



The Lake Report

Vol. 2, Issue 1

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Niagara-on-the-Lake

LEGAL BATTLES MOUNTING

Richard Harley
Editor

Legal battles between the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Two Sisters Resorts and Solmar Development Corp. will start coming to a head in February, according to both Lord Mayor Betty Disero and Two Sisters owner Benny Marotta.

The legal battles stem from a number contentious situations surrounding the development of the Randwood Estate.

Currently, four different proceedings will be before courts and tribunals.

The first battle stems from the Town's decision to seek historical designation status to the Randwood Estate and surrounding properties. Marotta is challenging the decision before the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, claiming many of the buildings don't have any significant historical value.

The second battle stems from accusations by Town staff against Two Sisters Resorts, which allege trees were illegally removed from the properties of the Randwood Estate, where Two Sisters plans to build a large-scale hotel.

In November of 2018, Solmar Development — also owned by Marotta — re-

moved around 150 trees from 588 Charlotte Street (the property behind the Randwood Estate) to prepare for a subdivision.

The removal of the trees is alleged to have damaged a century-old protected Dunnington-Grubb landscape on the former Rand property.

Marotta is fighting the Town's accusations, and claims trees weren't removed from the Randwood Estate in November, but had already been removed based on the advice of an arborist. He says the Dunnington-Grubb landscape is still intact.

He claims Town staff vis-

ited the site to check if there had been damage done — after protests sparked attention from Town staff — and says at the time nobody told him anything had been disturbed.

Marotta has drawn criticism from some residents, who believe it was immoral to clear-cut the trees, regardless of what's currently allowed, also accusing him of taking advantage of a time when the town was between councils.

The third battle comes from the Town's decision to ask a Superior Court to put an interim injunction on Marotta to stop developing.

The decision was differed to the new year, said Disero.

The fourth battle stemmed from the previous council waiting more than 150 days to deal with the application plan for the Two Sisters hotel.

Marotta has also appealed the amount of time, claiming it is beyond reasonable requirements for a development application.

Disero said it is "a very complex" situation. "I can tell you as a member of council there were too many unanswered questions in my mind with respect to the application."

Continued on Page 2.

NOTL to address affordability



NOTL has just one affordable housing option. (Christina Manocchio)

Christina Manocchio
Staff

Affordable housing is becoming a hot topic in cities and towns across Canada.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Association of Realtors reports that the average home in Niagara-on-the-Lake costs just under \$700,000 as of November 2018, which is above the \$409,000 average in the Niagara region.

Niagara Regional Housing has one subsidized rental housing available in NOTL. The property charges its tenants 30 per cent of their monthly income, or up to the maximum market rental amount depending on their financial situation. The average wait list length for Niagara Regional Housing stands at 5,500 applicants, and can range from a three-and-a-half year to a 16 year wait for a unit.

Currently, the unit in NOTL has a six-and-a-half year wait, and is only available for those

who are over 55 years-of-age.

"The need for multi-residential development is great," said Donna Woiceshyn, CEO of Niagara Regional Housing.

"We have people who are getting better jobs and are doing better who are living in affordable housing, but they can't move out because there is no place to go."

"The market is so bad right now because of the vacancy rate being so low. People are struggling to find units to rent, we're struggling to find landlords to partner with to come into our program."

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CHMC) reported that the St. Catharines-Niagara region has a rental vacancy rate of 2.5 per cent as of October 2018.

Niagara Rental Housing speculates that the vacancy rates increased due to new luxury developments in the Niagara region, not affordable housing units.

Continued on Page 3

Chautauqua residents coming around to severance application

Christian Coulombe
Staff

Chautauqua residents are slowly coming together in support of a rezoning application for Circle Street.

Although they don't fully support the original proposed dwelling, they do support the severing of the Niagara-on-the-Lake lot.

"I am not really here to oppose this particular pro-

posal but we do have something worthwhile to say," said Victor Tarnoy, a Wilberforce Street resident, during the first Committee of the Whole meeting this year. He said residents decided they would rather see the lot split than allowing for larger development in the future.

"We sat down and talked about our ideals and it's not that we're against small properties or subdividing," he said. "In fact I think a common sentiment

amongst all of us would be better to sever the property than leave it as a great big property that might invite a great big house, which would be out of keeping and out of character for our neighbourhood."

Susan Wheler, planner for the 6 Circle St. project, presented the updated plans for the property. The Nov. 21 open house had such a high turnout, and so many concerns from local residents, Lord Mayor Betty

Disero agreed a second public meeting would be held.

Previously, residents were concerned about the front yard setback, the validity of the arborist report, the location of the driveway, the streetscape and the location of a 75-foot silver maple tree.

The original application for rezoning included plans to sever the lot into two new lots with one being a triangular pie shape. *Continued on Page 6*



The corner of Circle and Dixie Streets. (Christian Coulombe)

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Garrison Village man hopes fellow dog owner will come forward after vicious attack

Richard Harley
Editor

Joel Donaghy is hoping a man whose dog attacked his dog on Dec. 18 will come forward and take responsibility for the incident — or at the very least apologize.

Donaghy, whose house backs onto a park in Niagara-on-the-Lake's Garrison Village, had just opened his gate to take his three terrier-poodles for a walk, when a larger black dog attacked his dog Poppy.

"The dog wouldn't release its grip," said Donaghy, clearly emotional about the incident.

Once the attacking dog did let up, Donaghy picked Poppy up in a panic and brought her immediately inside the house.

By the time Donaghy went back out to confront the man, he and dog had fled the scene.

Poppy ended up with 22 stitches in her side, and according to Donaghy, the vet said she was lucky to have survived.

Now Donaghy says he's doing what he can to try and



Poppy at home resting up after being attacked by an unknown dog shortly after leaving her owner's back gate in Garrison Village. (Richard Harley)

track the man down, especially since he hasn't come forward.

"He knows where I live," Donaghy said.

Donaghy didn't get a good look at the dog owner, but said the dog was large and looked similar to a schnauzer or a bouvier des flandes, with "beautiful black fur."

Both dogs were off-leash during the incident. Donaghy says most dog owners in the area know they're responsible for their pets, whether on or off leash.

Poppy is currently resting up at home and in good spir-

its, and Donaghy said he's contacted local animal control and encourages anyone who may know something about the incident to report it.

This story has been updated to include a more accurate description of the attacking dog.

One week left to apply for Town committees

Brittany Carter
Staff

Looking to contribute to Niagara-on-the-Lake in a productive and positive way?

The Town of NOTL is looking for dedicated residents to join its committees and boards for the 2019-2022 period.

Potential members have until 4 p.m. Jan. 17 to hand in completed applications.

The Town is seeking members of the general public who live, work or own a business in the municipality. Residents with a shared interest in improving and maintaining the standards set in place by the Town are ideal candidates.

The majority of board members work on a volunteer basis and are expected to attend meetings once a month.

Peter Todd, town clerk for NOTL, says the members

contribute to the development of policies, programs and initiatives that will enhance quality of life for the municipality. "The Town can benefit greatly from citizen volunteer's expertise, enthusiasm and civic pride."

While some committees are mandatory by legislation, Todd says they are all valuable. Some of the specifics of the boards have changed over the years, but he says they have been used by the Town for decades.

"Likely since the incorporation of the Town."

All boards and committees aim to create a healthy community for residents and visitors by advising on areas of inclusion, community wellness, licensing, urban design and transportation, to name a few.

A full list of committees and boards can be found on the NOTL town website.

Town legal battles gearing up

Continued from Front Page

"So I believe the 150 days was not adequate for the Town to respond to the application. And I've always said that we need to deal with what is heritage before we can actually consider the application. We have to know what we're looking at before we can actually evaluate it."

She said she didn't want to put words in the mouth of the planning staff, and that their report would be the final one submitted to the LPAT.

"But there are four issues, we're dealing with all of them. Nothing has been actually been put on hold, it's all just percolating along as a result of initial hearings in December."

And of course everything closed down for Christmas, she added.

"It's just taking a while.



Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Hall. (Christian Coulombe)

But you know, I think people understand that. Courts and judicial bodies all work at their own speed. They take they're time. They're not going to rush anything in terms of making deci-

sions on the appeals or the injunction." said Disero.

"As much as I would like thing to happen overnight, that's just not how it works in reality. And it will all unfold in due course."

She said she doesn't believe Marotta will "just let things sit" either.

And two of them, the conservation review board and the LPAT are responding. We didn't initiate those.

Voices of Freedom park under construction again

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
Staff

Voices of Freedom Park on Regent Street was officially opened on Nov. 2, with the goal of celebrating the town's Black history. However since December of last year, the park's monuments have been covered as the Town is completing its construction.

Kevin Turcotte, manager of parks & recreation for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, said park monuments are currently tented while cement work is being done on the tiles of the park path.

"We have to do it in order to put the tiles in and heat the area so it's the right temperature to set properly," Turcotte said.

When the park originally opened, there was sand in place so that people could experience what the park would be like when completed, he said, explaining that was done so "[The Town] could open it on time."

Work is currently underway to put the tiles in place permanently, he said.



"[The contractors] lay the tile, then they grow the gaps ... We're probably going to seal it next year and then it should be great for years to come."

Turcotte is uncertain when the park will open again, and said he would have to contact the contractors to find out.

"The park was well-supported by the community, local organizations, businesses and people," he added. "We were really happy with the opening that happened in November."

"I think it's going to be a great public art installation for years to come."

An in-depth story of the financials behind Voices of Freedom Park is in the works. Check out Niagaranow.com frequently for updates.



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NPC chair position still vacant

Brittany Carter
Staff

A void was left where previous chair of the Niagara Parks Commission once sat.

As of Nov. 15, 2018, Janice Thomson's term as chair came to an end, as predetermined at the beginning of her occupancy.

The position has yet to be filled.

Thomson says it was under her understanding that the Doug Ford government was going to fill the seat, along with many others.

"I was advised that the position would be posted when it became available, but I haven't seen any postings yet. It's their prerogative to fill those positions."

She says she would like to be considered for the role again.

"I'm very committed to the works of the Parks Commission. It served the people of Ontario well."

Over her seven-year tenure, Thomson says, with the help of the Ministry of Tourism, she moved the organization forward from a \$76 million operation to a current revenue of \$120 million.



Janice Thomson (left) is interested in another term as chair for the Niagara Parks Commission.

"From losing money to an organization that has a surplus."

She says the money goes back into maintenance, growth and beautification of the area.

The board she was working with, she says, played a key role in moving the organization to where it is now.

"Taking great steps to procure a professional senior management team who are dedicated, committed and experienced."

Thomson says they worked hard to prepare a new 10-year strategic master plan and would like to see the plans

carried out. With the board, she says she was working toward building up the parks to the benefit of locals and tourists alike.

"I'm really keen to be a part of the process."

Concerned tax-payer, William Cochrane, says the government is leaving itself open by keeping the position vacant.

"This provincial gem is being eroded by political incompetence. To have no board governance at the top level is shameful."

Cochrane says Thomson led a very successful Parks Commission and is con-

cerned about potential issues that could arise with a lack of leadership and representation on the board.

"Why would you go looking for someone else?"

The Niagara Parks Board of Commissioners consists of 12 publicly appointed members. Responsible for providing strategic direction and advising ministers, members are accountable to the Government of Ontario. Currently, seven of the 12 positions on the board remain vacant, including both the chair and vice-chair seats.

In an email response, Danelle Balfour, media relations for the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport said the ministry is in the process of filling the vacancies as the upcoming term expires on the Board of the Niagara Parks Commission.

"The ministry is committed to filling those positions in a timely fashion with the best candidates for the role. Once appointments come into effect, all provincial public appointments are posted on the Order in Council website as well as the Public Appointments Secretariat website."

Town to tackle affordable housing options

Continued from Front Page

Affordable housing is a concern for Glendale resident Amarjog Johal.

Johal had advocated for housing to remain affordable for Niagara College students. The Glendale Task Force proposed implementation of a long-term rental bylaw due to alleged Niagara College students living in rowdy, unkempt homes.

The long-term rental bylaw would include a fee for every unit, explained Johal. With this, Johal fears that rents will increase, making housing unaffordable and causing students to move further away from Niagara College.

"If you discourage rentals, where are these people going to go?" said Johal.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said the town is planning on keeping the rental licencing fee low, which landlords can write off on their taxes.

