



## Queen Street open to walk

Town council closes street to vehicles for weekends starting Canada Day, business owners say it wasn't a good time to gauge impact on community



Queen Street closed to traffic on Wednesday, as the first part of a pilot program to see if shutting the street down to cars is viable for the future, to encourage social distancing and support downtown businesses. RICHARD HARLEY

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

Canada Day was the first trial run of closing Queen Street to vehicles to allow pedestrian traffic on the street.

The afternoon saw people using the street, but some store owners say the national holiday is not a good representation of how the closure will affect businesses and residents.

Maureen Dickson, owner of Irish Design and a Simcoe Street resident, said Canada Day is so unique that it isn't valid for a test run and that things would be clearer during the next couple of weekends of the pilot project.

Queen Street will be closed on weekends now until July 19 as part of a project organized by the town in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce. It will be open to pedestrians

only, from King to Victoria Street. Access to essential businesses like the post office and Valu-mart will not be affected.

So far, Dickson is not supportive of the closure, she said during an interview Wednesday.

*“It's not a normal process, but I guess these aren't normal times.”*

GARY BURROUGHS  
NOTL TOWN COUNCILLOR

She said she saw people driving around frustrated trying to find parking spaces.

“On Simcoe Street this morning I would say probably up until about one o'clock there's a lot of confusion, people trying to find a place to park,” she said.

“I think it's the same on

the other side of Queen Street. People have been circling, trying to find places to park. ‘Cause I haven't seen anyone actually find a spot in a couple of hours.”

She said by mid-afternoon the traffic had died down a bit and a lot of cars were headed out of town toward the Niagara Parkway.

Prideaux Street resident Elaine Bartolini said she thinks visitors are getting frustrated.

“We almost got hit by a car because the guy didn't even stop,” she said.

Dickson said as far as helping business, it's also too early to know.

“It's hard to say because this morning it was busy in the store, which in the morning it can be, and then the middle of the day has been very, very quiet. So we're hoping that in the evening it will pick up a little bit,” she said.

“And it's hard to say what

happened today. It's Canada Day, as I said before, and on Canada Day there's more people in town, so we would expect more sales. But I don't think it's symptomatic of the street being closed.”

Dickson said she's not in favour of the closure at all, even if businesses were able to expand on to the street.

She said typically, as is common at the Peach Festival, the street just looks like a “flea market” and businesses tend to bring out old merchandise that isn't selling anyway.

It also prevents people from going into the shops and seeing the full inventory, and typically, she said the Peach Festival doesn't do the stores any favours.

Scottish Loft owner Simon Bentall also said he doesn't think Canada Day is a good time to judge the outcome of the closure.

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Stuart McCormack. FILE/DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

## Stuart McCormack resigns from council

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

After just 19 months into a four-year term, Stuart McCormack is resigning from Niagara-on-the-Lake town council and stepping down from his committee positions, The Lake Report has learned.

Late Wednesday, McCormack, a first-time councillor, emailed the paper a copy of a letter sent to fellow councillors late Wednesday. It is unclear yet how he will be replaced.

He said he thinks the “direction council is taking” does not allow him to “appropriately represent the interests” of the residents who put their trust in him, or to “contribute to the future of our community as I hoped and expected.”

His letter doesn't explain what specific council directions he objects to. McCormack was criticized in recent weeks after he refused to sign a letter issued by town officials denouncing

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## Town to help province with COVID testing for farm workers: Erwin Wiens

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is going to do whatever it can to help ensure all migrant farm workers in NOTL are tested for COVID-19, Coun. Erwin Wiens says.

The decision to test all farm workers comes from the province, after an announcement by Premier Doug Ford on Monday.

There have been no outbreaks of COVID-19



on NOTL farms. Workers at one farm in St. Catharines tested positive and hundreds of farm workers in southwestern Ontario have been infected. At least three have died.

The municipality is working to assist public health officials to set up testing, “just to make sure that we can do everything we can to keep everybody safe,” Wiens said in an interview Tuesday.

He said he thinks the

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Due to the Canada Day holiday, and in order to bring readers all the latest news, *The Lake Report's* print edition is publishing on Friday this week. Look for all your NOTL news next week on Thursday as usual.

# Mayor, CAO 'fix' council's decision on Queen Street closure

Town council closes street to vehicles for weekends during special meeting, mayor, CAO use delegated power to change plans

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

NOTL council held a special meeting last Friday to approve closing part of Queen Street on weekends and holidays from July to October.

Three days later, on Monday, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's emergency control group, led by Lord Mayor Betty Disero and interim chief administrator Sheldon Randall, decided to override council's vote and limit the pilot program to a couple of weeks in July.

Under the town's state of emergency during the COVID-19 pandemic, the emergency control group has the power to make decisions without having to bring together council members for a vote. Most members of council appear not to object to the control group's move.

So, now on weekends until July 19, Queen Street from King to Victoria will be a pedestrian mall from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., as the town runs the pilot program.

The street will be closed east of the post office and Valu-mart grocery store, two essential operations in downtown.

The project began on Canada Day and will continue on weekends until July 19. Among its main goals are to see if the closure benefits downtown businesses and what effect it has on traffic.

There are mixed messages coming from councillors — some saying the closure is to encourage social distancing, while others are clear that it is meant to support downtown businesses.

The program was also pushed for by the NOTL Chamber of Commerce.

Coun. Wendy Cheropita said she's happy with the town's decision to close down the street for the shortened trial run.

"I'm actually thrilled that the emergency team worked with the chamber to quickly change the motion, and the outcome right now is perfect," Cheropita said.



Pedestrians walk down the middle of a closed Queen Street on Canada Day. RICHARD HARLEY

"And a lot of retailers are now very happy. And I think the public is also happy that this is not necessarily something that's going to go on for four months."

Right now, the town, the business community and residents need to work together to see if the pilot is having a positive effect, she said.

"I think we need to work with the Chamber of Commerce and the merchants group. And part of the test should be, let's test the closure, and then let's evaluate — Did it work? Did it actually help the businesses? Is there something we could do differently?" Cheropita said.

"And we'll also look for residents to give their opinions and feedback. This is about helping to create a safe environment in the end, and it should benefit the business community and help them to survive as well. And to create a vibrant downtown area once again, so that our community can recover from the terrible effects of COVID."

Coun. Gary Burroughs said he was not originally in favour of closing Queen Street.

"The decision was made, I was not in favour of some parts of it," he said in an interview.

"I was not supportive of it

going to Oct. 31. It was supposed to be a trial and we can do a trial in two to three weeks and see if it needs to be changed or adjusted or cancelled."

With the changes made by the emergency control group, he is now more supportive of the shorter trial.

"I totally agree with the new timing. There was no reason to shut it to midnight, nobody's on the streets at midnight in Niagara-on-the-Lake," he said.

Burroughs did note that the emergency group's decision is unusual.

"It's not a normal process, but I guess these aren't normal times."

Coun. Clare Cameron, who put forward the original motion to close the street, said she's happy to see a trial run in place.

"Overall, with the recent changes, the goal of having a test and a temporary closure is still moving forward. And I'm very pleased about that," she said during a Tuesday interview.

She said she's glad council had an opportunity to discuss the issue in a public setting of council.

"I received a very significant number of expressions of interest and desire to see a portion of Queen Street closed for weekends and holidays. And these expressions of desire came

from people in the business community, came from residents. Some of them came from visitors, from people who have lived in town for a long time, some from people who are newer to town," she said.

"I'm feeling really glad that I took the opportunity on that Friday special council meeting to make the motion that I did that helped, hopefully to secure the start of this pilot."

She, too, said there was discussion about the need for "adequate space on the street to maintain safety, both for social distancing and for fire rescue operations if ever needed."

Cameron said she's looking forward to hearing from town staff as to how the test is going.

She encouraged residents and business owners to contact the town with feedback through the town's Join the Conversation web page.

Disero said she was surprised by council's decision to close the street, as town staff had recommended council approve working with the chamber to find alternate solutions.

"Like somebody asks you, 'Hey, can we close for a couple weeks to do a pilot?' And you think, 'OK, we're closing for four months? Like, what? I did ask Coun. Cameron three times. 'What

is your vision for Queen Street? What do you have in mind? What are you trying to do here?' And all she kept saying was, 'It's a street closure, I'm not changing anything. If somebody else wants to amend it, go ahead' Nobody spoke up."

Disero said she would have preferred to see parking spaces closed, but traffic still flowing.

Other ideas included closing a portion of some side streets off Queen.

"Or closing off some of the cans to make like little seating areas for people with a couple picnic tables that are distanced," Disero said.

"And then the chamber came in and did a delegation saying they want Queen Street closed altogether for a test."

"So I thought, 'OK, fine, that's not what we talked about, but alright,'" she said.

She said she was concerned because she'd gone down to Queen Street to talk to business operators and found that it was pretty evenly split as far as the desire to close the street.

"We only went to people that actually operated stores, not landowners. And it was not 95 per cent of people on Queen Street that want it. I don't know how that came about that 95 per

cent. But it was like, you know, 19 to 21 ... it wasn't even that extreme that everybody wanted it. So I asked (Cameron), please be cautious, because there's not an overwhelming majority that want it."

