



John Peller.

Grand **new vision** unveiled for Niagara wine and tourism sector

Jill Troyer
The Lake Report

There is a growing sentiment that the Ontario wine industry is poised to move to a new level, bringing

with it major economic benefits for a variety of related sectors.

A report this week by the Wine Marketing Association of Ontario predicts the number of visitors to the

province's wine regions will rise to 3 million a year by 2030, from 2.6 million now.

It also projects "a 75 per cent increase in capital investment by Ontario wine producers, with four mil-

lion new vines planted over 20,000 acres" and "more than 40,000 direct and indirect jobs in Ontario's grape and wine production, tourism and hospitality sectors."

The report comes on the heels of a major speech made by John Peller, chairman and CEO of Andrew Peller Ltd., at a gathering

Continued on Page 5

Hoverlink launch date **postponed** for a year

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Those eager to jet across Lake Ontario on a hovercraft will have to stay on land for another year.

Many people were skeptical about Hoverlink Ont Inc., founded by NOTL resident Christopher Morgan, when it released its plans to operate a first of its kind hovercraft that would get customers to Toronto from Port Weller in St. Catharines, and vice versa, in 30 minutes.

Despite concerns, the company seemed confident that the hovercraft will be operational as of this summer.

However, as of Feb. 28, plans have changed. The company released a press release saying that the launch date will be pushed to the summer of 2024.

This is "due to delays on both sides of Lake Ontario as governing bodies ensure full compliance is met on

Continued on Page 3

Ordnance stones should gather no moss

Town urged to restore historic military property markers



Ted Rumble kneels by one of 17 known remaining ordnance stones he wants the town to restore. There were originally 37. EVAN LOREE

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

One man's quest to restore Niagara-on-the-Lake's oldest rock collection could be a new history-focused tourist attraction for the town by summer's end.

Ted Rumble, a member of the NOTL Museum's board, has been trying to get the town's ordnance boundary stones restored and protected for the last four years.

He has gained some traction with NOTL councillors who referred the proposal to town

staff for a report on costs of restoring them.

In his research, Rumble learned the stones played an important role in shaping the town's future.

The stones are marked with the initials "BO" and an arrow pointing upward.

Those letters stand for Board of Ordnance, which was the British Crown's custodian of military property from 1687 to 1855, Rumble told councillors.

"It was the second biggest department of the British govern-

Continued on Page 2

History shines spotlight on **brave women** of the War of 1812

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

International Women's Day is March 8. This story takes a look at the role of some women during the

War of 1812.

Mary Madden Henry handed the troops hot beverages and food as the vicious and unforgiving war continued all around her.

It's a sight that would remain forever etched in the

soldiers' memories.

It was May of 1813 and the Americans had just attacked British troops at Fort George in what is now Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Amid the fighting and chaos, Henry, who was mar-

ried to a lighthouse keeper named Dominic Henry, surely knew the risk she was taking. Still she braved the prospect of injury or death to help the troops.

The lighthouse was located where the remnants of

Fort Mississauga are today, along the shore of Lake Ontario, surrounded by what is now the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club.

"Mary calmly walked through the men with refreshments and helped the

wounded several times as the battle raged on," Sarah Kaufman, managing director of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum, told a crowd at Navy Hall on Friday.

Continued on Page 11



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Bikes for Farmworkers needs **more helpers** for 2023 season

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report



Volunteers George Schachtschneider, left, and Danny Lummiss repair a bike at the Bikes for Farmworkers shop in Virgil. The service needs more helpers. SOMER SLOBODIAN

Ken Eden, the new leader of Bikes for Farmworkers, is optimistic about the 2023 season.

However, there's one thing that would make him feel more prepared.

"Right now we are looking for volunteers," Eden told The Lake Report.

Bikes for Farmworkers provides repaired bikes to migrant workers across the region for \$20 from mid-March to October.

There's a few changes to the way things will operate this year, "which will be easier to handle with some extra people," said Eden.

There will be three shifts with four people each so volunteers aren't working long hours.

The group only has about six volunteers now repairing

and fixing bikes in the shop.

The shop, in the basement at the old Virgil public school, has four work stations and multiple storage rooms. Those rooms are used to store bikes that are finished or need to be repaired.

Bikes for Farmworkers was founded by Terry Weiner and Mark Gaudet in

2015 – and Eden joined the organization in 2017.

He met Weiner and Gaudet while they were working in the basement of the old Virgil public school.

"Our church (Gateway Community Church) used to be upstairs and one day, I saw some guys coming in and I kind of heard there was somebody fixing bikes.

So I wandered down," he said.

He's been volunteering ever since.

Bikes for Farmworkers has been affiliated with Gateway Community Church since 2020.

Since Eden is on the board of the church and has been the longest-serving volunteer at Bikes for Farmworkers, he was the perfect candidate to take over, said Gaudet – who still helps out behind the scenes.

He's focused on helping Eden with the transition, purchasing bike parts as well as with training new volunteers.

"We had two new recruits call in and they're starting this Thursday and I'm going to take them on as a project," said Gaudet.

As of mid-March, Bikes for Farmworkers will be open Tuesdays and Thursdays, with the latter day

being the busiest.

On Thursdays, many of the seasonal workers will be out shopping in Virgil and will stop by the shop to buy a new bike or bring their two-wheeler in for repair.

"I probably didn't realize how important the bicycles were to these guys until I started doing it," said Eden. That's because for the eight months the workers are here, bikes are their primary mode of transportation, he said.

In 2022, the organization rebuilt 420 bikes and fixed 240. To date, the program has sold more than 2,300 bikes and repaired more than 1,600.

Eden said loves meeting new people and connecting with the workers.

"When we take a bike in to refurbish, we put it through a 50-point refurbishing schedule. We fix everything properly so that

it's safe (and) everything works."

"Then it's quality-controlled by being test-driven by somebody other than the person that fixed it," he added.

Bikes that can't be repaired are used for parts.

When the workers drop off a bike for repair, they get a loaner for the week. They can usually pick up their repaired bike the following week.

Since taking on the lead role, Eden said he's been working on reorganizing and recruiting more volunteers.

Anyone interested in helping out can go to Gatewaynotl.com/bikes and fill out an application.

Eden expects to open the shop by mid-March on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to about 7 or 7:30 p.m.

Ted Rumble is on a quest to restore historic **ordnance stones**

Continued from Front Page

ment after the treasury. It was very powerful."

The stones were used in the 19th century to mark the boundaries of military property.

Rumble said there were "severe penalties" for anyone caught "interfering" with those properties.

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa said he wants to see a budget report on the proposal before making any commitments.

Council voted unanimously to instruct staff to assess the cost of the restoration work and include it in the 2023 budget discussions.

Rumble first brought the history of the ordnance boundary stones to the attention of the previous council three years ago.

"They found it fascinating three years ago. None of them had ever heard of them before," he said.

At that time, council decided to have the municipal heritage committee investigate the stones for their heritage value, Rumble said.

But then the pandemic came along and "it all got forgotten," he said.



Ordnance Boundary Stone 31, located at the edge of Simcoe Park. SUPPLIED

"For us to allow them to get broken or to sink underground, or to be ignored, I think is a travesty," Rumble told The Lake Report in an interview.

Rumble said he first developed an interest in the stones after one was broken outside his home, at Simcoe and Prideaux streets.

He decided then that he'd look them up online and "see what the story is."

He found little at first and even the NOTL Museum had not done much research on them.

"I just found the story became more and more fascinating as time went on," Rumble said.

In NOTL, the stones mark four historic military properties.

They include the Garrison Reserve (known today as the Commons), the Mississauga Reserve (now Queen's Royal Park), Vacant Town Lot A (now Simcoe Park) and the "hospital block," (which is covered by the houses between Queen, Nassau, Dorchester and Johnson streets).

Some of those sites are now NOTL's most famous parks and greenspaces.

So far, 17 of the boundary stones have been found throughout Old Town, but Rumble said historical records show there once were 37.

Still, with 17, NOTL has the world's largest collection of these stones, he said.

"In the past 197 years these stones have been relatively untouched until the advent of motorized equipment," Rumble said.

Many of the stones have

sunk into the ground over time or have been damaged by snow removal and construction equipment.

"Nothing has been done to protect these stones," he said.

Three of them have been damaged since Rumble's first presentation three years ago.

The stones are made of white limestone from the Queenston quarry and are cut to about 9 inches square and are about a foot tall, he added.

Rumble wants the town to take steps to preserve them this summer in commemoration of their 200th anniversary.

The stones "present an authentic story of the early days of our town," he said.

"Restoring the stones means repositioning them up to their original height," he said.

It would also require installing a barrier to protect them from damage caused by snow plows.

Rumble said there are two in Queenston but they don't require as much attention.

"They are set aside, they're remote. They're not at risk of damage," he said.

Councillors were enthusi-

astic about the project.

"I'm very supportive of having something done here," Zalepa said.

"I think it's really important – 200 years is quite significant," he added.

Coun. Erwin Wiens wondered whether Rumble had a budget in mind for the project but Rumble said he did not know the cost of restoring them.

However, he said there would be no ongoing cost to maintain them for the next 200 years.

Restoring the stones "will be a legacy of this council," he said.

Coun. Sandra O'Connor suggested, "This will fit right in with our tourism strategy" and in an interview with The Lake Report, Rumble agreed.

"It strikes me that there are opportunities here. Tourists, you know, they love history in Niagara-on-the-Lake," he said.

