



THE CHATTER BOX

NEWS FROM HERE & THERE



A CHRISTMAS TALE

From Our VP,
Tim Wall



If you read the last newsletter, you would know that the last few months have been a bit stressful. This fall has been busy as well, and to top it off, last week, we struck a deer and probably totalled our car -so I haven't been feeling very full of Christmas cheer.

So the other night..not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. I tried to get in the Christmas spirit and watch a classic Christmas movie "Violent Night". During the movie, I ate a fruit cake our dear friend and fellow board member Paul made for us. I ended up in a fruit cake and rum induced haze and partial coma on our couch.

When suddenly to my ears, do I hear but a rapping at my window. I opened the window and to my surprise who do I see, but Jimmy Stewart! He started rattling on about a bunch of stuff, blah blah blah, "It's a Wonderful life", blah blah blah. I told him he was simply a figment of my creative imagination, a bit of undigested fruit cake.

So he says to me, "At midnight you'll be visited by the twelve ghosts of Christmas". Say What?! So I pass out, again... *how much rum did you put into your fruit cakes Paul?*

At midnight I'm suddenly awoken by the chiming of my grandfather clock- I actually don't have one, I hate clocks that chime, but I need one for this story to be believable-

There, crowded into the room, are the twelve ghosts of Christmas! There was the Sugar Plum Fairy, who looked strangely like Liberace decked out in sequins and jewels. (I got his signature, big fan!)

There was Disney's Ebenezer McScrooge, one of the camels from the Christmas story -who just spit all over the place, and I think suffered from IBS. There was Dolly Parton-what she was doing there, who knows but she was dressed as Mrs Claus. There was a second Sugar Plum fairy who looked a lot like my cousin Albert. (Hmmm, that answers a lot of questions). Arnold Schwarzenegger was there as Tiny Tim, sooo cute and Good King Wenceslas, who was three sheets to the wind. He probably got into Paul's fruit cake, as he kept asking Dolly to pull his finger.

How much rum did you use, Paul?





Bing Crosby made an appearance- personally I would rather have had Danny Kaye or Rosemary Clooney.

Frosty the Snow man was there and he left a big puddle on my antique Persian carpet, oh please let it be water!

Clarence the prized turkey from a Christmas Carol was there along with Snoopy who apparently isn't house trained. And finally, Charlton Heston, dressed as Moses-sorry Chuck, wrong story and season-he's such a ham.

They gathered around my bed and Heston kept trying to push his way to the front, and ended up hitting Dolly in the mouth with his staff. That's when the fight broke out, turkey feathers flying all over the place along with Camel spit. Liberace keeps screaming "not in the face, not in the face". It was a zoo!

Finally, Schwarzenegger yells out "God bless us everyone " and things calm down except for Heston pouting in the corner and mumbling something about "but I'm a star!"

After a lot of talking they resorted to threats.

If I didn't get on board and drink from the cup of human kindness, they would tie me in a chair and force me to listen to Yoko Ono sing "I want a Hippopotamus for Christmas" over and over.



I drank from the cup and everything changed.