She said she's received "lots of emails" from residents in the area, business owners and store employees asking "what are you doing?"

That's when she made the decision to use her delegated authority to make some changes.

"I just thought, you know what, I am not going to go through another discussion of council, because I don't know what they will do. All I know is that we need to adjust this to make it workable for the community. And I have delegated authority, Sheldon has delegated authority, let's just fix this so that way the residents and the store owners don't have to suffer. So I went in on Monday morning and said ... let's just do it now. Let's forget council for now. And let's just do it."

She said the decision was made to keep people safe, plus to help businesses. "The sole purpose and reason by the chamber and the Heritage District merchants was to make space for people to walk. What they want is for residents and tourists to feel safe. And they're thinking that might bring in a little bit more business. If people can feel safe to come here."

Disero said what is most important right now is to "promote safe physical distancing and that we support our local business community."

"Only time will tell if this solution helps us achieve both of those."

The town said in a media release that the closure is not intended to allow businesses expand onto the street, but to "support physical distancing measures among those wishing to visit the Heritage District and to support local business during the busiest times of the season."

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**Wayne Gates** MPP Niagara Falls representing Niagara-on-the-Lake & Fort Erie  
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# Canada Day isn't a good example of how closure will work, say business owners, residents

*Continued from Front Page*

He said so far the closure made “no difference whatsoever” at this shop.

NOTL’s interim chief administrator Sheldon Randall said in a media statement that there’s “no doubt that closing Queen Street has long been a contentious topic among businesses, property owners and tenants in the Heritage District.”

On Canada Day morning, during the first hour of closure, Randall was downtown seeing how things were going.

There was some scrambling to get detours set up last-minute, but he looked forward to seeing the outcome of the pilot project.

“So what we’re going to do today and through the weekend, is just monitor and see where we need to make improvements to try to make it better,” he said in an interview.

He said a big issue is congestion on residential

side streets.

“So we are concerned about the impact of the residents on the side streets. You know, more cars, more congestion,” Randall said.

He said the town will be monitoring the traffic.

“We’re going to try to monitor how much pedestrian traffic you’re getting on Queen and then for the weekend, we’re going to have cameras up so we can monitor congestion on the side streets.”

There were no signs to let people know they could walk on the street, however Randall said he figures they got the picture.

“I think people that visit Niagara on a regular basis realize that’s the use of it. I mean, out of the gate, it seems like people are using it. So that’s good.”

He said it’s a big task to set up the street and he would be checking with staff to see how it went the first day.

“We had staff drop

some signage off yesterday in preparation and then (staff) were out early (Wednesday) morning, making sure we were blocking off parking stalls so people didn’t come in, park the car at seven in the morning, expecting to leave their car there for several hours,” he said.

“So I need to get feedback from staff on how well that worked. And whether we were out early enough or we need to come out a bit later.”

He said another issue is ensuring tenants living above the shops in the closed areas can get in and out.

“We had a lot of concerns that keeping the street closed overnight would really impact any tenants who live above any of the businesses on Queen Street. They’re the ones that get forgotten,” Randall said.

“People forget that there’s people that actually live up there. And there’s one lady that we’ve been talking to



Scottish Loft owner Simon Bentall says the Queen Street closure hasn't made a difference for businesses. FILE/JESSICA MAXWELL

in her 80s. And she’s really concerned about it. So, we’ll continue to work with her,” he said.

Town workers might make some special arrangements for her. “I’m not sure what that might be. But if she needs groceries, or she’s picking up groceries and needs to get back to her place, maybe we can make sure there’s somebody there to help her,” Randall said.

“So again, this is going to be a learning process for everybody. We’ll definitely be tweaking it as we go.”

**Niagara-on-the-Lake**

**Queen Street Pilot Program**

At the June 26, 2020, Special Council Meeting, Town Council voted in favour of a temporary closure of Queen Street to vehicular traffic. Notwithstanding Council's decision, Interim CAO Sheldon Randall and Lord Mayor Betty Disero, with the support of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce, used their delegated authority to make changes to the details of the closure.

This decision was made in response to comments received by residents and business owners following the Town's announcement of the temporary closure, as approved by Council.

**Trial Closure Dates:** Wednesday, July 1, 2020, and every Saturday and Sunday from Saturday, July 4, 2020, to Sunday, July 19, 2020\*

**Trial Closure Location:** Queen Street, east of the Post Office to King Street

**Trial Closure Time Frame:** 10 AM - 6 PM each day of the closure  
 \*Dates of trial subject to change.

Neither the Old Town Post Office nor the Hendriks Valu Mart will be included in the street closure to vehicular traffic. Parking at both establishments will remain for patrons only.

Town Staff will provide a report to Council reviewing the success of the trial closure and will make a recommendation as to whether the weekend and statutory holiday closure of Queen Street should be extended to the rest of July, into August and beyond.

Alternative parking is being arranged for Queen Street tenants and employees. For further details, or to obtain a parking permit, contact the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce at [tourism@niagaraontheLake.com](mailto:tourism@niagaraontheLake.com) or 905-468-1950.

**We want your feedback!**  
 Visit [jointheconversationnotl.org](http://jointheconversationnotl.org) to complete the Queen Street Pilot Program survey.



Gordon Cutts found a severed fawn head on his driveway last week. FILE/RICHARD HARLEY

## Update: Police say animal likely responsible for fawn head found on driveway

Last week The Lake Report reported about a fawn head found on a man’s driveway. The man said the head was clean cut and suspected it was a person that did it.

Police did not immediately respond to questions before press time, but have since said they believe animals to be responsible for the incident.

## Town changes washroom hours

With the influx of summer visitors and easing of some pandemic restrictions, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has extended public washroom hours at Queen’s Royal Park, Simcoe Park and Market Street.

The washrooms are now open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week.



Police recovered a body Tuesday. RICHARD HARLEY

## Police trying to ID body found in river in NOTL

Richard Harley  
 The Lake Report

Police are trying to identify a body that was found in the Niagara River in Niagara-on-the-Lake Tuesday.

Officers were called to the area of Ricardo and Melville streets at about 8:45 a.m., regarding “found human remains,” Niagara Regional Police spokesperson Stephanie Sabourin said in response to questions

from The Lake Report.

Foul play is not suspected, Sabourin said.

She said investigators do not believe it is the body of a 19-year-old St. Catharines man who slipped and fell into the river on June 8.

He was hiking with friends near Niagara Glen and the Niagara River Parkway when they stopped to take a picture on a rock.

The teenager fell into the swift-flowing river and has yet to be found, police said.

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**Contributed by Patty Garriock**  
 "I don't think of all the misery but of the beauty that still remains." – Anne Frank.



**Contributed by Norm Arsenault:**  
 Save on your water bill by using these simple tips! Turn water off while brushing your teeth; fix leaky faucets and toilets (that one can really add up); shorten your showers; use low flow faucet nozzles and cover your pool to reduce evaporation!

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Hoping you had a **wonderful** Canada Day!



## Conservatives proposing **Back to Work Bonus**

Dear editor:  
 While Ontario moves forward with its reopening plan, I've heard from a number of residents and local business owners wondering how the transition back to a more open local economy will affect them in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls and Fort Erie.  
 My Conservative colleagues and I are focused on getting workers and

local businesses back on their feet. Conservatives believe it should always pay to work. That is why we are proposing to make the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) more generous and flexible, by introducing the Back to Work Bonus.  
 Under our Conservative plan, Canadians who lost their job due to the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to receive their

full \$2,000 CERB. As businesses reopen, workers who make between \$1,000 and \$5,000 per month would qualify for the Back to Work Bonus, a CERB top-up that would be gradually phased out by 50 cents for every extra dollar earned over the \$1,000 threshold.  
 For a part-time server making \$2,000 per month, the Back to Work Bonus would result in a top-up of \$1,500, for a total monthly

income of \$3,500.  
 After making it through an incredibly challenging few months, Canadians should not be penalized for picking up an extra shift or gradually returning to work as their employer reopens.  
 Canada's Conservatives will keep putting forward constructive solutions to get you the help you need.  
 Sincerely,  
**Tony Baldinelli**  
 MP, Niagara Falls riding

## Speed bumps are the **answer** to many problems

Dear editor:  
 Speed bumps and more speed bumps are what we need!  
 While issues are debated and minds are indecisive, just put these "traffic calming" agents to work.

Try them all along Queen Street. Put them at Simcoe, Victoria, King and Wellington to start.  
 You can still collect for parking fees but the driving through will be much reduced.

The motorcyclists will have to cut their speed on Queen and their noise and pollution will be reduced – an enhancement for the town  
 And since we cannot seem to afford several speed-minders or traffic lights, and

speeding is another big problem, put other speed bumps along Mississagua Street at the NOTL Community Centre and at King and Mary as well while we are at it.  
**Sheila Doyle**  
 NOTL



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# OPINION



## Pandemic a **chance** to re-evaluate

### We can move toward a more responsible society by first understanding the influences on our lives

Bill Garriock  
Special to The Lake Report

The COVID-19 pandemic will end up being a transformational event for all people and for all of society.

