

# 05 THE CABIN FEVER EDITION




## THE CHATTER BOX

NEWS FROM HERE & THERE



## CABIN FEVER!

Timbytes   
From Our VP, Tim Wall

Lately everywhere I go I have heard people talking about this winter's weather and being very clear and adamant that they have had enough. *Enough cold, enough snow enough of being cooped up inside.* I must admit coming from Manitoba this has seemed rather amusing to me as winters here seem positively tropical compared to the penguin loving temps and snow higher than elephants' eye we lived through out west. But then I began to notice signs in myself that could have suggested that maybe I too was being affected by the weather and coming down with cabin fever. It all started when I was having a delightful conversation with my new friend Bernard a six-foot armadillo who had wondered onto our yard. I invited him in for tea and as we watched a group of unicorns playing outside in the snow he asked me how I was really feeling about this winter.

Strange that he should ask me that question although I knew that Armadillos were unusually empathic. What was he picking up on? It got me thinking. I told Bernard that I recently I had begun to make unusual observations about myself and found myself asking all sorts of odd questions. Observations like; my head suddenly seemed oddly shaped, my hands were shrinking and my tongue was now too big for my mouth. I can hear my hair growing and keep hearing the song "super cali fragilistic expialidocious" from Mary Poppins in my head although I knew it was coming from the toaster.

Oh, and by the way don't you think I would have made a better Mary Poppins than Julie Andrews? I know right, I was born to play that role! I'm also convinced that Cary Grant was my real father. I wondered what I'd look like in my mothers wedding dress. Do fish have ears? I think someone broke into my house and stole my gum! Shhhh! There is also this giant beaver who thinks I'm a tree and is looking for me! Don't tell it I'm hiding under the sink!

El think I'd like a pair of ruby red slippers like Dorothy had. Those flying monkeys scared the beeebees out of me. Wait was that a seagull or a flying monkey I just saw flying overhead. So anyway, when I put all these things together, I said to Bernard "hummm maybe I have cabin fever".

So yes winter can be hard and challenging for all of us. While it is important that we practice good mental health strategies throughout the year it is perhaps even more critical during the long, dreary and cold winter months. Make a point to connect with others, stay physically active, learn a new skill, explore new opportunities for self improvement, practice Mindfulness and be self-compassionate.

Remember you are not alone when you experience the winter humdrums. And don't be afraid to talk to a health care professional if you feel concerned about your mental health especially if the humdrums begin to move into feeling depressed, helpless and hopeless. You are not alone and help is always available. Yes talking to someone and allowing yourself to be vulnerable requires a certain amount of bravery but its worth it and you are worth it. Take care my friends and take care of each other.

*Tim Wall, VP & his friend Bernard*



**The Upper Clements Community Association Board of Directors would like to wish you all a very Happy Spring!**



# Bar Bingo

A reminder to join us on May 28<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 to 4:00 P.M. This event is sponsored by Still Fired Distilleries, who have graciously provided some of the prizes for the bingo and will also offer a taste testing during the intermission. See you there!



## Sing It Out 🎤 Community Karaoke Nights



We're also leaning into joy. Like to sing and have a laugh? Join us for Karaoke every second Friday at the Upper Clements Hall from 7:00 to 11:00 P.M. The next one is scheduled for March 20<sup>th</sup>. The crowd gets bigger every time and It's a blast!

**B**

Quite simply, we can't do this work without you. Volunteers and donations are **urgently needed** to keep our programs, events, and community-building efforts going — if you're able to give time, resources, or support in any way, it truly makes a difference.



### Free Tax Clinic

Need help filing your 2025 Income taxes? The Upper Clements Hall is hosting a Tax Clinic every Monday from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. for the months of March and April. For more information please call Gail at 902-247-0545.



### Annual General Meeting

Please join us on April 22 from 6:30 to 8:00 for the Upper Clements Community Hall Annual General Meeting. Besides reviewing the Halls finances and our accomplishments over the past year the AGM will provide our community an important opportunity to hear about our plans and priorities for this coming year. Our Board of Directors is also anxious to hear your thoughts on what you would like to see from the hall and to participate in designing a vision for the future. These are challenging times for Community Halls and your participation and support has never been so critical as it is today in to ensuring our future. Looking forward to seeing you at the AGM!