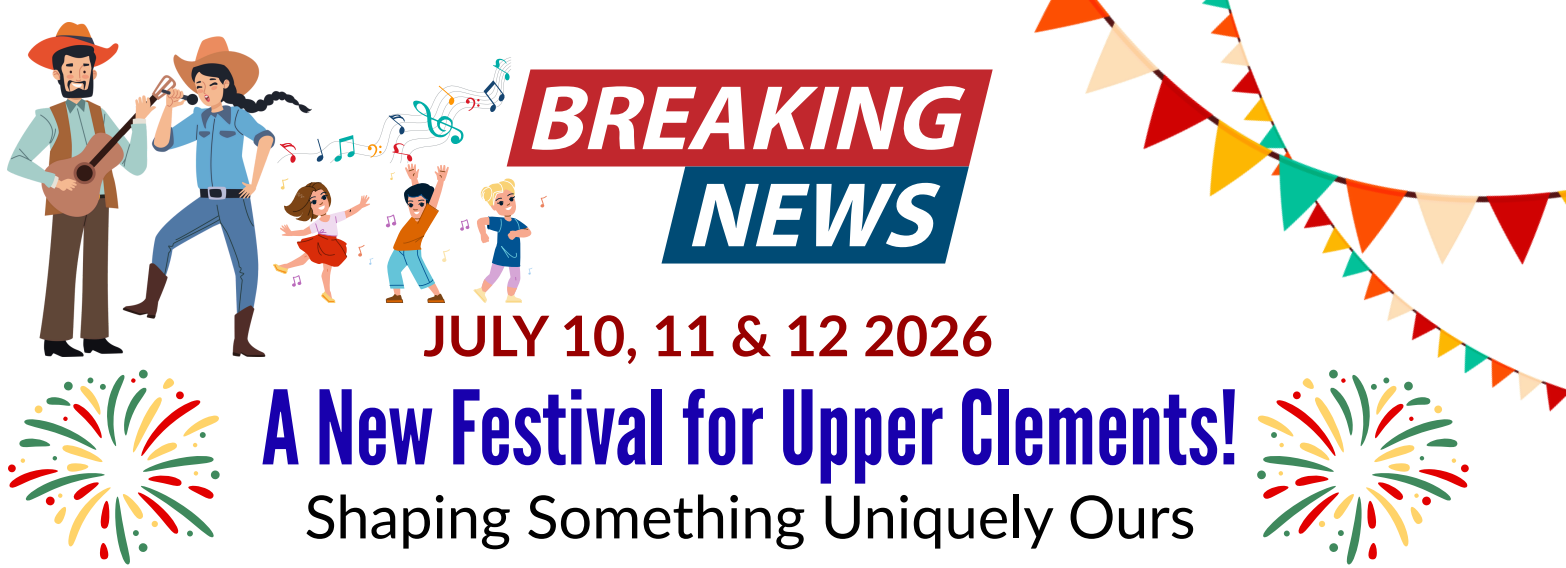
Yesterday I did my housework dressed as an Elf!

I love Christmas!



Tim Wall, VP

The Upper Clements Community Association Board of Directors would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and happy holiday season. We pray that this coming year will be blessed by peace and a world filled with compassion, justice and good will. May everyone drink the milk of human kindness and be grateful for what we have, and generous to those who are in want and in need of our support.



Back in November 2024, the hall hosted a community conversation about how we might strengthen our sense of togetherness here in Upper Clements — and how we might also draw visitors through the area to support local businesses and creatives. One idea from that discussion shone brighter than the rest: *our own three-day community festival*.

Many small rural communities hold annual celebrations tied to a signature crop or long-standing tradition. While Upper Clements doesn't have a single defining harvest or mascot, we do have something just as meaningful: a community full of artists, makers, musicians, builders, hobbyists, storytellers, and creative spirits of every kind. Rural life is woven with creativity here, whether it's expressed in a workshop, a kitchen, a garden, or a studio.

That's why the early vision for this festival centres around the arts — not only fine arts, but the everyday creative work that reflects our identity as a community. From local artisans and food producers to performers, growers, craftspeople, and heritage keepers, there is so much talent and character within our boundaries.

We're still in the very early planning stages. We don't yet know what the festival will be called, what shape it will eventually take, or how many activities will fill its three days — and that's the exciting part. We want the community to be part of imagining it.

Early in the new year, we'll be hosting a public planning meeting, open to anyone who wants to help shape this new tradition. Whether you're interested in participating, volunteering, selling, performing, or simply sharing ideas, you're warmly invited to join the fun. This festival belongs to the whole community, and we can't wait to build it together.

Stay tuned for the date of the meeting — and start thinking about what a uniquely "Upper Clements" celebration might look like. Follow us on Facebook for updates!



A Season of Celebration for the Steenken Family

A Homecoming to Celebrate

This Christmas brought a special kind of joy to our community with the return of Cornelis Steenken from his peacekeeping deployment in Ethiopia. Earlier this year, we shared how he is helping to lead a monumental effort to demilitarize 370,000+ combatants—work so significant, it earned him a nomination for the Order of Nova Scotia. It's just one chapter in a lifetime of stepping into difficult places to make life safer for others.

While Cornelis (Kees to us) serves abroad for months at a time, his family carries the weight here at home. Our heartfelt thanks go to his wife, Paula, and to his children and grandchildren for their steady support and sacrifice.

Having Kees home for the holidays feels like a gift to all of us. We're grateful he can enjoy well-earned time with his family—and grateful to have him back in our midst.

Cornelis Steenkin on deployment in the field, carrying out his peacekeeping work in Ethiopia.

Right beneath the joy of Kees' homecoming sits another reason to celebrate: the fifth anniversary of **Acadian Teas**, owned and lovingly built by his wife, and our board member, Paula. She launched the business as both comfort and creative outlet.

