

The Lake Report



Vol. 2, Issue 19

Niagara-on-the-Lake's first independent newspaper

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Hyper-local news for Niagara-on-the-Lake



Diving into E. coli

NOTL sewers are contaminating lake, two-year town investigation shows

Children play in Lake Ontario in 2018. The water has had problems with E. coli, according to the town. RICHARD HARLEY



Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

according to a massive, 210-page report on the investigation.

It is unclear how many years the problem has existed, but one problem area, the sanitary sewer pipe at the Simcoe Park wading pool, was installed "many years ago," Lord Mayor Betty Disero said in an interview Sunday.

Most of the issues are due to human fecal matter getting into the storm sewer system, but DNA testing found that some animal feces also contributed to the unsafe levels of E. coli.

The previously secret report, prepared by Hamilton firm GM BluePlan Engineering Group, was commissioned by town councilors in 2017. The document was included in the agenda for the May 6 committee of the whole meeting and posted online.

The report urges the town

Continued on Page 2

Darte won't discuss why public not notified

Former Lord Mayor Pat Darte says he has not read the report on NOTL's E. coli crisis and he hung up when a reporter asked why he didn't ensure the public was aware of problems at Queen's Royal Beach.

On Wednesday morning, Darte, who was lord mayor when the investigation began, was asked why, in the almost two years since the investigation was launched, nothing was said publicly about the investigation or any of the interim reports the town received.

"Well, we didn't have a report. We didn't have all the information," he said.

When he was asked why, when it was known there was E. coli in the water, the public was not notified, he said, "You should ask the staff that. They were in charge of that."

As mayor at the time, what input did he have into the process? "I'd have to go back and recollect the whole thing. It's been a while."

When it was suggested that sewage leaks and something as critical as E. coli in the water at one of NOTL's primary beaches would be of interest to the public, Darte abruptly ended the interview.

"You know what, I'm not comfortable with this conversation, so thank you very much."

Adding, "I'm not comfortable with this line of questioning, thank you very much," he ended the call.

— Kevin MacLean

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Photo illustration of a potential affordable housing complex in NOTL. SUPPLIED PHOTO

NOTL could see first affordable housing project

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

A NOTL developer wants to build 16 new affordable rental units in Virgil.

Rainer Hummel of Hummel Properties Inc. told town council Monday night his company is looking to build two five- or six-storey buildings in Virgil. There would be 40 units in each building and

20 per cent of them would be considered affordable, Hummel said.

The one- to three-bedroom units would range in size from 1,000 square feet to about 1,400 square feet.

Hummel Properties owns 16 acres in Virgil along Niagara Stone Road, across from Crossroads

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Stampede cancels derby, moves rides off grass

Richard Harley
Editor

The Virgil Stampede is going to be a little different this year.

Due to heavy rains and muddy grounds, rides will be set up in the parking lot of the Meridian Credit Union Arena instead of in the field at the Virgil Sports Park.

The Saturday derby will also be cancelled.

Sharon VanNoort, a member of the Virgil Business Association, which hosts the annual carnival, said the rest of the event will be the same, including the con-

cession stands, magicians, special guests, nickel sale and fireworks show.

"Everything else is a go," VanNoort said. "It will just be in different areas of the park."

She said because the rides will be taking up the parking lots, there will be "extremely limited" parking, though organizers are trying to find an additional lot nearby.

The schedule is unchanged. Festivities are set to run May 18, 19 and 20, ending with a fireworks display on Victoria Day Monday at 9:30 p.m.



E. COLI LEAKING

Continued from Front Page

to act on its recommendations and councillors agreed to do so last week.

The document warns, "If the town is not actively working toward a solution it is certain that the (Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks) will order the town to close the Queen's Royal Beach and remove the beach designation."

The town is taking the problem seriously, Di-sero said. Sections of "the sanitary system are leaking into the storm sewers, which dump (the contaminants) into the lake."

"Some of the repairs that are being done will be very quick and have a very large impact" on the problems, she said.

Overall, however, "This is not going to be a quick and easy solution. We are an old community. This is something that took years to get to this point and it's going to take some time. We are going to move as quickly as we can to resolve the issue, but it may take longer than just a few weeks to fix."

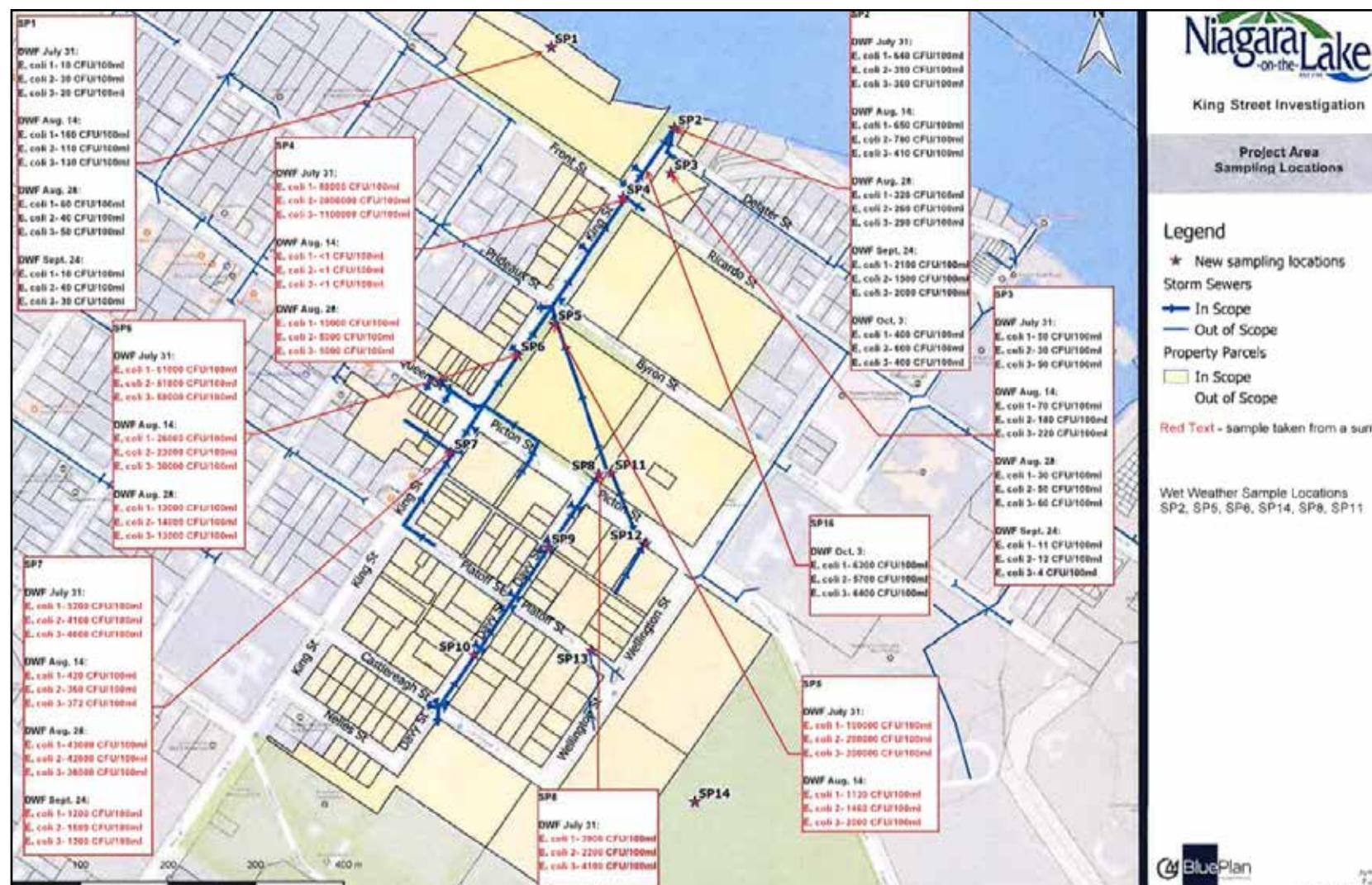
Most strains of E. coli are not harmful, according to the Mayo Clinic, but some can cause severe abdominal cramps, bloody diarrhea and vomiting.

The report says E. coli levels above 200 CFU/100ml (colony forming units per 100ml of water) lead to beach closings. Queen's Royal Beach was "posted," or ordered closed, six times last year due to high E. coli levels, the engineers said.

One chart included in the report shows E. coli samples with between 10 CFU and 2,000 CFU/100 ml in areas near the waterfront park.

The Queen's Royal Beach water will be tested bi-weekly this summer, the report says.

In all, 11 properties near King and Queen streets in Old Town, mainly private homes, but also an art gallery, a bed and breakfast,



Documents from the 210-page town investigation report show some of the test results, above, and recommendations for moving forward, below.

and one church, were found to have problems requiring urgent repairs.

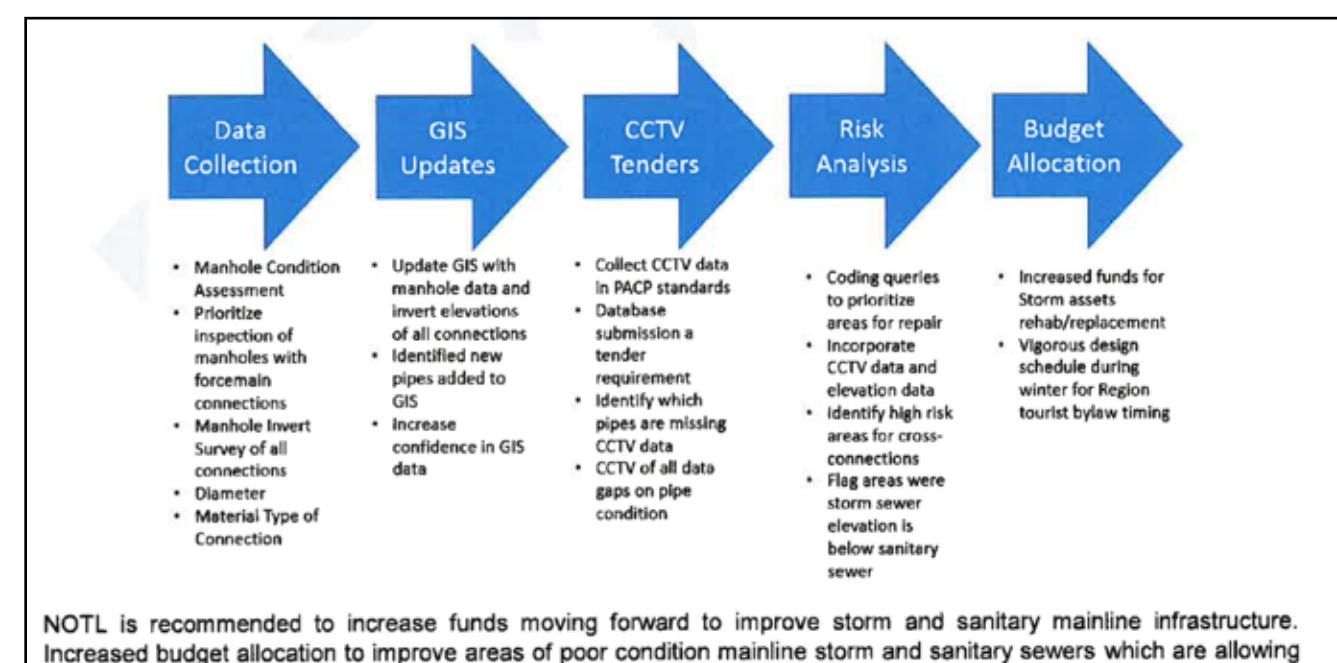
However, the report also said it is likely there are more problems elsewhere in town and recommended that every manhole in Niagara-on-the-Lake be thoroughly inspected.

"This is not the only area of town that has E. coli levels exceeding (environment ministry standards," the report says. In particular, the sewer discharge "located at Two Mile Creek has been identified with similar E. coli characteristics as Queen's Royal Beach," the document says.

It also notes that E. coli in storm water is common.