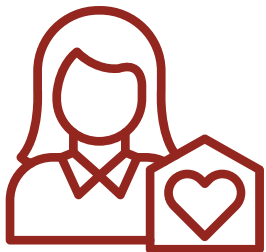
### Spring Tea

Spring is in the air and what a great time for a tea party. The Upper Clements Community Hall will host a spring High Tea on May 3rd from 1:00 to 4:00 P.M. What a lovely way to spend a springtime Sunday afternoon with friends. Admission is only 15.00 a person, so dawn your spring bonnet and come out for a delicious assortment of sandwiches and sweets.



### Death and Dying

Throughout our life times every one of us will face the loss of loved ones and eventually be confronted with our own mortality. We can not avoid the reality that living includes dying, yet we often try to. Death and dying however is something we seldom openly talk about which only adds to its mystery, and our own discomfort, fear and anxiety. We are fortunate to have in our community someone who is well versed on this important issue.



Cindy Young BSW is a social worker with years of experience in long term and hospice care. Cindy completed a Death Doula Certificate from the Conscious Dying Institute in Denver and finished a two-year spiritual practice under contemporary spiritual teacher, Thomas Hubl. Please join us on April 9<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 to 8:00 to explore the nature of death, dying and grief and how we can talk about death with family and friends. When we remove the mystery and stigma that often surrounds death and dying it elevates our capacity to live more fully. Admission is free and good will offerings ate gratefully accepted.



# DESIGNED FOR LIVING



Dorothy said it so well “There is no place like home”. The very word home conjures up so many thoughts and feelings. Home is our sanctuary, where we hopefully find joy, peace, contentment and are rejuvenated. Our homes are also a reflection of who we are yet so many of us approach expressing ourselves through interior design with timidity, trepidation, uncertainty and caution.

**Free your inner interior decorator and creative self!** Make your house a home that inspires you, reflects who you are and that makes you smile whenever you come home. Learn how to take decorating risks and have fun in the process. You don't need to spend a fortune to make your home something very special, inspirational and uniquely you.

Join us on Saturday, **May 9th from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.** for an exciting journey into the world of home design with the talented **Brant Hamilton Brown**.



Brant is a successful professional designer with a wealth of experience in creating spaces that embrace the spirit of the end user and balancing form with function. Brant will begin with a presentation on design, exploring key design components/rules, the courage to break the rules, current trends and timeless classics followed by design dilemmas and solutions.

Participants are encouraged to bring their design challenges, photographs and questions for Brant. What a fabulous way to kick off summer. **Admission is \$10.00** with proceeds going towards the Upper Clements Community Hall Fund.

**Brant was a regular guest on the Canadian icon show Marilyn Dennis!**

# BON APPETIT!

Yorkshire pudding took me months to master — and I mean that literally. After long YouTube rabbit holes, a few failed tries, and slow improvements... I finally perfected them. So I'm sharing the fruits of the experiments with you, my neighbours. ♥

**DANIELA'S PERFECT YORKSHIRE PUDDING (Makes 6 in a large muffin pan)**

**The Big Rule: Equal Volume.** Choose one glass/cup and measure everything with the same container: flour + eggs + liquid must be EXACT equal volume. (Egg sizes vary — this method keeps the ratio perfect every time.) For 6 Yorkshires in a large muffin pan, I use a glass that holds about 1 cup of volume.

## Ingredients

- 1 glass (about 1 cup) flour
- 1 glass (about 1 cup) eggs  
(usually 4-5 eggs depending on size)
- 1 glass (about 1 cup) liquid
- Pinch of salt
- Avocado oil (or other high-heat oil)



**My liquid trick (best rise!)** Instead of plain milk, I use:  $\frac{3}{4}$  blend cream +  $\frac{1}{4}$  water (still measured as one full "glass" of liquid). The water reacts with the sizzling oil and helps force a bigger rise.

**Best Batter Method** If you can, make the batter the night before and refrigerate overnight. If not, make it at least 1 hour ahead — but the longer it rests, the better (you'll actually see the batter consistency improve). Before baking, leave it out about 1 hour to take the chill off. I mix mine in a 6-cup measuring container with a lip for easy, clean pouring.

