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Canada Day festivities were 'hot, hot, hot'

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Canada Day crowds were on par with last year for most events across town, despite the heat.

Annandale National Historic Site saw the largest crowd, with an estimated 1,230 people. Programs were aimed at all age groups, with face painting, axe throwing, games and food trucks on the front lawn.

"It's great to celebrate Canada Day with so many people, even though we're 159 years old and hot, hot, hot," said Kate Bakos, Cultural Heritage Manager/Curator.

Besides the outdoor games, there were free snow cones, popcorn, cotton candy and cake for visitors. The snow cones and water were popular for helping combat the high temperatures.

"The main job today was making sure everyone had enough water," Bakos said.

Admission to Annandale House was free for the day, and a scavenger hunt took place to find 20 stuffed otters hidden throughout the building. Bakos pointed out the otter is the town's official animal, adding, "Turtlefest has created some confusion on that."

She emphasized the day wouldn't be possible without the many volunteers.

The Station Arts Centre's annual pancake breakfast drew about 540 people, a number similar to last year. Executive director and curator Tabitha Verbuyst was happy with the turnout in the heat. She did note that people didn't stay as long as usual, and surmised the temperatures were the reason.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 18



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

BRIDGE AND WALKWAY OPEN

A piper led the Legion colour party, dignitaries and members of the public across the Kinsmen Bridge after the official ribbon cutting on July 2. Besides the opening of the bridge, the occasion also marked the opening of the rejuvenated entrance to the Veteran's Memorial Walkway.

New Kinsmen Bridge opened on July 2

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Connections was a recurring theme that was repeated through various speakers as the rebuilt Kinsmen Bridge and adjoining Veteran's Memorial Walkway were opened last Thursday.

About 100 people turned out for the event to hear dignitaries and citizens speak prior to a piper and the Legion colour party leading the way across the bridge.

"The bridge is not the most important part of today," said Oxford MPP Ernie Hardeman. "The most important part is the community that built the bridge."

Mayor Deb Gilvesy paid heed to the history of the bridge, which is 138 years old.

"Originally built as a railway bridge, it was converted to a pedestrian crossing in the 1990s," she said. "Today, it serves approximately 500 to 700 pedestrians daily, and remains a vital connection between residential neighbourhoods and the downtown core."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



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New bridge and revitalized walkway opened last week

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

With the original budget for the bridge at \$5 million, Gilvesy said the project came in under budget at \$2.72 million, which included the restoration of the Veterans Memorial Walkway entrance.

Gilvesy spoke to the delay in the opening, which was originally scheduled for this winter.

"Like many infrastructure projects, this one faced its share of challenges - navigating an unusually cold and snowy winter, supply chain delays affecting material availability, permitting requirements, conservation and regulatory approvals, and the complexities that come with working around watercourses," she said. "The transportation of heavy equipment during seasonal load restrictions also required careful planning and coordination."

With the bridge replacement coming in under budget, Gilvesy said it was important to include the walkway entrance improvements in 2026 rather than closing the bridge in the future to complete the work. The changes to the Veterans Memorial Walkway were proposed by the Bridge Street Re-Imagination Committee and then endorsed by council.

"It is fitting that we honour the men and women who have fought, and continue to serve, to protect the freedoms we enjoy, and the country we proudly call home," she said. "I am thankful to council for supporting to

preserve a piece of the historical bridge that has aged in place, and weathered with time, to grace this entrance."

A new sign, featuring the poppy motif and designed by Jessica Phelps of the town's communication department, was unveiled as part of the ceremony.

Gilvesy said many have questioned why the bridge needed to be replaced. She explained that provincially mandated engineering inspections identified that the bridge would need replacement as early as 2019 due to deterioration. In the process that followed, public input was to save the historic stone piers that support the bridge.

A plaque will be installed adjacent to the girder from the old bridge on the walkway, telling of the bridge's history and that of the Great Western Railway. Local historian Joan Weston was thanked for her input into the research.

"Today, we celebrate more than the opening of a bridge," Gilvesy said. "We celebrate the

BRIDGE FACTS

- The Kinsmen Bridge is 106 meters or 347 feet in length
- The bridge consists of three sections, measuring 35 meters, or 114 feet each
- From the bridge deck to the park below is a distance of nearly 20 meters, or 64 feet.

preservation of our history, the responsible investment in our infrastructure, and the collaboration of residents, staff, council, community partners and volunteers who helped make this project possible."

Pat Carroll, who represented the Kinsmen Club, said the group was honoured to still have its name on the bridge. He recounted the story of Participark in the valley below the bridge, saying Tom Logan led the club in building the activity stations in 1979. Carroll joined the club in 1981, and helped repair vandal damage to the stations.

As an engineer, Carroll saw the initial estimates for replacing the bridge, which came in at \$5 million, and thought the price was high. He put together an estimate that was significantly lower and was pleased that the town purchased the structure from Algonquin Bridge, whom he spoke with when preparing the estimate.

"We are pleased the bridge still bears our name," he said of the club. "We are pleased there are many other places our name can be

seen around town, showing we are meeting our club mandate 'Serving the Community's Greatest Need'."

Legion President Tom Brown also spoke about the connections to the bridge opening and how it links the future to the past. He was thankful the town included the walkway as part of the project.

"This walkway will stand as a daily reminder that freedom is never free," he said."

Brown was hopeful that the walkway would carry the message of remembrance throughout the year, inspire conversations between grandparents and grandchildren, and encourage young children to learn about the sacrifices that were made.

Ruth Ann Helsdon, representing the Hickory Hills Residents' Association, paid tribute to resident Darryl Carter, who works at St. John's Anglican Church. Since Carter walks everywhere, he had an extra distance to walk with the bridge closed. Helsdon joked he wore out two pairs of shoes while the bridge was closed, and it's fitting he is one of the first to walk across it.

"He loves to walk and will be glad the bridge is open," she said.

A piper and the Legion colour party then led dignitaries and town residents across the bridge after the ceremony.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

An official ribbon cutting opened the Kinsmen Bridge on July 2. Taking part were, left to right: Kinsmen Pat Carroll, Oxford MPP Ernie Hardeman, Legion President Tom Brown, Mayor or Deb Gilvesy and Legion member Joe Brown.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

A good-sized crowd was on hand for the ceremonies marking the Kinsmen Bridge official opening. The occasion was celebrated with cake for those who walked across.



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EDITORIAL

Don't minimize the impacts of CUSMA

With the Americans making it official that they won't renew the Canada-US-Mexico Agreement, Canadians are left wondering what's next.

Since the official announcement on July 1, which wasn't a surprise, it starts a 10-year wind-down of the agreement. The possibilities for what could occur are endless and include side deals and annual negotiations.

More importantly, we need to question the local impacts. As Tillsonburg's economy moved away from tobacco several decades ago, a number of automotive plants opened up in town. Those plants are a vital part of a supply chain that feeds Canadian and American automotive plants. There is no doubt recent American protectionism is having an impact. The stagnation of automotive plants in Ontario is definitely fallout from this, and although there hasn't been a huge impact, it could still come.

The recent opening of food manufacturing plants in Tillsonburg is great diversification in the local economy. However, there are unofficial reports some of the food is also exported to the United States.

And then there's agriculture. Discussions on trade with the United States often miss the fact the export market is important for local producers of a number of commodities.

Some, overwhelmed by the elbows-up

movement and recent announcements of trade agreements with other countries, might not think trade with the United States is a big deal. They need to give their heads a shake.

Any trade with other continents would necessitate using Canadian harbours. Industry analysis of the country's harbours shows they are operating at capacity, and have little room for additional exports. Another analysis of global harbours finds Canada's receive low ratings, with Halifax being the exception.

This is not to say finding new trading partners is a bad thing, but a dose of reality doesn't accompany the announcements. Building critical infrastructure, like harbours, takes years. And, progress reports show it often takes more than a year for work of this magnitude to get off the ground. Diversification of trading partners is great, but it's a long-term solution, not a short-term one.

Not all is doom and gloom locally, as the Volkswagen PowerCo plant in St. Thomas is a potential bright spot for local industries.

Our geography in Tillsonburg puts us within 160 kilometers of the United States, compared to several thousand kilometers to Europe or Asia. The U.S. will remain a dominant part of our economy, and shouldn't be dismissed, nor should the importance of CUSMA.

tillsonburgpost.com



Roses.

(STACIE EDEN PHOTO)

The flight of the slinky and other manse misadventures



WRITER'S
CORNER

NORMA COLLIS

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Our home in the church manse held many possibilities for an "adventurous" minister's child.

The sweeping staircase in the front hall ended with a sort of Juliet Balcony at the very top of the stairs. Our piano sat in the spacious downstairs hallway and the balcony gave the viewer a bird's eye view of the piano and of who ever was perched on the piano bench.

I remember once gazing down onto the head of a wailing "bride to be" whose "husband to be" was a no-show. I was sworn to a vow of secrecy as to that event and to the

names of the participants, or in this case no-participants.

One Christmas, I found a slinky toy under the tree with my name on it. For anyone who remembers these coils of metal "fun" it was possible to get the slinky to "walk" down a flight of stairs if you started it off just right.

After perfecting this "stunt" I began to look for other more creative ways to use my new toy.

At some point in time, I discovered that I could let the slinky drop from the height of the Juliet balcony and by holding it just right, it would graze the top of the head of the poor unsuspecting occupant of the piano bench far below.

I practiced this maneuver on my sister as she sat practising some difficult piano piece. She was working on the complicated fingering of a piece titled "The Flight of the Bumblebee." I'm not sure she was even aware of the "aerial attack" on her coiffure. If she did realize what I was up to, she wisely chose to ignore the "Flight of the Slinky" as she bravely tackled the musical task at hand.

Some time later, my mother hosted a

church ladies meeting at our home. The good ladies were all seated around the perimeter of our living room and dining room. The living room door opened into the front hallway and the programme for that evening included a good old-fashioned hymn sing.

The pianist that evening was somewhat more enthusiastic than she was accomplished. She pounded the keys of our trusty old family piano, and used the volume pedal with great gusto. I knew if I ever pounded on the piano like that, I would be scolded and perhaps even be obliged to spend time on the "time out chair" in my dad's office. This place of punishment was much dreaded by me as it was so boring to spend time there. There were no books to read, no paper to draw on, and probably by design, that chair was the most uncomfortable piece furniture I had ever been obliged to perch on.

I was scandalized that this strange woman should be allowed to behave in such a way as she battered the keys on our instrument. I knew we couldn't banish her to the "time out chair" so I retrieved my trusty slinky from the toy shelf in my bedroom. I have

no idea what I was thinking when I let that toy spiral down from above. Perhaps, I was hoping that the enthusiastic pianist would think it was the "hand of God" asking her to please calm down, and to cease and desist.

I skillfully controlled my toy so that I didn't actually touch the woman. I was also sure that no meeting attendees would see my antics as everyone was joyfully participating from the safety of the adjoining rooms.

What I had not counted on was the fact that my mother was sitting in the only chair that faced the hallway. She had a front row and center view of my attempts to "turn down the volume."

The next day, my mother quietly admonished me for my behaviour. For some reason, she seemed to be having trouble to not laugh. I was fully expecting to be given a prolonged sentencing on the "time out chair." Much to my astonishment, life returned to normal and to my knowledge, the offending pianist never again graced our piano bench.

Norma Collis is a Tillsonburg author of several books, including "Tales from Holly Cottage".

Memories of Tillson Ave Public School

TILLSONBURG CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

JASON PANKRATZ

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Well, the school year has ended for students in town. For a “small town”, Tillsonburg had several elementary public schools throughout its history. How many can you remember?

I was reminiscing with friends a bit ago about our years at Tillson Avenue Public School. It no longer exists. It was torn down in the spring of 2015. It used to occupy the green space just south of the Livingston Centre on Tillson Avenue.

It was opened in 1950, and was just a line of classrooms parallel to the street. Then in 1954, an addition to the southeast was built. I am not sure if the gymnasium was built during this second phase or if the new wing was just added on. I do remember there being a “secret door” that led from the back of the gym through a supply closet to the new addition.

If you went there, there is a lot to remember about the geography and layout of the site: the sandy marble pits near the music portable, the forest of trees with their knotty roots that would trip you while running around them, the jungle gym with its orange cylinder slide that would both burn and give you static shock, the wooden octagon which was totally a wrestling ring but could never officially be used as such, the teetertotters, the tractor tire hoops, and many more examples of a “playground” of yesteryear. Oh, and the little hill at on the tarvia that we would race our bikes up and down on in good weather, and slide down during the winter. Remember the “redass” wall? Well, maybe it’s just my generation who would.