Hamilton Harbour, Toronto Harbour and Lake Erie State Park beach in New York state "have similar E. coli issues with storm sewer outlets."

When the former council ordered the investigation after learning of the situa-



NOTL is recommended to increase funds moving forward to improve storm and sanitary mainline infrastructure. Increased budget allocation to improve areas of poor condition mainline storm and sanitary sewers which are allowing cross-connection flows between the sanitary and storm systems.

tion during a closed session on July 17, 2017, all anyone really knew was that unsafe and abnormally high E. coli readings were occurring off Queen's Royal Beach.

The engineering firm conducted months of extensive testing, including using

CCTV cameras in the sewer system, to pinpoint causes and suggest solutions.

While most of the problems involve deteriorated hookups between residents' homes and the town-owned sanitary sewers, some of the contamination could

be from improper installations, one official told The Lake Report. But many of the sewers involved were installed as far back as the 1970s, so the concern now is fixing things, not assigning blame.

In the case of the town-

operated wading pool in Simcoe Park, the sanitary pipe from the pool was connected directly to the storm sewer – instead of the sanitary sewer – allowing contaminated water to head

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SIP & SIZZLE



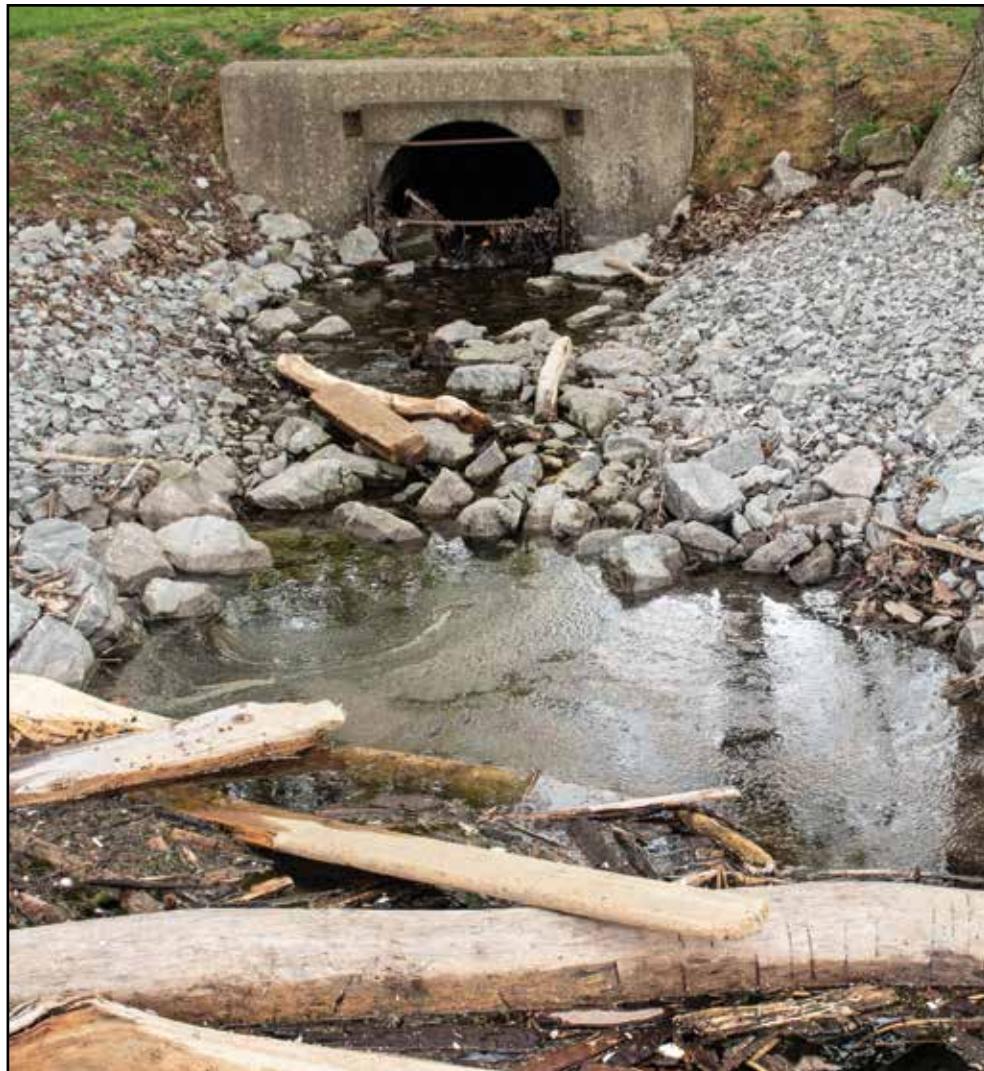
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INTO LAKE



A King Street sewer drain is leaking E. coli into Lake Ontario. RICHARD HARLEY

Continued from Page 2

directly toward the lake. Repairs on that connection began this past week and will cost \$30,000.

There were no problems with pipes from the washrooms at Simcoe Park, the report says.

NOTL already has a high water table and heavy rains and runoff can lead to very unhealthy E. coli counts at Queen's Royal Beach, the report says. Problems are not as pronounced during warm, dry weather.

Effluent has also leaked into the ground and thus the ground water aquifer, en route to the storm sewer system and eventually the lake.

Disero said a major sewer replacement project is underway on Dixie Avenue in Chautauqua because leaks from that area contributed to the high E. coli results in Two Mile Creek, which meanders through the west side of Old Town.

The investigation from 2017 to now has cost the town \$372,404, with planned repairs estimated to push that to \$493,000. The report says the town has sufficient budget to cover those costs. Part of that total could be defrayed by government grants of up to \$150,000.

Property owners are responsible for their own repairs, but could receive government grants of up to \$1,500, the report says. There are no estimates for how much each affected resident's repairs might cost.

However, with more investigations required the town's price tag could increase. Properties on Queen Street, where the most abandoned old pipe connections are located, have not yet been examined by CCTV, the report notes. Parts of Garrison Village are also being checked.

The investigators from GM BluePlan have been quietly compiling and analyzing a long list of problems and recommended fixes.

The engineers categorized problems from low to high urgency regarding repairs. Most of the properties listed in the report are homes on King or Davy streets, with one property each on Queen, Platoff and Picton identified.

The previous town council launched the investigation in 2017 after elevated E. coli levels were flagged by the Niagara River Remedial Action Plan, a Welland-based organization dedicated to protecting the river's ecosystem. However, little has been said publicly about the town's sewer problems, until now.

Many residents whose hookups or pipes were identified as problems, and others' whose were tested, were apprised of the investigation, however.

E. coli is a sensitive issue. Under the heading "Com-

munications," the report says, "Access to E. coli data is limited as it is sensitive information due to public perception."

"Due to the sensitivity of the investigation and findings, public awareness and education will be a key factor moving forward."

"The key to public education is to allow residents to understand the town is doing (its) part to reduce the levels of cross-contamination between the sanitary and storm sewer systems, but in some cases private property sanitary issues are also a contributor to the elevated E. coli levels."

Some relatively minor problems related to bird and animal feces were also found, according to the engineers.

Raccoon feces was found in some storm sewers after the animals were able to squeeze through large openings in some sewer grates. Those grates have been or are being replaced.

The report also says monitoring of horse carriage routes showed "horse feces droppings were evident on the road in multiple locations ... This confirms that the horse collection bags do not collect all horse droppings. This adds significant E. coli to the storm sewer" when it rains.

Disero said her main concern is fixing the sewer problems related to human E. coli.

"I don't know how you stop geese, I don't know how you stop raccoons. So I don't think the horse and carriage operators, the Sentineals, or whomever, should be worried at this point. They may want to review the methods they're using for controlling" their horses' droppings, Disero said.

"I'm not going to say, 'We need to take them away.' I'm not prepared to think about the extreme in that regard," she said.

The full report can be found online under the Council Business tab on www.notl.org.



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Editorial: Mr. Melling's attitude is concerning

Richard Harley
Editor-in-Chief

At the beginning of last week's Local Planning Appeal Tribunal hearing regarding SORE obtaining party status in ongoing litigation, Two Sisters Resorts Corp. lawyer Michael Melling approached the local media in attendance. He said he would not be offering any comments to reporters.

Regardless of Melling's worry about his own words being published, not commenting was completely within his rights, and arguably could have saved us all time.

But then, during the public meeting, while the chair was confirming a date for a continuation, Melling advised the crowd he would be addressing them after things wrapped up with a few words from himself and his client.

This is where Melling went wrong — he somehow got the notion that he could force the media out of the room. After he told the audience he would speak later, I asked him if he would be telling the crowd the same thing he told the media about having no comment.

He replied that he would be asking the media to leave,

and when I responded that wasn't going to happen, he proceeded to say he would have the media removed.

Needless to say, no matter the pedestal Melling puts himself on, the Toronto lawyer does not have that authority.

Before he addressed the crowd he once again approached the reporters on scene and asked them to leave.

All refused, so he said he wouldn't be speaking and that he would make the reason known to the audience. The crowd had mixed reactions, but in the end no journalists left.

Good on our local media for standing their ground.

It doesn't matter who you are — some hotshot lawyer or not — there is a set of reasonable standards when it comes to withholding information from the media and ultimately the public. Journalists covering a public gathering on a matter of major public interest were with their rights to be there.

The idea that Melling did not want his words reported is concerning.

Mr. Melling, you are welcome to come to Niagara-on-the-Lake to plead your clients' case anytime, but the NOTL media will not be pushed around by your demanding attitude.

editor@niagaranow.com



Toronto lawyer Michael Melling asked media to leave before addressing stragglers leftover from a meeting during which local activist group Save Our Rand Estate was granted party status.. RICHARD HARLEY



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Memories of the Thistle Shamrock

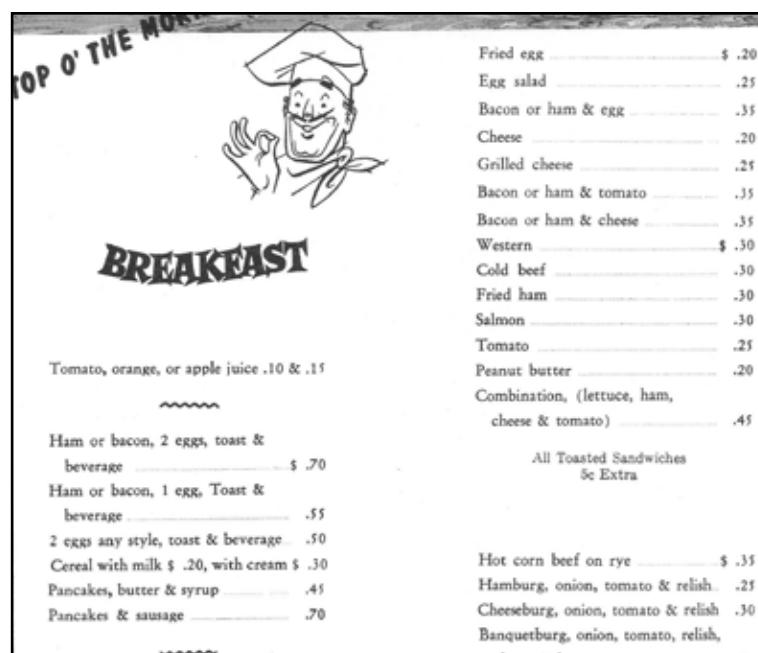
Dear editor:

I am writing in reference to the Thistle Shamrock Restaurant, which was featured in Exploring Photos: with Jim Smith, on May 9.

I was the owner of the Thistle Shamrock when that featured photo was taken. I purchased the restaurant on my 21st birthday, March 21, 1963, and sold it to the Oban Inn in December of 1972.

During the time I owned the restaurant, the Shaw Festival was just beginning and the town was developing into the tourist destination it is today.

Monty Ruller
Fonthill



A vintage 1963 menu from the Thistle Shamrock Restaurant.

Wetland Horrors sage continues

Dear editor:

I have to tell you how much I have enjoyed James Tupman's epistolary serial, The Wetland Horrors, and his concerns about converting the Department of National Defence lands into a park.