Not only have millions of people been infected by the virus and hundreds of thousands have died, but it has brought home to many that perhaps the way we have been living our lives is open to serious questioning. Not only have many had serious health issues including dealing with death, but many have suffered irreparable financial harm.

The social distancing or physical distancing, and self- and mandatory isolation, have caused people to have more time to assess the way they have been living.

Not all of the time now available for reflection has been focused on thinking about the future; much time has been spent dealing with the result of personal decisions made in the past. And many of those decisions have been influenced by a bombardment of messages received through many

traditional and alternative media to live a lifestyle which, in many cases, is really not affordable.

One of the insidious television commercials regularly viewed is one to encourage you to constantly keep track of your credit score, to see if there is more room to extend your credit by buying “things” and services to enhance your lifestyle.

It all looks so easy; it's like winning the lottery without having to buy a ticket for the next draw. Credit Karma, the company behind the credit score, earns revenue from lenders who pay the company when Credit Karma successfully recommends customers to lenders.

It is clear that this is not a public service. In fact, the company had been very successful. It is about to be acquired for \$7.1 billion by Intuit, an American business and financial company located in Mountain View, California.

This company spends 28 per cent of revenues on selling and marketing, to entice you to spend beyond your

means. It has a very profitable net income of 23 per cent of revenues. Encouraging you to live an unaffordable lifestyle is indeed rewarding for this company!

The other great appeal is to withdraw money from your home in what is dubbed a reverse mortgage. All you have to do is be over 55 and own your own home. Easy peasy!

And you can take up to 50 per cent of the equity in your home out over time to continue with your unaffordable lifestyle.

As one commercial says, “Why buy only one hot tub when you can have two?” However, there are at least two problems with all of this. Interest rates are higher than a conventional mortgage and once you have ‘consumed’ half the equity in your home, there is nothing left to borrow. So, sell your house and hope that you don't live too long.

From 55 years old to 85 or 95 is 30 or 40 years and those are long time periods to have your main source of income coming

from a reverse mortgage on your home.

And part of your new expenses will be the interest that is paid on the money you will have withdrawn. It all costs ... but then there is always pet food to eat when the money is gone. Or you will have to have “Big Government” take care of you when you are sharing four to a room in a care facility.

The good news is that we have an opportunity to reflect on our own responsibilities and to think about how we wish to live our lives going forward. Perhaps in this interim period we have actually achieved more of a balance in our lives.

Maybe being connected to our office 24/7 really isn't necessary. Generations before us never were and they survived and organizations prospered.

Maybe all of us should seriously question some of the things we assume to be true and how we live as individuals and as a society in total. Perhaps it is time to press the reset button.

*Bill Garriock lives in Niagara-on-the-Lake.*

## Evidence shows masks effective, so please, let's all start **wearing** them

Dear editor:  
News flash: The unequivocal evidence is in. “Wearing masks saves lives and prevents the spread of the virus.”

As the economy reopens, residents and tourists are becoming more complacent and not taking the virus seriously.

Masks on Queen Street are rare at best, as noted by Lord Mayor Betty Disero. Once inside the local stores, like Phil's, Penner, etc., all social distancing bets are off as there are very few people wearing masks and customers are charging around the stores in all

directions, like a bull in a china shop.

As well, there is total disregard for the aisle direction markings on the floor. I broached the matter with one customer, “Excuse me, you are going in the wrong direction.” Their reply, “I know,” and they keep on shopping.

We will always have these militant, cavalier types playing fast and loose with not only their health, but everyone around them – their family and friends, etc. They just have a total disregard for any laws and guidelines.

The United States is only one example and

is paying the inevitable price for ignoring the medical guidelines to defeat this virus.

The state of California, with a population of 39.51 million, that's two million more than Canada, has mandated the wearing of masks. Gov. Andrew Cuomo of New York has urged President Donald Trump to order everyone to wear a mask.

Florida, Arizona, California and others are closing the bars and beaches and delaying or rolling back economic reopening plans.

This is not a second surge. It's a new spike in cases during the first stage of the virus.

In conclusion, I am pleading with our town officials to make masks mandatory for the safety of our community as a whole and to protect our

merchants from a disastrous second shutdown. The jury has spoken on this one – let's not be late to the party. Be a leader, not a follower.

Seniors get the message on wearing masks. Many of them as children, like myself, wore gas-masks in the U.K. during the Second World War. We adapted to wearing seat-belts and not smoking in restaurants, etc.

What is so different with society today that a greater percentage refuse to wear masks? Is it that in our generation, we had more respect for our parents, teachers, the police and the general rule of law?

For those who refuse to and don't like wearing a mask: you will like wearing a ventilator less.

*Samuel Young  
NOTL*



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## Rebranded NOTL Museum to reopen building, walking tours

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

Residents and visitors will soon be able to plan museum visits in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Officially operating under its new name, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum will be open to the public as of July 14.

Museum hours will be 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Previously operating as the Niagara Historical Society & Museum, the facility opens not only with a new name, but with new guidelines and procedures in place to maintain a safe environment for visits.

“We’re asking visitors to maintain physical distancing, follow directional arrows and we’re limiting



The NOTL Museum. JESSICA MAXWELL

time and number of visitors inside the museum,” managing director/curator Sarah Kaufman said.

The museum is following provincial guidelines to reopen and maintaining sanitization schedules for high-touch areas and bathrooms.

“We want our members and visitors to have a relaxed experience when they come here,” Kaufman said, “but we’re also making sure

that safety is paramount, for them and our staff.”

Walking tours with the museum are also set to resume July 18, with limited group sizes and new routes planned to avoid high-traffic areas in Old Town Niagara-on-the-Lake.

“So, let’s all meet again, and preferably wearing masks,” Kaufman said, “but in the words of Vera Lynn’s iconic song, let’s keep smiling through.”

## NOTL farm workers to be tested

Continued from Front Page

testing will be done in “short order.”

“I think the province wants it done in the next few days,” Wiens said.

“As we speak, we’re working on it.”

He said right now he’s working as a “liaison between the farmers and the different agencies and the town as a councillor.”

Wiens, who operates a



Farm workers in NOTL will be tested for COVID. FILE

farm in NOTL, said it’s unclear how the testing will be conducted, but that it would likely require the use of town facilities.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero

echoed Wiens’ comments, noting that the testing is being done by public health officials, but that the town will assist with testing in any way it can.

## OPINION: Confounded by some of council’s latest decisions

Dear editor:

Recent articles on the lord mayor’s activities and council’s decisions are confounding to many I am sure, and difficult to understand for others.

A heritage municipal tax rebate, for example, can be simple.

The owner of a heritage-designated building should apply and benefit from the proposed rebate.

No other interest should benefit from the program and the building’s

designation is the important criteria, not whether it is residential or commercial, nor restricted to a specific area in the community.

Much of the program as described is unworthy of those owners of such important buildings in our community.

Closing of the downtown core for traffic is worthy of action but not providing the description of the area makes it difficult for residents to comprehend the affected area.

A two-block area, four-block area, six-block area, eight-block area and hours of the closures or is it the intent of council to impose a complete and total closure 24/7? This would be helpful information for businesses and residents to understand.

Please provide parking locations with a commuter system in place to relieve congestion on the side streets, in the planning. This would help offset lost parking revenues.

An administrative report

suggests council should hire a procurement officer to assist the town. The hiring of a commissioner for business development would go further to assisting council in planning and delivering these many programs it is initiating.

Council decided to repeal an interim control bylaw that froze urban developments. After such a draconian act, council is asking developers to buoy our local economy by investing in our community during this

recession/depression of the pandemic. I wish them luck.

Rural high-speed internet service is required in our community and waiting for others to do it would put our community on a very long provincial list. Would council consider empowering Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro to initiate, implement and deliver such a service? It could be a source of additional revenue for our municipally owned business, which has a very high rate of success in delivering its services.

Between the COVID pandemic and its impact on our economy, council will now compound issues by implementing policies that will impact residents and put further doubt on investing in our community.

Positive decisions can best be made when the complete facts are provided to the community for discussion. This may be one good thing the COVID pandemic forces on us in our policy process.

**Derek Insley**  
NOTL

## Community snaps Legion opens up to members



Patrick Dowd, Mark Gaspich and Jim Brunton enjoy the newly opened patio Thursday at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 124. JESSICA MAXWELL

## Pig Roast supports museum



Demitri Zakharchenko and Adam Sheridan of Pig Out prepare roast pig for a pop-up barbecue in support of Trinity Lutheran Church. JESSICA MAXWELL

## Town reopens gazebo, extends some closures

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

After being closed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the gazebo at Queen's Royal Park reopened July 2.

However, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is extending the cancellations of in-person meetings and the closure of some town facilities.

The town said it is "keeping in line with preventative measures being extended by the province amid the roll-out of recovery measures," in a media release.

Summer camp programs will remain open "in accordance with guidelines outlined in the province's Stage 2 framework for reopening."

Town staff are accepting



The NOTL gazebo at Queen's Royal Park reopened Thursday. JESSICA MAXWELL

and reviewing special event permit applications on a case-by-case basis and are issuing permits for those that meet guidelines laid out by the province and Niagara Region.

Staff are also looking into the possibility of continuing regularly scheduled advisory committee meetings

in an electronic format, the release said.