What began as a small passion project has grown into a thriving local brand—one we were proud to honour at our Winter Market here at the Hall. Today, you'll find Paula's blends on shelves across Nova Scotia, each reflecting her Acadian roots and her commitment to sourcing locally.





Introducing the Upper Clements' CHRISTMAS GLOW-OFF!

A friendly community decorating competition to make our little community shine bright this season.

✨ Two Ways to Participate

1. Best Outdoor Lights & Display

Show us your most festive porch, lawn, house, or yard. Classic, whimsical, over-the-top — all styles are welcome!



2. Best Christmas Tree

Share a photo of your tree in all its holiday glory. Traditional, themed, handmade ornaments, or full glitter bomb — we love it all.



📷 How to Enter

Just send us:

- Your name
- Address
- Category (Outdoor Lights, Christmas Tree, or both)
- Tree photo (if entering the indoor category)

👥 How Judging Works

A small volunteer panel from our Hall Board will judge entries.

- Judges' votes will remain anonymous
- Winners will be announced collectively
- It's all in the spirit of fun, community, and Christmas cheer

You can enter by messaging the hall Facebook page or emailing UpperClementsAssoc@gmail.com.



📅 Important Dates

- Registration Deadline: **December 15**
- Judging Weekend: **December 20**
- Winners Announced: **December 22**
Winners receive a curated gift basket!

☀️ Why We're Doing This

- Because Christmas lights make people smile.
- Because our community deserves a bit of sparkle.
- And because a little friendly competition never hurt anyone.

Let's brighten up Upper Clements together — one house (and one beautiful tree) at a time!

Sponsored by Upper Clements Community Hall & Friends



Open to residents of Upper Clements and surrounding communities (Allains Creek, Clementsport, and nearby rural roads)

A CHRISTMAS MIRACLE

The summer before last, we were told we might not have much more time with Loki. So when he made it to Christmas, it already felt like a small miracle. 16 months later, he's still trotting along, charming the town—and those of you who frequent Annapolis Brewing know just how loved this little character is! Our neighbourhood is better for having him in it. Here's to another Christmas with our beloved Loki!

And our hearts are with everyone who said goodbye to a furry or fluffy companion this year.



An Upper Clements Bromance



If you've just read the story of Kees Steenkin's return home for Christmas, consider this the next chapter in the Upper Clements saga—one about friendship, laughter, and a well-known neighbourhood bromance. When Paul and Daniela Beasant (and Molly) moved here almost five years ago, they quickly became friends with Paula and Kees Steenken, who live quite literally down the road.

It didn't take long before Paul and Kees were jokingly dubbed "brothers from another mother," a title they've more than earned. Their matching, and frankly dangerous, sense of humour has landed them in hot water with the wives more than once—but it's also sealed a friendship that runs deep.



2025: They attended a trade mission together in Bangkok

We also want to take a moment to congratulate Paul Beasant. Two years ago, his company Nova Graphene, earned "Most Innovative Company of the Year," and he's been nominated again for the same category at the Halifax Business Awards! Despite travelling the world in 2025 representing Canada on trade missions, he still made the time to talk to local AWEC students about advanced materials. Loki helped.

We're cheering him on for 2026—but he's already a champ in our books!

In a small town, neighbours become family long before you realize it.

This year, they've even managed to meet up abroad more than once while Paul was travelling on Team Canada trade missions—proof that the bond survives both distance and time zones. And as Kees serves with extraordinary devotion, he'd be the first to insist that friendship is a sustaining blessing—especially the friends who stand by you, cheer you on, and laugh until their sides hurt.





VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Running and maintaining a community hall takes a whole community. While the Board of Directors spends countless hours overseeing the hall's operations and keeping it running, it also needs the help and support of others in our community.

This is not our hall – it's everyone's hall; it's your hall.

If you believe in what we are doing and trying to do, please help us. If you can donate even an hour or two of your time from time to time, please contact us. Let's work and grow together!

WHO, WHAT AND WHERE

In future newsletters we plan to feature stories on people, ventures and new initiatives in our community. Feel free to submit your ideas about people, long time residents and new arrivals, and whats going on in our vibrant community that you might like to see featured in upcoming newsletters.

VAL'S WORD SEARCH

Find 30 words
Diagonally
Horizontally
Vertically

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CHOCOLATE

COOKIES
COOL
CREAM
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DATES
GLAZE
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JELLY
LEMON
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SUGAR
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Help! We Need a Few Helping Hands!



Our little hall is busier than ever, and we're looking for two separate volunteers to help keep things running smoothly.