Disero also explain that the rental licencing will allow the town to know how many students are in a rental, which would help improve parking requirements in the area.

Corks and Orzo owner, Maria Mavridis, has faced challenges when finding an affordable home close to Niagara-on-the-Lake. She said about 85 per cent of her staff live in Virgil or St. David's, but can't afford homes close to downtown NOTL.

"We grew up here, we want to raise out families here. It's getting harder and harder," said Mavridis.

The Wellness Committee is set to look into wellness in NOTL, which includes affordable daycare and housing.

The final draft of NOTL Official Plan states that the municipality plans to monitor affordable housing to "meet the needs of households unable to find adequate housing through the private market."



Amarjog Johal, resident of Glendale. (Christina Manocchio)

The Official Plan also acknowledges the shortage of rental housing in NOTL, and outlines recommendations and policies to improve or maintain current affordable housing.

The completion of the Official Plan has no set date, but a public open house will be planned in mid-February. During this open house, the Official Plan information will be provided for public review.



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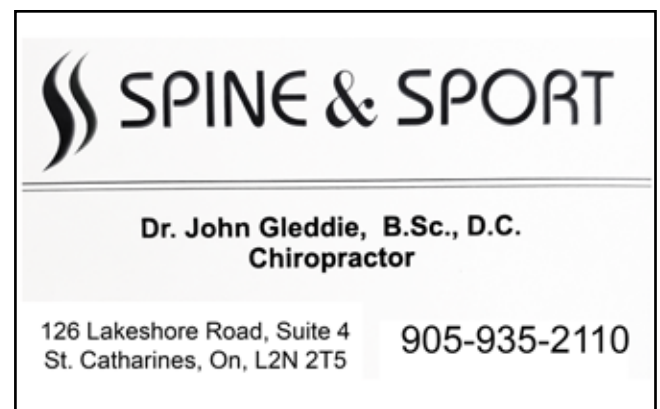
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Editorial: Let's make 2019 more friendly

Richard Harley
Editor

It happens to a lot of us in this day and age — we develop a tendency to dislike or even despise people we don't even know based on their online identities.

Whether it's differing political opinions, favourite sports teams or music tastes, social media is often the modern equivalent of raging fist-fight.

Having grown up going to Niagara District, I liken it to a group of punk teenagers meeting at Harvest Barn to fight at lunch.

And in the realms of Niagara-on-the-Lake's social media groups, this behaviour seems to be more and more prevalent, and people seem to attack each other so easily.

But really, how often do we get into raging fist-fights over



The Lake Report.

a differing political opinions?

For most grown adults, the answer is never.

Yet still, people of all ages hide behind screens to blast out hate towards other people they've likely never sat down with in person.

It's a shame — we get generational locals insulting newcomers purely because

they aren't the same, and newcomers acting the same towards locals, basically calling them rednecks.

It's a load of rubbish in 2019. We all have Netflix. We all talk to our phones. We're all human. And odds are if some of the people who argue online were to sit down for a pint or a coffee together in

person, some of them would end up as good friends.

There is one saving grace in all of this though, and it's that in the marrow of just about everyone who lives in NOTL, we have one thing in common — we love our town fairly fiercely.

It's been said before, that such a passion should bring us together, not divide us.

In 2019, why not try to keep our reputation as the friendliest town in Canada?

Rise above the social media arguments and election results, and embrace what's here right now.

Or live the year filled with hate. It's a free country.

The paper, however, will to look positively to the future and try to do what's best for all residents of NOTL in 2019.

editor@niagaranow.com

Lake Report ribbon-cutting open to all local residents

You're invited to join us at our official ribbon-cutting on Thursday, Jan. 17, at 10:30 a.m. at our newly renovated office space located at 496 Mississauga St. in Historic Old Town, NOTL.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero and members of local council will be in attendance to cut the ribbon, after which

people are encouraged to enjoy light refreshments with everyone and the team.

On behalf of The Lake Report, staff, and contributors, thank you for your support as we continue delivering hyper-local news to our great community.

Wishing you the very best for 2019 — we hope to see you there!

MYAC 2018 recap

December of 2018 was a busy month for the Lord Mayor Youth Advisory Council!

We are happy to report our Second Annual Niagara Youth Holiday Celebration was a great success. We had a full program and a full audience as our talented Niagara youth entertained.

The program showcased vocalists, violinists, pianists, the handbell choir, the ukulele club, and many individuals and duets all of who demonstrate that Niagara-on-the-Lake has talent.

Now, we are focused on organizing our plans for our Second Grade 8 Health and Wellness Conference in May, 2019. The one-day conference first ran last year for the Grade 8 students from local elementary schools. We had approximately 80 students attend and the feedback was all positive.

This year we are working to provide equally informative, hands-on and interactive workshop sessions, while delivering important messages

to help youth navigate mental, emotional, social, and financial wellness.

Promoting teen literacy is also one of the LMYAC's goals and we continue to support the Teen Literary Alliance, a book club which runs the last Sunday of the month at the NOTL Public Library.

To encourage reading, we suggest everyone should start off the new year with a great new book!

There are a few other ideas and surprises we are discussing to bring forward in the near future. Our ideas are dedicated to providing youth opportunities, a voice, and bringing the community together.

We thank the community for the continued support. We invite all NOTL youth to stay informed and have a voice by following us on Instagram @notlmyac and sharing your ideas on our web page www.jointheconversationnotl.org/notlyouth.

Bethany Pöhl

In response to Mr. Moorhead

My wife and I have been frequent visitors to Niagara-on-the-Lake for many years and have developed an affinity for the people and lifestyle of this town. We are retired and after a lot of contemplation decided to look for a smaller home.

This town was always on our mind as the place to enjoy our senior years. When an opportunity arose to purchase a new home in town we bought into the Windsor Development, a small enclave of town homes on Anne Street. These homes may not suit the "ideal" Mr. Moorhead has in mind for his vision of Niagara-on-the-Lake and he is entitled to his opinion.

However perhaps more im-

portant are the people who have purchased "these ugly little homes" etc, and Mr. Moorhead should have thought about that before putting so to speak "pen to paper."

Lastly his dislike of the builder whom we do not know and have never met but have done business with his employees for the purchase of this home and if they are a reflection of Mr. Marotta and his company, we are happy to engage in retirement in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

It takes more than the size and style of a home to shape and define a town. It involves decent, honest people.

*John & Patricia
BRAMPTON*



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Other houses look worse

Dear Mr. Harley,

Some of your letters to the editor speak disparagingly of Cannery Park in St. Davids.

"The finishings in the Model Homes cried 'cheaply built.' The homes don't fit the character of the town! Also that we belong in Brampton. I've seen homes around this area that are little more than shacks with abandoned cars, trucks, shipping containers and who knows what else all over their properties!

Your readers call Cannery Park a slum!!! Well excuse me you snobby Citizens of NOTL! Not everyone can afford a sweet little Bijou House in Old Town!

The project was built on scrub land that at one time collected run off water from the Cannery. It looks a lot better than the abandoned field I saw before the houses

were built. The model homes were lovely and done up to reflect different budgets! We now have gardens and houses individualized by owners! We will have a new park sometime next year right in the middle of our development. We have a mixture of retired, semi retired, young families and singles! We are a community! If you don't like us, don't venture into St. Davids! Stop protesting every thing that you don't like or isn't done the way you want it! Start being a little more welcoming to new families who now pay the same taxes you do and contribute to the economy! If not for new residents like me NOTL would still be a little backwater town. Oh wait! That's exactly how you want it to stay!

(Glad you are going weekly. I love the paper!)

A very short opinion

Dear Letter writers!

I guess Trish Romances proposal looks mighty good now! To all who opposed her Artist Retreat, enjoy the fire!

Perhaps the frying pan looks mighty good now!

Earle Vance

Virgil needs some spice

Central Virgil has become the place where architecture goes to die, all creativity crushed beneath the weight of proliferating uniform square boxes. Irritated defenders of this "progressive" building often remark "We cannot afford to build pretty villages any more." So I would like to point out that millions of people travel millions of miles to enjoy the beauty and human comfort of European towns and villages which are not only beautiful but still have shops within walking distance of their individual homes. Visitors spend millions of dollars to soak up the atmosphere of such charming places. These towns manage to perpetuate their attractive atmosphere by maintaining the old facades and rebuilding the interiors or just build-

ing with imagination.

I think this is proof positive that we do not have to allow the forces of greed to convince us to live in the mass produced plain and cheap so that they can live in the grand and glorious.

Planning by some people who actually care about architecture and the overall landscape of an area could create something of which the inhabitants would be proud.

I don't believe anyone wants to live in a suburban sprawl where each inhabitant needs a car to reach absolutely anything. Human beings want communities with soul. Niagara-on-the-Lake is fighting to keep this. Virgil should be fighting to achieve it.

Ann Handels

Requiem for a small town

The little town weeps as change sweeps uniformity over its charm.

The little town gasps for air as the lightning speed of bricks and mortar covers its green spaces and denies its history.

Hotels change the very

landscape that the visiting crowds come to enjoy.

The little town begs for respite but Profit wields a big stick so the little town breathes a sigh of submission And becomes another suburb.

Ann Handels

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Seven hours with Hazel McCallion

Ross Robinson
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Barbara Wall, Betty Disero and Hazel McCallion.
(Submitted)

Fasten your seatbelts, son. I will attempt to limn a fabulous seven hours with Hazel MacCallion on Dec. 3.

Scattered thoughts and streams of consciousness; how to capture the energy and positivity of that road trip?

After Betty Disero was elected the first female Lord Mayor of NOTL, a front-page piece appeared in the Toronto Sun featuring Disero and NOTL. The next morning, Hazel called Disero to congratulate her and ask to attend the Council Inaugural Meeting on Dec. 3.

Disero arranged for Hazel to get to and from the meeting.

"Hazel and I did a lot of work together during my 18 years as councillor in Toronto, A.M.O., etc. She wants to be here on Dec. 3. We will organize a car to get her here and back."

I told her not to worry about that. "I am your humble and enthusiastic chauffeur.

My son Scott, current vice president of Finance at McMaster University's Student Union, might want to join us. What a fun opportunity?"

The date was set.

On the afternoon of Dec. 3, at 2:30 p.m., I picked Scott up from McMaster and headed to Hazel's house where Joy Journeaux, Hazel's niece visiting from Gaspé, answered the door. Looking over my shoulder, she commented on the snow. "Look how beautiful the snowflakes are. I love this time of year."

Most people would have said, "Oh darn, I hope the highways won't be slippery. It's a long drive to Niagara."

This was the first positive comment of the evening. For the next seven hours, only positive words and thoughts; no health comments, no organ recitals, no bad weather.

Hazel was on the telephone in the kitchen, solving problems and helping people, as she does.

"I get the two people in a room with me and tell them to solve the problem. I have thrown many lawyers and politicians out of rooms."

As we left, I asked how she would like to be addressed, "Will Scott and I be calling you Mrs. McCallion or Mayor

McCallion?"

Hazel replied, "You and Scott will call me Hazel."

She is gracious, enthusiastic, personable, patient – a rock star in her own right. Commenting on gas prices, road signs and adding matter-of-fact opinions about the state of the community during the trip.

Driving, I missed a turn from Erin Mills onto Hwy 403.

Hazel remarked, "I have called the Roads Department twice to get that sign fixed."

I mentioned the new Credit Valley Hospital. "I suppose you had a lot to do with that project, Hazel."

She said they started planning that hospital 40 years ago on her kitchen table. Now, in the main foyer of the hospital, her table is on a display.

I asked about her leaving Gaspé when she was 19.

"Yes, Depression was ending. I went to Quebec City, then Montreal, business college. Got a job making \$12 a week. \$8 went to room and board, so I had \$4 a week left." She played hockey on girl's teams. "It cost \$5 per game. Great fun. The spectators loved it. We were good."

Passing a Petro Canada, Hazel commented on the price, "A dollar 12."

She loves speaking to the new generations, "Now, as Chancellor of Sheridan College, I get to hand out 2,200 diplomas each spring, to great young people from around the world. The President loves when I tell the graduates, 'a lot of you kids wear ragged clothes and jeans to make an impression, I wore ragged clothes because of the depression.'"

My mantra has always been to never talk to a celebrity

about what they are a celebrity about, but a few gems were proffered.