**Directions:** Whisk flour + eggs + liquid + salt until smooth. Preheat oven to 425°F (218°C). Using a large muffin tin, add just under 1 tsp avocado oil per cup — only enough to coat the bottom (too much oil makes them greasy/spongy). Put the tin in the oven and heat the oil for 15-20 minutes until it's sizzling hot (this is non-negotiable). Pull the tin out carefully and pour batter very quickly, directly into the centre of each cup with no splashes. I use a spoon to catch any drips as I move from cup to cup, because even small dribbles or splatter can prevent rising. Bake 18-25 minutes at 425°F until tall and deep golden.

**DO NOT OPEN THE OVEN DOOR WHILE THEY BAKE!!!**

I serve them plain with savoury dishes — especially anything with gravy. But they're also shockingly good as a dessert: warm with a drizzle of honey and a dusting of powdered sugar (decadent!).

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# WE WERE FEATURED IN A NATIONAL MAGAZINE!

*read it on the next page!*



Culture and heritage are not confined to landmark buildings or institutional facilities. They can be rooted in trails, artisan studios, and the entrepreneurial energy of residents. Photo: Spiroview Inc. - stock.adobe.com

# Vision in the village

by Daniela Siggia-Beasant

When municipalities think about culture and heritage, they often start with the obvious: landmark buildings, museums, or downtown cores. But what happens when a community does not have any of those things?

Too often, places without iconic infrastructure are dismissed as “residential only,” with little thought given to their potential as cultural or tourism destinations.

Yet, culture and heritage do not depend on a clock tower or a main street. They live in the ways residents perceive themselves – in stories passed on, in landscapes walked daily, in creativity shared among neighbours.

When given the chance, those residents often articulate visions that municipal leaders may not anticipate. That is the vision in the village, and it is often more imaginative, more practical, and more enduring than the assumptions written into official plans.

**Case Study: Upper Clements, N.S.**  
Upper Clements is a small rural community in County of Annapolis, Nova Scotia. It has no downtown, no retail hub, and no café to serve as a gathering spot. Its only real focal point is the community hall.

During a county visioning exercise, the expectation was that residents would suggest modest amenities such as a new playground or hall upgrades. Instead, the meeting drew a standing-room-only crowd eager to discuss their own ideas. Residents pointed to:

- 15 kilometres of accessible trails
- a recently opened Nordic spa at the local cottage campground
- heritage properties
- ideas for a festival

They envisioned a destination for visitors from across the Maritimes – one that could grow through local creativity and grassroots initiatives.

This case study demonstrates how communities often see themselves differently than their municipal leaders do. While planners may categorize some places as “bedroom communities,” residents frequently identify overlooked assets and opportunities.

What is striking is that these ideas were not lofty or unrealistic; they were grounded in what already existed and what neighbours could accomplish together. That balance of vision and pragmatism is precisely what makes grassroots development so compelling.

## Why Listening Matters

Leaving space for communities to articulate their own identities is both respectful and strategic. The visions that emerge from the grassroots are often more compelling than anything imposed from outside. They carry the authenticity that travellers increasingly seek – something no amount of branding can replicate.

Upper Clements illustrates that culture and heritage are not confined to landmark buildings or institutional facilities. They can be rooted in trails, artisan studios, and the entrepreneurial energy of residents.

Importantly, the appetite for tourism development was not prompted by consultants or external reports; it was voiced by neighbours who saw how their assets could be elevated. That distinction matters, because when ideas come from within, there is a greater chance of long-term ownership and follow-through.

Municipalities sometimes assume that only large-scale investments create economic value. Yet, listening sessions often reveal that residents are not asking for massive capital projects – they are asking for recognition, small-scale supports, and the freedom to tell their own stories.

In practice, these requests are not only more affordable but are also more aligned

with what modern travellers want: authentic, locally grounded experiences. Micro-Communities and

### Regional Identity

Micro-communities – hamlets and villages within larger municipalities – can cultivate distinct identities worth supporting. Even without a traditional centre, they can differentiate themselves from neighbouring communities, creating a mosaic of attractions that together enhance regional tourism.

When each community embraces its story, the wider region becomes more engaging. This is particularly valuable in rural areas, where visitors are less likely to be drawn by a single major attraction and more likely to enjoy a series of smaller, distinctive experiences.