The following facilities remain closed:

Niagara-on-the-Lake Library (closed to the public but offering curbside pick-up and online services)  
Queenston Library

Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre (open for summer camp activities only)

Meridian Credit Union Arena & Centennial Arena (open for summer camp activities only)

Town administration buildings

"As we continue to move forward with recovery measures, including the reopening and recommencement of some programming, we ask residents and visitors to remain vigilant in adhering to public health recommendations, specifically with respect to physical distancing within these open facilities," the town stated.

Gazebo bookings can be made by calling community centre staff at 905-468-4386, ext. 1.

## Smartphone ads to target tourists, residents with 'stay safe' messaging

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

Driving in to Niagara-on-the-Lake? You might just see an ad on your phone reminding you to wear a mask and practice social distancing.

The Town of NOTL has launched a new advertising campaign in partnership with Bell Media, which will send targeted messaging for four weeks to residents and visitors.

The measures are in response to increased visitors as the province continues to reopen.

The messages also will appear on the phones of people who use the Rogers

and Telus networks, town spokesperson Lauren Kruitbosch told The Lake Report. Total cost of the ad program is just under \$4,000, she said.

"With more businesses reopening as a result of increasing recovery measures, it is more important than ever to promote the message of stay safe," the town said in a news release.

"We're able to hyper-target visitors in real-time through their mobile devices when they enter the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake," stated Ashleigh Myers, a marketing executive at Bell Media Radio Niagara.

"We've also layered in additional messages targeting

residents and local tourists about continued safety measures as we move into Stage 2," she said, in the release.

The ads, which began June 26, will also let visitors know of washroom availability.

"While ads targeted to residents will be slightly different than ads for visitors, all ads will link to the COVID page on the town's website, allowing users to gain additional information about Niagara-on-the-Lake's recovery measures," the town said.

"Our goal is to ensure everyone stays safe and continues to practice physical distancing, while also supporting local businesses and



NOTL's new ad campaign will target cell phones with "stay safe" messaging. PIXABAY PHOTO

our vital tourism sector," said Interim CAO Sheldon Randall, in the release.

"We're pleased to see tourism returning to Niagara-on-the-Lake, but the impacts of COVID-19 remain a significant concern. With this campaign, we can target these visitors to encourage compliance with safety measures."

## NOTL to release instructional videos on how to gather safely

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is producing videos on how to get together safely, now that the province has allowed people to gather in groups of 10, Lord Mayor Betty Disero told council last week.

"We're doing a series of videos and instructional videos in consultation with members of the community,

the Shaw guild and others to explain to people how to be safe," she said.

She said she's been receiving increased emails from residents who are concerned about the number of people in town on weekends.

The first instruction, she said, would be to visit Queen Street "when the crowds are not as large as they are, let's say Saturday and Sunday afternoon."

Other videos, she said, will focus on "how to have a group of people over, how to shop for essential products, how to do different things in the community, that one would just sort of take for granted prior to COVID-19."

She reminded council that the pandemic is not over.

"We're still in the midst of it. So it's an extra special caution to everybody," she said.



The town of NOTL will be letting people know how to be safe. SUPPLIED



### Citizen Representatives Needed

#### Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Representatives for Niagara-on-the-Lake Council Advisory Committees

The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is seeking local representatives for appointment to the following Advisory Committees:

Name of Committee/Board	Number of Vacant Position
Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board	1
Environmental Advisory Committee	7

An application form and Terms of Reference are available on the Town's website [www.notl.org](http://www.notl.org). Applications will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. on July 16, 2020. A resume identifying specific qualifications for appointment to the Board of Directors is required with the application.

Completed applications may be submitted to the Corporate Services Department, Municipal Offices, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, PO Box 100, Virgil ON L0S 1T0 or by email to [peter.todd@notl.com](mailto:peter.todd@notl.com)



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Chris, Evander, Krystan Tandock, from Thorold, stop by the pop-up Rotary barbecue.



Natasha Vujcic, Marija Prica, Natasha Trpeski and Ana Pesic celebrate Canada Day at Stratus winery.



Tom Fabrey, Tracey Pether and Dozer, Rosina Mete and Amy Maraone at Stratus winery.

# NOTL celebrates Canada

Jessica Maxwell  
The Lake Report

Canada Day festivities in Niagara-on-the-Lake were different this year thanks to COVID-19, but people still found ways to adjust and continue celebrating.

Those looking to celebrate could enjoy a patio party, Canada Day cupcake delivery or drive-through barbecue in town.

The Rotary Club of Niagara-on-the-Lake partnered with Pig Out Ni-

agara for a pop-up Canada Day barbecue in the parking lot of Niagara United Mennonite Church.

Customers could order ahead or drive through the pop-up for a pulled pork sandwich or hot-dog lunch, between noon and 2:30 p.m.

Krystan Tandock, a Thorold resident, was driving home with her family when they spotted the barbecue.

"We're happy to be here and to be able to support something lo-

cal," she said.

"It's different, but it's nice to actually be able to get out of the house," said her husband, Chris Tandock.

Normally the Rotary Club would be set up for a morning pancake breakfast and afternoon barbecue in Simcoe Park, said Gary Hatton, chair of the Rotary Club Canada Day committee.

"Obviously this year, everything's gone out the window," he said.

Hatton said this gave the club an opportunity to collaborate with Pig Out Niagara for the July 1 barbecue and kick off a new year of fundraising.

Willow Cakes & Pastries with Friends of Fort George volunteers distributed 202 orders of Canada Day cupcakes to residents instead of the annual Canada Day cake at Simcoe Park.

Eskoot Niagara donated 100 gift certificates to Friends of Fort George for distribu-

tion with the cupcake deliveries. The gift certificates allow for a full day of rentals for two people, valued at over \$100 each.

"We are a big supporter of Friends of Fort George because they do a tour for us when things are normal," said Eskoot owner Colin Telfer, "and they employ a lot of kids on the money that we raise."

"It's just a different kind of Canada Day," he said. "We're trying to get up for it, we're all wearing red and we've got the flag

flying."

Stratus Vineyards invited guests to celebrate Canada Day with seating on the terrace and blankets on the lawn beside the vines between noon and 7 p.m. at the winery.

Kung-Fu Dawg set up on site selling original recipe hotdogs and fresh cut fries with homemade toppings and ingredients from Ontario producers.

"I think Canada Day is my favourite kind of holiday," said Stephen Payne, owner and operator

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I get sharper the more you use me.  
What am I?

Give me laughter and I'll become the death of many, give me hell and I'll be your protector. What Am I?

Answer: The letter "S"

Answered first by: Niamh Jones

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Deborah Vaughan, Pam Dowling, Margie Enns, Sheila Meloche

Email answers, with your name, to [editor@niagaranow.com](mailto:editor@niagaranow.com) for a chance to win a prize. (Subject line: Riddle me this)

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A bicycle parade went through The Village during the evening to say Happy Canada Day.



Gred Fedoryn, Anne Dickson and Brian Crow help out at the pop-up Rotary barbecue.



John, Megan, Clare and Sam Vanderlee stop by the Rotary barbecue on Canada Day.

# Canada Day

Kung-Fu Dawgs. "It just seems like the summer." "We haven't been doing events so it's nice to be able to do an event and celebrate Canada Day," he said. Rotary holds a few annual events to fundraise for local and international projects it supports, but the pandemic forced the club to cancel them this year, Hatton said. The pop-up barbecue lends itself to an opportunity to be able to reduce the numbers at one

place at one time, spread out the people around and still at the same time bring in some money," he said. "We're not getting anywhere near the cash that we got at Simcoe because there are thousands and thousands of people" that the Rotary Club normally serves on Canada Day, he said. "But it keeps people in mind. They see the Rotary sign and they keep thinking about us and we want them to keep us in their hearts."



