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the Heronry

Issue Includes

Legion Legacy with Ted Mabb
ORDINARY EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE

Turning Bags into Blessings
HELPING HANDS

The Price of Peace
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Vol. 12 November 2026

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About the Publication

What is a "Heronry"?

Herons are often seen standing alone in our waterways but they're actually communal birds; groups of them come together to raise their young. Various species of herons (and other birds) will often nest in the same area, taking advantage of community benefits, like protection, and foraging advantages. Those communities are made up of hundreds of nesting pairs, and are called "heronries." Mitchell doesn't have a colony of herons, but our founders liked the idea of starting a heronry *(pronounced heron-ree)* of our own.

Like those colonies, our publication is meant to be a safe and welcoming place for the diversity of people and stories that are found within our community. Each issue celebrates the people, places, and history that makes West Perth unique. From resident spotlights and pet features, to art and poetry, and family recipes, this publication is meant to highlight the often-overlooked things—things that, in our opinion, are the bedrock of our community.

Our editor and our growing flock of contributors are local residents who care deeply about this community and want to see it thrive. We believe every small town deserves a voice, and *the Heronry* is ours. It's a place to share what's happening, to celebrate good things, and to be reminded of what makes living here so meaningful.

Whether it's through donations, writing, advertising, classifieds ads, or just sharing your love of this publication with your friends and neighbours, we appreciate all the support you've given us. Thanks for joining us!

Where to find copies

Distribution Locations

Our distribution locations are always expanding! If a distribution location is out of copies, please text Amelia at: 519-955-3210 so we can deliver some as soon as possible! You can also find current and back-issues online at theheronry.ca and wpheronry.substack.com. We aim to have copies delivered to all of our locations before the end of the first week of each month. Occasionally, due to location hours or other mitigating circumstances, a location might be missed or have delivery delayed; we ask for your patience and welcome volunteers who are willing to ensure that the outskirt locations get their copies on time!

BRODHAGEN
- Wieterson's Country Store
- Hoegy's Farm Supply Ltd

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- Dublin Mercantile
- Dublin's Family Restaurant
- Goettlers of Dublin
- Van Bakel Homestead Meats

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- Thames View United Church
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- YNCU
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MONKTON
- Monkton Diner

STRATFORD
- Stratford Perth Museum

Remembrance

Christina tB Hotz
the Heronry Editor



In the summer of 2018, I had the privilege of helping my Oma, Engelina Van Essen, write her memoirs. She had begun taking notes on her tablet a few times over the years, but the general organization of things was complicated to sort out, and with her arthritis she found typing difficult. Although I had two young boys at home, I suggested we work on the project together. I had no experience editing, but I did have design chops, and I was happy to put them to good use on her behalf.

That summer we spent hours together. My Opa would drop Oma off, and we'd pull up one of the wingback chairs so that she could sit beside my desk and she could narrate while I typed. At the time she still had energy mentally if not physically, and it was a pleasure to be able to sit with her and record so many of the stories about the things that she lived through. I had heard a few war stories growing up, but it wasn't until that summer that I got a more thorough understanding of just how deeply she had been impacted by the experience of living in occupied Holland during WWII.

From being teenager who was shot at by a German aircraft while sitting in a boat on open water, to working on a farm far away from home so that her family could use her ration card for their own needs, she lived through things that we can only imagine. War left its mark on her. Her feet were bent in a funny way from having to wear too-small of shoes while she was growing, and its likely that some of her auto-immune issues were connected to the stresses and deprivation she experienced.

At the same time, living through such hard times made her extremely thrifty. The skills of "making do," whether it was learning to sew her own clothing, gardening skills, or how to get that last bit of nourishment out of chicken bones by boiling and scraping them for broth, certainly came in handy as a poor preacher's wife. She passed on those skills to my mother, who in turn passed them on to me.

Just last week I boiled up some chicken carcasses for soup, and spent a good hour pulling off all the available meat that was still had some amount of chew left in it. I'll admit, I was, and am extremely grateful that we do not live in the era where I would have kept all the fatty skin for nourishment. I was very happy to throw the bones and the gristle into the trash. These scrimping and saving skills have helped me stretch a dollar at times when money has been tight.

While my grandparents were staunchly proud of their Dutch heritage, they were both also proud of being Canadians. I too am proud. I'm proud to come from a line of people who worked hard to survive the German occupation, who immigrated to another country, slowly acclimatized to the culture, and eventually took on its name for themselves.

My Opa and Oma immigrated separately. They met and fell in love here in Canada. It can't have been easy for either of them to leave everyone they knew and loved behind, but the opportunities that Canada presented, and the reputation of the nation that liberated Holland was such that they were willing to take the risk.

This issue is full of remembrances. In it I share what I've learned about our local Legion, Cathy writes an overview of a Van Bakel war letter, and Tiffany Harbinson reflects on her grandfather's thriftiness. We also include a hilariously-titled recipe sent in by Doreen Skinner.

I am hoping that more people reach out with their memories and recipes and photos of the past, war-related or not, in order that we can create a kind of archive for future issues of the Heronry. It is so important that these memories are reflected on regularly so that the sacrifices so many made are never forgotten.

The next issue will mark a year of printing *the Heronry*! Please consider sending in your letters and comments to be part of the celebration.

November Horoscopes

Maggie Turner
Professional Astrologer



Aries: March 21 - April 21 Shared resources such as taxes, bills or deeply intimate and emotional bonds have been under the microscope recently. If something has felt one sided here, it may be time to bring it back into balance.

Taurus: April 21 - May 20 Focus this month is on relationships of all kinds. Something is changing here and you may have to ask yourself how much energy you are willing to give up to keep the relationship going.

Gemini: May 21 - June 20 Taking on an extra project, plus your children's extracurriculars on top of your everyday job/responsibilities might be taking up too much time and effort. For your own wellbeing, it's time to make room in your schedule for self-care.

Cancer: June 21 - July 21 This month begins with a need for balance between responsibility and pleasure. In order to reconnect with joy, romance and self-expression, follow what inspires you. It's a great month for a new hobby.

Leo: July 22 - Aug 22 Focus is on your connections to home and family. While you may be questioning what it takes for you to feel secure and rooted at the beginning of the month, greater stability comes by the end of November.

Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22 Miscommunications and daily mishaps may be shifting your perspective. Use discernment to uncover the real message. Remain open to insights that come when you start to see things a different way.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22 Attention is on finances and personal values. It may be time to cut extra spending and focus more on saving. Reassess what's valuable to you and what is no longer worth the expense.

Scorpio: Oct 23 - Nov 21 Happy Birthday Scorpio! You may not like too much attention. After some much needed deep introspection, a new found awareness may have you heading in a different direction. Celebrate that.

Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 20 A pull to slow down and turn inwards may have you seeking solitude at the beginning of the month. If you take some time for personal reflection, you may find exactly what you are searching for.

Capricorn: Dec 21 - Jan 20 Connections you have with friends and your community that once felt uplifting and supportive may be changing. Surround yourself with those who truly support your growth and share your same long-term dreams.

Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18 What does success really mean to you? You may find yourself redefining certain ambitions this month. Embrace any changes that unfold in your professional life.

Pisces: Feb 19 - March 20 New perspectives are unfolding that may challenge your current beliefs. It's time to expand your horizons and consider what the experience is teaching you. If travel is the experience, leave room for delays.

Maggie Turner is a local professional astrologer who loves to help heal and support people along their path in life using the amazing tool of astrology. Want to know more or book a personal reading? You can e-mail Maggie



Grace Reidy
West Perth Resident: Age 11



Catfish are definitely some weird-looking fish. I mean, a fish with whiskers? But those whiskers actually do some pretty important things!

Where Do Catfish Get Their Name From?

Well, first of all, they get their name from their unique whiskers. Their whiskers kind of look like a cat's, but they aren't used for exactly the same things. But did you know that their whiskers are actually called barbels? Not the ones that you lift, a different kind.

What Do Their Whiskers Do?

Catfish use their barbels to help find food and feel what is around them, especially in dark or murky water. This can be very helpful when they can't see what is right in front of them.

And murky water doesn't always mean dirty water! Sometimes it just has mud and other stuff floating around in it.

Cats use their whiskers to help feel what is around them too. They can even help a cat figure out if it can fit through a tight space. So cats and catfish both use their whiskers to help them figure out what is around them, just in different ways.

Can a Catfish Hurt You?

A common myth about catfish is that their barbels are poisonous and act kind of like a stingray's stinger, but that's not true. Their barbels are harmless.

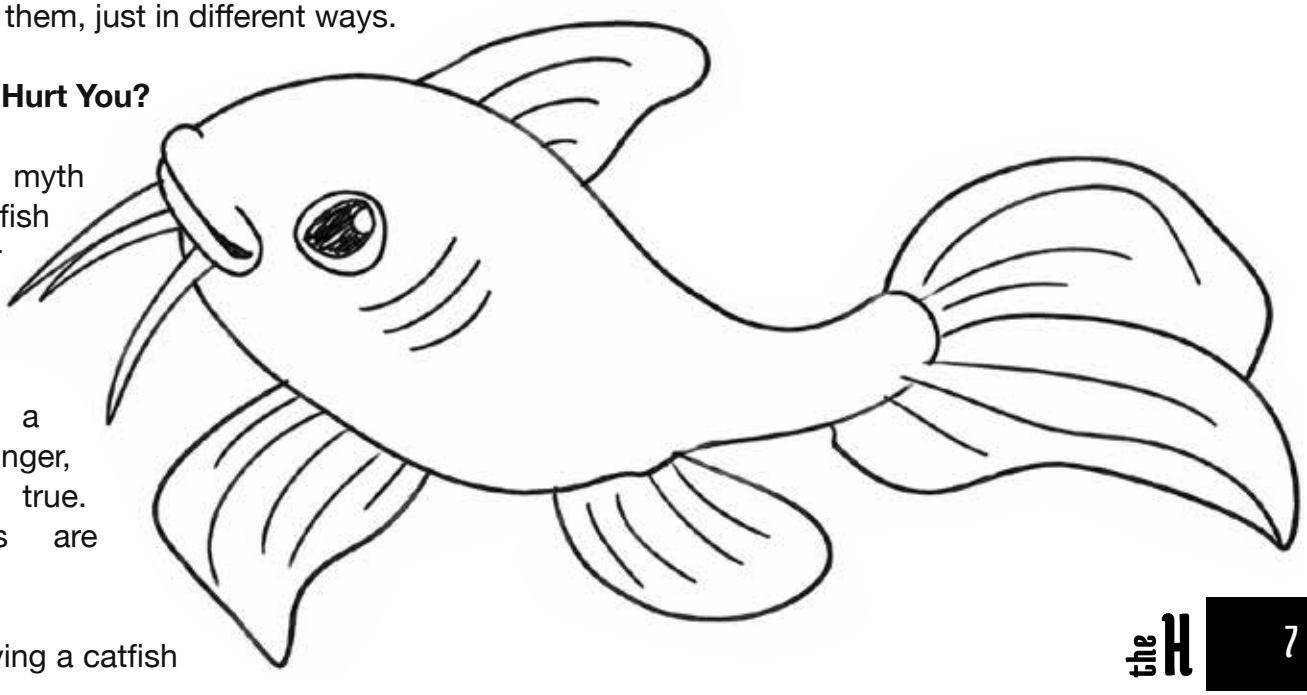
But I'm not saying a catfish can't hurt you! Many catfish have sharp spines in their fins, and some kinds even have venom around those spines. If a catfish feels threatened, it can stick its spines out to protect itself. Getting poked by one can really hurt.

So next time you're fishing, be careful!

What Can We Do to Help Them?

First of all, we can stop littering and help keep our rivers and lakes clean. Catfish might live in murky water, but that doesn't mean they want to live with our garbage!

If you have a pet catfish, make sure it has a big enough tank, clean water, and everything that kind of catfish needs. And NEVER release a pet catfish into a river or lake. Sometimes fish end up living in places where they don't belong, and that can cause problems for the animals already living there. Even if you ever find a fish that looks unusual, don't just take it out of the water because you THINK it shouldn't be there. Take a picture, tell an adult, and ask someone who knows about fish first.



The Price of Peace

Cathy Hutson
Fullarton Resident



In memory of all the Canadian soldiers who lost their lives fighting for the freedom we have today, I would like to share something special this month. I write monthly here about reflections I have on rural life in West Perth but this month, the reflections/ memories I write here are from the past and found in a letter. This letter was written by the great-grandfather of someone who resides right here on a rural property in West Perth, and the photos that accompany it are from the family history it is part of.