The suspense he's built up for his next instalment makes me believe some mysteriously created monster wetland, Swampy Bog, will surely erupt from the murky depths of obnoxious effluvia of the sewer ponds and swallow the lot of us — having first subdued us with West Nile-injected muzzy bite serum and black-legged tick Lyme disease bile.

Ryder Payne
NOTL

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MORE LETTERS

Rental properties are a fact of life in NOTL

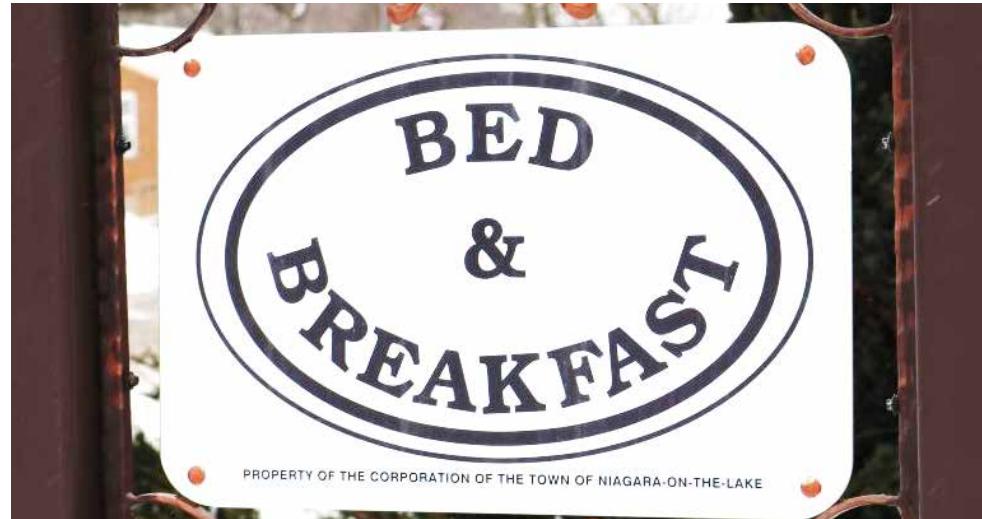
Dear editor:

Re: the letter: Who wants to live beside a party house?, published May 9, the answer of course is no one.

But then no one wants to have a noisy neighbour or be next to construction, yet these situations exist for all of us. We don't evict noisy neighbours or cancel all residential construction or complain about it in letters to the editor.

In fact, many short-term rental owners are not "absentee" but live in town and try to make a small income from renting a second house. Many more have professional managers that live locally and enforce their house rules, such as no parties.

Many guests have pets or children and hotels or B&Bs aren't suitable, yet they want



to visit and stay in town, sometimes for a week or more. To suggest limiting rental homes to owner-occupied isn't what the guests want and certainly isn't feasible for most owners who don't want to operate a B&B and serve breakfast to guests.

Rentals are a fact of life in this town. They are closely regulated and the licensed owners pay a substantial fee that helps pay for bylaw officers to enforce the rules.

If there is a complaint about a rental, the neighbour should first complain to the owner and if that

doesn't work, they should file a complaint with the bylaw officers. Part of the solution would be increased bylaw enforcement over the weekends. That way we can all be good neighbours.

Tony Chisholm
 NOTL

A liberal defence of Tory Sam Oosterhoff

Dear editor:

Sam Oosterhoff, the MPP from Niagara West, made himself all sorts of political enemies last week.

The sharks are circling around this young Tory lad. First he called the police on an ostensibly angry mob of septuagenarian bibliophiles storming the Bastille of his Beamsville constituency office. Then, to make matters worse for himself, he spoke at a pro-life rally, and he said he wants to make abortion "unthinkable" in this province.

If the Southern Ontario Library Service has a sense of humour it should interlibrary loan this boy a copy of a book on how to be politically correct in 2019.

I write with the intention of defending Oosterhoff at the political philosophy level. I write as a classical liberal, but I will defend a Tory. Regrettably, most people who call themselves "liberal" today have forgotten what liberalism actually stands for.

Oosterhoff has done the "unthinkable" in politics;

he has committed a thought crime, especially against a group like feminists, a sacred cow group. You can't criticize these people.

Poor Oosterhoff is going to be relegated to the classes of neo-Nazis, bigots, homophobes, misogynists, Islamophobes, xenophobes, white supremacists and all the other neologisms invented by the phobia-fighters of the left.

So let me give Oosterhoff some philosophical defences. Defending dissenters is an important aspect of Canada's system of parliamentary government.

For example, Wayne Gates, the MPP whose riding includes Niagara-on-the-Lake, attacked Oosterhoff on Facebook with a weak post. The opening post was something like this: abortion has already been debated; the debate is now long over; it is time to move on.

But Gates' view is contrary to how the Westminster system of government works.

"Even more important

is that in the Westminster process decisions are not final," writes McMaster political scientist Janet Ajzenstat in her book, *The Canadian Founding: John Locke and Parliament*. She goes on to say that this process of decision-making best conforms to the "equality principle" and that "it is difficult to imagine one that is more inclusive."

Equality! Inclusivity! My goodness, the Westminster system of government sounds like the leftist ideal. (It really isn't).

So even if one completely supports abortion rights, Oosterhoff still has a right as an MPP to continue this debate as long as he wants to.

We should never pass a "permanent law" to end a controversial debate because it is, quite frankly, tyrannical. For example, just before the southern states seceded from the Union, some Americans proposed an "unamendable" amendment to the Constitution. If it had passed, the United States would still be a slaveholding

nation in 2019.

Second, if Oosterhoff is going to be crucified by all those opprobrious terms I mentioned earlier (Nazi, misogynist, etc.), then, I think he should fight back in the time-honoured tradition of fighting fire with fire.

Take, for example, International Women's Day celebrated on March 8. I bet that most people think this is a great idea — we should celebrate strong women, inclusiveness, diversity, equality and all of that melodic stuff. But why should we celebrate a Soviet holiday? Why do we pay homage to Lenin? (If you think I am making this up, please see: <https://daily.jstor.org/the-socialist-origins-of-international-womens-day>)

So in conclusion, Sam Oosterhoff, if your opponents start throwing swastikas at you in order to defame your name and to silence you, then you can throw a few hammers and sickles right back at them.

Neil Tokar
 NOTL

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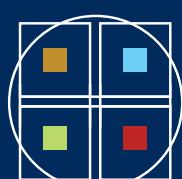
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NOTL could be getting affordable housing

Continued from Front Page

Public School and near Trius Winery and Restaurant.

Three acres of the property would be for the rental accommodation buildings while the rest of the land, 13 acres, would be used for mixed-use residential development, said Hummel.

The project would be built under the National Housing Strategy, a federal program providing affordable rental accommodations. The program has \$3.75 billion in available loans and is open until 2021.

To be eligible for the program, developers must meet several criteria, including having at least five rental units and a loan of at least \$1 million.

To satisfy the program's minimum requirement, at least 16 units out of the 80 total units have to be affordable with an average rent of \$1,260, according to the company's internal study. The rest of the units would carry a rent of about \$1,400.

"That's a bare minimum that you're required to do. And you probably can't qualify if you did that," Hummel said in a phone interview Wednesday. "You'll need more (affordable units) than that."

Under the federal program, the buildings cannot be used for student housing, retirement homes or short-term rentals.

The funding for the project would come from the Canada Mortgage and



Developer Rainer Hummel, seen next to Lord Mayor Betty Disero, would like to build Niagara-on-the-Lake's first affordable housing project. FILE PHOTO/JER HOUGHTON

Housing Corporation as well as the federal program, said Hummel.

Based on affordable housing programs in Peterborough and Kitchener-Waterloo, the developer is asking the town to be exempt from property taxes in the first four years and be fully taxed by year 10.

Hummel also wants concessions on development charges, all municipal fees and park dedication fees.

Coun. Allan Bisback said he was "intrigued and interested" in the project, but wants to look at the bigger picture and have more details on what's going to happen with the rest of the land.

He noted the town has "traffic issues" in the area, which is near where the Crossroads Medical Centre is planned.

"We are at the early stages. We are here to see, to gauge interest, to find out who our municipality interested in this," said Hummel. "If you're not, we're good with that, we're fine. But if you are, then we would make the necessary investments to determine what the mix would be."

Affordable housing is an issue in many cities and towns across Canada. In the St. Catharines-Niagara region, for example, the vacancy rate was 2.5 per cent as of October 2018, according to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation statistics.

The average sale price for a residential property in NOTL in April 2019 was \$939,488, according to a market report done by the Niagara Association of Realtors.

Councillors divided over plastic straw ban

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake council seemed wary this week of immediately banning single-use plastics in town and deferred the decision to its next meeting, a special session on Saturday morning.

At a marathon council meeting Monday, some councillors questioned how banning single-use plastics would work in the town.

Coun. Norm Arsenault made a motion to ban selling and using single-use plastics in town facilities, parks, town events and public spaces, and use non-plastic, compostable alternatives instead.

He also suggested that town staff speak with the public and business owners, come up with a plan for how to reduce and eliminate single-use plastics and report back to the council with a draft bylaw.

Chief administrative officer Holly Dowd said she told Arsenault the town couldn't do that right now and instead offered to start with town facilities not purchasing plastic straws and stir sticks.

About 57 million plastic straws are sold in Canada every day and an about 20,000 plastic straws are used in NOTL daily, Arsenault said in a presentation.

"We were elected to bring change to Niagara-on-the-Lake, change that will benefit all of our citizens,"



Coun. Norm Arsenault. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

Arsenault told councillors.

"I seek unanimous support for this motion so that our children, grandchildren and all of our citizens can enjoy a cleaner and healthier future."

Coun. Erwin Wiens questioned how the ban would be enforced and what alternatives to plastic items were available.

"I wholeheartedly support what Coun. Arsenault is doing," said Wiens. "But it's very premature to ban it at this point in time. I think we need to have more consultation."

Coun. Clare Cameron said she wasn't convinced a ban would have the intended impact and said she would support the motion if it only limits the ban to town facilities. Coun. Wendy Cheropita agreed and suggested holding off until the town sees what the province will do about the issue.

"Maybe now is not the time to ban anything but maybe to do with what is in our own control," Cheropita said, asking how community events would work. "What about water?"

You would have to bring in water stations ... We really need to think these things through."

Arsenault told councillors the intent isn't to ban anything up front but to educate the public. Plastic straws, stir sticks and plastic utensils are replaceable, he said, adding he talked to some businesses in town that were in favour of a ban.

He said he would like to see a draft bylaw in the next six months after having public consultations and working with the region and the province. Banning plastic bags and plastic bottles isn't realistic as it would hurt their own businesses, Arsenault said, but he wants "to get the ball moving."

Coun. Gary Burroughs said he would vote in favour of "getting it going," but not for imposing the ban right now. Lord Mayor Betty Disero also asked Arsenault to revise his motion and exclude the word "ban" from it.

The councillors met until 11 p.m. Monday, without completing their agenda. The meeting will resume on Saturday at 9:30 a.m.

TIDBITS:

Man, 24, charged with sexual assault at Outlet Mall

- A man who was cautioned by Niagara Regional Police last week for bothering two girls at the NOTL outlet mall has been charged with sexual assault in connection with a separate incident at the shopping centre a few days earlier.

On May 7, police cautioned a suspicious man who approached two teens. It was later discovered that the same man allegedly assaulted an 18-year-old girl on May 4 at the Outlet Collection mall.

Salih Sarieyyupoglu, 24, of Niagara Falls has been charged with sexual assault. He was charged once the May 4 incident came to light, Const. Philip Gavin said in an email to The Lake Report.

Ash trees removed from town's preferred planting list

- Despite objection from Coun. Clare Cameron, Niagara-on-the-Lake town council voted to remove ash trees from its list of species preferred for replanting.

Coun. Norm Arsenault put the motion forward, saying it wasn't appropriate to recommend planting ash trees in light of issues with the emerald ash borer — an invasive beetle native to Asia, which can damage and kill healthy ash trees. One of the ways NOTL addresses the problem is by removing ash trees based on the degree of the potential danger, according to the town's emerald ash borer fact sheet.

