

MAINSTREETER

OLD OTTAWA EAST'S COMMUNITY VOICE | LA VOIX COMMUNAUTAIRE DU VIEUX OTTAWA-EST

JUNE | JUIN 2020

Community views split on proposed plan to demolish historic Deschâtelets chapel

JOHN DANCE

The community faces a dilemma: whether to support The Regional Group's proposed demolition of the chapel wing of the historic Deschâtelets building to pave the way for the repurposing of the remainder of the building as a new school, community centre and, possibly, affordable housing for seniors, or else fight to preserve the chapel wing.

Regional's application to demolish the heritage-designated chapel wing will be considered by the City of Ottawa's Built Heritage Sub-Committee this summer. Then, the sub-committee's advice will be considered by the Planning Committee in the context of the rezoning request of the Conseil des Écoles Catholiques du Centre-Est (CECCE) for an elementary school, community centre and other specified uses within the main part of the Deschâtelets building.

The sale of the main part of the Deschâtelets building to CECCE is conditional on the approval of the proposed demolition.

In 2011, the City approved various



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

The Regional Group seeks approval to demolish the heritage-protected chapel wing of the Deschâtelets building. This 2015 picture shows the chapel interior before it was deconsecrated and the statue at the far end was removed.

heritage designations for Deschâtelets and some of the adjacent lands. While only the exterior of the main building was "protected," both the exterior and the interior of the chapel were given protection.

The chapel wing was built in 1950 and, as noted by John J. Stewart, who wrote

the demolition application report, "The chapel interior is a very stark, handsome expression. The monochrome interior, angular planes of the arches picked up in the glazing pattern of windows and pattern of tiles in central portion contribute to its distinct skeletal character. The very

slender exaggerated forms of the modernist sculpture help to establish a respectful hierarchy."

Over the last five years, Regional has

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The Mainstreeter Interview

Meet OOE model Amanda Nimmo

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Where our community stakeholders stand on planned demolition of the heritage chapel

CAG's Position

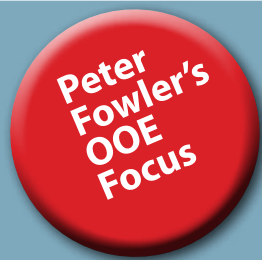
The Community Activities Group of Old Ottawa East understands the concern community members have about what will be built behind the Deschâtelets Building, including on the land that would be made available by the demolition of the chapel wing. We also respect the views of those local residents who feel the heritage value of the chapel is sufficient to warrant its preservation.

Our concern is that, to be viable, the new community centre project depends on the participation of the Conseil des Écoles Catholiques du Centre-Est and they are not in a position to purchase, restore and operate the chapel wing of the building. Neither can the City of Ottawa justify such an investment since the chapel cannot be repurposed for

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THE GATES OF OLD OTTAWA EAST

Our intrepid photo editor, Peter Fowler, regularly walks and cycles around Old Ottawa East snapping photographs to adorn the pages of *The Mainstreeter*. On recent forays, he has been struck by some of the many ornate gates and fences that dot the community and add

character to our neighbourhoods. Along with many of our readers out walking and exploring the sidewalks and streets of Old Ottawa East this spring, you can retrace Peter's steps and try to find all of the glorious structures pictured in this thematic study of our lovely "gated" community.



*Please continue to send us your favourite photos of Old Ottawa East to editor@mainstreeter.ca, along with up to 200 words describing the image, why it is special for you and the circumstances around how it came to be taken. If we like it, we will publish it in this space in a future issue of *The Mainstreeter*.*

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Meet Gianna – the girl behind Nature Girl Bread!

LORI GANDY

If you live near Lady Evelyn School, or you picked up your children from the school before the pandemic lockdown, chances are you've already met Gianna. At seven years old, Gianna may be the youngest business owner in our community. Since February, she has been baking and selling bread in Old Ottawa East under the name Nature Girl.