Rumble said he has been asked many times about doing a walking tour involving the stones, but thinks the distance might be too long for a trek on foot.

He suggested perhaps a bicycle tour instead.



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MPP Wayne Gates asks council to seriously consider the implications of Bill 23. EVAN LOREE

Gates asks NOTL council to support fight against Doug Ford's new housing bill

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Wayne Gates wants Niagara-on-the-Lake council to support him in fighting back against the province's controversial new housing legislation, Bill 23.

Also known as the More Homes Built Faster Act, it was passed in November and revises many of the rules for development in Ontario.

"Please, take a serious look at Bill 23 and the harm that its going to do," Gates, the New Democrat MPP for Niagara Falls riding, told council Tuesday night.

He added that he wasn't asking for much, just the opportunity to work together to "change the minds of this government for the betterment of this community."

Gates was joined by Owen Bjorgan, a resident expert in biodiversity.

The two argued that the province has sacrificed

environmental protections in the name of affordable housing.

The bill makes amendments to the Greenbelt Act and remove land used to grow tender fruit, replaces them with urban river valleys and parts of the Paris Galt Moraine.

"We should not confuse quantity for quality," Bjorgan warned.

He added that regardless of the land the province chooses to add, it cannot replace them once they've been built on.

"We need all these interconnected pieces," he said. "If we pick away at the Greenbelt, it will erode the biodiversity of the area."

The Lake Report reported in November that the legislation also makes amendments to the wetland evaluation system.

Those changes could potentially declassify land that now protected by its wetland status.

Bjorgan said if the town loses its wetlands, its fresh

water quality will suffer.

Gates said water quality has a direct impact on the town's economy, as it could impact wine production in the region.

"Conservation agencies across the province are ringing the alarm that water quality and our environment directly affects our tourism industry, our property values and our recreation," Gates said.

Bjorgan argued that the legislation had been "rammed through."

And Gates said it had been done without "meaningful consultation" with municipalities.

"Don't be a bystander in an unfair fight," Bjorgan said.

Gates also said the bill was not effective in addressing the issue of affordability.

"It is very clear we are facing a crisis in housing," Gates said. "But (Bill 23) will not solve the housing crisis," he added.

He pointed out Niagara

does not need additional land to meet the province's density requirements or building requirements.

"There's more than enough land to build over 2 million homes in the greater Toronto horseshoe by 2031, without even touching the Greenbelt," he said.

A report written by Kevin Eby, former head planner for Waterloo Region, corroborates Gates' claim.

"Your council has the opportunity to stand up and make sure that you are directing the vision of what the town looks like," Gates added.

He invited the council to join other towns in pushing back against the province to delay its plans for housing until towns are properly consulted.

There were no questions from council, but Coun. Sandra O'Connor pointed out that both the council and staff have submitted responses to the province on the topic of Bill 23.

Hoverlink ferry launch postponed for a year

Continued from Front Page

every level," said Morgan in a press release.

What these delays are isn't known yet.

The Lake Report reached out to Hoverlink for more detail but didn't get a reply back in time for publication.

"We are committed to

connecting communities, making transit more seamless, accessible, fun and environmentally friendly, for the Greater Golden Horseshoe's tourism, economy and overall quality of life," said Morgan in the press release.

Taking the hovercraft would cut travel time

significantly and it would operate year round.

Where driving from St. Catharines to Toronto might take upwards of two hours, taking the hovercraft would only take 30 minutes.

It would cost customers about \$50 to \$60 round trip and each hovercraft is expected to hold about 180

people.

Included in the price would be the electric shuttle service to the ports on each side of the lake.

According to its website, Hoverlink expects to serve upwards of three million customers a year and keep more than 8,000 cars off of the QEW.

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Rev. William Archer, pictured in a photo from St. John's Anglican Church website, was the chaplain of a Casualty Clearing Station in France such as this one. ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

THE MONUMENTS MEN

'Death due to service': William McLeod and William Archer

It's been a century since Niagara-on-the-Lake's iconic clock tower cenotaph was erected. Then, in 1926, the Township of Niagara unveiled its own memorial in Queenston. In recognition of those who fought and died in two world wars and beyond, NOTL historian Ron Dale has been researching the stories of the people – all men – whose names are engraved on the two cenotaphs. This is one in a series of stories documenting and remembering the sacrifices of those commemorated on the municipal memorial in Queenston.

Ron Dale
Special to The Lake Report

After the First World War ended on Nov. 11, 1918, men were no longer being killed by bullets, shells and bombs. But that did not mean the end of suffering.

Thousands of men and some women had been maimed, suffered from diseases picked up in the trenches, or were psychologically damaged by the hell of the long conflict under unimaginable conditions.

In 1928, the Department of Pensions and National Health was established and took over the care of badly injured and ill veterans.

Records were kept of the deaths of veterans for the next several decades and

were scrutinized to determine whether a death was due to war service.

The last two men commemorated on the Queenston cenotaph were considered to have died "due to service." They were from different backgrounds and had different experiences during the war.

William Alexander McLeod was born in St. Davids on April 22, 1892, son of Kenneth McLeod and Emily Hornsby.

William was living in St. Davids when he was conscripted under the Military Service Act in 1918. His younger brother, who had volunteered in 1916, was serving in France at the time. Arthur died of tuberculosis in 1924.

William McLeod's war was a short one. He was drafted on Jan. 10, 1918, and was sent to Halifax, sailing for England on Feb. 21. On March 4, on arrival in Liverpool, he was transferred to the 8th Reserve Battalion at Witley.

After six months of training, he was shipped to France on Aug. 19 as a reinforcement for the 102nd Battalion. He did not get beyond their base camp.

He reported sick on Aug. 25 and was immediately sent to the Canadian General Hospital in Étaples, where he was diagnosed with pleurisy and valvular disease of the heart.

McLeod was sent to hospital at Witley Camp in England on Aug. 29 and was shipped back to Canada on Feb. 19, 1919.

On March 20, a medical board confirmed that he had pulmonary tuberculosis. Private McLeod was discharged from the army on March 26.

The government continued to provide medical care in Canada until his death on Feb. 14, 1927.

His tuberculosis was determined to be "due to exposure and infection in France." His name as well as that of his brother Arthur are commemorated on the Queenston cenotaph.

Rev. William Lawrence Archer is also included on the Cenotaph. At the time of his death in 1931 he was the rector of St. John's Anglican Church in Stamford, which was attended by many Niagara Township residents.

Archer was born in London, Ont., on Sept. 2, 1883, son of Rev. Robert Archer and Sarah Alice Elizabeth Prince. William was educated at Ridley College in St. Catharines and Trinity College in Toronto. He was ordained in 1907.

In 1912, he married Caroline Louisa Macgregor in Geneva, Ill. The couple's first son, Robert, was born in Quebec in 1913 and second son, Edward, was born in Hamilton in 1915.

On Oct. 9, 1915, Rev. Archer accepted a commission as honorary captain and chaplain of the 81st Battalion.

On Jan. 15, 1916, he sailed for England and then for France, arriving on Feb. 5. Here he served as chaplain to the 3rd Canadian Casualty Clearing Station to provide comfort to the wounded and dying.

Over the next two and half years he served as the chaplain to a few different regiments. By September 1918, he had worn himself out and was transferred to England on Sept. 18.

Archer was able to arrange passage back to Canada on Nov. 2, 1918 and was discharged from the army on Nov. 27.

Caroline and William had one more child, daughter Isabel Mary, born in Hamilton in 1921.

Rev. Archer again picked up his civilian religious duties and among other appointments was posted to St. John's in Stamford in 1927.

On Sept. 18, 1931, while he was attending the General Synod in Toronto, he died suddenly of heart failure.

It was determined that his condition was due to his service in the First World War. When the Queenston cenotaph was erected, former parishioners ensured that his name was included.

Crossroads home show returns Saturday for first time in three years

Katie Ryan
Special to The Lake Report

Crossroads Public School is bringing its home show back to town this Saturday after a three-year pandemic absence.

Ashleigh Dixon, leading the project for the Crossroads parent council, says she is excited to have the home show back on.

"It's our first show since 2020," Dixon said, adding it's nice to see people getting back to normal.

The one-day Home, Garden and Craft Show runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission and parking are free.

The parent council is raising money to continue renovations on the school's playground.

"We're trying to revitalize our playground again this year," Dixon said.

"We were able to put in an accessible playground addition for some of our students so that they can all play together," she said.

This is the 13th edition of the home show and in the past it raised enough money for the students to have access to new tech such as iPads, have guest scientists in the classroom and take students on educational trips.

Man, 91, dead after Monday collision in Glendale

Somer Slobodian
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

A 91-year-old man from Niagara-on-the-Lake is dead after a crash on Glendale Avenue at Homer Road on Monday afternoon.

The man was transferred to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Police have not released the name of the victim.

The man was driving a Mini Cooper on Glendale Avenue near the outlet mall when he struck a 2019 Chevrolet Blazer travelling in the opposite direction, Niagara Regional Police

About 90 vendors will be on hand and some are holding workshops.

"We've got some new (vendors), we've got some old ones that are returning. We have some regulars that have come for the last 13 years," said Dixon.

The Home Depot in St. Catharines is doing a kids workshop and participants will create a unique project and get their own apron.

Some teachers have been involved by running a raffle and some students are helping set up and creating posters.

A variety of vendors will be there, including lawn care contractors, real estate agents, electricians and the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre.