"Make developers pay. Previous residents paid for infrastructure, future residents will use the roads, water, sewers, etc., so make them pay. Mississauga has been debt free. Last year, \$35 million converting to LED lighting, will be paid off in three years. I tell people I spend their tax money like I spend my money; seldom."

She spoke of international residents and regulations, "Integration. Make them abide by our rules. In India, they don't change the rules for us if we move there. We started Folk Arts Celebration with four nationalities. Now there's 49. About 40 years ago, there was a big war in Croatia and Serbia. At our festival, the Serbians and Croatians were working together, sharing a tent and a BBQ, side by side."

We pass a Shell gas station. Hazel, sotto voce, "A dollar nine. Cheap here."

I asked how she learned how to deal with so many competing pressures, everybody looking for something. "I grew into the job," she said.

She is a director of the Greater Toronto Airport Authority. Taking a ten-day trip to observe major airports in Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai and London, she was often the only woman in meeting and reception rooms.

In NOTL, I avoid driving along Mississauga Street so Hazel won't be upset at misspelling of the name.

We pass another Petro Canada. Hazel comments, "A dollar 14. Gas price is high here."

We arrive at the Shaw Festival Theatre Green Room. Hazel, Scott and I

enjoy Subway sandwiches, Pepsi, and, somehow, Betty has remembered my request for a couple of cans of Oast House Barnraiser beer.

I thought, "The details, the details; Betty is a Champ."

Disero brought new councillors to meet Hazel. Her advice, "Do your homework!"

I timed Hazel's arrival at the top of the Festival Theatre for 5 to 7 p.m. The theatre had a big crowd and an electric atmosphere. There were about 650 people in attendance.

Former Toronto Mayor Barbara Hall was there, as well as Sharma and a group of her former constituents from Toronto, to present garlands as a gesture of love and respect.

As Hazel descended the steps, the crowd rose; an enthusiastic standing ovation. Mick Jagger is an aging rock star - Hazel McCallion is a rock star, with lots and lots more to accomplish.

The NOTL Council Inauguration Meeting was perfectly executed.

Respectful, vibrant, timely, traditional. "God Save the Queen."

Lord Mayor Betty Disero's speech was spot on and touched all the bases.

Disero spoke to the crowd, "We will find common ground to reach higher ground."

Hazel gave her 100 per cent.

As we returned to the car for the trip home, Scott opened the rear door for Hazel.

She objected, "You are in the back on the way home, Scott. I want to sit in the front seat. Your Dad and I have a lot to talk about."

Nearing the end of our drive back to her place, I missed two more turns. I wasn't paying attention, on adrenaline. I could have driven all the way to North Bay.

We had been discussing driverless cars and autonomous vehicles. Hazel had a big meeting at Ford in morning.

Scott commented on my driving, "Mrs. McCallion, my Dad isn't a great driver at the best of times."

I wonder if I would be a better driver in a driverless car. Hazel laughed heartily and said she will use that line at her Ford meeting in morning.

We dropped Hazel at her front door at 10:15 p.m.

I will always regard it as one of my life's special adventures and experiences.

The Lake Report

The Lake Report strongly encourages readers to support the local businesses that advertise with us. When reading, we ask you to please remember that the businesses you see allow us to operate and keep the paper free and independent.

When you're looking for a service or product, check the paper and try someone local first. There are a variety of great businesses inside to choose from – don't forget to mention you saw them in the paper!

The Lake Report would also like to acknowledge and thank those who have made financial contributions to the paper, whether through our donate button online or by mailing us a cheque. The paper encourages all residents to support the paper through a "voluntary subscription" annually.

For those interested in supporting us, we suggest \$1 per issue, per household, at 52 issues per year, which we strive to get to. That's only \$52 – less than most people spend on pizza and wings – and will help us grow to a weekly edition and ensure all households receive a copy.

Larger donations are also accepted and greatly appreciated. For transparency, donations of more than \$1,000 will be published in the paper (with a big thank you) and donors will receive an exclusive limited edition Lake Report mug (not the standard one), as well as a copy of the first edition of the paper signed by staff. (Limit of 20 special mugs)

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Chautauqua residents coming around to severance application

Continued from Front Page

The line severing the two pieces of land "created an awkward pie shaped new lot, uncharacteristic of the neighbourhood," said Wheler of the original plan. There was also a potential negative impact on the streetscape because of the size and style of the house.

Wheler also agreed with the members of the community on the topic of the silver maple.

"Neighbours were worried the root system would be compromised during the construction phase when we were composing a 2.44-metre setback and they were entirely correct in that assumption," she said.

However, despite technical difficulties with Wheler's slideshow, council and community members were quickly shown a new design on printed handouts.

According to the new plans, the rear lot line was adjusted to minimize the pie shape which was origi-



Circle Street, where a severance application is proposed. (Richard Harley)

nally proposed, resulting in a slightly bigger lot area. Parking was also moved to the west side of the new lot, and both properties would now use existing entrance ways eliminating the need to create a new driveway.

The proposed 2.44 meter frontyard setback was also changed to 6.7-metres to be

more inline with the rest of the properties.

"In the end I believe we have made a better plan that is more compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood," said Wheler.

But Tarnoy suggested a different option for severance. He suggested splitting the lot into two equal parts.

"It should be severed to two equal pieces each with an equal frontage, each with an equal area. This creates two reasonable lots that don't require variances to build residential buildings," he said.

However, other concerns about safety were brought up in regards to the neighbour-

hood.

Barry Wilding, a Circle Street resident, mentioned there's a speeding problem on the street and he's worried he won't be able to see traffic coming out of his driveway if his view is obstructed.

"I can't see from right hand side and my fear is a big house will block my view from coming out of my driveway," he said.

Another Circle Street resident, Tim Johnson, agreed saying when driving clockwise you can't see what's in front of you or what's coming because of the hedges.

The original proposal had the house too close to the road and cars parked in the driveway would obstruct the view and there would be no way to see whats on other side.

"I've seen it so many times where smaller cars, sports cars let's say, you can't see what's coming and people are pushing baby buggies, it's almost happened," he said.

"The new proposal seems to be farther back, I haven't

seen how close to the roads the car will park but if you park a long car like a van you're going to have problems."

If the severance is approved, the size of the two new lots would be 348 and 496 square metres.

The land owners and planner are working diligently with the Chautauqua community to better their plans and make sure that everyone is happy with the outcome and will continue to do so throughout this process.

"I want to thank lord mayor, council and residents association and the neighbours as well for the input," said Wheler.

"I really do feel that the process has produced a better design ... Obviously the residents have not seen the new design and they're at a disadvantage and we realize they'd like to take the time to review the design, setbacks, lot configuration and the style and provide feedback as I'm sure the town staff will as well."

Paving, parking meters in Byron Street's future

Christian Coulombe
Staff

The town of NOTL previously planned for road reconstruction and paid meters to be installed along Byron Street. Those plans were deferred to the 2019 budget.

According to page 51 of the capital budget, council approved the installation of parking meters along Byron, between King and Wellington streets, though the budget of \$110,000 still needs to be approved.

The budget also doesn't specify how many parking meters would be installed.

Members of St. Mark's Church and other community members opposed the decision to install the new road, according to Coun. Allan Bisback.

"I believe there was concern about curbs and gutters that local folks didn't want," he said.

Some residents believe a new road could damage



Parking meters are approved to be installed on Byron Street in Old Town.

nearby trees and ruin the streetscape.

But not all residents feel that way. Local Alicia Farinacci thinks Old Town needs to stay consistent with its heritage, though the road needs to be updated.

"I think people are so focused on how Old Town looks, that they don't realize what it needs, and Byron Street definitely needs an update," she said.

The parking along the road is gravel and not ideal for parking lower cars, according to Farinacci.

Both Coun. Allan Bisback and Farinacci think it would be best for the Town to repave the road before installing parking meters.

"I would assume any paving would be in coordination with putting in the parking meters," said Bisback.

He spoke to the director of operations and confirmed there are plans to mill Byron Street and pave the roadway.

Operation staff will be holding an open house this year and a full information report is to be provided to council in the near future.

Town seeking sponsorship applicants for new ice resurfacer

Christian Coulombe
Staff

The town of NOTL is looking for businesses to help sponsor a new Olympia ice resurfacer for the arenas in Virgil.

The machine will be rotated between the Meridian Credit Union and Centennial arenas in Virgil on a monthly basis, according to a Town notice seeking applicants.

Events held at these arenas include the NOTL Nationals Jr. A team, three major tournaments, and a large figure skating showcase with an attendance of more than 500 people.

Each company is asked to submit a package to the town of NOTL via electronic submission.

The package must contain a company profile, which includes how many years the business has been in the community, a sketch of the proposed design for the machine, and a minimum sponsorship



The town of NOTL is seeking companies to sponsor a new ice resurfacer for the Virgil arenas.

of \$25,000 over 10 years.

The scoring will be out of 15 points — five points for the profile; five points for the design; and five points for the sponsorship.

The design needs to be ready to be installed within

two weeks notice and the cost of the installed design will be on the winning company.

The deadline to submit is Jan. 18, 2019 with the winning company announced Feb. 1, 2019.

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Newark Neighbours ready for donations

Jill Troyer
Special to TLR

When Newark Neighbours re-opened Monday morning after a break for the holidays, the thrift shop was bustling with bargain hunters.

Within half an hour of opening the doors, shoppers had filled the aisles looking through the stock, which changes regularly.

It was an auspicious beginning to the New Year, following a highly successful 2018, said board member Cindy Grant. Newark Neighbours used to be “the best kept secret in Niagara-on-the-Lake,” she said, though recently the charitable organization has “become more visible in the community, and more people are aware of us.”

According to Grant, donations of high-quality items for the thrift shop showed a significant increase in the latter-half of 2018, which was the 46th year of operation for the group.

In May the paper reported the charity had been suffering somewhat. She attributes much of the recent success to the Lake Report’s coverage of the charity’s community



Shoppers crowd into Newark Neighbours on first day open in 2019.

efforts.

Money raised by the thrift shop, as well as food donations, support Newark Neighbours food bank. As many as 50 local individuals and families are registered to receive food twice a month, and at Christmas, there are special holiday meal and gift hampers.

“It’s overwhelming how much food comes in the door at Christmas time, from the generosity of our donors,” said Grant.

Thirty volunteers keep Newark Neighbours running, and most have been helping

for four or five years. Grant said they stay because it’s a fun, team-based atmosphere, and they all want to give back to the community.

An anecdote from the Christmas season summed up what that sometimes feels like.

“On the day for our clients to pick up the Christmas hampers, a single mom came in. When she saw the food, and the gifts, she burst into — tears of gratitude — and we felt so privileged to be able to do that for her. Our volunteers had some tears too. It reinforced why we do

this.”

The food bank is the central mission for Newark Neighbours, but it also helps out in the community in other ways. Last year the group provided scholarships to six graduating high school students to help pay for their post secondary education.

Every July, all income from the thrift shop is donated to Red Roof Retreat, and clothes are annually donated both to the Prom Project in St. Catharines and the Dress for Success program at Niagara College.

Local favourite geese killed in hunting accident

Richard Harley
Editor

Four local domestic geese were recently shot in a hunting accident on the Niagara River, causing a wide uproar in town and on local social media groups.

The geese, known to many locals for years for hanging around the Niagara Docks, had been driven down river by an unusual amount of people trying to fish brown trout.

A group was legally goose hunting along the river in a boat when they came upon the local gaggle. A young hunter fired after being instructed not to by a more senior hunter.

The young hunter was given a stern talk to about what happened, according to local Alan Plut, who claims to have the full information.

The young hunter only fired once, killing four geese



The dock geese in the summer. (TLR File photo)

and wounding another.

The injured goose was later put down by the Humane Society due to extensive injuries.

Local hunters have criticized other media outlets for

poor reporting of the incident, claiming the story was sensationalized to shine a bad light on hunting.

Goose hunting along the Niagara River is legal from Sept. 6 to Jan. 5, except for

Sundays, with no daily bird limit.

- With files from Brittany Carter.

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(TBC): Films still to be confirmed.

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Swimming like a penguin

Richard Harley
Editor

In Niagara-on-the-Lake, certain events have become winter staples — the Candlelight Stroll, the Christmas Parade and the Icewine Festival are a few which never fail to draw crowds.