Gianna comes by her bread-making skills naturally as she's been helping her mom make bread for some time. She started selling her homemade bread at the end of her driveway to passers-by in February. She wasn't sure at first if anyone would buy her bread. Turns out, nobody can resist a fresh loaf of wholesome bread. As with any new business owner, Gianna is proud of her achievement and appreciates the business and support she has received from so many people.

"I like sharing fresh bread with my customers," she says, and then relates a charming story about how it all began. "I'll always remember my first customer. It was really snowing hard, and I was standing outside all bundled up with my five loaves of bread. A truck drove past me, saw us, then backed up, parked, and got out and bought the very first loaf of bread I ever sold! He also gave me a tip which was so nice of him, and I totally didn't expect that!"

The rest, as they say, is history. Gianna became a mainstay every Thursday afternoon at the end of her driveway, selling her bread while her younger brother passed out samples.

With the pandemic lockdown, Gianna has had to make a few changes to

her business. No more driveway sales; customers now order through her Instagram page or by texting her mother (see information below).

What hasn't changed though is the quality of the bread. It is made with four simple ingredients: flour, salt, yeast, and water. The cost for one loaf is \$6.00. In this time of physical distancing and health concerns, Gianna has incorporated processes to keep everyone safe: "I'm wearing a mask and using gloves to keep safe when I'm making bread!" She has also set up no-contact delivery - customers leave the money in the mailbox and Gianna leaves the bread on the porch.

Gianna has put a great deal of thought into her bread business, right down to the name - Nature Girl, which she explains she chose "because bread is a very traditional food and I use organic flour, and I'm a girl. So that creates Nature Girl."

Gianna's business drive is not surprising since the entrepreneurial spirit runs in her family, as she explains: "My grandfather is an entrepreneur and I've gone to work with him a few times and seen what it's like being in business and I really liked it." Nature Girl is Gianna's first business experience and she says she is having loads of fun with it and hopes to be able to keep running it for a long time.

It's difficult not to be inspired by Gianna's example. For those budding entrepreneurs among our readers, Gianna has the following advice: "I think that my best tip is to figure out what you want to do and what you want to call your business. And make sure you enjoy what you're doing because you'll do it over and over again." Sound advice indeed.

Because her family divide their time



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

ABOVE: Balloons are a major marketing tool for Gianna's Nature Girl Artisanal Bread company; **BELOW:** A batch of freshly baked Nature Girl Bread sells out quickly these days; **BOTTOM LEFT:** Gianna and her younger brother braved the cold this past winter to sell their product streetside in Old Ottawa East.



between Ottawa and Alberta, Gianna advises that the best way to know when she's baking bread is through her Instagram page.

Gianna looks forward to baking more bread for her new community of OOE. As she says: "It's a lot of hard work, but people are very nice and at the end of the day you feel good for the work you did." Well done Gianna!



If you would like to order bread from Nature Girl, you can either text Gianna's mother at 780-233-3643 or contact Gianna through her Instagram page: @naturegirl.bread

SHARING LUNCH WITH...

A decade of glamour

From Billings Bridge to Balenciaga!

In this installment of our popular interview feature, we profile one of Old Ottawa East's most glamorous young adults, Amanda Nimmo, whose decade-long odyssey as an international fashion and runway model was launched, most improbably, while walking along Riverdale Avenue en route to a friend's house in Old Ottawa South!

Back in her Marlowe Crescent family home during the COVID pandemic, Amanda graciously shared her experiences with *The Mainstreeter*. And, we also spoke to Amanda's mother, Heather Moxley, about the career of her globe-trotting daughter. That story is on page 36 of this issue. Enjoy!

THE MAINSTREETER: First of all, Amanda, congratulations to you on a marvelous career as a fashion model. Now, according to popular mythology in this community, you were “discovered” as a high school student right here in Old Ottawa East. Is that true?

