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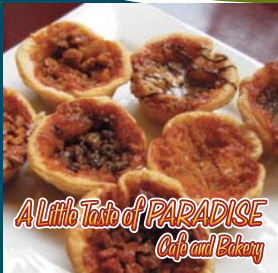


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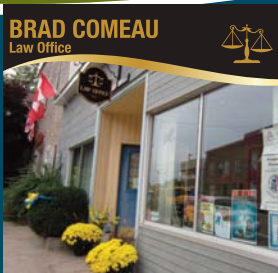
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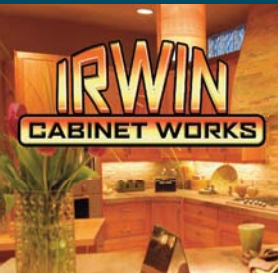
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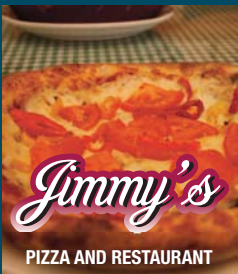
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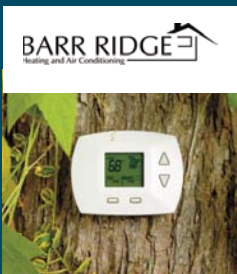
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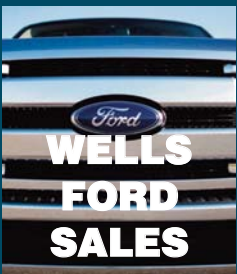
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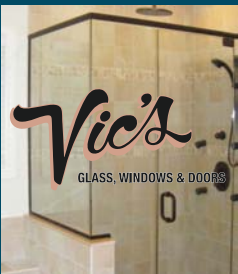
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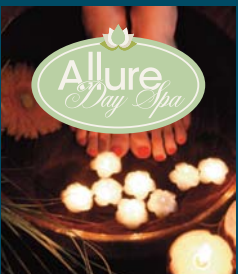
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# COUNTRY ROADS

DISCOVERING HASTINGS COUNTY

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# Contents



Photo: Haley Ashford

As Canadians we can regularly be heard lamenting the loss of defined seasons. Well, we had a Winter, for sure, and have high hopes that Spring will break forth with great gusto and the rainbow of colours we

crave after a good old fashioned white Winter. And let's be honest, there's no season more anxiously anticipated than Spring.

Denice Wilkins and John Wilson of Tweed will be even more antsy this Spring – especially as June nears. They will regularly peer out their bay window hoping to see the ‘march of the turtles’ discovering the new nesting beach constructed last Fall on their waterfront property. Built in collaboration with the Metro Toronto Zoo along with a snake hibernaculum the projects signify the couple's love of nature and opportunity to do something for the reptiles that share our countryside.

As ‘Just Saying’ columnist Shelley Wildgen and husband Rob enter their third year in a Trent River waterfront home it's become abundantly clear they're not alone! Nature's neighbours are everywhere and they don't call ahead before they visit!

When the weather breaks you will be tempted to take your copy of Country Roads and head out into Hastings County to take a tour of our company towns. Orland French tells us the important tale of these once thriving communities. Today all you will find is the skeletal remains of many, while some pursue the goal of reinventing themselves with new life.

And while out traversing Hastings County country roads don't be surprised if you come across another common spring sighting. It's the time of the year classic car buffs bring their beautiful automobiles out of hibernation. They are a sure sign of Spring!

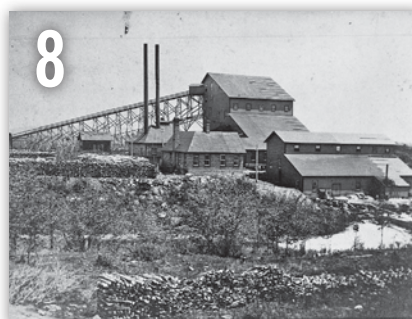
We're very excited about our new *Artisans at Hand* column. This regular feature provides the opportunity to profile the talented and often awe-inspiring artists and crafts people amongst us.

You will find this issue of Country Roads quite cheezie, literally, as we bring you the story of the W. T. Hawkins company, maker of the iconic Canadian cheezie. More than the story of a snack food this is the story of a Hastings County business – where both the product and the business are originals.

We're also delighted to bring you a healthy serving of local writers and musicians, recipes, landscapes, lakes and more in what we feel is a pretty full plate of stories.

Bon Appetit! ●

*Nancy & John Hopkins*



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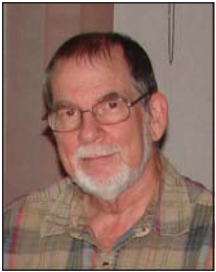
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**Orland French** is a writer and publisher living in Belleville where he and his wife Sylvia create colourful history books. In an earlier journalistic career, Mr. French worked with *The Kingston Whig-Standard*, *The*

*Ottawa Citizen* and *The Globe and Mail*. His company, Wallbridge House Publishing, is working on a new geological perspective on Prince Edward County, to be published this summer. Much more information is available at [www.wallbridgehouse.com](http://www.wallbridgehouse.com).



A resident of the Belleville area for 15 years, Country Roads Account Executive **Jennifer Richardson** has had a varied business career. She has a background in real estate selling/acquisition and commercial real

estate development, and has owned a variety of small- to medium-sized businesses. Her career path has helped her develop her strengths and passion for helping people, and she has a first-hand appreciation for the challenges facing business owners. Jennifer gets great pleasure out of meeting so many wonderful and interesting people when she's on the job and helping advertisers reach Country Roads readers.

Jennifer's romance with this area began when her family camped at the Sandbanks when she was a young girl, and she always believed it was her destiny to one day make Belleville her permanent home.

Her heart and life is her family, and Jennifer feels blessed that her two children have decided to relocate to this area. The absolute joys of her life are her three grandchildren.



**Shelley Wildgen** was raised 'radio.' Both parents worked at CJBQ in Belleville and by the time Shelley was 14, so did she. Her years have included stints writing and broadcasting at stations as close as Belleville, and

as far afield as Kingston, Winnipeg and Bermuda. In recent years, Shelley turned her pen to writing features for magazines and her voice is heard regularly on all '2001 Audio Video' radio commercials in the Toronto area. Now she teaches Media at Loyalist College and spends her off time relaxing in her wee home on the Trent River - watching the beavers, herons, frogs and turtles fight for top billing on the shoreline.

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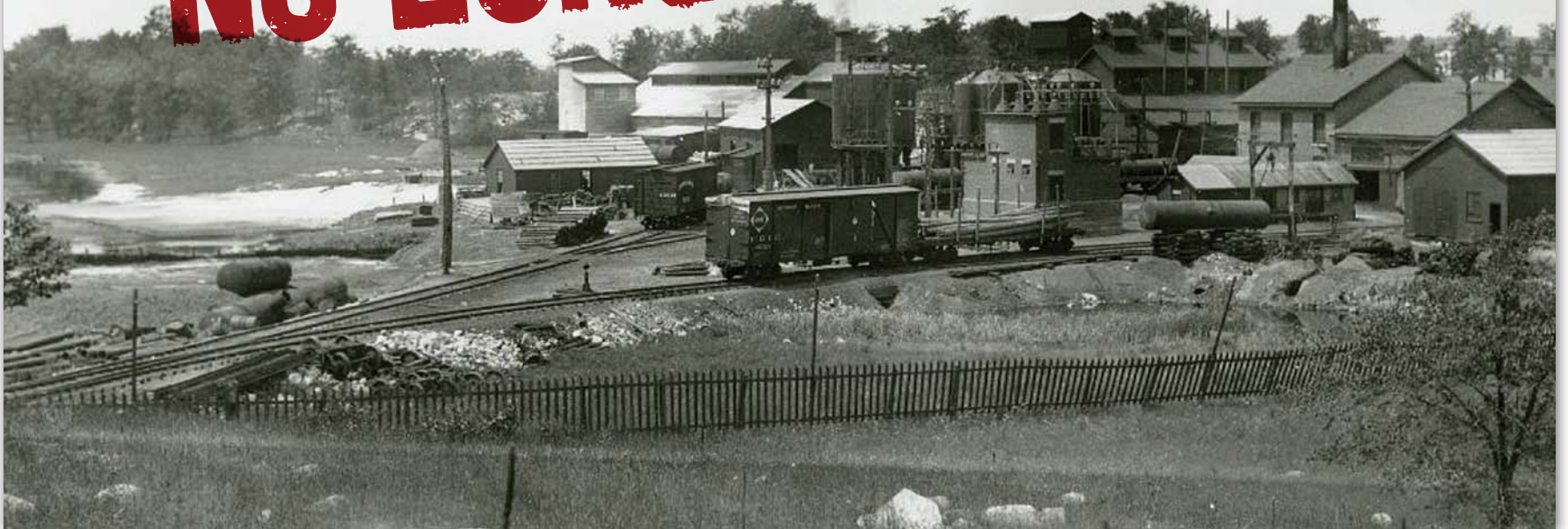
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# WHERE THE WHISTLE NO LONGER BLOWS



Mining works at Deloro. From 1885 to 1901 the mine was the only producer of arsenic in North America.  
*Photo courtesy of the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County (HC02270)*

## Hastings Company Towns fading into the past

BY ORLAND FRENCH

**T**he landscape of rural Ontario is littered with the corpses of company towns. Hastings County has its share – some desperate in their desolation, some nearly buried beneath the accumulated detritus of an encroaching forest, some still struggling gamely on under public and private life support, hoping for resuscitation in a new afterlife.

In their day, these were thriving communities. Men, women, kids all walked to their churches, schools, grocery and hardware stores and community centres. They lived and played in modest houses laid out in logical street patterns. Not far away was the jobsite: the mine or the lumber mill, where the whistle marked the beginning and end of the workday.

What most properties in town had in common, but not all, was that they were owned by The Company. Many of them sprang up in isolated areas around extractive industries such as mining and logging. If the resource was discovered where there was no population – which was often the case – The Company had to build a town to get workers to live at the jobsite.

Of the five company towns identified in Hastings, four related to mineral extraction and one to shoes. The shoe site, Batawa, could have been located anywhere. It wasn't that the only cowhide shoe leather acceptable to founder Thomas Bata could be found between Trenton and Frankford. He liked the area, the local politicians purred in his ear, and he established his shoe factory there.

Sometimes isolated company towns used a form of scrip system to pay employees, where earnings could only be redeemed at the company store at, usually, artificially high prices. This practice has been mournfully recalled in the coal mining song, *Sixteen Tons*:

You load sixteen tons what do you get  
Another day older and deeper in debt  
Saint Peter don't you call me 'cause I can't go  
I owe my soul to the company store.

Some of the more familiar company towns in Canada are Ocean Falls, B.C. (pulp and paper, Crown Zellerbach), Labrador City, Newfound-

land and Labrador (iron ore, Iron Ore Company of Canada), Churchill Falls, Newfoundland and Labrador (hydroelectric power, Church Falls (Labrador) Power Corporation). Walkerville, which has been absorbed into Windsor, Ontario, was founded by Hiram Walker as a model town to service his distillery.

None of Hastings County's company towns would show up on a list of prominent company towns. However, some of their products are known internationally. Retired hockey stars Bobby and Dennis Hull are famous throughout the sports world for their skills in the National Hockey League, although that has nothing to do with the cement produced by Canada Cement Company Limited out of their hometown of Point Anne, now part of Belleville. Bata shoes, no longer produced at Batawa, are still sold by the millions around the world. The others – Deloro (gold), Cardiff (uranium) and Sulphide (sulphuric, sulphurous and nitric acids) had international markets but not enough product, at the right price, to service them.

If you want to take a look at a company town, they're easy to find. Here's what you'll see:





Top left: Batawa townsite was carefully planned out by the Batawa shoe company, placing its workers within easy walking distance of the factory, at the top of the photo. *Photo courtesy of Batawa Development Corporation.* Top right: The general store at Deloro is now closed. Photo: Orland French. Bottom left: Belleville Fire Station No. 3 in Point Anne is still on active duty. *Photo: Orland French.* Bottom right: The Belleville Portland Cement Company works at Point Anne. It was the first rock cement mill in Canada, with a capacity of 1,200 barrels a day. *Photo courtesy of the Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County (HC00368).*

## Sulphide

Sulphide, near Tweed was established as a gold mining camp in 1836. However, it wasn't gold that made it money, for the gold turned out to be pyrite – also known as fool's gold. Fortunately, the pyrite contained sulphide which was what the Nichol's Mining Company needed to manufacture sulphuric and sulphurous acid. Acid was used in processing ores from mines, and ultimately Sulphide's acids were used extensively in the uranium mines in Bancroft. Its acids were also used in the manufacture of explosives, fertilizer and other products.

In 1907, the Nichols Chemical Company began mining the site. It expanded its operations in 1908, 1912 and again in 1915, when it was doing a roaring business providing acids for munitions manufacturing to meet the military demands of the First World War. After the war, in 1920, the company was absorbed by the Allied Chemical and Dye Company, later known as Allied Chemical.

Shipping out the acids was easy, because the Canadian Pacific Railway ran right past the town. Originally called the Ontario and Quebec Railway,

this line had been constructed through the future town site of Sulphide in 1881.