I was the last official teacher to teach in the school for



The school in the 1950s.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Thames Valley District School Board. My classroom was located in the last room of the east wing to the south. My windows faced Annandale School. By then the portables were gone and a beautiful line of maple trees lined that side of the building and they still do! I taught adult education in that room from 2008 to 2014. Those were some of my most favourite teaching years. So many characters and stories. Not to mention the amazing people I taught with.

Just before the site closed, I went in early one day to take pictures of all the whole school. No one was there except the custodian. Of course, it had changed greatly since my days as an elementary student. The two boys’ washrooms had lost their large round concrete wash basins. But all the water fountains were there and still functioning and one, at its original height. The green and yellow curtains on the stage in the gym were still the same, likely from its opening. I kind of wish I had taken them.

I did get one specific memento from the site before it came down. I was given permission to take the letters from the front of the school “Tillson Avenue 90-96”. Memories are innumerable and intangible, but these letters are taking up space in a tote in my basement.

The basement of the school was fascinating because it was huge and really deep. It held the boiler that heated

the school. It also had storage spaces. Prior the years I went there, the basement incinerator was still installed. This was the feature at the front of the school at the main doors – the incinerator chimney. People have told me that in the years after the incinerator was taken out, people would watch the bats fly out of the chimney during the summer evenings.

I also remember the juice fridge being down there, on the one side, when I delivered the juice at lunchtime as a kid. I’d do almost anything to drink the grape-flavoured option, with its slightly metallic aftertaste because of the tinfoil top that you had to peel back.

The public-school years are formative for our growth. Not all memories are positive, but those that are will truly last a lifetime, much like the people that we grew up with. The school is gone; some people have gone but memories will continue. I encourage you to reminisce, recall and record your stories (the true 3-R’s of education). Share them with young people so they know what things were like when we were kids. Memories beget memories and that is how history is preserved and perpetuated.

Dr. Jason Pankratz is a local historian and published author of several articles and books, including Tillsonburg at 200.

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POLICE BRIEFS

Oxford OPP investigates fatal collision near Tillsonburg

Members of the Oxford Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are investigating a two-vehicle collision near Tillsonburg that resulted in a fatality.

On Saturday, July 4, at approximately 12:45 p.m., officers responded to reports of a collision at the intersection of Plank Line and Ostrander Road, involving a motorcycle and a pickup truck towing a recreational vehicle (RV).

As a result of the collision, the motorcyclist, a 50-year-old male from Woodstock, was transported to hospital and later pronounced deceased.

The investigation by Oxford OPP remains ongoing, with assistance from collision reconstructionists and technical collision investigators from the OPP Traffic Incident Management Enforcement (TIME) team.

The intersection of Plank Line and Ostrander Road was closed for several hours while emergency crews and investigators were on scene but has since reopened.

Anyone who may have witnessed the collision or has dashcam or surveillance footage from the area at the time of the incident is asked to contact the Oxford OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

Fatal ATV crash in Norwich Township



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

One individual is deceased after an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) crash in Oxford County.

On Friday, July 3, at approximately 8:15 a.m., members of the Oxford detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), along with fire, and emergency medical services responded to the report of an ATV and rider in a ditch near the intersection of Middletown Line and Milldale Road in Norwich Township.

The 42-year-old resident of Otterville was pronounced deceased at the scene.

Milldale Road between Middletown Line and Oxford Road 13 was closed for several hours while Oxford OPP, along with members of the West Region OPP Traffic Incident Management and Enforcement Team, investigated the collision.

Anyone with information is being asked to contact Oxford OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

Should you wish to remain anonymous, you may call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-

222-8477 (TIPS) or visit ontariocrimes-toppers.ca.

Updates will be provided as they become available.

Drug trafficking arrest in Tillsonburg

One individual has been arrested and charged as the result of a drug trafficking investigation in the Town of Tillsonburg.

On July 2, members of the Oxford Community Street Crime Unit (CSCU) supported by Middlesex, Elgin, Haldimand, and Norfolk CSCUs, along with members of Oxford OPP, arrested an individual as part of an ongoing CDSA drug-trafficking investigation in the Town of Tillsonburg.

Leigh Buchanan, a 35-year-old resident of Tillsonburg has been charged with the following Criminal Code offences:

- Possession of a Schedule 1 Substance for the Purpose of Trafficking -Opioid
- Possession of Property Obtained by Crime Under \$5000

The accused is being held in custody awaiting a bail hearing before the Ontario Court of Justice, located in Woodstock.

"Every arrest made towards drug trafficking in Oxford County is a win for our communities. Oxford OPP and neighbouring Crime Units work collectively and tirelessly to investigate problem areas in our communities. We are grateful to the members of the public who bring these concerns forward," said Oxford OPP Detachment Commander Inspector Tony Hymers.

If you have a concern for drug use or trafficking in Oxford County, please contact Oxford OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

If you prefer to remain anonymous, please call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477)

Impaired driver charged in Tillsonburg

On Saturday June 27, at approximately 1:30 a.m., members of the Oxford detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) were on general patrol in the Town of Tillsonburg when they observed a vehicle being driven dangerously on John Pound Road.

As a result of the investigation, Evan Luce a 36-year-old resident of St. Thomas, was charged with:

- Operation While Impaired
- Operation While Impaired - Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) 80 plus
- Dangerous Operation of a Motor Vehicle
- Drive Motor Vehicle Without Proper Rear Lights
- Fail to Surrender Insurance Card
- Fail to Surrender Permit
- Drive Motor Vehicle with Unsealed Container of Liquor

The accused has been released from custody and is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice, in Woodstock, on August 4.

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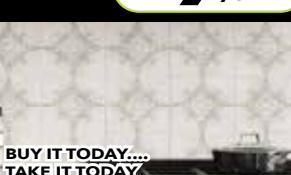
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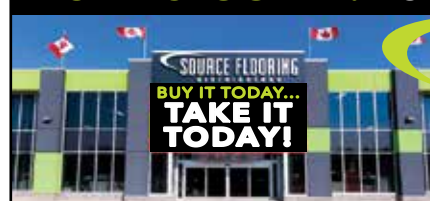
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Oxford MP appointed to justice critic role

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Oxford MP Arpan Khanna says he will be creative while holding the government to account in his new role as the Official Opposition's Shadow Minister for Justice and Attorney General of Canada.

Khanna's appointment was announced among other shuffles in the Conservative benches by Opposition Leader Pierre Poilievre on June 30. Khanna will also continue to serve as the Conservative Party's National Outreach Chair.

As a former lawyer, Khanna brings legal experience and a strong record of advocating for common-sense justice reform. In Parliament, he was active on the file, introducing the Jail Not Bail Act, which championed tougher measures to keep repeat violent offenders behind bars and restore accountability to Canada's justice system.

Interviewed the next day, Khanna was upfront that the new role will be a challenge in the face of what he called the "manufactured majority" in Parliament and changes in the structure of the committees. But he said he will do everything he can to fight for a justice system that protects victims, secures the borders, upholds the rights and freedoms of law-abiding Canadians and ensures violent criminals face meaningful con-

sequences.

"I will use every tool in the toolbox to fight for Canadians," he said.

The shadow cabinet is a team of Opposition MPs who are assigned roles to monitor government ministers and offer alternative policies.

"I look forward to getting to work with our Conservative team on behalf of Canadians. Our message is simple: Canadians deserve a justice system that protects the innocent, supports victims, respects the rights of law-abiding Canadians, and puts public safety first. We are ready to do the work to restore confidence in our justice system."

Khanna's portfolio overlaps with the Shadow Minister for Public Safety Frank Caputo's on the firearms file. This is a large issue in rural Canada where gun owners are critical of Liberal policies that target them instead of criminals. Khanna said he will "defend lawful gun owners while keeping criminals off the streets."

Although his responsibilities have increased at the national level, Khanna said his priority is still Oxford residents.

"My commitment to the people of Oxford remains unwavering," he said. "It is the honour of a lifetime to represent our community in Parliament, and I will continue fighting every day for the families, workers, farmers, and businesses that make Oxford such a great place to call home."



Arpan Khanna.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

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COMMUNITY UPDATE

Notices

Public Notice: Intent to Declare Lands as Surplus

Tillsonburg Council will consider declaring a portion of municipally owned land on West Town Line, within the Potter's Gate subdivision, as surplus to the Town's needs at its July 13, 2026 meeting. The property includes a portion of Block 59 (Plan 41M-372). If approved, part of the land would be sold for residential development, while a portion would be retained for a future neighbourhood playground. Residents with questions or concerns are encouraged to share their feedback before or at the July 13 Council meeting.

For more information visit the Town's website: www.tillsonburg.ca/news

Bid Opportunities

RFP 2026-010
Consulting Services for Stormwater Management Master Plan
Submission Deadline: July 28, 2026 at 2:00 PM

RFT 2026-004
Construction of Sidewalk Connectivity
Submission Deadline: July 27, 2026 at 2:00 PM

Visit tillsonburg.bidsandtenders.ca.



Thinking About Adding a Shed?

A new shed or storage building can be a great addition to your backyard. Before you start, be sure to review the applicable zoning requirements to ensure your project meets Town regulations and stays on track from the planning stage to completion.

For detailed information, visit www.tillsonburg.ca/planyourproject.

Want to Hear It First?

Stay in the know with the latest Town news, public notices, community updates, and upcoming events. By subscribing to News & Notices on the Town website, you'll get important information delivered straight to your inbox. Visit www.tillsonburg.ca/news and subscribe today so you never miss an update.

Soak Up the Fun, Not Too Much Sun

Whether you're spending the day at Lake Lisgar Water Park, enjoying one of Tillsonburg's playgrounds, or taking part in outdoor activities around town, remember to practice sun safety. Seek shade when possible, wear a hat and sunscreen, stay hydrated, and protect your skin during peak sun hours.

Did you know the Tillsonburg Community Centre is Sun Aware Certified? If you have questions about sun safety, Community Centre staff are happy to help you learn how to stay protected while enjoying the season.



Culture Corner

Stay Out a Little Later

Looking for a different way to spend your evening? Culture After Hours returns on Wednesday, July 9, with both the Annandale National Historic Site and Station Arts Centre staying open until 7:00 p.m.

Take your time exploring exhibits, discovering local stories, and enjoying art and heritage in a relaxed atmosphere. Whether you're stopping in after work, meeting a friend, or simply looking for something new to do, Culture After Hours offers the perfect midweek outing.

Because great cultural experiences don't have to end at 5.

Summer Drop-In Programming: Let's Celebrate!

Join us this summer as we explore celebrations from around the world. Through stories, crafts, music, and hands-on activities, participants will discover how different cultures celebrate special occasions and traditions.

July 7-10 and July 14-17 | \$10 per visit

Ages 3-7: 10:00-11:00 a.m. (Parent or caregiver attendance required)

Ages 8-12: 1:00-3:00 p.m.



Active Living & Learning Opportunities

Make a Splash This Summer

The indoor pool may be closed, but your favourite aquatic programs aren't taking a break! Many programs have moved outdoors to Lake Lisgar Water Park, giving participants a fun chance to enjoy familiar activities in a whole new setting.

Whether you're joining an aquatic fitness class, participating in a registered program, or looking to build your swimming skills, there's plenty happening at the waterpark. Swimming lessons are also being offered throughout the summer, making it a great time to learn, practice, and gain confidence in the water. Visit www.tillsonburg.ca/guide for the full list of programs.

And if you're just looking to cool off, Lake Lisgar Water Park is open daily from 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM.





MONSIGNOR O'NEIL GRADUATION

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)

Monsignor J.H. O'Neil Catholic School students were honoured and received their graduation certificates as they moved on to Grade 9. (Top photo) Giann Brillantes proudly displays his graduation certificate to the audience after receiving it. (Bottom photo) Student Carlos Hager receives his graduation certificate from teacher Luke Schonberger. The ceremony was held on June 23 at the school.

Cleanup coming for Norwich's African Methodist Episcopal cemetery

LUKE EDWARDS

Post Contributor

An important piece of history in Norwich will be receiving some much-needed attention.

Norwich councillors have approved spending \$16,000 on upkeep efforts for the African Methodist Episcopal cemetery, a heritage designated site near Otterville. The money will be used to remove a few dead and dying trees, conduct some branch trimming and generally clean up the cemetery.

"It's a very important part of our township, it's very significant historically," said Coun. Karl Toews, who first brought the issues at the cemetery to the attention of staff.

"It needs to be in better condition."

CAO Matt Smith said a site visit by staff confirmed the need for some work.

"Staff went down there and investigated and found out that, yes, there are indeed a number of trees that are in pretty poor shape and have not re-

ceived the TLC that they should have had over a little while," he said.