NIMMO: *I was actually just walking over to my friend's house who lived in Old Ottawa South. Someone stopped me along Riverdale and basically said he was, I think, a designer or a stylist or something along those lines. He had a friend who was an agent and he wanted to put me in contact with him. Of course, I was extremely hesitant when a man pulled over his car and asked me to model. At that point I was maybe 15, just about 16, and going to high school at Glebe. But when I walked over to my friend's house, I told her what had happened, and she actually knew someone who was modeling with that agent. They were in Greece at the time, and I thought I'd love to be in Greece, so I came home, and I talked to my mom about it. She was as shocked as I was because I would definitely describe myself as a bit of a tomboy and not someone who really liked makeup or getting*



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

ABOVE: As a teenager, Amanda Nimmo travelled to Paris for one of her first international fashion photo shoots, but not before some classic tourist photos! **BELOW LEFT:** On the runway at a Paris Haute Couture fashion show.



my picture taken or anything along those lines. But we decided to have a meeting, and then it kind of all just snowballed after that.

THE MAINSTREETER: Before we talk about your time on the global stage, can you tell me a little about your life in Old Ottawa East as a teenager? What kinds of things were you doing back then?

NIMMO: *I was actually working at Little Critters at Billings Bridge Shopping Centre, and I also rode horses at a couple of farms around Ottawa and the Green Belt. I was never into sports, but I spent a lot of time outside, just hanging around the neighborhood. My friends were in this neighborhood too, or Old Ottawa South and the Glebe, so I think between all of our neighbourhoods we spent most of our time in this area - no one had a driver's license yet. So yeah, in that sense, I definitely was a neighborhood kid.*

THE MAINSTREETER: And your dad, Geoff, is a famous Brantwood Park “hoser”. Would you skate at Brantwood or play hockey or anything like that?

NIMMO: *Actually, none of us skated at Brantwood, and my dad doesn't skate. So, it*

was kind of a mystery as to why he did the rink hosing. I think he just thought it was a good thing to do and so he did it for many, many, many years. My mom and I would go skating - you know the token one or two times on the canal to get a Beavertail, but no, none of us were big skaters.

THE MAINSTREETER: When you began modeling, Amanda, did you have an agent or a manager here in Ottawa?

NIMMO: *I started with one agent in Ottawa, but his agency isn't up and running anymore. What they would do is act as your mother agent, setting you up with other agencies around the world - kind of like your manager. So when I started, I had a mother agent in Ottawa who set me up with Spot6 in Toronto and Montage in Montreal, and those were my first two real agencies.*

They were the ones that booked me my first couple of jobs and really got me situated and prepared to move forward with a more international career after starting to work in Toronto and Montreal. They were great, and they're still great - I'm still with both of them!

THE MAINSTREETER: Is there

OOE MODEL AMANDA NIMMO

anything you had done in the past that prepared you for what you experienced as an international runway and fashion model?

NIMMO: Literally nothing! I don't think I'd even read a fashion magazine before any of this started. I remember people talking about Heidi Klum and I was like: "I don't know who that is". I was so beyond in another world. I remember showing up to Balenciaga and not knowing what it was. I had a meeting with Alexander Wang in my first week in New York, the hottest designer at the time, and I had no clue who this person was. Yeah, I was the definition of green. It was all very, very new to me.

THE MAINSTREETER: So, for how many years in total did you model?

NIMMO: I was modeling for about a year and a half during my last years of high school, while living at home. But during that time I really only worked direct bookings, which means that I didn't have to go to lots of castings. I could just travel straight to the job and hop right back into class since I was still in high school full time. I would take a day or week or whatever time was needed in Toronto, Montreal or in the U.S. to shoot the job.

After that I officially started modelling full time, quite literally, the day after I graduated high school. That would have been in 2011. All told, I guess I modeled full time for about six years, and part time for another three to four years after that, and you could say I'm still doing it part time.