In the course of the Second World War over one million Canadian soldiers served in the army, navy and air force. From September 1st, 1939 to September 2nd, 1945, our country was actively at war. There was not a corner of our country that remained untouched by those days of wartime, but the lives of the residents of occupied countries were another thing entirely.



Driek Van Bakel, the author of our featured letter

Driek van Bakel wrote this letter to his oldest son, Toon, who had moved to Wisconsin, USA shortly before World War 2 took its grip on our world. Driek wrote the letter from De Rips, Brabant, Holland. He begins his letter: "*As I already promised you, I will tell you now what I experienced from the war and its consequences*." He proceeds to explain the time-line which began in 1939, mostly with the Dutch army preparing the area for the best defence they could muster against the pending German invasion.

"*Soldiers and workers were hustled together from all directions: canals had to be dug... with the dug up sand, they built defence lines, sometimes in fields, sometimes in the bush. The sand was also used for hideouts and bunkers. With the artillery came barbwire barricades and minefields, so many that it became impossible to freely come and go.*" This was happening right on their home farm, turning peaceful country life into chaos! There was fear but no-one thought at that time it would be as bad as 1914-1918 (the 1st world war). "*Many private properties, such as ours, were damaged*" Driek writes. The rural residents didn't get much news but, *"We really believed that it wouldn't be easy to breach the defence line but how badly we were mistaken."*

May 10th 1940, German aircraft filled the skies and an army Captain came to the farm to announce, *"We are at war with Germany." "All over you could hear the military blow up bridges and trees to make the roads impassible."* The explosions blew the windows out of everyone's homes. Evacuation was attempted by the residents, most having to leave possessions, animals, all behind. Driek writes, *"Leaving with horse and wagon was impossible because of all the trees that were blown up. They went by wheel barrow and the most necessary things and small children. I myself didn't go along."* His reason was that all their cattle and baby chickens stayed behind. A true farmer at heart!

The van Bakel homestead was right in the middle of the fortified bunkers and military shelters so Driek interacted daily with the Dutch soldiers, sharing milk, eggs and produce from his farm. He witnessed the horrors of war daily though, "*The smoke cleared and we saw a cow fly in the air. She*

had wandered into the minefield." Driek argued with an army captain who *"wanted to shoot all the cows because they could destroy the whole minefield."* Many of the soldiers were unfamiliar with farming but Driek had good fences to rely on with which he saved his and his neighbours' cows. Most of the neighbours had fled to safety in the town of Bakel, leaving Driek alone to care for the farm and at the mercy of the soldiers. Life was turned into chaos as military had taken over their house, stables and whole property.

As the war escalated, Driek awoke one morning to a different scenario: *"Toon, you cannot imagine the funny feeling I had when I walked around with my cane and dog. No sign of life anywhere, only some birds and cattle left behind bawling loudly because they hadn't been milked."*



"De Melkwagen" that collected milk from the farmers in De Rips

The soldiers had left during the night! Food, clothing, equipment all abandoned. Guns and ammunition laid everywhere. Neighbours returned and the family came back to the farm. There was still little news to be had. *"After a few days a few Germans showed up: they inspected the defence bunkers, they left the Dutch people alone."* Driek reported that strangers came with buses and lines of vehicles searching the rubble and leftovers for anything they could use, *"The material disappeared like snow in the sun!"*

There was massive damage to farmland as bridges over canals had been blown up and minefields remained everywhere. *"First we had to pull the plow through the minefield and then lead the horses through it, a very dangerous job!"* This was so that they could attempt to plant their crops in May. The Germans spoke no Dutch for the most part but Driek was brave and persisted until he was able to get the soldiers to close big valves which controlled the flooding via the canals on his farmland. He got along fairly well as he describes, *"With lead in my wooden shoes, I approached them but I came back relieved."*

As the Dutch army was forced to surrender, *"We realized that we were under German occupation."* As the occupation grew, horses, milk, eggs, butter and potatoes were confiscated by soldiers. They looked for workers too but they paid well. The German soldiers on Driek's farm were *"ground personnel of the German Air Force. Always in the evening or during the night, we heard and saw them busy with their radar and search lights and obviously they were successful because many planes were shot down."*

Still no news for rural residents, *"Radios had to all be turned in and papers we received were German slanted, of course." "Everything became Germanized; all associations dismantled, even music and song clubs."* Their very lifestyle was being taken away and at best, changed. It was said, *"Holland would rise again but it would be a long road ahead." "And so, month after month passed by! There was enough money but other goods became more scarce by the day. If you couldn't grow anything, you were in poor shape."* There was a black market but everything was severely rationed. Hope was waning for many.

Finally, Allied forces seemed to be weakening the German armies. Driek writes of one incident, *"There was a German commando post nearby and that post became a target on a Sunday morning. But the bombs missed the target by at least 500 metres. Our home and Kies's neighbours home were only 200 metres apart and the bombs fell in between. I counted 20 bomb craters on our soil. Kies had 2 cows dead."* Close neighbours had it worse.

"Three children dead, and also 15 head of cattle." Kies's wife "*while on her bike was hit with bomb shrapnel: one piece in her abdomen and another in her chest."* Residents feared daily for the lives of their children. Always confused about the actual progress with the fighting, no-one really knew what to expect from day to day. One day, a terrible noise came from the West. Driek travelled by bicycle to a nearby road to have a look. *"And yes they were the long awaited liberators. An uninterrupted row of vehicles, materials and all sorts of weapons, Canadians, Americans and English. And there we were, it was called liberation. The Dutch flag flew in De Rips and the Deurne-Oploo road was solidly in allied hands."* He felt that with the German army only a kilometre behind them as it had retreated and was re-organizing.*"Not a good feeling."*



Toon and Tien, Driek's sons, work on the hay harvest

The family farm lay right between the continued bombing of the Germans and English: *"No pasture field without bomb craters, many cows and horses dead and many homes hit…So was ours!"* The fighting continued with many casualties. The English seemed to be gaining ground but as Driek writes, *"When you heard those squadrons of bombers fly over day and night, you can imagine the carnage and suffering."* The English army gained more strength and parked many tanks at the farm, even right up against the house. *"In our barn they set up a hospital, they brought in quite a few wounded and some bodies."* Two specific incidents right in the farmyard resulted in the death of two English soldiers. *"Both were buried beside our home and later reburied in the cemetery at Overloon. Only a few kilometres to the Northeast there was a big tank battle; some say the worst one in the whole of the Netherlands." "That was the battle of Overloon."*

Driek tells of what it looked like in the aftermath. *"I could hardly believe what I saw. Literally, no house was left standing and the cattle were left unburied in the fields. There were many woodlots there and they looked like vegetables after a big hailstorm."*

This was basically the end of the war activity in their particular area but in other areas in the direction of Germany it raged on for some time. Driek wrote to his son, "The future does not look too rosy. For long settled farmers, it won't be too bad, but new farmers can barely get started." "A big number of farm boys will end up in industry or be destined to emigrate to Canada or the USA". "Greetings and so long."

Driek van Bakel is buried in De Rips. He passed away in 1952, seven years after he wrote this letter. The area of De Rips was liberated in September of 1944. All of Holland was finally liberated May 6, 1945. It was during the years of 1944 and '45 that our Canadian forces fought so hard to free the Netherlands, ending five full years of Nazi occupation. During the final eight month campaign to liberate the Netherlands, 7600 Canadian soldiers lost their lives.

During the late fall of 1944, the Germans halted all food transport in the Netherlands. That winter is known as the Hongerwinter (the Hunger Winter) . Over 20,000 Dutch citizens starved to death that winter.

Reflecting on this account of the war years tells us one thing for sure, the suffering of residents, soldiers, families, livestock and the landscape was unbelievable. This, we must never forget. May we in all countries, remain forever thankful for the sacrifice.

Taking a Minute

Amelia McFarlane
the Heronry Business Manager



I figured it was probably time that I actually wrote something for *The Heronry.*

If you've been following along, you've probably heard a lot more from Christina than you have from me. And honestly, that's probably because I'm usually somewhere in the background.

I don't do nearly as much of the day-to-day work as Christina does. She is the one who is constantly thinking about what needs to happen next, what needs to be done, who needs to be contacted, what needs to be fixed, and about a million other things that I'm sure I don't even know about. But I see it.

I see how much work she actually puts into *The Heronry*, and I probably don't tell her often enough how much I appreciate it, how much I appreciate her.

When we first started talking about doing this, I don't think any of us really knew what it would turn into. We certainly didn't know how people would receive it. And honestly, seeing how much people have embraced it has been one of my favourite parts. The messages, the comments, the people stopping to talk about an article, the stories people have shared with us, and just knowing that people are actually looking forward to getting the next issue, it means a lot.

November means Remembrance Day. As a bagpiper, I've had the opportunity to play at quite a few Remembrance Day ceremonies over the years.

Wighty's Repairs Inc.

There is something about standing there with your pipes, looking out at everyone gathered together, and knowing why you are there that never really gets old. It's hard not to think about how different our lives could be. We get so caught up in everyday things. Work, bills, kids, appointments, grocery shopping, who forgot to do what, what needs to be done tomorrow... And then once a year, we stop. We remember. We remember the people who served. We remember the people who never made it home. We remember the families who were left behind. And we remember that the lives we get to live today came at a cost.

I think that is something worth carrying with us beyond November 11th. Not just remembering those who served, but remembering to appreciate what we have. Our families. Our friends. Our neighbours. Our communities. The people who show up for us. The people who quietly do things behind the scenes that most of us never see. Funny enough, I suppose that last one hits a little close to home. I may be one of the quieter people behind *The Heronry*, but I am proud to be part of it. And I am incredibly grateful for the people who have helped make it what it is. I'm grateful for Christina and all the work she puts into this. I'm grateful for everyone who has contributed a story, supported an idea, sponsored something, donated, shared an issue, or simply picked one up and read it. Most importantly, I'm grateful that this community has welcomed *The Heronry* the way it has.

So as we head into November, take a minute. Remember the people who made the life we have today possible. And then maybe take another minute to appreciate the people who are still here. The people sitting beside you, the people working quietly in the background, and the people helping make this community what it is. Sometimes we get so busy looking at what needs to happen next that we forget to look around at what we already have. I think November is a pretty good time to do that.

— Amelia

Ted Mabb: A Legion Legacy



Christina tB Hotz
the Heronry Editor



The Mitchell Legion wouldn't have been the first option that sprang to mind if someone had asked me about local service clubs a few years ago. While I was aware of its existence in a vague way, it wasn't really on my radar as anything other than a place people might go to grab a beer after a game of soccer or hockey.

A few months into publishing *the Heronry* for the first time, we got an email from a certain Diane Dickenson. She asked if we would please include "Catch the Ace Draws," "Euchre & Fun Pool," and something called "Meat Draws" in our community calendar. After some clarification regarding exactly what goes into a "Meat Draw," and a few more exchanged details about the other events, I added them into the calendar and didn't think much about it. A few months later I went to the Legion to drop off copies of the Heronry and I realized, if I had been part of Mitchell for about ten years without really knowing much about how the Legion functioned, there was a good chance that other people were in the same boat.



Ted's parents, Eve (Todd) & James Mabb

I asked around town about who would be the best person to talk to about the history and function of the Legion, and pretty much every person I spoke to recommended that I get in touch with Ted Mabb. I reached out over email, and was invited to sit down with Ted and his wife Katherine (who most people know as Kitty). Ted's opinion was that Kitty would have just as much to say about the Legion as he did – and would probably set him straight once or twice.

