

[EXCLUSIVE]

Undermined by councillors

Chief administrator Holly Dowd opted to retire after rising tensions with members of council



Retired town chief administrative officer Holly Dowd. SUPPLIED PHOTO

Kevin MacLean
Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake chief administrator Holly Dowd opted to retire in August rather than continue to put up with a group of councillors who spent months actively trying to undermine her as she completed the final year of her employment contract, The Lake Report has learned.

The tipping point appears to have come on June 10 when four councillors – Gary Burroughs, Clare Cameron, Wendy Cheropita and Stuart McCormack – voted against reappointing Dowd to the board of town-owned NOTL Hydro.

In interviews, the four councillors cited a variety of reasons for their individual decisions. However, the vote came after McCormack told the June 10 council meeting that Dowd did not have the qualifications required to continue as a member of the utility's board.

That debate actually ended in a 5-4 vote in favour of Dowd, but

the die was cast and it was the last straw for Dowd, who, after 37 years with the town, could have retired last year.

Neither Dowd nor Lord Mayor Betty Disero would comment on her departure, but The Lake Report pieced together events through extensive research and interviews with more than a dozen people.

Dowd, who has fibromyalgia, which she has said can be exacerbated by stress, went on medical leave not long after the June meeting and on Aug. 12 Disero announced the town's top civil servant was retiring.

Her departure was the culmination of several months of dealing with a few councillors who regularly questioned her suitability as NOTL's top civil servant and did

not want to wait for Dowd to retire after her contract expired on Dec. 31, 2019.

She was appointed CAO by the previous council after her predecessor, Milena Avramovic, left in 2016 after only a brief time in the post.

The town was in a bind at that time, and by accepting the job, Dowd saved the town tens of thousands of dollars in salary costs by serving as municipal clerk and acting CAO for a time after Avramovic departed, one

source said. Her permanent appointment also saved the town the cost of conducting an expensive executive search to replace Avramovic.

While Dowd, 56, was eligible to

“I note the suggested requirements for a director in the hydro company are substantially different than the job description the town uses for the CAO.”

NOTL TOWN COUNCILLOR
STUART MCCORMACK

Continued on Page 2



SURVEY

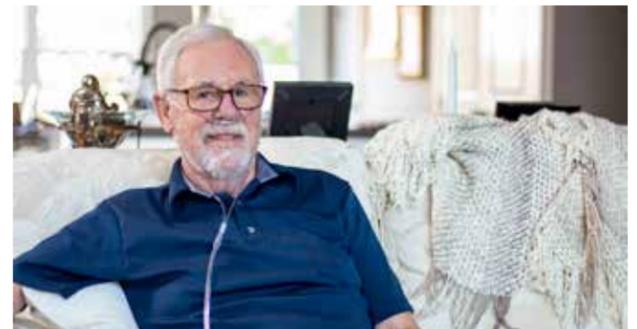
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The Lake Report



Terry Hardy in October 2018. RICHARD HARLEY

Remembering a conversation with the late Terry Hardy

Richard Harley
Editor-in-Chief

In his final days, Terry Hardy was sure the disease that was killing him wasn't as rare as doctors thought. Now, his wife Sandra says he was right.

Hardy died Dec. 13, 2018, after fighting a battle with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, a progressive lung disease that causes scarring of tissue, shortness of breath and debilitating tiredness.

In the last year, a support group started by Hardy has only grown in members, and research has begun to suggest it is one of the major forms of pulmonary fibrosis.

In October 2018, I spoke with him at his home; about IPF,

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The Dowd family celebrates mom's retirement as the town's CAO. From left, Kevan Dowd, Holly, husband Rob, Bryan Dowd and girlfriend Claire Bates, Heather Dowd and boyfriend Brandon Ducker. Last week's party was a lively affair, with entertainment by Bryan's band Sneaker Club. SUPPLIED

Undermined by councillors: Hydro vote was tipping point

Continued from Front Page

retire with a full pension last December, earlier this year, the new council asked her to stay on and voted to extend her contract until the end of 2019.

For the past several years, the town CAO's appointment to the hydro board basically has been automatic. Disero and Coun. John Wiens are among the eight people who comprise the current hydro board. The utility is owned by Niagara-on-the-Lake Energy Inc., which is wholly owned by the Town of NOTL.

The June 10 vote regarding Dowd's reappointment to hydro included no debate among councillors and was over in minutes.

McCormack, reading from a prepared statement, outlined some of the requirements for the position, including having business expertise, experience on boards of corporations, knowledge of legal and regulatory processes, energy industry knowledge and experience with risk management strategy.

"I make no comment on the CAO's ability to perform as a CAO," McCormack told councillors.

"But I note the suggested requirements for a director in the hydro company are substantially different than the job description the town uses for the CAO."



Coun. Stuart McCormack, left, and Coun. Clare Cameron. RICHARD HARLEY

Minutes of the June 10 meeting show while Dowd's reappointment was successful on the 5-4 split vote, all other hydro appointees were approved unanimously.

The vote atmosphere was described as "awkward" and "tense" by one source, noting that Dowd "was sitting there while they're voting, sort of like the old days of (kids) choosing pickup teams."

With barely six months left on her contract, "You wonder why they wouldn't wait," another source said.

No members of council would say whether – or not – Dowd's hydro tenure was discussed in advance or during private, in-camera sessions held by the council elected last fall. Councillors are bound by confidentiality on personnel matters.

However, a number of sources confirmed such talks occurred. And at the June 10 council meeting, after McCormack's statement on requirements for hydro board members, the vote came quickly, with no



debate. The entire process lasted four minutes and 10 seconds.

Hydro board chair Jim Ryan said that, during her tenure as a director, Dowd "brought a closer perspective as to the operations, longer-term directions and some co-ordination with the town."

"In my opinion, she did a good job in liaising with the town to both the hydro board and to town staff," he said in an interview, adding the management of hydro has a close working relationship with the municipality.

However, he emphasized, "the directors all serve at the pleasure of council. So, we don't have a say in the appointments. The council looks at who is nominated and they solely make the decision."

When it came to the hydro board vote, Cheropita said the primary reason for her No vote was that she expected Dowd would be retiring soon.

Council had extended Dowd's contract until the end of this year, "so when we were voting on a board member for hydro, we were voting for the next four years. And so it didn't make any sense to me to vote (for) Holly when ... my understanding when I was running for council was that Holly was going to retire. That that was her plan."

As well, Cheropita

said, the majority of the candidates on the list for the hydro board fit the qualifications "absolutely, completely, and completely aligned with the mandate and the requirements and the skillsets that the board was looking for."

"Holly Dowd was also on that list, but her bio did not line up with the specific skillsets that were being asked for."

McCormack noted in an August interview, "I think it's just a question of making sure that the best-qualified people were appointed to the board, since it's basically a subsidiary of the town."

He declined to comment further when contacted again last week.

Dowd gave the town many years of service, said Cameron, who, like the others, said she wished her "all the best."

Regarding Dowd's reappointment to the hydro board, Cameron said the qualifications for the job didn't align with Dowd's qualifications.

Cameron added that traditionally the town appointed its chief administrator to the hydro board and while she voted against Dowd, she had "no issue with council's decision" to approve her reappointment.

One reason for her No vote was "because I think with the new council it's important that we look at all the administrative functions in the town, including things that may have been done a certain way in the past, and really have a look at 'Is there a way we could do things differently' and I'm open to doing things differently," Cameron said.

"I don't tend to be convinced just because something's always been

a certain way that it has to continue being that way forever," she said.

Burroughs, who previously was lord mayor for 10 years, said in an interview in August that he believes Dowd was "the best clerk in the whole region" during his tenure.

He said it "was nothing against Holly" when he voted against her hydro board reappointment. He said he wanted a councillor, specifically McCormack, a retired lawyer, to be on the board so reports could be brought to council.

However, with Disero and Wiens already on the board, there would be two council members who could do that.

In a subsequent interview on Sept. 6, Burroughs said he "preferred to have an accountant go on the board, at least that was my preference. I don't know about anybody else (on council)."

Owning NOTL Hydro "is our biggest investment and so when they're dealing with how much dividends are to be paid to the town, all of those things, it's an accounting kind of question that would be useful for me."

The hydro board vote was "not against Holly, it was having a different representative. I've known Holly probably longer than anybody and she's fabulous. It has nothing to do with not wanting Holly," Burroughs said.

"I catered her wedding. I've known Holly forever, and her parents, and so I have nothing but good things to say about Holly."

Town employees held a retirement party for Dowd last week at the Virgil fire hall. None of the four councillors who voted against her hydro reappointment were in attendance.

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Queenston Mile Winery. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

Queenston Mile wins approval as **estate winery** despite opposition

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Despite loud public opposition, Queenston Mile Winery's rezoning application to operate as an estate winery was approved by Niagara-on-the-Lake council Monday.

The rezoning application, recommended in a town staff report, was passed after some amendments were proposed by Coun. Clare Cameron.

Cameron told council she would not support the staff report as it was presented.

"To say I'm disappointed with the contents of this report would be an understatement," she said, noting when council directed staff to consider some recommendations back in July, staff was to work with the applicant on "compromises" and "creative solutions."

"And what we received back in the report was, 'Sorry, nothing can be done. Nice ideas, nice try but nope,'" Cameron said, adding the only way she could vote in favour of the report was by imposing certain conditions.

Council approved two of five amendments proposed by Cameron: that cooking equipment not be installed and that the site plan define the use of square footage for particular pur-

poses including a clearly defined and permanent wine production, processing and storage area, retail space, hospitality area and any other uses.

Maria Mavridis, owner of Corks and Orzo restaurants on Queen Street in Old Town, said the opponents are not against a new winery but, "a winery needs to be a winery."

"To say I'm disappointed with the contents of this report would be an understatement."

NOTL TOWN COUNCILLOR
CLARE CAMERON

"By approving this (application), you're opening the floodgates to allow every barn out there with 20 acres" to be converted into a facility with an on-site restaurant, Mavridis told council, noting the winery won't be paying commercial taxes while her family pays \$80,000 a year in taxes.