The Pumphouse will be doing a demonstration and giving the kids their own take-home bags.

Dixon said the parent council tries to offer kids and families new experiences.

Also included are craft vendors who will be in the classrooms demonstrating different types of crafts such as candle making, crocheting, soap making and woodworking.

Dixon said the first 250 people who attend will get a swag bag.

said in a news release.

The cause of the collision is still under investigation, media relations officer Const. Barry Ravenek said in an email to The Lake Report.

The crash happened before Monday's major snowfall and the roads were "clear and dry," he said.

The driver of the Chevrolet was not injured.

Anyone with information are asked to call the lead detective at 905-688-4111 and pick option three, badge number 1009170.

Anyone in the area with security cameras is asked to review the footage.



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NOTL feted as a top destination

Attractions and hospitality businesses from across Niagara-on-the-Lake gathered at the Prince of Wales hotel Wednesday night to celebrate NOTL being ranked second on TripAdvisor's list of the Best of the Best destinations in Canada. Nine of the top 50 attractions are located in Niagara-on-the-Lake. From left, Andrew Wade (Peller Estates), Cheryl Penman (Jackson-Triggs Winery), Valerie Taylor (Shaw Festival), Andrew Niven (Konzelmann Estate Winery), Martin Lindqvist (Chateau des Charmes), Lisa Curtis (Parks Canada), Minerva Ward (NOTL Chamber of Commerce) and Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa. SOMER SLOBODIAN

New economic vision focuses on wine

Continued from Front Page

in Niagara-on-the-Lake sponsored by the town's Chamber of Commerce, and attended by a mix of local politicians and leaders from business, tourism, theatre and wineries.

"There is no other industry that has greater growth impact on economies than premium wine-based economies. It's a very bold statement, but it also happens to be true. It's not rhetorical. It's not hyperbole. It's not conjecture. It's an economic fact," Peller said.

He is out to prove that economic fact by looking at international wine regions and demonstrating how their wine industries have enriched their economies.

"Building a premium wine industry has such incredible benefits to so many people in so many ways that it needs to be understood, validated and be indisputable," he said.

"Just looking at France and Italy, their tourism economies are number one and number two in the world. And they believe it's only because they have the best wine and food culture. Tourism is about 15 per cent of their GDP in both their countries. Our tourism is barely 1 per cent (of our GDP)."

For Peller, that spells opportunity.

"We have a population of 14 to 30 million people around us that don't really have a lot of luxury food and hospitality competition, and that's why we are

popular now. But it's also why we want people to see us as a world-class destination. That's our ambition."

His recipe to get there is to do even better at the things we already do well.

"We have some natural, competitive advantages for us, like wine and food, and our history and our theatre, and our parks and the recreation amenities that we offer," he said.

"We need to make sure we go out and find who does all this the best in the world and make sure we set a best-in-the-world benchmark."

Peller's vision includes expanded theatre offerings, improved transportation, premium wine and food experiences, and iconic luxury accommodations.

And he has plans to create one of those luxury hotels by expanding Riverbend Inn.

Peller said the proposal is in a very preliminary planning phase and still evolving.

"We're working on community outreach, working with town planning, and getting support for the project, so there's a lot of work to do over the next six months."

Peller called on leaders from all related sectors to join efforts, saying, "As stakeholders we have stayed in our own lanes and that hurts policy and support."

Citing taxation policies and lack of support for the industry, Peller emphasized the need for "government and policymakers to unite

around the reality that building a premium wine industry has such incredible benefits to so many people in so many ways."

The Niagara wine industry has long lamented that other jurisdictions around the world, and even within Canada, get a better deal from their provincial governments.

Paul Bosc, president and CEO of Chateau des Charmes winery, was among those at the presentation.

Speaking to The Lake Report afterward, he explained that "even in B.C., wineries have a better deal. There is a VQA support program and their rebates are 10 times the value of the program in Ontario, to the tune of tens of millions of dollars."

Peller noted, "Our company is way more invested in the Okanagan (in British Columbia) than we are in Niagara, (because) we have challenges with the policies that support the wine and hospitality industry here."

One example on the tax front is a 6.1 per cent provincial tax on wine purchased at wineries, in addition to the HST. A petition to repeal that tax initiated by Ontario Craft Wineries has gathered more than 11,000 signatures, but the levy remains.

"I was incredibly insulted when they put two sales taxes on small winery gate sales," said Peller.

"I mean, that's just mean-spirited. Businesses are struggling to make a living and now you're

going to have two sales taxes. What other industry does that?"

He also pointed out that "we've got the same market share in the LCBO as we had 35 years back, a 26 share. What does it say to the people of Ontario when the government retail system doesn't promote, honour and revere our product?"

Wineries in other jurisdictions, including both British Columbia and California, have another advantage unavailable in Ontario. They have the freedom of direct delivery, both to consumers and retailers.

"California wineries deal directly with consumers in 47 states so they're not sharing their revenue with anyone. We have to go through the LCBO," said Bosc.

Bosc said Peller's vision is "spot on. We can't forget how far we have come. The question is, are there ways to accelerate the future?"

"It's going to happen, the question is how long is it going to take? Can we get more done in the next five to 10 years than the last 30?" Bosc said.

Peller appears determined to make it happen. "We have a lot of ways we're going to connect with people in the next few months," he said.

"I think there's kind of a realization that this is a big idea whose time has come and we're not going to go further, unless we work together with that compelling vision in place. And don't take no for an answer."



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FINE COLLECTIBLES BY THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND 

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Canada

The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.

COVID Tracker

NOTL active cases (last 28 days): 27

Region active cases: 435

Region deaths: 717

Region total cases: 51,661

**March 1 data per Niagara Region Public Health.*

Public health warns that "Due to the surge in COVID-19 cases, limited availability of testing, and changes to case and contact management practices, case counts shown (above) are an underestimate of the true number of individuals in Niagara with COVID-19. Data should be interpreted with caution." Case data for municipalities is also now being interpreted in 28-day cycles.



Contributed by **Patty Garriock**

"Even the wisest mind has something yet to learn."
- George Santayana

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Prepping the vines



Farmworkers prune grape vines in the freezing cold at Epp Farms.
DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Editorial

Celebrating the women of NOTL

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

The women of Niagara-on-the-Lake are a force.

That's not news to anyone who is paying attention to what gets done in town, but it IS worthy of note. And celebration.

Over the past week or so, we have seen what a force of nature these women are.

It started as a simple idea: What should we do to mark International Women's Day.

Last year we produced a package that included stories about immigrant women, our town council's women and then-mayor, and a young dynamo, Maya Webster, who had convinced the province to cover the cost of glucose monitors for many people with diabetes.

So, how to follow that up?

What if we reached out to women in the community and tried to get 20 or 30 notable movers and shakers

– community contributors – and take a photo of them on Queen Street in front of the town's iconic clock tower cenotaph? They'd be representative of the women of NOTL.

Talk about an idea that caught on, developed a life all its own and exploded into what we plan to publish next week: our regular edition with a keepsake Special Section saluting and celebrating the women of NOTL. Dozens and dozens of women.

That initial foray seeking a few women from the community has morphed into a full-fledged movement as now well over 200 women are engaged and participating in some way.

The idea for a photo of a few dozen women has now become a mass photograph of scores of NOTL women – from a wide range of community organizations, churches, agriculture, business, sports, education, government, general volunteers and women who have

contributed to the community by making their mark on Niagara-on-the-Lake and environs.

We haven't connected with everyone who is deserving of recognition and for those we might have missed, we apologize in advance. (But if you are interested in taking part, reach out to us at editor@niagaranow.com and we can send you the details.)

As well, not everyone we've contacted can make it for the photo shoot next Monday morning. Some have other commitments, are away and several are just plain shy about receiving recognition for what they do. And that's OK. We understand.

But this celebration, in conjunction with International Women's Day, is destined to be a unique and memorable event here in NOTL.

And it's fitting that many women are involved in helping us organize and stage it.

We can't name them all, but we want to especially note the help of NOTL's chief administrator, Marnie Cluckie. Because of the sheer number of women who have said they will take part, we will have to close Queen Street for part of Monday morning (which is also garbage pickup day for downtown businesses; an added wrinkle).

Normally, the town needs four to six weeks advance warning for a special event like this (so businesses etc. can be advised and prepared), but because this idea only came to life 10 days ago, (and we planned it, uh, before seeking all the permissions), they cut us some slack.

Who knew it would catch on like wildfire?

So, thank you to all participants – and welcome to those who still might like to join the crowd.

NOTL women are a force and deserving of recognition.

May the force be forever with you.

We welcome your letters

The Lake Report welcomes your letters to the editor. Please, write early and often. Letters ideally should be under 400 words long. Occasionally, longer letters may be published. All letters may be edited for conciseness, accuracy, libel and defamation. Please include your full name, street address and a daytime telephone number so that authorship can be authenticated. Only names and general addresses (eg. Virgil, St. Davids, NOTL) will be published. Send your letters to editor@niagaranow.com or drop them by our office at 496 Mississagua St., NOTL.

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An early design of the proposed hotel on King Street. SUPPLIED

Parliament Oak proposal is **not compatible**

Dear editor:
I was disappointed in the latest proposal for the Parliament Oak property since after spending a decade here I thought the developer would have come to appreciate what makes Niagara-on-the-Lake unique.