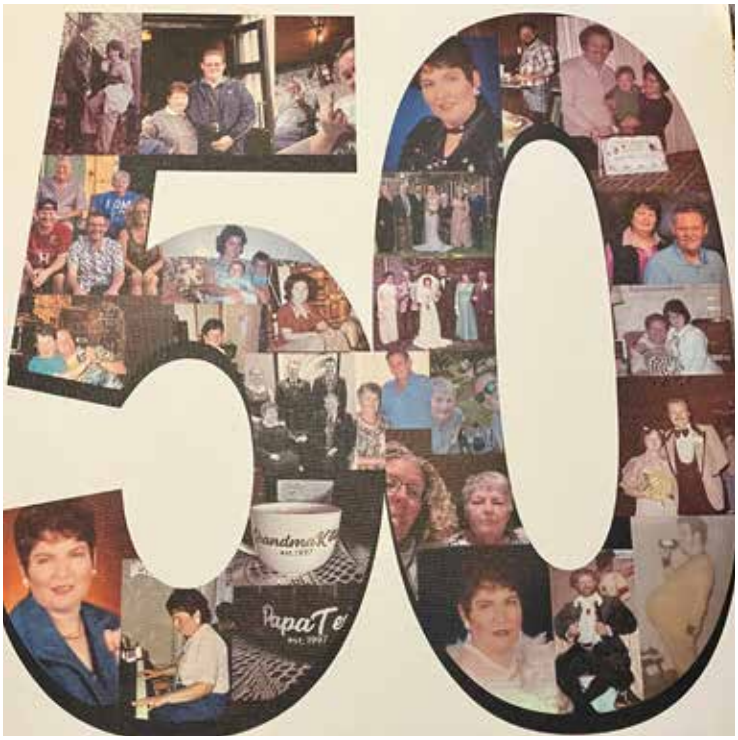
One sunny Tuesday morning I walked over to his house, Ted made us coffee, and I sat down and did a lot of listening. Ted was thrilled that I had an interest in the Legion and its history. As the grandchild of one of the founding members, he grew up helping to set up tables as a youngster and eventually became instrumental in helping first Mitchell Legion, and then other Legions across Ontario, to be financially organized and responsible.

For Ted, being part of the Legion is just a way of life. His father and grandfather both served overseas during WWI and WWII and both served in the Legion back at home. Ted's grandfather lost the use of his left arm while fighting in France, was left for dead, and three days later was found by people who were checking for live soldiers. When he made it back to Mitchell after the war, he got the job of caretaker of the high school and despite his disability, was still able to do the job well. He and his fellow soldiers, regardless of the fact that they all served in various aspects and locations, had a shared experience that no one else in the town could relate to, and that led to the creation of the Mitchell Legion. The Mitchell Legion Branch 128 became a place to find friendship; over cigarettes, beer, and coffee they bonded over stories that were sometimes good and sometimes traumatic, but always made better when shared.

Ted's dad also served, though he saw less action than many; he was part of a troupe that was responsible for laying down communication lines during WWII. He lied about his age and signed up when he was fifteen. He was part of the the liberation of Holland.

Over in England, Ted's mother worked at the Siemens factory making bomb triggers for the war effort and living through some of the worst the bombing England faced. Ted's parents met and married, and his mom became one of the thousands of war brides that made their way to Canada for a new life.

Back in Canada, Legion branches had been well-established all across our nation since the first world war. As their membership expanded, they started providing educational bursaries to the children of veterans, fundraised for mobility aids, and helped each other find jobs that fit. Ted's parents found community helping with those initiatives.



Ted and Katherine had a collage gifted to them when they hit 50 years. Many of their lifetime of memories happened at the Mitchell Legion.

Ted remembers his dad saying "If you move to a small town and need friends, go to the Legion, they'll help you out." At that time, you could only be a full member of the Legion if you yourself had served. Ted, as the son of a soldier, was welcomed as an associate member when he was eighteen. He remembers the feeling of walking into a Legion building, whether in Mitchell or in one of the other small towns where he worked as a CIBC employee, as being similar to how people are greeted in the old TV show "Cheers" ("Where everybody knows your name… and they're always glad you came".) He always felt so welcome.

When Ted and Katherine got married, our Legion, along with many others, still only accepted men as members. Women had their own group and even their own entrance. "The Women's Auxiliary" served meals, supported their husbands, and found their own community sharing about their own war experiences and the way serving had affected their husbands. They supported the branch, but didn't usually spend time swapping stories around the "bullshit table" the way the men did. Eventually, as Legion membership was dwindling due to members passing away from old age, it was proposed that women be invited to become full members on their own right and the Women's Auxiliary was disbanded.

Where once you had to be a male veteran or soldier to be a full member of the Legion, the terms of membership have now expanded even further. These days, a passion to support the troops is enough to get involved. As we move farther and farther away from WWI and WWII many Legion groups are seeing membership shrink. Our own Legion has shifted away from being just another place to drink beer and swap stories, to a full on service organization.

I was invited to sit in on a Legion meeting and was blown away by all the things that the Legion does for our community. Within the organization itself they have various committees and representatives who take care of things like ensuring the cenotaph stays in good shape, to being an advocate on behalf of our local veterans. I'd guess that there were about ten different committee heads that were given the opportunity to give updates on their various projects over the course of the meeting.

Thanks to Ted's intervention years ago, the financial situation of the

continued on next page

Mitchell Legion is strong and they use that strong position to help other service clubs and causes around town. Whether it's serving the community with cheap and hearty Friday Lunches, donating money to Perth County Transit, or driving veterans to appointments, the Legion is putting in hard work to support, not just veterans, but everyone.

This year the institution of the Royal Canadian Legion has celebrated 100 years. In honor of that, memberships are free for all of 2026 and various projects are being undertaken in Legion branches all over Canada. One of the prominent memorials in our town is the new crosswalk on St. Andrew Street. As for the branch itself, steps are being repaired, the bathrooms updated, the hall painted, and the floors redone. Many of the projects have been completed "in-house" by hardworking Legion members, but others have been donated by local businesses. The front railing was sandblasted and powder-coated by Mitchell Ironworks and that work was gifted back to the Legion at no charge; it looks beautiful. In 2028, our branch will have its own 100-year anniversary and I'm sure that by then, the whole building will be immaculate and ready for the celebration.



Two of the winning drawings from the Mitchell Legion's annual poster contest at our local schools in 2025

The most impactful change for the Legion members themselves has got to be the updated kitchen facilities that were finished earlier this year. Ted has described the kitchen as the "lifeblood of the Legion" and it's a huge part of how they fundraise, which makes this change an important one. Between catering for the various functions that other organizations hold in the upstairs hall, various dinners like wing night or spaghetti, or their weekly Friday dinners where they deliver over 230 meals (at least when it's turkey) and serve about fifteen in person, the new sanitizing dishwashers, large stoves, and extra fridges have definitely come in handy. The rotating kitchen crews and servers have definitely appreciated the upgrades as they cook and serve for all the events.

Like their parents and grandparents before them, both Ted and Katherine are slowing down. Gone are the days when they'd come home from a meeting to kiss their children goodnight only to have the kids complain, "they smell like Legion!" Ted makes an effort to make it out to every Legion meeting—usually in his uniform—but Katherine's health often means she stays home. Ted is still active, able to give the financial report, introduce visitors, and speak on behalf of other people who weren't able to be present. He jumped at the chance to share his love of the Legion with me, and obviously feels strongly about the importance of remembering the sacrifices that our ancestors made in the name of freedom. Both he and Katherine teared up when remembering the horrors that their parents and grandparents experienced and sharing the stories of how it affected them.

The Legion isn't what it was back when Ted was a kid, and he's ok with that. The organization has grown from being just for soldiers and their families into a community that seeks to serve everyone. It's no longer a limited-members social club or just another smoke-filled place to grab a beer; it's now open to the general community in a way that it wasn't before. By donating to local service clubs, raising funds for hospice, gifting new beds to medical centres, or just providing a hearty meal to shut-ins, the Legion is providing support and community just like it always has. You're invited to grab one of those free memberships and get involved. Whether it's as part of the Poppy Committee, serving as kitchen crew, or just lending a hand when you can, there's a place for you there. Just ask Ted, I'm sure he'd be thrilled to tell you all about it.

Love, Loss & New Adventures

Taryn Zinger
Mitchell Lions Club Member



Over the past few weeks, we've heard the saying, "Having livestock means having deadstock" many times. We know these words are usually shared with good intentions, but perhaps people don't always realize that the animals at the Mitchell Lions Club barn are more than livestock. They are beloved members of our little barn family, cared for by volunteers and loved by the many visitors who stop by to see them.

Recently, we said goodbye to one of our beautiful white peacocks. All of our peafowl joined the barn in 2013 at unknown ages, so we can only hope that these losses are simply a result of old age. We also lost one last fall, making these goodbyes especially difficult.

Losing any of our animals is heartbreaking, but we find comfort in knowing that we have given them the best life we possibly could. Although peacocks and peahens aren't particularly social birds, our volunteers could tell that they recognized familiar faces. When offered a treat, they would often come closer in their pen, reminding us that even the quietest animals can form familiar bonds with the people who care for them.

We are grateful to a very generous individual who has offered to donate another Blue India peacock to the barn. Our new feathered friend was born this Spring, and we look forward to welcoming him to the group. Introductions will be handled slowly and carefully, with a watchful eye on everyone's behaviour. As peafowl can be territorial, particularly when housing males together, ensuring a safe and suitable introduction will be important.

Meanwhile, our donkeys have been on vacation! Did you notice that our donkeys were away for a couple of weeks? The wonderful Van Bakel family generously offered to host them while work was being completed in their pens. This gave our four-legged friends the opportunity to enjoy green pastures, sunshine and plenty of room to stretch their legs.

If only our donkeys could talk, we're sure they would have some wonderful stories to share about their adventures! As much fun as they had away, they certainly seemed happy to come running back into the barn when it was time to return home.

As the colder weather approaches, we're preparing for the quieter winter months at the barn. While some of our animals settle into their winter routines, our volunteers will be busy finding new ways to keep everyone entertained, comfortable and mentally stimulated. New toys, enrichment activities and little changes to their routines help keep boredom at bay during the long winter months.

Do you have something that could help keep our animals entertained?

If you have old yoga balls, soccer balls or other suitable items that could be repurposed as animal enrichment toys, we would love to hear from you! Items must be clean, safe and free of damaged or loose parts that could pose a risk to the animals. Please reach out to the Mitchell Lions Club (Mitchell.lions.club@gmail.com or via facebook) before dropping anything off, so our volunteers can ensure the items are appropriate for our barn residents.

The Mitchell Lions Animal Barn is a special place because of the people who care for it, the animals who call it home and the community that continues to support it. There are happy days, challenging days and, sadly, days when we have to say goodbye. Through it all, we remain committed to giving every animal the best life we can.

Thank you for your continued support and visits to the barn.

A Free Owl Prowl

Denise Iszczuk
C.O.R.E. Nature Experiences



Discover the fascinating world of owls on November 28 during a free guided walk led by naturalist and educator Denise Iszczuk of C.O.R.E. Nature Experiences.

Since 2023, C.O.R.E. Nature Experiences and the Sawyer Preservation Woodlot Association have partnered to offer free guided walks throughout the year, helping visitors deepen their connection with nature and explore the woodlot's rich natural environment. This is the last of the free "Walks in the Woodlot" for 2026.

The Sawyer Preservation Woodlot offers a perfect setting to discover the wonders of nature after dark. Hearing and/or seeing owls tells us the woodlot is healthy. We don't always see the owls but often we hear them. "Just the other morning I heard an Eastern Screech Owl calling in my backyard," said Iszczuk.

On November 28, visitors are invited to join one of two 45-minute nighttime owl prowls. The first walk, a family-friendly outing that begins before dark, starts at 5:30 p.m., followed by a second walk at 6:30 p.m. Participants will quietly explore the woodlot trails, listening for the distinctive call of the Eastern Screech-Owl and keeping watch for signs of these elusive nocturnal hunters.

Along the way, Iszczuk will share fascinating insights into owl behaviour, their remarkable adaptations that make them such effective nighttime predators. Whether an owl makes an appearance or remains hidden among the branches, the experience offers a unique opportunity to slow down, tune in to the sounds of the forest and discover the wildlife that becomes active after sunset.

No registration is required, and everyone is welcome to join the adventure. Dress for the late-November weather, bring your curiosity and prepare to experience Sawyer Preservation Woodlot at night. Lug-A-Mug to enjoy some hot chocolate and there will even be some marshmallows to roast by the fire!



Event Submission Link

Submit your community event to the Heronry and expand your reach! Submissions are due by the 15th of the month prior to publication!

West Perth Events only! Club meetings, sports sign-up, and fundraisers welcome! Promotional items are welcome under our advertising category.

Reach out to wp.heronry@gmail.com for more information or call Christina at: 519-994-1431.

Christmas Needs

Kids' Quarter Store

Nancy Vorstenbosch
Knox Presbyterian Children's Ministry



Christmas is a comin'... and so is a chance for children to Christmas shop for some family members. There is a joy that comes with giving to others and the Quarter Store is a great opportunity for children to experience this.

The Kids' Quarter Store in Mitchell (which is similar to, but not the same date as, the one happening at Thames View United) is happening this year on the morning of **Saturday November 14 from 8:45 to 12 noon at Knox Presbyterian Church with entry at the 92 St. Andrew St. front entrance.** Gifts are quite affordable at 25 cents each. We ask that shoppers be limited to a maximum of 8 gifts for family members to allow as many shoppers as possible and to ensure some selection of gifts for later shoppers. It is helpful to bring a shopping bag(s) to help transport gifts home. Shoppers need to be old enough to comfortably leave their accompanying adult to shop with an elf helper and to select gifts.