At the July's council meeting, Queenston Mile general manager Alison Zalepa said the company is not asking for a restaurant but for a commercial kitchen.

One of the arguments

against the application was in regard to the winery's septic system.

In a septic permit, dated October 2018, Niagara Region granted the winery owners permission to use its new sewage disposal system. But the owners were responsible for completing the remaining work, which included adding seed or sod to prevent erosion and maintaining drainage to direct surface water run-off away from the tank and tile bed area.

In a letter to Queenston Mile, a private sewage system inspector Caitlin Wood said, "wine production cannot occur on-site as the sewage system is not designed to accommodate the industrial wastewater."

At the council meeting Monday, Rick Wilson, the town's manager of planning, said the Region of Niagara's septic permit was dated over a year ago. He told councillors the region was "very much aware" of the ongoing issue surrounding the application and the recent correspondence the town has received from the region also showed it was satisfied with the existing septic system, he said.

"The region accepted that any wine production wastewater would be transferred off-site," Wilson said.

At the meeting, Ravine Vineyard Estate Win-

ery's winemaker Martin Werner showed councillors a letter from Phil Lambert, the region's director of infrastructure planning and development engineering. In the letter, dated Sept. 3, 2019, Lambert said, a "holding tank is not permitted for winery wastewater and an on-site sustainable treatment system is typically required."

Ravine owner Paul Harber said their group, comprised of NOTL residents and business owners who have been opposing the application, will appeal the council's decision under the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, regardless if the winery owners also appeal the decision.

"We just don't believe they're an estate winery," Harber told The Lake Report. "There's a rulebook to play by. We play by the rulebook."

"Not even within a calendar year of being open ... they haven't lived by any of the rules of the farm winery. And now they're wanting even more ability to take advantage of the Niagara-on-the-Lake wine industry," he added.

Harber said he was disappointed the winery can now operate as an estate winery, but he was also encouraged to see some amendments approved by council.



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Liam Smeets, Ben Chrisholm and Jacob Prophet of the 1st Barrie Foresters Group before a re-enactment. BRITTANY CARTER

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Green Tip of the Week

Contributed by Norm Arsenault:

Combine all your plastic bags and wraps into one single bag and tie them up. Put the tied bag in the grey bin on top of your paper products. Don't recycle them loosely. They clog up equipment and slow down the recycling process!!

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Editorial Keep NOTL Palliative Care **in mind**

Richard Harley
 Editor

It's sometimes a tough decision when you're putting on a fundraiser. Selecting which charity to donate to can be overwhelming, especially when there are so many fantastic initiatives out there to support.

There's Wells of Hope, which held its annual Passion fundraiser last week at Chateau des Charmes. There's, of course, Red Roof Retreat, which is an extremely popular choice. There's Newark Neighbours, TD Jazz's Big Band Fundraiser, the Terry Fox Run, and the list goes on.

But one thing I've noticed, and perhaps it's ironic in a

town that has an older demographic, is that Niagara-on-the-Lake Palliative Care is often forgotten.

It's arguable, especially in this town, that NOTL PC is one of the most important charities we have.

For those who aren't familiar with it, they provide absolutely free services for people in the ends of their lives, and who are suffering from terminal illness.

We would like to remind anyone putting on a charitable event that there are plenty of diverse options to support within the community, and to keep NOTL Palliative Care in mind as the next organization to receive your support.

editor@niagaranow.com



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We've all had it with these **ignorant** protests

Dear editor:

I am 100 per cent in agreement with Richard Harley's Sept. 12 editorial, "Enough is enough," regarding ongoing protests by a Niagara anti-horse carriage group.

I have had it with these fringe groups harassing our town residents, our business operations – and the police unable or unwilling to do anything about it.

Now they've been joined by another fringe group of losers from Toronto, the Anonymous for the Voiceless vegans, to try to harass and intimidate the local population, until a possible physical altercation?

Targeting the Royal Canadian Legion's pig roast ... really??!!

Everyone has about had it with these ignorant protests, which is what they want, of course.

Is not this kind of thing harassment, or blowing a loud megaphone in someone's face an assault, sticking a sign in a horse's face hoping to spook the animal, or using their cars as a form of intimidation ... dangerous driving, against the criminal code?

Let's get some legal action going to get a restraining order against these groups. As a previous letter writer said, the town found the money to finance the court proceedings against the Randwood development threatening our heritage, is this also not what this group of fanatics are trying to do also?

Regards,

Earle Vance
 NOTL

Restricting cannabis growing makes **no sense**

Dear editor:

I am writing in regarding plans to extend the Niagara-on-the-Lake interim control bylaw for cannabis for another year.

Marijuana is grown for medicinal and recreational use.

Grapes in Niagara-on-the-Lake are grown primarily for making wine, which is for recreational use.

Both are considered agriculture.

My point is: wine is not a food product that is produced for recreational use, same as marijuana. But marijuana is also medicinal.

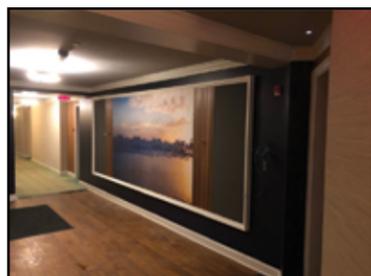
Why, then, should the town force marijuana to be grown only in an industrial area?

This does not make sense.

Leo Visser
 Hillside Greenhouses
 NOTL

Clarification

A story printed last week about an animal rights protest at the Legion's pork roast said an air horn was blown in a man's ear. In fact, it was a megaphone. In hindsight, the phrasing "in his ear" was misleading. While the megaphone was not held directly to his ear, it was being used to play an extremely loud siren, merely feet away from him while he was trying to perform.



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Thieves target **Virgil** restaurants

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Sono's Café owner says he is "disheartened" after two restaurants near the corner of Niagara Stone Road and Four Mile Creek Road were targets of break-ins overnight on Thursday.

Mahmoud Sono, owner of Sono's Cafe, said he had just returned from a week out of town when the café was hit by a break and enter. He had more cash on hand than he normally would have, he said, because he didn't have a chance to drop the cash deposits.

"It makes me upset so much, because it only takes 24 hours, if they waited 24 hours I would have taken out the money," he said. He was planning to deposit the money into the bank in the morning.

On Wednesday morning, Sono still hadn't heard an update on the break and enter, and he is "still struggling" from the hit.

"I don't leave any money anymore. We take more time every day to take all of the money out of the store. In the morning, with



Mahmoud Sono, owner of Sono's Cafe on Niagara Stone Road, after the break and enter this week.
BRITTANY CARTER

the cash floats, we have to take more time," Sono said.

Niagara Regional Police are investigating a break-and-enter at Silks Country Kitchen that occurred just after 4 a.m. Friday, Const. Phil Gavin said in response to an email inquiry from The Lake Report.

Officers also are investigating a break-in at Sono's Café that happened sometime between Thursday at 5 p.m. and Friday at 7:20 a.m.

Gavin said an "undisclosed amount of property was stolen" from the cafe.

Sono said about \$3,700 was taken, plus the cost of

damages to the security system which had been torn out and broken during the break-in.

Silks owner Joel Dempsey said his restaurant's security system was on, including motion sensors, but the suspect managed to avoid them. He said other than money taken from the safe — he would not disclose the amount — a jug of orange juice was the only thing missing.

Security cameras captured images of the suspect, who is described as about six-foot-tall with a slim build, wearing a hooded sweatshirt tied tightly around the face, with black pants, white running shoes and black gloves.

In both cases, Gavin said, the suspect entered by damaging a glass door.

He said investigators will try to determine if there is any connection between the two incidents.

Dempsey said the theft caused Silks to open a bit late Friday morning.

"We normally open at 6:30 a.m., but we had to wait until about 8:30 a.m. this morning before we could allow anyone in."

Glendale Avenue East to be **renamed**

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Glendale Avenue East road, near Niagara College, will have a new name, Niagara-on-the-Lake council decided Monday.

Town council approved the renaming of the road to help visitors find their way around, once the QEW/Glendale interchange project is completed.

According to the town staff report, the Ministry of Transportation has requested the town council to approve the renaming of the road in order to improve "wayfinding" through the interchange.

A new street name hasn't been chosen yet and it won't be required until the interchange construction starts in

about a year, the report said.

The provincial review showed there are three roads, in close proximity to each other, with a name "Glendale" in it: Glendale Avenue, Glendale Avenue North and Glendale Avenue East, the report said. The first two roads are contiguous while the latter intersects with Glendale Avenue.

"It is important that we help provide the best wayfinding direction to the three million-plus visitors travelling to the town every year, the majority of whom transit the interchange," town staff said in a report. "The renaming of Glendale Avenue East to something less confusing will support this goal."

The QEW/Glendale project between the min-



Lord Mayor Betty Disero chairs Monday's council meeting.
DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

istry and the Regional Municipality of Niagara has reached the request for proposal for the design stage.

As the traffic congestion and pedestrian safety at the interchange have been an ongoing concern, the ministry has decided to ad-

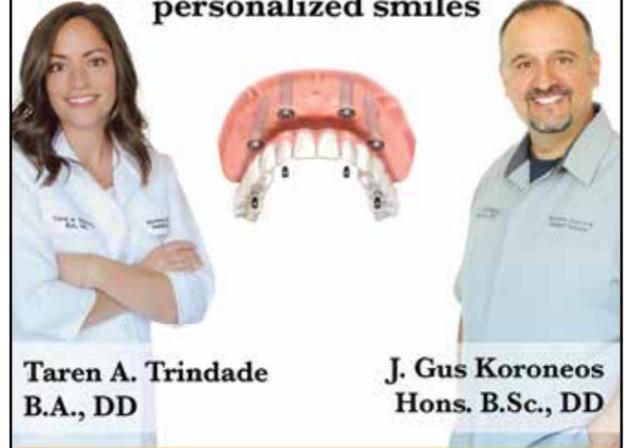
dress the issue by proposing a number of solutions, one of which suggests building a diverging diamond interchange.