At its peak, the mine and processing plant employed about 200 workers. Most of them lived in a self-contained company town with all the basic amenities, including a recreation centre. This facility included a bowling alley, billiard room, barber shop and a large hall with a stage for presenting Christmas concerts and cantatas. The hall was also used for showing movies.

A single street ran the length of the town. When Allied Chemical closed the plant in 1991, it ordered the demolition of its plant and 26 houses. Some occupants bought the houses for \$1 and moved them off company property.

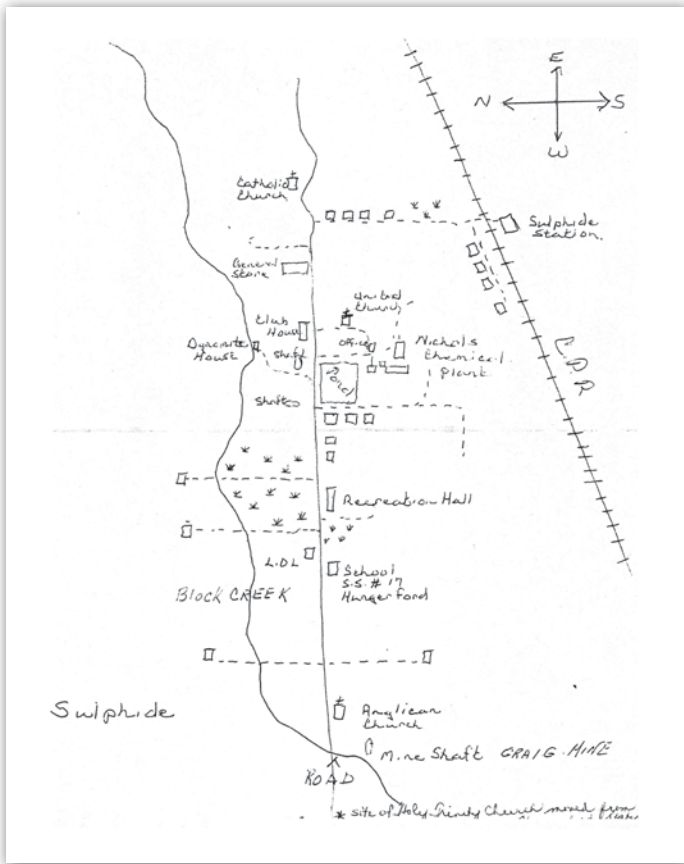
Even though the mine structures have been razed, there are still remains of prominent buildings of the time: The Roman Catholic church has become a private residence, as has the Anglican Church, the general store and the Sulphide school. The Orange Lodge is a sad rotting wooden structure sitting atop a crumbling concrete stairway. If you search around through the undergrowth on the south side of the road,

you can find a set of concrete steps leading to where the United Church used to stand. Nearby, on the other side of the road, stands a high chain link fence topped with barbed wire to discourage visitors to the site of a disused mine shaft.

## Batawa

Thomas J. Bata came to Canada to make shoes, but first he had to help defeat "that rascal, Hitler" who had driven him out of his native Czechoslovakia in 1939. The entire production capacity at his new shoe manufacturing plant in Batawa was turned over to making weapons for the war effort. During the Second World War Bata produced 48 special military items including naval gun mountings and hydraulic components for aircraft, and gyroscopes for torpedoes.

After the war, Bata returned to his first love of making shoes. The plant produced millions of pairs until changing economic forces shut it down in 1999. Bata world-wide still claims to serve more than a million customers a day and has stores in 70 countries. Sonja Bata, the widow of Thomas, maintains a country residence on the



Hand-drawn map of Sulphide, showing route of Canadian Pacific Railway. Photo courtesy of Tweed Heritage Museum

The Orange Hall in Sulphide sits abandoned and deteriorating. Photo: Orland French

Batawa site and dreams of converting the old shoe factory into stylish residences.

Batawa is an artificially-constructed native-sounding name, formed from Bata and -wa, like the -wa on the end of Ottawa.

Of the five company towns we are exploring here, Batawa is one of the newest and purest company towns. It is still extant. A dozen years after the factory closed, it remains a living community. All the buildings have been preserved and most are occupied. Take a drive through the community, just south of Frankford, and you will see a living exhibit of a company town.

The Bata Shoe Factory is intact and remains the focal point of renaissance dreams by the Batawa Development Corporation. Houses are occupied by families, many of them associated with the nearby Canadian Forces Base. The Batawa Ski Hill still thrives in winter, and features an excellent restaurant for skiers and spectators alike.

Batawa was built on 1,500 acres of land on the west side of the Trent River, a few miles south of Frankford. Thomas Bata selected it from the air because the landscape reminded him of the territory around Zlin, his Czechoslovakian home. The land was mostly pastureland, owned by cash-starved

farmers who were more than willing to sell. The local economy, which had been suffering since a pulp-and-paper plant had closed during the Depression, received a major boost.


The concept of a company town in Canada was the continuation of a dream of Thomas Bata, Thomas J.'s father. He had built a company town at Zlin, and had met death prematurely in an airplane accident. When Thomas J. moved to Canada, he continued the tradition.

Unlike company towns related to resource industries, which must be built where the resources are located, a shoe factory town can be built any-

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where. Or, not at all. There was no particular reason that the shoe factory could not have been built in Belleville or Trenton without a company town, except that the owner had developed a philosophy of creating a town where the employees were all well-served, happy, and willing to work. Maybe it was good for the sole!

In this case, too, the company-built town provided a cultural haven for Bata's 120 senior employees, few of whom spoke English. By 1944, during its wartime assignments, the plant employed more than 1,000 people – many of them local women who were used to earning household money from selling eggs and preserves. The plant had become Hastings County's largest employer.

## Deloro

This gold-mining town five kilometres north-east of Marmora is without question Hastings County's most expensive company town. The provincial government is spending tens of millions of dollars to clean up the environmental mess left behind when the industrial site closed.

It wasn't just a mine. It was an arsenic production centre, at one time the only one in North America. The mine site itself is described by an environmental report as "grossly contaminated with arsenic and arsenical compounds, refining slag, mine tailings, laboratory wastes, lead, cobalt, nickel, copper, mercury and other metals and low-level radioactive wastes..." It is one of the most contaminated industrial sites in Ontario.

On its eastern border flows the Moira River, picking up leachates from the site on its wandering route to the Bay of Quinte.

Deloro was a gold mining centre from the gold rush of 1866 until 1903. Arsenic was a by-product, but a valuable one. From 1885 to 1901 the mine was the only producer of arsenic in North America and it continued to produce arsenic until



Former home of the mine manager at Deloro, located beside mine site. Traditionally the manager would have a grander house than the workers below him. *Photo: Orland French*

the 1950s. Between 1907 and 1961, the site was also the location of a major smelter and refining centre for silver and cobalt ores brought in by train from northern Ontario and even from overseas.

Deloro doesn't rate with the zoo or a roller coaster as a place to take the kids, but it is worth a look. You can't get on the mine site itself – and who would want to? – but the adjacent townsite shows you the nature of a small company town. You can tell the mine managers' houses from the workers' – they're bigger, fancier and closer to the mine.

If you could get on the site, you would find only two buildings intact – a transformer building and a research lab. There is also a series of concrete piers which once supported a railway track. Everything else is in ruins or has disappeared. Be content to peer through the security gate.

In the provincial government, there are heritage-minded people who believe that Deloro has some redeeming quality as a cultural site. At the very least, it could be a learning centre for environmentalists around the world who are facing similar challenges in cleaning up industrial disasters.



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Steps in Sulphide to a non-existent United Church. *Photo: Orland French*

For the rest of us, the site raises the question: how could this happen? How could industries simply abandon such a mess without liability? In the old days, it was easy. As a heritage evaluation report puts it, “The material survival is closely linked to the societal attitude to industrialization that existed prior to environmental awareness of the 1960s and later. Until then owners could walk away from their property and leave the property derelict.”

Contrast that to the recent closure of the talc mine in Madoc. The site has been bulldozed and graded, and in a decade nothing will be visible but trees.

## Point Anne

When you tour the former company town of Point Anne, you might be surprised to find an active fire station nearly at the end of the road. Not very convenient for the neighbourhood it is supposed to protect, you might think. But actually, the fire station stands near the centre of the town it used to serve. It was the town that went away.

Point Anne is a part of Belleville, absorbed by the larger city when it amalgamated with Thurlow Township in the 1990s. Belleville Fire Station No. 3 is operated by volunteers, a vestige of the former township volunteer fire department. This was the heart of Point Anne, a town formed from two smaller communities which were, in turn, owned by two rival cement companies. Belleville Portland Cement Company, founded in 1905, and Lehigh Portland Cement Company, established three years later, consolidated with a number of other small companies into Canada Cement Company Limited in 1909. The new company operated at Point Anne for another 60 years, employing several generations of local people.

The two small towns merged into one, coalescing along the north shore of the Bay of Quinte on the road to the cement plant. The fire station,

which ironically backs onto Ashe Crescent, is near the former churches, school and stores that peppered the main street. Many of the more prominent buildings, such as the Point Anne School and the Orange Lodge, are constructed of decorative cement blocks. This was not a common building material but it reflected the economic base of the community.

As often happens when a company town closes, the more substantial buildings are converted to other uses. The Point Anne School, although it still bears a sign substantiating its history, is an apartment building. The Roman Catholic Church, identifiable by its gothic windows, is an auto body shop (also identifiable by the number of car carcasses around it). Next door the Catholic School has become a small factory. Down the road the United Church is totally gone, its location marked only by a monument on which is a plaque which reads: “This cairn commemorates the site of the Point Anne United Church 1925-1990 and is in memory of the people in this community who served the Lord faithfully for 65 years.” It is made of decorative cement blocks.

The town grew to more than 600 people at its peak. But it was doomed by another corporate merger in 1973, when Canada Cement joined the industrial giant Lafarge Cement. Immediately the company announced it was moving its operations to a new facility near Bath, on Lake Ontario.

Company houses were offered for sale to residents, who could move them to other sites. Those that weren't sold were torn down, as were most of the on-site industrial facilities. Today there isn't much remaining of the old plant, outside of company offices and research laboratories. Rusting signs advise wanderers to stay away from the huge quarry to the north.

The townsite can be found at the end of a two-lane road leading off Dundas Street, formerly Highway 2, on the east side of Belleville.



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## Cardiff

Cardiff is a company town, sort of, but not like the others. Just over the county line in Haliburton, Cardiff was developed as a provincial townsite, like Elliott Lake, under the auspices of the Ontario government to serve the uranium mining community. It was to prove to be a contentious community and, in short order, an unnecessary one as well.

In the summer of 1955, three uranium mines were producing ore in the Bancroft area: Bicroft Uranium Mines Limited, Faraday Mines Limited and Canadian Dyno Uranium Mines. These mines employed about a thousand people. With the U.S.-led West building a stockpile of thousands of nuclear weapons against the Russian-led East, and the allure of the potential of nuclear power as the wave of the future, the future of uranium mining seemed secure.

On the suggestion of Bicroft Mines, the government established a townsite north of Paudash Lake, west of Bancroft, in the fall of 1955. The purpose, like similar sites at Elliott Lake and Manitowadge, was to create a centrally located townsite to allow controlled urban development. The reasons were varied: concentration of shopping, business and entertainment facilities in one location, greater convenience for school children and general family life, prevention of strip development along a main highway and sporadic development throughout the countryside, easier supply of power and water to a planned community.

Naturally, this proposal was not viewed fondly by the proud civic fathers of Bancroft. Their community was already established a few kilometres to the east. They had stores, schools, churches, recreational facilities and a good community life in place. They failed to see the need for a competing community.

Initially, the townsite had been supported by both Bicroft and Faraday mines. But Faraday got cold feet and pulled out of the project, preferring



The former Roman Catholic church in Point Anne has become an auto body shop. *Photo: Orland French*

to develop company housing on its own site adjacent to the Village of Bancroft. This decision may have been hastened by the discovery that the company could get a 30 percent federal tax write-off for company housing on its own property, but not on the townsite.

Bicroft, which owned most of the townsite, went ahead with the development of Cardiff. As a co-operative townsite, the project was a fiasco. The uranium boom in Bancroft was short-lived in any event. Bancroft uranium was lower-grade than ores at Elliott Lake and Uranium City in Saskatchewan. With cheaper uranium found elsewhere and the world price dropping, the Bancroft uranium industry collapsed in the late 1960s.

Today's townsite is a quiet suburban community with a public school, United and Roman Catho-

lic churches, a pool and some other limited recreational resources, all thanks to the dream of a short-lived uranium industry. About 500 people live there, many of them retirees, in about 250 houses which are now privately owned.

Are these ghost towns? Not really. People who talk of ghost towns are usually trying to sell books or bus tours. There ARE ghost towns where nobody lives any more, but there are real people still living in these communities. The towns are ghosts of their former selves, perhaps, but they have found a pleasant after-life. ●

Orland French is a writer living in Belleville. His books can be found on-line at [www.wallbridgehouse.com](http://www.wallbridgehouse.com).