Because of the heritage designation on the property, the township will have to bring in a specialized climbing arborist to deal with the trees. That ups the cost a bit, and given the township already has a shoestring \$6,000 budget for cemetery maintenance, staff came to councillors with the request. Smith said they plan on absorbing the extra costs within the existing budget, possibly using some year-end surplus dollars to cover it.

The cemetery is one of the few remaining Black pioneer burial grounds in Ontario. As free Black people and escaped slaves fleeing persecution in the United States settled in the Otterville area, trustees of the African Methodist Episcopal Church purchased the lot, west of present day Church Street, in 1856. The church and cemetery operated until the late 1880s, with the church disappearing sometime in the early 20th century.

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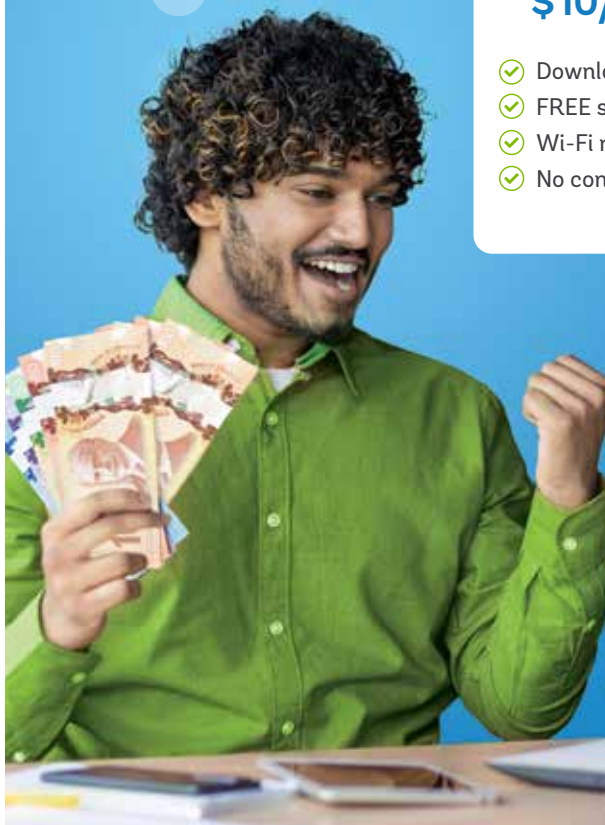


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Library movie program extends local tradition



OCL BOOK TALK

MATTHEW GRIFFIS

Oxford County Library

When Broadway Cinemas closed last year, our community changed.

For the first time in decades Tillsonburg was without a local movie theatre. Now, to see a movie in a modern theatre, one must drive to Simcoe, Woodstock, or London. That movie theatres still exist somewhere is a comfort; public entertainment brings people together and creates a shared experience. But not everyone can leave town easily. So, if you want to see a newer movie in a theatre-like setting, what options are left in Tillsonburg? You might be surprised.

But first, let's go back about a hundred years. Most popular entertainment was live, and the most popular form was vaudeville. Vaudeville mixed small musical, dramatic, and comedy acts into a live variety show that ran in a loop. It wasn't Shakespeare; it was more like television

but without the box.

By the 1920s, even small towns had at least one venue for vaudeville shows, whose performers toured in circuits. But with the arrival of "talkies" (movies with synchronous, prerecorded sound) vaudeville would quickly vanish.

By the 1930s, most vaudeville theatres would convert to movie houses that played films all day and evening. Even in the Great Depression, many people were willing to pay a few cents to see a "picture" starring the likes of Clark Gable, Ginger Rogers, or Bette Davis.

It's no surprise then that by 1939, Tillsonburg had at least three movie theatres. The earliest was the White Star, which opened in 1913 at 114 Broadway. Originally a vaudeville house, "the Star" ran early silent films like "The Birth of a Nation" and many of Mary Pickford's films. In 1923, its performers were among the first to perform live on local radio. In 1924, a promotional reel made by Ford Motors and filmed in Tillsonburg had its first showing at the Star. In 1931, after installing a sound system for "talkies", the theatre reopened as the Capitol. But with its wooden seats and tin ceiling, the small Capitol was not as comfortable as its competitors and would eventually close. Its screen, projector, and seats were sold in 1956.

Tillsonburg's other two movie theatres were the Oxford and the Strand, both of

which opened in the late 1930s. The Oxford's front entrance stood at 51 Broadway (now Birds Golf Sports Lounge). At over 500 seats, the Oxford Theatre was larger than the Capitol. Some of Tillsonburg's most senior residents recall seeing "Gone With the Wind" at the Oxford during the film's original run. Although it's unclear exactly when the theatre closed, its building went up for sale in 1957 and would later become the Broadway Lanes bowling alley. The building is now home to several businesses.

The Strand, however, outlasted the others. It opened in 1939 and closed in 1992. For more than 50 years its bright marquee at 169 Broadway was visible from blocks away. The Strand was where Tillsonburg residents saw many famous films for the first time, including Cecil B. DeMille's "The Greatest Show on Earth".

Although the theatre is gone, its building survives. It reopened as a bank in 1994, later served as a pizza restaurant, and even later as office space. The opening of Broadway Cinemas in the mid-1990s helped fill the hole the Strand left when it closed.

Today, sometimes the idea of viewing movies in public seems as outdated as a rotary telephone. So many of us just watch large screens at home. But public forms of entertainment still have value. They bring people from the same community together and create a shared experience.

In the heyday of movie houses, people would remember exactly when and where they saw a culturally important film for the first time. Home viewing can be more convenient, but does it have the same impact? Will we tell our grandchildren, for example, on what model television or by which streaming service we saw a particular movie for the first time?

But more to the point: What does any of this have to do with Tillsonburg's library?

Well, if you want to see films in a local, theatre-like setting, for now we're the place. We have a large screen, comfortable chairs, and an HD media projector. We have a license to show movies that have recently been released to the home market. Admission is free, and we offer complimentary refreshments. We're not in the movie business; we just want to offer programs that meet important needs in the community. By showing movies publicly, we're continuing a tradition that began here more than a century ago.

Our movie afternoons usually occur on the last Tuesday afternoon of each month. The next is scheduled for Tuesday, July 28th at 1p.m., and we'll screen the award-winning historical drama "Hamnet" (2025). We look forward to seeing you there.

Matthew Griffis is the Digital Literacy and Local History Technician at Oxford County Library's Tillsonburg Branch.

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TILLSONBURG COUNCIL BRIEFS

Council gives go-ahead to apartment expansion

Tillsonburg council approved, in principle, a zone change that will allow a 16-unit addition to a 12-unit apartment building at 12 Hale Street.

The change included a holding provision because the town's water supply allocation was maxed out.

Pickleball tournaments

A request for booking times on the town's pickleball courts from the Tillsonburg Pickleball Club was granted as a pilot project for three courts.

The club requested to book four courts on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday mornings from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 5 to 8 p.m. The purpose of the request was to sup-

port league play, clinics and skill development, tournaments, and ladder play.

The town's Recreation and Sports Advisory Committee instead suggested allowing three courts to be included in the agreement, which the council endorsed.

Freedom of Information policy changes

Changes to the town's Freedom of Information policy were made in response to

changes in provincial legislation.

Trisha McKibbin, Manager of Legislative Services/Clerk, explained that the biggest changes are that statutory timelines will now be calculated using business days instead of calendar days, and the deadline for responses will be capped at 45 days instead of 30.

McKibbin said the changes are part of Bill 97, and more changes will be introduced in the coming months.

It's not too late to book some extra summer fun for kids

ROBIN KRAFFT

Post Correspondent

Whether children look forward to the summer break, or they miss their friends and routines, the holiday offers many opportunities for new experiences that broaden their horizons. Follow their interests or suggest something new and undiscovered among the variety of summer programs available in Tillsonburg and beyond.

Many of the summer camp programs are almost full, but it doesn't hurt to check in, and some programs offer single day registration.

The popular Town of Tillsonburg Summer Camp programs at the community center keep kids active, and include lots of time outdoors. Junior camp is known for fun themes like Wild West, Outer Space and Jungle Safari. Camp programs for older children include sports, explorations around town, and visits to the waterpark. They may have a few spaces left.

Annandale House still has space in all four

weeks of their History Camp programs. The cost is \$166.25 per week for five full days of camp. Activities are geared toward children ages 7 – 12, “with fun, hands-on experiences that bring history to life in exciting and engaging ways,” said Curator Kate Bakos. Themes include Canada Welcomes the World, Life on the Farm, Adventures Unlimited, and Ticket to Ride.

Sign up using your Connect2Rec account: <https://townoftillsonburg.perfectmind.com>

Or call the museum at 519-842-2294 for assistance.

“What makes our camp special is the balance we offer,” said Bakos. “We do include engaging historical content for those who enjoy learning and exploring the past, but we also make sure there's plenty of time for unstructured play, games, and just having fun with friends. Our goal is to create an experience that feels both meaningful and enjoyable, so campers can learn something new while also simply being

kids.”

The Station Arts Centre summer camps are almost full, but they still have openings in their younger craft camp program, and some select single day registrations (\$45/day or \$220/week). Featuring a variety of art projects, crafts, games, outdoor activities, and special themed experiences, their popular camps provide children with social, creative, and confidence-building opportunities.

“What makes our camps especially unique is that they're hosted right here at the Station Arts Centre, where campers are surrounded by inspiring galleries, local artwork and working artists,” said Curator Tabitha Verbyust. “It's a creative environment that encourages imagination, curiosity, and a lifelong appreciation for the arts. If families are still looking for summer activities, we'd love to welcome them. Registration is available by contacting the Station Arts Centre at 519-842-6151 or visiting www.stationarts.ca.”

The Oxford County Library offers a wide range of programming at its various branches, and Tillsonburg residents can join in at our own library, or take a day trip to a nearby town to take part in programs throughout the county.

Join the TD Summer Reading Club and Splash Into Stories, an all-ages program that runs until August 22. Logging your reading achievements and earning badges is a fun way to reinforce literacy skills over the summer break. Check out the program events calendar online, by location, to see what might be of interest.

“The Tillsonburg Branch of Oxford County Library has free summer programming for families with children of all ages,” Katelyn Bennett, Literacy Program Specialist said.

“With many drop-in opportunities available throughout July and August, families can stop in anytime. Check out our program calendar at ocl.net for our full program line up, including Rainbow Fish Fun, Summer Santa Storytime, and Art in the Park held at Coronation Park – 19 Van Street in Tillsonburg. We look forward to seeing you!”

Food Literacy fun with a youth nutritionist, Gaming Club, Story Walks, SpongeBob SquarePants Terrariums, Ocean Crafts and Facts, Shark Friday, Splash Into Drawing, and the ever-popular Shake, Rattle and Read might jump-start a whole range of activities that you can follow up with at home.

At Theatre Tillsonburg, the summer camp programs are almost full, with access to updated information on their website. Camp Director Charlotte Van Roestel said that “Some parents put us on their calendar a year in advance because the kids love it so much!”

The specialty camp offers children the full theatre production experience, from learning lines, dance, choreography, and costumes to a Friday performance on the live stage under the lights for their friends and family.

“Everything we do, games, activities, crafts, has a theatrical or dramatic component,” Van Roestel said. “Each group has a play written for them, and they practice and then perform at the end of the week. The staff are very excited. We get to take what we enjoyed as children and teens and share that experience with them.”

From beach days to play at the park, visits to the gallery or museum, dropping in to programs or entire weeks of summer camp, a safe, enjoyable, and inspiring summer is yours to explore in Tillsonburg and throughout Oxford County.

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Soccer's progress on the international stage mirrored at home in Tillsonburg

JEFF TRIBE

Post Correspondent

The beautiful game continues to look even better in Tillsonburg, mirroring recent advancements on the international stage.

"We've gone further than we've ever gone," said Tillsonburg Minor Soccer Club (TMSC) President Frank Deutsch, citing Canada's first men's team world cup wins, a tie and advancement to the round of 16. "So that's awesome."

Growing up as a 'soccer guy' in a nation which had far more 'hockey guys' at the time, Deutsch is pleased to see this year's World Cup encourage more recognition of the men's game and soccer overall than during any point in our history. The Canadian women's team has already forged a strong legacy, their male counterparts made their presence felt with an exciting World Cup run concluding with a tough loss to Morocco.

Against that backdrop, building critical competitive soccer mass to select talent from and provide opportunity to grow and develop toward the women's World Cup next year and the men's event three years beyond that continues at the grassroots level.

TMSC serves over 1,400 soccer players in Tillsonburg, house league, competitive and adult programs working together to provide a variety of opportunities on the Tillsonburg Minor Soccer Park's multiple pitches.

"We use every field every night," said Chair of House League Operations Jenn Bakker. "Monday to Friday, we utilize every field that is there."