Across The Village people celebrated Canada Day by decorating their front porches. PHOTOS BY RICHARD HARLEY

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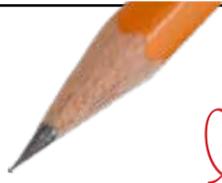
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# GAMES



*Have some fun*

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](mailto:editor@niagaranow.com)

**Across**

- 9. Playwright (9)
- 10. Moor (3,2)
- 11. Space surrounding an altar (7)
- 12. Quickly (7)
- 13. Runner (9)
- 14. Cougar (4)
- 18. Distinct sort or kind (7)
- 20. Surgical knife (7)
- 21. A great deal (4)
- 22. Herald (9)
- 26. Hedge (7)
- 28. Books of maps (7)
- 29. Young hooter (5)
- 30. Abbreviated (9)

**Down**

- 1. Decree (5)
- 2. Executives (10)
- 3. Biting (9)
- 4. Fiddle (6)
- 5. Old liners (8)
- 6. The Roman Empire's home country (5)
- 7. Large mass of floating ice (4)
- 8. As thumbs are (9)
- 15. Disagreeable (10)
- 16. Psalter (5,4)
- 17. Moon (9)
- 19. Astonishment (8)
- 23. Lea (6)
- 24. Threescore (5)
- 25. Stage whisper (5)
- 27. Depend (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				25
26	27					28	
29				30			

### Last issue's answers

1	P	Z	P	U	B	H	P
2	R	O	M	A	N	I	A
3	L	G	L	I	B	M	T
4	P	O	T	R	O	A	S
5	Q	E	T	Y	B	C	N
6	R	A	B	B	L	E	S
7	T	O	E	U	H	L	A
8	R	E	M	O	V	E	R
9	A	B	E	E	S	I	G
10	I	N	A	H	E	A	P
11	T	R	S	A	L	N	E
12	S	O	D	A	S	S	Q
13	N	I	O	A	K	N	A
14	V	E	N	D	O	R	E
15	S	E	E	W	E	E	H

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





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4 RAMPART STREET, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$1,295,000  
MLS ID # 3081731



201-61 PAFFARD STREET, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$429,000  
MLS ID # 30791111



720 KING STREET, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$1,650,000  
MLS ID # 30769475



765 LAKESHORE ROAD, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$1,725,000  
MLS ID # 30773587

**15 +/- ACRES**



60 NIAGARA STREET, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$1,683,000  
MLS ID # 30801773

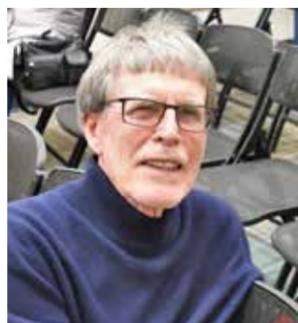


2215 FOUR MILE CREEK ROAD, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - \$774,900  
MLS ID # 30800891



Happy Canada Day

# Dr. Brown: Beware, COVID is not over and NOTLers remain vulnerable



Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the Info-health series held on the second Wednesday of each month at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

Dr. William Brown  
Special to The Lake Report

The last week has been a terrible lesson in how not to open up in the face of an active pandemic, what with record numbers of new cases reported in states such as Florida, Texas, Alabama, Arizona, Utah, Montana and beyond.

As bad as those numbers are, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the real numbers of new cases are probably 10 times worse – making for, by any sane standard, an out-of-control pandemic.

Those record numbers

correspond to states that wilfully – encouraged by a likeminded White House – opened up too early with too little control. Scenes of crowded bars, restaurants and beaches tell the story with no social distancing and nary a mask in sight. Score one for the virus.

COVID-19 has surely proven that it can spread freely and widely in the absence of early identification of cases and contact tracing, meaningful social distancing, mandatory use of masks and quarantining when and where warranted, to stem the tide.

It's an illustration of what happens when politics trumps public health concerns to jumpstart failing economies, and in the case of the United States, reverse falling poll numbers in the face of a November election.

The contrast with FDR's courageous leadership in managing the fallout from the Great Depression and the current fiascos in Russia, Brazil and Philippines and the USA, to name a few, is stark.

Compared to the mess south of the border, Canada managed the pandemic well except for the bungling early on with long-term care facilities

– a failure that accounted for over 80 per cent of the deaths in Ontario and Quebec.

However, these days my concern is more local. Why? Niagara-on-the-Lake is home to a large number of seniors, many with one or more comorbid conditions, which makes them especially vulnerable to this virus.

Except for some problems with long-term care facilities in the region early on, we managed through a combination of luck, relatively few visitors through to June, awareness of the risks, closing many businesses, social distancing, wearing masks and quarantining when necessary, to keep the town safe.

However, with the expected flood of visitors in the coming months from the Golden Horseshoe and beyond, and possibly the United States if the border opens up, the risks to locals will surely increase substantially.

If my observations of some visitors' behaviour on recent good weather weekends are any guide, the added risk to locals from thousands of visitors, some of whom show little inclination to

socially distance or wear a mask in busy grocery stores, is very real – for much the same reasons we saw for the huge spikes in cases in several American states.

The latter reopened too quickly with too few restrictions. That could well be our fate, too.

One of the characteristics of COVID-19 is that active shedders of the virus may be entirely asymptomatic and, without timely widespread testing, public health authorities have no way of identifying those spreading the virus.

That's the dilemma – unless reopening is cautiously done, with a willingness to vigorously clamp down should new cases be identified – the risk of a major outbreak in this community is high. Because many of us are in our seventies or older, NOTLers are especially vulnerable to the serious effects of the virus.

So, beware. The best advice is to continue what you've been doing with respect to social distancing and managing your personal risk.

Don't count on the local or provincial government to manage the risk without your help.

## SPORTS: Golfers celebrate Canada Day in style

Kevin MacLean  
Managing Editor

The women of the NOTL Golf Club were colourfully dressed in all their red-and-white finery on Tuesday to celebrate Canada Day one day early.

The women also paused to toast and remember the late Elaine Lavery, a popular, fun-loving member of the club who died last week.

Meantime, 30-time club champ Mark Derbyshire and lefty Jim McMacken shot 2-over 38 to tie for first place in Niagara-on-the-Lake men's league action last Thursday.

Jim Sifton and John Wiens earned 22 points under the

modified Stableford scoring system to share top honours. Larry Mantle, Joe Mulholland and Tim Taylor were runners-up with 20 points each.

Birdies by Brodie Townley (#4) and Warren Tutton (#6) won gross skins worth \$40 each. No net skins were won.

The previous week, Glenn Young shot a blistering 2-under 34 to win low gross.

His round also was good for 23 points, earning him first place on the day.

Doug Dineley and the ageless Doug Garrett, who is 93, were right behind, tallying 22 points each. Alan Dickson and John Gursky followed with 21 points



Women's club champ Louise Robitaille tees off.

KEVIN MACLEAN

apiece.

No net skins were won, but three golfers won \$20 gross skins for birdies during their rounds. Stephen

Warboys took two skins (#3 and #5), while James Grigjanis-Meusel (#6) and Sean Simpson (#8) scored one each.



### Notice of Open House

**WHAT:** Open House – Review of updates to By-law 4588-12 (Noise By-law)  
**WHEN:** Thursday, July 9, 2020 at 6:00 pm  
**WHERE:** This Electronic Open House will be recorded and will be available for viewing at the following link: <https://livestream.com/notl.com>  
**REGARDING:** Updates to By-law 4588-12 (a by-law to prohibit and regulate noise in the town of niagara-on-the-lake)

#### What is this?

Council has directed Staff to conduct a comprehensive review of the existing Noise By-law 4588-12 (a by-law to prohibit and regulate noise in the town of niagara-on-the-lake). You are invited to attend this meeting to gather information and provide input regarding this matter. You can do so by speaking at this meeting (instructions noted below) or via a written submission to the Clerk of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. All correspondence must be received before July 9, 2020 and be addressed to Peter Todd – Town Clerk, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0, or via email at [peter.todd@notl.com](mailto:peter.todd@notl.com).

#### Dialogue is encouraged:

Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Hall is closed to the public due to the COVID-19 emergency and in-person meetings have been cancelled. As permitted under Provincial legislation and the Town's Procedural By-law, Council and Committee meetings are being conducted electronically during the declared state of emergency. If you wish to participate and/or make an oral presentation or ask questions at this Electronic Open House, you must register in advance with: Peter Todd ([peter.todd@notl.com](mailto:peter.todd@notl.com) or 905-468-3061, ext. 228) (register as soon as possible but prior to 12 noon on Thursday July 9, 2020) Following registration, you will be provided with instructions to connect to the Open House on your computer, tablet, or telephone.

#### For more information:

For more information regarding this matter, please contact Warwick Perrin, Supervisor of Enforcement, 905-468-3061, ext. 278, [Warwick.perrin@notl.com](mailto:Warwick.perrin@notl.com). A copy of the supporting documents pertaining to this proposal may be obtained via the Town's web-site, <https://notl.com/content/corporate-services-public-notice>.

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## McCormack resigns from council and committees

Continued from Front Page

racism. He later said he felt actions, not just words, were needed.

Here is a copy of his resignation letter:

“To my fellow councillors:

I believe that the residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake deserve a well-functioning council serving the residents who have given it their trust. Council must take its responsibility seriously to act, based on evidence and the best information available, solely in the interest of the residents for their common good. Council must safeguard the strong foundation Niagara-on-the-Lake has established and create a framework for a strong future. I am convinced that any such framework, to be successful, has to be built on a foundation of fiscal responsibility, sound planning and vision.

I ran for council with a desire to work co-operatively with the mayor, the council and staff as a team to accomplish that mission

of creating and achieving a strategic vision for this town and building the necessary sound financial foundation to support it.

Unfortunately ... I believe that continuing on council is no longer viable for me. The direction that council is taking and its process of decision-making underlying that direction does not allow me to appropriately represent the interests of the residents who put their trust in me and to contribute to the future of our community as I hoped and expected.

Having regard to the foregoing with considerably mixed feelings, and after a long period of deliberation I have taken the decision to resign from council. I will necessarily be stepping down as chairman of the audit committee and the Glendale task force and other council-related positions.

I would like to emphasize how much I enjoyed working with and more importantly learning from the people in Old Town, St. Davids, Glendale, Virgil



and Queenston. I want to particularly thank the agricultural community for taking the time to educate me and sharing some of their passion for the land. I only wish I could have been as successful in assisting them as I would have liked.