More news that happened this week:



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Save Our Rand Estate wins third party status victory

Richard Harley
Editor

It's now three for three for a group of activists in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

A crowd of about 260 people showed up for a public meeting at the NOTL community centre last Thursday morning to show resident support for Save Our Rand Estate, a group that is fighting a hotel and subdivision development on historic properties in town, and advocating for protection of a heritage estate.

The group requested party status at the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal in a matter between the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and Two Sisters Resorts Corp.

Two Sisters Resorts Corp. and the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake both accepted SORE's request and meeting chair Blair Taylor granted SORE party status about 20 minutes in, making it SORE's third time



A crowd of around 260 people showed up at the community centre last Thursday for a public meeting about SORE's application for third party status. RICHARD HARLEY

being awarded party status by judicial bodies, the others being the Superior Court and the Conservation Review Board.

The Niagara Parks Commission was also granted party status in the matter. Representative Daniel Richer said it's a

"statutory duty" of developers to consult with the NPC on any developments within its jurisdiction, and furthermore that the town's official plan states Niagara Parks must be consulted on any development adjacent to the Niagara Parkway.

David Bell, a represen-

tative of SORE, had also been scheduled to apply for party status, but withdrew his application during the meeting, saying that for the sake of simplicity SORE would adequately represent his needs. All parties agreed to adjourn the meeting for eight weeks.

Two Sisters lawyer asks media to leave the room

Davies Howes lawyer Michael Melling asked media to leave before addressing stragglers left over from a meeting during which local activist group Save Our Rand Estate was granted party status.

After the meeting, Melling, Two Sisters' lawyer, addressed people who stuck around to hear a few words from himself and Two Sisters. He asked local media to leave before he would speak. None of the media in attendance left the room.

"So here is what I'm able to share with you since the media won't leave and what I say will now be on the record," Melling said.

"When I was retained on this file in January, I candidly didn't know what I was getting into, but since January I've spent a lot of time trying to understand what has happened here."

"Once I felt I had a sufficient understanding, I asked my client for permission to, and received instructions to, reach out to the lawyers for the town and SORE association, to talk to them about trying to settle the case ... And I said, among other things, that I would consent to SORE obtaining the party status it obtained today."

"I said I would prefer therefore if the discussions among their lawyers and their expert witnesses and their clients remained confidential. And the other parties agreed to that. You may have noticed, since I was engaged, that my client has gone dark in the media. That is because of me ... So regardless of what you might read in the media, while our clients are in good faith discussions with the town and with the SORE association, you won't be hearing from us in the media. I think that the dialogue has in some respects thus

far been counterproductive."

Lyle Hall, core SORE member, said he thinks Melling's comments should be clarified.

"It is only the heritage experts who are talking and I have no idea if there is any reasonable prospect of them reaching common ground. There are no other experts meetings planned or under discussion to my knowledge," Hall said.

"Any suggestion by Melling that agreement on (developer Benny) Marotta's convention centre and hotel plans can be reached will depend entirely on four things: his client's willingness to make material changes to his proposal to respect the heritage assets on the entire estate; restore the landscape features he destroyed last November; bring it into conformity with the town's official plan and minimize adverse impacts to the residential neighbourhood in which it sits."

David Auger, a resident who was in attendance, said he thinks people should be careful about believing anything that comes from the "other side."

"Has the community believed most of what has been said by the other party? No. The other party (Marotta) has said, 'Trees, nobody loves trees more than I do,' and he's on film saying that. That was just before the mass killing of trees. So I take it all with a grain of salt," Auger said. "I've never seen a leopard change its spots before."

The delay in the procedure is understandable, he said, though he is concerned the provincial government might effectively bring back the Ontario Municipal Board, which was seen to often favour developers.

"Is that going to supersede what has happened in this process? That's my fear."

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Segregated black militia honoured

New plaque at Fort George recognizes contributions of the Colored Corps

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Members of Canada's black community received long overdue recognition Saturday with the unveiling of a plaque commemorating the role of segregated black militia units in Upper Canada.

The group known as the Colored Corps is now celebrated with the plaque at Fort George and its members are lauded for their role at Queenston Heights during the War of 1812, serving during the 1837 Rebellion and helping to build Canada.

Rosemary Sadlier, an Order of Ontario recipient and founder of the Black Canadian Network, fought for years for public awareness of the historical significance of the Colored Corps, which served from 1812 to 1850.

In 1994, Sadlier said she was part of the provincial effort to commemorate the Colored Corps. From that effort, a plaque was erected at Queenston Heights. That was a start in bringing Canadian black history to light, but there was more work to be done, she said.

"I was disappointed in realizing that, even with that effort, we weren't seeing much more in terms of the



Members of the Canadian military came together Saturday morning to celebrate the unveiling of a plaque at Fort George commemorating the role of segregated black militia units in Upper Canada. BRITTANY CARTER

commemoration of blacks in the military."

She said a stereotype exists about black people not having earned their right to consider themselves Canadians and feels it's critical to change that through awareness and education.

"Sometimes that right is seen as having come about through their service in the military. And when you consider that people of African descent have been serving in the military since

before it was even Canada, and most people don't know that, it was very important to put this into play."

The plaque serves as a reminder and as a catalyst to seek out more information about the history of black Canadians and their dedication to both Canada's freedom and their own, Sadlier said.

"I think that whenever you have a plaque, it's a little piece of history that is structured and tangible and accessible. It doesn't tell the

whole story, but what it can do is allow people to ask questions. And to wonder why they maybe didn't learn about it in school."

Sadlier said she would like to think people will come away from the plaque unveiling knowing there has been a positive, productive and purposeful black contribution.

"Not just in the GTA, not just in Toronto where it's sort of assumed and expected, but everywhere in this coun-

try. Even if you don't see it today, it doesn't mean that it wasn't there before, and it doesn't mean that it won't be there in the future."

Her initial push for recognition and education stemmed from learning more about her own family's background, she said.

"I was horrified when I was in my 20s to realize the extent to which my family was involved in the military, because that's just not something I grew up being

aware of, for many different reasons," she said.

She learned that her family formed 60 per cent of the recruits to the Number Two Battalion, from New Brunswick.

"I was absolutely shocked. And, it's my family," she said, adding that her interest wasn't just because of her family's connection.

"If I don't have it (the historical information), and it's my family, what about the people who might not even begin to consider that (connection). I think it's just really important to be mindful. And hopefully this helps to make people more mindful."

NOTL Lord Mayor Betty Disero and St. Catharines MP Chris Bittle were among the dignitaries on hand for the ceremony.

Brock University president Gervan Fearon, who also was in attendance, said the black community in southern Ontario and across Canada play a significant role in the history of Canada.

"The unveiling of the plaque provides an opportunity for all Canadians to become aware of that history as well as to celebrate the outstanding country that we've all been a part of building," Fearon said.

Historic life's work of local humanitarian to be celebrated

The Lake Report

A prominent member of Niagara-on-the-Lake society a century ago will be honoured on Sunday, May 26, for her efforts to help young Polish soldiers struck down by the Spanish Influenza pandemic in 1918.

A special St. Mark's Church service and dedication of a memorial stone will celebrate the life and work of Elizabeth Ascher (1869-1941), who, for her tireless efforts, was awarded the Polish Knight's Cross of the Order of Polonia

Restitura, the highest Polish civilian honour for a foreigner.

The celebration is a collaboration between St. Mark's Church and the Polonia Canadian Institute for Historical Studies.

"Elizabeth Ascher was extremely important in the early life of our town," says Donald Combe, historian and member of the St. Mark's archives committee.

"Not only was she called the Angel of Mercy and Godmother of the Polish soldiers, she was instrumental in establishing the Polish military cemetery for those

who died from influenza during their training here."

Ascher grew up in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Around the turn of the 20th century, she became the correspondent for the St. Catharines Standard, the Buffalo News, the Mail and Empire, and the Niagara Advance, contributing to these newspapers for many years.

She developed interests in many local causes, including: the local library and historical society, the local chapter of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire and she started

the local branch of the Red Cross Society.

She was a board member of local Boy Scouts and a founder of the hospital's auxiliary in 1920.

In 1930, Ascher became a life honorary vice-president of the Polish Army Veterans' Association in America.

She was also a life member of the Polish White Cross and of the 35th Battalion, CEF.

The special service begins at 10:30 a.m. The dedication will take place in St. Mark's cemetery, followed by a reception in Addison Hall.



Elizabeth Ascher

SPORTS



Lord mayor bowls them over



Gwynne Giles, Derek Sherville, piper David Janaszek, Lord Mayor Betty Disero, club president Elly Warren and past-president Paul McHoull at the NOTL Lawn Bowling Club season launch on Saturday. BRITTANY CARTER

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Lord Mayor Betty Disero helped open the Niagara-on-the-Lake Lawn Bowling Club's official season on Saturday.

Disero was dressed in white and met the group behind the community centre on the lawn bowling green, where she was invited to deliver the first bowl of the season. It was the first time Disero played the game and club president Elly Warren said the lord mayor was a natural.

"She did very well and everyone seemed to like having her around," Warren said.

Disero said although she hadn't played before she was excited to see how she would hold up against the club members.

For the opening day, 42 of the club's 56 members were in attendance, all of them



Lord Mayor Betty Disero tries her hand at lawn bowling for the first time Saturday during the club's first official day of the season. BRITTANY CARTER

resplendent in their white attire. "Traditionally on a day like that we do wear all white," said Warren. "And we have a moment of silence for the people that passed away this past year. There's a welcoming address and then we do a parade, we kind of walk up and down the green with the piper leading us."

She said the parade is sort

of a silly but traditional part of the ceremony.

As for the tradition of wearing white for special occasions, Warren said she wasn't sure where it came from.

"It's an old-fashioned reason. All other sports used to be in white. Tennis used to be white, baseball used to be white. I guess for our official day that's just what

we do. As for where it originated, I couldn't tell you."

Warren said 36 members bowed on six greens. The group finished the day with tea and snacks. "It was a really nice afternoon."

The club began in 1877 and Warren said it has been a vital part of the community since its inception. New members are always welcome, she added.

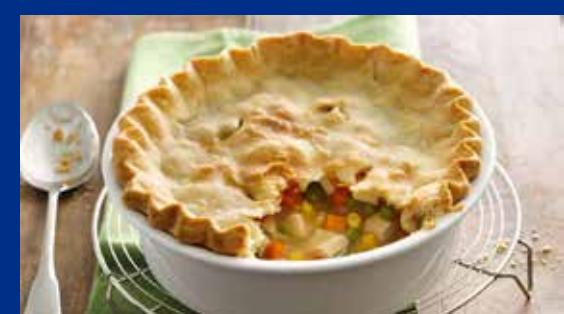


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Calling all cooks!

Local recipe book planned for 2019

The Lake Report is calling on all cooks, chefs, bakers and food enthusiasts in Niagara-on-the-Lake. We want your favourite family recipes, and the stories that go with them, to share with the community. Whether it's a special stew, soup, or salad; the best bread or muffins; or a decadent dessert, we'd like to hear from you!

We'd love it if you could include pictures of the food where possible, and of the family member who might have passed the recipe down. If there is any family folklore associated with the recipe, we'd love to hear that too. Maybe there's a certain occasion when it's always made, perhaps there's a funny or sad story to tell that relates to that particular recipe, or certain traditions that accompany it.

We will publish selected recipes regularly, and at the end of the year we'll compile all the recipes together as a book of NOTL family favourites. Proceeds from the sale of the book will be donated to a local charity.

Please send your recipes, pictures and stories to: recipes@niagaranow.com

The top recipes will be published in an annual paperback book which will be available (in limited supply) to residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake at The Lake Report office. This year's book (title uncertain!) will be released in the coming months!

Karen Balcom's 44 tops in Business Ladies League

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

Karen Balcom won low gross honours by shooting 44 in Monday Business Ladies League play at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club on May 6.