The unanimous decision to rename the road was passed at the council meeting without any discussion.

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MORE LETTERS

Police need to stop horse protesters' intimidation tactics

The following letter was sent to Lord Mayor Betty Disero, Laura Sentineal (owner of Sentineal Horse Carriages), MPP Wayne Gates, Eduardo Lafforgue (president, NOTL Chamber of Commerce), and Chief Bryan McCulloch (Niagara Regional Police). A copy was submitted to The Lake Report for publication.

Dear editor:
My young teenage daughter has her dream first real job as a footman for Sentineal Horse Carriages in NOTL.

She proudly works for this outstanding employer as it incorporates her love and respect for all that represents horses. On Sept. 8, I went to drop her off at 11 a.m. in front of the Prince of Wales Hotel so that she could work her shift until 7 p.m. The At War For Animals Niagara protesters were out, as they have been numerous times when I have dropped her off, but I must say that this day felt different.

There was a definite feeling of being smothered as I couldn't even drop her off at the normal spot where the carriages sit at the corner of King and Queen.

The protesters, with their very large signs, had taken up the spot where the carriages normally park. They were also occupying the median to my left as I went to turn from King Street onto Queen Street.

As a matter of fact, I couldn't even turn from the left turn lane because the protesters had one of their sign-plastered cars parked in the left turn lane. This is illegal!

Why on earth were they allowed to do this?

I dropped my daughter off nearby. But if I knew how intrusive and aggressive these protesters were going to get, I would not have left my child in the

midst of this.

My daughter contacted me a couple of hours into her shift because she felt overwhelmed and intimidated by the increasing aggressiveness of the protesters.

You do not know my daughter, of course, but she is an incredibly tough-minded and resilient person.

I can count on one hand the number of times that she has cried or gotten emotional over a situation that would bother most of us.

But the protesters did elicit an emotional reaction from her to the point that she had to leave her shift. This makes me LIVID.

This situation with these misguided protesters has become unbearable. After many incidents arising from these protests, I understood that there was an agreement formed between the protesters and the Locals for Carriages group stating that neither side was to come within a certain distance of each other nor were any verbal exchanges to take place.

Those terms of mutual respect were totally blown out of the water by the protesters on this day.

They shouted "Shame! Shame!" to many of the tourists who were taking carriage rides. If I were a tourist, I would be very annoyed to be dragged into this conflict and would walk away with a very unfavourable impression of NOTL. I certainly would not revisit.

At one point, protesters were intimidatingly coming very close to one of the carriage horses. This can spook a horse, which could result in injury to the horse or people, and damage to cars.

The driver alighted from the carriage to ensure that the horse remained calm.

Because the protesters were in such close proximity, physical contact was unavoidable. The protesters inflated this into a brouhaha

of exaggerated shouts of "Assault! Assault!"

It was at this point that my daughter called her employer to ask if she could leave the scene because she felt unsafe. The protesters even followed the horse carriages down King Street with their signs, as the drivers took their horse carriages off-duty because they feared for their safety.

As they approached the Royal Canadian Legion on King Street, where a fundraising barbecue was taking place, the protesters shifted their objections to the pig roast with new signage and a megaphone to spread their propaganda.

They clearly came prepared to cause mayhem anywhere they could. Is it not enough that they disrespected our veterans earlier in the summer by projecting their indoctrination right onto the cenotaph in NOTL?

Now they're taking exception to a legion fundraiser! I scratch my head in disbelief that they are even allowed back in NOTL after their cenotaph affront.

As the protesters stalked the horse carriages down King Street, one of the drivers asked my daughter to ask one of the Niagara Regional Police officers to come down to the spot where the horses are turned in after a shift.

The driver was feeling very uncomfortable and intimidated with the protesters following her and wanted to ensure that there would be no altercations. My daughter was told by the officer that "We do not have the resources to extend ourselves in that way."

What a great education my daughter is getting in what she can expect from our law enforcement (to be read with dripping sarcasm). This HAS to stop.

Donna Williams
St. Catharines

More books about history of flying in NOTL

Dear editor:

Re: Larry Milberry's letter, "Excellent story on history of flying in NOTL," The Lake Report, Sept. 12.

As the youngest son of Fred Pattison, who was instrumental in obtaining an air harbour licence in 1929 for what is now the Niagara District Airport, I was also very interested in the article by Denise Ascenzo, "90 years of flying in NOTL," published on Sept. 5.

In addition to the two books mentioned in the letter from Mr. Milberry, a member of Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame, my father wrote his memoirs and in them he detailed how it all began, as well as his years as manager of Elementary Flying Training School (#9) in Niagara.

As well, in the early 1980s, he organized a small group known as the Niagara

Aviation Pioneers.

They published Wings over Niagara, written by Jack Williams, and it outlines the history of aviation in Niagara from 1911 to 1944.

Upon my father's death, we donated his extensive collection to the St. Catharines Museum, where it is referenced as the Fred Pattison Aviation Collection 984-170. I am also aware that Brock University and the St. Catharines Library have files, too.

His memoirs, titled "His Story," (the original handwritten manuscript was 600 pages), and the book, Wings over Niagara, can be viewed at the St. Catharines Museum. Anyone wishing to contact me for more information can reach me at Pattison@bell.net.

Paul Pattison
St. Catharines

NOTLers loved the Snowbirds and Lake Report's coverage

Dear editor:

I have always been a fan of the Canadian Forces Snowbirds.

As the treasurer of the Niagara Historical Society & Museum, I knew we needed a great event to help with our fundraising in 2019.

I built a team of the best organizers with the theme Engaging The Community to inspire our decisions.

The planning started in April 2018. After 3,000 hours of work by committee members, the weather cooperated on Sept. 11 and we had a very successful event.

Local schoolchildren got an up-close and personal view of the Snowbirds and their Tutor jets, VIP patrons enjoyed their private space, and everyone on-site that day at Niagara District Airport felt a little more Canadian as the Geronimo! skydivers displayed our flag during their descent while the national anthem played.



And then it was show time. The march out by pilots and technicians, the firing of the engines – the crowd was mesmerized by the Snowbirds' performance.

The next day, after all evidence of the event was erased, we had our memories, and the most amazing coverage from The Lake Report to allow us to relive these incredible moments. A special thank you goes to reporters Brittany Carter and Dariya Baiguzhiyeva, and their support team for their fantastic coverage.

On the ground, the stars of the show were the volunteers.

Thank you to the incredible team of 23 people who were instrumental in making this event successful and memorable.

Thank you also to the 65 volunteers who helped out the day of the show. And a very special thank you to the entire Niagara District Airport staff, led by CEO Dan Pilon and airport manager Cliff Reinhart, who were the best partners to work with.

Mona T. Babin
Event chair
NOTL Snowbirds
Treasurer
Niagara Historical Society & Museum

As The Lake Report continues to grow, we want to continue to make our paper even better. We'd like to take just a few minutes of your time to ask you a small number of questions about your readership of the The Lake Report.

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Hardy's legacy lives on strong

Continued from Front Page



Terry Hardy before his illness. SUPPLIED

his support group, a fundraiser he initiated, and a bit about journalism.

It was the first time I met him. His mind was as sharp as ever, and he was in good spirits. But the toll the IPF was and had taken on him was evident. Photos of Terry from when he was healthy showed a thick, handsomely built man. The man I was talking to, was frail, his fingers were swollen (as is often a symptom of the disease), and he was hooked up to an oxygen tank that was pumping air through tubes that were carefully lined throughout the house.

It was as if the hospital had moved in. The medical equipment had taken over his and Sandra's lives — though his sense of humour wasn't hindered.

"I keep joking — aside from IPF I'm in pretty good shape," he said.

But even with weak, scarred lungs causing him to cough as he spoke, Hardy was adamant to be heard, and to fight for people like himself.

"I really want to see something in the paper," he told me, not shyly, as he showed me information about IPF on his laptop at the kitchen table.

"Because in my view, yeah, it's sad. I'm not happy I've got this disease. But the story, this whole story, is a really good news story. You don't see those in the paper too much," he said.

"I'm not saying your particular paper," he was kind enough to add.

The story he wanted to tell began with his doctor recommending he explore support groups.

"Now I'm not big on support groups," he said. "At least I'm not big on what I thought support groups were about. So I said, 'well, you know maybe.'"

But after some reflection, and encouragement from Sandra, he contacted a man who was starting a support group in Hamilton. The problem was, he wanted to run it from 7 to 9 p.m. in the evening, which isn't ideal for IPF patients — or some-

get that from your doctor. But I wanted there to be an educational component."

For people living with IPF, knowing what's available to them, and advocating for things they need together, could mean the difference between life and death.

One fairly obvious suggestion for people with IPF is to get exercise, as Hardy said, but the solution to practically doing that isn't so easy to figure out, he learned.

"Therein lies the problem," he said. "Anybody with advanced IPF is on oxygen. I can't do anything without this. This is 24/7."

When trying to find out where he was able to exercise, he was surprised to learn that in all of the Niagara region, there was only one place to access workout

year. Normally they give 20 per cent of proceeds to a charity. That time they gave 50 per cent, and the money went directly to the St. Catharines hospital.

Sandra talked proudly about Terry, and still does.

"In the course of one year, he co-ordinated a support group, he initiated a program at the hospital, and is now doing this with the graciousness of Juliet," Sandra said in 2018, echoing the sentiment in a recent talk we had.

The program has come a long way since Hardy died, she said.

As of this September (IPF awareness month) Sandra said the group has about 40 people, and now also meets once a month for lunch now — as more of social gathering.

The actual group continues to have an education sharing focus, she said.

The St. Catharines unit has also been converted into an auxiliary unit so people in Niagara don't have to travel out of the region for physiotherapy.

Sandra has also been out trying to raise awareness about IPF, bringing pamphlets to doctors and politicians, to try and spread the word and encourage further IPF research.

Sandra says Terry was right when he said IPF is more common than what was once thought.

When I talked with him, he thought so.