Sudoku Puzzle

Fill in the grid with digits so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box have the digits 1-9 (no repeats allowed).

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

In order for the Quarter Store to operate there are 2 major requirements.

Gifts and wrapping: We are collecting new and gently used items that children may purchase in the store as a gift. We prefer smaller items and here are a few suggestions that may help give you ideas for suitable donations.

Dads/Grandpas/Uncles: small tools, socks, ties coasters, golf balls

Moms/Grandmas/Aunts: scarf, jewelry, home decor, book, candles

Siblings: toys, books, games, and puzzles

Generic: Christmas ornaments, mugs, picture frames *(Please: no clothing)*

Donations of gift bags and tissue paper for wrapping gifts are also most helpful. All donations can be dropped off at Knox Presbyterian Church Nov. 4, 6 and 11 from 10am - 2pm. Please use the entry-way off of Adelaide Street.

Volunteers:
Helpers are needed to be either:

"Elves" who guide shoppers through the store to help them find gifts.

Gift Wrappers who will wrap gifts selected by the shoppers.

These helpers would be needed on the morning of **Saturday, Nov 14 from 8:30am until 12 noon.**

If you are interested and available to help out during shopping hours or have questions about donations or the Quarter Store, please reach out to Rev. Marc Fraser (519-492-1226) or Nancy (519-348-8761). Please leave a message if no one answers. We look forward to having another successful event this year!

Huron Perth Dairy Cares

Christina tB Hotz
the Heronry Editor



Reciprocity is a fancy word, and one that's been growing in common use as people are realizing more and more the importance of close-knit communities. It's defined as "a social and economic dynamic where two people or groups exchange mutual help, favors, or benefits." Although they may not use the word "reciprocity" specifically, many of our local farmers live their lives and work their farms according to that principle.

A few weeks ago I spent about three hours in a tractor cab with Frank Louwagie as he put his harvesting equipment to work helping the Schoonderwoerd's get their silage harvested and packed. We spent a bumpy time following the harvester with our trailer pulled behind us, and I learned about the ways rocks and bits of metal need to be pulled out of the harvester's teeth manually, and I also learned about the ways that our local Perth Dairy Committee is putting the principle of reciprocity to work in a big way.



Frank and a large number of the Dairy Cares Team

Frank Louwagie should probably have the name "Frank Loquacious"; He's a talker, and he's good at it. He's full of anecdotes, silly stories, and was more than happy to talk about his newest focus – a fundraiser called "Dairy Cares".

Dairy Cares is a fundraising initiative that originally started in the US. During Covid, some other dairy committees in Ontario, including Stormount, Dundas, and Glengarry decided that they would try raising money for local needs - especially hospitals. Frank found out about this, and after watching a couple of successes around the province by different groups, thought the local dairy committee could do something similar here.

Of course, as Frank puts it, he might be the quarterback, but without the rest of the team, there'd be no game. While he had an idea of what kind of impact he wanted to have, he knew he couldn't do it on his own. He asked a half-dozen of his connections across the dairy industry if they were interested in helping with this initiative. Every single one of them said yes. Those first contacts became the core visioning group - they came up with the plan and the strategy, and once the plan was soft-launched at the Canadian Dairy XPO in September of 2025, more people came out of the woodwork to get involved. Frank says, "They've had no shortage of enthusiastic and amazing volunteers ever since."

After the team was formed, a concrete plan had to be made. Step one was research. Prior to the core group getting together, Frank had conducted some unofficial research into project ideas, but with the skills and experience of people like Jamie Beaumont and others they were able to hammer out the details. What were the gaps exactly? What did our community need? And what were the most underfunded and under recognized needs that existed. Time and time again the same things were mentioned, and finally three main targets were identified.

These targets were: a significant need to expand mental health training and services, the increasing problem of food insecurity, and the need to support

local families who spend time at Ronald McDonald House due to family illness. The board decided that a three-pronged approach would be the most beneficial. It would allow for a wide distribution of funds and would appeal to people with various priorities.

Of course, as any good farmer knows, it's not enough to just throw money at a problem. Frank says it is important to the board that they ensure that all the financial support goes towards changes which will have a tangible and long-lasting impact. In order to receive any funds, the associated organizations had to put together comprehensive plans that show how the funds would be used.

Both Ronald McDonald House and the Huron County Food Bank Distribution Centre are well-established and already have existing guidelines for fund usage, but the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance and Huron Hospital System spent a solid eight months coming up with a multi-tiered plan. With a focus on training for existing personnel, and the expansion of counseling and educational goals, the HPHA and HHS plan on using the Dairy Care funds to reduce the incredible backlog and wait-times that local residents often face when dealing with mental health struggles.

Dairy Cares is raising funds in a few ways. The first, and the one that Frank and group are already hard at work with, is approaching local farmers and businesses for direct support. This is where Frank's gift of the gab comes in handy. Give the man ten minutes and you'll be swept away by his enthusiasm for the project and will likely be reaching for your wallet. He's already received pledges and funds from many of our local businesses and farmers including $10,000 each from our local Schoonderwoerd Bros Concrete, and Hoegy's Farm Supply. (The Huron Perth Dairy Cares website has an extensive list of donors, and we encourage you to reach out to the supporting businesses with your appreciation.)

The second fundraising method is a formal event that will be hosted on Thursday, November 26, 7pm at the Stratford Agriplex. Doors will open at 6:30pm and the age of majority event will be featuring: drinks and delicious hors d'oeures; a live auction of items donated from local businesses, farms, and people; and live entertainment featuring Garth Brooks Tribute Band "Les Smith and Fresh Horses! A sneak peak of auction items shows incredible items including a "Nordic Thermal Spa Experience," and a one-week stay at a condo in St Maarten! Tickets are available on the Huron Perth Dairy Cares website.

I asked Frank why he was so passionate about Dairy Cares. He laughed and said he knows that some people will speculate that he has been throwing himself into the project as a result of his cancer journey, but he had actually been working on it for over a year before he was diagnosed. As we bumped over the field, Frank spoke several times about all the ways that he's "lucked out" as a farmer. Being born to a dairy-farm family in Canada, at a time when supply-management has kept the industry stable and growing, and getting to live in such a tremendous agricultural powerhouse of a county, fills him with gratitude. He, and the rest of the Dairy Cares organization, are putting their reciprocal farming-mentality to work along with the rest of us. The more we pull together, whether it's lending a neighbour a cup of sugar, volunteering with a service club, donating to a fundraiser like Dairy Cares, or helping a fellow farmer get her soybeans harvested before the rain hits, the stronger our community will grow. This community, this life, has given so much to the dairy farmers of the area, and Frank just wants to give back because he, along with the rest of the dairy board and so many of our local farmers, cares.

Visit dairycareshuronperth.ca for more information or to purchase tickets to the fundraising event.

Pottery Open House & Sale

Come visit Mitchell Pottery Studio for our annual Christmas Open House!

Saturday, November 28
10am - 3pm

82 Huron Rd, Mitchell ON (beside Quadro)

Mitchell Pottery Studio

West Perth Community

Most of these events are open to the general community though some have age restrictions. A diamond ◊ is for persons 55+ or living with disabilities/chronic health co

November 1 - Sunday

Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am-12pm | West Perth Arena
Public Skate | 12-12:50pm | West Perth Arena

November 2 - Monday

◊Pickleball | 8-11am | Mitchell Community Centre
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | Upper Thames Church
◊$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am-12pm | West Perth Arena
Babytime w/ Early ON | 1-3pm | West Perth Public Library
◊Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
*D&D~ | 5:30-8pm | Youth Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
~West Perth Singers Practice | 6:30pm | Main St United C.
◊Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
West Perth Council Meeting | 7-9pm | 160 Wellington

November 3 - Tuesday

Rotary Meeting | 7:15am | Deck Dentistry Basement
◊Senior Fitness | 9:30am | West Perth Community Centre
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | Mitchell C Centre
$10 Drop-In Play (1-5y) | 10-11am | Mitchell Gym Club
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am-12pm | West Perth Arena
Adult Skate | 12:00 - 12:50 pm | West Perth Arena
Mahjong | 1pm | West Perth Public Library
Crafter's Circle | 2pm | West Perth Public Library
◊Farkle | 1:30-2:30pm | Manor Lounge
Fall Craft Night | 3-5:30pm | West Perth Youth Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
◊Pickleball | 6-9pm | Mitchell Community Centre
Legion Band Practice | 7pm | Mitchell Legion

November 4 - Wednesday

$10 *Mayor's Breakfast | 7am | 160 Wellington
◊Pickleball | 8-11am | Mitchell Community Centre
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | Upper Thames M. C.
◊Aquafit | 9:30-10:45am | Spruce Lodge
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30-12pm | West Perth Arena
Public Skate | 12-12:50pm | West Perth Arena
Cards and Fun Pool | 1pm | Mitchell Legion
◊Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
Mac & Cheese | 3-5:30pm | West Perth Youth Centre Hall
Walking | 6pm | MDHS
◊Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge

November 5 - Thursday

◊$40 Reflexology (by Appt) | 9am-12pm | Manor Lounge
M.Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am | 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
◊$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life ◊$12
Euchrama w/ lunch | 10am-3pm | Mitchell C. Centre
◊Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
Drop-In | 3-5:30pm | West Perth Youth Centre
Curling Club Starts | 5:30pm | Mitchell Arena
◊Pickleball | 6-9pm | Mitchell Community Centre

November 6 - Friday

◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | Upper Thames M. C.
◊Fall Prevention Facts & Fun | 10:45-11:45am | Manor L.
$17 Meatloaf Lunch | 12pm | Mitchell Legion
◊WII Games | 2-3pm | Manor Lounge
A Night to Remember | Details on p.39 | Various Locations
CMHA Drop-in | 1-3pm | West Perth Public Library
*Paws 4 Stories Reading | 4:30pm | West Perth Public Library
Tween Crochet Crew | 4:30pm | West Perth Public Library
Scottish Dancing | 7-8:30pm | Knox Presbyterian Church

November 7 - Saturday

Men's Breakfast | 8:30am | 101 Restaurant
Pete the Cat Stories & Crafts | 11am | W.P.P. Library
Catch the Ace | 4-5pm | Mitchell Legion
$40 Dinner & Dance | 4-10pm | Brodhagen Community C.

November 9 - Monday

◊Pickleball | 8-11am | Mitchell Community Centre
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | U. Thames M. Church
◊$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am-12pm | West Perth Arena
Public Skate | 12-12:50 | West Perth Arena ◊Bereavement
Babytime with EarlyON | 1-3pm | West Perth Public Library
Group | 1:30-2:10pm | West Perth Village
◊Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
*D&D~ | 5:30-8pm | Youth Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
~West Perth Singers Practice | 6:30pm | Main St United C.
◊Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge

November 10 - Tuesday

Rotary Meeting | 7:15-8:30am | Deck Dentistry Basement
◊Senior Fitness | 9:30am | West Perth Community Centre
Foodbank Drive-Thru | 10am | Main Street United Church
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | Mitchell Community C.
$10 Drop-In Play (1-5y) | 10-11am | Mitchell Gym Club
Adult Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena
Blood Pressure Clinic | 1-3pm | West Perth Public Library
Mahjong | 1pm | West Perth Public Library
Mitchell Foodbank* | 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St

Events: November 2026

onditions, An asterisk means pre-registration or an appointment is required. A "~" indicates join-up is seasonal. A dollar sign or price indicates the event is not free.*

Crafter's Circle | 2pm | West Perth Public Library
Drop-in | 3-5:30pm | West Perth Youth Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
◊Pickleball | 6-9pm | Mitchell Community Centre
Mitchell Lions Club | 6:45pm | Town Hall
KIN Club Meeting | 7pm | Legion Basement
Legion Band Practice | 7pm | Mitchell Legion

November 11 - Wednesday

Remembrance Day Events | *See page 39 for details*
Remembrance Videos | 10:15am | 3:30pm | Cenotaph
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Public Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena
S'mores Dip | 3-5:30pm | West Perth Youth Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS

November 12 - Thursday

$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
◊Fall Prevention Walk | 10-11am | Manor Lounge*Paws 4
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Adult Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena ◊Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
Winter Craft Drop-in | 3-5:30pm | West Perth Youth Centre
Stories | 4:30pm | West Perth Public Library
Tween Crochet Crew | 4:30pm | West Perth Public Library
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
◊Pickleball | 6-9pm | Mitchell Community Centre
$10 Line Dancing (18+) | 7pm | UTES