But another local tradition, one that may seem rather wild, is the act of submerging oneself into the freezing cold waters of Lake Ontario during the depths of winter. For decades a group of local “penguins” has gathered at Ball’s Beach in Niagara-on-the-Lake to take the frigid plunge on Boxing Day.

Exactly how many years it’s been taking place was a little hazy — perhaps due to the cold water in the ears — but many who have been dipping since the beginning agreed it was the 43rd annual Penguin Dip.

About 12 people participated this year, while a crowd of about 20 people watched.

The number seemed rather low to Chris Bjorgan, who has been dipping for more than 35 years.

Some years have seen as many as 50 people participating, he said.

He suspects part of the reason this year’s turnout was one of the lowest in decades is because there really “wasn’t much of a challenge,” with the temperature being so warm for December.

In 2017, and in most other years, the mouth of the River has been filled with ice, making it much more of an event.

The group also never does much promotion for the event, he said, which could be part of why dippers participant numbers have been dwindling in the past couple years.

Regardless, the die-hard swimmers seemed to enjoy themselves, submerging themselves not once but three times, warming up in a heated trailer in between.

For others like seven-year-old Fin Hartley who was visiting from Australia, swimming in a frigid lake with a bunch of Canadians was something completely new.



Chris Bjorgan makes a splash entering the lake. (Photos by Richard Harley)

He and his father came down to join in after seeing the crowd gathering from a nearby window. It didn’t take Fin long to decide he wanted to join in.

It wasn’t even cold, he said. Others, like Sam Quinn, who has been dipping most of her life, seemed to agree it was still fairly cold.

According to the penguins, the dip first took place in 1975 on the former Ball property next to the beach. Mary Ball, whose mother owned the house, was in attendance this year.

Originally the “penguin swim” took place in April, she said, but for about the last 25 years it’s taken place on Boxing Day. It was then when the tradition truly came to life, with rules being made that each participant must dip three times, three years in a row, to become an official penguin.

Back then, there used to be a wood furnace in the house, which people would use to warm up between plunges. In modern times, the penguins keep the tradition (and themselves) alive by getting a trailer with a heater to serve the same purpose.

Ball claims she was the first one to call the group “penguins.”

Since then, there have been record books, trophies, banners, shirts and more. Much of it has been lost, but The Lake Report intends to dig up as much information about the dips as possible for



Twelve dedicated penguins showed up to take a frigid plunge into Lake Ontario this Boxing Day.



Local resident Pat Quinn has been taking the penguin plunge for the last 39 years.



Ed Ball and Pat Quinn after taking the plunge.

a future story.

The group of penguins traditionally ends up heading to a local tavern to warm up and celebrate. This year was no different, with the penguins

heading to the Sandtrap Pub & Grill for a bite and a cold one.

Donations were collected after the swim in support of Red Roof Retreat.

Newark Neighbours helps 33 families during holidays



Twelve dedicated penguins showed up to take a frigid plunge into Lake Ontario this Boxing Day.

Christina Manocchio
Staff

In December, 33 families in need had a full, fruitful Christmas thanks to Newark Neighbours and the community. Individuals and families will receive gifts, a full Christmas dinner and two weeks’ worth of groceries thanks to the community’s donations and support.

Ten of those families have children aged one to 18 that receive gifts relative to their age group, and even adults receive gifts for Christmas. The organization tried to get gifts that children and families requested, explained Pat Hicks, gift coordinator at Newark Neighbours.

Food packages at Newark Neighbours.

“We have everything from baby toys ... to a telescope ... and globes. Someone wanted a clock radio for their room ... we even have an Easy Bake Oven in there,” said Hicks.

The families will receive two weeks’ worth of food due to the food bank being closed over the holiday season.

“We are just blown away

every year, and as our food clients come in and families come in and gather up our gifts, it’s a really emotional time,” says Hicks.

The local Sparks (Girl Guides of Canada, aged five to six) decorated over 40 bags for the families, each one filled with gifts and other items.

The organizations primary source of income is from their thrift shop, which includes clothing for adults and children, homeware and electronics. They have seen an increase of donations and sales as a result of their efforts to promote the charity.

“We have a thrift shop that 100 per cent of the proceeds support the food bank,” said Cindy Grant, who is a board member with the organization.

Families in need are able to pick up necessities like shampoo, feminine hygiene products and food, every two weeks. The funding also allows families with dietary restrictions to purchase food at the grocery store for themselves. Families who belong to the food bank are eligible for the organization’s Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets.

Photo: Levee welcomes New Year



Locals rang in the new year Jan. 1 by celebrating at a levee at Navy Hall. (Eunice Tang/Special to TLR)

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Cadets collecting bottles Jan. 12

Jer Houghton
Staff

The 809 Newark Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron is calling out to Niagara-on-the-Lake residents to take part in a bottle drive on Jan. 12, 2019. The annual drive raises money to support cadet training and programming.

“It’s a big operation – we have over 30 to 40 volunteers that day, sorting bottles, packaging them, getting them all packed into the truck, and then driving them out to the depot,” said Gary Zalepa, chair of the squadron sponsoring committee, which is made up of volunteer parents.

“Over Christmas, over the holidays, hopefully people are partaking. If they could store their bottles, we’ll be coming by to pick them up Saturday, Jan. 12.”

Twice a year, in January and September, the cadets and parent volunteers meet at Van Noort’s Greenhouses on Hunter Road. Parents will chaperon the cadets door-to-door through Old Town collecting empty wine, beer and liquor bottles before sorting and redeeming them at the local beer store.

“They’re ringing doorbells and they’re saying, ‘Do you have empties that you’d like to donate to the air cadets?’” said Christine Lett, treasurer of the sponsoring committee.

“We’ll be going door to door, so even if they just put them in box on their front porch, we’ll pick it up and take it.”

“It’s a great way to support



Twelve dedicated penguins showed up to take a frigid plunge into Lake Ontario this Boxing Day.

the youth in our community,” added Sandra Gowans, board member of the sponsoring committee.

Last year, the squadron raised more than \$11,000 to support this year’s programming and training, which helped train the air cadets in everything from outdoor survival skills training to compass training to glider training to aviation simulator training, along with the rental costs to support their weekly training at the Croatian National Centre on Line 3 Road in NOTL.

“A lot of the sponsoring funds go to the glider training,” said Gowans.

“Because they’re air cadets, we want to get them up in the air, and those are big expenses – with all the fundraising, we need to get those dollars to get them up in the air and run the other programming.”

“We also have a power flight. We take them up in a plane and a properly trained officer takes them through what they have to do for that – which is really cool,” added Zalepa.

In the past, some of the funding has gone to field trips overseas to Vimy Ridge in France, and towards international exchange scholarship trips to China and Australia.

Zalepa said as part of the cadets winter training, they will be preparing for applying to summer training programs with the Department of National Defence, boarding at bases such as CFB Trenton.

“The cadets go through a merit basis to apply for that, and then they go for interviews, so it’s really good training because it’s like a job interview, and if they get selected, they get to attend one of the summer camps, which many of the cadets have done,” he said.

“It’s a great opportunity to spend a couple weeks at an Air Force Base.”

Along with some of basic funding going to training equipment and camping supplies, other expenditures will go to recreational activities over march break and planned weekend activities.

“Last year, the money

raised from the bottle drive helped fund the cadets to go on a weekend trip kayaking and white-water rafting,” said Zalepa.

“In past years, we’ve done things like bowling, rock climbing, or curling, which went over really well last year. So those are other things that we fund for the kids,” added Lett.

This year’s September’s bottle drive brought in \$4,000 and they’re hoping for greater donation support on Jan. 12, 2019.

The committee expressed that without the support of the community from bottle donations, it would make it “extremely hard for the staff to run the program.”

“So save your bottles, it’s a very easy to contribute to the squadron,” said Lett.

“We also have ongoing collections where locals can drop off their empties at any time,” added Neeti Mehrotra, secretary of the sponsoring committee.

Empty bottles can be dropped off to 901 East West Line in NOTL, located behind the McDonald’s. A trailer with signage that reads, “Air Cadets Bottle Drive Drop Off,” is available to the public for bottle donations.

The air cadets are always encouraging more youth to join the 809 Newark squadron.

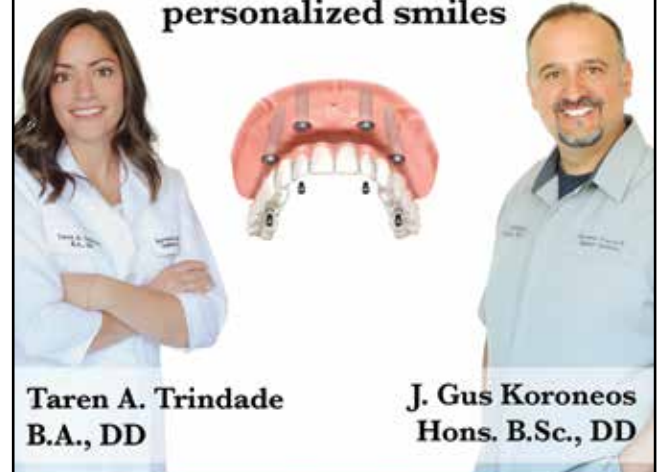
“We welcome any youth from ages 12 to 18 to come out – girls and boys,” said Gowans.

“It’s a phenomenal program, they learn so much and get such great opportunities.”

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Queen’s Landing building outdoor wedding venue

Christian Coulombe
Staff

The Queen’s Landing hotel is creating an outdoor venue beside its current property.

It purchased the two lots beside the hotel two years ago, according to Lily Kszan, general manager of the hotel.

King’s Point resident Catherine Cornell says she noticed the changes while on a walk, but couldn’t find answers to what was going on.

“Now that the trees are bare, the large white pergola at the hill’s edge is very visible from below on Ricardo

Street,” she says. “We believe it is a new structure. We went up the hill to investigate, and saw the new stone steps linking the two vacant properties to the Queen’s Landing front parking area.”

The space will be used for wedding ceremonies, specifically for brides who are having their reception at the hotel, says Kszan. It will also be used for wedding receptions.

Some concerns from local residents include late night noise, but if they follow the current noise bylaw, Queen’s Landing has their support.

“As long as the dance music

doesn’t go beyond 11 p.m., we are okay with it,” says Cornell. “We already get the wedding reception music from the events held at Navy Hall on the south side of King’s Point.”

The project isn’t new and has been in the works for some time but is expected to be completed by spring of this year.

“We have been talking about the need for outdoor wedding space for years,” says Kszan. “The ability to do it overlooking the Niagara River is perfect.”

It will be a completely



Queen’s Landing hotel. (Christian Coulombe)

fenced in area with two sections, she says. The lower area will be for pre-ceremony cocktails and the main event will be held in the upper area.

“The bride and groom will be showcased on a beautiful white pergola overlooking the magnificent Niagara River on the larger main section of the

property,” according to Kszan. The space will be able to accommodate 250 people and the hotel is accepting reservations now.