Roughly 750 youth are involved at the house league level she says, beginning with a parents-and-tots program for 18-month to two-year-olds, and running up to U15. In general terms, players up to the U6 level are on the field once a week, those beyond, twice.

Participation suffered during COVID says Bakker, but numbers are continuing to rebuild.

"We had the largest U15 program group we've had in 20 years."

TMSC also offers adult programming. Fridays are reserved for co-ed play in A, B and C divisions, the first the most competitive, the second less so and the latter, more for recreational for those over 35. A dedicated Sunday evening women's league continues to grow, expanding to six teams from four during its inaugural 2025 sea-

son.

"And we're probably going up to at least eight next year," said Bakker. "It's been a really popular thing."

"It gives them a bit of women time, fun and exercise," added Bakker, who along with Kalleigh Bakker, is one of three mother-daughter tandems on her squad.

TMSC offers two house league seasons, the summer program running from May to mid-August, a fall counterpart beginning then and going through to mid-October. As well as being stand-alone opportunities, the house league can be a feeder and call-up system for TMSC competitive program teams playing in the Elgin-Middlesex District Soccer League (EMDSL).

"We work well together," said Deutsch. "If kids want to do more, they move on to the competitive side."

Under Chair of Competitive Program Mark Locker, TMSC fielded two boys' teams in each of the U8, U9 and U10 EMDSL Divisions this year, along with U11, U13 and U15 squads. There are two U10 girls' entries along with representation in the U8, U13 and U16 age groups.

"Five years ago, we had three competitive teams," said Deutsch. "And now we have 15."

Beyond numerical growth, the TMSC club is striving to promote individual and collective player development, in line with its motto of creating better people as well as soccer players. The organization has sourced the services of Jose De Figueiredo's Academy Garrincha under club head coach John Twinem to enhance soccer skills through training and coaching clinics.

In building and supporting competitive opportunity for area players, the club is also providing a strong base for those who may wish to take their game to an even higher level.

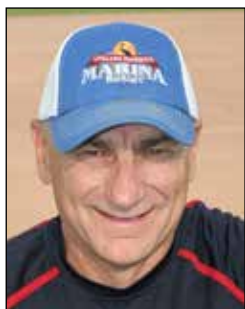
"And we're okay with that," said Deutsch.

TMSC also supports entries in the Middlesex Masters over 35 Division II and over 45 Division I, the London & Area Women's Soccer League Division III, and the men's Western Ontario Soccer League Division II.

In short, a sport being embraced and played well at the international level, is also doing very well in Tillsonburg.

"Proud to see Canada doing so well," concluded Deutsch, a lifelong 'soccer guy' trying to give back to a sport which offered him so much. "And doing our part to make soccer in Canada better."

Two Tillsonburg slo-pitch players qualify for nationals



**EYE
ON
SLO-
PITCH**

DAVE WEAVER

Post Columnist

Congrats goes out to two members of the Cooks Concrete Jays, Maddi Obar and Cayden Thornton, who were part of the Lynx team that captured the Ladies' A Division at the Northern Shootout last weekend, thus becoming the first team to punch their ticket to the Canadian Championships in Leduc, Alberta.

Men's Division 1

Leeswood Construction Dirty Mitts turned

their season around with a big victory over The Mill and a tie against the Cubs. Hit N Run also downed the Cubs. Sunspace/Bill Klyn Carpentry split on the week defeating The Mill but dropping one to the Cobra Chickens. 1,2 Seal Insulation Hawks handed The Mill their third defeat on the week to remain unbeaten on the season.

Cobra Chickens-14, Sunspace/Bill Klyn Carpentry-3

Cobra-Nathan Peters 3-4; Wyatt Blatz 4-4, 2HR; Marcus Peters HR.

Sunspace-Nick Joosse 3-4; Nate Boldt 3-4.

Game Synopsis-Cobra's seven-run fifth helped decide it, Wyatt Blatz hit a three-run shot and Marcus Peters added a two-run blast in the rally.

Sunspace/Bill Klyn Carpentry -30, The Mill-14

Sunspace-Davin Ramer 5-6, HR; Dallas Dalby 4-4, HR; Nathan Boldt HR; Kyle McDougall HR; Randy Miller HR.

The Mill-Darren Pace 4-4; Steve Byron 4-5; Ryan Black 2HR; Tim Morgan 2HR; Logan Kloet HR.

Game Synopsis-Sunspace's offence was firing on all cylinders as everyone in the winner's order scored at least one run. Nick Joosse reached five times and crossed all five times.

1,2 Seal Insulation Hawks-27, The Mill-23

Hawks-Peter Epp 5-5, HR; John Klassen 4-5; Johnny Klassen 2HR; Martin Klassen 2HR; Jake Klassen HR; Ben Bueckert HR.

The Mill-Josh Stubbs 4-4; Ryan Black 4-5; Noa Black HR; Bryan Deblaire 2HR; Ryan Stephenson HR.

Game Synopsis-A six-run sixth pushed Hawks into the lead, Peter Epp was a triple shy of hitting for the cycle.

Leeswood Construction Dirty Mitts-16, Cubs-16

Leeswood-Colin McDonald 3-4, HR; Devin Lee 2-3; Thom Pühr HR; Cheyne Sarafinchin

HR.

Cubs-Ivan Dyck 4-4; Chris Dyck 4-4.

Game Synopsis-A six-run sixth by the Cubs helped them earn the tie.

Leeswood Construction Dirty Mitts-28, The Mill-26

Leeswood-Jarrett Anderson 4-4; Tim Townsend 4-5; Trevor Stuyt 2HR.

The Mill-Tim Morgan 5-6, 4HR; Ryan Stephenson 4-6; Bryan Deblaire HR; Steve Derks 2HR.

Game Synopsis-Leeswood won it with a two-run seventh, Devin Lee tripled and scored the eventual game-winning run.

Hit N Run-24, Cubs-17

Hit N Run-Johnny Unger 4-4; Daniel Unger 4-5; Diedrich Klassen HR; Martin Klassen HR; Jacob Klassen 2HR.

Cubs-Johnathan Dyck 5-5, 2HR; Dave Peters 4-4; Chris Dyck HR.

Game Synopsis-A seven-run seventh was key to Hit N Run's victory. Jacob Klassen

CONTINUED TO PAGE 15

Two Tillsonburg slo-pitch players qualify for nationals

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

homered twice and drove in four.

Men’s Division 2

Pelicans dropped their first, losing in a walk-off to Strike Force after winning by one earlier in the week over Papa's Auto Spa. Strike Force also defeated Designated Drinkers. At My Playground/IQT Logistics continued to stay hot, and also defeated the Drinkers. Mavericks won a pair, knocking off All Seasons Estate Care Bandits and Quackheads. Quackheads and Sticky Bandits collected the other division victories.

At My Playground/IQT Logistics-14, Designated Drinkers-8

A.M.P.-Tyler Lamb 3-3; Jayden King 3-3, HR; Logan Partlo HR.

Drinkers-Cole Palen 3-3; Kevin Postma 3-3.

Game Synopsis-A.M.P. put runs up in every inning but the sixth, Jayden King led their attack homering, tripling and scoring three runs.

Quackheads-24, Papa's Auto Spa-20

Quackheads-Jim Long 4-4; Cody Long 4-4; Scott Mudford HR; Dylan Graydon HR.

Papa's-Peyton Harris 4-5; Jesse Legg 4-4.

Game Synopsis-Dylan Graydon homered and scored four runs for the winners. Bob Long also crossed four times.

Strike Force-17, Pelicans-16

Strike-Henry Teichroeb 4-5; Abe Klassen 3-4; Peter Klassen HR.

Pelicans-T.J.Neville 4-4, HR; Matt Summers 4-4; Steve Leacock HR.

Game Synopsis-Peter Klassen had the walk-off hit in Strike Force 's four run seventh.

Pelicans-16, Papa's Auto Spa-15

Pelicans-Adam Jensen 3-4; Ryan Marques 3-4; Steve Leacock 2HR.

Papa's-Shawn Brooks 3-4, HR; Steve Poll 3-4; Dylan Denomy Gr Slam.

Game Synopsis-Steve Leacock 's solo homer his second in the game won it for Pelicans in the seventh.

Strike Force-14, Designated Drinkers-9

Strike-Tony Klassen 3-4; Henry Teichroeb 4-5.

Drinkers 'Gavin Haggith 3-4; Will Martin 3-4.

Game Synopsis-Abe Hamn led the winners with a triple, a pair of doubles and three runs batted in.

Mavericks-10, Quackheads-5

Mavericks-Chris Hass 4-5; Jason Carlisle 4-4.

Quackheads-Christian Bevan 3-3; Austin Korten 2-2.

Game Synopsis-A six-run bat-around fourth helped the Mavericks break open a close game, Chris Hass reached base four times and scored three runs in the game.

Sticky Bandits-23, Underhill Farm Supply-20

Bandits-Tyson Krahn 5-6; Andrew Knelsen 5-6.

Underhill-Aaron Dyck 5-5; Troy Sebok 3-4.

Game Synopsis-A seven-run seventh keyed the Bandits win.

Mavericks-16, All Seasons Estate Care Bandits-12

Mavericks-Chris Hass 4-4; Kevin MacDonald 4-4.

Bandits-Luke Neufeld 4-4; Benny Neufeld 3-4.

Game Synopsis-Leadoff batter Kevin MacDonald scored three runs for the winners.

Men’s Division 3

Beer Bombers collected a big win in one of the season's lower-scoring games, 5-2, over Sandy Shore Brew Jays handing them only their second defeat of the season. John Beere defeated the Bombers and Bird's Golf but dropped one to NAPA/Coward's Pharmacy Maulers. Wolfpack picked up the other divisional win by beating Bird's Golf.

NAPA/Coward's Pharmacy Maulers-20, John Beere-15

NAPA-Jeff McKay 5-5; Brandon Tilford 4-5.

John Beere-Shaun Elliott 4-5; Brandon Reaney 3-4.

Game Synopsis-Jeff McKay reached and scored five times to lead the winners.

John Beere-12, Bird's Golf-9

John Beere-Mark Carrel 3-4; Nathan Sullivan 4-4.

Bird's-Jason Lichti 3-4; Joshua Townsend 3-4.

Game Synopsis-John Beere took over the lead in the sixth with a three-run rally, Mark Carrel and Keith McMerty hit runs, scoring doubles.

Beer Bombers-5, Sandy Shore Brew Jays-2

Bombers-Brett Vandendel 2-3; Cam Vilaca 2-3.

Sandy Shore-Brian Reddecopp 3-3.

Game Synopsis-A four-run fourth decided this one for Bombers. Brett Vandendel led off the rally with a double.

John Beere-16, Beer Bombers-13

John Beere-Mark Carrel 5-5; Brandon Reaney 5-5.

Bombers-Cayden Mitchell 3-4; Kaleb Kloepper 3-4.

Game Synopsis-John Beere scored seven in their final at-bat to steal this one away.

Wolfpack-26, Bird's Golf-10

Wolfpack-Cam Butler 4-5; Matt Pitt 5-5; Ryan Berger HR.

Bird's-Jake Froese 3-3; Josh Townsend 3-3.

Game Synopsis-Leadoff batter Kevin Hmeil hit a pair of doubles and scored four runs for the winners.

Men’s Division 4

Diamond Kings won a close one over Tornadoes. Tornadoes collected a close win over R.L.P. Melanie Luksys. The two front runners, N.I.M. and Brickhouse Boys, both won easily.

Diamond Kings-18, Tornadoes-17

Diamond-David Wall 3-3; Ben Bueckert 3-3.

Tornadoes-Hayden Lounsbury 3-3; Tyler Bouck 4-4.

Game Synopsis-Everyone in the winner’s order had at least one hit. Ben Bueckert hit three and scored three runs.

Tornadoes-14, R.L.P. Melanie Luksys-11

Tornadoes-Ben Serrador 2-3; Jack Soares 2-3.

R.L.P.-Ryan Gradish 3-4; Braeden Redling 4-5.

N.I.M.-19, Smokin Bases-2

N.I.M.-Cory Chambers 4-4; Jordan Friesen 4-4.

Smokin-Wade Kirby 2-2; Tim Miners 2-2.

Game Synopsis-Brodie Earls reached and scored four times for the winners.

Brickhouse Boys-30, Smokin Bases-10

Brickhouse-Tanner Lammens 5-5; Dimitri Carvahlo 5-5; Shawn Knelsen 2HR.

Smokin-Chris Foresman 4-4; Josh Vanhaverbeke 3-4.

Game Synopsis-A 14- un seventh closed the door on any comeback chances from Smokin Bases. Shawn Knelsen homered twice and doubled twice for the winners.