Each vision in the village, when nurtured, strengthens the region as a whole. Examples can be found across Canada:

• **Ontario** – Small hamlets across Prince Edward County leveraged wineries and artist studios to create a tourism

brand. In Ontario, small towns like **Brudenell** – a village along the shore of Georgian Bay – has a rich history and is now a cultural hub. In Ontario, small towns like **Brudenell** – a village along the shore of Georgian Bay – has a rich history and is now a cultural hub. In Ontario, small towns like **Brudenell** – a village along the shore of Georgian Bay – has a rich history and is now a cultural hub.

• **Saskatchewan** – Prairie towns have revitalized themselves through quilting festivals, threshing demonstrations, and heritage suppers that appeal to niche travel markets.

These case studies echo the lesson from Upper Clements: the village voice, when amplified, carries further than municipal branding alone.

The Annapolis Valley, N.S., for example, shows how small-scale initiatives add up to significant cultural appeal. Between Windsor and Annapolis Royal, travellers can curate a driving tour that appeals to antique furniture and book collectors, folk-art enthusiasts, heritage seekers, and casual explorers.

The attraction is not a single blockbuster site but the layering of many modest experiences: studios tucked into barns, heritage properties repurposed for new uses, coastal trails, quirky roadside experiences, and small festivals. Each offering was created by individual entrepreneurs or community groups, sometimes supported by micro-grants or

a supportive municipality. Together, they form a cultural ecosystem greater than the sum of its parts.

This approach is particularly relevant at a time when Canadian domestic travel is expanding. In the fourth quarter of 2024, residents took 71 million domestic trips, an increase of 7.8 per cent over the previous year, spending \$16.2 billion. Overnight trips averaged \$440, showing that travellers are prepared to invest in authentic local experiences when value is evident.

For municipalities, the lesson is clear: even modest projects, if woven into a larger regional tapestry, can capture a share of this growing market. Municipal Lessons from

### theVillage Vision

Rural communities also hold an advantage in affordability. For families and older travellers, rural domestic experiences offer an alternative to costly international travel. Beaches, trails, and heritage sites provide experiences that are both meaningful and budget-friendly, making them especially appealing for international travellers.

Domestic travel also addresses safety and convenience. It avoids the need for passports, currency exchange, and international insurance. Smaller communities often feel safer, more walkable, and less overwhelming than large urban centres. For many travellers – particularly women over 50, who frequently make travel decisions for families – these qualities are decisive. Safety, simplicity, and affordability all contribute to the vision in the village.

Upper Clements and the Annapolis Valley highlight several lessons for municipal leaders:

- **Listen first** – Public meetings and visioning exercises often reveal aspirations that planners may not expect. Communities see their assets differently than outside observers.
- **Support micro-identities** – Encouraging villages and hamlets to

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cultivate their own distinct identity adds diversity to the regional tourism landscape.

- **Back small-scale initiatives** – Micro-grants, modest infrastructure support, and facilitation of community-led projects can create lasting impact without requiring large investments.
- **Leverage natural advantages** – Affordability, accessibility, and safety are natural strengths for rural areas. Municipal messaging should highlight these qualities.
- **Curate rather than control** – Municipal leaders can help connect and promote regional experiences without imposing a single vision. Acting as facilitators allows authentic local character to shine.

Beyond these lessons, there is also a deeper takeaway: success depends on building trust. Communities are more likely to engage when they see municipalities not only listening but also responding tangibly, whether through signage, grants, or simply promotion of local efforts. When residents feel heard, they are emboldened to bring forward more ideas – often at little or no cost to the municipality.

The story of Upper Clements in the Annapolis Valley shows that communities often hold a deeper vision for themselves than municipalities may realize. By listening carefully, supporting grassroots initiatives, and amplifying local perspectives, municipal leaders can unlock cultural and heritage assets that are both authentic and sustainable.

The strength of rural regions lies not in competing with large attractions but in weaving together small, authentic experiences. Each community, empowered to tell its story, enriches the region as a whole. In that tapestry of culture and heritage, the vision in the village becomes a foundation for growth – not just for Upper Clements but as a model for rural communities across Canada.



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**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.**



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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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