Other winners were: low net score Petra Brown with

33; closest to the line, #1, Charlotte Kainola; closest to the pin, on #4, Paulene Holmes, on #7, Chris Yakymishen, on #9, Sheila Gayman; closest to the barrel, #6, Judy Obee; longest drive, #2, Julie Hunter, #8, Sally Miller; longest putt, #3, Ria Rosenberg, #5, Suzanne Watson.

The rainy weather so far this month has forced cancellation of most of the club's league play in the past two weeks.

WOOFs league results: Some members of the Tuesday men's WOOFs league braved the soggy elements this week.

Don Allen, Jim Mc-

Macken and Peter Falconer shared low gross honours, shooting 40. Low net was won by Bill Garriock with a score of 32.

Earl Shore was closest to the pin on #4 and Allen won the hidden hole prize (#7). "Downtown" Jimmy Brown scooped the \$33 proceeds from the 50/50 draw.



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
COMMUNITY FAVOURITES: Legion Fish Fry every Thursday - 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Duplicate Bridge at the Community Centre, Tuesdays and Fridays at 7 p.m.			
19	20	21	
Plein Air Then & Now Workshop at Fort George - 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Fort George Ghost Tours of Fort George - 8:30 p.m. - Fort George Virgil Stampede - 1567 Niagara Stone Road	Victoria Day Virgil Stampede - 1567 Niagara Stone Road Fun Duplicate Bridge - 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre Plein Air Then & Now Workshop at Fort George - 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Fort George Monday Night Teen Hang Out - 6 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. - NOTL Public LibraryRegional Native Centre	NOTL Rotary Club - Noon - St. Mark's Anglican Church Duplicate Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre - 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Pizza Garden - 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. - NOTL Public Library German Conversation Group - 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre	
26	27	28	
Family Friendly Art Studio: Drop in - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre Ghost Tours of Fort George - 8:30 p.m. - Fort George Niagara College: Bake with an Expert - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Niagara College, CWFI Campus Niagara Pumphouse: 25 Years of Style and Beauty Fashion Show - Noon to 5 p.m. - Hilton Garden Inn	Fun Duplicate Bridge - 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre Famous & Infamous: Theodore Roosevelt with Michael Clark - 2 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society & Museum Open House: Residential Infill Policies - 5 p.m. - Town Council Chambers Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre	NOTL Rotary Club - Noon - NOTL Community Centre Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre - 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre NOTL Horticultural Society: Climate Change and Gardening - 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre	

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LOCAL CALENDAR

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1 p.m.	<p>16 Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Art & Fashion Lecture Series: "Exposed" A Brief History of Underwear with Rita Brown - 7:30 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society</p>	<p>17 P.A. Day -- Duplicate Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Mahjong Game Drop In - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Family Movie: Spider-Man Into the Spider-verse - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p>	<p>18 Virgil Stampede -- 1567 Niagara Stone Road The War of 1812 Officers Day -- Fort George Mori Gardens Seminar Series: Noteworthy Trees & Shrubs - 10 a.m. - Mori Gardens - 10 a.m. - Mori Gardens</p>
<p>22 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. - 9 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Seniors Group - 1 p.m. - NOTL Simpson Room</p>	<p>23 Seniors Fitness: Healthy Safe & Strong - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. / 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Tinker Thinker Thursdays - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p>	<p>24 Spanish Conversation Group - 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre Duplicate Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Mahjong Game Drop In - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Fort George Murder Mystery - 6:30 p.m. - 1567 Niagara Stone Road</p>	<p>25 The Village Community Garage Sale (Multiple Homes) - 8 a.m. to noon - Niagara Stone Road & Garrison Village Drive Artillery Day at Fort George - 10 a.m. - 1567 Niagara Stone Road Bravo Niagara! Presents Piano Six (6th Annual Spring into Music Series) - 7:30 p.m. - St. Mark's Anglican Church Spring Into Gardening: A Floral Workshop - 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Mori Gardens Seminar Series: Perennials New & Trending - 10 a.m. - Mori Gardens</p>
<p>29 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. - 9 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Tinker Thinker Thursdays - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Seniors Fitness: Health Safe & Strong - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. / 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. -</p>	<p>30 Minecraft Club - 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Tinker Thinker Thursdays - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. - NOTL Public Library Seniors Fitness: Health Safe & Strong - 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. / 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. -</p>	<p>31 Duplicate Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Mahjong Game: Drop in - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p>	<p>1 Mori Gardens Seminar Series: Winning Plant Combinations - 10 a.m. - Mori Gardens Walking Tours of Old Town - 11 a.m. - Queen's Royal Park Ragnar Niagara 2019: Running Event - 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. -</p>


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Photos by Richard Harley

Richard Harley
Editor

Saturday was filled with plant sales in Niagara-on-the-Lake, just in time for Mother's Day.

In Virgil, the NOTL Horticultural Society held its annual plant sale fundraiser at the Meridian Credit Union Arena, drawing a lineup of about 60 people before it even started. Plants were advertised at a fraction of nursery prices, however similar-sized tomato plants were selling at Horbach's on Concession 2 for \$1.35.

VanNoort Florists also had a coffee vendor outside for those looking for a high-quality brew on their travels.

In Old Town, St. Mark's held a spring gardening sale, which offered a variety of gardening tools and a selection of plants for a fraction of store prices. A high-quality hose on a spindle sold for \$12.50. The sale was helped out by students from the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture.

Also in Old Town, residents on Mary Street held their own sale in front of their yard with plants from their nursery. They said they do it every year on Mother's Day weekend as a little gift to the community.

All around NOTL there were garage sales with people clearing out old tools for the spring, offering up deals for the keen gardener.

All in all the smell of summer was in the air.



Mattison Innis and Leslie Hockley, first-year Niagara Parks School of Horticulture students, at the St. Mark's spring garden sale Saturday.

\$ Tomato price investigation \$

	Single	4-Pack	Patio (large)
Horbach's Farms	\$1.35	\$1.59	\$10
Seaway Farms	\$2.99	\$1.29	\$5.99
Sunshine Express	\$3.29/\$1.29	\$1.59	\$7.99



Stan Synowicki and wife MaryAnne lined up for the Horticultural Society sale Saturday.



Horticultural Society sale co-chair Sandy Bott, right, helps customers find the right plants for their gardens.



Dorothy, Brianna and Jessica Wiens shop for plants at the Horticultural Society fundraiser sale Saturday.



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Families make unique hats for Mother's Day



Eileen, Rhiannon and Kaius Zorko at the Pumphouse for Mother's Day. BRITTANY CARTER

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Hat's off to Mother's Day. Families celebrated Mother's Day with tea and crafts at the Niagara Pumphouse Art's Centre's Tea and Hat-Making Workshop on Sunday.

Partnering with Niagara Parks and the Niagara Historical Society and Museum, the Pumphouse launched a new project called Looking Back – Forging Forward. It's a series of pop-up art workshops inspired by Niagara's history.

On Mother's Day, the series brought families together over the historical shako hat while they made contemporary fascinators, the decorative headpieces favoured by British royals, and enjoyed tea and snacks provided by the art centre.

Hannah Dobbie, children's program instructor at the Pumphouse, said the workshop was made possible thanks to the Niagara Region's Niagara Investment in Culture program.

"We were given some funding to create events based on Niagara's history. That's why we have the shako hat. They have the option to create shako hats or fascinators."

Dobbie noted shako hats are military hats that were worn during the War of 1812.

The Pumphouse has two more workshops planned. One is a printmaking workshop in association with the Mackenzie Printery and Newspaper Museum.

The other event hasn't been announced yet, she said.

The dates for both upcoming events are yet to be determined.



The Vintages at FOUR MILE CREEK

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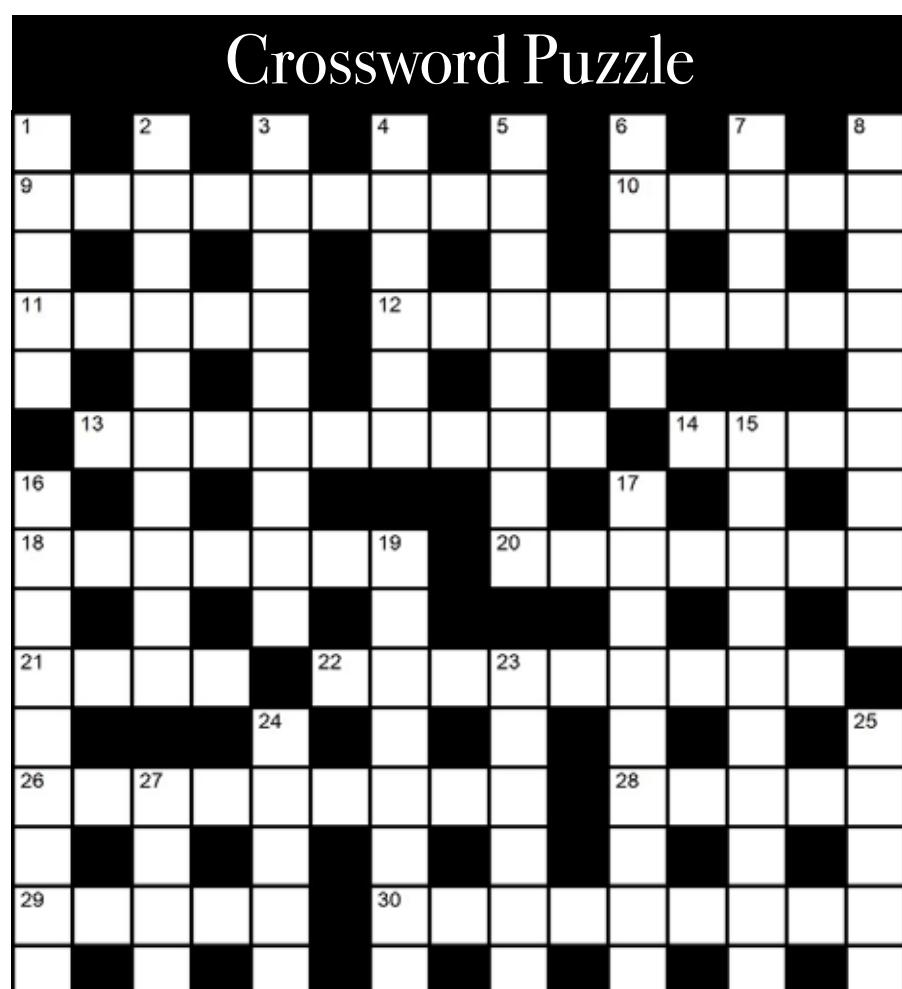
Have some fun

Across

- 9. Cliff face (9)
- 10. South American ruminant (5)
- 11. One who shapes metal (5)
- 12. Rhizome (9)
- 13. Telegraph messages (9)
- 14. Government supremo in a specified policy area (4)
- 18. See (7)
- 20. Uproarious (7)
- 21. Vex (4)
- 22. Caused by overexposure on a hot day (9)
- 26. Musical note (9)
- 28. Inexpensive (5)
- 29. Type of male (5)
- 30. Cut off (9)

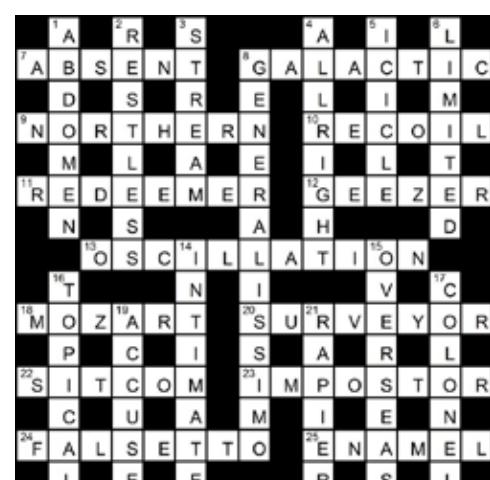
Down

- 1. Sudden convulsion (5)
- 2. Type of military flag (10)
- 3. Made more restrictive (9)
- 4. Reflecting surface (6)
- 5. Progressive (8)
- 6. Utter joy (5)
- 7. Western pact (1,1,1,1)
- 8. Cold weather personified (4,5)
- 15. Retailer (10)
- 16. Fencer (9)
- 17. Eighty (9)
- 19. Memento (8)
- 23. Perspiring (6)
- 24. German submarine (1-4)
- 25. Malice (5)



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

Last issue's answers



Sudoku



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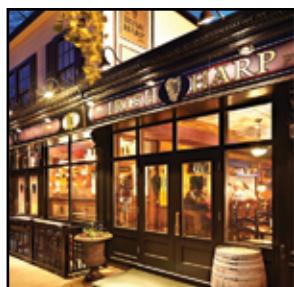
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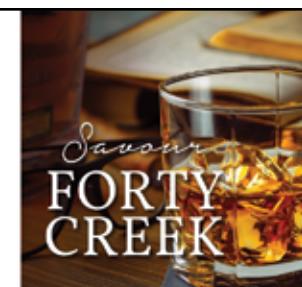
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Museum fundraiser lets NOTLers explore Bermuda connections

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake culture buffs can explore historical connections between Bermuda and NOTL on a fundraising trip organized by the Niagara Historical Society and Museum this November.