Ladies’ Division

Wildcats collected their second victory of the season, beating Resting Pitch Face. Cooks Concrete Jays and Foldens Machine Works both won by mercy.

Wildcats-23, Resting Pitch Face-12

Wildcats-Steph Miller 4-4; Shirley Simmons 4-4.

Resting-Martina McCallum 4-4; Amber Smith 3-3.

Game Synopsis-Back-to-back six-run innings gave the Wildcats an insurmountable lead. Steph Miller, Ling Wong and Shirley Simmons all scored three runs.

Foldens Machine Works-19, Queen Bees-1

Foldens-Trisha McKenzie 5-5; Roxy Dekeyser 4-4.

Queen-Diana Byers 2-2; Jayden Hanniman 2-2.

Game Synopsis-Trisha McKenzie, Nancy Texeira, Roxy Dekeyser and Danielle Swart each crossed three times for Foldens.

Cooks Concrete Jays-15, Sunspace/Bill Klyn Carpentry-3

Cooks-Mayra Baelde 4-4; Deanna Laemers 3-3.

Sunspace-Missy Falkins 3-3; Carrie MacDonald 3-3.

Game Synopsis-Cooks were able to score multiple runs in each at-bat, Mayra Baelde singled three times and scored three runs.

MEN'S DIVISION 1	W	L	T	PTS
1,2 SEAL INSULATION HAWKS	11	0	0	22
THE MILL	6	5	0	12
LEESWOOD CONSTRUCTION DIRTY MITTS	5	6	1	11
COBRA CHICKENS	5	6	0	10
HIT N RUN	5	7	0	10
CUBS	4	6	1	9
SUNSPACE/BILL KLYN CARPENTRY	3	9	0	6

MEN'S DIVISION 2	W	L	T	PTS
PELICANS	11	1	0	22
STRIKE FORCE	7	4	0	14
ALL SEASONS ESTATE CARE BANDITS	6	4	1	13
AT MY PLAYGROUND/ IQT LOGISTICS	6	3	1	13
MAVERICKS	6	5	0	12
STICKY BANDITS	5	4	0	10
PAPA'S AUTO SPA	3	8	1	7
UNDERHILL FARM SUPPLY	3	7	1	7
QUACKHEADS	3	7	0	6
DESIGNATED DRINKERS	2	9	0	4

MEN'S DIVISION 3	W	L	T	PTS
SANDY SHORE BREW JAYS	8	2	0	16
SLUGGERS	8	2	0	16
JOHN BEERE	7	5	0	14
BEER BOMBERS	4	6	1	9
WOLFPACK	3	8	1	7
NAPA/COWARD'S PHARMACY MAULERS	3	6	0	6
BIRD'S GOLF	2	6	0	4

MEN'S DIVISION 4	W	L	T	PTS
N.I.M.	15	1	0	30
BRICKHOUSE BOYS	9	3	0	18
R.L.P.MELANIE LUKSYS	7	8	2	16
DIAMOND KINGS	6	10	0	12
SMOKIN BASES	5	11	0	10
TORNADES	2	11	1	5

LADIES	W	L	T	PTS
COOKS CONCRETE JAYS	14	0	0	28
SIMMONDS MORTGAGES	10	3	0	20
FOLDENS MACHINE WORKS	10	4	0	20
SUNSPACE/BILL KLYN CARPENTRY	8	6	0	16
RESTING PITCH FACE	5	10	0	10
WILDCATS	2	12	0	4
QUEEN BEES	0	14	0	0

Red Sox jinx in Port Dover continues, lose 19-9

GRAHAM NICKERSON
Post Contributor

On the eve of Dominion Day in the warm humidity of a summer's night, the Tillsonburg Red Sox ventured to the shores of Lake Erie for a match with their friendly rivals, Port Dover. The ragged conditions of the diamond, combined with inconsistent umpiring, caused an otherwise entertaining game to get out of hand, forcing the visitors to wave the white flag after just five innings of play in a 19-9 shellacking. Bad luck and tough hops seem to inflict the Sox whenever

er they visit Misner Park. The team becomes fast and loose with the ball and effective pitching vanishes. The blame for this poor display of ball does not rest squarely on the shoulders of Tillsonburg's players, but rather is in part a factor of playing in a poorly-kept and all-together inadequate field for senior baseball.

For starters, the mound measures six inches too high, and is shaped with a steep drop off from the rubber that makes visiting hurlers unbalanced in their delivery. The infield is hard-packed sandy dirt that plays like a mall parking lot, while the outfield is as uneven and hilly as the Appalachian Trail. Fly balls are routinely lost in the low dim lights and pop-ups drifting foul are hopelessly given up on with the miniscule territory between the lines and out-of-play markers.

Enduring these factors, the Red Sox came out swinging in the first with four straight singles off Clippers starter Aaron Bain. Jeff Prouse drew a base-on-balls to bring in the second run of the inning.

Bubba DeClark started for Tillsonburg and was nicked early when the Clippers strung together a rally of their own on an identical four hits and a walk that was good for three runs and the lead.

Tillsonburg tied the game in the top half of the second on a two-out solo home run by Jordan Vitias. The high blast to right field was a long time coming for the Red Sox catcher as he had scrapped the top of many a fence in the previous two seasons.

DeClark sat down Dover 1-2-3 in the second but lost the zone in the third, walking three straight batters. Tim Thiessen jogged in from left field to take over mound duty but fared no better, letting up a walk and a hit to give the Clippers back the lead with four runs.

Tillsonburg answered with four tallies of their own an inning later sending nine men to the plate. Anthony Andello had replaced Bain pitching and was touched for four hits and two walks in the bat-around frame. The hitting spree was punctuated by a Vitias double and a two-RBI single by Rob Verhoeve. Bench Coach Neil Polfleit factored into the rally getting his first hit of the year – an opposite field single that touched down in left out of reach of the leaping shortstop.

With the game notched 7-7, Thiessen started the fourth by issuing two free passes then was promptly yanked in favour

TILLSONBURG	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
RACHAR, SS	4	0	0	2	1	0
VITIAS, 2B	3	3	3	1	0	1
*NICKERSON, 2B	0	0	0	0	0	0
VERHOEVE, 3B, P	4	2	2	0	1	0
DECLARK, P, 1B	3	0	3	2	0	0
DAVIS, C	4	0	2	4	1	0
PROUSE, CF	2	0	0	1	0	0
MINERS, LF	3	0	0	0	0	0
POLFLIET, 1B, LF	2	2	1	2	0	0
THIESSEN, RF, P	2	2	1	0	0	1
TOTALS	27	9	12	12	3	2
*Pinch Hitters						

Summary: ER, Tillsonburg 9, Pt. Dover 19 8; **LOB**, Tillsonburg 8, Pt. Dover 6; **HR**, Vitias; **2B**, Vitias, Thiessen, Storchuck,; **RBI**, Rachar, Vitias (2), Verhoeve (2), DeClark, Davis (2), Prouse, Polfliet, Heipel, Storchuck (4), Mitchell, C. Barnard (3), Henrich, Ritchie (3), Bain; **W**, Andrello; **L**, Thiessen; **BB**, DeClark (5), Thiessen (3), Verhoeve (2), Miners (3), Bain (1), Andrello (3); **K**, DeClark (3), Miners (1), Bain (1), Andrello (4); **Time**, 2:25.

of Verhoeve. In a deja-vu performance to his outing against Beamsville, the defence behind Verhoeve seemed to forget the fundamentals of fielding and struggled to make the simplest of outs. The big right hander was tagged for nine runs, five hits and two walks in just two-thirds of an inning. Ky Miners was called in to stop the hemorrhaging, but not before the twelfth Clipper crossed the plate in the delirious inning.

Tillsonburg mustered two runs in the fifth but the game was all but over. The Red Sox return to Sam Lamb Field July 10 at 7:30 where they hope to avenge this embarrassing loss against Port Dover.

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Port Dover.....304 12X – 19 10 0



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(STUART BLOWER PHOTOS)



Tillsonburg Lions baseman Tate Parker hits the bag with his foot, to try to ensure there was an out in a U7 house league game against George's Auto Repair.



Tillsonburg first baseman Rosalee Mesquita is ready for the ball as a Caledonia runner approaches the base in a recent U-15 house league game.



Entec pitcher Coen Hardick Swings into form during a game his team played against Royal Canadian Legion Ladies' Auxiliary in a U-11 match-up.



Sawyer Vanstraten and Genesis Rai of the McFarlan Rowlands U-7 team struggle with the ball as a Pioneer Pools base runner comes up from behind.



Tillsonburg Mandryk, Morgan & Vervaeke Law U7 players Annabelle Baer and Levi Horvath wait for the ball, as an Ingersoll Unifor runner flies by.



Tillsonburg U-13 J&E Construction Rep's third baseman catches the ball as a Delhi Tigers player reaches the bag in a recent game.

Residents turn out for Canada Day despite the heat

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

She too gave credit to the volunteers for making the day come together. Besides members who volunteered, she gave credit to the councillors and mayor for flipping pancakes, to Mike and Christina Gazley of Tim Hortons for donating coffee and tea, and to Nectar for cooking the sausage in the company's food truck. Verbuyst also noted the BIA donated the sausage and paid for the bouncy castle.

The one event that may have suffered in attendance was the annual veterans' parade at the Legion, held at noon. Outside of Legion members and town council members, only about a dozen people turned out.

Fireworks over fireworks show

An estimated 700-plus came out at night for the fireworks and pre-show in the band shell.

Unfortunately, some were disappointed with the language used by the DJ playing before the show.

A news release from the town on Friday clarifies that the band shell was rented by an individual.

"The language used does not reflect the values of the Town of Tillsonburg, particularly during a family-oriented community celebration," the release stated. "Residents and visitors attending Canada Day festivities should be able to expect entertainment that is suitable for audiences of all ages."

"Moving forward, the town will strengthen its rental requirements to help ensure that entertainment provided at all-age events is appropriate and aligns with the family-friendly nature of community celebrations and public

events held on town property."

There was also disappointment with the length of the fireworks show.

Mayor Deb Gilvesy, who attended the event, was also dissatisfied with the length of the show.

"I was there, recognized there was a problem and immediately contacted staff the next day," she said, adding there were sufficient funds in the budget for a show of the length town residents are used to.

The town's press release explained the computer control for igniting the fireworks experienced technical problems that couldn't be resolved, cutting the show short. A "make-up" show is planned in town for the Labour Day weekend on Sunday, Sept. 6. More details will follow.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Charlie Watkins III showed his skill at the ring toss, throwing a smaller ring through hula hoops as part of the outdoor games on Canada Day.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Legion Padre Paul Robinson salutes the flag during the playing of O Canada.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Betty Davies was decked out in her Canada Day finest while attending festivities on the country's birthday.

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CANADA DAY

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)



The Super Air Bounce inflatable obstacle course at the Station Arts Centre was popular with the younger attendees. It was close to a photo finish as Emmy and Addie raced through.



About 500 people attended the annual pancake breakfast at the Station Arts Centre on Canada Day.



Cake, cake, cake was found throughout the town's Canada Day festivities as there was birthday cake at the Station Arts Centre, cenotaph and Annandale National Historic Site. Cutting the cake at the Station Arts Centre were, left to right: Station Arts Centre board President Sarah Senior, Oxford MPP Ernie Hardeman, Mayor Deb Gilvesy, Oxford MP Arpan Khanna and Station Arts Centre member Jenn Jackson.



The Legion colour party, dressed in jackets despite the heat, marched a short distance down Broadway before a Canada Day ceremony at the cenotaph.