November 13 - Friday

◊$11 Nov 17 Brunch n Bunch RSVP Deadline
◊$15 Dining for Seniors Nov 19 Delivery Meal RSVP Deadline
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | U. Thames M. Church
M.Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am | 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
$5- DIY Holiday Cards | 11am | West Perth Public Library
$17 Roast beef Lunch | 12pm | Mitchell Legion
◊WII Games | 2-3pm | Manor Lounge
$30 Ringette Trivia Night | 7pm | Mitchell Community C.
Evening Drop-In | 7-9:30pm | West Perth Youth Centre

November 14 - Saturday

Kids' Quarter Store | 9am | Knox Presbyterian
Open Mic | 1-4pm | Mitchell Legion
Catch the Ace | 4-5pm | Mitchell Legion
$30 Yukyuks Comedy | 8pm | Mitchell Legion

November 16 - Monday

◊Pickleball | 8-11am | Mitchell Community Centre
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | U. Thames M. Church
◊$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
Babytime with EarlyON | 1-3pm | West Perth Public Library
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Public Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena
◊Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
◊$4 Pie Social-RSVP* | 2:30-3:30pm | Manor Lounge
Mosaic Art Craft | 4-6pm | West Perth Public Library
*D&D~ | 5:30-8pm | Youth Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
~West Perth Singers Practice | 6:30pm | Main St United C.
◊Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
Inaugural Council Meeting | 7pm | 160 Wellington St

November 17 - Tuesday

Rotary Meeting | 7:15-8:30am | Deck Dentistry Basement
◊Senior Fitness | 9:30am | West Perth Community Centre
$10 Drop-In Play (1-5y) | 10-11am | Mitchell Gym Club
◊$11 Brunch n Bunch* | 10:30am | Manor Lounge
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Adult Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena
Mahjong | 1pm | West Perth Public Library
Crafter's Circle | 2pm | West Perth Public Library
Holiday Decor Day | 3-5:30pm | West Perth Youth Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
◊Pickleball | 6-9pm | Mitchell Community Centre
Legion Band Practice | 7pm | Mitchell Legion

November 18 - Wednesday

◊Pickleball | 8-11am | Mitchell Community Centre
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | U. Thames M. Church
◊Aquafit | 9:30-10:45am | Spruce Lodge
◊Coffee Hour-Advance Care Planning
Rotary Hospice | 10:30-11:30am | Manor Lounge
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Public Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena
Cards and Fun Pool | 1pm | Mitchell Legion
◊Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
Alzheimer Drop-in Support | 2pm | West P. Public Library
Mini Pot Pies | 3-5:30pm | West Perth Youth Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
$5 DIY Holiday Cards | 6:30pm | West Perth Public Library
◊Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge

November 19 - Thursday

◊$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
◊$15 Dining 4 Seniors Delivery Meal* |
11:30am | Delivery Only *RSVP needed*

November 19 - Thursday Continued

◊Fitness Fundamentals | 1:30-2:30pm | Manor Lounge
*Paws 4 Stories | 4:30pm | West Perth Public Library
Tween Crochet Crew | 4:30pm | W.P.P.L
Drop-in | 3-5:30pm | Youth Centre
◊Pickleball | 6-9pm | Mitchell Community Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
$10 Line Dancing (18+) | 7pm | UTES

November 20 - Friday

◊$40 Reflexology (by Appt) | 9am-12pm | Manor Lounge
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | U. Thames M. Church
M.Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am | 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Adult Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena
$17 Turkey Lunch | 12pm | Mitchell Legion
◊WII Games | 2-3pm | Manor Lounge
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
Scottish Dancing | 7-8:30pm | Knox Presbyterian

November 21 - Saturday

T.U.C. Children's Shop | 9am-1pm | 3178 Perth Rd 163
$Winter Floral Arranging | 11am | West Perth M. Office
Catch the Ace | 4-5pm | Mitchell Legion

November 22 - Sunday

Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Public Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena

November 23 - Monday

◊Pickleball | 8-11am | Mitchell Community Centre
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | U. Thames M. Church
◊$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Public Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena Babytime with
Early ON | 1pm | West Perth Public Library
◊Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
*D&D~ | 5:30-8pm | Youth Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
~West Perth Singers Practice | 6:30pm | Main St United C.
◊Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge

November 24 - Tuesday

◊Senior Fitness | 9:30am | West Perth Community Centre
Yahtzee | 10:30am | Manor Lounge
$10 Drop-In Play (1-5y) | 10-11am | Mitchell Gym Club
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Adult Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena
Family Services Drop-in | 12:30-2:30pm | W.P.P. Library
Mahjong | 1pm | West Perth P. Library
M.Foodbank* | 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
Crafter's Circle | 2pm | West P. P. Library
Blood Pressure Clinic (by appt) | 1-3pm | Manor Lounge
Card Game Tournament | 3-5:30pm | Youth Centre
◊Pickleball | 6-9pm | Mitchell Community Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
Mitchell Lions Club | 6:45pm | Town Hall
Legion Christmas Concert | 7:30pm | Crystal Palace

November 25 - Wednesday

◊Pickleball | 8-11am | Mitchell C. C.
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | U. Thames M. Church
◊Aquafit | 9:30-10:45am | Spruce Lodge
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Public Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena
Cards and Fun Pool | 1pm | Mitchell Legion
YMCA Settlement Services | 1-4pm | West PP Library
◊Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
$5 Senior Dance | 1:30-3:30pm | Mitchell Community C.
◊Senior Line Dancing | 4:30-5:30pm | M. Community C.
No Bake Cheesecake | 3-5:30pm | Mitchell Youth Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
◊Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge

CE COMMITTEE PRESENTS

T.U.C. CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SHOPPING SPREE



SATURDAY
NOV 21, 2026
9AM - 1PM

An affordable way for children to gift shop new or 'nearly new' items with our "elves" (& wrapped too!)

Adults can enjoy refreshments & shop from the various vendors while waiting

www.thamesviewuc.ca
Thamesview United Church
3178 Perth Road 163 Fullarton, ON

November 26 - Thursday

◊$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
◊Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
Agilec Employment Support | 1:30-4:30pm | WPP Library
◊Adam's Family Entertainment | 2-3pm | Manor Lounge
Snowman Games | 3-5:30pm | West Perth Youth Centre
*Paws 4 Stories | 4:30pm | West Perth Public Library
Tween Crochet Crew | 4:30pm | West Perth Public Library
◊Pickleball | 6-9pm | Mitchell Community Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS

November 27 - Friday

M.Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am | 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | U. Thames M. Church
◊WII Games | 2-3pm | Manor Lounge
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Adult Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena
$17 Smoked Pork Chops Lunch | 12pm | Mitchell Legion
Scottish Dancing | 7-8:30pm | Knox Presbyterian

November 28 - Saturday

* Dinosaur Hatch & Dig | 10:30am | West P. Public Library
Pottery Open House | 10am-3pm | 82 Huron Rd, Mitchell
Catch the Ace | 4-5pm | Mitchell Legion
Owl Prowl Family Walk | 5:30-6:15pm & 6:30-7:15pm |
Sawyer's Woodlot (6100 Line 12)
Bethlehem Live | 6:30pm - 8pm | Upper Thames M. Church

November 29 - Sunday

Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Public Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena
Advent Concert | 3pm | Knox Presbyterian Church
Bethlehem Live | 6:30pm - 8pm | Upper Thames M. Church

November 30 - Monday

◊Pickleball | 8-11am | Mitchell Community Centre
◊G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | U. Thames M. Church
◊$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
◊Senior Book Chat | 11am | Ritz Manor Apartments
Parent & Tot Skate | 11:30am | West Perth Arena
Public Skate | 12pm | West Perth Arena
Babytime with Mini Mess Makers | 1pm | W.P.P. Library
◊Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
*D&D~ | 5:30-8pm | Youth Centre
Hall Walking | 6pm | MDHS
~West Perth Singers Practice | 6:30pm | Main St United C.
West Perth Council Meeting | 7-9pm | 160 Wellington
◊Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge

Helping Hands

Community Christmas Care

Juanita Power
Mitchell Resident



Community Christmas Care serves West Perth families and children 0-16 years in need at Christmas time.

Applications will be available from November 12 to December 11, 2026 and can be accessed online at gracemitchell.ca or in person at the West Perth Pubic Library or at Upper Thames Missionary Church during Salvation Army Food Bank Hours (Fridays 9:30-11:30am | 1:30-4:30pm, and every other Tuesday: 1:30-4:30pm).

Gift deliveries to the applicants are scheduled for the morning of Wednesday, December 16, 2026.

Financial donations to help with the cost of grocery cards can be directed to Grace Lutheran Church with the indication CCC. New and unwrapped item donations can be made through Angel Trees at local businesses in the near future.

For more information call Juanita Power: 519-348-4609. Please leave a message if no one answers the phone.

Bethlehem Live 2026

A great way to start the Christmas season is by attending the event "Bethlehem Live" presented by Upper Thames Missionary Church, 80 Rowland Street, Mitchell, on Friday, November 27 and 28 starting at 6:30 p.m. This presentation has been held annually at the church since 2013.



Bethlehem Live participants from a previous year

Early on the morning of November fourteenth, passersby on St. Andrew Street will start to see a cluster of buildings and animal pens being erected on the parking lot and its perimeter, behind the church building in anticipation of the actual event. Continue to watch for changes as these structures are transformed back to 1st century Israel.

Bethlehem Live is a family oriented outdoor self-directed walking tour to a live presentation of the first Christmas and beyond. The route is fully accessible for wheelchairs, scooters and strollers, weather permitting. During your journey, you will encounter characters in period costumes as well as live animals. At each stop along the way, the drama, action, lighting and props will make the presentation more authentic, realistic and exciting. At the end of the walk, you will be invited inside the church to warm up and enjoy some refreshments.

If you wish to claim a particular time slot, preregistration will be required. You can register either by a phone call to 519-348-4445 or online at www.utmc.ca/events or by simply clicking on the qr code on some of the posters around town.

This approximately 20-minute event is free for all, but cash donations will be accepted for Mitchell Youth Unlimited and nonperishable food items for the Mitchell Food Bank. We hope to see you there!

Crossword clues

Armistice	Memorial	Freedom
Flanders	Soldier	Battle
Silence	Field	Peace
Wreath	Sacrifice	Eleventh
War	Remember	Service
Ceasefire	Veteran	Sunday
	Medal	Poppy
	Conflict	Liberation

Crossword

G A T R S D S E P J G Q P L A A Y Z U B U X P O R
W N L C D B T U X G S E R V I C E P E V X N O F E
R K K Y W I Q Y V H K C O N F L I C T T J R P D S
E F W U H G Z W W F R E M E M B E R G R D Z P K O
A Q W W M X J U A X P F M E W P X R S U I L Y E L
T L R A J C Q U R D V N J C L Y P T O N N E S O D
H K S U B N P Y N A R M I S T I C E E C C H S C I
S R N O Z D J C N H G R M L W Y C T H K V O I C E
B X Y O E W H G E A Y Q M J Z F I B J W W M L Z R
S N M F T Y C D V A L J U D U E U F Q Y L I E Q M
V V X M B F I A F Y S S V E T E R A N Y R A N Z E
E X C A K A E L S D I E F I E L D E U J Q B C K D
R B F H S C T J R I K W F K F I N P R M U K E Z A
U J L Z P I V T E L R I X I A S T V B C P V Z X L
L Q A D E D J R L S I O D S R U U W N R Z L L K Y
O T N A A V H C V E T B Z A P E M N H U U G W T M
C N D S C S M Q I Y V B E C F N E N D M Z Y F H W
Y V E L E V E N T H B E F R H F E U J A Y O J L X
Y J R B H D E Y S A S F B I A E R I S M Y I I J B
X B S I U E Q Z N D K A U F J T U E W B G I V Q H
J Y M Q L P N R O T N M E I N Z I O E M F T I D P
P K Q I O A H E C B P Y S C O B D O T D J E Y F F
P R B E D S R C N N L A G E Z Y U Z N U O Y L B B
O M D O T B G B M E M O R I A L V T P H Y M W F T
R O X H F T I Z S I C S V H N R Z X P K U H E K P

Elysha Vorstenbosch
Local Musician & Composer



Visiting Van Egmond House

I visited Van Egmond House in Egmondville, ON (near Seaforth) at the beginning and end of the summer as part of my research for my solo harp album, *Tales of the Huron Tract: The Whispers That Lie Dormant No Longer*.