"It's becoming more and more common I think, because the diagnostic techniques are improving, and I think that generally speaking, family physicians are beginning to recognize the symptoms," he said.

Terry chose to leave the world by means of doctor-assisted death. In his time before the disease became too much to bear, he said he was overwhelmed at the support he received.

"The one thing we've both been struck with is the incredible generosity of some people," he said. "I think people realize that it's not just going to benefit me, it's going to benefit all those who come after me."

one living in NOTL.

"One of the side effects of IPF is you get very tired. I can't be driving (at that time), I just can't do it," Hardy said. "So at that point Sandra and I sat down, and thought, if there isn't a support that I can go to, why don't we try to create one ourselves?"

So that's what they did. They organized a monthly group to meet at the Niagara-on-the-Lake community centre.

This September for idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis month, the Canadian IPF Foundation is asking people to blow bubbles for those who can't because of the disease. NOTL residents can show their support by blowing bubbles at the gazebo at Queen's Royal Park next Monday, Sept. 23 at 8:30 a.m.

"And the interesting thing is, when you first get diagnosed they will tell you it's a very rare disease — which I don't know if that's supposed to make you feel better or not, but it really doesn't. But what it does is it creates the impression that you're on your own," Hardy said.

"But when we set up the support group, all of a sudden, the first meeting, we had 23 people show up. We all said the same thing. When we walked in we had no idea there was this many people in the Niagara region — and this is just Niagara-on-the-Lake and St. Catharines."

Hardy wanted the support group to teach people something too, so he started inviting guest speakers in to talk about some of the key issues of living with IPF. He put the list together himself, with topics like "physical activity, and mind over matter."

"When I first said the group up, I said it needs to be more than just a social group. And we're not there to teach anybody, or give any medical advice. You

equipment without oxygen — the St. Catharines hospital on Fourth Avenue, which only had two oxygen machines.

At that point he decided he was going to raise money for the hospital.

"I wanted to have a fundraiser, and to increase the awareness for this disease," he said.

He contacted Juliet Dunn of the TD Niagara Jazz Festival to see what he could arrange, though shortly after that, he was hit with pneumonia.

"I recovered, fortunately. Because, usually, people with IPF, if you get pneumonia, it's usually the kiss of death."

While he was sick with pneumonia, he called Dunn to tell her he wouldn't be able to continue with the plans for the fundraiser.

"So I said, you know, we'll have to forget about it. And she said, 'No we're not. No we won't. We'll take it on as part of our big band fundraiser.'"

The fundraiser takes on a different charity every

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Town looks for organizations celebrating major milestones in 2020

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

If any Niagara-on-the-Lake groups or organizations are having a big milestone in 2020, their anniversary can be celebrated with a flower bed at Mississauga and Queen streets.

Applicants are welcome to submit a letter to the town providing background information about their organization and their contribution to the community and explaining their milestones and how many years they're going to celebrate next year.

Letters should be sent to the town's parks and recreation office by Sept. 30.

After the group or organization is chosen, the town's park and recreation department will meet with the recipient to discuss the design, logo and colour scheme of the flower bed. The plants that the town usually uses in the bed are bloodleaf, yellow bloodleaf, various colours of prelude series fibrous begonias and senator series fibrous begonias.

The winning group will also have to pay \$1,000 to cover the cost of the medalion that is placed in the middle of the flower bed.

All groups, regardless

of their anniversaries – whether it is 50, 100 or 250 years – will be considered, said Kevin Turcotte, the town's manager of parks and recreation.

"It's nice to recognize groups that have been in the community, that are celebrating significant anniversaries," Turcotte said. "It's always exciting to see the submissions and the length of service some of these organizations have given to the community. So, to have two churches that celebrated 225 years is pretty significant for the community, I would say."

This year, the flower bed celebrated St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church's 225th anniversary. Last year, it was a tribute to the Act to Limit Slavery. In 2017, the flower bed celebrated St. Mark's Anglican Church 225th anniversary. Volunteer firefighters were commemorated in 2016, Niagara Camp at the Commons in 2015 and the United Empire Loyalists were celebrated in 2014.

The flower beds usually go in around late May or June and come out around October.

"It adds a nice, attractive feature to the gateway into Old Town," Turcotte told The Lake Report.

Recycle electronic waste for a cause on Sept. 21

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Recycle electronic waste for Red Roof Retreat on Saturday, Sept. 21.

The Electronics Recycling Event and Barbeque at Simpson's Pharmacy on Niagara Stone Road will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., to raise money for the organization's operating and program costs.

Part-time special events co-ordinator for Red Roof, Karen Post, said the money raised will help to keep costs down for the families.

Electronics will be processed by the Ontario Electronic Stewardship, which is a not-for-profit organization that operates the regulated recycling program in Ontario. The organization recycles the electronics, paying out per ton for items gathered, and the money

goes back to Red Roof.

Operations manager of Simpsons Pharmacy, Catherine Porter, said she's always happy to support Red Roof Retreat.

"Last year I believe we raised about \$2,000 for Red Roof, which was very, very handy. So, we would love for the community to support it as they have done in the past," Porter said.

"I would just like to encourage people to come on out and support the most wonderful local charity by throwing things away," she added.

There will be a barbeque throughout the event, with the proceeds also going to the charitable organization.

Post said personal information should be wiped from devices before recycling. Other than digital information, she said there's no need to dust off the items.



Elly Forbes, front store manager and Rebecca van der Zalm, pharmacist, get ready for the electronics waste recycling fundraiser this weekend at Simpsons Pharmacy. BRITTANY CARTER

She said she would like to encourage as many people to recycle as she could.

"The more electronics that come in, the more we raise," Post said.

A list of accepted elec-

tronic waste can be found on the Ontario Electronic Stewardship website, and include but are not limited to computers, printers, non-cellular phones, cellular devices, home audio devices.

NOTL cyclists pedal for palliative care

Tim Taylor
The Lake Report

Twenty NOTL-area cyclists created a peloton in support of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care Service on Saturday and raised \$3,000 by completing the return ride from St. Mark's Anglican Church in Old Town to St. Saviour's in Queenston.

The ride was an extension of The Healing Cycle, a provincewide fundraising event for palliative care services, held annually in Mississauga. The provincial ride was held Sunday.

The extra ride was the brainchild of Rev. William



Pedal Pushers get ready to ride from Old Town to Queenston Saturday, in support of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care Service. The local effort raised \$3,000. The ride was an extension of a larger provincewide cycling fundraiser held annually on the same weekend. KEVIN MACLEAN

Roberts, rector of St. Mark's Church. "I wanted to ride to support palliative care, but I work on Sundays," said Roberts. "It was a beautiful day and our small group enjoyed the ride and raising money for a great cause."

"Next year, we're hoping to include all in-town churches in the effort."

The NOTL Community Palliative Care Service has been helping seriously ill residents and their caregivers in our community for over 30 years. About 25

trained visiting volunteers offer emotional support, compassionate listening, companionship and caregiver relief in patient's homes and area long-term care facilities.

The organization lends crucial equipment, however long the need, and provides bereavement support services for up to a year following the loss of a loved one. All services are offered free of charge.

NOTL's total support from both the provincial

and local rides reached some \$17,000, including donations from a record number of Niagara businesses and organizations, said Bonnie Bagnulo, program manager for the NOTL Community Palliative Care Service.

"That's amazing," Bagnulo said. "This support is so important for our ongoing operation."

For more information about NOTL palliative care services, go to www.notlpc.com.



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Town promises it will attempt to save **Butler's Burial Ground**

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

The Town of NOTL is establishing a committee to examine ways to preserve Butler's Burial Ground, a key historic site that has become overgrown and deteriorated.

The move comes after councillors were told last week that if something is not done soon the site will be lost.

Bill Hamilton, who provides ghost tours in Old Town, and Shirley Stark, a shopkeeper at The Ghost Walks, addressed Niagara-on-the-Lake council last week to ask for support in restoring the site.

The cemetery, located at the west end of Butler Street, is a resting place of Lt.-Col. John Butler, one of the founders of Upper Canada.

Butler played a major role in local history and was among 14 other national war heroes who were honoured in 2006 at the Valiants Memorial in Ottawa. Butler's Rangers also fought for the British in the American Revolution and there are several places in town – from a hotel to a sports bar – that were named after Butler.

The gravestones are sinking into the ground and the property, owned by Parks Canada, needs to be desig-

nated as a national historic site in order for restoration work to take place, the residents said. A nomination can be submitted to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

Lord Mayor Betty Disero said the issue is important enough to form a committee, including herself, Coun. Gary Burroughs, Hamilton and Stark as well as acting chief administrative officer Sheldon Randall and the town's manager of parks and recreation, Kevin Turcotte.

They plan to start discussions with different community partners, such as the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Parks Canada, Willowbank School and the Commission School of Horticulture, on how to restore and preserve the site.

With the help of a Canada 150 grant, the Town of NOTL built a \$76,000 pedestrian bridge to provide safe access to the burial ground in 2017.

"A beautiful bridge leading to what? Nothing," Hamilton told The Lake Report. "An embarrassment."

The residents appeared before council wondering if the town could build a bridge on the Parks Canada property, then it would be able to help to restore the site, Stark added.

The site is part of Parks

Canada's maintenance schedule but the federal agency doesn't have any plans for restoring the site, said spokesperson Rae Kingdon.

"Parks Canada conducts routine inspections of the site, and undertakes additional maintenance work when required," Kingdon said in an email response to The Lake Report. "For example, this spring, a landscaping company was hired to remove overgrown vegetation and poison ivy to improve the safety of the site."

In 1967, Niagara Parks, which owned the site at the time, created new stones for the graves and installed markers to capture the inscriptions.

Ron Dale of Parks Canada also covered the vault with shale to protect it from vandalism and further deterioration.

Without Butler, there would be no Canada, residents said, so it's a "no-brainer" the site should be preserved.

When the international Butler Clan comes from Ireland to visit NOTL next summer, they will want to see the burial site of their famous relative, Hamilton said.