THE MAINSTREETER: And of all the amazing places that you've modeled, countries, cities, what would be a couple of your favourites?

NIMMO: I unintentionally spent a lot of time, and fell quite in love, with New York. But I also spent a lot of time in Paris and London. My favorite chunks of time modeling were when I got to go down to Australia. They have a market similar to Canada, in the sense that it's a little isolated, but if you take the time to go there, you can stay for a month or two for work, and it's quite a treat. I think there was a three or four year period where I would go for one month a year, and really enjoyed that time. If you're lucky while you're over there, you can book a couple of jobs in New Zealand and pop over there. The South Island has become one of my favorite places.

THE MAINSTREETER: What about the day-to-day issues that a model faces in pursuing this career? What was the most challenging aspect for you?

NIMMO: When I think back to moments I now find humorous, most of them are about how absurd our "daily commute" could be. Navigating ridiculous travel schedules, back-to-back jobs and time changes – getting there could often feel like more work than the actual shoot. At times, I've hardly slept in days, but when I show up to work I still have to somehow look beautiful and act like I'm happy to be there.

I think clients sometimes lost sight of what the whole goal was when they hired you knowing you would have to take back-to-back flights, or a redeye to get there. They hire you because they want you to be the happy, fresh face of their company - and sometimes it just makes you wonder if they've really thought it through.

THE MAINSTREETER: From the photographs, you have a look that seems to be Finnish or Russian. Was that the look and the kind of jobs that you tended to be hired for?

NIMMO: I get that question all the time, especially at work when they ask me about my background, always expecting it to be Russian or Scandinavian. But actually, Nimmo is a Scottish name, which doesn't seem to make sense to everyone based on my appearance. I definitely got typecast as Scandinavian or Russian, booking a lot of the jobs that those girls would also get.

In international modeling, you tend to get hired more in the countries that you don't look like you're from, if that makes any sense. Spain was always a great market for me, and Italy and Paris. And then, of course Asia was the same too. Whereas, I never worked in Scandinavia or Germany. So, I think, outside of North America, anywhere where you're considered exotic is usually where you end up working.

THE MAINSTREETER: I understand that when you took on modeling, it was always as something of a pause in your academic career. Are you back in school now?

NIMMO: Yeah, I just finished my third year of undergrad at University of Toronto. I'm doing a double major in Animal Physiology and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, but that's a bit of a mouthful, so you could just say, biology. I'm also doing summer school this year, which I've never done, because why not - I have the time! But yes, April 2021, would be the normal date to graduate. But it depends if I keep on plowing through summer school courses, it could be earlier!

THE MAINSTREETER: Do you have plans to continue studying, or perhaps a mix of studying and modeling in the future?

NIMMO: Modeling is definitely something I've kept in my back pocket, although I don't think it will be my main focus again. My current plan is to apply to veterinary school either next year or the year after. Of course, that would involve quite a bit more school - another four years. I think that's one of the most interesting career prospects for what I'm studying and what I'm interested in.

Unfortunately for my family here in Ottawa, I'm considering applying to the University of Pennsylvania. I spent so many years, almost all of my early 20's, in New York. A lot of my closest friends are there, along with my boyfriend who still lives in Manhattan. So I think I'd like to go



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Making the cover of Flare Magazine as an 18-year-old was another highlight of Amanda Nimmo's modeling portfolio.

back – and interestingly enough, UPenn is the closest vet school to Manhattan. It's just about an hour train ride, so it would be pretty convenient for long distance and finding a way to live between the two places.

THE MAINSTREETER: Amanda, clearly you did something really unusual, exciting, and exotic in places all over the world for a decade. By contrast, Old Ottawa East is a remarkably quiet place. For you, has this been a good place to be from, the kind of place you might mention to people in Paris, Milan, or New York?