Every time I visited the house there was always something new to learn, whether it was a story about a descendant or an artifact, or a glimpse into the lifestyle in the mid to late 1800s.

My attention was directed towards various artifacts including:

- The pair of glasses worn by Madam Susanna, the wife of Anthony Van Egmond and mother of Constant Van Egmond
- A linen sheet spun and woven from flax by Ann (Johnson) Van Egmond, the wife of Constant Van Egmond
- A pair of shorts with the names of six winning local soccer teams and their players written on it (a few of the players are descendants of the Van Egmond family)



The Music Room in the Van Egmond House



The linen sheet which was woven by Ann Van Egmond

A fact I found interesting about Van Egmond House was that it served multiple roles. Because there wasn't a jail in Egmondville, they built the basement with barred cellar windows to use part of the cellar as the local jail to house criminals awaiting trial or transfer to another jail, such as the Goderich Gaol. While it was occasionally used as a jail, the main function of the Van Egmond House was first and foremost a home. It was a place of solitude and peace for the Van Egmond family, a place to rest their heads after a long day's work, cook and work on their craft (e.g. knitting, needlework, etc.). It was a lively and boisterous place for them to gather with friends, family and neighbours to celebrate and enjoy each other's company over a meal or by joining together in singing and playing music. My favourite room of the house is the music room where a square piano and pump organ are housed. It reminds me that music is eternal.

Today, Van Egmond House is still a place that brings community together. The Van Egmond Foundation hosts events which include Ciderfest, breakfasts, and concerts. Music, food, and celebration is the legacy of this home.

As I begin to write this piece of music, I'm reminded of the warmth that fills a loving and welcoming home. I want this piece to evoke the joy you would feel walking into a house full of friends and family, the smell of a freshly cooked homemade meal and lively music.

While the warm atmosphere of their home is the main feeling I want to evoke with my music, I'm reminded that there were also many hardships along the way for the Van Egmond family. These hardships include the imprisonment and death of Anthony Van Egmond as a result of his participation in the 1837 uprising; I want to honour this hardship in the music as well.

Nicholas Hotz
Local Resident



Round 3 : Anagrams

An anagram is when you rearrange the letters of a word or phrase to create a new one (e.g. “staple” turns into “plates”). Cryptic anagrams have indicator words which hint that nearby text should be rearranged. Look for themes like: scrambled (mixed, crazy), poor quality (horrible, awful), broken (ruined, butchered), or motion (active, dancing).

Cryptic Structures

WORDPLAY
Contains (a) “fodder” text to manipulate into the answer; and (b) indicator clues

DEFINITION
- Answer theme
- STARTS or ENDS the cryptic

ANSWERS
- ignore punctuation
- can be multiple words

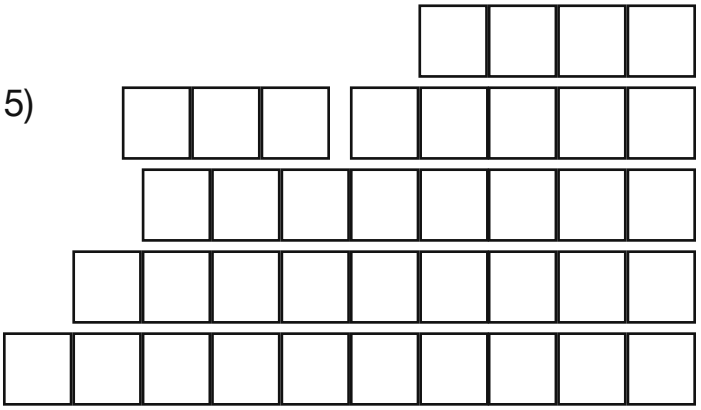
Bad odor restricts access (4)

D O O R

INDICATOR
- Text manipulation clues
- Here, “Cut back” indicates reversal

ANSWER LENGTH
- how many letters it contains
- multi-word answers feature commas

1. Smashed taco covers shirt (4)
2. Terrible crime ace makes everyone scream (3, 5)
3. Animal acrobats… Shake! Spin! Hold! (8)
4. Rapid expansion means Lions Expo out of order (9)
5. I note Elvis dancing on the small screen (10)



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Turning Bags into Blessings

Pat Britton
UTMC Member



Upper Thames Missionary Church (UTMC) members had been collecting milk bags for the Rotary Club in Grand Bend. Then in 2016 we were shown how to make these beautiful, colourful and soft mats from the bags. We were loaned a loom and then Ron Boonstra, a member of UTMC, made 3 of our own.

The mats are sent to South African schools for the precious children to sit on, instead of sitting in the dirt. The Rotary Club looks after the shipping, along with other school and medical items they have collected. The mats are used for packing during shipping, saving costs.



The ladies at UTMC pose with some of the mats they've made

The process begins with flattening the scrunched bags (we sure like it when they are flat and folded), then cutting off the longer side at the top of the bag and slitting the bottom. Then the bag is cut in 2 across the middle, leaving us with 2 circular pieces. These pieces are then looped together into strings. About 160 pieces are needed for covering the loom and many strings of 10 for weaving. It takes about 130 bags to complete a mat. Each mat is 2'9" x 2'3". At the time of writing this article we have made 774 mats which means we have used over 100,620 bags!

Not only are the mats a blessing to the children but it has kept this plastic out of landfill sites. Also, the mats last for over 20 years and are easy to wash, they will not get mouldy or mildewed and they repel insects. This is a win-win situation, and a wonderful blessing to the children and to us who meet together to make the mats.

We meet every Tuesday morning from 9:30 to 11:30, except Christmas week. You are welcome to pop in, through the office door, to see up to 15 ladies at work. You will hear us laughing and talking in the kitchen. We usually have 3-4 ladies who take some work home, so that helps a lot with our production.

We are very thankful to all who have been saving your bags, but we can always use more. You can leave your bags at the church office, 80 Rowland St., Mon.- Fri. 9-noon, or with the staff, just inside the door, at Your Independent Grocer.

To all who support this ministry by saving your bags or being a drop off centre, we say, 'THANK YOU VERY MUCH'.





Cartwright Chiropractic
35 Ontario Rd, Mitchell, ON N0K 1N0
cartwrightchiro.ca
519-348-4690

Waste Not. Want Not.

Tiffany Harbinson
The Square H



With cooler weather moving in, there is a sense of urgency to harvest the bounty of the garden. Like animals preparing to hibernate, I am busy in the kitchen trying to process and store food any way I can in an attempt to have nothing wasted and to prepare for the winter months. I am busy cutting, blanching, vacuum-sealing and canning. Root vegetables are dug from the earth and stored in totes full of sand and stored within a cool environment for the winter months. The pantry and freezer are becoming full of family-sized potions of vegetables, soup, purees, and sauces; all ready to be pulled for meals during the time between the growing seasons. Harvesting and storing this food takes a lot of work which occupies my time between August and November. The drive to gather all the food I grow and use it in some way seems ingrained in me. Waste not, want not. It was a principle that my grandfather lived by.

My grandfather was a World War Two war veteran. In 1939 at the age of 19, he enlisted and was designated as a signalman. He spent most of his time in England, before being deployed to mainland Europe after D-Day. He drove a vehicle delivering messages through France, Belgium, Netherlands, and finally Germany. During his time in the war, he got to experience a lived education about the impact of hunger and poverty. He was appreciative of any generosity given to him and often shared his rations with families who were thankful for liberation.

He returned to his hometown of St. Marys in 1945. Like most soldiers, he got married and life carried on. The lessons and trauma of the war stayed with him and guided how he lived his life and the lessons taught to his children and grandchildren. As a child, I have very fond memories of spending my days in his garden. He was very fortunate to have a large lot within town limits. I am sure the gardens of England inspired his own. He had a substantial vegetable garden, multiple types of fruit trees, and various rectangle shaped flower beds of impatiens, begonias, roses, and zinnias. Raised flower beds filled with annuals lined the garage. Homemade bird baths made from old platters were dotted within the flowerbeds. An old washing machine tub was re-purposed into a rain barrel. Birdseed lined the edge of the driveway and brought in flocks of mourning doves, finches and sparrows. This space reminded me of a secret garden, as it was surrounded by a large hedge that was marked with a couple secret entry points that I could use to pop through and play with the neighbour kids. I also spent substantial amounts of time on the board-swing that hung from a large, mature hardwood tree.

Like many soldiers, he rarely spoke about the war. I am sure he carried trauma and learned to manage it. He found purpose and joy in the community and nature around him. He would play piano in community centres and nursing homes for others. He would spend most of his days tending to his gardens, sailing at Wildwood conservation area, and appreciated the beauty and sounds of nature. He would talk to birds. He taught his children and grandchildren how to appreciate these things as well. If there was a phrase that I remember him saying often, it was “Waste not, want not.” I didn’t fully understand what this meant as a child, but now as an adult, I have come to learn how this principle guided an entire generation after the war. They all understood what it was to have nothing. How every resource is valuable and how important it is not to waste what you have now.

In November, I often reflect about my grandparents and how their bravery and sacrifices have made our lives possible. Time continues to move on, and it is important to remember their contributions and lessons that they have taught us so we can pass this knowledge to our children. I am thankful for their service and influence on my life.

Stoneage Equipment: Here to Stay

Cathy Hutson
Fullarton Resident



If you ask any geologist they will tell you that every piece of stone has a story to tell. The word, stone to me, represents the ultimate endurance... built to survive. I was fortunate enough to hear a few stories recently from a local and long-time West Perth resident. This individual has more interesting tales to tell than could ever be written on these few pages!

Pat Sebben, the founder of Stoneage Equipment Limited is soon to become a centenarian. Clearly, both Pat and the business he started are survivors. Pat has a lifetime of experiences well worth sharing.



The original Sebben House

Stoneage Equipment Ltd. is a unique generational family business. Today their inventory, displayed over ten acres, has no less than 1500 pieces of used farm and industrial equipment for sale. They are now into a third generation of the Sebben family which oversees the daily operations of Stoneage. Pat's two sons, Mike and Dave, know equipment inside and out. If you are a farmer, a contractor, a hobbyist or anyone who uses equipment, this is the place where you will find the right part or implement for the right price. The Sebbens serve Ontario, Quebec, the Maritimes, Western Canada, the USA and beyond. They buy, repair, refurbish and sell everything mechanical. Since the 1980s they have satisfied the unique needs of a very wide customer base.

The name "Stoneage" brings to mind something historical in nature, something enduring, built to last. The founder of the business, Pat, born right here in Perth County in 1928 has an interesting history. He was born in the, now-demolished, original Stratford General Hospital. He was raised on a farm on what is now the site of the McDonalds Fast Food Restaurant in the east end of the city. As time went on, his father, William Sebben, purchased a farm property here on the 26th Line in West Perth where all the action takes place today. This farm came up for auction back in the 1950s and in short order, Pat was able to take over ownership of this 100 acres, the original stone house and the truly noteworthy octagon barn that still stands at 5475 Line 26.

Pat married Jean in 1952. They were life partners, raising four children while farming and eventually becoming business partners for Stoneage Equipment. In the early days of life here, Pat was fully employed as a milk inspector. He did this job for ten years while also raising beef cattle and growing crops on their own farm. His job involved driving long distances daily as the coverage area for dairy barn inspectors was large. A helping hand was also extended to his father's farm in Stratford. Life was not easy and money was not plentiful so Pat was always finding new opportunities to take advantage of.

In the 1970s Pat purchased a combine and began custom work. Combines were scarce and other farmers were also interested in purchasing one. Pat attended auction sales in the USA and Ontario to do research. This was the beginning of buying, fixing and selling farm machinery as a business. He noticed a missing link in harvesting beans and designed a "bean puller" and made a few prototypes. A local welder and farmer went on to manufacture and sell them. With Pat's keen eye and interest, he soon accumulated a valuable inventory.

(continued on next page)

Jean was a good partner at home and also in the business; she worked tirelessly behind the scenes helping keep track of the financials. She had graduated from the Stratford Normal School and had worked as a school teacher prior to their marriage.

Soon Stoneage was growing in size and success! The type of equipment that Stoneage was dealing in was and still remains a "niche" market. They were careful to stay small enough to achieve success but not to get large enough for the inherent risks that can come from growing too much, too fast.

Stoneage Equipment Ltd. has a rich history. Visiting their location is somewhat like a trip to a museum. The original stone block house is something amazing to view up close. The 8 sided octagon barn is a rare and incredible piece of construction from the past and the only one I know that is still standing in Ontario. These buildings are obviously original to the property, most likely built by locals at least 100 or maybe even 150 years ago. The hand cut stone blocks which are the same on both structures have a beauty and an array of colours that only seeing them in person does justice to. The inside of the barn, standing much the same as originally, contains a wooden timber hand-constructed crane-type of device that would have been capable of distributing the crops for storage to the various mows contained within.