As an architect I have always been aware that new buildings should be compatible with their surroundings in use, size, materials and scale.
It's called contextualism and it's a philosophy that has been successfully followed in the design of new

structures in the town for 200 years.
The developer is insulting our community in proposing a huge brick and stone hotel in the middle of one-and-a-half and two-storey single family houses, clad primarily with wood siding or stucco.

Town council and staff should not give this proposal any serious consideration as it reveals poor land use planning as well as proposing a building that wouldn't be compatible anywhere in town, not just on this property.

*Wayne Murray
NOTL*

Neanderthals vs. human intelligence

Dear editor:
Dr. William Brown's very interesting column, "Differences between Neanderthal and human brains" (Feb. 23) was certainly enlightening.

However, the long and descriptive list of discoveries and scientific procedures did not produce anything more than a vague opinion on substantial differences.

A single sentence in the article appears to "suggest" a change in intelligence over 30,000 years.
I quote: "That's a startling result for one gene and suggests the brains of Neander-

thals were not as capable as those of modern humans."
Perhaps future study will "suggest," even prove, otherwise.

*George Dunbar
Toronto*

Canada has a responsibility to our planet's climate

Dear editor:
Climate change is one main contributor to the creation of the cycle of poverty, which has been sustained throughout multiple generations.
It is great that Canada intervenes with emergency funds in times of crisis.
But the ongoing issues contributing to the cycle of poverty also need to be

funded to reach the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.
Impoverished communities at a greater risk of being affected by climate change deserve quality investments in health and access to education that will help mitigate this vulnerability.
As budget 2023 develops, I think Canada is responsi-

ble for taking action toward the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
Canada has a crucial role in ensuring a better world for all and international assistance is one important tool to help get us there.
Predictable increases to the International Assistance Envelope are key, so I call for an increase of \$1.9 billion

within the next three years in the upcoming budget.
With Canada's ability to provide international assistance, developing countries will have the monetary funds and support to reverse the cycle of poverty. It is possible, but only if there is political will.

*Muskaan Waraich
Student, Brock University*

Bylaws were enacted for a worthy purpose

Dear editor:
There is an old adage: never remove a fence without finding out why it was put there in the first place.
Were I to upgrade that adage I would say: never try to circumvent an "official bylaw or plan" with-

out understanding why these guidelines are there in the first place.
A lot of those concepts were crafted and enacted by wise people with long-term visions and perspectives.
By applying these

guidelines many streets became artscapes appreciated by both tourist and resident alike. (Yes, there is such a thing as a beautiful street.)
We all benefit from these concepts.
Next time you see an

application fluttering on a post, go and read it.
It's often about a developer seeking permission to bend or break a bylaw.
Maybe they all need a history lesson.

*Joost Vandelinde
St. Davids*

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What is the purpose of municipal zoning bylaws?

Dear editor:

Perhaps I'm naive, but what is the purpose of the municipality having zoning bylaws?

Presumably we elect municipal officials and pay municipal taxes to live in an ordered community planned such that some areas are commercial, some areas are agricultural, some are greenspace and some are residential.

And the rules for each are clearly laid out in zoning bylaws, which specify where and what can be built and things like maximum building height, lot coverage, setbacks, etc.

Those are the rules and we the citizenry agree to abide by them regardless of whether we are individual homeowners, developers or builders.

So, why does our plan-

ning department accept any application for development as being "complete" if it does not conform to the existing bylaws for the property?

Presumably, if an application is simply not accepted because it doesn't meet the existing criteria it is not an accepted application deemed complete which can be appealed to Ontario Land Tribunal?

If one goes into a bank to apply for a mortgage and refuses to meet the lending criteria by demonstrating the ability to repay the loan, the bank will simply refuse to accept the application.

If that happens, one will have no appeal to a higher authority because we don't agree with the bank's rules.

If I want the mortgage and can't meet the criteria

I will likely have to find a property for which I can qualify or demonstrate how I meet the bank's criteria, not suggest the bank should change the rules to suit me.

Maybe one way to short-circuit the new provincial law regarding developments (as detailed in "How new Ontario law curtails town's power over development," The Lake Report, Feb. 23), Niagara-on-the-

Lake should simply refuse to accept any application that doesn't meet our bylaws.

And if a developer wants to appeal a non-application, let them file their non-application directly with the province which can assess it by provincial zoning bylaws – which don't exist.

Bob Bader
NOTL

Doug Ford's Bill 23 presents **tough challenges** to new council

Dear editor:

Kudos on the in-depth analysis by Evan Loree about Ontario's Bill 23, which became law in November, ("How new Ontario law curtails town's power over development," The Lake Report, Feb. 23).

It was very objective and fact-based and it provided a shocking education for everyone in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The present town council will be burdened on ways to mitigate any adverse impacts of a proposal that

is not in the best interests of the municipality before it goes to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

It will require communication and co-operation within council and with the applicants, which is no easy task.

Let's be clear that for the most part, the challenge is within new provincial rules and existing zonings/designations of properties.

Whereas, changing a zoning/designation to a much higher level will always be extremely difficult to do.

Historically in NOTL, refusing an application meant years of waiting for the final decision at the Ontario Municipal Board (now the Ontario Land Tribunal) and the next term of council had to deal with the final results and the costs.

Today that appeal to the tribunal is a much quicker process and as the article states "places developers in a highly favourable position" rather than the previous 50/50 chances of winning.

Given the new ground rules, it is a wise position

for this council to "communicate (negotiate) rather than litigate," as Coun. Erwin Wiens suggests.

One might wonder what the municipality has to negotiate or communicate with?

Well all is not lost, as "time" is still the strongest tool the municipality has to negotiate with.

Time costs money, appeals cost money and missing a market that is eager to buy also costs money.

Legislation also exists that requires applications to be

dealt with in a certain time period, so not dealing with a development proposal can result in an application going straight to the land tribunal.

As well, appeals can also cost the town money (and lead to tax increases) and can cost a lot more if the full-scale application is approved. So, time is a limited negotiating tool.

In my previous four terms of council starting in the early 1990s we faced challenges (including financial) but not to the scale that this

council will face this term.

I can only offer the advice as I was given with the "Serenity Prayer" by Reinhold Niebuhr.

It guided my decision-making: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, And the wisdom to know the difference."

In this difficult time, I wish this new council success in finding the best solution for the municipality.

Jamie Slingerland
NOTL



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Call to action: Looking for help protecting our town



ARCHITEXT

Brian Marshall
Columnist

Just what is it that makes Niagara-on-the-Lake unique among Ontario communities?

What is it that draws some 3.5 million visitors to this one little town every year?

Some may point to the wineries augmented, by the tender fruit growers in season. However, Grimsby, Beamsville and St. Catharines offer these experiences and their visitor numbers are in no way comparable.

Others might suggest it's the Shaw Festival, complemented by the outstanding restaurants that are responsible for this annual visitor traffic, but again, other communities in Ontario have excellent performing arts venues and dining establishments that do not achieve the draw of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Still, a third group could point to our bucolic tree-lined streetscapes, open countryside, greenspaces, history and built heritage as the reason visitors come, stay and return year after year.

It is my contention that, among other secondary considerations, it is the gestalt of these three primary contributors that create the character of the town and make Niagara-on-the-Lake a go-to destination.

Moreover, it is this "character" that generates and supports a "quality of life" that 85 per cent of the residents who responded to an Abacus Data survey (published May 2022) rated as "good to excellent" – a percentage far higher than most communities in this country.

With all due respect to other communities in this province, I would argue that Niagara-on-the-Lake is unique in the province because of the character generated by this gestalt. And, that the revenues flowing into both local and provincial coffers are unmatched on a per capita basis.

So, what happens to a gestalt when one (or more) of its parts is unalterably damaged and/or significantly changed?



This little piece of Golden Horseshoe suburbia could be NOTL's future if we don't fight to preserve and respect our heritage, says Brian Marshall.

The gestalt is dissolved and the total is no longer greater than the sum of its parts.

This is what Premier Doug Ford's Bill 23 (the More Homes Built Faster Act) will do to Niagara-on-the-Lake if some accommodation is not reached by the town with the province.

Folks, it specifically prohibits local councils from protecting their town's character.

As I have been railing in The Lake Report against this legislation since prior to its tabling in the provincial legislature, it should come as no surprise when I state bluntly that, according to the provisions of this legislation: If a developer wishes to build a six-storey residential building, they can; if the owner of the lot next door decides to erect two more houses on his lot, they can; if a historic building (that is not designated) stands in the way of development, it can be bulldozed; if 300-year-old trees interfere with a builder, they can cut them down.

And, as it stands right now, there is absolutely nothing your NOTL town council can do to stop it.

But, that is the key phrase ... "as it stands right now."

In my view, our only viable option is to present the provincial government, at the highest level, with a clear, concise and complete rationale together with solid financial projections of the loss in business and tax revenues when tourism is adversely affected (as it inevitably will be) that justifies an exemption from the provisions of Bill 23 for the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

I'm no Pollyanna and completely understand the amount of effort, from every part of this commu-

nity, it will take to do this in a relatively short time. It will take effort from the growers, the wineries, the businesses and the residents to make it happen.

To business owners, entertainment venues (of all stripes) or wineries, I would say: what would your revenues look like should the visitor traffic drop by 40 per cent?

That's a fairly conservative drop based on past statistics suffered by tourist towns in North America that suffered a temporary or permanent loss of their "character."

Given that we've just gone through the pandemic, I would imagine you could draw on specific months during that period with a comparable 40 per cent reduction in traffic.