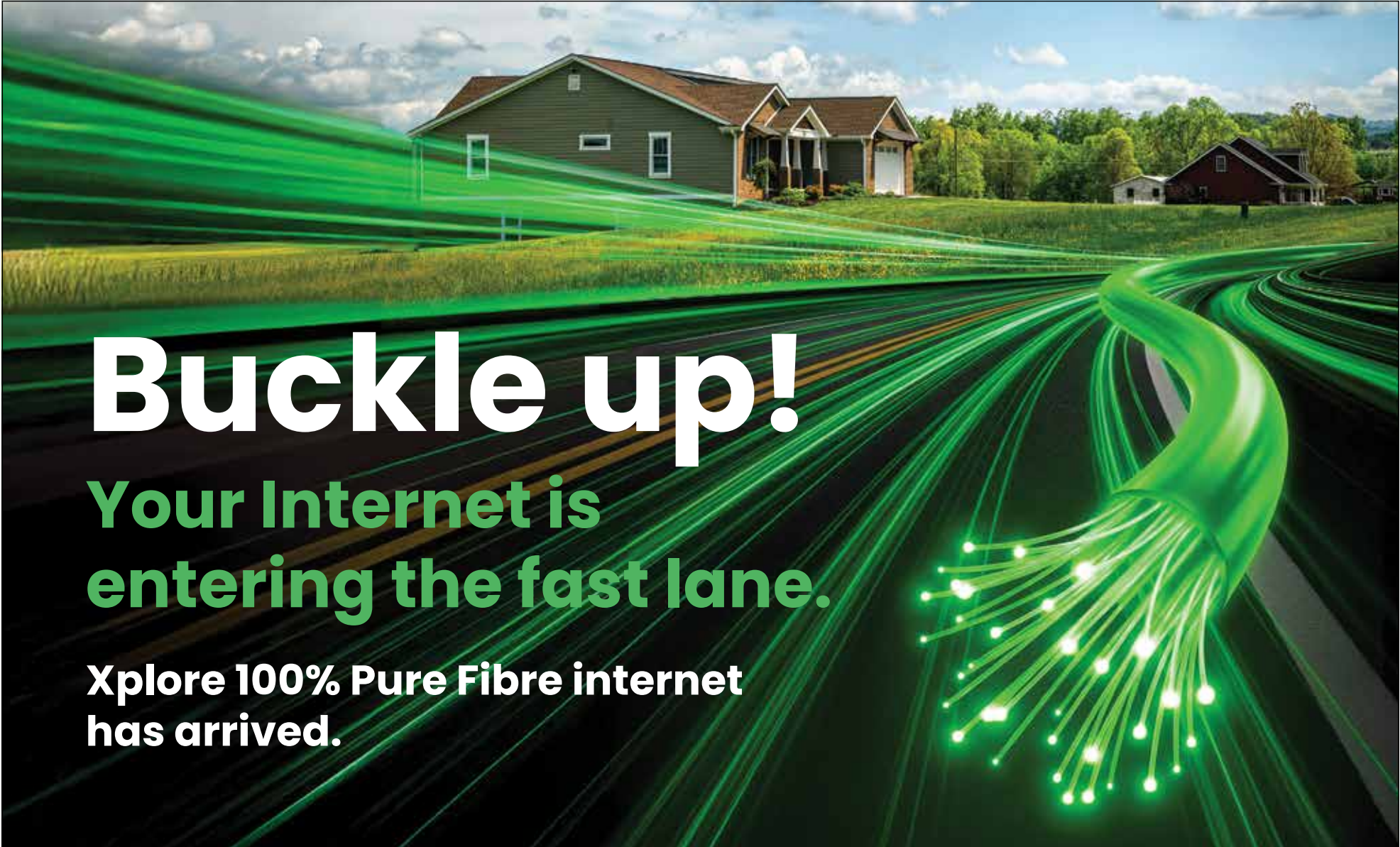
Quinton Howe demonstrates the fine art of axe throwing on Annandale's front lawn with the plastic axe-throwing set.



The art of face painting was alive and well at Annandale National Historic Site as youth lined up at the three stations offering face art. Oakley Bootsma, left, of Tillsonburg sits patiently while Erica Hendel paints a beaver on her face.



Volunteers played a crucial role in the execution of the Station Arts Centre's annual pancake breakfast on Canada Day, including serving pancakes. Several town council members also volunteered to cook and serve pancakes.



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Woodstock alt-rock band The Ick make their Tillsonburg debut tomorrow with Dumb Crush



BEN ANDRESS

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

MUSIC CORNER

For a band that has only been together a short time, Woodstock's The Ick has wasted no time making a name for themselves on the Southern Ontario music scene.

The five-piece alternative rock band will make its Tillsonburg debut on Friday, July 10 opening for Toronto's Dumb Crush. These two bands pairing up is a superstar bill for concertgoers that enjoy catchy hooks and '90s-inspired tunes. Dumb Crush is making their return to Tillsonburg after an explosive debut, and fresh off their tour with Billboard-charting artist grandson.

The Ick's lineup features Quinton Wattie on lead vocals, Lucas Deamone on lead guitar, Owen Weger on bass, Blake Fletcher on bass and Conner Fletcher on drums. It is still early in the band's journey, however,

their on-stage chemistry comes from years of friendship and a mutual love and respect for alternative rock.

That momentum recently earned The Ick a spot in the London Music Awards Battle of the Bands where they impressed audiences with a set that blended original material with beloved '90s alternative rock favourites. The opportunity was both exciting and motivating for the band.

"Honestly it was a fantastic experience. We were so happy to even have that kind of opportunity," says drummer Fletcher with a grin. "There were so many amazing bands there, and it was great to connect with those musicians and experience their music live. The event definitely showed us that we have a way to go and encouraged us to keep writing and improving our music for a better live sound."

Rather than leaving with inflated confidence, the experience reinforced the band's desire to keep growing while sharpening both their song-writing and live performance.

The influence of 1990s alternative rock runs deep throughout The Ick's music. While music fans can expect familiar covers when they are on stage, the band's own material carries the same spirit that made that era so enduring.

"That era and style of music is just a well-rounded sound," Deamone explains. "I

think that general sound of music is extremely likeable, and anyone is able to listen and enjoy it. That is what I want The Ick's sound to be. Something everybody would be able to listen to and enjoy."

That accessibility is something the band hopes comes across immediately when audiences see them perform for the first time in Tillsonburg. According to Wattie, people should be ready for an energetic opening set designed to get the room moving before Dumb Crush takes the stage.

"Anyone coming to see us on the 10th can expect a high energy show," Wattie says. "We have tuned our set list with the goal of getting the crowd ready for Dumb Crush. There are some great half-time breaks, along with some up-tempo headbangers. The best representation of who we are as a band is our original songs because we each spend time carefully developing our own parts and layer them together to create our own unique sound."

Like many young bands, The Ick has benefited from the supportive DIY music community throughout Southern Ontario. A scene where established acts have helped newer groups find their footing. The band agrees that encouragement from other bands has been invaluable.

"Having so many other up-and-coming bands that already know what they are doing and are extremely encouraging to their lo-

cal scene is such a welcoming environment that I feel really helps to grow newer bands like ourselves," Fletcher reflects. "Opening for Dumb Crush at Paddy's is such a surreal thing because we actually met them for the first time when they were at the same venue opening for another local band. It is like things have really come full circle. The Ick met through our high school music program, and started with us playing covers in my parent's garage. Now we are a real group writing our own music."

From rehearsing in a family garage, to sharing the stage with some of Ontario's upcoming independent rock acts, reflects the grassroots path many successful bands have followed and The Ick is glad to be on that same path. This weekend's show offers the chance to catch a young band that is clearly on the rise. The Ick looks poised to make a memorable first impression when they come to town.

The Ick opens for Dumb Crush this Friday at Paddy's Underground. The venue is located at 20 John Pound in Tillsonburg, with doors opening at 8 p.m., and an advance ticket price of \$10. Tickets are available online at www.eventbrite.ca and in person at The Mill. They will also be available night of at the door for \$15. You can follow The Ick on their official social media at www.instagram.com/the.ick. official

UPCOMING SHOWS

JULY 10 - KEN LIGHTHEART & NORTH SHORE RAMBLERS
Tillsonburg Legion #153: \$7 – 1 p.m.

JULY 10 - DUMB CRUSH W/ THE ICK
Paddy's Underground:
\$10 – 8 p.m. - all ages/licensed

JULY 11 - TRI-COUNTY'S GOT TALENT
The Copper Mug: 6 p.m.

JULY 12 - MUSIC ON THE LAWN SERIES W/ GEORGE FULOP
Annandale NHS: Free Entry – 7 p.m.

JULY 17 - JAW RAWK
The Copper Mug:
Free Entry – 8 p.m.

JULY 18 - KICKN KOUNTRY
Tillsonburg Legion #153:
\$8 – 12 p.m.

JULY 19 - MUSIC ON THE LAWN SERIES W/ NORTH SHORE RAMBLERS
Annandale NHS: Free Entry – 7 p.m.

JULY 24 - MUSIC BINGO
The Copper Mug: 6:30 p.m.

JULY 25 - DANIEL HAMM
The Copper Mug:
Free Entry – 8 p.m.

JULY 30 - THE SADIES
Paddy's Underground:
\$40 – 8 p.m. - all ages/licensed

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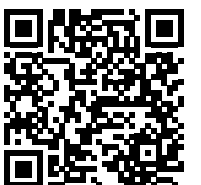
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Celebrating 50 years of classic cards and developing deep friendships

ROBIN KRAFFT

Post Correspondent

Keeping their minds sharp and enjoying social connections are side benefits to a game they all love to play.

The Tillsonburg Bridge Club gathered at the Royal Canadian Legion to celebrate their 50th anniversary on June 19. Members circulated, conversing and sharing memories before dinner, catered by the Legion.

"The game was incredibly popular in the '50s, 60s and early 70s," current Club President Rick Martin said. "It has dropped off in the age of TV and video games, but tabletop games are still being played. Bridge requires very little expense; all you need is a deck of cards."

There are currently 50 active members in the club, down significantly since the pandemic. Many bridge clubs across the country didn't start up again after lockdowns.

"Membership is down significantly, but we're doing alright," Martin said. "My goal is to break down some of the structural impediments to people learning to play. It's been an interesting 50 years. Before COVID there were

twice as many tables as we are now. I'd really like to get back to that status."

Martin learned to play the classic card game during high school and played during his university years. He describes the game as a mind sport, similar to chess.

"It's exercise for your brain," Martin said. "It stretched my mind and I approached academic study more intently. It's a great way to fire up those grey cells."

The Tillsonburg Bridge Club rents space at the Tillsonburg Senior Center but is separate from their bridge program. When they meet on Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m., it's less formal and beginner friendly. They also meet on Friday afternoons at 1 p.m. for more serious, dedicated, and competitive structured duplicate games. Players must arrive early for Friday games, Martin added.

Long-time player and club member Robert Burns learned to play bridge from instructor Terry Morris, who taught bridge during the 80s and 90s at evening enrichment courses at Glendale High School.

"My wife gave me a choice between bridge or ballroom

dancing," Burns said. "With my two left feet, it was going to be bridge. I got immersed in it. It takes about a year to really get into it and be competitive, but you can learn in eight lessons. You have to have the patience to gain experience."

Mary Alice Reid remembers watching her mom and dad and aunt and uncle gather around the card table every Saturday night to play bridge when she was 6 years old and she was mesmerized.

"When I was at university someone asked if I wanted to play bridge, but I had no idea there were any rules," Reid said, laughing. "I fell in love with it and I've played all my life. My daughter used to ask me 'Why do you play every week? Do you get money?' And I said, 'You get honour. My daughter is now 64 and she wants to take bridge lessons. It's never too late'."

Many members commented on how friendly the club is, and the bonds that develop over time, the camaraderie, and good times. Long-time member Deb Wycherley affectionately shared memories of players who are gone, and added, "I just love the game. I'll never give it up."



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Club member Nettie Ferrell moved here from Burlington 15 years ago. She had played with clubs in Burlington, Hamilton, and Oakville. She and her husband Robert had six children in eight years, and they learned to play bridge from their babysitter. She eventually earned a prestigious Gold Master coin.

Member Maureen Flynn offers lessons at Baldwin Place every Monday afternoon. She didn't learn the game until she retired from teaching elementary school.

"I took 10 lessons and went to play at a bridge

club thinking I knew how to play," Flynn said. "My mom laughed when I told her that. She taught me how to play better bridge."

She doesn't claim to be a skillful player, but she loves the game, and that's why she teaches it. She offers 10 lessons for learners and at the end she encourages them to attend the Wednesday night bridge club so that they can continue to play and learn.

"I think that would be the equivalent of going to my mother," she added with a laugh.

"If I had learned to play bridge when I was a teach-

er, I would have taught my students," Flynn said. "Kids who love to play Dungeons and Dragons, those are the kinds of thinkers that would love it. It's a thinking game. It helps you organize your thoughts. You don't need amazing math skills, it's more about problem solving."

"Some people play bridge online," said President Rick Martin. "But that's not the same game at all, there's no social aspect or human aspect at all. The face-to-face game is a whole different experience and that's what we offer."



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Former grocery store staff reminisce about the past

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Employees in the former IGA/Loeb/Valu-Mart saw many changes over the years the store operated in Tillsonburg. They gathered recently to reminisce 25 years after the store closed.

Opening as the IGA in 1979, the store was the first retailer open in the Tillsonburg Town Centre Mall. It was one of the original anchor stores, located where Staples and Shoppers Drug Mart are today. The new store replaced the original IGA, which was torn down to make way for the new development. Trottier Foods owned both the older and the newer store at the beginning.

When it opened, the store featured the newest convenience for grocery shoppers: parcel pick-up. This conveyor system moved groceries from inside the store to a covered canopy outside, where customers could drive up and have their groceries loaded into their trunks by store staff.