1. Interior Painting (One-Time Project)

We're planning to give the hall a fresh coat of paint early in the new year and would love help from anyone with a steady hand. While volunteers are ideal, we're open to budget-friendly proposals, and we'll cover all supplies.

2. Regular Cleaning Support (Ongoing Commitment)

We're also looking for someone who can commit to cleaning the hall weekly or every two weeks. The main tasks include washing floors and baseboards, and cleaning the bathroom and kitchen. It's roughly a 2-3 hour job each visit, and we always cover all supply costs. This is primarily a volunteer role, but we're open to discussing a modest honorarium if needed.

If either role feels like a match — or you'd like to chat about what you can offer — we'd be glad to hear from you. Every bit of help keeps our community hall strong, welcoming, and well cared for.



LOOK WHO'S TALKING



Achieving Good Mental Health

February 18 2026 6pm-7:30pm

After all the holiday celebrating is over and a new year has begun, the long winter months can be a hard slog and put a strain on our mental health.

Mental health is a critical component to our overall wellbeing and yet is something we tend to ignore and seldom talk about.

This final talk in our series on mental health will explore what good mental health actually is and what contributes to maintaining good mental health. Join us for an interesting and important conversation on this timely issue. This event is free, however, donations are gratefully accepted.

To RSVP or etransfer a donation: UpperClementsAssoc@gmail.com





UPPER CLEMENTS HALL SAVE THE DATE!



We've got a full and festive stretch of community events coming up, and we hope you'll mark your calendars and join us. Everyone is welcome — new neighbours, long-timers, and all the folks in between!

Christmas Open House-Let's Decorate the Hall!

Date: Sunday December 14 • 1-4 pm

Help us deck out the hall for the season! Families and kids especially welcome — the tackier the better. The canteen will be open, music playing, it'll be great!

Community Glow-Off

Saturday December 20 • After Dark

Our committee will be out driving the community to admire — and vote on — this year's holiday displays. Light up the neighbourhood!

Meet Your Neighbour Chili Lunch & Potluck

Saturday January 17 • 1-4 pm

A warm winter gathering to help new and long-time community members meet, mingle, and reconnect. We'll also begin a simple community project to help us look out for one another during storms and emergencies.

Heritage Day

Sunday February 15 • 1-4 pm

Discover the rich history of Upper Clements and surrounding communities. Historical displays, local stories, and the chance to learn more about the heritage of our area.

Achieving Good Mental Health

Wednesday February 18 • 6pm-7:30pm

We'll explore what good mental health actually is and what contributes to maintaining good mental health.

Mother's Day Tea

Saturday May 2 • 11-2

A spring tradition — light refreshments, friendly faces, and a lovely afternoon out.

Upper Clements Festival

July 10, 11 & 12

A brand-new three-day celebration of local makers, creativity, and community spirit. More details to come!

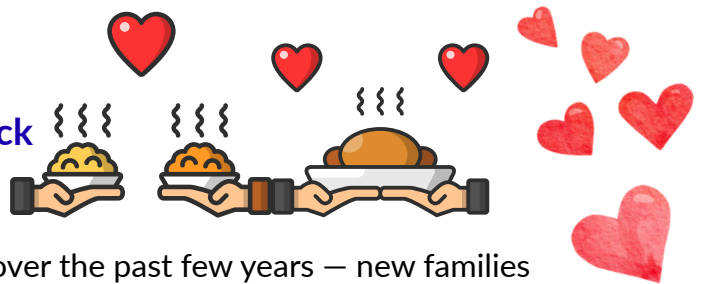
Follow Us On Facebook For Updates!





Meet Your Neighbour Chili Lunch & Potluck

January 17 • 1–4 pm



There's been so much change in our community over the past few years — new families moving in, longtime neighbours settling into quieter routines, and the natural ebb and flow that comes with rural life. *Many of us have mentioned the same thing: we don't actually know who lives around us anymore. That's why this gathering matters.*

This isn't just a potluck (though the chili will be plentiful!). It's a chance for everyone in Upper Clements and the surrounding area to get in the same room, share a meal, put faces to names, and build the kind of connections that make a community strong.

We'll also be talking about emergency preparedness and community resiliency — lessons learned from last year's wildfires and the winter storms that remind us how important it is to look out for one another. At the event, we'll introduce a new community project designed to help neighbours stay informed, connected, and supported during emergencies. More details will be shared at the lunch.