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## Whose river bank is it, anyway?

A few years back, we decided to ‘downsize’. That meant leaving our ancient Prince Edward County schoolhouse for a tidy bungalow - alongside Hastings County’s mighty Trent River. For those who already reside near water, the next few paragraphs may echo your own experiences. For those who don’t, well, it’s not all rivers and rainbows. You learn early on that you are never alone, especially in the springtime.

Our first spring was pretty enough. Plant life looked greener and quite lush. Slowly, we realized it was the many other lives that were beginning to – steadily – outnumber us. The swans arrived early. Oh, how unexpected. First two large, white swans, followed later by four wee signets.

“Aren’t they lovely? Hand me the binoculars, let’s feed them, take a picture.” A buffet of springtime joy to be sure. Next came the garter snake. No, I mean it really came to us, out of the side of our neighbours’ lawn tractor, over the fence and onto our car. Eww. But that could happen anywhere, right? Sure.

Then came a seasonal favourite. The frogs gathered choral steam on the shoreline, heralding a most robust visitor. Easily the size of a dinner plate our new guest planted her weary self on our front sidewalk. Looking up the hill to see where she came from, we saw about 10 of her reptilian girlfriends lumbering down our driveway. Spring is turtle season!

These lovelies have been doing more than river sipping for centuries; they’ve been birthing by the river. This annual occurrence is a blessed event we’re told, so we listened. Soggy mama turtles drag their sorry selves to dry land and lay their litter of white eggs in various locales close to water so, once born, the babies won’t have far to scuttle.

Beautiful. Our first maternal turtle. There she was, sort of sitting or splaying or doing whatever turtle ladies do in the sidewalk tulip bed. I got up to the garden goddess real close. She stretched her neck ‘round and I swear she smiled. Honestly, I don’t know how she ever got a date, let alone pregnant. Hideously

beautiful, this lady of the snapping turtle variety was immense, primitive and very, very slow.

After I stepped way around her, my husband obligingly picked her up with gloved hands, and ferried her down to the river in the wheelbarrow. Turtle mama was our season greeter. Since that spring day, we’ve stepped over and swerved by dozens more. You can’t be in a rush when driving to our house. We respect the egg-laying turtles as well as the mighty river at our doorstep, but no more transporting the girls down to the shore. We simply give the matrons a wide berth and leave them to their familiar ritual.

Once while watching television, I happened to glance out the living room window and staring straight back at me was a great horned owl. Wise, wonderful and so close. Our pint size dogs have been tethered ever since.

The river has been a natural rec centre for centuries. Decades before homebuilders began nesting humans on waterfront properties, the Trent River provided far more than a pretty site. It was a life source for swans, geese and a myriad of other fowl.

Once while watching television, I happened to glance out the living room window and staring straight back at me was a great horned owl. Wise, wonderful and so close. Our pint size dogs have been tethered ever since.

The river hosts snakes, eels, frogs, salamanders, turtles, mud puppies (yuk – worth a Google search) as well as a bevy of beavers. The beavers are busy...naturally. Destructive yes, but mostly beavers are resourceful. What they can do with a downed limb would shame any HGTV host. Make THAT right!

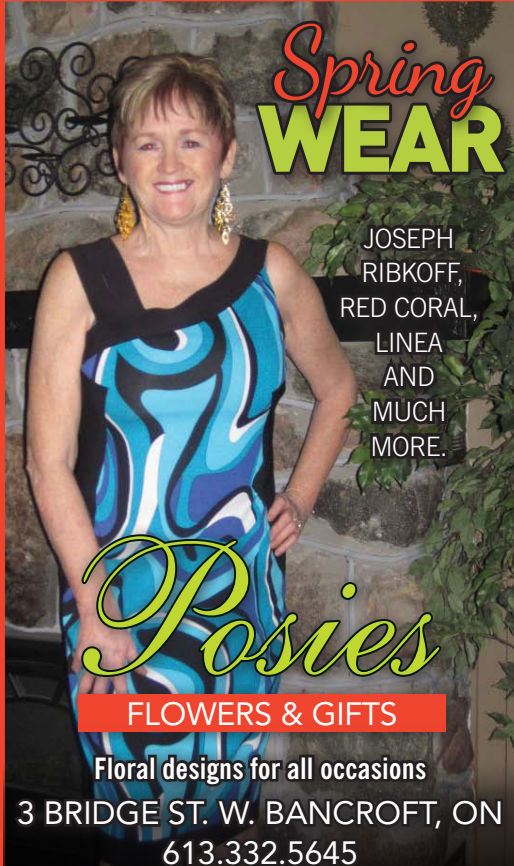
By far our most noted river dweller was arguably the largest. This past summer was dry as dust, so the river was more appealing than ever to the ringside wildlife, including the biggest drinker of all, a seven-foot brown bear. Size and weight may be up for discussion, but if we ever doubted that a bear was seen crashing through fences and drinking from the river – the rumours were confirmed. We were graced with clear evidence that bears do indeed doo doo in the woods...and on riverbanks.

City dwellers complaining of intrusive squirrels should try a little waterside living to really appreciate our tiny role in the universe. As I type, I’m watching a wayward opossum cross the deck, looking both ways as she shops for a room.

Some say opossums belong further south, others say they are commonly seen in this part of Hastings County. Clearly, the aforementioned marsupial doesn’t give a river rat’s asterisk where anyone thinks she should be. Facebook friends are telling me it’s not uncommon for her to birth 25 babies right about now, so “Welcome to the dance, li’l mama.”

For us, what began four years ago as a bucolic morning of swan-watching, slowly became a healthy life lesson. The circle of life is all around us, whirling and diving and striving and slurping and slithering. Living amongst nature’s pioneers and hard won champions of the food chain keeps us honest. The house on the river may seem like ours but it’s clear who was here first. The true owners of the Trent and all that surrounds us have, so far, been patient with our disruptive behaviour. ●

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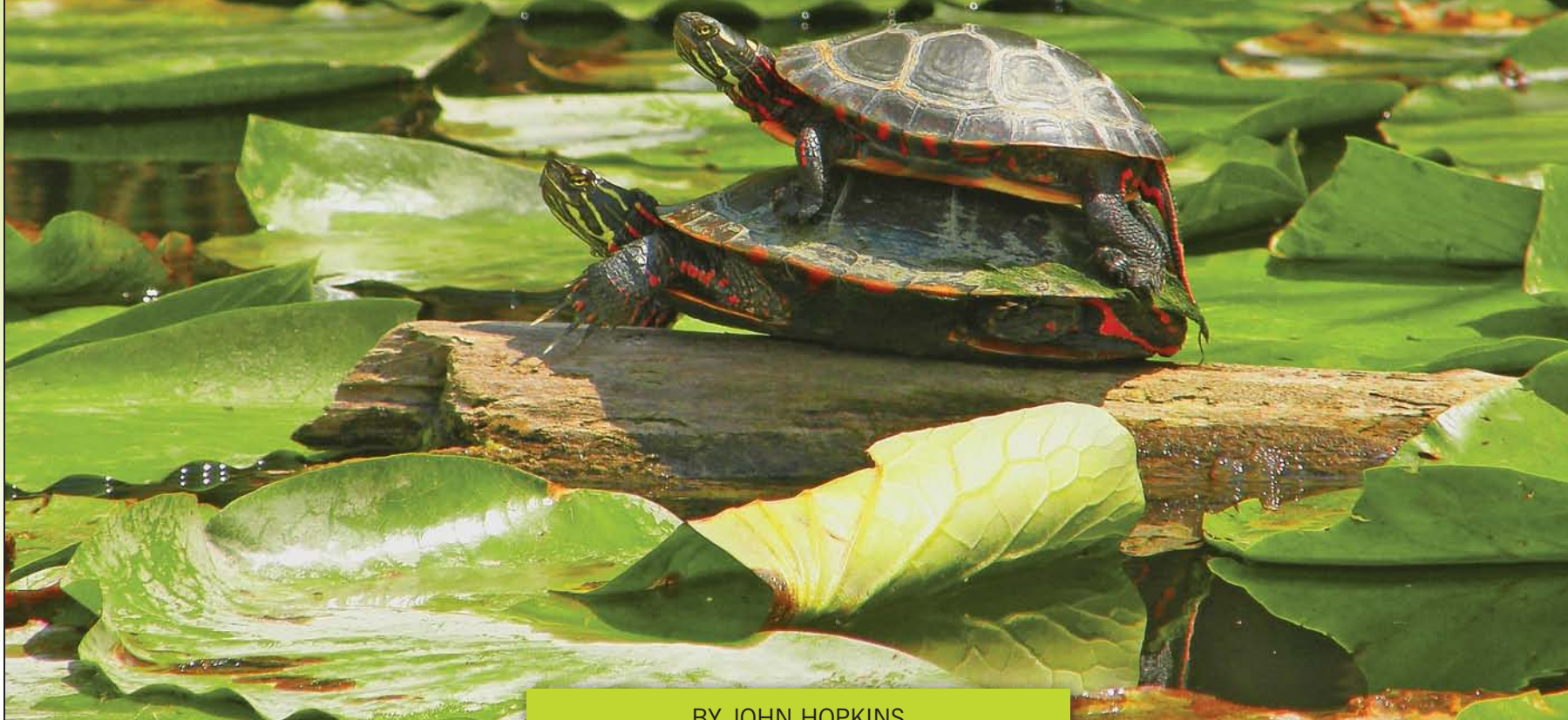


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# March of the turtles



BY JOHN HOPKINS

Painted turtles sunning themselves. Turtles depend on the warmth of the sun to regulate their body temperature.  
*Photo by Don Scallen/courtesy of Adopt-A-Pond Programme*

## Tweed couple taking steps to save reptiles

**F**rom the end of May through to the middle of July, Denice Wilkins and John Wilson will look out of the window of their waterfront home north of Tweed in eager anticipation.

What they hope to see are turtles inching their way from the water up to the beach. Should any of the hard-shelled reptiles actually venture onto the couple's property, they will have the pleasure of discovering a custom-made nesting area in which to lay their eggs. If all goes to plan, the turtles will lay their eggs in the protected and convenient space provided by their human benefactors, and return in subsequent years, perhaps bringing their friends along. Should that be the case, an important step will have been taken in saving some of this country's most threatened species.

"I feel like there is so much bad news in the world these days," says Wilkins. "I feel like if there is just one thing that I can do that has a positive impact, I'm helping in some small way. The plight of the turtles in the world is quite shocking. They are disappearing faster than any other species on earth."

If and when that first turtle makes the march up the shoreline, it will be the culmination of a labour of love that reflects the couple's passion for our natural heritage. Wilson is a retired wildlife cinematographer, who worked extensively with John and Janet Foster during their career. Wilkins has spent her career as a wildlife educator, both in her native United States and in Canada. She has worked at nearby Bon Echo Park and most recently has served as Environmental Officer for the Quinte Field Naturalists.

It was during her stint with the Quinte Field Naturalists that Wilkins developed an appreciation for the plight of Ontario's turtles. That led to a connection with the Toronto Zoo's Adopt-A-Pond Wetland Conservation Programme, which is involved in a variety of projects to save at-risk species.

The threat to turtle populations, especially in Ontario, is a particularly acute one. According to *Turtles of Ontario: A Stewardship Guide*, a booklet produced by Adopt-A-Pond, seven of Ontario's eight native species of turtles are at risk of extinction.

There are a few key contributors to the problem. At the root of the issue is that fact that turtles look for sandy areas near the water to lay their eggs, however, those locations are disappearing.





Snapping turtles are one of seven species common to Ontario that are at-risk due to habitat destruction and high mortality rates. *Photo courtesy of Adopt-A-Pond Programme*



John Wilson and Denice Wilkins have had a life-long love affair with nature. He worked as a wildlife cinematographer and she as a wildlife educator. *Photo by George Thompson*



Models of Ontario's most threatened turtle species rest atop the wire frame that will be used to protect the turtle eggs from predators once they are laid. *Photo by Sam Conroy*

"Habitat loss is the primary risk," explains Julia Phillips, the Adopt-A-Pond programme co-ordinator. "That includes shoreline hardening, things like putting in cement walls at the shoreline, extending agricultural lands to the shoreline, and development."

With fewer opportunities to lay their eggs close to water, turtles have to stray further to find sandy locations. As many travelers know, turtles will often wind up on the side of a paved road. That leads to an increased risk of road mortality (and as Phillips points out, the proliferation of paved roads also contributes to habitat loss). The Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre in Peterborough has identified seven "hotspots" for turtle mortality on roads in southern Ontario. They include a stretch of Highway 7 from Norwood

to Maberly, and Highway 60, especially through Algonquin Park.

Of course, being born far from water adds further risks to the safety of newly-hatched turtles, particularly from predators.

There are natural risks to turtle populations as well, although they have been skewed by human factors. For example, raccoons and skunks find turtle eggs very nutritious, Wilson says. Raccoon populations are rising and they are not shy of human contact, increasing the risk to turtle eggs.

Another issue, according to Adopt-A-Pond's Phillips, is the introduction of a non-native species, the Red-Eared Slider into the mix. The Red-Eared Slider is native to the southern United States but is sold in many pet stores here. When people no longer want them as pets, however,

## A winter retreat

By John Hopkins



It may just look like a pit full of concrete blocks, but for a snake this could be a winter resort!