For those who don't think it could happen, Google tourist ghost towns in North America. And, the history of NOTL itself shows the impact of down-cycles in tourism, several of which lasted for a decade or more.

For my part, I'm willing to focus on our built-heritage. We know, as a fact, that Niagara-on-the-Lake has the largest clustering of surviving Neo-classical houses in the province, but it is my hypothesis that the town also represents the greatest density (per square kilometre) of 19th- and early 20th-century residential buildings of any town in Ontario.

This is a potentially unique concentration of built heritage.

But, to prove or disprove my hypothesis, a complete listing of the town's built heritage must be compiled in short order and for that undertaking I'm going to need help.

So I'm calling on you, dear readers, and asking for

volunteers to assist in the effort. If you can spare a day to walk (or drive) the streets, lines, concessions around where you live, drop me an email at homeguide.ca@gmail.com.

You do not necessarily need to be knowledgeable

about architecture as long as you can spot an "old" house; we can vet the "long" list once it is compiled. I can promise the endeavour will be co-ordinated, efficient and respect your time.

An apartment building at the actual gateway into Old

Town will spell the beginning of the end and, if we all work together, have one shot to make a difference.

Brian Marshall is a NOTL realtor, author and expert consultant on architectural design, restoration and heritage.

BILL FRANKS – A STUDENT OF A.Y. JACKSON



FROM PADDLE TO PAINTBRUSH

Bill Franks started his painting career as a boy, rowing A.Y. Jackson around the 'Go-Home Bay' area of Georgian Bay. He was influenced by Jackson and started his oil painting career 'en plein air'. Jackson taught him how to make a sketch box and introduced him to the basics of colour. Now at age 89, after a successful career in medicine, his current works reveal his continued passion for painting as he strives to depict rhythm, pattern, design and colour.

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Open? Closed? Family Day needs clarification and commitment



Ross's Ramblings

Ross Robinson
Columnist

Monday, Feb. 20 was a lovely day for families to be outside enjoying fresh air in our lovely spa-like town, where the Niagara River empties into Lake Ontario.

Six people arrived on the old Court House steps, anxious to learn some local history and chuckle at my Niagara-themed funny stories.

To be entertained and educated on a perfect mid-winter day, as it were.

Being downtown now every day at 9:50, hoping for walkers to arrive, it has been amazing to learn that the busiest store on Queen

Street is the LCBO.

Almost every day, there are a couple of thirsty customers going in the out door at 10 o'clock sharp. After that, a steady stream all day, all genders, all ages, all sizes, all thirsty.

There was consternation because the store was closed for Family Day.

The good people at our Niagara-on-the-Lake Tourism office work hard and skilfully to draw visitors to our town. Families arrived in droves during the weekend, eager to walk our sidewalks, enjoy a gelato, or tour the town on a horse and carriage. Eureka!

A new and plus-sized candy store was busy all day. But no, it was not possible to buy a bottle of Niagara wine from the provincial liquor store and learn about our wineries.

I had checked out the Toronto Star on Saturday, under "What will be open on Family Day?"

The Toronto Zoo was open, Ripley's Aquarium was on extended hours, the



Ross wonders what the deal is with Family Day and inconsistent closures. PEXELS

Royal Ontario Museum was featuring special family programming, all aimed at providing good days out for family experiences. Their libraries were open, too.

Just after noon, I drove over to our wonderful NOTL Library and Community Centre, intent on a

ginger cookie from Sweets & Swirls and a workout at the fitness centre.

At the front door of the community centre I met five nice people who had driven over from Brantford to enjoy our town and play some disc golf. They each had their own set of golf

discs and had been playing for just over an hour.

But now, they were stymied in their attempt to use the community centre facilities. The building was closed for Family Day.

This is all very confusing, eh? It was a bit chilly to nip in behind an evergreen

tree at the Disc Golf course. What to do? Is it a holiday or is it not a holiday?

Tell me again why provincial and municipal government employees get a statutory holiday, while private sector workers are working, creating tax dollars to pay for public sector employees?

I understand the world is not a fair place, but please think about ways to clarify and simplify Family Day.

As I have said so often while rambling, I love living in NOTL.

On Family Day, there was a lot of good happening to locals and visitors. Our town and regional garbage crews were on the job, ensuring a pridefully clean village.

In theory, an annual Family Day may be a fine concept. But let's make the rules fairer and advise residents and visitors what's open and what's closed.

Here's to another birthday and another year in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Let's ramble into spring.

Council can't let NOTL's heritage be overrun by development

The following letter was sent to members of council and a copy was submitted to The Lake Report for publication.

As longtime, active and involved Niagara-on-the-Lake residents, we have watched real estate escalate from a most affordable town for young families (in the early 1970s when we moved here) to its current exclusive pricing levels.

In reading the proposal for an apartment at 223-227 Mary St., it appears these units would only be affordable to those retiring from larger and more expansive lifestyles and who are now looking to downsize, using their built-up equity.

These are not designed for working families or individuals looking for starter homes or rentals.

The faux-colonial design negatively impacts a gateway entrance (an area once considered to become the centre of town) to the Old Town tourism district.

It also directly would



Writers Erika and Jim Alexander say NOTL council has to do whatever it takes to stop the town from being overrun by inappropriate developments, such as the massive condo complex proposed for Mary Street that would dwarf surrounding homes. SOURCED

affect and throw shadows onto the backyards of the five neighbouring properties on Mississagua Street, two backyards on William Street, four yards on Simcoe Street as well as the neighbouring properties that front onto Mary Street.

This town is not obligated to allow maximum development to reward

a developers' investment while possibly destroying the individual real estate of those properties that abut the property.

This is an incredible impact of an existing neighbourhood of the proposed 41 units, a minimum guesstimate of 82 residents and their vehicles (excluding visitors and

their cars) on a property frontage of merely 45.59 metres (150 feet).

Having been members of many NOTL organizations and being local business owners, we have been involved in many aspects of promoting, protecting and preserving Niagara-on-the-Lake's history and cultural resources.

We believe that this and future councils are the stewards of the town and the direction and impact of development is their responsibility.

There must be included in an over-arching plan, a commitment to preserve landscapes, minimize the impact of development, protect open spaces and promote this unique community to benefit tourism opportunities that highlight our history and establishment as the first capital of Upper Canada.

As this letter is being drafted, there are news reports about recent world events – war and natural disasters – that have destroyed the natural landscapes and heritage buildings of eastern Europe.

As world citizens we decry the horrors of the loss of lives and destruction and mourn that the built-history and its stories are forever lost and now will be mere memories in history books.

While there is no com-

parison to the horror and conflict, NOTL did suffer in the War of 1812. We could have easily lost our history, our spaces, our buildings but people fought hard to protect that which was valued for future generations.

And now we are faced with a different assault – by those who financially benefit from the destruction of our heritage resources and landscapes, while those empowered as our decision-makers must act on behalf of the community and preserve our history for the future generations.

Our town is a unique and special place, unlike any other in Ontario. This proposal is one of many being considered by council and one of many others that will come in the future.

As our community leaders, as Canadians, as world citizens you have a responsibility to be stewards of our spaces, stories and buildings.

Erika and Jim Alexander
NOTL



THANK YOU

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Lecture shines light on NOTL women who helped **change history**

Continued from Front Page

“She returned to her house, near the lighthouse, of course, for more supplies. Miraculously, she was not wounded,” she added.

When the Americans torched homes in town, Henry housed as many people as she could.

While Henry’s story is a favourite of Kaufman’s, it was one of many shared during the “Niagara’s Women of War” Fireside Friday presentation, the last in a series of talks organized by the Friends of Fort George.

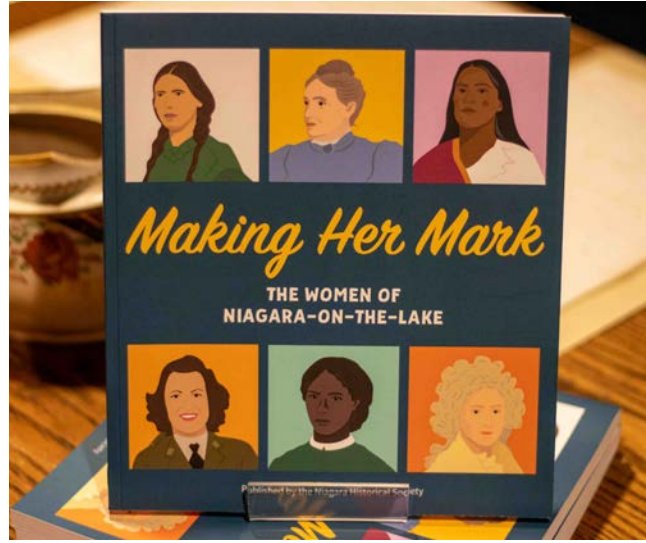
“The life of women during this period was primarily shaped by their environment,” said Kaufman.

“It was a reflection of their class, their religion and most certainly their husband’s profession and status,” she added.

She spoke of those who were caught in the burning of Niagara-on-the-Lake by



Left: The outfit of a soldier’s wife on display at Navy Hall last Friday Right: “Making Her Mark, the Women of Niagara-on-the-Lake” is a book published by the Niagara Historical Society. SOMER SLOBODIAN



the retreating Americans in December 1813.

“Most of the people were women and children, as nearly all the males were away serving in the British army or in the local militias, and they had retreated to Burlington Heights after the Battle of Fort George,” said Kaufman.