"How wonderful it'll be to bring them into this. And say, 'Yeah, here he is. Some-



Shirley Stark and Bill Hamilton want to see Butler's Burial Ground cleaned up and restored to what it once was. DARIYA BAIGUZHIYEVA

where,' " he said.

Since Hamilton and Stark brought attention to the issue at an open house held by Parks Canada in 2018, the cemetery's deterioration has worsened, Stark said.

When asked to confirm if Parks Canada wasn't aware of its ownership until after the public consultation, Kingdon said the agency "has been responsible for the administration and active maintenance

of the site since 1979."

If that's what the owners can do, it's not enough, Stark said, adding it's not a witch-hunt and they're not trying to blame anyone. But "this has to be preserved, so who can do it?"

Stark said she gets "bombed" with people coming into the shop and wanting to know more about Butler, his Rangers and where they are buried.

"It's just amazing, the historical attention (to it)," she said.

At the Sept. 9 meeting, Hamilton and Stark asked for town's support and endorsement in campaigning for site preservation and also suggested the Willowbank School of Restoration Arts and the Niagara Parks Commission's School of Horticulture look into restoration projects on the site.

Public forum will discuss **NOTL wellness**

Dariya Baiguzhiyeva
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake residents are invited to a public forum next Thursday, Sept. 26, to weigh in on the current state of wellness in the town.

The forum, organized by the town's community wellness committee, will revolve around just that — wellness, and what can be done to improve it for residents of all ages within the town.

The forum will address eight different topic ar-

eas: community vitality including transportation, culture and leisure, democratic engagement, education, environment, healthy community, living standards and time use.

Attendants will be broken into small groups and given time to discuss each topic, with the goals of identifying what works well, what doesn't, and what can be done to solve local problems that fit in the category.

At town council on Monday, chair Cindy Grant provided an update of the committee's work since it

started meeting in March.

"Don't think of wellness as just health," Grant said. "This is wellness in the broader scope of wellness: transportation, housing, community vitality, social connectedness and so on."

In order to get a better understanding of the state of wellness in town, the wellness committee also encourages residents to take an online survey. As of Sept. 10, 140 responses have been received so far. Grant said the committee hopes to get at least 200 responses.

After the forum and

survey, the committee will cross analyze the results, said Grant, and then prepare a report for council with recommendations in November.

The forum will take place at the NOTL community centre in two sessions, one from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Simpsen Room, and another from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the auditorium.

The survey can be found online at www.jointheconversationnotl.org/community-wellness. Residents will also be able to fill out the survey at the forum.

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Theatrical Cemetery Tour - 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society and Museum	Niagara Regional Native Centre Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre, 382 Airport Rd. - Niagara Regional Native Centre Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre, 382 Airport Rd.	NOTL Horticultural Society Sept. Meeting - 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre NOTL Rotary Club - 12 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre - 1:00 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre	NOTL Toastmasters House - 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - College NOTL Campus German Conversation - 9:45 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre
29	30	1	2
Theatrical Cemetery Tour - 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society and Museum Family Friendly Drop-in Art Studio - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre Teen Literary Alliance - 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library	Niagara Regional Native Centre Community Drumming Night - 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Niagara Regional Native Centre, 382 Airport Rd. Fun Duplicate Bridge - 9 a.m. to noon - NOTL Community Centre	Niagara Golden Age Club: Seniors Euchre - 1:30 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre NOTL Rotary Club - Noon - NOTL Community Centre Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre	German Conversation - 9:45 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre

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art

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Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>19</p> <p>Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Therapy Tails with Jasper - 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Film Screening: Angry Inuk - 7 p.m. - RiverBrink Art Museum</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Theatrical Cemetery Tour - 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society and Museum</p> <p>Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village</p> <p>Theatrical Cemetery Tour - 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society and Museum</p> <p>Lino Block Printing: Wearable Art Workshop - 1 p.m. - Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre</p> <p>Artist Talk: Charmaine Lurch - 2 p.m. - RiverBrink Art Museum</p>
<p>25</p> <p>Special Open House - Niagara Public Library</p> <p>Senior Group - 10 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p>26</p> <p>NOTL Community Wellness Committee Public Forum - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Therapy Tails with Jasper - 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p> <p>Yoga with Jenny - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Culture Days: Fay and Fluffy's Drag Queen Story Time - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Theatrical Cemetery Tour - 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m. - Niagara Historical Society and Museum</p> <p>St. Davids Fall Fair - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - St. Davids Public School</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Senior Group - 10 a.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Therapy Tails with Jasper - 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Seniors Drop in: Casual Bridge - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Knit a Bit - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Yoga with Jenny - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - NOTL Public Library</p> <p>Queenston Volunteer Firefighters - Spaghetti Dinner - 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - Queenston Firehall</p> <p>Duplicate Bridge (ACBL Sanctioned) - 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - NOTL Community Centre</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Saturday Morning Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. - The Village</p>

\$5

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The Great NOTL Summer Walkabout

Welcome to the final episode of the Great NOTL Summer Walkabout, a summer-long series of stories that has taken readers to all corners of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Our reporters trekked around the community to meet residents and visitors, attend events, visit area landmarks and tell stories about what they found.

Breaking a sweat for a cure

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

Fourteen-year-old Liam Ainslie was the first to cross the finish line on foot Sunday morning at the Terry Fox Run, and though the event wasn't competitive or timed, he finished the five-kilometre route in about 20 minutes.

Ainslie, who lives in Buffalo but said his mother has dual citizenship, said he pushed hard to make it to the end of the route first. The Canadian fundraiser brought him to Niagara-on-the-Lake to test his limits.

"I can't believe I ran it that fast," he said while waiting for his father to finish a second lap.

"He just flew, I don't think he even touched the ground," said one participant in passing.

On Sunday morning about 250 people walked, ran and rode to support cancer fighters and survivors and to remember those who lost their own battles, while raising money for the Terry Fox Foundation.

The run has been happening annually across Canada since 1981 and began in Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1991. NOTL's run picked up momentum in 2007 when Joan King took over organizing the event, and Sunday's show of support from the community was a testament to what she's been able to accomplish with the help of the number of volunteers and sponsors.

"It was great to see such a mix of people out on Sunday. There were young kids and community groups

and teams all supporting the cause," King said.

She said it was each participant, team, and group of volunteers that made the event authentic and true to Terry Fox's vision: Crossroads Public School's ME2We club cheered people on near the finish line; Team Pillsy was out in full force with family and friends; June's Dream Team walked together to remember Donna Seymour's close friend June Huyck, who died of ovarian cancer; students from Vineridge Academy joined in on the Canadian fundraiser after being inspired by his story; and so many more groups and individuals took to the street to honour and support the cause.

The group of eager participants gathered at the starting line on King Street, and after a few words from King and Lord Mayor Betty Disero, and Juliet Dunn's rendition of *O Canada*, they were off just after 10 a.m. Volunteers donning bright vests succeeded in holding off traffic until the crowd made their way through the start of the route.

Terry Fox's vision was to inspire a country to step up and raise money for cancer research, and though he didn't finish his run, his dream has been inspiring Canadians ever since.

And it's not just born and raised Canadians who have been touched by his story – about 65 international students from Vineridge Academy were out Sunday morning for the annual run.

Alex Odumosu, from Nigeria, said she is inspired

by the way the community comes together to raise money and support a good cause. Events like the Terry Fox Run just don't happen back home, she said.

"To experience how society gets together over someone who gives a lot of hope," Odumosu said she finds the entire experience inspiring and that she has been happy to take part since she has been attending Vineridge.

Collectively, the academy raised \$1,120. Each year when classes start in September new students are introduced to Terry Fox's vision and shown a video documenting his story. Jade Winterbottom, student and community engagement co-ordinator said she is often blown away by the quick response from the kids wanting to take part.

"Their teachers will show them the video and then they'll come down to the office and sign up right away," Winterbottom said.

She said participation numbers have grown since the academy started taking part, and she expects it to continue to do so over the next few years. Students of Vineridge Academy have been participating in the NOTL run since the school's inception in 2016.

Each person who came down to the corner of King and Queen streets Sunday morning has their own reason, inspiration or personal story that compels them to take part each year.

Kevin Smith from NOTL said he has been coming out for the run for 20 years. His wife, Darlene Smith, was a



Top: Joan King and Andrea Kaiser pose for a pic at the Terry Fox Run Sunday. Left: Fourteen-year-old Liam Ainslie was the first to cross the finish line on foot. Middle right: Elizabeth McDermid, Jane Rusnak, Morgan, Taylor and Mark Cherney, Trish Vaillancourt, Carrie Cherney and Donna Seymour raise money for June's Dream Team. Bottom right: Paisley Malloy and Savanna Wiens hand out water to finishing participants. BRITTANY CARTER

crossing guard for St. Davids Public School and encouraged the family to join in 1999, he said. She took part for one year before she died of anaphylactic asthma attack in 2000, but the family has been taking part every year since.

"My dad had passed away from cancer, and we all know about Terry Fox ... It had just sort of become my thing," Smith said, adding that he donates \$100 each year he takes part. "This would be my 21st year."

This Sunday he was joined by about eight family members, including Karen Breivik and Alexis and Avery Smith.

A group of women from the Niagara-on-the-Lake Tennis Club participated for the second year, raising \$1,500 among them. Each woman walked for someone in their own lives who has been touched by cancer in some way.

King said about \$50,000 was raised by the end of the day Sunday, but donations were still coming in online.

The run saw a mix of ages taking part, and whether they ran, walked, or rode bikes along the five-kilometre route, they all reflected the inspiration of one of Canada's most noted heroes.

Ten-year-old Aine O'Neill, Danielle Smith and Peyton

Leigh, both 11, crossed the finish line with big smiles.

The Rotary Club 4742 of Lewiston, N.Y., and Niagara-on-the-Lake held a barbecue after the run.