*Photo by Sam Conroy*

The turtle nesting area is just the latest conservation initiative spearheaded by Denice Wilkins and John Wilson.

In fact, at the time that the nesting area was constructed last November, the couple also created a snake hibernaculum. The hibernaculum is essentially a pit dug below the frost line that is accessible for snakes to hibernate in during the winter months.

The project involved digging down six feet, arranging concrete blocks at different levels and then creating three separate entrances with pipe.

"The blocks act as platforms that allow the snakes to move to different levels based on temperature and humidity," Wilson explains. "We also have to be careful that cold air doesn't run down into the pit and camouflage the entrances."

A data logger also helps monitor the temperature inside the pit.

The snake hibernaculum plays a critical role as similar types of spots are disappearing. As Wilson notes, dug wells lined with stones are a perfect hibernating refuge for snakes, but as housing development moves along and wells get filled in, these options disappear.

they release the turtles into the wild where they compete with Ontario's indigenous species for dwindling resources and can carry diseases like salmonella, which our native turtle species are not traditionally exposed to.

What makes the situation worse for the turtles is that they face an uphill battle to thrive even without all of these manmade challenges. Snapping turtles, for example, do not start to lay eggs until they are between 17 and 19 years old, according to the booklet *The Road to Extinction: A call to end the snapping turtle hunt*, and even then the average female snapping turtle would have to lay about 1,400 eggs during her lifetime in order to have one of her offspring survive into adulthood.

"Even a 10 percent increase in adult mortality in a snapping turtle population would result in the

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Work begins on the turtle nesting area, with a backhoe removing the surface vegetation. *Photo by George Thompson*



Finishing touches – a final layer of sand is spread over pea gravel. Having the beach so close to the water is critical, as is having it in a raised location so turtles can see it as they're swimming by. *Photo by George Thompson*

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disappearance of half of that population in less than 20 years," the booklet adds.

But why all the fuss about saving turtles? To many people they are cold, ugly, unpleasant relics from the prehistoric era. However, despite the poor PR, they play a key role in the natural balance of our wetlands.

"They are a big part of the ecology of our waterways," Wilson points out. "They clean and maintain the health of waterways by eating dead and decaying fish."

And what about the powerful jaws of a full-grown snapping turtle ripping off your hand?

According to *The Road to Extinction*, snapping turtles will very seldom bite underwater, even if harassed, and even then they do not have enough

strength in their jaws to bite through bone and cannot bite off a person's finger or toe.

What is ironic is that, while turtle populations are at risk, measures to arrest their decline are relatively simple. To create their turtle nesting beach, Wilkins and Wilson had to simply remove the surface vegetation, put down a layer of landscape cloth to prevent plants or weeds from growing through, and lay down some pea gravel and some sand. The nesting area measures 15x42 feet and along with the adjacent snake hibernaculum (see sidebar) was built at a cost of about \$2,500, with Adopt-A-Pond contributing about \$1,500. Cost of a similar project would vary depending on the size of the area and the availability of resources. A key concern for Wilkins and Wilson was find-

## KTTC to the rescue

By John Hopkins

So, you don't have a beach, or a lot of space, or the resources to build a turtle nesting area.

Fear not, there is still plenty you can do to save a turtle or two, especially if you're driving around the Hastings countryside this spring and summer.



Snapping turtles can be particularly badly injured in accidents on the road.  
Photo by Scott Gillingwater/courtesy of Adopt-A-Pond Programme

Road accidents constitute a major threat to turtle populations, since the victims are most likely to be female turtles in the process of finding a suitable location to lay their eggs. As a result, if a turtle does get hit, more than one turtle is placed at risk.

However, since 2002 the Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre ([www.kawarthaturtle.org](http://www.kawarthaturtle.org)) has played a critical role in saving turtles and their eggs involved in accidents. The centre cares for injured turtles and oversees their release back into the wild, educates the public on risks to the turtle population, and conducts field studies aimed at enhancing turtle survival.

Located in Peterborough, the trauma centre now accepts injured turtles from across Ontario, many delivered by its team of about 65 volunteer 'turtle taxi' drivers.

"The first job when we get a turtle in is to stabilize the injuries," explains KTTC Development/Sustainability Co-ordinator Kate Siena. "Then we take x-rays to see if she's still carrying eggs. If that is the case, we'll incubate the eggs, and after they hatch we'll release them back where the mother originated from."

Before 2010 the trauma centre would take in about 50 turtles a season (late May to mid-July) but last year that figure grew to 665.

The KTTC will literally go to any lengths to rescue a turtle. Twice it has taken in injured reptiles from Manitoulin Island. In one case,

the turtle came over from the island on the ferry, where a driver met it in Tobermory. It was driven to a clinic in Barrie, where it was stabilized, then to Oshawa, and finally to the trauma centre in Peterborough.

In another case a volunteer made the

eight-hour drive from Peterborough to Tobermory to meet the ferry.

"We have a great volunteer base," Siena says. "As payback, we will have them release the turtles they rescued back in the wild, which is pretty special after the trauma of picking them up when they are injured."

Siena even had a call last February from a gentleman in Dawsonville, Ga. who had found an injured snapping turtle. Although they obviously couldn't get the turtle to Peterborough, Siena was able to find a clinic near him where he could take it.

The trauma centre has a hotline (705-741-5000) that the public can call whenever they find an injured turtle. There are also drop-off centres and turtle handling tips listed on their website.

Siena says if you are going to move a turtle off the road, be mindful of which direction it is moving. A turtle trying to find a spot to lay eggs is not going to appreciate going back into the water. Most species of turtles can be picked up with a hand on either side of their body, but for snappers Siena recommends dragging them on a car mat, carrying them in a wheelbarrow or shovel, or nudging them.

She also cautions against driving over snapping turtles. They will jump or bite when threatened, and tend to sustain serious injuries to their jaws and shells from the bottom of a car.

ing a suitable time in the Fall for a back hoe to come onto their property and dig. Construction took place last November.

However, their responsibilities don't end with the new beachfront. Once a turtle has visited the nesting area, Denice and John must cover the spot so that raccoons and skunks cannot get at the eggs. A wire-mesh platform serves the purpose, allow-

ing the eggs to be exposed to sunlight and moisture but preventing predators from getting their paws on them.

Wilkins and Wilson have worked extensively with the Adopt-A-Pond programme from the beginning. Adopt-A-Pond has been running since 1999, although it has grown dramatically in recent years.

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Julia Phillips (left) is the Toronto Zoo's Adopt-A-Pond Programme Coordinator and played a critical role in setting up the turtle nesting area. She is shown at the site with Bob Johnson, Curator of Reptiles and Amphibians at Toronto Zoo. Photo by George Thompson

"It is becoming more common for people to approach us with conservation initiatives," Phillips says. "I think in the past four years there has been a new movement to hands-on activities. This is partly due to more resources being out there, so some of these ideas are taking hold, and just a general recognition of conservation issues. We've come a long way in the past 40 years, particularly in the recognition of reptiles and amphibians.

"Usually these projects will come from a community stewardship initiative, or sometimes we're already involved in the area. Denise is quite exceptional. She was all-in from the beginning and there was not as much work to do at our end."

The process to help set-up and fund a project like the turtle nesting area usually begins with a site visit to assess its suitability for the initiative.

"For something like the turtle nesting area, you want something with a south facing slope, lots of sun (turtles control their body temperature through the external environment, unlike humans) and good drainage. The size and shape of the beach is also something to consider."

Funding for the Adopt-A-Pond program comes from a variety of government grants.

"A lot of people think of the zoo as just being in Toronto," Wilkins points out. "But they are doing a lot of other things and they are involved across Ontario. It's important for people to know that."

The location is ideal, the nesting area is ready and the need is certainly there. But turtles are also notorious creatures of habit when it comes to nesting. All Denise and John can do is wait and hope, and look out the window.

"Turtles will swim by looking for places to lay eggs," Wilkins says. "Theoretically, they will see the beach; it's high enough. But it is possible none will come at all."

If they don't, it certainly won't be for lack of effort on the part of Wilkins and Wilson. Or lack of passion. Here's hoping our reptilian friends enjoy the fruits of Denise and John's labours. ●

For more information of the Toronto Zoo's Adopt-A-Pond Programme, visit [www.toronto-zoo.com/adoptapond](http://www.toronto-zoo.com/adoptapond).

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## ARTISANS AT HAND

# A friend of the forest

## Frankford artist creates miniature world

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHARON HENDERSON

*Forest Friends are the creation of Frankford-based artist Maria “Maia” Heissler. In addition to her artwork, the German-born Heissler has written a variety of books, including two novelettes about the Forest Friends and a cookbook. The development of the Forest Friends led Heissler to establish a business, Down-To-Earth Creations. It is clear that Maia’s hands are regularly exposed to the elements for they are raw and earthy, but they are also nimble and capable of skillfully fashioning miniature handicrafts.*

### Who are you and what is your craft?

I’m Maia. I work primarily with natural materials and one of the things that came out of working with natural materials was creating this elfin civilization of Ontario woodlands called the Forest Friends.

### For those unacquainted with your work, could you describe in detail what you do?

The Forest Friends started as a cute and simple idea and really evolved into a very serious civilization of Ontario woodlands, one which lives by a very strict three part credo, which encourages living in harmony with the earth, living in harmony with other creatures and living in harmony among ourselves. I like to tell people it’s a really good recipe for living no matter what size you are.

The materials I use I gather from the forests here because it’s really important to me that everything is ecologically sympathetic. It has to look as if it’s in the realm of the possible. And who knows, maybe it is?

### Why did you choose this field of expression?

I don’t think I chose it, I think it chose me. I often wonder how many things are put in our path along the way to gently nudge us in a certain direction. This all started with a pair of maple keys on a city sidewalk. For the first time in my life I thought, “fairy wings.”

For me, the Forest Friends have been one of the great learning experiences of my life. They require so many skills to create them: listening, knowledge of the wild, knowledge of edible plants, knowledge of medicinal plants, storytelling, woodworking, art, understanding body language. These are not all skills that I had right from the get-go. These are skills that have developed over time.

### Did you always know you would be creating fine art from forest findings?

No, no, no. When I started school I came home one day and announced to my mother that I was going to be a teacher. It was when I started having children that I walked away from the teach-

ing profession and then the serious unleashing of my creative side started. It was after the birth of my first child, and only when he started walking, that I really started to slow down. When you’re introducing your child to the world and the world to your child, it’s like a personal journey of rediscovery and with the rediscovery came, among a number of other things, the Forest Friends.

### How has your work evolved?

At first it was cute, it was simple. For Christmas I would spray paint maple keys and little acorn caps gold and put them in arrangements with strawflowers and cute stuff like that. I would never do that now. The whole concept went into hibernation for a few years; I just completely packed them away. That was almost like an incubation time. I resurrected it a couple of years after we moved here. For a number of years when I did craft shows, I would show candles, cedar rail vases, candle holders, fudge, jams, and salted herbs. The Forest Friends were just this tiny, little, almost apologetic little corner. That part has grown to be really, really important, because that’s the part that’s putting the serious message



out there: the environmental consciousness, the earth-based spirituality, the lessons, the insights, the stories. It has evolved a lot.

**How did you learn your craft? Do you have any formal training?**

The learning has all been by experience and by experiment. Sometimes a piece of wood, circumstance in my life, or customer's request or question will inspire a whole different direction.

**What do you enjoy most about what you do?**

The final putting together of a piece. The piece of wood has been sanded. It's mounted on a base. I have dressed the base by adding mosses, lichens, a snail shell, cones, stones to make it look like it's lifted out of the forest floor. By that time, I know what is going to be going on in the piece. Then taking the characters, putting them in position to express movement and emotion, seeing the piece just totally come to life, that's the coolest part.

**In line with the environmentally conscious theme of your work, what measures do you take to ensure that your pieces are 'green'?**

Very rarely do I take anything living. There's so much material out there that is absolutely gorgeous. You don't have to take something that is still alive. When I take fungus it's probably alive and I'll take a little bit of moss, but I will never rape an area. There's always one left for the earth, one left for the others, then one for me and I only take what I need.

I make small pieces that encourage people to pick up cones, stones, snail shells, whatever when they are going for a walk and create their own world. I believe that by doing that, and especially if there are children in their life, they are already helping to set a child's focus towards small details in nature and the whole process of seeing, appreciating the beauty and eventually respecting and preserving. That's probably the most important part of the environmental consciousness.

**What is the most memorable compliment you have received regarding your work?**

Tears pouring down a person's face. That says more than anything. There's just something about the entire concept. Simpler life, close to nature, I think that really tugs at heartstrings.

**What wisdom do you possess that might be useful for those interested in pursuing a vocation in quality craftsmanship?**

Follow your heart. Just follow your heart. It doesn't get any better than that.

