and as District of Muskoka CAO for seven years prior.

He is a former general manager in the City of Windsor, and is a lawyer with 10 years' experience as a senior corporate law partner with Miller Canfield LLP in Windsor.

One of the reasons Duben said he was attracted to the job here is because Chatham-Kent is a single-tier municipality.

"It's very clear to the public who is responsible for what," he said.

Duben also did his homework on Chatham-Kent.

"My understanding is we've got a good strong council - a very innovative organization, that is placing emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion."

When questioned about his vision and goals, Duben pointed out the 18-member council makes the decisions and his job is to carry out those decisions.

The possibility of a new civic centre complex in the Downtown Chatham Centre is one of the projects Duben will be working on, and the Wheatley disaster will continue to be a priority.



Chatham-Kent's new CAO, Michael Duben, started work for the municipality on Friday. - Pam Wright, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Shaping the municipality into being "an employer of choice" is another goal Duben would like to work towards, noting it's an employer's market and attracting and retaining good staff is a challenge all organizations are facing.

Mayor Darrin Canniff said the municipality is "extremely lucky" to have Duben, adding the veteran municipal leader is well respected in the municipal sector.

"He's certainly the person to lead us to a whole new level," Canniff

said, adding he supports Duben's vision to make the municipality "an employer of choice."

"If we have great staff, we can have great service."

Duben is replacing former CAO Don Shropshire who retired from the position late last year. However, Shropshire has continued to assist with the Wheatley disaster.

Duben has purchased a home in Chatham and will be moving here later this fall.

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I'm Lauren Anderson, Wife, Mother, Business Owner, Registered Nurse, and Community Advocate.

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Being a community advocate for years has given me a pride that has fuelled a new passion to challenge my abilities as your Ward 1 Chatham Kent Councillor.

Thank you for your support and know that I appreciate this opportunity to advocate for you and our community.

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