NIMMO: I suppose I always wanted to do something different, and to try something new. And then, after leaving and having a career that couldn't give me any stability, I became aware, and so thankful, of what Ottawa was and what our neighborhood was, and what an amazing home our whole family made for themselves here. It was always so reassuring to know I could come home for the holidays and have a place like this.

It sounded so ideal when I would tell my friends how, for instance, all the neighbours know each other, and there's a neighborhood sleigh ride over Christmas, and all the kids go to play at the park, and we make ice rinks there in the winter. I think people just couldn't wrap their head around that kind of picture because it almost sounds cheesy and made up. After living away, in so many different places, being able to come back to Ottawa, and to this neighbourhood, always made me thankful that it never changed too fast.

In our next issue of *The Mainstreeter*, we profile another internationally acclaimed Old Ottawa East woman, Wallis Giunta, who discusses her lifelong passion for music and her place today as one of the most talented young mezzo-soprano opera singers in the world.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

That was then, this is now

The front page of the April issue of *The Mainstreeter* reads: “Ghost Town. Thanks to our caring community for staying indoors”.

My understanding is that “stay indoors” is *not* what is being advised any longer. If anything, this is a time to be making walking, running, and gardening a regular part of our lifestyles. With proper physical distancing, it is very safe. We have many good places to walk (in addition to the canal path, which can be busy at times).

While it’s great to see some people out walking, the numbers seem to indicate that many are *not*. If we’re inside watching screens, or alone in isolation, there will be physical and mental health impacts. Recent news has made it clear that chatting over your fence, or at the end of a neighbour’s driveway, is also quite fine if you’re two metres apart.

Let’s get outdoors!

Peter Blanchard,
Drummond Street
Founder of *GreenOttawa.ca*

*(Editor’s note: We thank Peter for his contribution of an excellent article at page 35 of this issue of *The Mainstreeter* entitled 10 tips for a great urban walk.)*

Do we need a second footbridge?

Is a footbridge over the Rideau at the foot of Clegg Street really needed? It takes only ten minutes to walk at a leisurely pace from the base of Clegg to the light rail bridge. By bicycle it takes seven minutes to go all the way around to the opposite side. For the gain of just a few minutes’ time, what could we be losing if it is built?

We are truly fortunate to have this stretch of natural river in Old Ottawa East to enjoy and cherish. During the pandemic, we have become even more aware of the critical importance of intact green and natural areas to support our well-being. This type of natural space is unfortunately becoming an increasingly rare commodity. As many of us benefit from enjoying our proximity to this great natural resource, we should also take very seriously our role in protecting and conserving it.

Building a bridge over a natural watercourse is quite a different and more serious matter than building a bridge over a canal. Any proposed project in or near a natural watercourse must consider its potential impacts on the environment. While the impacts from one project alone may not seem significant, the cumulative effect of more and more development gradually diminishes the integrity of the whole.

It is well known that larger, continuous natural areas are far better for supporting wildlife. Connected, natural corridors are critical for maintaining the ecological integrity of the sensitive river shoreline. A bridge at this location would not only disrupt the shoreline ecology, but there is also the potential loss of large trees, impacts from the construction, and loss of views to consider.

Do we see the river as an obstacle to be crossed, or as a natural treasure to be valued and protected?

Linda Burr,
Glengarry Road



COVID-19 and the community

I greatly appreciated your editorial in the April issue of *The Mainstreeter*. Ordinarily I might have simply said that I’d enjoyed reading it but somehow that didn’t feel quite right given the content of the article and what we’re all living through these days. The information you shared from that old issue of National Geographic about a previous virus was grim but illuminating. But there was also a lot of encouraging content in the article that was comforting and hopeful as well as interesting, along with useful information throughout the issue.

We in the local jazz community lost a great friend to COVID-19 recently and that has brought the situation home to many who knew him in a more affecting way than was perhaps previously the case. I know this is true these days for many people when a loved one, friend or acquaintance falls victim to the disease; it can really throw you for a loop. On the same day that our friend lost his fight with the disease, however, I learned (via a TV news report) that a long-ago friend had won his lengthy battle, so some balance in the scheme of things may help us to manage the sorrow.