The trip will cost \$4,100 per person based on double occupancy and \$5,200 per person for single occupancy.

Applications for the historical society's excursion are being accepted until May 30.

Gail Lord, president and co-founder of Lord Cultural Resources, said it's more than just a tour.

"It's really about people with similar or related histories getting together. I think that's what people ultimately like about travel. It's not just about going to see a place. It's about creating relationships with people,"

she said.

Amy Klassen, acting managing director and historical society administrator, said she was to Lord after her company did some work in Bermuda.

"She was down there for a project and she thought there were some real great connections between Bermuda and Niagara-on-the-Lake. There's the War of 1812 history down there. There's just a lot of history to the country and culture there that people might want to see," Klassen said. "So, we decided to put together a package."

The trip, which is planned for Nov. 14 to 19, will help the museum raise money to cover annual operating costs. The town funds a portion of the operational expenses, but Klassen said the society needs to come up with the rest of the budget.

"The historical society owns and operates the

museum. We do get a chunk of money from the town, but the rest is done through admission, fundraising, donations – that sort of thing," Klassen said.

From the cost of the trip, \$500 will go toward operational costs.

Klassen said the trip is a great opportunity for museum members and residents to experience the similarities and differences between NOTL and Bermuda, with exclusive benefits they wouldn't find on their own.

"There's really kind of exclusive things that you wouldn't get if you went on your own. For example, having a candlelight dinner in the museum with members of the National Trust there and with a tour of the museum. There's a lot of personal tours."

The museum is about halfway to its goal of signing up 20 people for the trip, Klassen said.

Lord said she liked the idea of connecting Niagara-on-the-Lake with Bermuda, adding that there are many parallels between the culture, people and history of the two places.

"It's about bridging the gap across the world, reaching out to another country that is steeped in the history of the War of 1812 as well as an extensive black history," Lord said. "The trip, while also a fundraiser for the Niagara Historical Society and Museum, is about more than raising money."

Lord said her company has been working on the expansion plan of the historical society for many years. At the same time and purely by coincidence, she said the company was also working on the cultural tourism plan for Bermuda.

Lord Cultural Resources is the largest cultural planning company in the world, she said. Through the exten-



Gail Lord. SUPPLIED PHOTO

sive reach of her company, she's been involved with 2,600 museum projects in 57 countries around the world.

She said the Niagara Historical Society and Museum is the best overall mid-sized museum in Canada.

"It's one of the best, period. It has an excellent collection which it manages very well. It's very good at storytelling. It's innovative in its use of digital media. I think it has a very good base of activity in the community."

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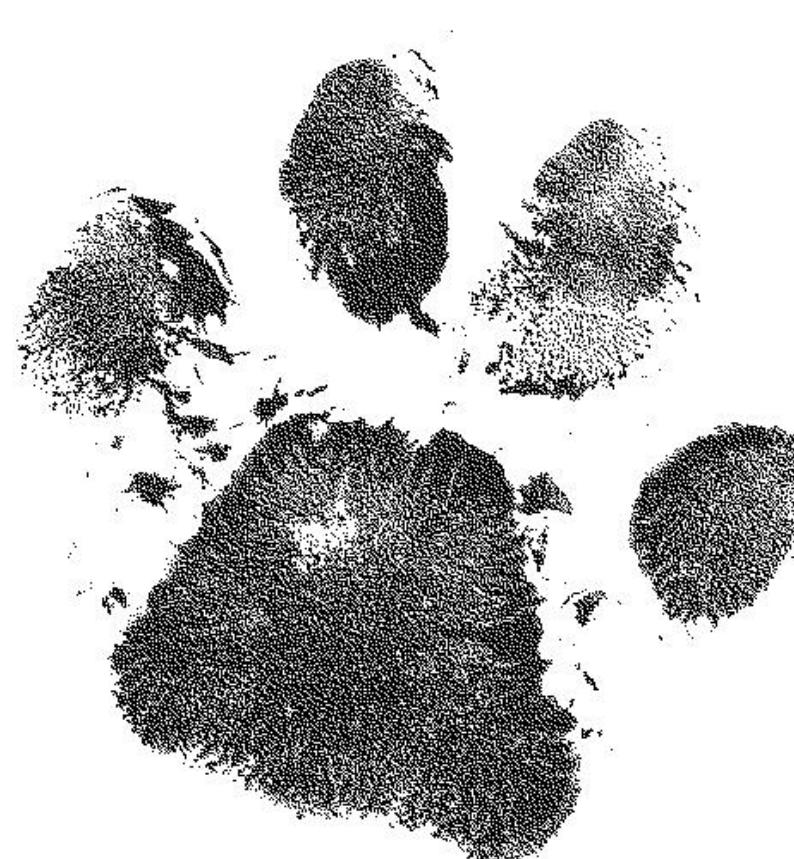


ODE TO BRIAR (2009 – 2019)

By Bill Hamilton

Her empty leash waves in the morning breeze
Idle to the wind, an icon to our grief.
A void fills my life, as purpose bows to futility,
A realization, an empty corner you're not there.
Nearby, a Post Office awaits your morning plea
For a biscuit, and a friendly paw shake
But shattered news, quells the greeting
Leaving remorse behind, with those who love you.
The morning walk seems longer now
Unnecessary as it were my gait, now slow.
Like a pup of summer, you romped the fields
Throwing down your body, on your back,
You writhe in pleasure, hitting that spot.
Then, you sprint, tongue lagging in the sun.
In winter, your nose disappears in a white drift
You look back with the freshness of cold air.
You leap ahead through deeper snow,
Beckoning me with that look, to catch up.
Almost ten, your youth shines through
And your summoning love for a welcome pet
Encouraged those around you to say "hi".
As I stand proud, wallowing in your praise.
Oh I know, life does not go on forever but,
I had hoped you could have stayed longer.
I will honor your life, and never forget
That joy and fulfillment, you gave me and
Unselfish, you were there for me, to listen
On good days and bad, non-judgmental
A nudge of your nose, gave me hope.
Rest in peace, my Briar you are with me
And your memory will live with me, always.

NOTL Writers' Circle



Author's note: Last week we had to put down Briar, our beautiful Golden Retriever as she succumbed to cancer. It was a shock, as we had not realized how serious her condition had become. Writing is not just a creative avenue for me but a means of therapy. I direct this particularly to any dog owner or dog lover out there. Briar was not a dog but she was a member of our family. Her memory will live on with all who knew her.

Town launches adopt-a-park cleanup program

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

NOTL is launching an Adopt-a-Park program and encouraging service groups in town to assist the town in maintaining green spaces.

The project is part of the Communities in Bloom program and the town is going to stock a trailer with all the tools needed to tidy up parks.

"We're asking community groups that want to be involved to adopt a park and organize cleanups. We are very excited about this program," said Kevin Turcotte, manager of parks and recreation.

"All of our neighbourhood parks are available to be adopted."

Town staff and mem-

bers of the Communities in Bloom committee met at Sweets and Swirls Café in the community centre on Friday morning to announce plans for the 2019 season.

The town borrowed the park adoption idea from a similar program successfully run by the city of Hamilton.

Information about how to apply for Adopt-a-Park, which is set to launch June 1, will be posted to social media by the town once plans are finalized.

When they're approved, adopters will need to attend a training session and sign an agreement, committing to at least three organized cleanups a year.

Aside from the cleanup program, the town's involvement in Communities in Bloom this year will veer



Communities in Bloom board members Rene Bertschi and Bette Ann James spoke of the upcoming 2019 season at the community centre Friday morning. BRITTANY CARTER

away from the competitive side, focusing more on bringing the community together. The town will jump back into the competition for the 2020 season.

This year the committee will participate in the Circle of Excellence category, a non-evaluated designation. Organizers plan to prepare to compete in the Class of Champions category next year.

Niagara-on-the-Lake demonstrated its ability to stand out on a provincial and national level during competitions in previous years. NOTL was a national

finalist in 2016, earning a "five blooms" silver rating – a sign of excellence in floral arrangements, community involvement and exceptional green spaces.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said upcoming projects are about more than just showcasing beautiful gardens and flower arrangements – they will connect the community.

"It's about community involvement, civic engagement and community pride. It's also about protecting our environment and celebrating our culture," she said.

Participation in Communities in Bloom was initiated by council in 2015 to showcase the beauty of the town and to connect with the community, Turcotte said.

The organizing committee covers all five areas of NOTL – connecting the entire town through floral arrangements, gardening initiatives and community participation.

Rene Bertschi, a Communities in Bloom board member, said residents all over town were happy to be involved in the program.

"This community just jumped on board. This is an incredible community of people," Bertschi said.

Since many residents have lived "such incredible lives" and have travelled the world, they have been able to bring back home the inspiration of beautiful places they've visited, he said. That adds to the quality of NOTL's green spaces and gardens.

Other programs planned by the committee were announced Friday as well.

The Horticultural Society's Garden of the Week

will run throughout summer. Nomination forms will be available through the town's Join the Conversation page.

Tulips for Trees, which runs in partnership with the NOTL Rotary Club, will feature the sale of tulip bulbs from town displays. The proceeds will go toward the town's tree fund.

A mobile app for the Voices of Freedom park is set to launch on July 9 to coincide with the 226th anniversary of the signing of the Act to Limit Slavery.

It will provide a walking tour of the black history landmarks around town.

The hydro box beautification project plans to turn three transformer boxes in the Historical District into art installations with decorative vinyl wraps.

The project is the result of a partnership between the Communities in Bloom committee, Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro and the Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre.

This year will mark Communities in Bloom's 25th year enhancing community green spaces across Canada.



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Exploring Photos: with Jim Smith

Exclusive to The Lake Report

BASKET FACTORY FIRE



It was the evening Friday the 13th, in January, 1961, when Niagara had one of its biggest fires. The old basket factory at the time was the Canadian Wood Products Ltd. warehouse. It was located at the foot of Melville Street, just inside the entrance to the present Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Club. This photograph shows the back of the building taken in the 1950s as seen from what is today the Harbor House parking lot.

SUPPLIED PHOTO/JIM SMITH

ARCHITEXT

Managing our legacy

Brian Marshall
Featured

Contrary to any impression I may have given in the past, I wish to state categorically that I do not consider developers "the enemy." Nor am I a Luddite who believes that anything old is good while all that is new must be viewed with suspicion and contempt.

I do believe, to quote from page 86 of our town's draft official plan, that "Cultural heritage resources are not renewable resources. Once lost, they are gone forever."

It falls to the community, our elected officials and a town's public servants to work in concert for protection of that heritage. That



Without guidelines, what we get is out of our hands.
BRIAN MARSHALL

united effort requires a clearly articulated and thoroughly documented set of published guidelines which detail all the criteria for treatment of heritage resources and also provide the tools for its enforcement. This is proven best practice.

Further, I believe that heritage guidelines are far more effective when working in concert with overarching protocols for the entire town; the former

protecting the past while the latter safeguards the future.