**How can people access the fruits of your labour?**

I have a website (<http://www.forestfriends.ca/>) and a Facebook page (Down-To-Earth Creations). I do craft shows. There are a couple of local shops that carry some of my work (The Unconventional Moose near Tweed, The Old Hastings Gallery in Ormsby, and Eclectic Mix in Warkworth). ●

# Say Cheez!

BY ANGELA HAWN

## Local business established snack sensation

When confectioner W. T. Hawkins caught wind of farmer Jim Marker's plans to compress corn meal for cattle feed, a snack revolution was set in motion. *Photo courtesy of W.T. Hawkins Ltd.*

Perhaps Jim Marker wasn't exactly a Canadian icon himself when he passed away last May at the respectable age of 90. But the addictive snack food he helped create alongside fellow American entrepreneur W.T. Hawkins certainly was. It is, after all, the original cheezie we're talking about. Many imitators followed, but no other possesses that particular claim to fame.

Countless Canucks, especially those hailing from the west, hold the Hawkins brand high above all other cheese-stick style products. And few Canadians anywhere can indulge in just one of their crunchy, finger-shaped nibbles and then resist the urge to reach immediately back into the trademark red and white striped bag for seconds.

Who would have thought a savoury treat invented by two American guys would become such a favourite in their adopted country to the north? But that's exactly what happened. And what's more, this is the only place you can get it. Hankering for some Hawkins? You'd better be shopping in a Canadian store, because we're the only country that sells them.

"It's sort of like the old Red Rose tea commercials," jokes Tony McGarvey, head of Hawkins' financial operations. "Only in Canada, you say? Pity!"



A farm boy at heart, Jim Marker was happy to leave the bustling city of Chicago for the more rural setting of Hastings County. *Photo courtesy of W.T. Hawkins Ltd.*

So how did this cheesy snack food with American roots make its way to Hastings County? It's been quite a journey, starting a couple of years just after the end of World War Two. McGarvey points to the company website for a quick

Hawkins history lesson and some clues as to how far the cheezie has travelled since its early days in the American midwest.

Marker, a young farmer/tool and dye maker from Ohio, was tinkering with a device meant to compress corn meal into short, stick-like shapes for storage purposes. Mindset firmly planted on the farm, Marker was thinking cattle feed. Enter confectioner/businessman Hawkins and all that changed.

When Hawkins got wind of Marker's invention, he sent his son, Web, to check it out. Suddenly a whole new world of edible possibilities opened up. Good-bye cow mush; hello human snack food. Once Hawkins got the brilliant idea of frying the cornmeal fingerlings in vegetable oil and coating them with cheddar, the cheezie prototype was born.

Marker soon opted to leave farm life behind and go into partnership with Hawkins in Chicago. Already a snack food giant, Hawkins' profits soared even higher with the addition of cheezies to their product roster. Things were rolling along quite nicely, until a series of poor business decisions began to eat away at the company's bottom line. Around the same time, the cheezie makers started to attract unwelcome attention from the Teamsters' Union. Stories of mob connections and intimidation tactics flour-





Shirley Woodcox, shown with Terry Fox, represents the close-knit nature of the Hawkins workforce. A tireless campaigner for the Canadian Cancer Society, she worked for Hawkins from the early days in Tweed until her death in 2004. *Photo courtesy of W.T. Hawkins Ltd.*

ished and change suddenly seemed like a good idea. Luckily, Hawkins had already established a much smaller operation in Canada. Declar-



ing bankruptcy, the two closed up shop in the U.S., crossed the border and reinvented themselves as a Canadian success story.

## Not Just a Cheezie Guy

By Angela Hawn



*Photo courtesy Dave Byrd*

When Jim Marker's thoughts weren't firmly rooted in the world of Hawkins' cheezies, his head was in the clouds - literally. Above all else, Marker liked to fly. With that in mind, he bought a field on the west side of Belleville in 1960, determined to turn it into a local airport.

Soon there was an airstrip and space for both office and classroom use. And thus, the Belleville Flying Club was born. A flight school quickly followed and hired instructors taught pilot 'wannabes' how to handle gliders, as well as single and twin engine aircraft. There was even a small charter service, mostly focussed on freight. A qualified Aircraft Maintenance Engineer, Marker worked on the club's planes for years, even after he was no longer able to fly himself.

Dave Byrd, one of the pilots from the club's early days, recounts how Marker dreamed of seeing a regional airport operate in the area. To that end, he once offered the airstrip to the city of Belleville for the economical sum of one dollar. Unfortunately for Marker's dream, there were no takers.

"It might have had something to do with the fact this all happened around the same time Quinte Terminal opened up at CFB Trenton," Byrd suggests. That civilian service has since shut down.

Even the Belleville Flying Club had its ups and downs. Boasting about 100 members in its heyday, the club closed in 1985 due to lack of interest. When it reopened about 10 years later, the remaining members decided to pony up in order to help out with taxes and general maintenance. Prior to that, many pilots had enjoyed use of the airstrip for free. Some even built their own airplane hangars.

"Jim never asked for anything," Byrd reports, stressing any ideas about charging membership fees originated strictly with the members themselves. "He wanted the rates to be low so that people could afford it."

At one point, the club housed all 11 of Marker's personal aircraft. The last of these sold just a few years before his death in 2012. And the Flying Club got just a little bit emptier. Now there are about nine planes left, all belonging to various members.

Marker stopped flying himself in the late 1980's when a brain tumour prevented him from passing the required medical exam. In later years, his legs failed him and he wasn't able to climb up into an airplane. But Marker did enjoy one last flight, around the turn of the millennium, when one of the club's instructors took him on a brief trip over his earliest stomping grounds in the world of flight: the Picton Flying Club in Prince Edward County. Marker's influence on the local flying scene impressed the Picton pilots so much, they offered him a lifetime membership.

"Jim was a character," Byrd chuckles. "He was a bit gruff around the edges; either he took to you or he didn't. But he poured his heart and soul into the Belleville Flying Club and he was always a real advocate for flying."

Hawkins originally produced a range of products, including potato chips, but eventually decided to focus on cheezies. *Photo courtesy of W.T. Hawkins Ltd.*

Convincing Marker to leave his relatively new home in a big American city and migrate north wasn't all that hard. A farm-boy, born and bred, he'd never been crazy about Chicago. And although he never applied for citizenship during the 60 plus years he lived here,

Marker nevertheless quickly found his niche in the quiet country atmosphere of the cheezie's first Canadian home: Tweed, Ontario.

Why this particular small town in the middle of Hastings County? McGarvey points out Tweed's near geographical perfection. Situated mid-country, the community suited both the company's import and export needs to a T. Not far to the south lay the American cornbelt, easily accessible by rail. At the other end of production, boxes of packaged snacks headed east and west, whetting the appetite of Canadians on both coasts.

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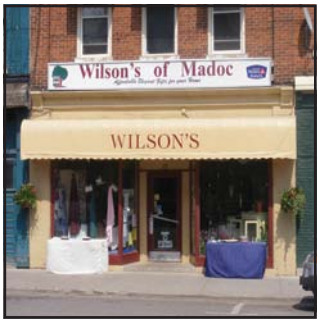

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**Welcome to Comfort Country**



The current Hawkins factory location in Belleville is modest and unassuming, much like the company's co-founder himself. *Photo courtesy of W.T. Hawkins Ltd.*



Jim Marker stands by his plane on Stoco Lake in January, 1951. Tweed was considered an ideal location geographically for establishing the new business. *Photo courtesy of Dave Byrd*

Established in 1949, W.T. Hawkins Ltd. manufactured more than just cheezies at first. McGarvey mentions a number of products, ranging from sweet to savoury. Hawkins once made donuts dusted with cinnamon, as well as potato chips sold under the catchy slogan 'A Pip of a Chip.' Pennies wrapped in cellophane went into each chip bag as a promotional gimmick.

But potato chip competition was stiff. A lot of companies out there were making the product. It seemed a whole lot of effort was going into making something which didn't show much profit.

"Sometime in the 1970's, the company decided why not just focus on cheezies," explains McGarvey with a smile.

By then, the Hawkins operation had moved about 25km south to the slightly bigger community of Belleville. A fire had reduced the Tweed factory to rubble in January of 1956. While many companies might have turned tail and run for the comforts of home, the Hawkins team determined to forge on. In later years, Marker and long-time employee Shirley Woodcox regaled Hawkins' workers with stories of the company's miraculously rapid rise from the ashes. Less than 30 days after the Tweed plant went up in smoke, W.T. Hawkins Ltd. was back in business, this time situated between the railway tracks and the Bay of Quinte.

As private as Marker himself, the Belleville factory seems a modest and unassuming affair from the outside. A long white, nearly windowless building sits in the middle of a parking lot, a round brick chimney poking out of the roof. You needn't bother looking for the Hawkins sign because there isn't one.

"Jim Marker didn't like to encourage visitors," says McGarvey, explaining the man lived by a "don't come looking for us; we'll find you" philosophy.

In fact, there's no signage whatsoever, save for two small plaques on narrow, side-by-side doors informing the uninitiated which leads to the office area and which to the factory proper. Within this humble shell, the mysterious business of making cheezies carries on under the watchful eyes of 70 or so Hawkins employees. This number climbs to about 100 during summer, Hawkins' busiest season. And it seems the only way I'm going to get a personal peek at the production line is by applying for a job at Hawkins myself. Tours just aren't done, McGarvey informs me apologetically.



Kent Hawkins (right) is the current president of Hawkins Cheezies and the third generation of the family to run the business. He is shown with his wife Darlene and son Travis. *Photo courtesy of W.T. Hawkins Ltd.*

In the interests of full disclosure, I report I've got some inside knowledge of a sort up my sleeve. My husband once worked at the Hawkins plant for two weeks, sent over from a temp agency to fill a gap in the production line. He remembers walking back and forth with bucket loads of cheezies before dumping them into a huge packaging machine. This was back in the days when Hawkins still made potato chips, so we're talking ancient history in the snack food world. Have things on the factory floor changed much since then?

McGarvey laughs, but he's not biting. And he won't get specific when I ask for a physical description of Marker's famous cheezie-making device, either. He simply smiles at my musings about a great, hulking machine with plenty of gears and levers, and maybe, a funnel where the cheezies come out. That's not far off, he concedes, but will go no further, except to confirm Marker's original invention still presides over the factory floor. In fact, with the exception of a few replacement parts over the years, that first cheezie-producing machine still functions as a key part of the business.

And it's not just the machinery that lasts forever. People tend to stick around the Hawkins plant as well. McGarvey proudly ticks off a list of long term employees, some retired, some not. Community-minded Shirley Woodcox campaigned for the Canadian Cancer Society when not busy on the job. Starting out as Marker's assistant back in the Tweed days, she quickly rose to lead Hawkins' Public Relations department and served as the company's General Manager until her death in 2004. When Geraldine Fobert left the plant after 53 years, CBC morning radio host Wei Chen called for an interview. And don't forget Doug Rushnell, who supervised the night shift for 40 years. McGarvey himself traces his time with the

company back to 1981, when he started out as a summer student. Some staff are second generation, he notes, following in their parents' footsteps as part of the loyal Hawkins family.

Perhaps head office best illustrates this idea of multi-generational family ties. When W.T. passed away in 1961, the reins passed to son Web, who ran things for nearly another 30 years. Now W.T.'s grandson Kent, who lives north of Toronto, is in charge.

"It's a family company, with family values," reports McGarvey. If in doubt, check out the company's mission statement. All employees, from the top rung down, whether permanent or temporary, stand as the "brick and mortar" of the business. According to W.T. Hawkins Ltd., people are key. That means staff and customers.

This might help explain longtime cheezie-consumer loyalty. When Marker died, cheezie fans flooded the internet with a swell of nostalgic missives paying tribute to both the man and the product he helped invent. For some, the famous snack brought back memories of the grandparent who bought them their first bag. For others, Hawkins recalls youthful Halloween nights from years ago, and the neighbour across the street who always gave out treat-sized packs of the orange stuff. Surf a little farther and you'll come across cyber-threads launched by desperate cheezie addicts, searching everywhere for their favourite snack food.

And sometimes they might have to look very hard indeed. Hawkins doesn't really advertise and they don't seek out the difficult to obtain, eye-level shelf space in stores, either. The company seems content to let their product sell itself (even when you have to hit the web to find it!) Nevertheless, their fans stick with them.

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## Trivia Tidbits (Cheezie Style)

By Angela Hawn

1. The term cheezie, spelled with a “z”, is owned by W.T. Hawkins Ltd. Many competitors followed, but Hawkins’ got there first. The word is even in the Canadian Oxford Dictionary.
2. Despite the name, Hawkins’ cheezies bills itself as a corn snack and corn meal ranks as number one on its list of ingredients.
3. Is W.T. Hawkins Ltd. a Canadian company? Absolutely. But most of the corn used in Hawkins’ cheezies comes from the U.S. Tony McGarvey (head of Hawkins’ financial operations) explains the quality of corn in the quantities needed just wouldn’t be available without accessing America’s vast mid-western cornbelt.
4. The cheese comes from Canada.
5. Hawkins’ cheezies contain no gluten. Though they can’t claim “gluten-free” in any official capacity (and therefore, can’t put it on their package), McGarvey insists there’s no gluten in the product, nor in the plant.
6. Hawkins’ cheezies contain no preservatives. This claim is official and made it on to the Hawkins’ label. Hmmm, so how long do they last? Boxes filled with cheezies for packing purposes refer to the snack as “semi-perishable.”
7. Marker’s original cheezie-making invention (circa 1947) still holds court on Hawkins’ factory floor.
8. Heading out into the wilderness and wondering what to pack in your survival kit? How about some Hawkins’ cheezies? If you’re hungry, you can eat them. If you’re cold, they make excellent firestarter! Don’t try this at home, kids, but cheezies are known to be incredibly flammable.