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|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Legion Fish Fry Every Thursday | | | |
| | | | |
| | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| | <p>Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Council Meeting - 6 p.m. - Council Chambers</p> <p>Niagara Regional Native Centre: Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre</p> | <p>Power Off and Play - 11 a.m. to noon - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Chair Yoga - 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Dance Niagara - 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> | <p>Simpson's Senior's a.m. to 8 p.m. - Simpson Pharmacy: Virgil</p> <p>Simply STEAM Store a.m. to noon - NOTL Library</p> <p>Trivia Night: Exchange (Winter League Week) p.m. - The Exchange</p> <p>Dance Niagara - 6:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Ian Hamilton Book - 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Library</p> |
| | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| | <p>NOTL Icewine Festival - Noon to 5 p.m. - Queen Street Heritage District</p> | <p>Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Niagara Regional Native Centre: Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre</p> <p>Beer & Books: Seven Fallen Feathers by Tanya Talaga - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - The Old Winery Restaurant & Wine Bar</p> | <p>Power Off and Play - 11 a.m. to noon - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Chair Yoga - 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Dance Niagara - 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>NOTL Horticultural Society Monthly Meeting: Rose Bartel - 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> |
| | | | |

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| Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|--|
| | 10 Bridge Seniors Casual Drop-in: Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. / 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Tinker Thinker Thursdays - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Niagara Pumphouse Drop In: Artists' Cafe - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre | 11 Yoga with Jenny - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Wayne Gates Office - 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library | 12 Royal Canadian Air Cadet's Bottle Drive Fundraiser - Old Town Council Workshop: Leading the Way; Civil and Respectful Workplaces - 9:30 a.m. - Council Chambers |
| 16 Day - 8:30 son's Time - 11 Public Library ange Brewery ek 1) - 6:30 Brewery 0 p.m. to 8:30 ity Centre Launch & Talk - NOTL Public | 17 Practical Genealogy - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Bridge Seniors Drop-in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. / 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre DNA Workshop - 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Niagara Regional Native Centre: Community Social - 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Tinker Thinker Thursdays - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library | 18 P.A. Day The Vintage Skating Rink at Fort George: PA Day Fun at the Rink - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Fort George National Historic Site St. Davids and District Lions Club: Friday Fish Fry - 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. - St. Davids and District Lions Club Sparkle and Ice Gala - 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. - The Royal Cambridge at the Prince of Wales Hotel Comedy Night at The Exchange Brewery - 9 p.m. - The Exchange Brewery | 19 NOTL Icewine Festival - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Queen Street Heritage District St. John's Babysitting Course - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Women's March NOTL - 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - Simcoe Park Icewine Cocktail Competition - 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. - Queen Street Heritage District |
| 23 Time - 11 Public Library ange Brewery ek 2) - 6:30 Brewery 0 p.m. to 8:30 ity Centre ly Festival - 7 Winery | 24 Bridge Seniors Casual Drop-in: Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. / 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Fish Fry at the Legion - 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - Royal Canadian Legion Tinker Thinker Thursdays - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Icebreakers Comedy Festival - 7 p.m. - Oast House Brewery | 25 Yoga with Jenny - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library Wayne Gates Office - 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Icebreakers Comedy Festival - 7 p.m. & 10 p.m. - Corks Winebar & Eatery 5th Annual White on Ice Dinner - 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. - Courthouse Theatre | 26 Icebreakers Comedy Festival - 8 p.m. - Courthouse Theatre NOTL Icewine Festival - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Queen Street Heritage District 27 NOTL Icewine Festival - Noon to 5 p.m. - Queen Street Heritage District Niagara College: Seasonal Soups & Stews - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. - Canadian Food & Wine Institute (at Niagara College) |

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Humour and Hops brings regular comedy to NOTL

Brittany Carter
Staff

David Green and the Exchange Brewery are pouring a steady flow of comedic entertainment.

Each month, Green hosts an evening of laughs - showcasing a variety of aspiring local acts mixed with more well-known headliners.

This Jan. 18 at 9 p.m., Brenda Lenni and Jason Allen take the stage.

Green has been putting on Humour and Hops at the Exchange Brewery for almost a year. He says he was first approached by the brewery when they were planning their two-year anniversary show.

"It's been a hit ever since." There are no other regular

comedy shows in Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL). He says it's nice to have a consistent show fans can expect and look forward to. The Ice Breakers Comedy Festival happens at the end of January, coinciding with the Ice Wine Festival, but it only takes place once a year.

"It's nice to have something that's regularly occurring for locals. We have a lot of regular returnees who keep coming back. They've seen me before and we can play around, they know what style of comedy they're getting; they know they're getting top-class comedians as headliners."

He says most of the comics are clean and un-offensive.

"You can come out for a fun night and not have to worry - is it going to be rough, is it

going to be bad or offensive?"

While many NOTL and area locals frequent the show, Green says it isn't just for them. Many people in attendance travel from out of town and across the border. They have put on shows without one Canadian in the audience. He says the room was entirely occupied with American tourists.

Over the year the show has grown and matured.

"Crowds have been receptive, and the shows have been well-attended. We've been able to attract bigger name headliners to come out. Some people from *Just for Laughs*, CTV and *Comedy Now*. It's kind of cool to have them in a tiny little brewery in Niagara-on-the-Lake. It only fits about

40 people; a small, intimate space."

Green says he's excited to have Jeff Leeson perform.

"He's my favourite comedian, hands down."

Leeson will also be on the roster for the Garden City Comedy Festival coming up in May on St. Paul Street in St. Catharines. Headlining one of the first shows at Exchange, tickets sold out weeks in advance.

Tickets for Humour and Hops can be purchased for \$18 on the Exchange Brewery website or in person during opening hours. Each ticket secures a seat and includes one 12 oz. draft beer. A portion of the cost of each ticket will go to the Red Roof Retreat charity organization.



The Exchange Brewery hosts a month comedy night. Brittany Carter

Exploring Photos: with Jim Smith SIMCOE PARK RINK



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NOTL's Tribe of Seven bring Brush Strokes to community centre

Jer Houghton
Staff

A group of seven local artists have banded together as the Tribe of Seven to showcase their art exhibit, Brush Stokes, in the rotary room at the NOTL public library between January and February.

What started from introductory painting lessons at Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre for the group over three years ago, has now resulted in a two-month long exhibit, in which dozens of residents attended the opening reception on Jan. 5 to view the works.

"It's about a group of seven painters locally who got together after taking painting lessons at the Pumphouse, and we decided, 'Well, let's get together on Fridays,'" said Richard West, a group member of the Tribe of Seven, which also includes local residents Judy McHattie, Albert Towers, Murray Wilcox, Gordon Pollock, Diane Croker and Marilyn Crow.

"So for the last three years, we've met every Friday at each other's houses, and we try to exercise what we've learned at the Pumphouse, and what we've learned from other people, and try to paint things."

The group spent every Friday over the last three years



The Tribe of Seven, minus two members. (Jer Houghton)

supporting each other with their painting, everything from picking the right colours. They would even host other artists outside the group and have them teach new techniques such as finger painting and paint pouring.

"So we would be there and someone is painting watercolours, someone might even be doing pen and ink. I always paint oil. Someone else always paints acrylic," said West.

"And then sometimes we get someone to come to our house, and we'll say, 'Well, teach us a bit about what you do.'"

Three years later, the group has since formed as the Tribe of Seven to welcome their very first exhibit featuring these works, entitled Brush Strokes.

"We've got portraits, we've

got landscapes, we've got watercolours of, you know, abstract sort of things – there's quite a wide variation of topics, sizes, techniques, the lot," said West.

"And it's also very interesting, even for us, because now we see them on the wall, and we can really see the differences in our personalities and our techniques and how we've improved."

Prior to the exhibit, the group has shown their works in the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre as students, but never as professionals.

"There's usually a painting from these people somewhere in the Pumphouse, but we've never done this together before. This is totally new. And even for us, a surprise, and we go, 'Wow,'" said West.

The exhibit is offering most

of its pieces for sale. A third of them range from \$125 to \$550 depending on the painting, which what West said reflects the group as new artists who are not used to selling their artwork.

The remaining are reserved for the artists and are listed as, not for sale.

"When we do a painting we like, we tend to put "NFS" on it – not for sale – because we like it, and we want to hang on to it. You have to mature a bit with your painting before you can say, 'you can buy it,'" he said.

"You're not confident you can paint it again, whereas an established artist can paint that 10 times over."

West said that some of paintings may end up in galleries, while most of them will appear in the Niagara Arts Pumphouse Centre after the exhibit finishes at the end of February.

Depending on the success of the showcase over the next two months, the Tribe of Seven may host another exhibit – but what's for certain, their Friday's will continue.

"We'll just keep paintings on Fridays," said West with a chuckle.

"We'll usually have a drop of wine and then in the evenings we'll usually have a meal – so it's also a friendly and social thing."

The bricks behind the barley



Bricks & Barley opens Jan. 25. (Christina Manocchio)

Christina Manocchio
Staff

Virgil is about to get a new place to watch sports, listen to live music and grab a bite to eat. Bricks & Barley is an upscale sports bar, featuring 24 local beers and an award winning chef.

The idea to open a restaurant occurred when the property came up for sale. Eymann asked a friend and cousin to join his dream to open a restaurant.

Bricks & Barley will be the first upscale sports bar in Virgil.

"There was a huge demand for a restaurant of this calibre, this style. People needed a change, so we thought we'd give them that change," said John Eymann, owner and manager of Bricks & Barley.

The menu will feature typical sports bar food, like hamburgers and poutine, but also feature steaks and broasted chicken (deep fried in a pressure cooker).

Head chef Jeremy Clarke Gillian was a former member of Junior Culinary Team Canada, which ranked sixth in the world and won silver and gold in the Culinary Olympics. In 2016, he won the judge's choice in the

Community Care Downtown Chili Cook Off in St. Catharines.

The menu has a special take on typical bar food. They feature items like deep fried dill coins, instead of the entire pickle.

"We have some of your normal sports bar fare mixed with some elements of fine dining," said Gillian.

Their pulled pork sandwiches aren't just your run of the mill simmered meat, it's competition style. Meaning, it's smoked for at least 12 hours. Once the smoke house is built in the back, they plan on doing competition style ribs. They will also feature wood oven pizzas, with a dill pickle pizza on the menu.

"You're not going to leave here hungry, you're going to get a good portion of food," said Gillian.

In the future, the restaurant will feature a 15-person, fine dining room with a five course tasting menu with one sitting a night.

"That way you create a buzz like 'oh I want to get in there,'" said Gillian.

A soft opening is planned for Jan. 18 and 19. Local rock band Vinyl Flux is set to perform on the grand opening Jan. 25.

NOTL has a thirst for live jazz

Brittany Carter
Staff

Bringing jazz to the residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Twilight Jazz Series recently expanded its showcase to offer an outlet for local jazz fans.

On the third Sunday of every month until June 2019, Cork's Playhouse Theatre will feature a steady flow of jazz musicians.

Fans can also still expect shows at Mahtay Café and Lounge in St. Catharines on the first Sunday of the month throughout the series.

Juliet Dunn, executive director, artistic producer and co-creator of the TD Niagara Jazz Festival, says she saw an opening for more jazz in NOTL, "A lot of residents of NOTL really

liked jazz. The timing was just right."

Dunn says there are a lot of great venues for live rock and alternative music in the area, but jazz was something she felt was lacking.

Each month boasts a new theme showcasing a variety of jazz styles. Part of its aim is to show music-goers that jazz isn't as static as expected. She says some people hear the word jazz and they have certain expectations. "The word jazz has a stigma around it."

She's trying to show them that it can be so much more.

Dunn updated the marketing angle to attract a variety of people. With themed shows each month she says they can showcase a wider range



Avery Cantello with Miles Fuller. (Submitted/Jeff Speed)

of styles, drawing people out that otherwise might not have attended.

"Everything this season has sold out so far. Changing the marketing angle has helped a lot."

Employing a variety of jazz musicians, the festival aims to keep things local. Dunn says that while she strives to hire local artists, she also brings some in from all over. "Part of our mandate is to employ local musicians. It's nice to help and contribute to what they can offer."

Dan Plunkett, owner of DPLU Music, a sponsor of the Twilight Jazz Festival, says it's a great community event. "We've had some great performances so far. It always draws a really great crowd."

Plunkett says they were happy to expand. "It's been a great cultural experience for Niagara, I'm glad to be a part of it in NOTL."

This month the theme is January Blues.

Avery Cantello Blues Band can be found at Cork's Playhouse Theatre on Jan. 20.