Please join us — whether you've lived here for a lifetime or arrived last week. Your presence truly matters.



Heritage Day

February 15 • 1–4 pm



Did you know Upper Clements has a full, county-compiled repository of every heritage property in the area — all bound together in a hefty, fascinating binder? It's an incredible snapshot of our past, and it will be on full display for Heritage Day.

If you'd like to find your house in the archive and snap a photo of its entry, you'll be able to do exactly that.

The hall will be filled with heritage displays, local artifacts, and interesting pieces from the community's past — thoughtfully curated to bring our history to life. We'll also have a presentation that digs deeper into the stories of our past, the families who shaped it, and how the area has evolved over time.

Whether you're a history buff, a genealogy enthusiast, or just curious about the place you call home, this is a wonderful opportunity to explore our community's roots.



Looking Back & Going Forward

It's been a busy and productive year at the Upper Clements Community Hall and for our hard-working volunteer Board of Directors. Much has been accomplished this past year and the hall has hosted so many events! We introduced our free lecture series, our newsletter, a new website and online booking platform, town halls, craft sales, spiritual retreats, Christmas events, bingos and Karaoke nights, family celebrations and not to mention the many groups that meet at the hall every week!

There are so many more things we hope to accomplish in 2026 and we can't do it without your support. Help our on-going efforts to make your community hall a dynamic, vibrant and active hub in our community. Help us in our efforts to make meaningful and real contributions to the health and wellbeing of our community.

When planning your gift giving and donations this holiday season, please consider including the Upper Clements Community Hall. Your donation makes a big difference and supports so many in our community who rely on your and our community hall. The Board of Directors is so very grateful for your kind and generous donations and we wish you all a very happy New Year! All the best for the new year -a 2026 that is filled with peace, kindness and compassion.

SANTA WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We love opening our doors to people who bring wisdom, wellness, and a bit of uplift to our community. This year alone, we've hosted everything from mental health conversations and spiritual retreats, to bee clubs, karaoke nights, craft and yard sales, and recovery groups.

If there's something you'd love to see happen here—or a subject you think we should bring in an expert to explore- or if you'd like to share your genius, we'd be thrilled to hear from you. This hall grows stronger with every idea shared.



UpperClementsAssoc@gmail.com



STAY UP TO DATE!
UpperClementsCommunityHall





A Note from the Chair

If you've ever spotted me at an event, you'll know my favourite place to perch is right here in our little kitchen, looking out through that window. No matter what we're hosting, this view always hits me the same way: board members shoulder-to-shoulder, volunteers buzzing, neighbours gathered with purpose and joy. If you follow us on Facebook, you've noticed I take the same picture at each event.

Paul and I truly love working side-by-side on this community initiative, sharing in all the small moments that make this hall feel alive.

There's a particular kind of warmth that settles in that spot—watching something meaningful unfold for the people we care about, knowing we all helped make it happen. It's a privilege to be part of this circle of care, and an even greater one to work alongside the kind, steady souls who give this place its heart. Thank you for letting us serve you.



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Mrs Daniela Beasant





2025 WHAT A YEAR!

**With Gratitude to Our
Outgoing Board**

A heartfelt thank-you to the former board for guiding us through such a smooth and generous transition mid-year. Your steady support, wisdom, and strong foundation made it possible for the new board to begin with confidence and clarity. We're deeply grateful for the care you poured into this community and for the way you helped us step forward.



We hope you've enjoyed this issue and maybe found a little inspiration in the stories shared—whether they're feel-good moments, unique friendships, special talents, or the kinds of passions that make our community shine. We'd love to keep highlighting the wonderful people who call this place home. If you have ideas or stories worth celebrating, please send them our way.



**LOOKING TO RENT THE HALL FOR A
SPECIAL EVENT OR REGULAR GROUP?**

UpperClementsHall.ca/rent-our-hall

**We've got a virtual tour,
pictures & a fully automated
online booking system!**



THE CHATTER BOX

NEWS FROM HERE & THERE



UpperClementsHall.ca



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Donations

The Upper Clements runs on a small annual budget, yet, as everyone has experienced, costs keep growing — stretching and straining our resources. The hall has a long list of annual operating expenses, from insurance, septic services, utilities, and supplies to repairs and replacing equipment.

All of these ongoing expenses are covered through fundraising and your generous donations. No donation is too small, and every donation is greatly appreciated. Invest in our community and future by investing in the Upper Clements Community Hall. Thank you.

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upperclementsassoc@gmail.com
 -please write **DONATION** in the message