The Octagon Barn

Pat himself is an extremely creative person with many interests and talents. He is a brave man and a caring individual. These characteristics were demonstrated in his life from a young age. As a teenager, he would drive a team of horses and a sleigh in wintertime from the home farm to the old Stratford Hospital where he would gather up twenty or so young nursing students from the nearby residence. With Pat's capable handling, the group would sleigh ride around a city block or two for an evening of pure fun and enjoyment. This, I can imagine, was a highlight. Many nurses would have been boarding away from home and would have been weighed down with the long hours of study it took to become registered nurses.

Pat is a painter, an artist. His true creative side was evident when I had the pleasure of looking over at least 30 to 40 paintings he has around the house. This was only a glimpse, as there are so many more to see. He pursued some lessons in painting back in the 1970s. He has a definite style, reminding me somewhat of that of the famous Eastern Canadian artist, Maude Lewis. There is a theme to most of his artwork which reflects his early days on the farms. His love of horses, horse drawn vehicles, nature (in particular, country scenery) shows through in his work. The use of vibrant colours is something he says: "reflects his feelings at the particular time he put brush to canvas for each creation." I could see that he is an artist who expresses his thoughts with colour and imagination. Pat is still painting today, so never let it be said that someone is too old to create!

Pat is also a singer. He demonstrated this to me with his lively rendition of "Oh My Darlin' Clementine". The words came easily to him in his stories and songs, as he has a remarkable memory. He was a member of our own "West Perth Singers" (who still practice most Mondays at Main Street United Church). For years, he was part of the Seaforth barbershop quartet known as "The Harmony Kings." He was an active member of our own Thamesview United Church choir until recently.

The Sebbens gave back to their community. Both Pat and Jean were involved with the Mitchell Agricultural Society for years. Pat was an active member of the AOTS (a former men's group associated with the United Church of Canada. He is still an active member of our local Pioneer Hobby Club.

I'd say that Stoneage Equipment is here to stay. The sons, Mike and Dave are on site daily, and are both trained mechanical technicians who will take on any project. The third generation is already present on site as one of Pat's grandsons is now working in the business.



The equipment sheds where the work is done

I would be remiss not to mention Pat's two daughters, Bonnie from the Seaforth area and Patti from British Columbia. They visit and help out with whatever is needed, particularly following the loss of their Mom, Jean in 2023. Pat and Jean were married 70 years!

Patti was here for a visit and listened in as I spoke with her Dad on the rich history of Stoneage. She summed up his lifetime, which these few pages could never do justice to. "Dad sees his life as a Fairy Tale". That sounds a bit idealistic but I had just witnessed a person who through our discussions had shown me that he has a truly refreshingly amiable attitude. Still recovering from a recent broken bone, the idea of complaining about pain, care received, or anything else, just isn't in Pat's nature. He is an individual who at 98 years old stops at nothing. After all, he is well known around here as the man who could walk on his hands!

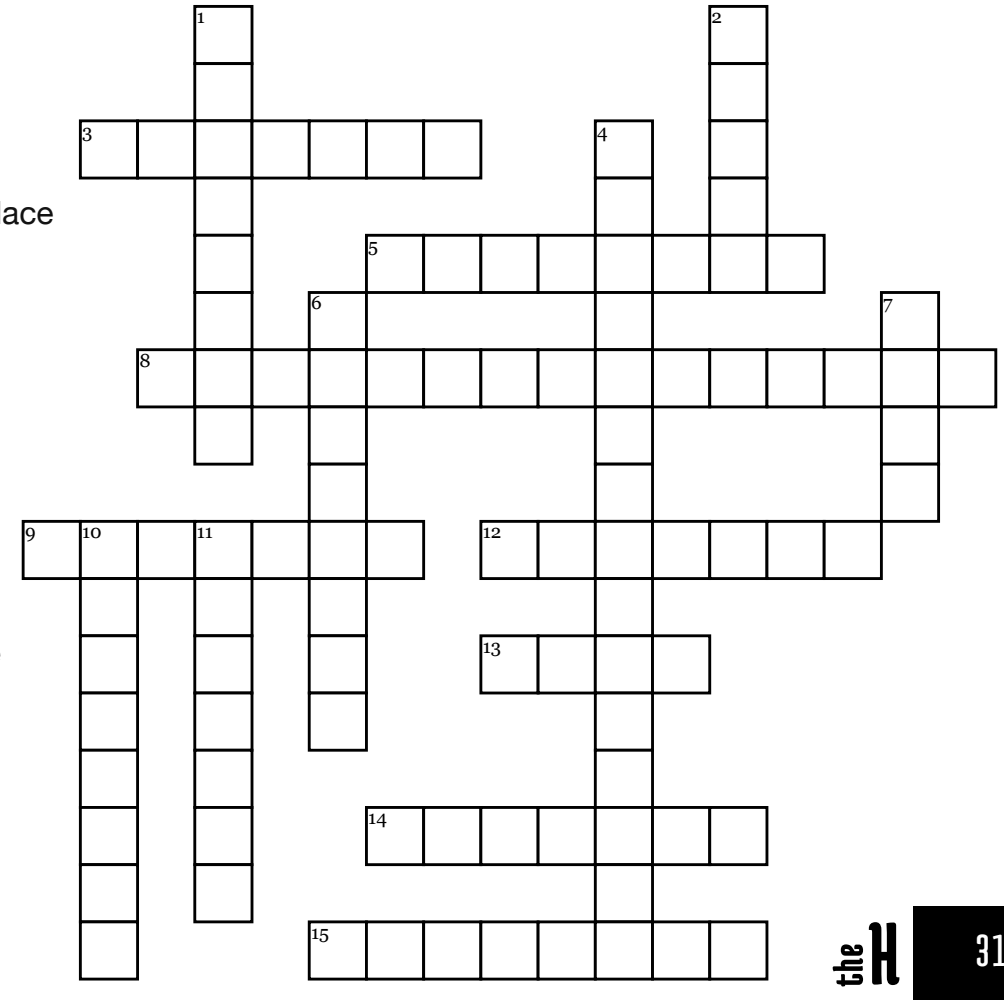
Crossword

Across

3. Soldiers fight in
5. In which month do we remember
8. A famous poem by John MaCrea
9. What usually marks the resting place of soldiers
12. Absolutely no sound
13. thanks to them we are
14. They grow in Flanders Fields
15. They fought for our freedom

Down

1. They came home
2. The instrument played before the two minutes of silence
4. Legions have these
6. The ____ hour of the ____ day of the _____ month
7. Symbol of our country
10. We will...
11. thank you for your...



Community Resources

Municipality of West Perth
Phone: 519-348-8429
westperth.com

Emergency Services

Perth County OPP
132 St George St. Mitchell, ON N0K 1N0
Administration: 519-348-9700
Emergency Services: 9-1-1
Non-Emergency Services: 1-888-310-1122

West Perth Fire Hall
170 Wellington St, Mitchell, ON N0K 1N0
Non- Emergency Services: 519-348-9031
Fire Safety Question: 519 595 2800 Dial 4

Local Hospitals

Stratford General Hospital
Stratford, ON
Phone: 519-272-8210 Website: www.hpha.ca

Seaforth Community Hospital Seaforth, ON
Phone: 519-527-8404 Website: www.hpha.ca

St. Marys Memorial Hospital St. Marys, ON
Phone: 519-284-1332 Website: www.hpha.ca

General Health Information

Huron Perth Public Health
Address: Stratford ON
Hours of Operation: Mon - Fri: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Toll-free: 1-888-221-2133
www.hpha.ca

Health Care Connect
A free program connecting Ontarians without a healthcare provider to providers accepting new patients.
Phone: 1-800-445-1822

Health811
Immediate health advice 24/7 from registered nurses.
Phone: 1-866-797-0007

Unattached Care Clinics

Non-Emergency Care for individuals who are without a family doctor

Stratford Family Health Team:
Phone: 226-766-0510

Bluewater Area Family Health Team,
Exeter Medical Clinic,
Maitland Valley Medical Centre
Phone: 519-870-9034

Listowel-Wingham and Area
Family Health Team: Phone: 519-291-4511

Mental Health Supports

Ontario Structured Psychotherapy
Provides support for Ontarians age eighteen and over with depression, anxiety, or related symptoms.
Phone: 1-833-944-9966

Mitchell & Area Community Outreach
Providing supports to enable disabled or elderly people to continue living independently
Phone: 519-348-9765

City of Stratford: Social Services Department
Phone: 519-271-3773 ext. 200

211
A helpline that easily connects people to the social services, programs and community supports they need.
Call or Text: 2-1-1
www.211ontario.ca

United Way, Stratford, ON
519-271-7730 / Toll-Free: 877-818-886
www.perthhuron.unitedway.ca

Canadian Human Trafficking Hot-line
Phone: 1-833-900-1010
www.canadianhumantraffickinghotline.ca

Farmer Wellness Initiative
24-hour support for farmers and their family members.
Phone: 1-866-267-6255
www.farmerwellnessinitiative.ca

Good2Talk
Free, confidential support services for post-secondary students in Ontario.
Phone: 1-866-925-5454
Text 'GOOD2TALKON' to 686868
www.good2talk.ca

Huron Perth Helpline and Crisis Response Team
Phone: 1-888-829-7484
www.hpha.ca/mentalhealth

Kids Help Phone
Phone: 1-800-668-6868
Text 'CONNECT' to 686868
www.kidshelpphone.ca

One Stop Talk
Phone: 1-855-416-8255
www.onestoptalk.ca

Optimism Place
24/7 Support Line: 519-271-5550
Toll-Free: 1-800-265-8598
After-hours: 519-272-2294
www.optimismplace.com

Counseling Services

Alcoholics Anonymous
If you want to drink, that's your business, if you want to stop, that's ours.
1-800-706-9833
Meeting locations found at web@aad4.org

Alateen
Support for teenagers with alcoholic adults
Online meetings every Wednesday on Zoom
HopePrevailsAlteen@gmail.com

Huron Perth Centre
Accredited community-based mental health centre for children and youth.
Stratford Office: 519-273-3373 ext. 2221
www.hpcentre.on.ca

Medavie Health Services
Mobile mental health program offering immediate help and referrals for people dealing with mental illness.
Phone: 1-877-872-6350
Email: ontariommh@medaviewhs.com

Family Services Perth Huron
FSPH provides individualized counseling, support services, advocacy, education and referrals.
Phone: 519-273-1020 / Toll-free: 1-800-268-0903
www.familyservicesperth-huron.ca

Shelterlink
Phone: 519-272-2294
Email: info@shelterlink.org
www.shelterlink.org

Victim Services
Phone: 519-600-4108
www.victimserviceshuronperth.ca

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Huron-Perth
Phone: 519-271-6819
Toll-free: 1-888-261-9350
www.cmhahuronperth.com

Senior Services

Alzheimer's Society Huron-Perth
Phone: 519-271-1910
www.alzheimer.ca/huronperth

Mitchell and Area Community Outreach
Phone: 519-348-9765
Email: maco@ritzlutheranvilla.com

One Care
Phone: 1-877-502-8277
www.onecaresupport.ca

West Perth Village
Phone: 519-348-8612
www.westperthvillage.ca

Local Food Banks

Mitchell Food Bank
80 Rowland St, Mitchell ON (Upper Thames Missionary Church building)
Phone: 519-703-4880
Email: mitchellcfs@salvationarmy.ca
Hours: Fridays: 9:30am - 4:30pm
Appointments preferred

Monkton Food Bank
Delivery Only - Independently Run
Phone: 1-780-222-5050
Email: tiggerdigrr@gmail.com

St. Mary's Food Bank
Phone: 519-284-2760
Email: st.marys@salvationarmy.ca
220 Queen St. E, St. Marys, ON

Stratford Food Bank
Phone: 519-271-2950
Email: stratfordcfs@salvationarmy.ca
230 Lightbourne Ave, Stratford, ON







The Library Board

Laura Bere
West Perth Public Library CEO



Have you ever been curious about the Library Board? Are you passionate about library services and looking for ways to contribute to your community?

What is a Library Board?

Ontario public libraries are governed by the Public Libraries Act, which outlines the responsibilities and requirements of the Library and its Board. The role of the Board is to direct library governance, create strategic goals and priorities for the library, and advocate for the library within the community.

Term & Time Commitment

Library Board positions are volunteer, and run in four-year terms. These terms coincide with municipal council terms. The Library Board attend 8-10 meetings per year.