I am grateful to live in such a caring neighbourhood as Old Ottawa East and to live amongst such lovely folks as my neighbours, some with whom I’ve established close connections since moving to The Corners on Main, and those I’ve only gotten to know virtually since the virus changed our lives. Even though in-person contact is occasional and fleeting, living here makes it a lot less lonely for someone like me who lives alone. Whether it’s been finding a bouquet of flowers or a bottle of wine at my door; receiving homemade muffins or other treats; volunteering on our condo COVID-19 neighbour assistance team; hearing the sound of music playing inside or children playing outside, or simply chatting online via email, Zoom or our condo Facebook page, it all helps me to feel less isolated, as does connecting with my family and other friends on a regular basis.

I too wonder and worry what the world will be like post-COVID-19, but I am trying to be optimistic. For now, I am also using the time and enforced isolation to attack clutter, and finally recycling or shredding mounds of collected articles, magazines, letters, printed emails, and receipts.

So now that I have read the April issue of *The Mainstreeter* from cover to cover — rather than holding it aside to read when “I have time” — I can toss it into the recycle bin!

Karen Oxorn,
The Corners on Main

He’s pleased, we’re proud!

Just been reading the April issue. As it always does, *The Mainstreeter* boosted my knowledge of our community. The writing is clear and tight, photos relevant, story ideas newsy and original (Cuban Embassy!). Greystone is a tricky (to say the least) story, and the summary on page 13 is balanced and fair. As a retired news editor and journalism professor, I’m grouchy and hard to please. This publication glows. Keep it up.

Roger Bird,
McGillivray Street

Slattery’s Field – A redo!

Just picking nits about a recent article [*Spotlight set to shine on that strange building, February 2020 issue*] that mentioned Slattery’s Field! I’m not sure that the location of the electrical substation [at 39 Riverdale Avenue] was ever part of Slattery’s Field, or Slattery’s holdings (despite what the plaque on the building says). I believe it was part of “Rideau Garden”, the property of Lewis Williams, the son of one of the first settlers in the area who arrived in 1817.

William Slattery, a wealthy Ottawa butcher, had his house right across the street, at 40 Riverdale, but most of his property was either north of Riverdale, or east of Main Street. His first holding was a 27 acre property he bought in 1873, bordered by Main Street to the west, Rideau River to the south and east, and up to Clegg Street. (Which is confusing because there are reports of Bower’s land footing onto the Rideau River). He built a house, but it was destroyed by fire in the 1890s.

In 1877, Slattery bought a large acreage on the west side of Main, from Clegg to Riverdale. The northerly part was known as “Slattery’s Field” and was likely where the flights started/finished. It is reported that one of the planes crashed at the corner of Clegg and Drummond streets, totaling the plane.

Steve Konkle,
Centennial Blvd.

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Editor: editor@mainstreeter.ca Lorne Abugov

Content Contributors: John Dance, Lorne Abugov, Tanis Browning-Shelp, Bonnie Wepler, Quinn Abugov, Lori Gandy, Carol Workun, Peter Fowler, Elaine Dean, Kelsey Coburn, Carol Workun, Peter Simpson, Peter Blanchard, Bessa Whitmore, Karen Oxorn, Roger Bird, Steve Konkle, Linda Burr, Jamie Brougham, Bess Fraser, Sue Cavanaugh, Dr. Nili Kaplan-Myrth, MD, Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay.

Copy Editors: Lorne Abugov, Jocelyne Caloz, Lori Gandy

Photo Editor: Peter Fowler

Rédactrice (pour le français): Jocelyne Caloz

Advertising Manager: advertising@mainstreeter.ca Cynthia Dwyer (Acting)

Accounts Manager: Cynthia Dwyer

Layout Designer: Bess Fraser

Photographers: John Dance, Lorne Abugov, Peter Fowler, Peter Croal, Barb Grisdale, Bonnie Wepler, Greg MacKay, Linda Burr, Jamine Ackert, Danielle Washam, Carol Workun, Tia Photography.