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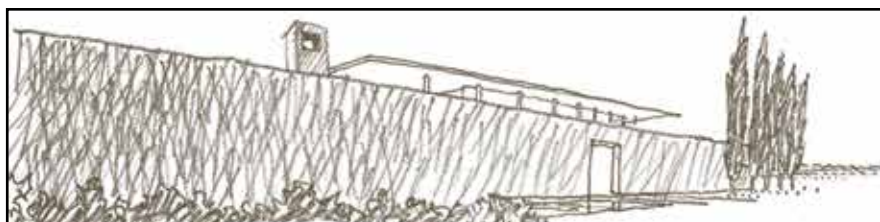
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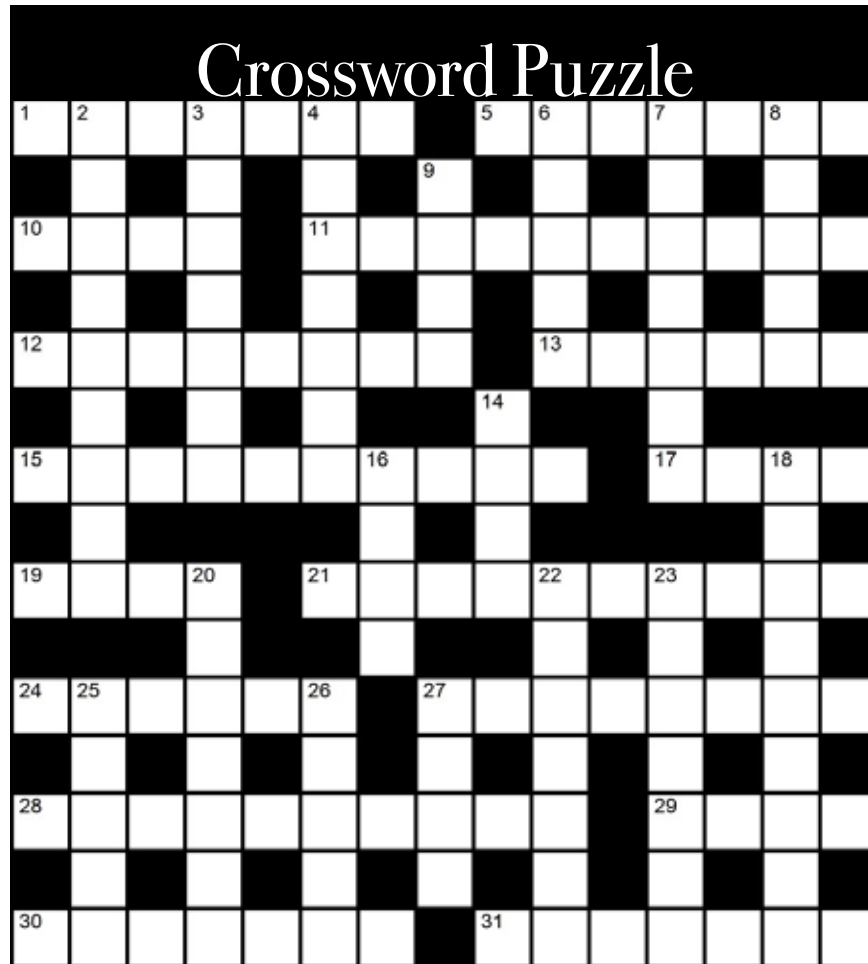
The Lake Report is looking for puzzle makers who would like to help develop this page. We are seeking both standard and cryptic crossword writers. editor@niagaranow.com

Across

- 1. Of the red planet (7)
- 5. Family line (7)
- 10. Sandbag (4)
- 11. Hostile (10)
- 12. Balladeer (8)
- 13. Resembling a horse (6)
- 15. Yuletide visitor (5,5)
- 17. Talk irrationally (4)
- 19. Agitate (4)
- 21. Not doable (10)
- 24. Entertains (6)
- 27. Burn without flame (8)
- 28. Narrow entrance (10)
- 29. Encounter (4)
- 30. "Stand by your Man" singer (7)
- 31. Exact (7)

Down

- 2. Space traveller (9)
- 3. This evening (7)
- 4. Water-dwelling (7)
- 6. Banish (5)
- 7. Vanquish (7)
- 8. Thermoplastic yarn (5)
- 9. From a distance (4)
- 14. Greek liqueur (4)
- 16. Member (4)
- 18. Worth nothing (9)
- 20. Politician's badge (7)
- 22. Sensational novel (7)
- 23. Mohammedan (7)
- 25. Temperamental (5)
- 26. Slumbered (5)
- 27. Storage shelter (4)



Want the answers early? Scan the puzzles using HP Reveal. (Must be following Niagara Now's channel.)



Last issue's answers



Sudoku



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2 Samuel Street, NOTL \$1,395,000



MLS# 30691472
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FEATURES

Nature's lens with Owen Bjorgan: What do Niagara and this tiny area of Australia have in common?



Owen Bjorgan
Biophilic World
Featured



An excellent view at sunset hour can be found up along the Niagara Escarpment's Bruce Trail, from Queenston to St. Davids. (Owen Bjorgan)

Greetings from Australia! I hope everyone has been soaking up their holidays and staying warm. Staying warm for me hasn't been the issue whatsoever. Christmas in the Land Down Under might mean dust storms, cyclones, and 40 degree heat, but this isn't the Australia you likely imagine. Perhaps you're conjuring up images of red dirt, endless horizons, and stark rocky landscapes. That's fair, as that is what the vast majority of this country looks like. I'm tucked into a little nook though, a Hidden Corner, in lush tropical north Queensland, and it is a lot like Niagara. Let me explain.

I had a major epiphany while in the midst of filming in Queensland. The same fundamental fact that I promote on my hiking tours reigns true in both Niagara Region and these rainforests. We have the Carolinian Forest, which is a life zone covering less than one per cent of Canada's landmass,

but it the most species rich area in the nation. Likewise, Queensland's tropical rainforests also cover less than one per cent of Australia, but they harbor the most unique and biodiverse ecosystems the country can offer. Another noteworthy parallel is that both regions have heaps of tourists and their own baggage of environmental issues. This is why I make Hidden Corners nature documentaries, to promote the undeniable importance of these areas to both the local and outside world.

One major initiative that the Queensland government latched onto in the 1980s was to put the value of these rainforests on legislative paper, as if to say, "Hey, wait a minute,

these forests are so precious and unique, that we have to slow down their destruction and practice better management immediately." As a result, most relatively large swaths of habitat were locked up and protected for generations to come, usually in the form of national parks. This is the oldest rainforest on the planet—a living fossil record of plant life and ancient animal ancestors that still live here. It is a 400 million year old evolution factory that has ceased to shutdown, still pumping out new species from its valleys and mountain tops. I've had the sincere pleasure and privilege of exploring it, breathing in the primal air that steams from it.

Where do I possibly begin

with stories that not many Lake Report readers could relate to? I got spooked by a giant wild boar who prevented me from getting to the summit of a mountain. There's the six ft. tall southern cassowary, an upright bird with a blue and red head, who tried to steal the asparagus from our camp. There are rivers and beaches that look like the perfect postcard, but they are home to saltwater crocodiles and irukandji jellyfish, which is nature's way of saying "don't swim here, silly!" Every night I am visited by massive insects and the sweet sounds of rare tree frogs. It's a jungle out there.


Exploring these wild places further fuels my passion to deliver memorable experiences on my hiking tours in Niagara. I can only hope that people visit places like NOTL and tropical north Queensland and walk away with a powerful sense of place on the global scale.

On that note, keep an eye out for hiking tours beginning May 2, 2019 onwards, and the Hidden Corners: Tropical North Queensland documentary this summer. Information on both the tours and films can be found on my Facebook page and Youtube channel, "Biophilic World." Until next time, enjoy an especially cold Canadian beverage for me.

bjorgan.owen@gmail.com

Niagara on-the-Lake HYDRO

Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro Inc would like to thank all the residents and business of the area for another successful Food & Toy Drive. The drive collected well over 1,000 lbs of non-perishable donations, cash and toy donations to help Niagara residents in need.



Santa's Little Helpers

Historical Society showcasing history through art

Brittany Carter
Staff

This winter the Niagara Historical Society & Museum is offering a chance to discover Niagara-on-the-Lake's history through local art.

A temporary exhibit called Paintings of Niagara-on-the-Lake will be on display until May 4, featuring works by local names such as Betty Lane.

About a decade ago, the museum showcased an exhibit called The Forgotten Years which held works by many local artists, including Lane.

Shawna Butts, acting curator of the Niagara Historical Society Museum, says the museum acquired 16 paintings from Lane's family in 2014 — many of which have never previously



Works by Betty Lane. (Supplied photo)

been shown at the museum.

Butts says the museum is lucky to have so many pieces by Lane.

"A lot of her paintings from that period really highlight a unique time in NOTL history. They offer a kind of insight into a time in NOTL that was maybe a little more quiet."

Many other residents who tried to capture NOTL in art will be featured as well. RJR Pottery, a trio working with local clay sourced from Queenston and NOTL ponds will also have pieces on display.

Francis Granger, another artist who will be featured, was not an artist by

trade, according to Butts. Granger was commissioned by the first curator of the museum to paint unique aspects of NOTL history.

"He certainly had a passion for art," Butts says.

She thinks residents should check out the exhibit to see what the museum carries in its collections.

"I think a lot of people are shocked by how much artwork the museum does have in its collection. Some people think we're mostly archives and three-dimensional objects. We do in fact have quite an extensive art collection."

The temporary exhibition is on display in the main gallery at the museum, located at 43 Castlereagh St. in Old Town NOTL.



with Brian Marshall

Keeping the rain out

We're surrounded by a sea of 20th Century asphalt shingled houses and one roof looks much like the next. But, if you lived in Niagara during the 1800's, what kept the rain out of your house? For most folks, the answer would have been either tinplate or wood shingles.

Tinplate, a thin iron sheet coated with tin & a little lead to inhibit rust, was produced in the U.K. and used extensively across Canada as roofing. In fact, it was so popular in our market through the 18th & 19th Centuries that an 1892 Scientific American edition referred to it as "Canada Plate". Easy to work with and relatively inexpensive, it could be installed in sheets joined by standing-seams or as shingles (some with fanciful embossed designs) which were very often painted. Sadly, in Niagara, very few tinplate roofs have survived.

Surrounded by the Carolinian forest, wood shingles crafted from eastern white cedar, white pine or white oak was a 'natural' roofing for Niagara homes. Properly installed (three layered on lathe, etc.) and regularly maintained, these shingles had a lifespan of roughly 50 years. Interestingly, it was considered good practice to coat these roofs with a mixture of brick dust & fish oil or a paint made of linseed oil and iron oxide... but it does beg the question: How did the neighbourhood smell on a hot summer day?

Over the holidays I discovered kicking one's own butt is physically impossible. Despite my wife's 'kind' offer to do it for me, I decided to settle for smacking my forehead and feeling like a Homer Simpson clone. You see, I'd forgotten one of my own cardinal rules; to-wit: Always ask for input because, unless you're God, nothing worthwhile will be created in a vacuum.

So folks, you can help me out. Is there something you'd like to see addressed in an Arch-I-Text column? Is there something about the architecture of your (or someone else's) home which has you scratching your head? Feel free to send me an email at homeguide.ca@gmail.com and we'll get it addressed.

Happy New Year and thanks for reading!

Brian



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Consecutive Wallbangers games end in disappointing ties, rule changes considered

Ross Robinson
(#9 Blue Team)
Special to TLR

Submitted by Ross Robinson The weekly Sunday morning Wallbangers Old Timers Hockey Game ended in a fairly exciting 7-7 tie earlier this week. Red Team, captained by Carl Glauser, held a 6-1 lead half way through the third period, but tenacious forechecking and great work along the half walls allowed Blue Team to tie the game with only 34 seconds left. Ken "Svenny Greer" lazared a bewdy pass to Greg Wight who one timed it home past Neil Roberts. Seconds earlier, big J. R. Lewis had won a tough puck battle in the corner to get the puck to Greer."

The age gap on the Wallbangers rosters has caused some problems in the past few years. To that end, an Ad Hoc Rules Committee has been formed, comprised of three aging veterans. League Commissioner Bill Dickson is working with smooth skating Montreal Baie d'Urfe native Phil Torell and rugged defenceman Marcel Lounsbury. Marcel played his kids hockey on the very

chilly outdoor rinks and ponds of Rouyn-Noranda in, northern Quebec. He brings a keen sense of fair play to Wallbanger hockey, with skaters of various abilities enjoying the game without being hamstrung by referees. Let the campers run the camp, and all that.

Having a Rules Committee sounds rather formal, but is a necessary step. Should the mandate of the Rules Committee be to intelligently guide the evolution of the game, or to protect the status quo? Players get bigger, players get stronger, and lucky players get older. The rules must be modified to reflect new realities. For example, this season we have limited players to a maximum of three goals per game. After a third goal, the superstar must pass off to a teammate, sharing the thrill of the puck bulging the twine. If a player scores a fourth goal, the opposing team is credited with goal. This rule was borrowed from Ball Hockey International in St. Catharines.