Hawkins Cheezies contain no preservatives and use Canadian cheese.  
Photo by Angela Hawn



The original Canadian factory in Tweed burned down in 1956. Photo Courtesy of W.T. Hawkins Ltd.

to know where they can get their hands on some Hawkins cheezies,” declares McGarvey.

Ah yes, there is that “only in Canada” thing. Is that partly why we love it so? Who cares if it started south of the border? Little red maple leaves adorn each packet, right above the words “A Canadian Company.”

You can keep your cheese balls and your cheese sticks; never mind the styrofoam-like, lighter-than-air, pale orange curls churned out by the competition. For me, no other snack stacks up to the original. I’ve loved Hawkins’ brand since the early 1980’s when a university roommate’s mom sent a care package, complete with birthday cake, all the way from Niagara Falls to Ottawa via Greyhound bus. How does a cake survive a trip like that? Why, nestled in a protective cocoon of Hawkins cheezies, of course. When I want cheezies, only the cheezie with a “z” will do. And it makes pretty delicious packing material, too! ●

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## North Hastings group gets camp funding



Children in North Hastings will get a fantastic educational and recreational opportunity this summer thanks to the Wollaston Lake Home & Cottage Association and *Cottage Life* magazine.

The WLHCA is the recipient of a \$5,000 grant from *Cottage Life* for the 'Wollaston Young Stewards Environment Camp,' an initiative designed to foster environmental inquiry and understanding for children in the Wollaston Lake area.

"FOCA [Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations] had indicated to us that *Cottage Life* had the grant program and the opportunity was there to make a submission," explains WLHCA Director of Environment, Richard Clark. "I had had this idea before and we do have two campgrounds at Wollaston Lake that were available, so it seemed like a neat idea to leverage the facilities."

The camp will be run over two separate weeks this summer, with a Junior Camp designed for children between nine and 12 years old, and a Primary Camp for those aged five to eight years old. The Junior Camp is scheduled for the week of July 8-12 and the Primary Camp for August 12-16, with the hope that some students from the Junior Camp will want to volunteer with the Primary Camp later in the summer.

Each five-day camp program will cover a different theme, with topics including animals, water, habitats, connections to nature and preserving shorelines. A wide range of activities have been designed to provide children with engaging opportunities to learn.

A key partner in the project is Camp Kawartha, based in Lakefield. Executive Director Jacob Rodenburg has an extensive background in outdoor education, and Camp Kawartha will provide the instructors to deliver the programs for both age groups.

"We knew we needed a first-rate camp to work with us," Clark says. "It turned out our Lake Steward's daughter had been at Camp Kawartha and they turned us on to Jacob Rodenburg. He liked the idea of establishing something of a satellite Camp Kawartha. It also is great for the local kids in the area, who may not have the opportunity to visit Camp Kawartha itself."

Local participation and support has also been a key element in putting together the program as well, Clark points out. According to the grant proposal submitted to *Cottage Life*, drawing upon local sites and personnel will add to the educational opportunities of the camp. Possible participants include 'Coe Hill Gold', a local geology exploration and trout farm experience for children, the Bancroft-based North Hastings Community Fish Hatchery, the Bancroft Stewardship Council, and the Crowe Valley Conservation Authority.

"Community involvement has been critical," Clark says.

As an added bonus, there is no cost for children to attend the camps. Families are asked to pay a \$20 deposit for each child when they register, but that is refunded if the child attends all five days of their camp.

"This is basically a no-cost event," Clark says. "Making this available locally, and accessible to local kids is a very important part of the project."

As of early March, the Junior Camp had received 23 registrations and the Primary Camp had



15. Clark says he expects both camps to be full with 20 kids each.

According to the grant proposal, the environmental camp has a budget of \$5,780. In addition to the \$5,000 from the *Cottage Life* grant, the Wollaston Township Recreation Committee is expected to cover the remaining \$780.

Clark says he was surprised to receive the full funding of \$5,000 from *Cottage Life*. He points out that often the grant is split between a few different initiatives, and apparently there were 20 other submissions for the grant.

According to a statement from *Cottage Life* announcing the awarding of the grant, "the judges liked the level of organization and commitment that this group demonstrated in their proposal, and that this new initiative will celebrate the natural world and engage young people in an area where there are no other programs available."

The judging coordinator was Leslie Garrett, a *Cottage Life* contributor and author of *The Virtuous Consumer*. This year's judges were Bev Clark, a scientist who focuses on lake health and aquatic biology; Dirk Janas, an ecologist with expertise in the more terrestrial side of life at the cottage; and Terry Rees, the executive director of the *Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations*.

Wollaston Lake is located close to Bancroft in North Hastings and the hamlet of Coe Hill is the urban centre of Wollaston Township. ●

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# The memories live on

## Classic car collectors preserve the past

BY JOHN HOPKINS

Jim Spence's 1969 Dodge Charger. Juggling a car collection and work and family obligations can be tricky. Spence works on his cars mostly in the winter, when his roofing business isn't too hectic.

*Photo courtesy Jim & Bev Spence*

For a winter vacation, many people would like to go Cuba and lie on a beach. For Brian Cooney, the perfect respite is a trip to Arizona to comb wrecking yards for old car parts. That's how Cooney, the co-owner of Belleville's Cooney Auto Sales, describes his obsession with classic cars.

The classic car community in Hastings County is extensive. Although it is impossible to pin down the number of individuals or vehicles involved, a trip to the massive Stirling automotive flea market at the start of May or one of the busy Thursday night cruise nights in Marmora will tell you all you need to know.

The cars are pristine, restored as closely as possible to the original. Many harken back to the late 1950s and 1960s, what one could consider a golden age for the automobile. Particularly prominent are the 'muscle cars' of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the fire-breathing sedans that defined

a period of North American automotive culture before environmental concerns and the fuel crisis shifted opinions and car-buying trends.

Talk to these collectors and they will freely admit to their addiction or obsession.

"I'm on the computer every night checking out ebay or Kijiji," concedes Stirling-area collector Pete Taft.

For many of these collectors, the fascination with cars started at an early age. Some, like Cooney, came by it logically. His father opened Howard Cooney Auto in Stirling in the 1940s, later moving it to Belleville; Brian and his brother David eventually took on the business.

"It's like growing up on the family farm," Brian Cooney explains. "We got to like cars and that's what we know. When I started driving I was into hot rods and hot rod magazines. When I was 16 I was buying cars and fixing them up."

For other collectors the connection is less obvious. Lifetime Belleville resident Ross Smith showed his mechanical inclinations when he was 12 or 13 years old and he started rebuilding outboard boat motors even though, as he says, "my father couldn't turn a wrench." When he was 15 Smith rebuilt the engine from a 1959 Plymouth.

"I just read everything I could get my hands on and did it myself," explains the 61-year-old Smith.

Taft's first car was a 1958 Pontiac he got from his brother when he was 13 years old, which he worked on in the backyard of his parents' Toronto home. By the time he was 16 he had six vehicles on the go.

For some enthusiasts the pressures of time and finances that come with a career and family would make it tough to maintain their interest in classic cars. Although Smith got a job in the automotive field as a service manager, he worked as a licensed



Jim Spence's 1967 Dodge Charger is a good example of the muscle cars of the late 1960s and early 1970s that are popular among collectors. *Photo courtesy Jim & Bev Spence*

air conditioning mechanic for 20 years as a means to, as he says, "fund my hobby."

Jim Spence of L'Amable, just south of Bancroft, balances a collection of 14 classic cars with the demands of his roofing business.

"I don't work on the cars full time," explains the 61-year-old. "I do more in the winter when the roofing slows down. It can get to be a bad habit. Hopefully soon I can slow down in the roofing and do more shows and things with the cars. I'm not able to do as much as I'd like to."

It could be argued that the vast majority of classic car collectors are from the baby boomer generation – now in their fifties or early sixties, they are retired or close to it, and have the time and income to invest in their passion.

"There's so much interest in older cars today," Cooney says. "Part of the appeal is you've got gearheads like me with a bit of disposable income. And in a way you're reliving your youth, you're drawn to the cars you remember."

That perhaps goes some way to explaining the emphasis on muscle cars.

"I had muscle cars when I was a teenager," says Spence. "My first car was a 1969 Dodge Swinger. I like the cars from the late Sixties and early Seventies. That's when they really made muscle cars."

However, there is more to the popularity of muscle cars than simple nostalgia. According to Cooney, the environmental and gas concerns that caused car companies to curtail production of these vehicles forced many owners to simply take their cars off the road, rather than drive them into the ground.

"The gas mileage issues of the Seventies probably saved a lot of these cars," Cooney points out. "They were too expensive to keep on the road so they went into the garage. The owners couldn't sell them, so they just sat in garages or barns for years."

A case in point is Cooney's current treasure, a 1969 Chevrolet Biscayne that was purchased from an individual in Orangeville. Cooney says he had been hunting for a Biscayne for about 10 years when his friend Taft found one advertised in the Toronto Star newspaper.

"It was the original owner, which makes the car very special, and I phoned Brian and said, 'You won't believe what's in the paper,'" Taft recalls. "I phoned the owner and as I expected he had had a lot of calls about the car. I thought for sure it would go. But no one came, and the owner got back to me and said he had to get rid of the car and he wanted to sell it to us. So I drove to Orangeville in a snowstorm to pick it up."

The car is quite rare. It is powered by a 427 cubic inch engine and has a four-speed transmission. According to documentation received by Taft and Cooney, only about 50 of that model were ever built, but given the colour of the car and the options it was fitted with, it could be one-of-a-kind.

"That story is one of the neat ones," Taft admits.

Just about any collector will have a story about their 'Holy Grail', the one car they covet more than any other. For Smith it is his 1965 Dodge Coronet, which is unusual in that it is one of the earliest models equipped with Chrysler's 426 cubic inch second-generation Hemi engine, which was introduced as strictly a racing engine in 1964. The Hemi was named for its use of a hemispherical engine head, which was a step forward from more traditional flathead designs and brought with it performance advantages.

"I always wanted one and I finally found it in a barn in Napanee," Smith says. "It had been brought up from Virginia and the body was perfect, no rust. I stripped it to the bare metal and built it from the ground up."

While each collector may have one or two of those special vehicles that they'll never get rid

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Collecting can become a family affair. Pete Taft's son drives this distinctive 1961 Ford wagon. *Photo courtesy Pete Taft*



One of the latest projects to occupy Brian Cooney and Ross Smith is a 1940 Ford pick-up acquired from Stirling. *Photo: John Hopkins*



Pete Taft's 1966 Chevy Biscayne. The fuel crisis and environmental concerns of the 1970s drove many of these cars off the road prematurely, but also left them available for the collectors of today. *Photo courtesy Pete Taft*



Often collectors will crave a particular car. For Ross Smith it was this 1965 Dodge Coronet, which he found in Napanee. *Photo courtesy Ross Smith*

of, often once a car is restored it will be put up for sale, to make room or raise funds for the next acquisition. Indeed, for these gentlemen the true excitement of their hobby comes from the hunt or restoring a faded legacy of automotive history. In very few cases are their purchases considered investments. Often a car is bought and restored purely for its sentimental value and the hobby is very much a labour of love.

"I like the building part," Smith says. "I like to drive the cars too, but for me the building is the most enjoyable. Once a car is done, I don't care if I ever work on it again."

"You can never have everything and I'll probably get rid of one or two of my cars. I'm running out of room."

Adds Cooney, "The satisfaction is in the hunt, and it's kind of sad when it's all done."

The hunt has changed significantly in the age of the internet, which Cooney says is another factor in the growing popularity of the classic car business. Twenty years ago an enthusiast would have to scan newspaper want ads or specialty print magazines looking for a gem.

"You'd have to wait for the magazine to arrive and by the time you got it, the car you wanted was probably already sold," Taft recalls.

Last summer, however, Taft was able to acquire a rare 1960 Mercury Meteor sedan/delivery from Manitoba through online classified site Kijiji.

The parts business has seen big changes as well. Smith recalls Saturday mornings spent scouring wrecking yards looking for bits and pieces. Many of those yards are disappearing, he says, and used parts for some cars are getting harder and harder to find at flea markets as well.

Meanwhile, a booming business has developed in reproducing original parts for classic cars, and there are companies based in the U.S. that specialize in making popular parts and accessories for cars from various eras. For some collectors, it opens up another avenue to restore the worn out vehicle in the garage, but for others nothing can match or fit like the originally-built piece salvaged from a scrapyard or another vehicle.

While the business evolves, however, its roots remain unchanged. The thrill of the hunt for that

one-of-a-kind classic and the challenge of restoring it never fades.

"You can never have everything," Smith says. Now retired, he can often be found at Cooney Auto Sales helping with one of Brian's projects. The latest is a 1940 Ford pick-up acquired in a trade from Stirling.