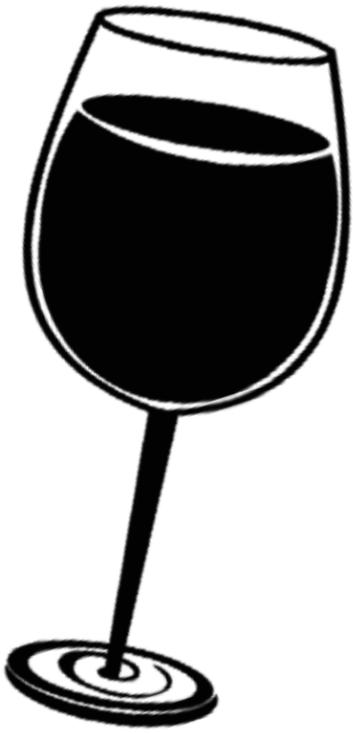
Past-president and current secretary Thomas Gerbasi donned a hot dog hat while he helped serve the hungry participants. The Rotarians, whose club bridges the gap between Canada and the U.S., made jokes about the "weiner with the hat" while cooking for the crowd.

But they take their fundraising seriously, said member John Shaver, which is why all proceeds from the barbecue on Sunday went to the Terry Fox Foundation.

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It's a Wine Thing

Each week, the staff of Ravine Winery share their expertise and offer a brief explanation about an aspect of wine. So, whether you're an expert oenophile or a newbie just finding your way around wine country, we trust you'll enjoy. Cheers!

Tartrates

Ravine Staff
Exclusive/The Lake Report

Have you ever opened a bottle of wine and found tiny crystals on the cork or when you finished your wine noticed crystals at the bottom of your glass? It makes you wonder whether the bottle is good or has gone bad.

Well, no worries, the tiny

crystals are tartrates and are also known as wine diamonds. The crystals are created by the tartaric acid in your wine. During fermentation malic acid is converted to a more mellow and soft lactic acid; but tartaric acid maintains its chemical consistency.

The tartaric acid helps keep wine from spoiling, is very temperature sensitive

and doesn't always dissolve during the process. The higher quality your wine is, the more likely you are to see tartrates. That is because on the lower end of the wine spectrum, the wine is often cold stabilized in order to filter the tartrates out.

This is done by chilling the wine down to near freezing levels and letting the solidified tartrates drop

to the bottom of the tank where the wine is then filtered off. While this process will ensure a wine's clarity, lowering a wine's tartrate levels also affects a wine's flavour and hurts its ability to be aged.

So, if you are finding tartrates in your wine it means that the wine was not over-processed and was well-preserved.

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Lepp and Cooper: Tennis champs



Left: First place winners Paula Lepp and Brenda Cooper at the NOTL Tennis Club Grape and Wine Invitational Saturday. Right: Second place winners Peter Rider and Estelle Simons for the NOTL Tennis Club Grape and Wine Cup Invitational Saturday. SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Wild week on-the-link

The Lake Report

An eagle 3, a fourth lucky lotto win and another 36 by Jim McMacken. It was a wild week at the NOTL Golf Club.

Women's club champ Louise Robitaille notched an eagle 3 on the tough par-5 third hole in ladies league play on Tuesday.

After a big drive, from about 175 yards out she put her second shot within a couple of feet of the hole for an easy eagle.

Alan Dickson, meanwhile, capped an unprecedented run by winning his fourth 50/50 draw of the season during men's competition last Thursday. Another cool \$145.

And the same day, lefty McMacken shot another even-par round to win low gross while also capturing two gross skins (\$15 each, #1, #4) and closest to the pin (#4). Sean Simpson wasn't far behind, scooping gross skins on #2 and #8, a \$118 net skin, also on

#8 and closest to the pin on #2.

Other men's winners: gross and net skins, Keith Dexter (#5). Closest to pin: Stephen Jenkins (#7), Dean Sanders (#9). Long drive: Warren Tutton (#3), Mark Derbyshire (#8). A flight: Randy Busbridge (23 points), Roman Mamalyga (22 points).

WOOFs results: Don Allen shot a 1-over 37 to win low gross on Sept. 10. Earl Shore was closest to the pin (#4) and Richard Cook won the hidden hole (#5). Ken Burr won \$50 in the 50/50 draw.

Women's league: Besides Robitaille's eagle, the women's Solheim style match play competition Sept. 17 featured birdies from Yolanda Henry (#17) and Sue Gagne (#3). Valerie Chubey celebrated her birthday by winning her match, while Brenda Bell (#4) and Sharron Marlow (#13) won closest to the pin. Chip in: Gagne (#9).



NOTL Couples league draw winners Glen and Cathy Murray, with watercolour painting donated by artist Marilyn Cochrane, right. KEVIN MACLEAN

Couples league: The annual Friday night Couples league wrapped up Sept. 13. The closing scramble, which allowed each team one free "toss" per hole, led to some crazy low scores.

First, Glen & Cathy Murray and John Reynolds & Linda Williams (25). Second, David & Sue Gagne and Rai Lauge & Jo Holden (26). Third, Oleh & Kim Hrycko and Kevin MacLean & May Chang (27). Most honest, Sharron & Bernard Marlow and Tim & Kathy Taylor, Bob & Elaine Lavery and Keith & Wilca Lay. Closest to pin: Stephen Warboys, Lyn

Sanders. Longest putt: Rob Chubey, Margot Hickson.

Special awards: The Couples league also handed out a number of awards. Couple of the Year – May Chang and Kevin MacLean. Attendance award: For making it to 16 out of 16 play dates, Bernard & Sharron Marlow. Followed by Bob & Elaine Lavery, Martin & Margot Richardson and Jack & Eileen Hanna (14 weeks). Top Billy Bucks winners, Glenn and Debbie Young. Draw winners, of an original watercolour donated by NOTL artist Marilyn Cochrane: Glen & Cathy Murray.

The Lake Report

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The Lake Report would also like to acknowledge and thank those who have made financial contributions to the paper. **Your donations and contributions help support young, local journalists, as well as student interns, local charities, and so much more.**

We encourage all residents to support The Lake Report through an annual "voluntary" subscription. We suggest just \$50/year (less than \$1 per issue) per household. **That's less than most people spend on coffee.**

Larger donations are also greatly appreciated.

Donations can be made online at www.lakereport.ca, or cheques can be mailed to the NOTL Post Office, L0S1J0, PO Box 724.

Please make cheques to The Lake Report.

- Richard Harley



"Having recently moved from Toronto to the Niagara area, I found myself having trouble locating new clients for my residential cleaning business. But with the help of the Lake Report, that all changed. I advertised for a short period of time and now I can't keep up with the phone calls coming in. I would highly recommend advertising in The Lake Report for any business leads!"

- Alina, Eurocleaners

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Murder ... He wrote

Randall Crickmore
Special to The Lake Report

Near the end of July, my wife Nan and I returned to our recently purchased winter home for a summer visit.

It's located in a visually stunning, wonderfully relaxing village on the Portuguese island of Madeira. The town is nestled at the base of volcanic mountains on the shore of the Atlantic Ocean. Northern breezes bring cool, clean air, while rustling the leaves of the banana plants on the myriad of sculpted terraces at the foot of our villa. The now becalmed sea laps on stone beaches aided by several waterfalls — mere ribbons of misted vapour and streams splashing down the cliff faces.

We delightfully returned to this idyll Jardim do Mar (garden of the sea) with the wonder and glee of children on their first visit to Disney-

world.

Two days in, we began work in earnest doing some painting, building and decorating the new house. Out front, a local resident had leashed a large, runaway Billy goat to an able tree while he sought out the animal's origins. Billy's constant, sonorous bleating reminded everyone within earshot of his plight — rope entanglement and water dysfunction, and Nan, after two days of being the goat's primary care giver, sought out the fellow who was supposed to be responsible for it. She proclaimed the animal would be released "Free Billy" as it were, to the wilds, if he did not rise to the occasion and properly help him.

This prompted a delightful older man named Davide, his erstwhile cousin Manny, his niece Esterina and his grandniece (everyone in town is related) to our door. Refreshments and

potables were enjoyed while the men groused about a goat they didn't own, and how they could relieve us of our old sofas (a new one was coming in two days) through our narrow doors and up the cobbled alleyways.

The women toured the house and spoke of interior design and their mutual grandchildren. Esterina, 53, asked Nan if she could help her with a couple of rooms she was preparing for rentals in her home. Many things were resolved and we parted ways.

That was Sunday afternoon. Sunday night found us strolling under the moonlight along the Promenade at the water's edge in search of ice cream and a jug of white wine at "Portinos" — a quayside establishment about a kilometer away.

While there, in the quietude and peace, a shirtless, single and enraged man strutted onto the scene.



Madeira Island in Portugal. SOURCED PHOTO

His howling insanity on the pavement in front of the establishment seemed directed at no one, but clearly unsettled everyone, especially the couple with two young children seated beside us. We don't speak Portuguese, so his ravings were undecipherable.

After about ten minutes, into the dark, he left. Most of the patrons soon followed suit as it was getting late. We wandered back up the hill, through the meandering alleys and laneways of the village and slowed at Esterina's home, pondering the huge disrepair of her entrance, as she makes ready for her new tourist business.

Little did we know that as we spoke, inside that very house, our newly met

friend, Esterina lay dead, brutally murdered by her deranged husband of one year, on his return this same evening from fishing, ten days at sea.

It was the gentle, always smiling, Uncle Davide who discovered her ruined corpse — throat slashed, eyes cut out and an endearment carved across her chest — just a couple of hours later.

The village is now reeling, not knowing what to do, who to look at, what to say. We are the "newbies."

Little more information from the community will likely be coming to us beyond the local news reporting. Needless to say, the entire island is shocked and subdued.

Madeirans always took great pride in the lack of violence and crime on the island. They frequently eschewed those of the 'outside' world in order to keep their own peace. It has been said that you could leave your wallet on an open porch, and upon returning three months later, it would still be there. But, alas, mental illness knows no bounds. The husband was apparently picked up a few hours after the horror, "on the run" the rumour has it.

If that were the same madman we were exposed to, it wouldn't have taken great policing to uncover the perpetrator, but hats off to the constabulary for their expediency. It was said he was a "bad" man, many, many years her junior, from another town.