I want to thank the residents for having given me their trust and assure them that I worked every day to, first and foremost, listen, problem solve, take decisions and contribute to the best of my ability to discussions. My desire was always to serve all residents.

I wish the council and town staff well in their stewardship of this wonderful place, and in their efforts to move this town forward. I personally will welcome the opportunity to return to being simply a hands-on volunteer for a variety of organizations in the Niagara region.”

## Disero unsure of route council will take to replace councillor, but favours appointment

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

With Stuart McCormack resigned from council, Lord Mayor Betty Disero said she's not sure what council will do about replacing him.

Ontario's guide for municipal councillors says, “If a municipal council seat becomes vacant, council must declare the council seat vacant at its next meeting.”

The guide says a copy of the declaration must be forwarded immediately to an upper-tier council if the declaration is made by a lower-tier and vice versa.

“Within 60 days of declaring the council seat vacant, council must decide whether to fill the vacancy through a by-election or by appointment for the remainder of the council term.”

Disero said council will declare the seat vacant at its July 20 meeting “and then has 60 days to figure

out how to fill it.”

She said staff will report to council on the best options.

The options are to hold a by-election or to have council appoint a new member.

By law, council cannot leave the seat vacant, she said.

“At one time there were rules on timing for whether an appointment or by-election was required. It is now up to council to decide whether to appoint or call a by-election.”

Disero said if she had to guess, she would say council will likely appoint somebody.

“My guess, and I do not know what council will do at the best of times, is to appoint,” she said in response to questions Thursday.

“It would be very costly to have a by-election.”

According to the Ontario Municipal Act, council can choose anyone to fill the po-

sition, provided they agree to join council, she said.

However, she said she thinks the “fair thing to do” is to choose the person who was next in the results from the 2018 election. That person was Sandra O'Connor, who finished ninth in balloting.

“This council only started 18 months ago with another two and a half years left. It was a democratic vote and I think it is fair,” Disero said.

“But as I said, members of council may have different opinions.”

During the pandemic, the town's emergency control group, including Disero and interim CAO Sheldon Randall, has delegated authority to make decisions for council.

But Disero said the decision to fill the seat is something the emergency group can't make and that it will be left to council to decide what to do.



Lucas Topic, Kevin McClelland, Dan Willms and Larissa Stemmler receive their helmets Monday night after graduating 300 hours of recruit training. RICHARD HARLEY

## Fire recruits get their helmets

Richard Harley  
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake has 15 new firefighters, including five women.

The recruits, who underwent 300 hours of intensive training since September, were presented with their full helmets Monday night as part of their graduation. The department now has 10 female firefighters/officers, Fire Chief Nick Ruller told The Lake Report.

Graduation ceremonies took place at all five NOTL fire stations, social distance-style, with Ruller stopping by each station to congratulate the new team members.

Ruller said it's “encouraging” to see the recruits graduate to full firefighter status.

“Over the past several years, women have applied

to Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire & Emergency Services in increasing numbers,” Ruller said. “We pride ourselves on being an inclusive organization, and are simply looking for the best person for the various roles. It just so happens that 10 of those people are women.”

“The vision for our department is to be high-performing, progressive, and visionary in the provision of emergency services within our community. As we diversify, we are better positioned to realize our vision.”

The new grads all received rave reviews about their performance during training, he said.

“Every instructor in the recruit program and the program administrators all raved about how this group really was performing at such a high level,” Ruller said in an interview.

“You get out of it, what you're willing to put into it,” he noted, “and I think I'm pretty confident based on the group that we have that many of them are going to find this incredibly rewarding opportunity as they move forward.”

The new recruits are:

**Station 1**  
Danielle Bley  
Dan Ens  
Dario Pagogna  
Karley McKeigan

**Station 2**  
Katie Graziano  
Nick Poloniato  
Arthur Martin

**Station 3**  
Lucas Topic  
Larissa Stemmler  
Kevin McClelland  
Dan Willms

**Station 4**  
Spencer Glass  
Chris Maartense

**Station 5**  
Rebecca van der Zalm  
James Chandler

## Legion Honour Guard sees member off



Members of the Legion Branch 124 Honour Guard attend a socially-distanced funeral for veteran Blanche Quinn on Saturday. RICHARD HARLEY

  
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## Obituaries & In memoriam

### David Aurandt

AURANDT David

It is with great sadness that the family of David Aurandt announces his passing on June 4, 2020 at the age of 77. He was the beloved husband of Anne for 38 years. David graduated from Fairfield Connecticut University, received an MA from University of Toronto and MFA from Bard College in New York. He taught Art History, studio courses and visual arts management at University of P.E.I., Algoma University College, Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Brock University and the University of Toronto in Scarborough.

David directed the Thunder Bay Arts Centre, Rodman Hall Arts Centre, Robert McLaughlin Art Gallery in Oshawa, and Riverbrink Art Museum in Queenston. He was a practicing artist whose work was distributed in Canada and the U.S., an experienced writer, visual arts commentator, and curator in both historical and contemporary art.

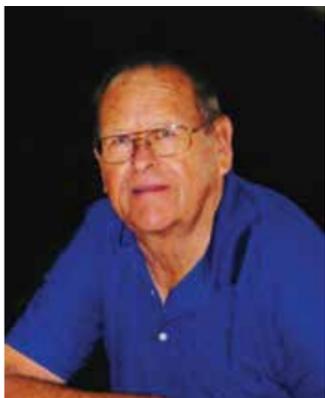
David was a member of St. Mark's Church in NOTL, the Rotary Club, and the local book club. He had been a Board Member of the Gallery Players of Niagara and the Niagara Historical Museum. Cremation has taken place.

In addition to his wife Anne, David leaves his sons Hans and Eric Aurandt and his step family Jerry, Amy, and David, their spouses and seven grandchildren. A service and celebration of life will be held at St. Mark's Church at a later date.

Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at [www.morganfuneral.com](http://www.morganfuneral.com)



### Ken Petrunik



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Silent thoughts of time together,  
Hold memories that will last forever.

Ken & Colleen  
Blake & Sandra  
& Families

For obituary and memorial inquiries,  
please contact [editor@niagaranow.com](mailto:editor@niagaranow.com).

### John Galloway



GALLOWAY John, David –After a lengthy battle with cancer, John David Galloway passed away peacefully in his home, among friends and family, overlooking his garden, on June 28, 2020 at the age of fifty-seven.

He leaves behind his dear friend Gary Zanner of Niagara-on-the-Lake and his two children Rebecca Galloway and Alexander Galloway (Brittany Blaker).

Son of Grace and Allan Hamilton of Listowel and Doug Galloway of Shelburne. Dear brother of Carolyn and Mike Chapman of Listowel, Melissa Galloway, Jenny Bryan (Joey McCrae) and Amy (Jeff) Smith. He will be remembered fondly by his two nieces Hunter (Scott) and Jensen, as well as by his many friends.

David was a skilled gardener, fiercely protective of our natural world. An excellent teacher, he showed many young people the correct way to plant, to divide, and to weed.

Always concerned for his family and friends, he remembered their life events, all while battling the ravages of leukemia. If it was YOUR birthday, a large bouquet would arrive on your doorstep. David leaves a legacy of great beauty for us all to enjoy. We will remember him for his kindness and his gardens.

A celebration of David's life will be held at a later date.

In his memory, please plant a tree or send a donation to St. Mark's Church - Cemetery Tree Fund, Box 582, Niagara on the Lake, or the Jurivinski Hospital and Cancer Centre Foundation, P.O. Box 739 LCD1, Hamilton, ON L8N 3M8. Arrangements entrusted to MORGAN FUNERAL HOME, 415 Regent St., Niagara-on-the-Lake. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at [www.morganfuneral.com](http://www.morganfuneral.com)



For obituary and memorial inquiries,  
please contact [editor@niagaranow.com](mailto:editor@niagaranow.com).



### Notice of Open House

**WHAT:** Open House – Review of DRAFT Long Term Rental Housing By-law  
**WHEN:** Tuesday, July 7, 2020 at 6:00 pm  
**WHERE:** This Electronic Open House will be recorded and will be available for viewing at the following link: <https://livestream.com/notl.com>  
**REGARDING:** The DRAFT Licensing By-law to regulate Long-Term Rental Housing in Residential Areas

**What is this?**

Council has directed Staff to investigate the feasibility of a Licensing By-law. Similar By-laws in other municipalities have been implemented to help mitigate concerns surrounding number of bedrooms, parking, property maintenance, and safety that often stem from long-term rental housing in residential areas. The Town does not currently have a by-law in place that requires property owners to obtain a license to rent out all or a portion of their property to tenants for residential uses lasting longer than 28 days. You are invited to attend this meeting to gather information and provide input regarding this matter. You can do so by speaking at this meeting (instructions noted below) or via a written submission to the Clerk of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. All correspondence must be received before July 7, 2020 and be addressed to Peter Todd – Town Clerk, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0, or via email at [peter.todd@notl.com](mailto:peter.todd@notl.com).