"Brian asked me to come and do some work for him and I enjoy it," Smith says. "It keeps me busy, I enjoy the guys. It's like being back in the automotive business. It feels like home to me. It's not a job; it's a hobby."

And in many cases it's a family affair as well. Jim Spence's wife Bev shares in his enthusiasm, although as he points out, "I'm mostly into Mopar cars and she's a Chevy girl."

Pete Taft's wife loves her 1970 Chevy pick-up and his son has a 1961 Ford Country Sedan. However, when he turns 21, Pete will pass on his own 'Holy Grail', the 1962 Chevy Impala Supersport he bought in 1979.

The memories roll on. ●



## HASTINGS TASTINGS

Some of the local vegetables you will find 'Spring'-ing up in Hastings County!

- Asparagus
- Beets
- Radishes
- Rhubarb
- Spinach



### RURAL ROOTS RHUBARB MUFFINS

Recipe Courtesy The Rural Roots Café, Bancroft

Makes 12 small muffins

Preheat oven to 350 F and grease a muffin tin

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 cup whole wheat flour

1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder

1/2 tsp baking soda

1 tsp salt

3/4 cup chopped pecans

1 egg

1/4 cup vegetable oil

3/4 cup honey

2 tsp grated orange zest

3/4 cup freshly squeezed orange juice

1-1/4 cup finely chopped fresh rhubarb

- In a bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and pecans.
- In another bowl, beat egg. Add oil, honey, orange zest and orange juice. Add to flour mixture and stir just until moist and blended. Add rhubarb.
- Spoon batter into prepared muffin tin. Bake in preheated oven for 25 to 30 minutes.
- Rhubarb is a source of calcium, Vitamin C, and potassium. One cup raw, diced has 27 calories

Spinach originally came from Persia (now Iran) where it was known as "aspanakh".

### GARLIC SCAPE PESTO

Recipe Courtesy Strattons Farm, Stirling

1 cup garlic scapes (about 8 or 9 scapes), top flowery part removed, cut into 1/4 -inch slices 1/3 cup walnuts or pecans

3/4 cup olive oil

1/4 -1/2 cup grated Empire Extra Old Cheddar or if feeling extravagant parmigiano

1/2 teaspoon salt

black pepper to taste

- Place scapes and nuts in a food processor and whiz until well combined and somewhat smooth. Slowly drizzle in oil and process until integrated. Scoop pesto out into a mixing bowl and add parmigiano to taste; salt and pepper.
- Makes approx. 6 ounces and keeps up to one week in an air-tight container in the refrigerator.

### BABY SPINACH & GOATS CHEESE SALAD

Recipe Courtesy The Blue Roof Bistro, Bancroft

A handful of baby spinach per person

Sliced cremini mushrooms

A slice of red onion - chopped finely

Crumbled goats chevre

Tossed in a raspberry vinaigrette

What exactly are garlic scapes you ask?

They're the strange-looking, curly, deep-green stalks that grow from garlic bulbs. They do taste like garlic but a little milder than the bulbs.

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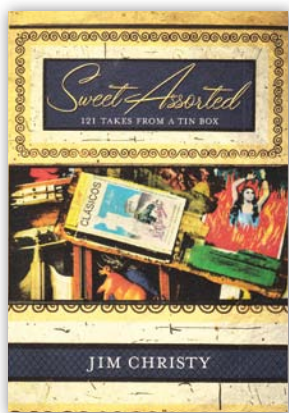
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## TELLING TALES



*Sweet Assorted: 121 Takes from a Tin Box*  
By Jim Christy  
Published by Anvil Press  
SC \$20.00

*Sweet Assorted*, the latest book from Stirling-area writer

and artist Jim Christy, reads very much as the title suggests. It is a random collection of memories amassed over the past 40 years, represented by memorabilia collected in a tin biscuit box.

The artifacts are as varied and singular as the stories they tell – an airplane boarding pass, a postcard, a newspaper clipping, a photograph. Some of the items are very personal, such as Christy’s scribbling in a notebook on the activity in his Vancouver neighbourhood in the 1980s (Take 14), and others have a broader context, such as the newspaper article about the man who spent most of his life in bed (Take 10). By and large, however, all of the stories are interesting in one way or another, partly because Christy has lived an adventurous life, but more significantly because he is an expert storyteller with a rich ability to weave a tale and give it a personal connection.

However, *Sweet Assorted* also appeals to the reader because, in a way, we all have a tin box of collected memories from our lives. It may be a scrapbook, or a trunk in the attic, or a shoebox in the closet, but the concept is universal, even if we don’t all have something as rare as a liquor rationing card from Greenland (Take 16).

And like a tin box of biscuits, *Sweet Assorted* is not meant to be gobbled up from start to finish, or top to bottom, but is best enjoyed in small samples, picked randomly, savoured and then returned to the cupboard until the next craving.

**-JOHN HOPKINS**



### Writer Spotlight: Chris Faiers

Marmora writer Chris Faiers has established himself as one of the foremost practitioners of English language haiku

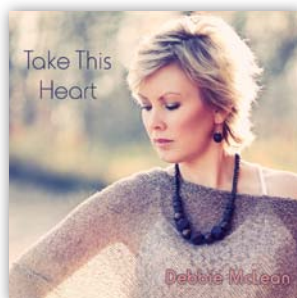
since first being introduced to the form in 1967.

In 1987 Faiers was the inaugural recipient of the Milton Acorn People’s Poet Award and more

recently he began coordinating the annual Purdy Country Literary Festival in 2007. He is a founding member of Haiku Canada and the Canadian Poetry Association and an honorary life member of the Canada-Cuba Literary Alliance.

He has had 18 collections printed, the most recent being *ZenRiver: Poems & Haibun* by Hidden Brook Press in 2008. *Eel Pie Island Dharma: A hippie memoir/haibun* first self-published by Faiers in 1990, has been recently republished by Hidden Brook Press and was relaunched, alongside Jim Christy’s *Sweet Assorted*, at the Marmora Inn in late January.

Enthusiasts can follow Faiers poetry and activities through his blog *Riffs and Ripples from ZenRiver Gardens*.



Debbie McLean  
*Take This Heart*  
(CD)  
\$20.00

In 2011 at an open mic at Trenton’s Classic Country

Music Reunion, onlookers were mesmerized by the sounds of Debbie McLean. She has since been entertaining listeners with a voice reminiscent of Tammy Wynette or Lorrie Morgan while sweetening the sound with her pure, authentic and refreshing voice.

While Country and Gospel music are deep rooted in McLean’s heart, she grew up listening to and was influenced by many styles of music. Like many other young girls Debbie dreamed of recording a CD but felt she would not have the opportunity. Last year her dream became reality. With the help of Rick Hodgson from Starlink Sound in Brighton “Take This Heart” was recorded and released in December. This latest addition to the music world made it possible for Debbie to work with numerous other locally talented musicians.

“Take This Heart” consists of two original songs written by Brett McNaueal. You can hear Debbie’s music on some of the local radio stations.

“I have been very blessed and so thankful to work and perform with some of Canada’s finest musicians and I have learned so much from each of them,” McLean said recently.

For Show Dates visit [www.debbiemclean.ca](http://www.debbiemclean.ca)

**-SHEENA ROWNEY**

Sheena Rowney works at Sam The Record Man in Belleville and will be writing regularly on the Hastings County music scene. Sam’s is a strong supporter of local music and promotes the artists featured here.



### MILKWEED BIRDS By Alex Hamilton-Brown

milkweed winter husks  
iced together  
milkweed winter birds  
frozen to a stalk of steel  
white tails turned up  
beaks pointing petrified  
to the sky

a blistering wind blows blindly  
over icebound fields  
shaking a milkweed bird  
it frees a downy seed  
from a rigid corpse  
and floats it  
to a frigid tomb

impervious to winter’s keep  
it waits the warming  
hand of spring  
to be another milkweed bird  
and fly again

Published in Verse Afire, the journal of The Ontario Poetry Society, 2012

As an award-winning documentary filmmaker, Alex Hamilton-Brown has produced for CBC Television, the U.S. Discovery Channel, U.K. Television and the National Film Board of Canada. Now living in Bancroft, he devotes much of his time to writing. His poetry has been published in various anthologies, and a short Christmas story was recently published in the Ottawa Citizen.



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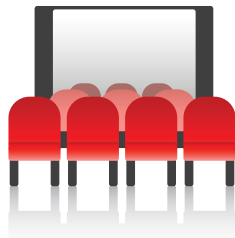
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## ART GALLERIES/EXHIBITIONS

**Art Gallery of Bancroft,**10 Flint Avenue, Bancroft,  
613-332-1542 [www.agb.weebly.com](http://www.agb.weebly.com)**March 6 - April 6 - Works by Oscar Schlienger** from the Gallery's Permanent Collection**April 10 - May 5 - CHOICES;** Bill Ellison - Digital Painter**May 8 - June 2 - Invitation 2013;** 32nd Annual Juried Exhibition**June 5 to July 7 - The Presence Of Nature;** Works by Ingrid Monteith & Donna Caldwell**Belleville Art Association Gallery,**392 Front Street, Belleville.  
Tues - Sat 10am - 4 pm.**March 12 - April 6 - Artist Choice;** Featuring work by the members of the Belleville Art Association and Photographic works by area Secondary school students as part of the UpsARTS program**April 8 - May 11 - Spring** - Featuring work by the members of the Belleville Art Assoc.**May 15 - June 8 - Artist Choice** - Featuring work by the members of the Belleville Art Assoc.**John M. Parrott Art Gallery,**Belleville Public Library,  
254 Pinnacle Street, Belleville,  
613-968-6731, ext. 2240,  
[www.bellevillelibrary.com](http://www.bellevillelibrary.com)**April 9 - May 1 - Windows on the World;** annual exhibition of work by our secondary school students. Reception April 11th from 6 - 7:30 pm**May 9 - 30 - The Quinte Arts Council members' show** - Expressions. Enjoy works in a variety of media and meet the artists at the opening reception May 9th from 6 - 7:30 pm**Stirling Public Library Art Gallery,**West Front Street, Stirling.  
Main floor gallery.**March:** Nancy Sherk**April:** Heather Laillah McKee**May:** Andre Jolicoueur

## THEATRE/LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

**Bancroft Village Playhouse,**  
613-332-5918[www.bancroftvillageplayhouse.ca](http://www.bancroftvillageplayhouse.ca)**April 24 - 27 - Random Acts****May 25 & 26 - North Hastings Community Choir Annual Spring Concert****Belleville Theatre Guild,** 613-967-1442 [www.bellevilletheatreguild.ca](http://www.bellevilletheatreguild.ca)**April 4 - 20 - ART by Yasmina****Reza** This 1998 Tony Award winning play is sharp, witty, funny and sophisticated - and in a surprising twist, affirms the power of friendship.**June 6 - 22 - The King and I** by Rogers and Hammerstein. Set in the lavish 19th century court of the King of Siam, this is the famous story of Anna Leonowens, an English governess hired by the Siamese monarch to modernize the education of his many children.**Quinte Film Alternative, The Empire Theatre,** 321 Front Street, Belleville,  
613 969-0099[www.quintefilmalternative.ca](http://www.quintefilmalternative.ca)

QFA Hotline 613 480-6407

**April 10 - The Angels' Share****April 24 - AMOUR****May 8 - Barbara****May 22 - The Sapphires****The Regent Theatre,** 224 Main St.  
Picton 613-476-8416 [www.theregent-theatre.org](http://www.theregent-theatre.org)**April 6 - CBC's Ed Lawrence****April 6 - Patsy Cline tribute****April 7 - Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (Bolshoi Ballet)****April 14 - Brian Barlow Big Band****April 18 - Edouard Manet Portraying Life (via HD)****April 27 - Giulio Cesare MET Opera (via HD)****May 5 - Edgar Winter Group with Kim Simmonds****May 12 - Romeo and Juliet Bolshoi Ballet (via HD)****May 16 - This House National Theatre (via HD)****June 6 - Wing Wingfield in "Unbound"****June 13 - Edvard Munch 150th Anniversary (via HD)****June 16 - County Dance The Art of Dance****The Stirling Festival Theatre,**West Front St., Stirling  
613-395-2100 1-877-312-1162  
[www.stirlingfestivaltheatre.com](http://www.stirlingfestivaltheatre.com)  
[tickets@stirlingfestivaltheatre.com](mailto:tickets@stirlingfestivaltheatre.com)**April 5 - Night Fever Bee Gee Tribute**

- The #1 production of the Bee Gees in the World. All your favourites; How Deep is Your Love, More Than a Woman, Night Fever, Stayin' Alive, You Should be Dancing. Shows 2 &amp; 8 pm. Pre Show Dinner 6 pm

**April 13, 8 pm - Canadian Improv Showcase Laugh**

a minute game-style comedy show similar to the popular, long-running TV series "Whose Line is it Anyway?" The show is 100% unscripted and guided by audience suggestions and participation, but performers do not pick on their audience members. May contain mature content.