She related the story of Elizabeth Quade, the daughter of Mary Madden and Dominic Henry. Quade was a child during the war, but revealed her story to the world when she was 84.

She described some of her experiences to a reporter in Ransomville, N.Y., in 1888.

Kaufman said Quade “and several other children were playing in a wheelbarrow near the lighthouse when a cannonball struck about two feet from where they were.”

“So they decided to run behind the lighthouse, and (in) another moment another ball struck the wheelbarrow that they had just left,” she added.

Like many in attendance, Matthew Goodman found Kaufman’s presentation illuminating.

“I just enjoyed all the detail and the stories that they’re able to glean from the research,” the St. Catharines resident said.

As a history enthusiast, he enjoys being able to

look at history “through different lenses (and) through different prisms,” he said.

On Friday, the crowd at Navy Hall was silent as Kaufman spoke about a handful of brave women on both the British and American sides.

She noted the roles of Elizabeth Campbell, Charlotte Dickson, Elizabeth Taylor, Julia Defield and Jane Kerby from the British side of the war.

On the American side were a Mrs. Gillette, Mrs. Doyle and Margaret St. Johns.

Regardless of which side they were on, they had one thing in common: all were courageous in a time of great danger and suffering.

In recognition of International Women’s Day, next week The Lake Report will publish a special keepsake section celebrating the women of NOTL.

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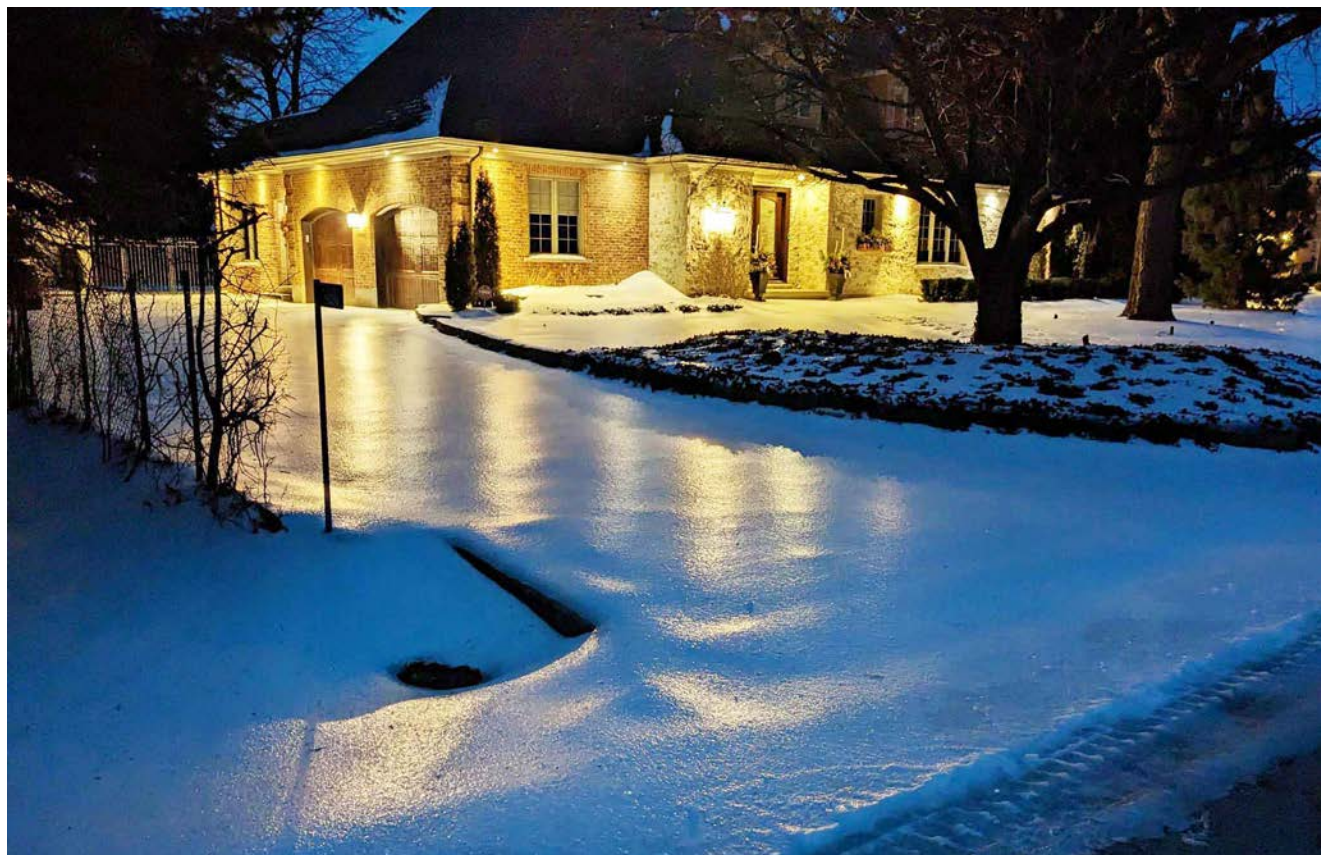
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FEATURED



When NOTL freezes over



Clockwise from top left: Queenston resident David Scott took this photo of his icy driveway. He said he hasn't seen anything like it in his 70 years. A snow plow totalled a mailbox on Creek Road last Thursday. Town staff uses a backhoe to clear municipal lots behind the Virgil arenas. Residents in the Village were out shovelling after Wednesday's storm. A couple basks in the sun and enjoys a morning coffee on a chilly Sunday morning at Ryerson Park. John Street neighbours help shovel the driveway. RICHARD HARLEY/KEVIN MACLEAN

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Niagara chamber honours Indigenous advocate

Evan Loree
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report



Michele-Elise Burnett, seen here at last year's Celebration of Nations, is this year's recipient of the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce's annual International Women's Day award. EVAN LOREE

The Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce is honouring an advocate of Indigenous culture at its 22nd annual celebration of International Women's Day.

Michele-Elise Burnett is this year's winner of the chamber's annual International Women's Day award.

The event is Friday, March 3, from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Central Community Centre on York Road. Tickets can be purchased through the chamber's website.

Burnett is a Metis citizen of Ontario with Algonquin roots and member of the Bear Clan and has earned a reputation as a fierce and proud advocate of Indigenous culture.

Chamber president Mishka Balsom described her as "innovative" and "ground-breaking," noting she "brings a voice to women's issues."

"Each year the Women in Niagara Council (WIN)

presents the IWD award to a woman in Niagara who captures the spirit of the values celebrated that day," Balsom said in an interview.

Burnett has done much to capture that spirit.

She is president of Kakekalanicks, an art consultancy organization that promotes Indigenous art and education across Niagara.

Burnett is also president of

Landscape of Nations 360, the non-profit organization that built the Landscape of Nations monument in Queenston.

The non-profit directs the annual Celebration of Nations, a large gathering of the Niagara Indigenous community which promotes education, art and culture to a wider audience.

Burnett is also the artistic producer for Artpark's

annual Strawberry Moon Festival, an Indigenous community festival in New York state.

The chamber's choice to award Burnett is in the spirit of this year's theme of embracing equity.

The chamber is also hosting Dr. Kate Bezanson, Dr. Tapo Chimbanga, Trecia McLennon and Dr. Samah Sabra, all of whom specialize in an area of diversity or equity.

Bezanson is a federal adviser on gender rights and professor of Social Justice and Equity at Brock University.

Chimbanga is the founder of the non-profit organization Future Black Female, which works to help young black women "take charge" of their own futures.

McLennon, director of equity diversity and inclusion at Brock University, works to teach "cultural competence" with her company Culturiosity.

And Sabra manages workplace diversity and inclusion at Niagara College.

New library series aims to help us 'Learn & Live'

Julia Sacco
The Lake Report

The popular "Learn & Live: Enriched Living For All Ages" series is returning to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library, starting off with sessions focused on living well.

You can learn more about the town heroes at NOTL Palliative Care with the first session led by Bonnie Bag-nulo on Monday, March 6.

Other presentations include one on the Niagara North Family Health Team on March 13 led by

executive director Mary Keith, and "Expanding the Options for Successful Aging in Place" on March 27, presented by author and advocate Sue Lantz.

All sessions begin at 6:30 p.m.

Organizer Terry Mactaggart said the idea for Learn & Live came from recommendations made by the town's community wellness committee on how to improve residents' lives.

One suggestion was life-long learning and sessions were held in 2021 and 2022.

The gatherings have

focused on subjects ranging from singing to cultural heritage, all with education in mind.

Mactaggart explained that NOTL Palliative Care was the next choice because the organization's influence on the town is often underrepresented.

"People don't know all of the tremendous amounts of services (NOTL Palliative Care) provides," Mactaggart.

"With palliative care, the big thing is that they support you from diagnosis and not because you're dying.

We really need to get that message out."

Besides the March sessions, a memoir-writing forum will be held April 17, the museum will have four presentations at the community centre in May, Indigenous issues are explored June 5, the Shaw's Tim Carroll talks about plays June 19 and NOTL parks supervisor J.B. Hopkins speaks about the "Prettiest Town in Canada" on the old Court House steps on July 17.

For more information about the sessions, see the NOTL library's events page.



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.
Category: WE ARE TV FAMILY

Before becoming TV's favourite drug kingpin, he played Frankie Muniz' dad on "Malcolm in the Middle."