Already this year, relative youngsters Ben Glauser, Evan McCaughey and J. R. Lewis have had hat tricks. Terry Nord, a really good hockey player, had two

goals and a cross bar just before Christmas. Amazingly, J. R. Lewis, who can play well as both a forward and a goaltender, had forgotten his regular skates, and had his three goal game wearing his heavy goalie skates. Instead of the squeak, squeak sound of hollow ground skates, we heard a weird clunk, clunk sound as J. R. moved up and down the ice. Nobody enjoys the game of hockey more than J.R. And, he is a true raconteur on the bench, while most of us struggle to get our wind for our next shift.

Another rule change being considered is how to end game. Should a time limit buzzer halt proceedings, even if the game is tied? Surely, not a wimpy coin toss! Should a quick and tidy shoot out declare a winner? We could shorten our warm-up, and if the game is tied at 8:19 a.m., the rink attendant could sound the buzzer. Simultaneously, one player from each team would skate in on a breakaway. In the unlikely even both players score, another quick round. We would be very cognizant of our 8:20 finish time, so as not to grab any of Frank McIntyre's time to

follow..

We'll see where this goes.

Another possible step forward for Wallbangers hockey will be a Coaching Certification course. Most Sunday mornings, a few players are missing. Life does get in the way. Business trips, vacations, sickness, malfunctioning alarm clocks, late, late Saturday nights, so many things. This often causes a discussion during the warmup between Captain Glauser and Captain Shantz, moderated by Commissioner Dickson.

A few players may be traded, in the attempt to even things up. The causes the traded players to be a bit out of sync. Both teams should use the same break out patterns, forechecking strategies, etc. This would allow seamless movements of players between teams

Or am I overthinking this?

There is no worry about PK and PP systems, because Wallbanger hockey has no referees to create PK and PP situations.

Slow motion hockey is fun to watch, and plenty of seats are always available at the Meridian Arena in Virgil Sunday mornings at 7 a.m.



Wallbangers veterans Marcel Lounsbury (above) and Phil Torell (below) have agreed to sit on a committee to review and perhaps modify the Official Rules of Wallbanger Hockey. Commissioner Bill Dickson will be chair of this Ad HOC committee.

NOTL Hydro food gives back big during the holidays

Christina Manocchio
Staff

Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro and the community came together during the holiday season, in an effort to make the holidays brighter for a number of local families.

As part of its eighth-annual food drive, NOTL Hydro collected donations from the public during the Christmas parade, and community members dropped off donations at the hydro office in Virgil.

"Most people go to the parade to have fun and to watch ... This is one way people can be giving back," said Tim Curtis, president of NOTL Hydro.

The company estimates it received more than 100 toys and more than 1,000 pounds of food in donations this holi-

day season.

Brodie Mosher, manger, conservation and administration at NOTL Hydro, said more of the community is starting to remember the food and toy drive.

"A lot of people bring stuff to the parade to give us," he said.

NOTL Hydro has been supporting Newark Neighbours with donations for the last eight years. Newark Neighbours has a limit of 10 families that receive toys, so NOTL Hydro also donated toys and food to Gillian's Place and Project SHARE.

In the new year, NOTL Hydro is starting a tree fund campaign. When hydro customers sign up for e-billing, the funds saved will be contributed to planting trees within the community.



Donations were made during the annual Santa Clause Parade. (Courtesy of NOTL Hydro)

The summary of the 2018 VQAO report

Richard Harley
Editor


The Vintners Quality Alliance Ontario has released its annual Vintage Report, and it's a tale of tumultuous weather and challenging harvest conditions, but the overall outlook for wines from this vintage is positive, according to the report.

We had a very cold winter, a warm March, but then "winter reappeared in April, bringing cold weather, snow and ice". Finally Spring arrived in May, followed by a summer that included some extreme heat, heatwaves, and thunderstorms. Rain and humidity brought challenges during harvest season, but the report noted that



"Precision agriculture, teamwork and expertise ensured grapes were harvested in peak condition." There was some reduction in yield, but the VQAO report concluded that "above average heat paired with a dry summer allowed a good level of ripeness and concentration to develop in remaining 2018 fruit."

Pauline Reimer Gibson is an Audiologist with over 20 years of experience who loves helping people of all ages in the community. Julia Dick is the Front Office Coordinator and a longtime resident of Virgil. Call Julia today to book a free hearing test!



Pauline Reimer Gibson, Audiologist



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OBITUARIES & MEMORIALS

Luci Vaandering

October 3, 1948 - December 28, 2017



A year has passed and with it my first Christmas without you. Where have you gone Sweetie?

Your 'Celebration of Life' last May proved your importance others. The overwhelming show of love, respect and support cannot be denied. The void in many hearts shall never be filled. Your laughter, your never ending sense of humour, your warmth and dedication to me and Jimmy and Joe and countless others are so deeply missed. You were my best friend, my first mate, my loyal supporter, my lover.....my everything. Ben looks for you often but has finally accepted his lose.....so sad!

I miss you, I love you, I think of you daily. .
Rob

Terence "Terry" William Hardy

May 12, 1943 - December 13, 2018



HARDY, Terence "Terry" William - Born May 12, 1943 in Romford, England died peacefully at his home in NOTL surrounded by immediate family and friends on Dec 13, 2018. He leaves behind his loving wife & soulmate Sandra (Kesselman), sons Russell (Sophia) and Matthew (Jennifer), grandchildren Adam (Erin), Owen and Tessa and many friends. A lifelong civil engineer; past president of Ainley and Associates; past Chair of The Consulting Engineers of Ontario and past President of Ontario Public Works Association. He was also the founder of the Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis support group of Niagara. Terry had a passion for language, diction and music and shared this with all those who would listen! He will always be with us; his spirit will be wearing a wizard's hat! He has indeed moved mountains and was valiant until the very end. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to Canadian Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation. Cpff.ca/donations/terry-hardy-fund/ or to NOTL community Palliative Care Service (905) 468-4433. A celebration of life will take place at a time during the spring months. Memories and condolences may be shared at:

www.morganfuneral.com.

Renate Hamm

October 3, 1948 - December 28, 2017



HAMM, Renate - September 23, 1923- January 7, 2019

Peacefully slipped into Glory from Pleasant Manor (Heritage Place), Virgil on Monday, January 7, 2019 as her Lord and Saviour called her home. Beloved wife of the late Kurt Hamm Sr. (2008). Loving and

caring mother of Berent (Lina), AB, Gudrun (Nick) Giardina, Wieland (Dorothy), Dirk (Doriann), MB and Kurt Jr. Dearly loved and admired by her grandchildren Adrianna (Brian), Dale, Alicia (Nick), Anita, Peter, Nicolas, Craig (Lindsay), Lisa (Matt), Melanie (Jason), Clayton and great grandchildren, Dylan, Adrie, Lexi, Kaitlyn, Becca, Manley, Burke and Anna. Renate enjoyed her career as a nurse at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Hospital, retiring in 1988. She loved her time serving the patients and befriending the staff. However, her greatest love was her husband and to spend time with her entire family especially her grandchildren and great grandchildren.

The family will receive friends at MORGAN FUNERAL HOME, 415 Regent St., Niagara-on-the-Lake, on Monday January 14, 2019 from 6-8 p.m. Private family burial service to take place in Niagara Lakeshore Cemetery. Everyone is invited for a service to celebrate the life of Renate and it will be held at Cornerstone Community Church, 434 Hunter Rd., Niagara-on-the-Lake on Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at 11 a.m. If desired memorial donations to Radiant Care at Pleasant Manor would be appreciated by the family. Memories, photos and condolences

Did you know?

Niagara Now's printer sources 100 per cent of its paper fibre from industry leading paper mills, which use quick-growth, sustainable, renewable plots of land, rather than clear-cutting forests. The ink is also vegetable based.

DAWSON, Helen Iles

DAWSON, Helen Iles - Passed away peacefully in her sleep, on Thursday, December 27, 2018, at the Royal Henley Retirement Residence, St. Catharines, at the age of 97. Predeceased by her husband Harry Dawson (2001). She will be sadly missed by her children Delpha (James) Wake, Huntsville, Robert, St. Catharines, Gina (Paul) Smith, Mulmur, Donald (Judy), Niagara-on-the-Lake, Janine (Michael) Chermiuk, Jackson Township, Ohio and nine grandchildren; Greg (late Elaine), Craig, Bradley (Melissa), Raymond (Jess), Haley (Tyler), Lauren, Kaitlyn, Mark and Mackenzie and great grandchildren; Mathew, Alicia, Kyle, Campbell, Tate, Maia, Kinley, Zander and Sterling and sister Delpha Williams.

Fondly remembered by many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. Predeceased by her brother Watson (Ester) Younie and brother-in-law George Williams.

A service to celebrate the life of Helen Dawson will be held at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 323 Simcoe St. Niagara-on-the-Lake, on Saturday, January 19, 2019 at 11 a.m., followed by burial in the church cemetery and a reception in the Kirk Hall next door to the church. Donations to the St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, would be greatly appreciated. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com

Trius Winery Restaurant and Masaki Sushi among OpenTable's Top 100 restaurants

Jer Houghton
Staff

Niagara-on-the-Lake's Trius Winery Restaurant was named to OpenTable's 100 Best Restaurants in Canada list for the second year in a row.

OpenTable, the world's leading online restaurant-reservation service, selected this year's list from over 500,000 verified diner reviews and 2,500 restaurants between November 2017 to October 2018. As voted by OpenTable diners, restaurants that made the list were selected based on the minimum overall score and number of qualifying reviews.

"We're a destination for travellers from abroad. We're definitely a place that people have on their radar when they want to celebrate an anniversary,

birthday or special occasion," said Jonathon Ingrao, restaurant manager of Trius Winery Restaurant.

"But we're not limited to that because we're also super popular with the locals, who know that there's a consistently super high calibre of service and food quality."

In speaking to the Canadian-inspired menu, Ingrao attributes much of the restaurant's success to Executive Chef Frank Dodd, who has been with the restaurant for 13 years, alongside the "extensive portfolio" of Senior Winemaker Craig McDonald.

"We have an amazing wine list and winemaker," said Ingrao. "We have a really extensive portfolio of wines to choose from and a very hospital, professional staff to suggest wine pairings and help guests

with their overall experience."

Ingrao said OpenTable as a reservation platform has been a really important tool and crucial to their success - and Caroline Potter, OpenTable's chief dining officer, touted Trius Winery Restaurant as one of the region's stalwart establishments.

"We were struck by some of the regional highlights in our diner-generated list of Canada's best restaurants. As an example, the Niagara region continues to have a remarkably significant number of restaurants that rank among the country's culinary leaders," she said.

Also named to the list was NOTL's Masaki Sushi.

"We're seeing a wide range of cuisines reflected in this list - Peruvian, Japanese, Syrian, Indian. These restaurants

were identified based on diner reviews over the course of the year and the diners have spoken by celebrating the culinary diversity that reflects Canada's population and different countries of origin," said Potter.

"These restaurants resonate with diners because of their shared commitment to dining and hospitality excellence and allow locals and visitors to experience international flavours."

The annual list of Canada's best restaurants consisted of 57 restaurants from within Ontario, 21 within Alberta, 13 within British Columbia, seven within Quebec, with the remaining from within Newfoundland and Saskatchewan.

"It's incredible to see Canada's diversity, culinary and hospitality excellence showcased in this year's 100 Best.



OpenTable is a reservation platform. (Jer Houghton)

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St. Davids in the 20th Century



Four Mile Creek Road in St. Davids circa 1920. SUPPLIED/ST. DAVIDS RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION



Denise Ascenzo
Featured

One might think that all the excitement and action for St. Davids was in the 19th century but during the 20th century the town had its fair share of excitement.

At the turn of the century St. Davids had one bank, the Imperial Bank, located in the Odd Fellows Hall at 231 Creek Rd.

The Odd Fellows Society was a fraternal organization dating back to the mid -1700s. Their primary function was to assist those in need; widows and orphans to men looking for work. The name is felt to have derived from their charitable work, seeming "odd" to many people ... thus they became known as Odd Fellows.

The Imperial Bank in St. Davids might have been considered an easy target for bank robbers what with it being a small quiet village, close to Niagara Falls where roads and railway lines would make for an easy and successful escape.

The first robbery attempt was in 1907. In the early morning hours the robbers entered the bank and blew off the door of the safe with nitroglycerin. The teller who was returning home (one might say from a late night of partying) heard the explosion. Having nothing but stones at his disposal, he threw them through the back windows of the bank to scare the robbers away.