**April 27, 8 Pm - Carroll Baker****Thanks for the Memories** - More than 20 number one records to Platinum record sales, TV appearances including her own specials and TV Series.**May 3, 2 pm & 8pm - For The Love****O' Nat** starring Dean Hollin. In one of his extremely popular "Musical Biographies", Dean celebrates the music, life and times of his very favourite male vocalist, Nat King Cole.**May 24, 2 & 8 pm - Buddy Holly Lives!** takes you back to a 1958 rock n' roll concert, when Buddy Holly & The Crickets were at the peak of their popularity.**June 7, 2 & 8 pm - Saturday Night At The Grand Old Opry** An evening of country classics with music of all of the Opry greats, Johnny Cash, Hank Williams, Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, Patsy Cline and more! Starring Daphne Moens and The Riverdale Kid with the Saturday Night Band.**June 12 - 15 - The Anna Russell****Story.** Canadian-born Anna Russell was an internationally acclaimed musical comedienne who delighted in skewering the pretences of classical music!

## EVENTS

**March & April 2013 - Treats On The Black River**

High water on the Black River signals the beginning of Whitewater Kayaking and the beginning of great treats for sale at the rivers' edge in Queensborough each weekend. Come and watch the fun and support the Queensborough Community Centre. Info Lud &amp; Elaine Kapusta 613 473-1458

**March 27 - Greg Moore of Lockyer's Country Gardens presents "Whats New for 2013".**

Presented by The PEC Horticultural Society. Picton Town Hall, above the fire station (elevator available). Doors open at 7pm, free lending library, free refreshments and mini flower show.

**April - Yoga Program** each Tuesday morning from 9:30 - 10:30 am at Queensborough Community Centre. Info Lud & Elaine Kapusta 613 473-1458**April 6-7 - Marmora's kayak festival; M.A.C.kfest & Queensborough's Treats On The Black River** join together for a fantastic kayaking weekend. Info Lud & Elaine Kapusta 613 473-1458**April 15 - Quinte Field Naturalist Annual Fundraising dinner - Speaker Micheal Runtz.** Award-winning naturalist, nature photographer and Prof. Runtz has written 10 books on natural history, hosted a television nature series, and teaches at Carleton University.. \$25 per person. Call soon for tickets to this sell out event 613/477-3066.**April 16 - Hastings County Historical Society Presents: The Archive Angels'** annual highlights of local heritage gems through the fascinating stories found in our community archives. 7:30 pm, downtown Belleville, at the Quinte Living Centre, 370 Front Street (north-east corner door). [www.hastingshistory.ca](http://www.hastingshistory.ca)**April 19 - 21 - Quinte West Home & Leisure Show,** Trenton Community Gardens. Three shows in one; home, leisure, women. [www.quintewesthomeshow.com](http://www.quintewesthomeshow.com)**April 20 & 21 - The Healthy Living Expo, Quinte Sports & Wellness Centre,** Belleville. Seminars, fitness demos, cooking demos, wine tasting, shopping, & prizes. [www.thehealthylivingexpo.ca](http://www.thehealthylivingexpo.ca)**April 24 - Court Noxon, of "Field, Forest, Hedgerow. A Hiker's Guide for PEC",** presents Climate Change in your Garden. Presented by The PEC Horticultural Society. Picton Town Hall, above the fire station (elevator available). Doors open 7pm, free lending library, free refreshments and mini flower show.[www.deseronto.ca](http://www.deseronto.ca) ~ 613-396-2440[f /Deseronto](https://www.facebook.com/Deseronto)[@Deseronto1](https://twitter.com/Deseronto1)

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## Things to see and do in and around Hastings County.

To submit your event listing email [info@countryroadshastings.ca](mailto:info@countryroadshastings.ca) or call us at 613 395-0499.

**April 26 - May 11 - You're Only Young Twice;** at the Brighton Barn Theatre. Evenings at 8 pm and two Sunday matinees at 2 pm. Tickets \$15. For tickets 613-475-2144 [www.brightonbarntheatre.ca](http://www.brightonbarntheatre.ca) For info only - 613-475-0497

**May 3, 4, 10 & 11 - Prince Edward Community Theatre presents "Dial 'M' for Murder"** by Frederick Knott, @8pm Mt. Tabor Playhouse, Milford, Ont. Advance tickets \$14.00. 613-476-5925. [www.pecommtheatre.ca](http://www.pecommtheatre.ca)

**May 5 - Queensborough Community Centre Annual Pancake Breakfast** 8:00 am to Noon Info Ann & Frank Brooks 613 473-4550

**May 11-20 - Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory Spring Birding Festival,** - guided hikes, workshops, banding demonstrations and more. [www.peptbo.ca](http://www.peptbo.ca).

**May 18 - Labour Day** - Farmtown Park, Stirling, Ontario. [www.agmuseum.ca](http://www.agmuseum.ca)

**May 18 - Plant Sale** presented by the Trenton Horticultural Society & Garden Club; the parking lot of Dr. Craig Cocek, 455 Dundas St. W., Trenton at 8:30 am. Proceeds from this sale will help fund club gardens at the Trenton Memorial Hospital and in Victoria and Centennial Parks. Info Joan 613-392-2572 or [trentonhorticulture@yahoo.ca](mailto:trentonhorticulture@yahoo.ca).

**May 21 - Hastings County Historical Society Presents: Stirling's Lloyd Jones** speaking about the intriguing stories of historic wooden ship's masts, from felling in Hastings County, to their fixture aboard ships bound for high seas. 7:30 pm, at the Quinte Living Centre, 370 Front Street downtown Belleville, (northeast corner door). Bring a friend. [www.hastingshistory.ca](http://www.hastingshistory.ca)

**May 24 to Sept 1 - Walking Tours in Prince Edward County** - Contact the Regent Theatre 613-476-8416 ext 28 [www.theregenttheatre.org](http://www.theregenttheatre.org)

**May 25 - Terroir; A County Wine Celebration.** 9th Annual PEC Wine Celebration. Crystal Palace, Picton. 12 - 6pm. \$35/\$40 at the door. Admission includes all wine samples and 3 food pairings.

**May 25 - June 2 - Warkworth Lilac Festival** - Festival locations on Main Street, Millenium Lilac Trail with local artists, Garden Talks & Demos, Lilac Sales, Garden Luncheon, music, kids activities and more. [www.warkworthlilacfestival.ca](http://www.warkworthlilacfestival.ca) @warkworthlilacfestival.ca 416-873-1912

**May 29 - Chef Tina Morrey presents "Cooking With Herbs"** demo. Presented by The PEC Horticultural Society. Picton Town Hall, above the fire station (elevator available). Doors open at 7pm, free lending library, free refreshments and mini flower show.

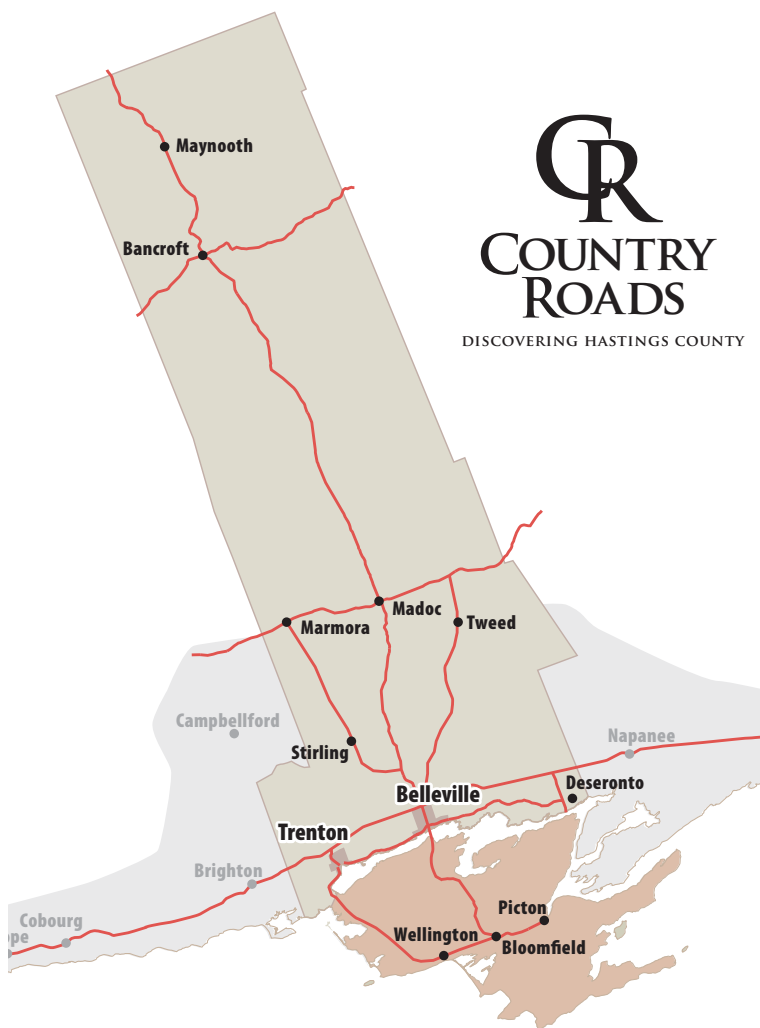
**June 8 - The County Garden Show,** Crystal Palace, Picton fairgrounds. Join us for a judged flower show, Victorian Tea, local vendors, speaker Paul Zammit presents "Container Gardening" Green Trust Music Festival from 7pm Tickets & Times at [pehorticultural.org](http://pehorticultural.org)

**June 8 - Queensborough Community Centre Yard Sale** from 8 am to 3 pm. Info Lud & Elaine Kapusta 613 473-1458

**June 14, 15, 16 - Prince Edward Curling Club 49th Antique Show & Sale Fairgrounds** - 375 Main Street East, Picton, Ont. Admission \$4.00 /Two-Day Entry Lunch Available, New Dealers Welcome. 613-476-2078. Wheelchair Accessible

**July 3 - Fish Fry and Craft Sale.** 4:30 to 7:00 pm at South Bay United Church, 2029 County Road 13, near Milford in Prince Edward County. Delicious local fish with all the trimmings: salads, baked beans, rolls, homemade desserts, beverages. Adults \$15; 10 and under \$8. Take-out available, too. Free admission to the craft sale in the heritage schoolhouse next door. Contact 613-476-5421.

**July 6 - Tweed Garden Tour** -hosted by the Friends of the Tweed Library from 10-4. Enjoy 8 outstanding gardens with artists and musicians plus 3 Community Gardens! Rain or Shine! Passport \$20.00 each/2 for \$30.00 if purchased before June 15, 2013; available at the Tweed Public Library, Food Company (Tweed), Tweed News and [online @ pgweber419@yahoo.ca](mailto:online@pgweber419@yahoo.ca). Info 613-478-1791.



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# Back Roads



**Hotel Quinte, Belleville 1908**

Last December fire destroyed Belleville's iconic landmark, the Hotel Quinte. The hotel had reopened to great fanfare on February 28, 1908, ironically after a fire in 1907. A story in the following day's *Daily Intelligencer* raved, "...the princely Quinte, after its baptism of fire, has risen from its ashes more magnificent than ever." Sadly, it is uncertain that another rebirth is possible this time around.

*Photo courtesy Community Archives of Belleville and Hastings County (HC04809).  
Hastings County Historical Society photograph collection" (photographer is unknown).*

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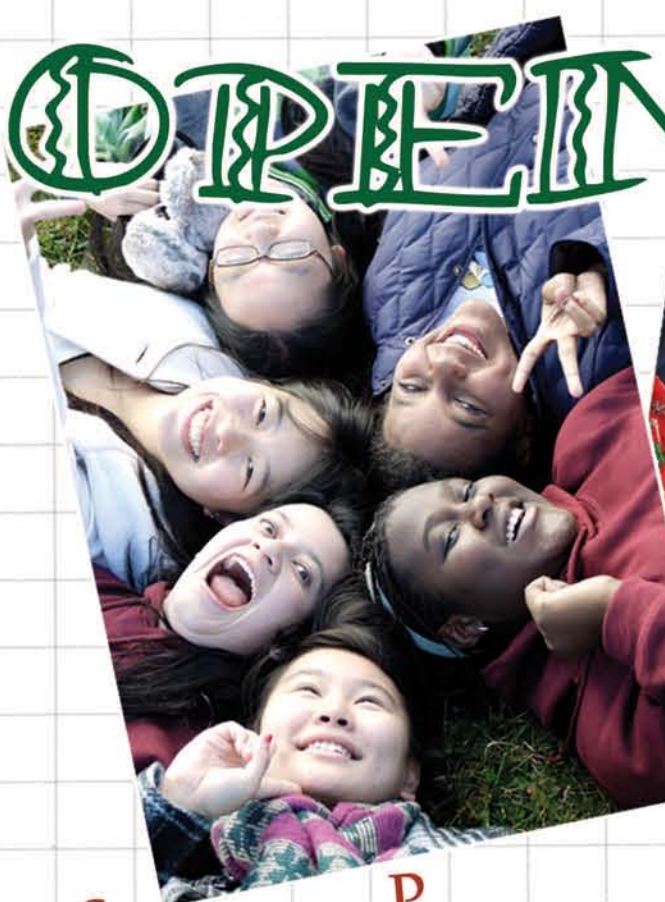


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