**Dialogue is encouraged:**

Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Hall is closed to the public due to the COVID-19 emergency and in-person meetings have been cancelled. As permitted under Provincial legislation and the Town's Procedural By-law, Council and Committee meetings are being conducted electronically during the declared state of emergency. If you wish to participate and/or make an oral presentation or ask questions at this Electronic Open House, you must register in advance with:

**Peter Todd ([peter.todd@notl.com](mailto:peter.todd@notl.com) or 905-468-3061, ext. 228) (register as soon as possible but prior to 12 noon on Thursday July 9, 2020)**

Following registration, you will be provided with instructions to connect to the Open House on your computer, tablet, or telephone.

**For more information:**

For more information regarding this matter, please contact Warwick Perrin, Supervisor of Enforcement, 905-468-3061, ext. 278, [Warwick.perrin@notl.com](mailto:Warwick.perrin@notl.com). A copy of the supporting documents pertaining to this proposal may be obtained via the Town's web-site, <https://notl.com/content/corporate-services-public-notice>.



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**Kelly Turner**  
Owner of The Olde Angel Inn



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Pauline Reimer Gibson  
Audiologist



Left: John Drope at the Pillar and Post with the Queen in 1973. She visited to commemorate the opening of Shaw's Festival Theatre. Middle: John Drope. Top right: This picture, from a local newspaper of June 28, 1973, depicts the dress rehearsal for the Royal Visit to the Pillar and Post later that day. Sitting in for the Queen is John Drope, founder and proprietor of the hotel. The serving team included from left: Peter Hicks, Rick Meloen and Bruce Cumpson. Bottom right: The Pillar and Post Inn with its distinctive chimney-top sign, guiding visitors to the property. This picture was taken shortly after 35 rooms were added to the restaurant in 1972. SUPPLIED PHOTOS

# Pillar and Post turns 50

In 1970s, iconic hotel helped transform NOTL from a sleepy small town to major destination

*The Lake Report* asked reporter Tim Taylor to find the few remaining locals who were part of the early years of the Pillar and Post Restaurant, now celebrating its 50th birthday this week. Taylor seemed the right choice. He has his own P&P memories. As a summer student, he worked during the day in the woodworking shop. At night, he donned the waiter's distinctive uniform to serve dinner. In that first summer, Tim met and later married, Kathy, the eldest daughter of the Pillar and Post founder, John Drope.

Tim Taylor  
The Lake Report

The opening of the Pillar and Post, 50 years ago this week, heralded an early chapter of the coming-of-age story of both the town and a whole generation of Niagara-on-the-Lake young people.

In many ways, through the 1960s, Niagara-on-the-Lake was still a little backwater community, literally at the end of the road, content with a quiet life with locals and a few

seasonal cottagers.

Teens had fun, but little else. There were few job prospects, certainly none in the town of 1,000 plus-or-minus people.

It is true, residents were just waking up to the opportunity to breathe new life into the town's abundant heritage architecture. And the Shaw Festival, then in its ninth season, was beginning to attract cultural attention.

But the attractive simplicity of the town limited what could happen next.

## OLD TOWN IN LATE 1960s

You could buy rubber boots on the main street. You could get your shoes repaired. A haircut. Fabrics. China. There were car dealerships. Gas stations. Shoe stores. An Eaton's Catalogue outlet. TV and radio repair. Harrison's Lumber Yard. A movie theatre. Movies cost a quarter. Popcorn a nickel. There was an operating fishing industry. The Greaves cookhouse wafted wonderful pickling smells after the fall harvest.

You didn't need to leave town for anything.

The Shaw Festival was spreading its wings. In 1970, the Shaw staged just 89 performances of two plays over 10 weeks in the summer.

Almost all shows were matinees. Performances were still mounted only in the Court House, the audience seated on chairs borrowed from the local high school.

Props were borrowed from local supporters. Actors were billeted. Volunteers made and sold baked goods and lemonade at intermission.

Bright's and Chateau Gai wines highlighted Canadian wine lists and sold for \$3 a bottle. Soup was 85 cents a bowl.

Randwood was still owned by the Rand family from Buffalo.

A few early adopters were buying inexpensive heritage properties, many in disrepair, and bringing them back to life. There were few restoration rules in those days, just well-meaning people.

## PILLAR AND POST VISION

With the benefit of hindsight, the idea seemed quite simple — provide hospitality services to the increasing number of visitors wanting to absorb our local heritage and theatre.

In the mid-1960s, John Drope brought his young family to Niagara-on-the-Lake from Toronto. He knew the town well as his mother summered at her stately home on the edge of the old town's golf course (now the Charles Hotel).

By 1968, Drope had sold his business, Drope Paving and Construction, and was casting about for a new venture.

With coaxing and support from his family, local friends and former schoolmates, Drope conjured a two-pronged new business,

to be housed in the old packing plant-cum-basket factory, on the edge of town at John and Mary streets.

The first prong was fed by his innate handiness and construction savvy. Amber Construction and Amber Forge would satisfy the rapidly increasing desire for period restoration and historically accurate furniture and hardware. Reproduction Canadiana. Drope partnered with well-known restoration specialist Ed Thalman.

For the second prong, he needed skilled help outside his field of experience. He asked his relative-by-marriage, Gordon Paul, then proprietor of the Honeymoon Hotel in Niagara Falls, to partner with him in a new restaurant, something that might well lead to accommodation, at some

*Continued on Page 15*



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# Half a century later, hotel and restaurant are still **pillars** of NOTL community

Continued from Page 14

point. The new restaurant would sell fine food in the traditions of Niagara.

They picked the former packing plant/basket factory for its history, its proximity to the historic Old Town and its sheer size and adaptability for the multiple functions it would perform.

By early spring 1970, the vast empty expanses of the late 19th-century factory were a beehive of activity. In one section, the reproduction furniture and fixtures for the new restaurant and craft shop kicked up clouds of sawdust and turnings. In the main section of the building along John Street, the floors, posts and ceilings were being readied for all the trappings of the restaurant and craft shop.

In June, the first visitors for the "soft opening" were coming by bus from Toronto. Many were old friends of John's willing to help him polish the offering before opening.

On Dominion Day as it was then known, July 1, 1970, the Pillar and Post officially opened its doors.

## THE PEOPLE

**Pat Balasiuk and Kathy Taylor** are siblings, the eldest of Mary and John Drope's five children. Both live in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

When the Pillar and Post opened, Pat was still in her final years at Niagara District High School and would later go on to earn a nursing degree. Kathy returned from Toronto to become the bookkeeper for the new businesses.

Both women remember the town as sleepy. "It was fun for teenagers," says Pat. "We were a tight-knit group. Swimming, tennis, sailing."

Kathy almost tears up when she lists her memories of her father: "Jolly. Jovial. Very social. Friendly. A visionary. Everybody loved dad. Generous. Gentle giant. Approachable. Always open to give advice. Craftsman and tinkerer. He loved to build things."

Kathy also tells the story of how the Pillar and Post was named. As the story goes, it was their mother, Mary, now deceased, who came up with the name.

Wandering the building one day, long before the work was completed, Mary was taken with the sturdy brick pillars that created the basement foundation, where the new lounge would shortly open.

"Then she went upstairs to the future main dining room and marvelled at the tall wooden posts. Without thinking, she said: 'Our guests will go from Pillar to Post.'" It stuck.

Both women see their father as a true visionary. He was one of the first to warn that parking would one day be a major town issue. He urged the town to follow the Williamsburg example and create parking outside the historic area, with shuttles carrying visitors to town. "Everybody thought he was crazy."

He may have been crazy, but people valued his contribution. He sat on the first board of directors of the Shaw, the board of Ridley College in St. Catharines, the fundraising committee for the restoration of the Court House and numerous other community projects. John died in 1983 at age 59.

**Rick Meloen and Bruce Cumpson** have been lifelong friends, growing up in Chautauqua in the 1960s.

Cumpson started working at the Pillar and Post as a pot washer during the initial set up of the restaurant. After a few months, he encouraged Meloen to apply as a busboy. By the time they left the P&P in 1976 and 1978, respectively, Cumpson was bar manager and Meloen managed the dining room.

Meloen's memories of town in the late 1960s are fond ones.

"It was great living here," he says. "Growing up in Chautauqua was like being Tom Sawyer. You had the lake, the woods and rifle range. The town was a sleepy backwater, with nothing going on."

"There were a lot of kids.

When we went to high school there were 1,100 to 1,200 kids at Niagara District."

When he started working at the Pillar and Post at age 17, everything was new. "I learned a lot about how to interact with people. I never had an escargot before in my life."

Meloen went on to a 33-year career in the operations division of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. He retired in 2009 to continue his flower and fruit farming with his wife, Janet. And his three children and nine grandchildren are never far away.

Cumpson also gives the P&P a lot of credit for helping him in his later careers. "For small-town kids, the P&P was a real learning experience. I was very shy as a kid. It brought me out. What I learned, helped me handle my customers today."

After 30 years with General Motors, Bruce also retired to his passion for flowers, continuing to operate Olde Towne Gardens on Lakeshore Road at the big curve at Townline Road. Commercial and retail customers for his hostas come from far and wide. He and his wife, Judy, live in Niagara. Their son Matthew is a steamfitter at the Darlington nuclear facility.