We actually met him in March and can certainly attest to a certain anger and intensity. Esterina had told Nan that he had just stopped drinking and was a new man. A new horizon beckoned. So sadly, it was not the one she imagined.

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Alternative Investments: Private Equity

Submitted

Private equity often attracts interest as investors seek alternative investment opportunities in more challenging market times. Private equity organizations have been around for many years. Kohlberg Kravis Roberts and Co. (KKR) and Onex Corp., under Gerald Schwartz, are well-known examples of private equity firms that have been active in North America for decades.

Private equity organizations use their capital to buy investments, much like any other investment fund. However, they tend to buy the whole company (or often times a majority share), getting actively involved in the management of the company with

a goal to force operational improvements in operations to unlock value. Alternatively, they may provide capital for potentially attractive start-up projects (often termed "venture capital"). All of this will generally be conducted away from the scrutiny of public stock markets — hence, the name "private equity".

For many private equity firms, the exit strategy from an investment may be to take a company public at some point in time. In other situations, the private equity firm may sell the company after improving its operations or acquiring other operations to make the company larger.

Historically, returns have been good in this sector. Two drivers for

this success are low interest rates and strong equity markets, which have allowed private equity groups to advantageously use leverage and to sell their holdings at a profit in the public arena at the right time.

In the past, investing in private equity was only available to larger institutional investors such as pension funds or high net worth individuals. This was because of the high cost to invest in many of these firms — often in excess of \$5 or 10 million, depending on the size of the private equity fund. Many institutional investors continue to invest significant portions of their assets in private equity. In Canada, investing in private equity opportunities generally require that

you meet the definition of an Accredited Investor (as defined in the Ontario Securities Act).

Private Equity Investments may not be suitable for all investors, as there are different types of risks involved with this investment strategy. Even if suitable to your level of risk tolerance, Private Equity may not be appropriate for your portfolio, depending on what other investments you hold. The present communication is intended for Accredited Investors only.

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Exploring Photos: with Jim Smith

Exclusive to The Lake Report



Connolly's Corner

Connolly's Corner, at King and Queen streets, was well known to every kid in town. Jim sold us penny candy and school supplies. One way we could get the money to buy candy was by finding and cashing in pop bottles. Often we kids would buy candy on our way to school and hide it in our desk. When the teacher wasn't looking, a few of us would pop a candy in our mouth. If the teacher caught you, she would confiscate the candy. Inset at left, is Jim Connolly with his wife in 1929.

SUPPLIED PHOTO/JIM SMITH



Considering your roof again

Brian Marshall
Featured

Managing tax exposure likely started soon after the first taxman was employed in the dawn of human history. I can't think of anyone who enjoys paying taxes and very few who would not exercise a common legal option to reduce their tax burden.

I suspect our ancestors were no different and suggest that a part of the popularity of Second Empire and Dutch Colonial-styled houses can be directly attributed to their respective hallmark roof forms: Mansard and Gambrel.

You see, in both forms,



An 1870 Second Empire Mansard roof. BRIAN MARSHALL

the top floor of the house is actually within the confines of the roof. So, even if it was a fully finished living space, the area was legally considered an attic. And, wait for it, historically an attic was not taxable space.

Normally an attic is height-constrained by the slope of the roof, but not so under a Mansard or Gambrel form. In both of these roofs, the maximum

possible full height attic floor space is created by using a two-slope roof design; the dormer window pierced lower slope is set at an extremely high pitch (in some cases nearly vertical) which is crowned by a low-pitched upper slope.

Named after the early 17th-century French Baroque architect, Francois Mansart, who initially popularized it in his de-

signs, the Mansard roof is actually a highly modified hip roof, which always has two distinct slopes on all four sides. In our backyard, the Mansard roof is most often associated with historical homes of the Second Empire style (1865 to 1880) and the Mansard-styled home, built from 1950 until about 1985.

While no one can say when or who initially designed the first Gambrel roof, it has certainly been in use for many centuries. We do know that there were (and are) Dutch, English, Spanish and Portuguese variants of this two-slope form of the gable roof and the Gambrel was used on some of the earliest colonial homes built in North America.

Niagara's oldest gambrel roofed residence is the circa 1790 Schram House, but far more common are the Dutch Colonial Revival homes built in the area between 1880 and 1930.

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Please make cheques to The Lake Report.

- Richard Harley

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NIAGARA'S HISTORY UNVEILED



St. Mark's Anglican Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake. DARIYA BAIGUZHIEVA

St. Mark's a **pivotal** part of community



Denise Ascenzo
Exclusive/The Lake Report

One of the prettiest churches in Niagara-on-the-Lake, St. Mark's Anglican Church, sits nestled in a delightful park-like setting on Byron Street.

The first congregation was formed in 1792, but did not start to build the church until 1804 and it was completed by 1809. The first structure, built of sandstone, was a basic rectangular building, with four windows on each side and a door at one end.

Inside was a simple design of box pews for the congregation to rent or even purchase. The closer to the front, or ones with heaters, were the most costly. If a box was purchased, the "real estate" was often passed down through several generations.

The parishioners of St. Mark's, however, did not have use of their church for long when war broke out in 1812.

British military took over the church building to use it as a field hospital. Then in 1813, when the American forces occupied the town, the church was used as a barracks and commis-

sary. Their disregard for the church and graveyard was evident when trenches were dug through the cemetery using headstones as support walls.

Another act of desecration was when a grave marker, that of Charles Morrison, was taken into the church and used as a chopping block for the butchers in the commissary. To this day you can still see chopping marks on his stone.

When the Americans retreated from Niagara-on-the-Lake on Dec. 10, 1813, they set fire to the town; St. Mark's was also set ablaze. The roof and interior were damaged but those sandstone walls remained strong.

By 1822, the parishioners were financially able to rebuild the church. The design remained the same. Then in 1842-43 the church was enlarged adding the transepts, gothic revival altar and chancel. A bell was purchased by public subscription to be used not only for a call to worship but to sound the alarm should the Americans decide to invade again.

The graveyard was actually in use before the church was built. It was the general gravesite for all denominations. The oldest gravestone in the cemetery is that of Elizabeth Kerr who died Jan. 21, 1794. She was the daughter of Molly Brant, who was the sister to Chief Joseph Brant, leader

of the Mohawks. Kerr had married Dr. Robert Kerr, one of the two doctors when the town was first settled.

It was during this time, when the footings were being dug that a gravestone was unearthed, that of Lenard Planck. He had fought with Butler's Rangers and had been wounded in the battle of Upper Sandusky. He died in 1782 in a military hospital that was located just east of the church. No human remains were found, so a mystery surrounds as to where this young man is actually buried. It was decided to embed his gravestone in an interior wall of the church. It can be seen there to this day.

Further alterations were made in 1892 when the box pews were removed and simple bench seating was installed. The wood from the walls that encased all the boxes was used as wainscoting on the interior walls of the church.

To the keen eye, in older pictures of the church, can be seen pinnacles on the bell tower; they were removed in the 1950s. The bell tower itself has evolved from just one bell to 19! The first bell was replaced with six bells in 1877. Then, in 1917, three more bells were added. By 2007 another nine bells were added to the repertoire. The last bell, Brock's Bell, was added in 2012 to commemorate the War of 1812.

Over the years, stained glass windows were donat-

ed, including the elaborate window above the altar. It is considered the oldest stained glass window in the province, having been installed in 1840.

Rev. Robert Addison was the first clergyman of the church. His service in Upper Canada was from 1792 to 1829. During the occupation of the town by the American forces in 1813, Addison was permitted to stay but could not live in the town. He was put under house arrest in his home, which was three miles out of town. He was permitted to conduct services in the general hospital that was located on The Commons.

Addison was very particular when it came to record-keeping. If a child was baptized, not only did he record the date and name of the child as well as parents, but quite often added extra information such as occupations and other family members. The Niagara Historical Society & Museum are ever grateful for his detailed records.

Addison died in 1828 and is buried in St. Mark's by the north transept. There is a lovely memorial plaque in his honour on the side of the church, above where he is buried.

Another clergyman who needs to be mentioned is Rev. William McMurray, third rector of St. Mark's. He insisted the church provide him with a parsonage. So the beautiful home, known as the

Tuscan Villa, was built in 1858. The bricks for the home were from Britain. They came here as ship's ballast and were purchased from the estate of the late Samuel Zimmerman, who had run a steamship company. The home has been used since by the clergy of St. Mark's.

Between the church and the parsonage is Addison Hall. Built in 1866, it was purposed as a Sunday school, meeting room and library. The library is considered to have some of the oldest books in the province, one dating back to 1548. Rev. Addison brought his collection of over 1,500 books with him from England. On the death of his wife, the family kept some of the books and bequeathed the remaining 1,300 to the church.

In 1966, the wings to Addison Hall were added, which included washrooms, a kitchen, offices and side rooms. Where windows had once been, doorways now led from the main hall into smaller rooms. The hall is now used for Sunday school, meetings, rehearsal hall, lecture hall and a learning centre.

St. Mark's Anglican Church has been a pivotal part of the community and continues so to this day. Weddings, baptisms and funerals aside, the church is well-known for its music.

The church is home to three organs, one grand piano and a harpsichord.

The choir has several professional musicians who elevate the other members of the choir to a higher standard. The choir is always a pleasure to listen to and one soon appreciates the amount of time the members put into choir practice.

As well, St. Mark's regularly is used by the Music Niagara and Bravo Niagara! festivals. This week, the church is host to David Scott Curry, an internationally acclaimed opera singer. Curry recently moved back to Ontario and is pleased to bring his talent to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

St. Mark's Anglican Church has been the heart of this community for over 200 years. Through wars, economic hardships and the successful years of harvests, the church has always stood strong.

For more information on the church's upcoming events, email stmarks@cogeco.ca or call 905-933-4499.

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

Correction: Last week's story by Linda Fritz about the A La Gallerie house said the house was completely rebuilt after a fire. In fact, the house was not entirely destroyed by the fire, and some of the original house remains.