Last issue:

Category: IN SEARCH OF ALIEN LIFE

Clue: As the name suggests, the \$100 million Breakthrough Listen is a project to detect this type of signal from distant planets.

Answer: What is radio?

Answered first by: Bob Wheatley

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Sylvia Wiens, Bill Hamilton, Jim Dandy, Pam Dowling, Nancy Rocca,

*REMEMBER TO PUT "WHAT IS" FOR JEOPARDY QUESTIONS!

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Yellow Door Theatre brings 'Charlie Brown' musical to stage

Staff
The Lake Report

The Yellow Door Theatre Project is bringing the musical, "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown" to the stage for four shows on March 11 and 12.

It will be performed in studio at 504 Line 2 in Virgil at 2 and 7 p.m. on both dates. Tickets are \$15.

Based on the comic strip "Peanuts" by Charles Schultz, "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown" was written by Clark Gesner.

The show opened on Broadway in 1967 and won two Drama Desk-Vernon Rice Awards for director and performer, and the Outer Critics Circle Award for outstanding production.

It explores life through the eyes of Charlie Brown (played by Avery Kasper) and his friends, as they play baseball, send valentines, sing songs and share friendship.

The series of vignettes and songs features Lucy



van Pelt (Catherinee Dubois) as Charlie Brown's strong-minded friend, who analyzes his character in "The Doctor Is In."

Lucy dominates over her younger brother, Linus (Diego Rey), but shares a special bond with him as well, as she instructs

him in her view of life in "Little Known Facts."

For his part, Linus is a child prodigy in philosophy, calmly delivering wisdom and support to Charlie Brown, while also clinging to his blanket as he sings, "My Blanket and Me."

Lucy sings "Schroeder" to her heartthrob, the musician Schroeder (Liam Marriott), who rarely looks up from his piano long enough to notice her.

Sally, Charlie Brown's little sister, (Leah Hyatt and Maya Sternin), who sings "My New Philoso-

phy", rounds out the group of friends, while Charlie Brown's dog Snoopy (Alex Bergshoeff) steals the spotlight in his production number, "Supper-time." The entire cast highlights some of childhood's simple joys in the finale, "Happiness," a beloved

classic from the show.

An ensemble of other Peanuts characters sings and dances along in "The Baseball Game," "Supper-time" and the title number, "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown."

The ensemble is made up of Daya Summers, Eva-Odile Beausoleil, Anwen Marriott, Elina Moussi and Claire Hill.

Yellow Door's production is directed by artistic producer Andorlie Hillstrom and choreographed by Celeste Brillon.

Music instruction and coaching is by Anthony Scaringi and costume designer is Alexa Fraser. Other participants include set painter and prop builder Lisa Agnew and stage manager Emma Marcy.

The family appropriate production is about one hour long.

Tickets, sold at the door up till showtime, also are available on Eventbrite be searching on Yellow Door Theatre.

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Predators win first-round playoff series

Kevan Dowd
The Lake Report

They're not finished yet.

Staying cool, calm and hungry, the Jr. A Niagara Predators came out on top in an 8-2 victory over the St. George Ravens Tuesday night.

Niagara's second win in the best-of-three quarter-final round of the playoffs ended the Ravens' season and means the Predators move on to the Greater Metro Hockey League's south division semi-finals.

Niagara now faces the first-place North York Renegades in a best-of-five series starting at home this Friday night.

Niagara started its series against the Ravens last Friday night at the Meridian Credit Union Arena in Virgil with a 5-2 win, only to lose 4-2 two days later on the road.

So, things were do-or-die Tuesday night. But, according to Predators head coach Kevin Taylor, the game was theirs to win from the moment they walked into the rink.

"Tonight, they wanted it. That was the nice part of the game. They were pumped for that game," he said.

"They did what they were told to do, they worked hard



Niagara finds the net and pops the water bottle with its final goal last Friday night en route to a 5-2 win over St. George. KEVAN DOWD

and came out with the two points. It's a job we got done but there's still more to do."

All season, the south division's top three teams – North York, the Durham Roadrunners and Bradford Bulls – have been well ahead of the rest of the teams in the division and with all three entering round two, being among the group bring a certain amount of prestige to Niagara.

But taking on the very capable Renegades will be no easy task.

"It's going to be a challenge for these guys," said Taylor.

"The four teams that finished in the top of the

league, they're all playing each other so it's going to be interesting. We have our work cut out for us."

Taylor feels they have at least one advantage going into the series – they will be starting at home, despite North York having home ice advantage in the series.

"Just because of the way the schedule worked out, they didn't want to play during the week so they did do us a huge favour and it's huge for us," said Taylor.

"We could potentially be out of here with a lead in the series and it is a short series."

But a single win at home will not be enough to

eliminate a team Niagara has failed to beat even once all year, though Taylor remains optimistic.

"We need to be much more disciplined, there's going to be more line-matching. They've got two lines that can put the puck in the net at will," he said.

"As long as we can come to play and we play our systems and we play our game and stay under control, it's going to be a really good series for everyone."

Niagara takes on the Renegades this Friday, March 3, at the Meridian Credit Union Arena in Virgil. Action starts at 7:30 p.m.



Wolves start playoffs

The minor hockey playoffs have begun and the NOTL Wolves U11 rep team is off to a good start with three straight wins in OMHA round-robin play. Pictured in action in their 5-1 victory over Haldimand on Saturday are brothers James Froese (#87) and Hunter Froese (#4). JULIA SACCO



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No-till gardening offers big benefits for your soil and environment



GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Columnist

don't need to be turning over or tilling the soil in your vegetable and flower gardens every year? Sound too good to be true? Welcome to the world of no-till gardening.

The idea of no-till is certainly not a new one — at least not in agricultural circles — but it is a relatively new idea for most gardeners. I grew up on a farm west of Stratford and it was a practice that was really catching on about 30 years ago.

If you were driving through that area in fall, you would see that the dead grain and corn stalk stubble is left in the soil and not ploughed under as has traditionally been done. In spring, again the fields are not worked up, but the seeders cut into the soil, planting as they go along, with very little soil disturbance.

As gardeners, we also care about soil. We know that healthy soil is essential to growing healthy plants and vegetables. So, what does the term no-till gardening mean?

Do not disturb: With no-till gardening, once a vegetable or flower bed is established, the surface is never disturbed.

While you can garden

Sometimes I think that we create more work for ourselves than we need to.

I don't know about you, but I can't remember the last time I said to myself, "Wow, I wish I had more work on my plate."

You might be familiar with the trend several years ago called double-digging where you dig down a spade's depth into the soil and set it aside and then you dig down another spade's depth and turn it over as well.

Not only is turning over your soil in the spring enough back-breaking work — let's go twice as deep. What were they thinking?

So, what if I said you



Lasagna garden with green and brown layers. JOANNE YOUNG

successfully by tilling and regularly turning over the soil, the time and effort you must put into it is intensive. The idea of not working up the soil seems contrary to the way we have done things in the past, but the benefits of no-till speak for themselves.

Constant tilling of the soil can do more harm than good in that it is destroying the actual soil structure itself. A complex, symbiotic relationship exists between the soil surface and the underlying micro-organisms that contributes to a natural, healthy soil structure.

Constant digging into the

bed will interfere with this process and disturb the natural growing environment.

Although we think that turning over the soil is aerating it, we actually are breaking down the structure of the dirt, causing compaction and erosion.

We also think that tilling up the soil will keep weeds at bay. In reality, it is bringing the dormant weed seeds to the surface where there are favourable conditions for them to germinate.

Did you know that crab-grass seed can lay dormant in the soil for 25 years and then if brought to the surface will still germinate?

So I can hear you asking, "Won't my plants deplete all the nutrients in the soil?"

Here is the key to no-till gardening:

Mulch with organic matter: You do not need to be working the compost in to the soil — the earthworms do all the work for you. Since they are taking up real estate they might as well be earning their keep.

The easiest time to be adding organic matter is in the fall because you will have a lot of the material available right in your own yard. As you are cleaning up the dried leaves and cutting back perennials etc., you can be adding them on top of your vegetable gardens.

Layer your materials: To get a balanced source of nutrients, it is best to do layers of green material with layers of brown material (sometimes referred to as lasagna gardening).

Green material — grass clippings, vegetable waste, and annual and perennials plants — will add nitrogen to your soil. Make sure you shred the leaves or any larger material before laying it on top of the soil.

Dried or brown material

such as dried tree leaves, straw, coffee grounds and even shredded paper will be a source of phosphorus in the soil. As with any good diet, too much of any one thing can be bad, so keep things balanced.

Use compost: If you want to start no-till gardening this spring, purchase some well-rotted compost in bulk or in bags, depending on how much is needed.

Do it annually: By topping up the soil yearly with organic matter you are feeding your soil and providing nutrients for your plants. At the same time, you will not have to water your plants as often because the compost will help retain moisture.

The decaying compost is also adding a courser texture to your soil, helping to break down heavy clay-based soil.

So less physical labour, healthier soil and plants, less time watering, fewer chemical-based fertilizers. You don't have to be the sharpest tool in the shed to see the benefits of no-till gardening!

Joanne Young is a Niagara-on-the-Lake garden expert and coach. See her website at joanneyoung.ca.