Identified as "Community Design Guidelines" in the draft official plan, it is regulation with the express intent of ensuring all new development conforms to the formally adopted criteria/vision of the community. These non-negotiable requirements might variously include such items as "walkability" (pathways or sidewalks), a

public greenspace formula (one square foot of green-space per "Y" square feet of developed land), specifying acceptable architectural streetscape theme(s), and so on. Again, an approach internationally understood as best practice.

The benefits of such guidelines are far too many to detail here, however, consider these general statements:

1. Clear and defined protocols make the town planners' decision-making process significantly more efficient while reducing the associated risk.

2. Detailed Guidelines provide developers a stable, predictable framework from which a reliable, low-risk project cost-benefit analysis can be conducted.

3. The town resulting from the uniform application of such guidelines is visually and functionally cohesive, quite simply a better place to live.

And isn't that what we all want?

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Advance Care Planning

with Carma Shawn, Palliative Pain and Symptom Management Consultant

THURSDAY MAY 23 :

Caregiver Relief

with Joan Graham, Mental Health Nurse

THURSDAY MAY 30 :

Elder Care (Palliative Perspective) Alzheimer's

with Dr. Pratik Kalani

THURSDAY JUNE 6 :

MAiD - Medical Assistance in Dying

with Dr. Karen Berti

THURSDAY JUNE 13 :

The Importance of Palliative Care

with Dr. Kim Adzich

THURSDAY JUNE 20 :

Grief and Bereavement

with Merri-Lee Agar, Death Doula

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There are a variety of great businesses inside to choose from — don't forget to mention you saw them in the paper!

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

The paper encourages all residents to support the paper through a "voluntary subscription" annually. For those interested in supporting us, we suggest \$1 per issue, per household, at 52 issues per year. That's only \$52 — less than most people spend on pizza and wings.

Larger donations are also greatly appreciated. For transparency, donations of more than \$1,000 will be published in the paper (with a big thank you) and donors will receive an exclusive limited edition Lake Report mug, as well as a copy of the first edition of the paper signed by staff. (Limit of 20 special mugs) To support The Lake Report, mail cheques to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Post Office, L0S1J0, PO Box 724. Please make cheques payable to Niagara Now Ltd. and note it as a donation.

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Virgil was once called Lawrenceville

Denise Ascenzo
Exclusive/The Lake Report

This story is one in a series about Virgil.

A name can mean so many different things to people and how names are chosen can be interesting.

A good example is Niagara-on-the-Lake. It has had many different names over its life span: Butlersberg (after John Butler and his Rangers), Niagara (due to its location near the Niagara River), Newark (an English town favoured by Lt.-Gov. John Graves Simcoe), then back to Niagara (when Simcoe left town) and then Niagara-on-the-Lake. Even now some people are referring to it as "Old Town," just to differentiate it from the municipality of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

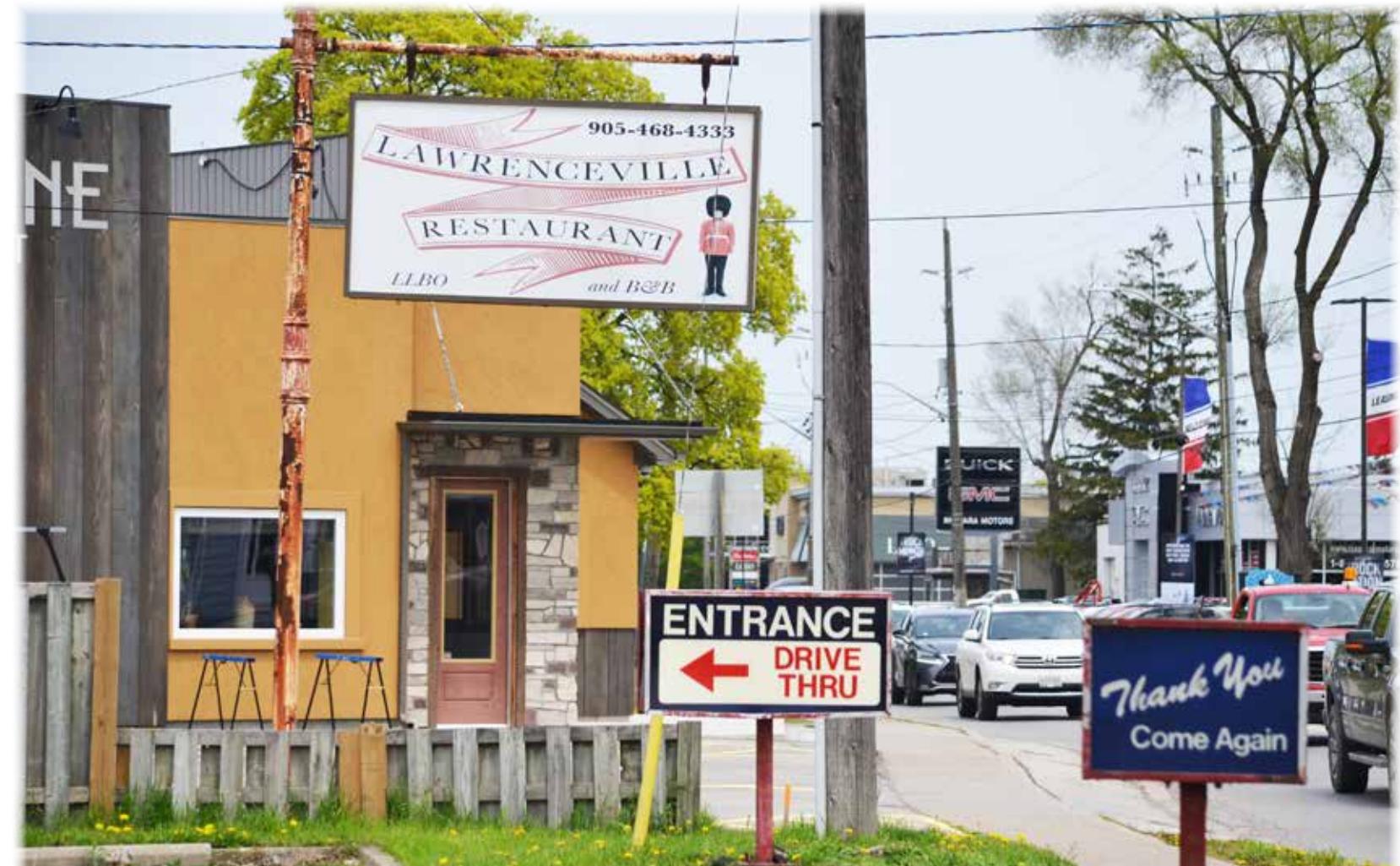
Many towns have had a good reason for their particular name. Niagara originated from the Indigenous language of this region – Ongiara.

St. Catharines was named after the wife of Robert Hamilton, a successful businessman and political figure in Upper Canada, and a respected judge. This is not the man that the city of Hamilton was named after though. It was named for Robert and Catharine's son George Hamilton.

St. Davids was named after one of the founders of the area, David Secord. He was renowned for his service as an officer in the loyalist militia during the War of 1812, as well as being a politician, land-owner, justice of the peace and the brother-in-law of Laura Secord.

Two brothers, John and Colin McNabb, received 1,900 acres in the 1790s for their service to the crown during the American Revolution (1765-1783). The town of McNabb was named in honour of the two brothers as well as their father, Dr. James McNabb, who died in a Loyalist refugee camp in Quebec in 1780.

The Queen's Rangers used to be stationed in a small hamlet on the Ni-



The old Lawrenceville Restaurant in Virgil took its name from George Lawrence, after whom the hamlet was once named. KEVIN MACLEAN

agara River just under the escarpment. The hamlet is now known as Queenston.

Then we have the town of Virgil, a name that seems so out of context with the rest of the community. It has no Canadian historical meaning, no Indigenous meaning and no geographical meaning whatsoever. It is certainly a name designation that needs an explanation.

Loyalist families who had fled to Fort Niagara after the American Revolution were encouraged to move to the west side of the Niagara River to settle in Upper Canada and 16 families had made the move by 1782. They settled in the village of Niagara (now NOTL) and the small community of St. Davids. The St. Davids site was chosen for its water sources to build mills on Four Mile Creek. The Niagara River was never considered for this type of construction as the current was too strong for any mills to operate.

Several mills were built along Four Mile

Creek from the foot of the escarpment north to Lake Ontario. The most northern mill was built at Palatine Hill.

In 1783, Black Swamp Road was built from the village of Niagara to the commercial road bridge over the easternmost S-bend in Ten Mile Creek, which was subsequently straightened when the 4th Welland Canal was installed. This road crossed an Indian trail that travelled from the escarpment north, following Four Mile Creek to Lake Ontario. As the name Black Swamp Road indicates, it was no more than a rutted dirt track built with fallen trees spread through marsh land, making the road surface like corduroy, especially after rain washed away the mud placed between the fallen trees in an attempt to make the ride smoother.

With the continued growth along Four Mile Creek, two former Butler's Rangers, George Lawrence and John C. Ball, decided to settle another

community where the two roads met. The village of Crossroads (Virgil) was founded at the junction of the Indian trail and Black Swamp Road.

Black Swamp Road was being travelled on more and the original design of logs over bogs and a rutted dirt track needed changing. Rocks, cleared from fields, were continuously dumped onto the dirt and boggy road. Soon the name of the road was changed to Niagara Stone Road, which made logical sense at the time.

As the village of Cross Roads grew and became more prosperous, the town's people renamed it Lawrenceville in honour of George Lawrence (1757-1848), the much admired principal, founder and lay preacher of the village. This name change happened before 1848 while Lawrence was still alive and the local community felt it fitting that the village be named after their leader.

But we have a quandary of how the name "Virgil"

came to be assigned to the village of Lawrenceville.

It was in 1862 when the postal service was first developed. The story of the name change of Niagara (NOTL) is well known. It was the post office that decided there were too many towns called Niagara. So they designated the town by the falls as Niagara Falls, whereas the other Niagara became known as Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Lawrenceville to Virgil makes no sense. In fact, it was noted that the town's residents did not want a name change at all. It soon became known that some well-educated postal employee, with a passion for Greek and Roman poetry, had influenced the new name. Since the postal employee knew there was a town called Homer in the municipality, named for the same reason, it was an easy leap to renaming Lawrenceville to Virgil.

By the 1890s, the town of Virgil was still a small village of just over 100 residents. It wasn't until

the 1930s, with the arrival of the Mennonites from Ukraine via Vineland and points west, that the town saw any substantial growth. Their contribution to the Virgil community has made the village what it is today.

The name Virgil has no historical significance to the community but as we all understand, names can be changed. As author David Hemmings has stated, "It is never too late to return to the community its rightful heritage and name of Lawrenceville."

* I would like to thank David Hemmings for giving me permission to use his book, "The Cross Roads: Fortune Favours the Strong," for much of the information in this story. The book can be purchased at the Niagara Historical Society and Museum in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

More Niagara's History Unveiled articles about the past of Niagara-on-the-Lake are available at: www.niagaranow.com



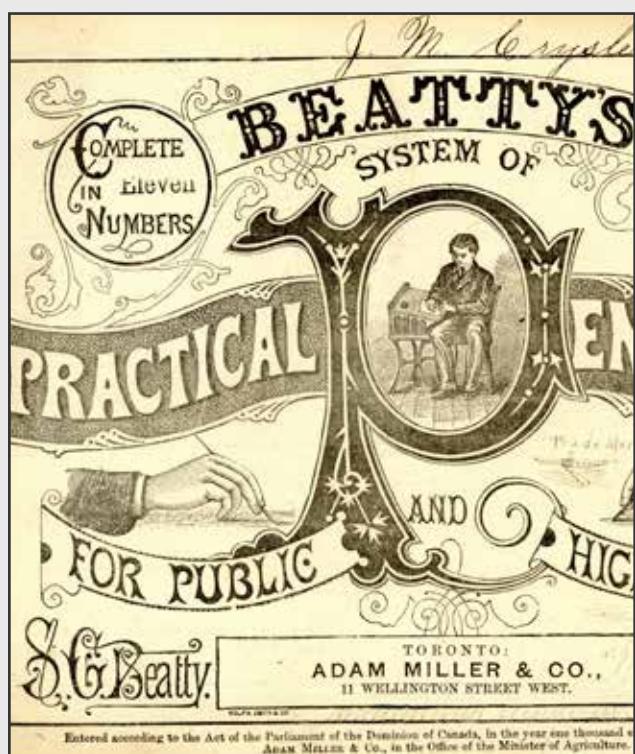


COMMUNITY

We invite you to submit photos and stories for consideration in this section.
Send your submissions to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to be featured.