Qualifications

The ideal Library Board member should:

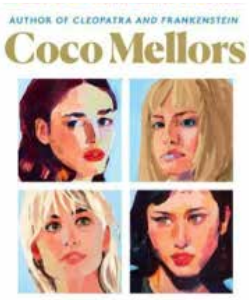
- Believe strongly in the benefits the library provides to the community
- Understand that the role of the library extends beyond books. It is a community hub with many resources, programs, and materials.
- Value the importance of literacy and reading
- Demonstrate pride and concern for the community
- Approach challenges and people with an open mind
- Work well in a team environment
-

If this sounds like you and you are interested in joining the board, you can find application forms on the municipal website. Please consider applying and giving back to your community this way!

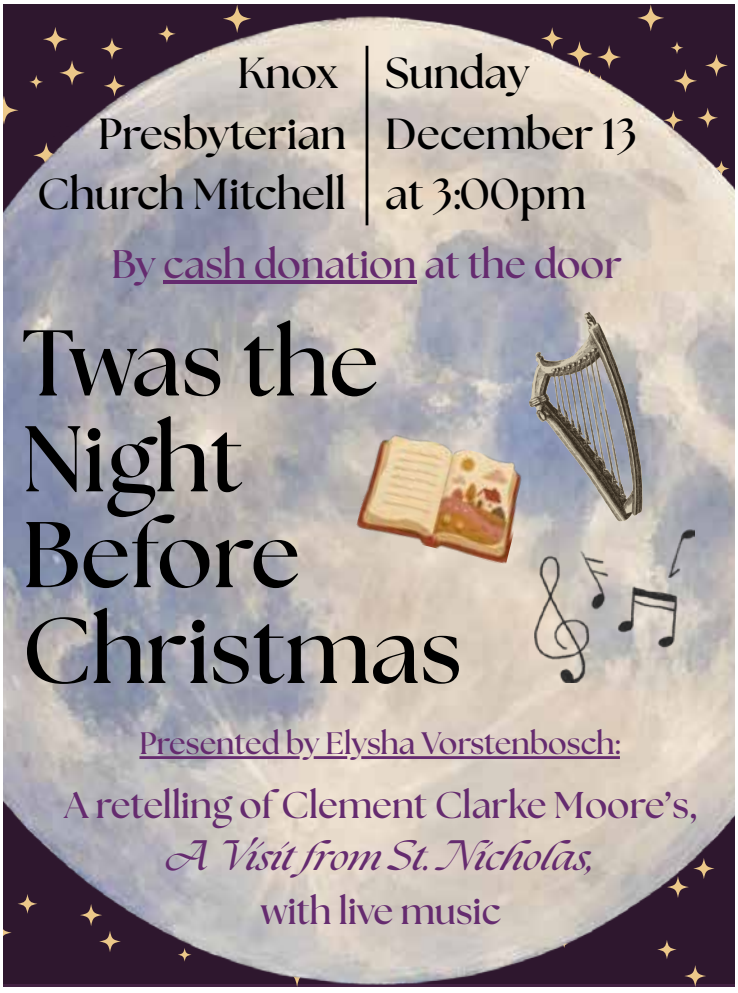
westperth.com/government-administration/boards-and-committees

Also keep an eye on the library website for updates on application deadlines.

What I'm currently reading:



Blue Sisters *by: Coco Mellors*
The Blue sisters have always been close. But it's been a year since one of the sisters died suddenly, and the remaining sisters must work through their grief and complicated relationships with each other. The writing in this book is gorgeous.



The New Bob Ross

David Doyle
Local Artist



This serial story began in the Heronry Issue 9. We took a break last month, and are picking up where we left-off in September, with Roger's base painting.

Roger came back to his easel the next day. The browny, yellowy squiggly-lined canvas was there, staring directly at him. It was almost calling him, "Roger, darling, here I am." Positioning himself in his chair, he swiveled the ipad around until it faced him. Soon he was back with New Bob for Lesson Two.



Roger's base-painting from Lesson 1

"Hello again everyone. Welcome to lesson number two. In the last session you got your canvas all prepared and ready to go. Today you are going to start mucking around, getting your hands dirty, so to speak."

"Let's define the areas of light and dark by painting in rough outlines for the sky, land and trees. Now, don't get your knickers in a knot here, I want you to be loosey-goosey, no fine brush work just yet"

Roger watched as New Bob grabbed his #2 brush and smashed and smeared colour onto the canvas in what appeared to be a haphazard approach. "There you go, we got sky, trees and land!"

It reminded Roger of his son's kindergarten finger paintings. "How on earth is this going to be a landscape?" With a great deal of doubt and trepidation, Roger followed along as instructed.

The sky was defined with a combination of Titanium white and Phthalo blue, but it was predominately white. The trees were put in along the one large vertical squiggle to the right side of the canvas. This was made with Cadmium yellow, Titanium white, and sap green, with the yellow being most prominent. Finally the land was slapped into place. It was made with a combination of Cadmium yellow and sap green. Again, the yellow was dominant.

"Doesn't that make a pretty picture? New Bob went on to explain that while these colours are our "defining elements" they would not remain the same. There will be additions as we go along." "Thank God", thought Roger as he struggled to understand what in the heck New Bob was doing. He wondered if the guy was on something when he made this video.

"We now need to add a bit of atmospheric effects," said New Bob. "Let's mix up lighter versions of these colours on our palette, like this." Roger again followed along. He now had, as instructed, three much lighter versions of the colours used for the sky, trees and land.

"Using your super good *New Bob 1 inch Brush*, blend the lighter sky colour along the bottom edges of your sky. Blend her real good, but leave at least the upper third as is." Roger did as he was told. "Now, the land. Take the lighter version of this colour and blend it in the upper half of the land. Nice!" "Lastly, we do the same for trees, but this time we are going to blend the lighter colour from left to right. The trees should be lightest at the top and left side." "Great work there buddy!" Roger was beginning to feel like a ten year old with all this pablum-like back-slapping.

"Here's where the fun begins. Load up my excellent *1 inch Brush* with that original sky colour. Load it up real good!" Roger wondered what was coming next. He was more than a little frightened.

“Now, let her fly!”

Holy crap! Roger almost jumped out of his lovely *New Bob Apron* as he watched paint being viscously splattered everywhere on the canvas. “Once we finish this we need to go back into our sky and blend out the splashes, but leave them everywhere else.”

Just like the other day, Roger did as was asked and once again paused the session to clean up the paint that covered almost everything within a ten foot radius of the easel. Some things were more difficult to clean than others. Roger was again ever so thankful that his wife wasn't here. “Okay folks. That's a wrap for this lesson. Let this beauty rest for a day before we get back to it. Gosh, I love it already. You have done great work.”



Roger's painting by the end of Lesson 2

If Roger knew anything about art history he may have realised that his landscape was taking on a distinctive De Kooning look to it. Luckily, he didn't know anything about art history and was by now feeling a little buoyed by the work he had just done.

...to be continued

Wartime Recipes

Constipation Cake

Doreen Skinner
Mitchell Resident



Ingredients
1 cup oatmeal
1 cup of hot water (pour over the oats and let cool for 20 minutes)
1 cup of brown sugar
½ cup butter
1 cup flour
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp cinnamon
1 cup chopped walnuts
1 cup raisins (I always soak raisins in hot water for a few minutes)

Bake at 325 degrees.

My mothers always iced this cake with a peanut/ brown sugar icing.

I was 7 years old on the day Canada declared war on Germany. Our family was on an outing in Springbank Park in London when suddenly there was an influx of boys on bikes waving copies of the London Free Press and shouting “Canada has declared war!”

We always came to town on Saturday nights (stores were all open until 11pm) and there was always jitney dancing (where couples were charged a dime to get on the dance floor) in the area that was situated where the Howie Morenz memorial park is now. My friends and I were way too young to dance, but we would sit in the bleachers and listen to the music and watch the dancers. The music was provided by Ross (Pinky) Pearce and his band. George Doerr on drums, Glen Diegel on a horn, and I can’t recall the names of the other players. We always loved to watch the dancers that were in the navy uniforms because those bell bottom trousers would fly around their ankles.

Perth County was “dry” at the time so there were a few bootleggers in town that did a good business. Sugar and gas were rationed and books of coupons were issued to everyone. Farm gas was not rationed and was a pink colour and you’d better not be caught with pink gas in your car or truck).

Endra the Ekans: Chapter 5

Kit Hotz
Age 10



As he watched the Scyther family from Chapter 4 fall, seemingly out of nowhere, a laser shot past Endra's head.

Endra quickly turned around and he could not believe his eyes. There, standing right in front of him, the one and only "Genesect" a mythical pokemon! Endra wondered why Genesect was trying to kill him, but he was ready to defend himself.

Genesect shot another laser at Endra. He quickly dodged, "So this is how you want to play, huh?" said Endra as he bit Genesect. There was a loud "Crunch!" as part of Endra's fang broke. "OW!" screamed Endra, and Genesect began to charge up an even more powerful laser. Endra knew this was bad. He only had ten minutes before Genesect's laser would be fully charged and he would be disintegrated! Endra charged at Genesect and head-butted him – which did nothing but knock Endra out.

Nine minutes later, Endra woke up, he was almost out of time. With only fifty seconds left, Endra had one more trick up his sleeve.

"Ok, that's it," said Endra, as he curled his tail around Genesect's leg, and pulled it off the tree branch. This made Genesect lose his balance, and as he fell a huge explosion occurred, which made Endra think Genesect was dead.

"Whoops!" Endra said, "I didn't mean to kill him! I wonder why he was shooting at me?"

Turning his head, he noticed he had finally reached the branch, that would let him transfer over to the top of the "Meowtain" that was directly beside the tree. Finally he had made progress and was closer to rescuing his sister.

Last Month's Puzzle Answers

Cryptnics: Round 2: Hidden Words – Answers
Legend: Definitions are "in quotations." Indicators are italicized. Answers in wordplay are bold. (#) are number of letters for the answer.

1. "Circled" *the reflecting* **pool** (4)
Answer = LOOP

2. *Pull back* **plug**, "water goes down the hatch" (4)
Answer = GULP

3."Ma doesn't like kitchen stains" (**nor pa**, *in retrospect*) (5) Answer = APRON

4."Farm vehicles" **rot; cart** *returned* (7)
Answer = TRACTOR

5. *Flipped* **pots sub** "for roadside rendezvous"
(3, 4) Answer = BUS STOP

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

Legion
Mitchell Branch 128

Remembrance Day, Nov 11

You are invited to join Mitchell Legion Branch 128 as we remember the sacrifices our veterans made for freedom.

10.45am The parade will leave from the Legion building

10:55am Assembly at the cenotaph & the singing of O Canada

11am Moment of silence

11:05am Service: this includes scripture, a reflection, the recitation of In Flanders Fields, and the laying of the wreaths.

Following the service all are invited to make your way to the Legion for lunch and fellowship.

Royal Canadian Legion, Mitchell Branch 128, 175 Andrew Street, Mitchell ON N0K 1N0 Hall: 519-348-4208 Canteen: 519-348-9607 Email: mitchell128legion@gmail.com

Legion
Mitchell Branch 128

A NIGHT, TO REMEMBER

PLEASE JOIN US ON NOVEMBER 6, 2026

Schedule of Events

4:30 COMMEMORATIVE CROSSWALK DEDICATION WITH COLOUR PARTY AT CENOTAPH

5:30 OPENING CEREMONY OF THE U13 BOY'S HOCKEY TOURNAMENT
MITCHELL BRANCH 128 COLOUR PARTY
DROPPING OF THE PUCK BY CAPTAIN (RET) ROBERT (BOB) HARLEY SB Stj, CD

6:30 COME ENJOY FOOD (By Donation), REFRESHMENTS AND FELLOWSHIP UPSTAIRS AT THE MITCHELL LEGION (CASUAL ATTIRE)

Opening Prayer of Remembrance by Legion Padre Bill Nye

7:00 UNVEILING OF THE CANADIAN FLAG DISPLAY FROM THE KUWAIT CITY CANADIAN EMBASSY (CIRCA IRAQ WAR 1990)

7:30 GUEST SPEAKER CAPTAIN (RET) ROBERT (BOB) HARLEY SB Sjt, CD

These events are open to the public and all are welcome.

Please Join us!

Royal Canadian Legion, Mitchell Branch 128, 175 Andrew Street, Mitchell ON N0K 1N0 Hall: 519-348-4208 Canteen: 519-348-9607 Email: mitchell128legion@gmail.com



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