With guns blazing, the robbers ran from the bank to their get-away vehicle, a horse drawn carriage, fleeing the scene leaving behind \$5,000 sitting in the open safe.

By 1923, the Imperial Bank was now in its own building at 253 Four Mile Creek Rd. It was built to house the bank on the street level with an apartment being provided for the bank manager and family on the second floor.

A single robber attempted this next heist, when during the night he entered the apartment of the manager, Mr. Rogers. The robber's plan was to force the manager to open the safe.

Unfortunately, the manager woke up before the robber was fully in the bedroom, a struggle ensued and the robber's gun went off wounding Rogers.

However, Rogers kept up his fight and moved the struggle out onto the back stairs of the building. With the gun going off, many neighbours awoke and decided they must assist.

One such person, in the home behind the bank, was a Mrs. Archie Woodruff who threatened to fire her shotgun from her bedroom window. Poor Mr. Rogers pleaded for her not to do such a thing for he had already been shot once and did not want to take his chances on being shot again.

At that very moment another shot rang out. It was Mrs. Rogers, who upon finding her husband's revolver, fired through the screen door at the bank robber, wounding him. Another bank robbery had been foiled.

On Aug. 17, 1951, two men were successful in robbing the Imperial Bank in St. Davids.

Boldly entering the bank they demanded from the teller, Ann Neufeld, the money in her till. While they were distracted with scooping all the money out of the drawer, Neufeld was able to sound the alarm. With the alarm going off, another teller grabbed the manager's revolver and fired off three shots at the robbers. The robbers fled the bank and

jumped into their getaway vehicle, this time a car, which they had stolen.

The Evening Review (Niagara Falls) reported this on their front page "Brave Woman Teller Saves Bank \$27,000, St. Davids Holdup". The robbers were both apprehended within a few weeks of the robbery.

The last bank robbery was on Sept. 10, 1951. Three men tried to rob the Imperial Bank in St. Davids and once again the teller sounded the alarm (no idea if it was Neufeld).

The manager grabbed his revolver and shot two of the bandits. With all this noise of the gun shots from the bank, many people decided to become involved.

Carl Slingerland, who owned a grocery store, ran out onto the street with his gun and fired shots into the tires of the getaway car. Another customer in the bank grabbed the manager's revolver and took off after the robbers firing the gun at them as they ran. Three young, wounded bandits were captured later in the day.

It was discovered that their getaway car had been stolen from a lawyer, Judy LaMarsh, who later became a Federal Cabinet Minister for Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson.

Not all the excitement in St. Davids has involved bank robberies. One very unusual tradition, Devil's Night or Cabbage Night, which was held on the night before Halloween, created great amusement for many, but not all.

Pranks by local young men have stayed in the memory of residents over the years with many of these stories being spun into local folklore.

Mrs. Paxton and her cow, Daisy, were always a challenge to the lads. Pranksters would sneak into the barn to steal Daisy and tie her up in the centre of the village.

One year it is said the Paxton went to extreme measures to secure Daisy by locking all her gates and barricading the barn door. Not to be thwarted, the young pranksters removed barn boards and poor Daisy was on a new adventure.

Another prank saw the lads stealing farm equipment, such as wagons or buggies from surrounding farms and placing them on the veranda of the local grocery store owned by the Woodruff-Lowrey family. It was a grand endeavour, but the fun they said was watching all the farmers sorting through the pile of equipment the next day figuring out who owned

what.

In 1960-63 Hwy 405 was being constructed just south of the village of St. Davids. One Cabbage Night (or Devil's Night) some local lads took all the blinking warning lights and set them up as a detour route around the construction. The next morning many unsuspecting drivers were lead southward, up Henley's Hill (top of Tanbark Road) to a dead end.

But that was not the worst of it, once stuck in the dead end the vehicles were pelted with tomatoes.

St. Davids has a very colourful past, one that even new residents will enjoy learning that their village was not always a quiet peaceful place.

To learn more about the topic of this story you can visit the Niagara Historical Society & Museum website at, www.niagarahistoricalmuseum.com, or visit the museum for yourself.

The Niagara Historical Museum is located at 43 Castlereagh St. in Old Town, in Memorial Hall. Visit, or give them a call at 905-468-3912.

Ascenzo is a regular Niagara Now contributor. Her full profile can be found at niagaranow.com.





COMMUNITY

All NOTL residents are welcome to submit photos and stories for consideration in this section. Send submissions to editor@niagaranow.com.



Dreaming of spring?

Photos: Tim Horton's Free Skate



RESIDENT PHOTO



We opened on Wednesday December 5th. This family waited outside for the big moment! Zuzanna Bator, 6, (in blue), Klaudia Bator, 5, and Felix Bator, 3, and Magdalena Bator is the mom.. Submitted by Ashleigh Friesen.

Wishing you a happy and exciting 2019

Richard Harley
Editor

As the year begins, we at The Lake Report would like to wish you all an exciting and successful 2019.

From all of us on the team, we thank you for your support this year. Without you, the paper would not have gotten far off the ground and reach the amount of dedicated readership we have today.

We invite you to join us at our official ribbon-cutting on Thursday, Jan. 17, at our newly renovated office space located at 496 Mississauga St. in Historic Old Town, Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The afternoon will cel-

brate the paper's jump to a much-anticipated weekly edition for our Volume 2.

Members of local council, including Lord Mayor Betty Disero, will be in attendance to cut the ribbon, after which people are encouraged to enjoy light refreshments with everyone and the team.

On behalf of The Lake Report staff and contributors, thank you very much for your business and support as we look forward to delivering you and the community another fantastic year.

Wishing you the very best for 2019.

Happy New Year!

- The Lake Report Team



Betty & Jane: Plunger Patrol Inspecting NOTL's bathrooms:

Public Washrooms (Old Town)

After an afternoon of touring in NOTL you may be in need of a comfort stop. Never fear the Public Washrooms on Market Street is your answer. We were very surprised to find this well marked spot with lots of room, bright lights, easy access, and very clean facility. If you have a toddler in tow there are baby friendly change tables and a large sink area lets you wash-up with ease. These restrooms are cleaned and inspected at least three times each day as posted and signed on the schedule.

4/5 Golden Plungers



RIDDLE ME THIS:

I travel all over the world, but always stay in my corner. What am I?

Last Week's answer: A river.

Email answers to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to win a prize.



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FEATURED LOCAL STORY

Christopher Newton gets Order of Canada

Brittany Carter
Staff

Christopher Newton spent most of his career in a creative role; that didn't end after retirement.

Born in Deal, England on June 11, 1936, Newton has since found a home here in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

After studying at the University of Leeds, Purdue University and the University of Illinois, he taught briefly before modifying his goals.

"I decided I didn't like doing that, I wanted to be an actor. I thought that might be a more interesting job."

He moved to Canada in 1961 to audition for the Stratford Festival in Stratford, Ontario.

"I thought that was the type of company I'd like to be a part of."

Although he was turned down, his resolve never wavered.

"I decided that I was an actor, so I had to tell people I was. I had to find a job."

Moving to Toronto and securing a room at the YMCA, he proceeded to apply anywhere that was hiring actors. He landed a position with the Canadian Players where he toured the country performing classical productions.

"We were playing at the strangest places. Often, the people had never seen a theatrical production of any kind before. You had to make it real, you had to make it true. That was six months of learning for me."

With a desire to grow and take control, he says he resolved that he wanted to be a director.

"I wanted the control. You know, as an actor, you don't have a great deal of control. It seemed to me that the best place to be, if you wanted control, was as a director."

He says he didn't think it all through, though, and was concerned no one would hire him.

"It just happened, as it does in life. Nobody was going to hire me as a director anyway because I had no experience - so I had to found a company. It was starting Theatre Calgary in 1968; that's how I became a director. I had to direct."

In 1973 he went on to become artistic director for the Vancouver Playhouse. In his time there, Corrine Koslo, long-time friend and professional actress on CBC and Netflix series *Anne*, says she attributes him with launching many careers, including her own.

"No one had an acting ensemble in Canada in the

mid 70s in the regionals; Christopher Newton did. The Vancouver Playhouse had a company of professional actors. A school, which I attended 1979 to 1981, that fed into that company. It was a kind of golden age of theatre in Vancouver in the mid 70s and early 80s; very exciting times. Newton was responsible for that. He was a great architect, a builder of company."

Koslo says he was always interested in collaboration and regarding what artists can bring to the table.

"He truly loves actors. He is an actor himself. I think that is why he was so successful in creating ensembles that thrived. We were alive with ideas, imagination and a real desire to grow into great actors under his guidance. He set a very high bar, not just for the actors, for the entire company."

That desire to propel an entire company forward is one reason he was sought after by other theatre companies. The Shaw Festival approached Newton to come work for them on several occasions, he rejected them every time until finally accepting the position.

"They must really want me, I thought. I ultimately said yes."

He was reluctant to take the position because he says, at the time, the festival was a bit of a mess.

"It had lost its sense of direction, it didn't quite know who it was. We were very successful in Vancouver. I knew this was going to be a very difficult job. I didn't think that I wanted it."

Looking back, he says he is very happy to have taken the position.

He had a hand in making Shaw what it is today. Nicholas MacMartin, married partner, says the festival isn't as big now as it was while Newton was artistic director.

"The company was never larger. It's never been bigger than it was in his time. He hired more actors than they can afford to now."

MacMartin says Newton was skilled at putting all the money for the festival on the stage.

He used resources on hand instead of sourcing out.

"He is so knowledgeable about music. He used that knowledge in his productions all the time. He didn't hire that many composers in those days in order to save money. His knowledge of classical music was such that he could just pick the most amazing stuff for his shows

that no one knew. Things that were out of copyright, so it didn't cost anything."

Working as artistic director of Shaw has taught Newton a few things over the years.

"I think it has taught me not to be selfish. It has also revealed Niagara-on-the-Lake to me, which is an interesting thing in itself."

Newton was in the town one summer in the early 1960s, at the beginning of the festival.

"Quite frankly, I never thought it would last. It didn't seem very serious. The directors and the whole atmosphere, it didn't seem like a serious company, so I didn't treat the town serious."

Returning in the 1970s, he says he was inspired by the area. While he didn't see NOTL supporting it at the time, they were aiming to create an international company.

"We were not only creating a company of actors but defining what the place did. It



Christopher Newton. BRITTANY CARTER/THE LAKE REPORT

had a very special mandate."

Newton's mandate for the festival was to put on productions only created within George Bernard Shaw's lifetime. Having lived for over 90 years, from 1856 to 1950, there was a lot of material to work with. Newton enjoyed putting on plays about the modern world.

"About 80 per cent of the plays nobody had ever seen. It was a discovery, but they were discoveries from the past. People liked that in the 80s and 90s."

Newton is at home in NOTL and says he is happy to stay, although he didn't think this is where he would end up.

"I always thought that I'd go back to Vancouver, but Vancouver in the 70s was very different than what it is now. I adored Vancouver in the 70s. It still had the smell of a pacific port town - it still had a roughness that was so specific and so interesting. That's completely gone - so

I'll certainly not go back to Vancouver. I like Toronto very much, but it didn't seem quite the place I wanted to be. And I'm lazy, I didn't want to move."

His home garden and the area had a hand in keeping him here. Paralleling his experience working as theatre director and designing and maintaining gardens, he spoke of his ability to take something untamed and give it form.

"This garden fascinated me for the past 20 years, designing and taking care of it. What I like about the garden, and how it kind of reflects on what I've done, is that you must allow for change constantly. Plants grow bigger or die - you must take that into account."

"So, you create structures for them to be happy in and for them to look good for us. That's exactly what I was doing in the theatre - creating structures which allowed individuals to show off and

to grow; it was very similar."

In 1996, Newton was appointed a member of the Order of Canada; in 2018 he was named an Officer.

"It means you have a national significance, if you're an officer. As a member you've done something really good for your local area. They made me a member toward the end of my time at the Shaw because we've done quite important things here. I think I was bumped up a bit because of the 50th anniversary of Theatre Calgary. There aren't too many people who have founded an institution and then go on to appear at the 50th anniversary. I think that's why I received the promotion to officer - as a compliment to Theatre Calgary."

Koslo says she is happy to see Newton being recognized as an innovator and as one of the great theatre creators of all time.

"Christopher Newton is a visionary."

Mr Furnace 
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