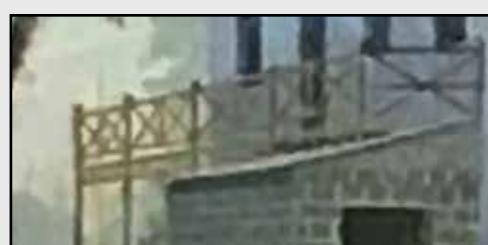


Artifact of the Week: 19th Century Penmanship Books



Answer: This week's artifact is a set of Penmanship books, "Practical Penmanship" and "Mercantile Penmanship," published in 1877 by Adam Miller & Company and Copp, Clark & Company. The books contain exercises for practicing suitable writing skills which would have assisted those wanting to enter the accounting and bookkeeping fields. Two of these books belonged to John Morten Crysler and were geared toward children in public and high school. Well into the 20th century, penmanship was a major subject in public schools with children learning to write with ink, straight pens with steel or brass nibs and specially designed exercise books. Many students who failed to follow instructions were often punished by the slap of a teachers' ruler on their knuckles.

The Artifact of the Week column is submitted by the Niagara Historical Society & Museum, exclusive to The Lake Report.



Can you guess this artifact? >

Clue: There was no vacancy at the ____.



From left, NOTL Kinsmen Brian Litke, Willy Janzen, Phil Bergen, Ed Marcynuk and Bob Dick clean up Niagara Stone Road, which they adopted from the Niagara Region. They are out cleaning two or three times a year. BRITTANY CARTER



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

Stagecoach



The Stagecoach accepts a 4/5 Golden Plunger award.
PLUNGER PATROL

A longtime classic bathroom experience can be had in the heart of Old Town. The Stagecoach's bathrooms are clean and utilitarian. Their claim to fame is more about familiarity. If you live in Niagara Region, you know the Stagecoach is a favoured breakfast hot spot. We've all parked on its porcelain at some time or another. We love the staff, who acknowledge regulars, locals and visitors alike with their friendly service. The smell of toast evokes memories from our youth of late-morning breakfasts after late nights. And by "youth" I mean last week. We ate at the Stagecoach, having slept in after watching the 10 o'clock news the night before. But I could have gone back as far as 1985 for memories. That's how long the Stagecoach has been operating. This family-friendly diner sports a Diaper Genie. You can rub all you like on that container. We won't tell you what's in there but there is no Genie, that's for sure!

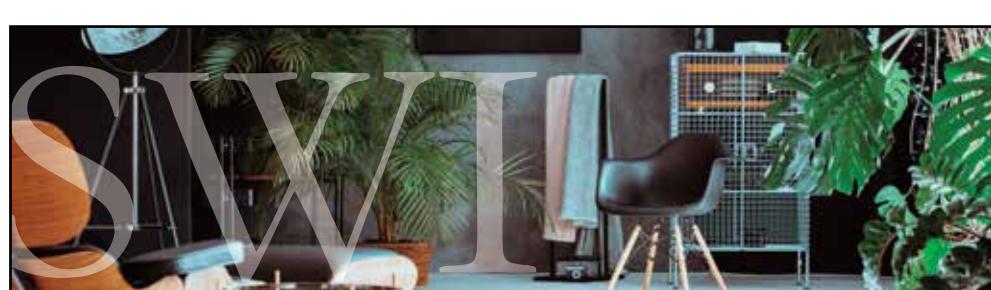
3/5 Gold Plungers



RIDDLE ME THIS:

I fly without wings,
I cry without eyes. What am I?

Last Week's Riddle: I have many keys but can open no doors. What am I?. Answer: Piano
Answered first by Margie Enns, as well as by Roger Marcos, Lynda Collet
Also accepted various other answers such as: Maple Tree - Elly Kopp, Sandra Gowans, Britney Turasz
Typewriter - Dianne Arsenault
Email answers to editor@niagaranow.com for a chance to win a prize.



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Featured local story

Doug Garrett: A sporting warrior turns 92

Kevin MacLean
Managing Editor

Doug Garrett is a warrior. A proud former army reservist who still turns out for Remembrance Day every year.

A Legion member for 64 years and a Mason for a half-century.

A man who was born in the Roaring Twenties, grew up in the Great Depression and was once a local milkman, making daily deliveries by horse-drawn wagon.

A literal legend in the local sporting community where he has set records on the golf course that might never be matched.

A father, grandfather and husband. A cancer survivor turned caregiver for his wife Christine, who at age 82 now faces her own mortal battle with Alzheimer's and dementia.

Garrett turns 92 on May 20, and when you get to be his age, all the numbers in your life are big ones.

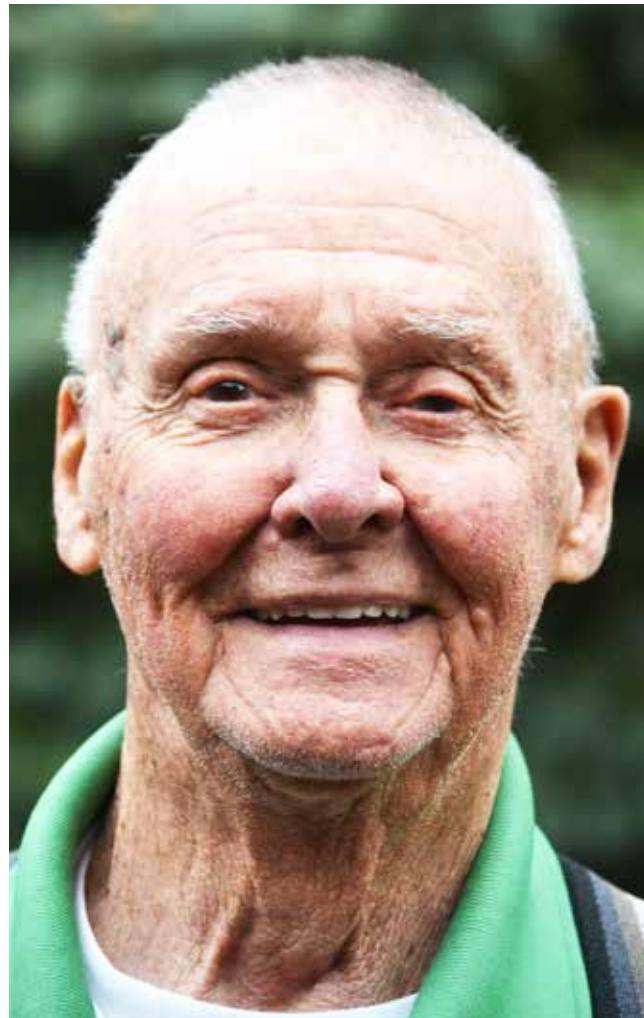
Born and bred in Niagara-on-the-Lake, he would be a deserving candidate if there was such a title as "Mr. NOTL."

At 5 foot 6 and 150 pounds in his prime, he has been a diminutive giant in his community and in sporting endeavours, including playing Senior B level competitive hockey. "I was small, but I was fast," he recalls.

Growing up in NOTL, "There was very little to do, except get into a bit of trouble sometimes," he laughs.

Not that they got up to anything really bad. But they all made sure not to be on the wrong side of the L.A.W. "That's Lew A. Warner. He was the chief of police in town and he kept a tight lid on things."

Fort Mississauga, the national historic site on the grounds beside the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club, was a favourite haunt for kids in the 1930s, he says.



Doug Garrett turns 92 next Monday. Above, showing fine form as he tees off on the 225-yard 18th hole in NOTL. At left, in his army reservist uniform in the 1940s.

"All through the parapets at the fort, we used to play in the tunnels in the embankment around there. We'd crawl through them and every kid in town played there."

"It was really silly when you think about it because, if they had collapsed nobody would have known where we were."

"Our parents didn't know we were doing this, of course," he says with a laugh.

Eventually the tunnels were closed off. As for the mythical tunnels under what is now the Charles Inn, he says he never saw any evidence of them.

In 1944, when he was in Grade 11, his father John died and young Garrett dropped out and started working to help support his mom and two brothers.

He had been too young to fight in the Second World War, turning 18 just before it ended, but he did sign up

for the reserves. He served five years, 1945-50 with the 44th Field Regiment in St. Catharines.

He worked various jobs over the next 15 or so years, including more than a decade as a meat cutter for area butchers and delivering milk the old-fashioned way for Avondale Dairies when his sons David and Paul were young. Garrett and his sweetheart Dorothy were married in 1956; she died of cancer in the mid-1970s.

He married Christine in 1979 and they've been together ever since. She nursed him through his bout with colon cancer and he cared for her at home until Christine's daughter Kelly and Garrett made the decision to move her to Upper Canada Lodge.

Back in 1962, Garrett settled in to a career with the LCBO, starting at the small store in Old Town. He spent 28 years with the LCBO, eventually as manager of various locations in St. Catharines.

Back in those days, having political connections could help you get hired at the liquor store, and Garrett recalls the last regional supervisor he worked for was someone he and others didn't get along with.

"He was an appliance salesman from Toronto, a political appointment, and he came in trying to tell us how to run things." It didn't end well. Eventually, Garrett and six other managers all retired simultaneously, which caused head office to sit up and take notice, he says.

He's loved his retirement years, always keeping busy. "Unfortunately, I was a pall-bearer at the funerals for all six of those other guys," he says. They didn't really have much to do once they stopped working. "That's essential," he says.

One of the things Garrett keeps busy at is golf. Like many young golfers,

his first club was given to him by an older player – it was a cut-down, wooden-shafted iron. "For a long time, I only had one club."

Matters were complicated somewhat by the fact Garrett plays left-handed. Even in the 1970s and '80s it was tough to find clubs for lefties. In the '50s and earlier, they were extremely rare.

But it didn't deter him. He played and practised and competed.

Jack Nicklaus's record of 18 major golf tournament wins is something that might never be matched. But consider just some of Garrett's amateur feats on the links in NOTL. He has won:

Three open championship titles. And was runner-up six times.

Twelve seniors champ crowns.

One super senior title (for those 65 and up).

Five "Legends" titles (for those 80 and up – the only time, so far, anyone else does).

has won it is when Garrett didn't compete).

One Champion of Champions seniors title for Niagara district. That tournament pits the club champions from around the area against one another. "I was the first lefty, and probably the only lefty, to have won that," he says.

Also mixed in there were five seniors titles at Queenston Golf Club.

In golf, anyone can get lucky and have a hole in one. Garrett has only done it once, in 1951. However, shooting an 18-hole score that is less than your age is a feat that few accomplish. Garrett can't recall how many times he's done it, because it has happened so often. And he's still doing it.

Likely his most spectacular course accomplishment occurred on Sept. 20, 1995.

Sometimes in sports, the stars are all just rightly aligned: Kawhi Leonard's buzzer beater bounces four times on the rim and drops in, Joe Carter steps to the plate and knocks the ball over the fence for a walk-off World Series win.

On that cool, sunny fall Friday in NOTL, almost everything was going Garrett's way. He shot a remarkable four-under 32 on the front nine – despite a bogey on the 9th hole. On the back nine, he kept it rolling, but somehow bogeyed the 15th, not one of the tougher holes on the course. "Two bogeys that day," he exclaims.

Heading to the final hole, a tough 225-yard par 3 that is difficult to reach from the tee, he wanted to finish well. "I didn't hit a good tee shot. It was short of the green."

So what did Garrett do? He stepped up and chipped in for a birdie two.

And a seniors course record that still stands almost 24 years later.

Garrett shot 66 that day. He was 68 years old.

That's what a warrior does.

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