Both men, now in their late 60s vividly remember the 1973 royal visit to Niagara and the Pillar and Post. They were both on the head table team, serving the Queen and Prince Philip before they attended an opening performance of the Shaw's new Festival Theatre.

"That visit really put the P&P on the map," says Rick. "We were seriously vetted by security. But from then on, whenever a dignitary came to Niagara, they came to the P&P because they knew we would do a good job."

**Sue and Wayne Murray** came to Niagara-on-the-Lake in the early 1970s.

Wayne was born in St. Catharines, graduated as an architect and went to work for Don Chapman's firm in Niagara Falls in

1970. Chapman was an old friend of John Drope's and over the years did all the design work for the young company, including the addition of 35 rooms in 1972 and another 87 in 1994.

In 1971, Wayne wooed and married Susan, enticing her away from a good job in her hometown of Toronto. She went to work with Drope, helping the P&P build one of the largest conference businesses outside of Toronto.

She and Wayne were a P&P tag team: He helped design it; she helped sell it.

Wayne remembers the early '70s well. "Every other small community had the money to change things. They tore off the storefronts, added neon and plastic. NOTL never had a money to do those things.

"It was a kind of wild west of restoration. But everything was done quite well because the community largely appreciated history."

Marketing the new business was a real challenge, according to Sue. "Cold calling, cold calling and cold calling, again. But when people got here, they were sold."

Long before the existence of 1-800 telephone numbers, the P&P had a 416-number connecting the inn directly to Toronto. "I can remember when the 800 number went in," says Sue. "You paid for it by the call. It was a big deal."

Sue joins the chorus singing the praises of Drope's visionary contributions.

"He understood what was so special about the town, what its potential was. He put a lot on the line to try to see that vision into reality."

## NEW TOWN EMERGING

In an area with such abiding heritage, a 50-year history does not seem long. And perhaps the role the Pillar and Post has played in Niagara's historic re-emergence, was only tangential. More of an enabler. But its opening certainly signalled a kind of readiness to emerge and showcase what makes the town special.



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**Julie Dyck**  
Pharmacist, CDE



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Kelly Turner  
Owner of The Olde Angel Inn

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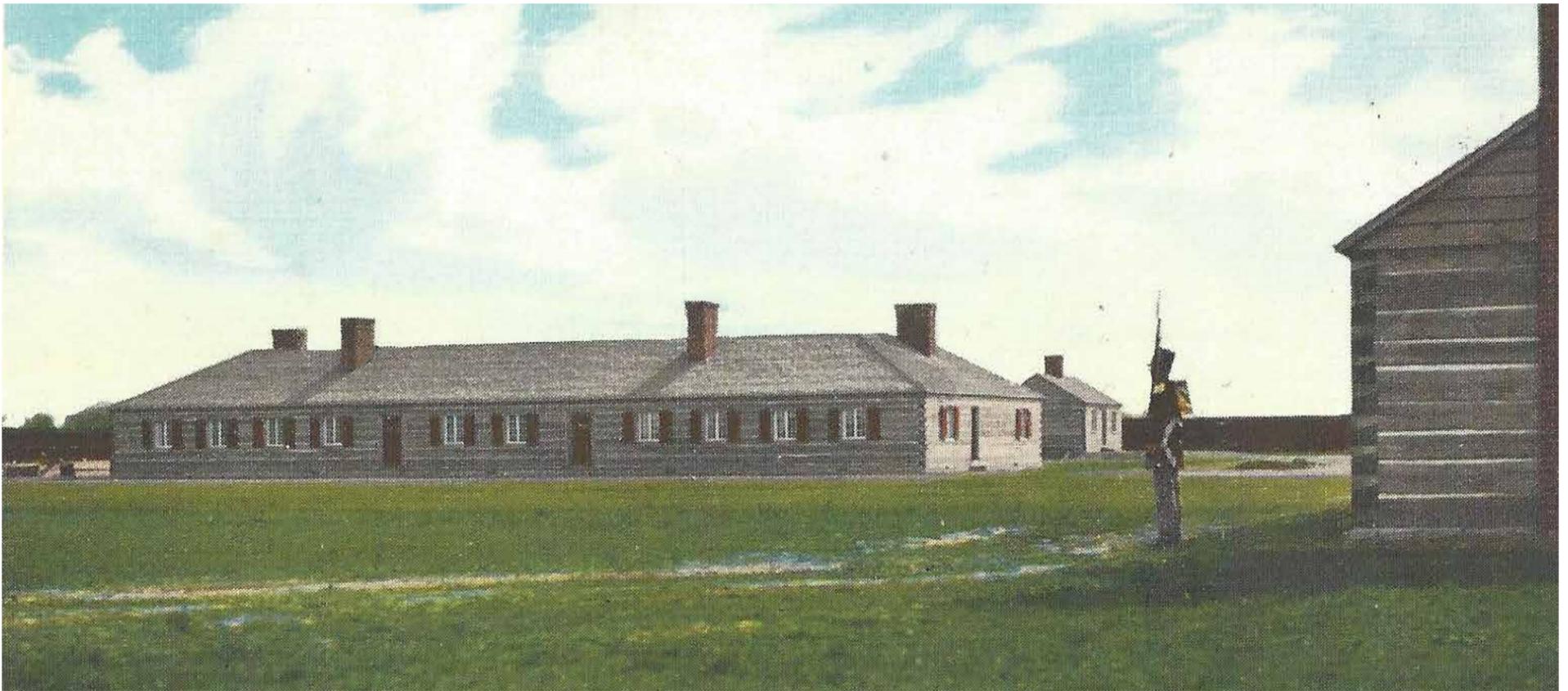


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# Exclusive: Historic postcards offer new look at old Fort George



These old postcards of Fort George show what it looked like about 70 years ago. Top: Fort George officers' building. Below 1: Fort George Guard House. Below 2: Fort George officers' building. Below 3: Fort George trading post. Below 4: The view from Navy Hall across from Fort George. SUPPLIED PHOTOS

John Sayers  
Special to The Lake Report

Many thanks to Tony Chisholm, president of the Friends of Fort George, for passing along a group of postcard images of Fort George which will, in the post-COVID era, be offered to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum to be added to its extensive collection of historical postcard images.

No, these cards aren't 100 years old, but they are old enough to show part of the evolution from the fort's military persona to its position as one of the gems in the portfolio of Parks Canada, and they were given to Tony Chisholm by local resident Marie Scarland-James, who kept them in pristine condition from her trip to the fort many years ago.

Labelled on the back as published as one of the "Deeptone" series, and numbered on the front lower right, the images probably date to the 1950s. They haven't been used postally, so it's a challenge to date them exactly.

It seems that every tourist attraction is not complete without a gift shop, and the fort is no exception. However, if you had visited at the time of

these cards, you would be directed to the Trading Post. As today, it's outside the walls of the fort. The location represents the conflict between business enhancement and the need for security. Being inside the walls would be more convenient for residents of the fort, but it would allow potentially hostile groups inside the fort. No way.

The location would also be more convenient for town residents who wanted to shop at the Trading Post for whatever was on offer at the time that wasn't available in town. Executive director Amanda Gamble and her assistants operate the gift shop to coincide with the hours that the fort itself is open to visitors.

The View of the River from Navy Hall shows a neatly bordered ramp, which reflects some of the restoration work on the hall itself in the late 1930s. Surprisingly, it doesn't show the hall itself, although that may have been on a separate card.

But as a visitor, wouldn't buying this card and not one of the hall itself be sort of like a tourist buying a shot of the steps to the Court House in town rather than a picture of the building itself? Well, maybe the same person who bought this card also

purchased and sent a shot of Navy Hall itself and the steps at the Court House! We will never know.

There are three other postcard images that help to remind us of the challenge – and the cost – of maintaining these historically significant buildings. The Guard House looks bleak and cold, but that's what life was like at the fort in those days long ago.

And if you think of life in the bitter cold winters, when even the tiniest fire was a precious commodity despite the wool uniforms, think about those same uniforms on a hot and sweltering day in the summer. Air conditioning was unknown and the best one could do was a surreptitious sweep of a hand-propelled fan (no electricity, of course).

The last two images are different views of the officers' accommodation. A broad view of the Officers' Quarters can be revisited when the fort is open to the public – hopefully sometime soon, post COVID-19.

Visit it and see the class distinction between the officers and their men, with the officers enjoying these comfortable facilities for dining and other congenial moments.

This goes back to the era when your family could purchase an offi-

cer's commission for you – probably as a second- or third-born son in the era of primogeniture, when you would not inherit the family estate, and sending you off to a comfortable posting in the far reaches of the Empire got you out of the way.

Check it out when you get the chance and think of some of the men who would be enjoying its facilities. Think of some of the evenings as the military equivalent of a get-together that includes some "second-round draft choices" (or perhaps even "players to be named later" – if their older brother dies and they actually inherit) and their tensions interacting with career officers who had received formal military training.

And then there's a final card picturing the Officers' Building, another area exclusive to the officers. The gap was clear. We can be certain that the rank-and-file soldier would be reminded of it every day. And these wonderful images remind us of that gulf today.

Thank you, Tony Chisholm and Marie Scarland-James, for these reminders of life in the fort and the offer of a potential addition to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's extensive collection of historical postcard images.