Many changes took place

over the years, with the first being Trottier Foods' bankruptcy, followed by IGA's sale to Loeb. In between the location being corporately owned, Dale Moore and Tom Kipp were owners. Along the way, Loeb sold to Valu-Mart, which was a subsidiary of the Loblaw Group. With Zehrs also being owned by Loblaws, the store's days were numbered.

With a Christmas newspaper greeting ad from 1979 or 1980 showing a staff exceeding 70, the grocery retailer provided a first job for many teenagers. Some stayed with it, while others went on to a variety of careers, ranging from the insurance industry to factory jobs to becoming a dentist. Besides being a job, many in attendance at the reunion on June 27 talked of it being family. Those working at the store went through many victories, trials, and tribulations together, with a little romance occasionally mixed in for interest.

Nancy Walker (Shelton) organized the reunion. She



(KAREN HELSDON PHOTO)

Frank Nold, Cathy Nold, Elaine Lockhart and Judy Bond-Blodgett take a moment away from reminiscing about the old days at the IGA to pose for a photo.

started at the store in 1989 and was deli manager when it closed in 2001.

"The store was closed, and it was unexpected. This is a way to get everyone together and reminisce," she said of the reason for organizing the event.

About 50 people turned out for the event.

One person many associated with the IGA, since he started in the old store, moved to the new one, and then on to Zehrs, was Lyle Kent.

"It's all I knew," he said of the grocery business. "It's

what I did since the beginning, so I stayed with it."

He started packing groceries, moved to stocking grocery shelves, then to produce manager, and then back to grocery, where he stayed as assistant grocery manager until Valu-Mart closed.

Bob Feere started in the IGA days as a full-time produce employee, and was there 15 years, finishing as assistant produce manager when the doors closed.

"It was comfortable," he said of the reason for staying in the store.

But when the store closed, it pushed him in a new career direction.

Feere met his wife, Evelyn, there, and they have been married for 33 years. She still works at Zehrs.

Tony Vandevyvere succeeded Kent as the produce manager. Starting as a high school student packing groceries, he moved to the produce department and became manager. Vandevyvere met his wife Cindy there, who worked in the front end. After the store closed, he worked for Loblaws as a produce trainer. Together, they eventually owned a grocery store in Dorchester.

"The opportunities presented themselves to move forward," he said. "When the opportunities presented themselves, I jumped in with both feet. It served me well."

Elaine Hickey, who worked as a cashier from 1979 to 1983, recalls the fun of working in the store.

Cathy Nold, also a cashier, commented, "It was like family, and we all got along." She worked there from 1980 to

1982, then returned in 1984.

Chris Rosehart was an employee in the old store in both the meat department and deli. She became deli manager when the new store opened before she left to open her own store.

"It was a God-send working for George Trottier," she said. "He was an awesome manager; he was amazing. We had great staff who always helped each other out. That whole place was a team."

Martha Cook, who is well known in town for her years working in the Royal Hotel and the Copper Mug, started at the IGA when she was 17. She worked in the old store for two or three years before starting in the Royal.

"We had so much fun then," she recalled at the reunion.

Peter Restinas, who has worked at Zehrs since 1989, started in the grocery business at the IGA in 1984. He, too, talked about the family atmosphere, the jokes, staff initiation, and the barbecues.

"I'll never forget those days," he said.

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KINETTES GIVE BACK

(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

The Tillsonburg Kinette Club donated a portion of its proceeds from its Ladies Night Out to Sunbeam Christian Daycare to assist with costs of upgrading the park next to the daycare. Left to right in the back are Tina Taylor of Sunbeam, Kinette Lindsey Mejaski, Jessica Desjardins of Sunbeam and Kinette President Carrie Lewis. The Kinettes also supported Turtlefest, St. Paul's Community Kitchen and Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario.

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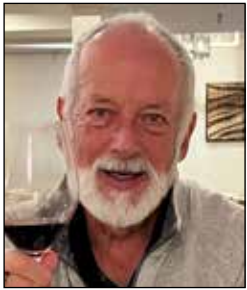
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An undiscovered treasure: Richmond's Olympics Museum



**OH,
THE
PLACES
WE'LL
GO!**

PAUL KNOWLES

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

The first exhibit you encounter makes the point, immediately. It's a display of 20 different and unique Olympic torches, including examples from the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympics, the 1988 Winter Games hosted by Calgary, and the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics.

The information panel reads: "The Olympic flame is a symbol of peace, friendship, tolerance and hope. The Olympic Torch Relay reminds us that we are part of something bigger – a global community." It immediately occurred to me that this was a message much forgotten in our current, fractured world – and that reminders like this one, at the Richmond Olympic Experience Museum, are even more important today.

I was in Richmond, British Columbia for the 2026 Travel Media Association of Canada conference. I arrived in the city flat out ignorant about the place. I knew from looking at a map that Richmond was south of Vancouver, but close enough that the Vancouver airport is actually in Richmond.

Media members of TMAC get the option of doing a "pre-tour" – spending a few days being guided around the conference's host city, for example. So, for four days, I learned a great deal about Richmond.

And one of the most striking experiences was our visit to the Olympic Oval, home to the Olympic Experience Museum and much more. Visitors are welcome to come to the Oval, to tour, to visit the museum, or, for a modest price, to use the outstand-

ing athletic facilities now housed in the place. The "Oval Drop-in" pass, which allows you to use everything for the day, is \$23. Adult admission to the museum is \$16, less for kids and seniors.

Those facilities are certainly impressive. In 2010, the building housed the Oval, home to Olympic speed skating competitions as well as spectator facilities, media centres, VIP areas and all the features that come with a world-class venue. But the Oval was designed to serve the community for decades to come – and it does so in amazing fashion. There are ice rinks, basketball courts, table tennis facilities, state of the art gyms, a terrifying rock-climbing wall, and more.

The place is pretty special. It features the largest cantilevered wooden roof in Canada. More significantly, 2010 marked the first time Indigenous groups – the Coastal Salish – had been involved in planning and participating in the official opening of an Olympic facility.

The Oval continues to be a key training facility for national teams including Canada's Women's National Volleyball Team. It also boasts a world-class training area for para-athletes.

I will admit that for this relatively non-athletic writer, the athletic facilities offered only a certain level of interest. But the Olympic Museum experience was amazing.

Gregory Huzor showed us around the museum. He's the enthusiastic manager of the Richmond Olympic Experience.

He told us that the Richmond museum is one of 36 official Olympics museums, located in 25 countries on five continents. Headquarters of the Olympic Museums Network is the museum in Lausanne, Switzerland. The Richmond museum is the only one in Canada.

The Oval is also designated as an "Olympics Legacy Site," which allows the facility to proudly display the much-protected Olympic rings symbol and other Olympic-branded material.

The museum itself offers visitors a whole



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

The display of Olympic torches greets visitors to the Richmond Olympic Experience, one of 36 Olympic museums around the world.

menu of hands-on activities, and I was surprised how immediately available they were, because the place was not busy. In fact, I think I could categorize the Richmond Olympic Experience as a hidden gem, one just waiting to be discovered by visitors – who will be thrilled by their find.

There are fascinating exhibits in the museum, highlighting both Canadian involvement in the Olympics, and the global vision of the Games. Visitors can take enjoy an array of virtual experiences – careening down a bobsled run, experiencing ski jumping, kayaking through rapids, or walking a balance beam – conveniently located about 20 centimeters off the floor level, so even an unbalanced guy like me could give it a try without risking injury.

This is very much an interactive facility. In addition to the virtual experiences, visitors can hoist an Olympic torch, don replica Olympic medals, and even dress in Olympic hockey jerseys.

The entire Oval facility was designed to be of ongoing use to the community, and to welcome visitors from around the world.

And more than that – Gregory Huzor told us that, should the opportunity arise, the Oval could be transformed back into a competition site for a future Olympics!

The multi-purpose facility is a testimony to the vision of Richmond's leaders. The Oval was originally supposed to be located at Simon Fraser University, but Richmond made an offer that could not be refused – the Oval eventually cost \$178 million, and Richmond guaranteed to fund all costs over the \$60 million mark.

Huzor echoes the comments of many Richmond residents, who now, 16 years later, think that the \$118 million investment has paid dividends far beyond the original price.

Visitors will find that the people who planned this Olympic venue deserve a gold medal for foresight.

Paul Knowles is an author and travel writer, and Past-President of the Travel Media Association of Canada. To contact Paul about travel, his books, or speaking engagements, email pknowles@golden.net.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

The Olympic Oval, home of speed-skating competitions during the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

The virtual bobsled ride.

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An earthworm.

I bring music wherever I go. I keep things very cold. I have wheels. People give my driver money and he gives them treats. What am I?
An ice cream truck.

I appear once in summer and twice in autumn, but never in winter. What am I?
Letter U.

Coal in my belly, steel on my feet. When I get hot it's time to eat. What am I?
Charcoal BBQ.

You might love me in summer but I never like the sun. The hotter the weather, the sooner I disappear. What am I?
Ice cream.

I'm a letter of the alphabet and I'm the biggest thing on the planet. What am I?
C (Sea).

I'm surrounded by water but I'm not a fish. What am I?
An island.

I am a type of building and from the top I shine. I warn sailors about land so that ships will be fine. What am I?
A lighthouse.

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Solutions on Page 31

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JULY 19 | 2 PM

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AUGUST 9 – “ Kickin Kountry”

AUGUST 16 – “North Shore Ramblers”

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AUGUST 23 – “George Fulop”

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Appointments are available at Alexandra Hospital
Ingersoll and Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital and by phone

Are you looking for support with your Diabetes? Our Team of Registered Nurses, Registered Dietitians and a Social Worker is here to support YOUR goals. We can help with medication adjustments, lifestyle and diet changes, stress management, weight reduction strategies and more. **SELF REFERRALS ARE WELCOME.** Please call 519-485-9611 to book an appointment. Let's work together!

MONDAYS | 7 - 9 PM

MODERN SQUARE DANCING IS FOR YOU!

Thames Valley Dance Club

Looking for something to do in the evening or something new to try? Modern square dancing is a great way to learn something new, have fun, meet new friends, relieve stress, and get some exercise! All you need is comfortable shoes and casual clothing. No experience or partner is required and anyone over the age of 12 is welcome (children from 12-15 with an adult, please). **The 2025-2026 season has started at the Ingersoll Pipe Band Hall, 108 Wonham St. S. Ingersoll.** The first night is free, and after that the cost is \$7.50 per person each Monday, paid monthly at the start of the month. For more information, contact Julie at 519-535-3314.

2ND TUES. OF MONTH (SEPT. TO MAY) | 2 - 4 PM

4TH TUES. OF MONTH (SEPT. TO MAY) | 7 - 9 PM

OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Church of the Epiphany, 560 Dundas Street, Woodstock
Ontario N4S 1C7

If you have never belonged to a stamp club, now's the time. Meet new friends, grow your knowledge and collection. Contact: Don Eaton dhfe@silomail.com. Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>

3RD WED. OF MONTH | 10 AM - NOON

LYNN RIVER PROBUS CLUB

Army, Navy & Air Force Club, Simcoe, ON. Corner of Water St. and Culver St. Simcoe. Enter via Culver St.

Our retired and semi-retired members enjoy diverse interest groups, friendship and fellowship. We have interesting speakers at our monthly meetings as well as time to socialise.

Current and prospective members are welcome to join us at the Army, Navy & Air Force Club, Simcoe, which is on the corner of Water St. and Culver St. Simcoe. Enter via Culver St. For more information, please visit our website at: lynnriverprobus239.com or email lynnriverprobus239@gmail.com

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS | 7 - 9 PM

SATURDAYS | 10 AM - 12 PM

LEARN BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU (BJJ)

North Broadway Baptist Church

Thanks to donor support, we've been able to purchase mats and uniforms, and our instructors generously volunteer their time. This isn't a business—any donations go straight back into the program to help buy more uniforms, mats, and equipment. If it's within your means, a \$20 monthly donation helps support the program, but if not, classes are completely free. **Classes are open to anyone 14 and older.** If you'd like to try a class, please arrive about 15 minutes early to sign waivers and get fitted for a uniform. Information can be found at: <https://www.northbroadwaychurch.ca/nbmfa>, <https://www.facebook.com/northbroadwaymfa>, <https://www.instagram.com/northbroadwaymfa/> Inquires can be made at: nbmfa@northbroadwaychurch.ca

EVERY OTHER FRIDAY | 1 - 4 PM

SPRING INTO THE INGERSOLL COUNTRY MUSIC JAMBOREE

Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St. S., Ingersoll

Join us, walk ins welcome. Qualifications - love 50-70's country music. Perform, listen, dance & enjoy! May 1, 15 & 29, June 5 & 19.