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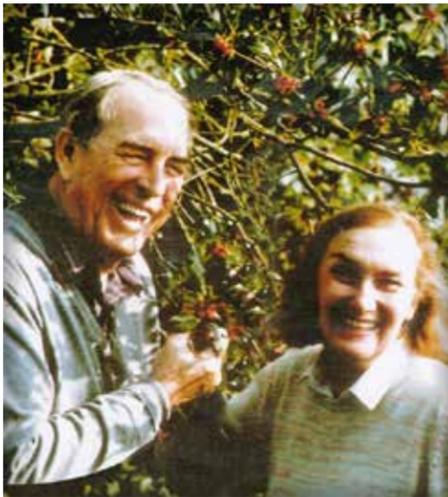
COMMUNITY



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.



MEMORIAM



NOBLE, Reena - It is with great sadness that our family announces the death of Reena Alice Noble, affectionately known as Slim, on Friday, Sept. 6, at Henley House in St. Catharines. Slim was the dearly loved and cherished wife of Stan (deceased April 2019), mother of Nancy (the late Ian), grandmother of Laura, (Mat), and great-grandmother of Isabel and Maeve. She will also be missed by many friends including her cousin Bill Bentall and wife Hazel in England and her dear friends Delvia and Jim Anderson in Guelph. Born in Hamilton in 1924, Slim was the daughter of Robert and Mary Hughes. Her early years were spent at school in England at the Ealing School for Girls. Upon return to Canada, she worked for the war effort in Pickering where she met the love of her life, Stanley G. Noble. Married to Stan for 73 years, they shared a full and interesting life living in many different countries through Stan's work with the Government of Canada. They especially enjoyed their postings in Ireland, Italy and California. Upon their retirement to the place of their youthful dreams on the Niagara River Parkway, and before ill health slowed her down, Slim was an active member of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Horticultural Society, The Niagara-on-the-Lake Hospital Auxiliary and was most definitely known as a generous baker to many volunteer causes. Slim found great joy and comfort in listening to jazz music, flower arranging, time with family, and without hesitation, feeding all the neighborhood cats. Her family and friends will miss her sweet, kind, slightly cheeky, and gentle nature. Her family would like to thank Dr. Bastedo and his associates, the LHIN team, the staff at Henley House, Don Hendry and Reverend Virginia Head for their care and kindness these past few years. A Private Family Funeral Service will be held at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. Interment will take place at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Cemetery. Arrangements entrusted to Morgan Funeral Home, 415 Regent Street Niagara-on-the-Lake. In memory of Slim, donations may be made to the SPCA and would be appreciated by her family. Memories, condolences and photos may be shared at, www.morganfuneral.com



A red-tailed hawk keeps a watchful eye on players at the NOTL Golf Club. SUBMITTED/RICHARD COOK



NOTL resident Chris Allen sent us a unique snap of his dog Ace catching a glimpse of a deer. SUBMITTED/CHRIS ALLEN



The Golden Plunger
With Betty and Jane
Chateau des Charmes



Sarah Cummins and Nick Mackie accept the Golden Plunger for Chateau des Charmes. THE GOLDEN PLUNGER

Chateau des Charmes, with its "palatial" architecture and picturesque setting, is an estate winery on the St. Davids Bench. It is owned and operated by the Bosc family, fifth-generation winemakers from France. Driving to the winery, you feel as though you have been personally summoned to the palace for a "royal tasting" of the latest harvest. Chateau des Charmes offers wine tours, tastings and hosts special events. The grounds are brimming with flowers and lush greenery that speak of nature and sustainable gardening. On our visit to the "toilette," fresh flower bouquets greeted us as we entered and were displayed on the counters, connecting the outside beauty with the facility inside. The restrooms were well-lit, helping one to check out their "award-winning smiles" and "trendy 'dos". Accessibility was no issue here and provided sufficient room for this busy winery. The Chateau "des charmed" its way to a Golden Plunger Award, earning 3\5 Plungers.

3/5 Gold Plungers



Artifact of the Week

with the Niagara Historical Society & Museum

The Niagara Historical Society & Museum's "Artifact of the Week" column begins again this week, exclusive to The Lake Report. Here's your first clue!

You will raise your pinkie when you drink from it.

Send answers, with your name, to editor@niagaranow.com. Names of correct responders will be published week to week.



RIDDLE ME THIS:

I sound like one letter but I'm written with three. I show you things when you look through me. What am I?

Last Week: I am a ball that can be rolled, but never bounced or thrown. What am I?

Answer: An eyeball

Answered first by: Margie Enns

Also answered correctly by: Jared Hollemans, Katie Reimer, Cheryl House, Evan Ganski, Britiney Turasz.

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

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FEATURED LOCAL STORY

JESSE LEPP

An artistic mind finds its way to Mikreations

Brittany Carter
The Lake Report

If you're looking for something a little different, in art, philosophy, and genuine eccentricity, Jesse Lepp might have what you seek.

The NOTL artist will be displaying his take on modern art at Mikreations Art and Frame Gallery on Niagara Stone Road until Sept. 28.

Lepp, a local artist, self identifies as eccentric, thoughtful and shy, relating what he calls an "unconventional" approach to painting with his way of approaching most things in life – he consumes information and then offers criticism on the subject in his own striking and unique way.

Lepp once considered himself a writer, and though he says he hasn't given up the craft, he finds people are more receptive of his art than they were of his commentary.

"I thought I was a writer, but I became more eccentric in my writing. In writing, that's a problem but in painting, people seem to like eccentricity. So, I made a quick shift there and started to paint a little bit more, and people seemed to enjoy it," Lepp said.

He's been experimenting with different styles of painting for about 10 years but has continued to work with oil on canvas.

Mike Penner, owner of Mikreations, says Lepp wandered into the gallery one day and the two have spent several years building a strong relationship.

"I think Jesse has a really important voice in our community, and I've always been very favourable to what he's been bringing in," Penner says.

The creation of the current series of paintings on display was very much a collaborative effort, Lepp says. He brought paintings in to show Penner and the two would discuss each piece, deciding how to move forward.

"For this show in particular I would bring the paintings in to Mike and we would evaluate them. I would either take them home and rework them or bring them back here," Lepp says.

Penner says

Lepp's work always evokes thought and emotion, but this series had a lighter, relatable sense, without losing that dramatic emotion, that he felt would reach a wider audience.

Lepp began this series while reading *100 Artist's Manifestos: From the Futurists to the Stuckists*.

"I was reading a book of manifestos and I was painting based off what I was reading. The more I read, the more the manifestos seemed to be telling a story," he says.

That story was one of modernism. He says he started to realize that the authors were all revolutionaries, but he wasn't one.

"So, what do I have to say about modern art. How do you bring out the modernism without the revolution?"

With painting, he says it's simple, "You just want to paint something beautiful."

"You try to make it as beautiful as the other paintings you've seen in your life that are beautiful, you try to make beautiful paintings without lying," he says.

To do that, he says you can't be too romantic about the subject. "Try to paint something that admits that there's a real problematic world."

With that idea in mind, he creates what he calls thoughtful paintings.

"As Conrad said, "To be able to think and unable to express is torture." So, it's important to keep expressing and thinking," Lepp says.

Inspiration for each of the bright, bold and abstract pieces came from the passages of the manifestos, which he

says conveyed a lot of "spirit and life."

"I had never seen writing with so many exclamation points. And there would be funny stuff in there, like "the horizontal line is dead. Exclamation mark." And then I would go to the paintings, and I would be like, yea, I don't like horizontal lines anymore, for some reason."

As he continued making his way through the book, inspiration from the manifestos continued to drive his craft.

"Paintings must be green — With 10 e's in it, and exclamation mark (greeeeeeeeen!). So, I would do a green painting, or a red painting. Reds must be red, exclamation mark, and then repeated again. Red's repeated 10 times each time with an exclamation mark," Lepp says, adding "It's funny stuff to read."

But he managed to capture that lively spirit of the book dramatically and emotionally on canvas.

With much of Lepp's work, he says he challenges himself to create a certain style, and then he sees where that takes him.

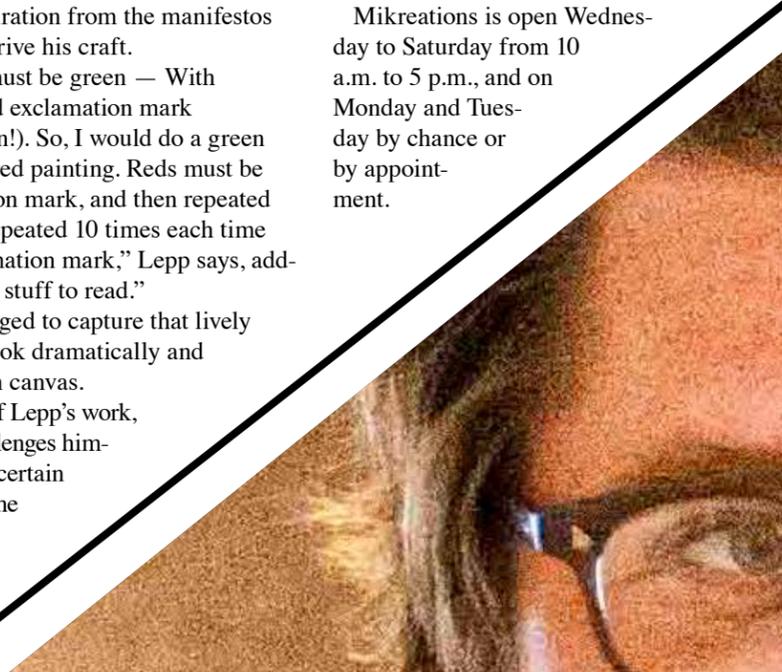
"I put a challenge toward myself. I ask, can you do this? And then I try to do it," Lepp says.

Who might be interested in Lepp's paintings?

"Hopefully, people with walls will come in and see something they like," Lepp says.

Penner chimes in, "People with good taste."

Mikreations is open Wednesday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Monday and Tuesday by chance or by appointment.



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