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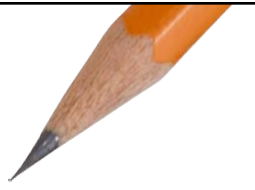
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- 5. Spanish city at the foot of the Sierra Nevada (7)
- 9. Renaissance master (7)
- 10. Doubter (7)
- 11. Alike (2,1,5)
- 12. Quest (6)
- 13. Oversize jib (5)
- 14. Mass-transit option (5,4)
- 18. Name on an envelope (9)
- 19. Astringent shrub used for tanning and dyeing (5)
- 20. Few and far between (6)
- 23. Post-war Essex new town (8)
- 26. Well-behaved (7)
- 27. Three successive lines of verse (7)
- 28. No longer eruptive (7)
- 29. Giant sequoia (7)

Down

- 1. Horsepower booster (5)
- 2. Spelled out (9)
- 3. Lifeless (9)
- 4. Minute particles (9)
- 5. Spout profusely (4)
- 6. "Skyfall" singer (5)
- 7. Communion table (5)
- 8. Boozy (9)
- 13. A light portmanteau (9)
- 15. Targets (4,5)
- 16. Gave evidence (9)
- 17. Bony-plated mammal that rolls into a ball (9)
- 21. Examine the books (5)
- 22. Seductively beautiful woman (5)
- 24. Worthy of attention (5)
- 25. Wen (4)

Crossword Puzzle

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9								10						
11										12				
13						14		15		16		17		
18										19				
20		21		22				23						24
26										27				
28										29				

Last issue's answers

1	P	2	L	3	C	4	L	5	R	6	L	7	M	8	A
9	I	M	A	G	E	10	O	P	E	R	A	T	O	R	S
	T	Y	11	L	E	G	E	S	T	U					
12	B	A	M	B	I	13	J	U	M	P	S	U	I	T	S
	U	A	B	A	P	I	O	U							
14	L	I	N	D	A	15	M	I	L	L	E	N	N	I	A
	L														
20	A	T													21
22	S	O	R	R	O	W	F	U	L	23	F	U	T	O	N
	E	E	U	G	L	O	U	T							
27	P	E	N	I	N	S	U	L	A	28	R	I	N	G	O
	T	G	C	A	29	M	I	C	E	T					
30	I	N	T	H	E	A	R	E	A	31	E	V	I	T	A
	C	H	S	D	S	D	N	L							

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



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Footprints and the evolution and genetics of **bipedalism**



DR. BROWN

Dr. William Brown
Special to The Lake Report

I am fascinated by footprints left behind by our prehuman and modern ancestors. Those tracks stir the imagination in ways that bones, including the skull, do not — at least for me.

One such track was left by a woman carrying a small child on her left hip 8,000 years ago in what is now New Mexico.

Periodically, perhaps because the child was wiggling or the woman was tired, she put the child down, leaving two sets of prints, one much smaller, only to return to her prints alone when she once more picked the child up.

Their path was crossed by a mammoth who kept going and a giant sloth who paused and turned toward them before continuing. Who was she? Where was she going?

And what became of them? All questions those tracks pose for us in our time.

What about the 37 or so separate pairs of footprints left on a south coast of a Spanish beach 110,000 years ago?

Most were adults leisurely walking along the beach, perhaps talking to one another, while other pairs of smaller prints suggested several children probably playing with one another, all of whom had to be Neanderthals given the age and the shape of the prints.

Or what about the tracks left in east Africa by two adults walking side by side with a child whose prints wove back and forth through their path much as human children are wont to do when they play?

The prints were probably made by *Australopithecus afarensis*, to whom the name Lucy was attached after the Beatles song “Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds” and dated to 3.4 million years ago.

In the last few decades many similar tracks have been discovered, sometimes by returning to previous sites only to find more tracks in the same area or nearby



Footprints of early bipeds give us a glimpse into how humans evolved into what we are today. PIXABAY

areas, some uncovered by erosion or radar or satellite images.

The latter images revealed the shores of ancient lakes in northwest Saudi Arabia and led to the discovery of footprints of modern humans or perhaps Neanderthals from 100,000 years ago.

But why the fascination with ancient tracks? Because all the prints and tracks I’ve referred to were left by fluidly bipedal species.

Bipedalism among apes can be traced back at least to the common ancestor for what would much later be modern humans, chimpanzees and the latter’s very close relative, the bonobos.

It took several million years for all the closely

related elements in the spine, pelvis, hips, knees, ankles and feet to evolve to the point where species became fully bipedal.

Coupled with these changes were other adaptive changes to make room in the pelvis for the birth of increasingly larger skulls (think brain here).

Human babies are born far more dependent and remain so for much longer than children of other apes, which suggested to some experts that all normal-term births in humans are developmentally premature, relative to newborn children of apes.

As Jeremy DeSilva pointed out in his 2021 book, “First Steps,” bigger brains in primates, go hand-in-hand

with skeletal adaptations for both bipedalism and making room for those bigger brains in the birth canal.

Bipedalism also freed the forelimbs for other tasks such as the creation of tools and eventually go on to serve a wide variety of other functions such as playing musical instruments.

Bipedalism was accompanied with the development of increasingly large social groups and the greater challenges for navigating larger, more complex social networks.

This would have placed a premium on the evolution of social intelligence and the closely related evolution of increasingly sophisticated oral language and matching changes in the brain, such as the lateralization of speech.

The genetic basis of bipedalism was recently explored by studying legally aborted human fetuses, with the mother’s permission.

The investigators showed that the pelvis begins to take shape around four to eight weeks and involves many thousands of genes many of which are regulatory ones — that is, they dictate what changes take place in what

specific regions of the forming pelvic cartilage (there is no bone that early).

By comparing the genetic control of the human pelvis with that of the mouse, they were able to show that many of the regulatory genes for the pelvis in humans evolved rapidly in the last few million years and early on were under intense selective pressure for the evolution of bipedalism.

Similar reasoning and findings would probably be true for other highly valued systems such as social intelligence, sophisticated oral speech and fine manipulatory skills with the hands.

Bipedalism was important in our evolution but as part of a much larger package of changes involving the brain and other systems and we’re just beginning to get a glimpse of how complex and integrated those changes were and are.

Nature is far more marvelous than we imagine but the gap is closing.

Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the InfoHealth series at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

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C&C Yachts Factory

Vintage Inns recently won a Biennial Design award for the Gardens at the Pillar and Post. This week's aerial photo is a "before" image for that same block of land, showing the C&C Yachts complex. The brick building at the top edge is the current Pillar and Post and John Street runs along just below it. George Cuthbertson and George Cassain are the two Cs of the company, which designed custom sail boats that were built here by George Hinterhoeller. Their boats were known to be fast and dependable and, in 1964, they were one of the first to design one made of fibreglass. Hinterhoeller built the Redwing 30 and 35 as well as the Invader series for them. A merger in 1969 between C&C, Hinterhoeller and two other ship builders resulted in C&C Yachts Limited whose main shipbuilding was focused in NOTL. During the 1970s, C&C was one of the largest sailboat builders in the world. The local plant suffered a devastating setback in 1994 with a fire that caused millions in damages. The NOTL plant was closed in 1996 and C & C was sold to Tartan Yachts in Ohio.



Fog frames Brock's Monument

Brock's Monument perched high above Queenston is shrouded in a foggy mist early on a February afternoon while the Mackenzie Printery basks in sunlight. GAIL KENDALL

Looking to the Stars

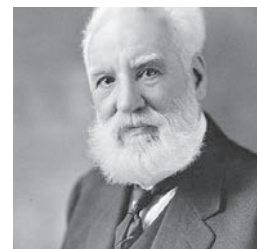
New ideas and new rules can make for a fresh start

Bill Auchterlonie
Columnist

Thursday, March 2: Both Venus and Mercury are in play today, first Venus with Jupiter and then Mercury with Saturn. Something new is in the air: new ideas and new ways of initiating the rules of the game. It's fresh. Most of us know him as Dr. Seuss but Theodor Geisel published more than 60 books during his life, 44 of them for children as Dr. Seuss. He remains one of the most beloved children's authors. Ironically his first children's book "And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street" was rejected 27 times before being publishing in 1937.



Friday, March 3: Pay attention to your intuition and the opportunities for new relationships they offer. Today, one is likely solid gold. Happy birthday to Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone and a multitude of other devices, many still in search of a use. Bell was born in Scotland in 1847 and he lived in both Brantford and Nova Scotia before settling in America.



Saturday, March 4: A pause in your social calendar allows you to pursue new relationships. It was March 4, 1971, that Pierre Elliott Trudeau wed Margaret Sinclair in a private ceremony north of Vancouver.



Sunday, March 5: Romance is in every beath you take. Enjoy it. But avoid any of the seven sins! It was March 5, 1496, that English King Henry VII granted John Cabot (Giovanni Caboto) a commission to explore for new lands.



Monday, March 6: On this day before the full moon Mercury sets up as opposite the moon, leaving tension and lots of ideas on the table. Think before you speak. On March 6, 1981, iconic newscaster Walter Cronkite retired from his nightly hosting duties on CBS TV.



Tuesday, March 7: It's a full moon. With the sun in Virgo and the moon opposite in Virgo, the sneaky one is Saturn quietly moving into Pisces and asking us to be sure our values make sense. On March 7, 1876 that Alexander Graham Bell received his American patent for what would eventually be known as the telephone.



Wednesday, March 8: The moon begins the day in Virgo but quickly moves to Libra in the morning. This sets a real break from yesterday's full moon and emotions become more considerate and all-inclusive. On March 8, 1867, the British North America Act was passed in the House of Commons. It served as Canada's constitution for more than 100 years.

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