FRIDAYS | 1 PM

INTERESTED IN BRIDGE?

JOIN US AT THE TILLSONBURG DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Tillsonburg Senior Centre - 45 Hardy Ave, Tillsonburg

Don't have a partner? Come anyway and we will match you up with someone. For more information, visit their Facebook page: TburgBridge.

SATURDAYS, JUNE 6 - SEPT. 19 | 10 AM - 4 PM

PLATTSVILLE & DISTRICT HERITAGE SOCIETY 2026 EXHIBIT - HOLIDAYS & CELEBRATIONS THAT BRING US TOGETHER

Archive & Museum at Chesterfield, 816661 Oxford Rd 22, Bright (June 20 - visit us at Plattsville 175)

Donations accepted. Refreshments. For private viewing email plattsvilledistrictheritage@gmail.com or call 519.535.1417.

1ST AND 3RD TUES. OF MONTH

TILLSONBURG LIONS

The Tillsonburg Lions meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays. You are invited to their dinner meetings in the Lion's Den at the Community Centre. If you are interested in giving back to your Community contact Jim at 519 409 0876 for more information.....all are welcome.

1ST WED. OF MONTH | 7 PM

WAGNER MEMORIAL TEETERVILLE LEGION BRANCH 526 - MEMBERS GENERAL MEETING

The Wagner Memorial Teeterville Legion Branch 526 - 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, ON

Not a member? Contact us to join. For More Information Call, the Legion 519-443-5588. www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca

WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO HELP AT ONE OF OUR EVENTS? WE WELCOME YOU!

The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch 526 - 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, ON

You do not need to be a member to Volunteer, Just contact the legion and leave your name and number and purpose of your call. Someone will get back to you as to where you might be needed. Students and Adults welcome. **Open hours. Wed.-Fri. 3 pm-10 pm, Sat.1 pm-10 pm, Sun.1 pm-6 pm. For More Information call, the Legion at 519-443-5588 or teetervillelegionbranch526.ca**

VON OXFORD SUPPORTIVE CARE PROGRAMS

Navigating any form of grief can feel overwhelming; however, with the right support, guidance, and education, individuals can discover a pathway to help in the healing of grief.

VON Oxford Supportive Care Programs offer assistance for grief stemming from various circumstances, such as the death of someone, caregiving, serious illness diagnoses, and life transitions. Through education, connection, and compassion, our programs create a safe space for individuals to explore their emotions and learn effective coping mechanisms during the grieving process.

Contact us today to learn more about VON Oxford Supportive Care Programs:

Email: oxford.griefsupport@von.ca

Phone: 1-888-866-7518

All Programs are Free-of-charge.

CLASSIFIEDS

TREES

For Sale: Shade Trees; Maples, Oaks, Birch, Beech, Honey Locusts, Elms, Magnolia, Hydrangea Tree, Tulip Tree, Crab apples, Ivory Silk Lilac, Chanticleer Pear, Golden Weeping Willows and more. Apples, Pears, Peaches, Plums, Apricots, Nectarine, Blueberry, Haskap etc. Lots of healthy strong Spruce, Cedars and White Pine for your privacy hedges and windbreaks. Hundred of flowering shrubs.

Reg Hours 7am- 6pm Mon-Sat at Martins Nursery c/o Emanuel Martin. 42661 Orangehill Rd., Wroxeter, ON

OBITUARY

TIMOTHY ROBERT BRINDLEY



Suddenly, at Timmins and District Hospital on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, Timothy Robert "Tim" Brindley passed away at the age of 59. He was the beloved husband and best friend of Petra Brindley (née Hinz); the loving and caring father of Ashley Brindley (Del), Tyler Brindley (Audrey), and Jocelyn Horman (Larry); and the loving stepfather of Anastacia Gencarelli (Mario).

Tim was the proud grandfather of Liam, Jonny, Allie, Brooke, Emma, Tyson, Grayson, Reid, Reilly, and Gabriel, and proud step-grandfather of Vincent, Matteo, Sawyer, Mia, and Sophia. He was also eagerly awaiting the arrival of his 17 th grandchild in August.

Tim was the much-loved son of Robert Brindley (Diane). He will be deeply missed by his sister, Tracy Couture, and his brothers, Jim Brindley (Jodi), Tony Brindley (Amanda), and Troy Brindley (Sonya). A fun-loving uncle to his nieces. Tim is also survived by many aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Tim was predeceased by his grandson, Gavin (2022); his mother, Linda Brindley (2023); and her husband, Wayne Norman (2000).

Tim was a fun-loving man whose mischievous smile was never far from his face. A hard worker by nature, he took a chance in 2025 when he and Petra moved north to Chapleau, where they embraced northern life and looked forward to spending time with family and friends. One of his favourite pastimes was riding his motorcycle with Petra.

Tim loved the outdoors and could often be found tinkering with something—whether a motorcycle, a vehicle, or a boat he was restoring. Before moving north, he spent more than 25 years as a truck driver with Verspeeten Cartage in Ingersoll, and he worked for the Township of Chapleau until his passing.

Tim will be remembered for his big heart, quick wit, and the mischievous smile that so often lit up his face. He leaves behind a lifetime of memories, laughter, and love that will be treasured by his family and friends. His presence will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

Cremation has taken place, and a celebration of life will be arranged at a later date.

Memorial donations to local animal shelters. (Arrangements entrusted to Kerry Funeral Home, Wawa.1-800-439-4937). www.kerryfuneralhome.ca

OBITUARY

THOMAS (TOM) CHARLES FURLONG (SEPT. 8, 1933 – JULY 2, 2026)



It is with sadness that we announce the peaceful passing of Thomas "Tom" Charles Matthew Furlong, at Caressant Care Courtland, on July 2nd, 2026, at the age of 92. Tom was born to the late John "Jack" Furlong and late former Mary Priddle. Over his working years, Tom was a dedicated employee with Butler Ash, Timber Jack and General Motors. Tom was a lifelong member of the Navy Club, an avid

sports fan who won multiple Ontario baseball and hockey titles, a longtime baseball coach, and a fan of the Detroit Red Wings and Tigers. Tom will be remembered by his family and friends for his charismatic and charming personality.

Tom is predeceased by his much loved wife Alma Mae (nee Kumm) Furlong (Feb. 27, 2025). Tom is also predeceased by his children Mary "Lynn" Hutchinson and Thomas Michael "Mike" Furlong. Lovingly remembered by son-in-law Colin Hutchinson (Susan), his grandchildren Ryan (Lisa) Hutchinson and their children Mackenzie and Carson; Mike (Melanie) Hutchinson; Heather Hutchinson (Cameron Simpson) and their children Aidan, Avey and Emily; Kelsey Hutchinson (Matt Inchley) and their children Cooper and Beckett. Survived by two siblings: Jane House and Robert "Bob" (Cathy) Furlong. Predeceased by six siblings: Mary Margaret Church, William "Bill" Furlong, Wanda Pope, Barbara Hart, Dave Furlong and Sharon "Sherry" Furlong.

In keeping with Tom's expressed wishes, private interment will take place in Otterville Cemetery. Everyone who knew Tom is invited to attend a Celebration of Life on Wednesday, July 8th, at the Woodstock Navy Club (959 James St., Woodstock) between 4:00 and 8:00 p.m. All are invited to share favourite memories and photos, express personal condolences or contribute memorial donations to the "Canadian Cancer Society" or the "Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario" via Tom's online tribute page at www.verhoevefuneralhomes.com or by contacting the Maurice J. Verhoeve Funeral Homes - Burial and Cremation Services Inc., 262 Broadway, Tillsonburg (519) 842-4238, entrusted with final arrangements.

"Thank you to the Doctors, Nurses, PSWs and Staff at Caressant Care Courtland for the wonderful care provided to Tom and Alma over the years. Your kindness will always be remembered."



OBITUARY

DOUGLAS EDWARD WILSON (SEPTEMBER 29, 1933 – JUNE 30, 2026)

It is with heavy hearts that the family of Douglas Edward Wilson, announce the peaceful passing of our much-loved father, grandfather, great-grandfather ("Papa-joke"), brother-in-law and friend to many. Born in Port Burwell, son of the late Wm. Edward Wilson and the late former Ila Aspden. Doug is predeceased by his loving wife Agnes Kirwin. Many Tillsonburg locals will recognize the recently named "Doug Wilson Park", a permanent tribute that Doug was so honoured to receive. Doug was a very active member of the community, with a long list of accolades in support of Tillsonburg Public Services. He is the recipient of the Exemplary Service Medal from the Governor General of Canada, after 40 years of volunteer service as a Firefighter and Captain with the Tillsonburg Fire Department. Doug notably served for 7 years with the Ontario Provincial Police Auxiliary Unit. He also supported the establishment of a Senior Baseball League in Tillsonburg, coached minor hockey for years, was an elected member of the PUC for 6 years and was a member of the Tillsonburg Parks Recreation and Arena Commission for 12 years. This community was a priority to Doug; this positive impact is his legacy. He will be dearly missed by his family and friends.

Always a loving father and father-in-law to Annette (Keith) and their children Jeff (Amanda) (sons Braden & Caleb), Greg (Kirsten) (sons Connor, Evan & Josh); Steve (Leslie), and their children Lynette (Dan) (kids Axel, Weston; Hudson & Clarke), Justin (Hillary) (kids Edison & Edith); Joanne (Mike), and their daughter Victoria; Tim (Melissa), and their children Tim, Connor and Madison. Doug is predeceased by his brother Bill (surviving wife Marg).

"Thank you to the wonderful staff of Sakura House for making Doug and his family comfortable. Your kindness was appreciated and will always be remembered."

A Celebration of Doug's Life will be held on Monday, July 13th, 2026, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Carriage Hall, 25 Brock St. W., Tillsonburg. Everyone who knew Doug is invited to send personal condolences, share favourite memories and photos. Memorial donations to "Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital Foundation" or to "VON Oxford" (for Sakura House Hospice), via Doug's online tribute page at www.verhoevefuneralhomes.com or by contacting the Maurice J. Verhoeve Funeral Homes-Burial and Cremation Services Inc. (519) 842-4238, which has been entrusted with all funeral arrangements with confidence.

WEEKEND QUIZ

by Jake Grant

1. What year did Doug Ford become premier of Ontario?
2. Who plays Rick Grimes in The Walking Dead?
3. What element makes up the majority of Earth's atmosphere?
4. Which animal was the most sought after during the fur trade era?
5. Who says, "Th-th-th-that's all folks!"?
6. What is botany the study of?
7. What prominent facial feature is Hello Kitty missing?
8. Where is the lowest elevation point in California?
9. Michael Stipe was the lead singer of which band?
10. What is the roman numeral for 10?

This week's answers are found on pg. 31

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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QUIZ ANSWERS

1. 2018
2. Andrew Lincoln
3. Nitrogen
4. North America Beaver
5. Porky Pig
6. Plants
7. Mouth
8. Death Valley
9. R.E.M
10. X

SUDOKU

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



Why Is the Funeral Ritual Important?

1. Acknowledging Death and the Reality of Loss:

Funerals provide a concrete way to recognize that a person has died, which is a crucial step in the grieving process.

They offer a public declaration of death, allowing the community to share in the grief and support one another.

This public acknowledgment helps to validate the experience of loss and begin the process of healing.

2. Rituals for Mourning and Remembrance:

Funerals provide a structured environment for expressing grief, both individually and collectively. They allow for the sharing of memories, stories, and experiences related to the deceased, helping to keep their memory alive.

Different cultures have developed unique rituals, such as viewings, processions, and memorial services, to honor the deceased and facilitate the grieving process.

3. Support for the Living:

Funerals bring people together, fostering a sense of community and providing social support for those who are mourning.

They offer an opportunity for friends, family, and community members to offer condolences and comfort to the bereaved.

The support system provided by the funeral can be crucial in helping individuals cope with the emotional challenges of loss.

4. Cultural and Religious Significance:

Funeral practices are deeply intertwined with cultural and religious beliefs about death, the afterlife, and the relationship between the living and the dead.

For example, ancient Egyptians believed in an afterlife and meticulously prepared their dead for it, while Greeks and Romans saw funerals as a way to ensure the deceased's peaceful transition.

Christian funerals emphasize the belief in resurrection and the promise of eternal life, while other religions may have different perspectives on the afterlife.

Recording your funeral wishes is easier than you think.

Did you know? When funeral expenses are pre-paid, prices for all prepaid goods and services are locked in.

Call: (519) 842-4238 today



Maurice Verhoeve
Owner/Funeral Director



Margaret Verhoeve
Office Administrator



Robert Verhoeve
Funeral Director



Krystyna Verhoeve
Funeral Director



Hector Verhoeve
(1938 - 2015)