Web Editor: B.J. Siekierski

Social Media Editor: Anthony Lenzo

Instagram Editor: Bess Fraser

Board of Directors: Bonnie Wepler, Cynthia Dwyer, Leslie Kirk, BJ Siekierski, Scott McAnsh; Sue Beattie, Ron Rose, Lorne Abugov (ex-officio)

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Councillor Shawn Menard: Shawn.Menard@ottawa.ca

Community Activities Group: Call Old Town Hall at 613-564-1078 and leave a message for Carol Toone

Community Police (for non-emergency concerns): 613-236-1222 x5287 or huntmr@ottawapolic.ca

Old Town Hall: 613.627.0062

Opinion

Thoughts on very large houses in Old Ottawa East

JOHN DANCE

Over the last 10 years, Old Ottawa East has seen a lot of rebuilding whereby old houses have been torn down and replaced by much larger homes. This transformation reflects a trend across Canada where, since the 1970s, the average size of a new house has doubled to about 2,000 square feet.

The question is whether this is a desirable trend.

During these pandemic days, the extra space may be enjoyed. It certainly is a marked contrast to what, say, residents of the Lees Avenue apartment buildings have experienced, let alone how the homeless are coping.

But are the much larger homes – some of them “monster homes” – good for our community, its fabric, and the environment? Should the City of Ottawa’s planning policies be modified?

In the case of most of these new homes built on lots where a house was demolished, there is no increase in density. Indeed, given the changes in family demographics, many of the larger new homes have fewer residents than used to live in the smaller homes.

So the City can’t plausibly justify the new homes on the basis of achieving intensification.

If the much larger homes were built in accordance with zoning restrictions then it wouldn’t be bad, but often so-called “minor variances” are approved by the City so that prescribed yard requirements are reduced, or the building height is increased, or both.

And not only is more of the lot taken up by the new house, but there is more hard-surface around it, so that there is less room for trees, and less precipitation is able to soak into the ground to nourish those trees. Let’s not forget how trees are often removed so that the new houses can be built, or how trees on neighbouring properties suffer damage during the construction.

Many of the new homes have roof-top terraces and balconies that reduce the privacy of neighbours and increase the general level of noise in the summer.

With the larger homes comes the reality that it is harder to afford a home in Old Ottawa East. We’re not going to become Rockcliffe Park, but we are going to have fewer economically diverse residents.

So, what options might be explored? First, perhaps houses in the centre of the City should have a maximum floor area. We have no problem with the idea of limits on height, so why not on floor area? If people want to have really large homes let them move to an area where there are large lots and fewer neighbours.

Maybe policies should be changed so that two small – and affordable – houses can be built on what was a single lot. Or perhaps there should be changed zoning so that the modest – yet dense – two-storey row housing like that of Terra Firma on Drummond Street is allowed. Another idea is to add to the so-called “tests” of the minor variance process, for example, a new test to determine whether the proposed variance has an adverse impact on trees.

The pandemic has already changed the world. Maybe it’s time to figure out how we can reduce the amount of housing excess in our community. Perhaps we should actively encourage modest homebuilding for more people, achieved in a manner that is environmentally sensitive and actually addresses climate change.

On expanding the urban boundary

JAMIE BROUGHAM

A silver lining of this pandemic is that in responsible communities, people are getting out in their community. They want to escape their house. To many, all of a sudden, the kind of community they live in matters a lot more.

The 15-minute rule is great, that is, where you can walk to in 15 minutes from your house. Hopefully, that radius affords you with everything you need: groceries, natural settings like parks and shady wooded paths, places to live, work, and play.

In Old Ottawa East, we are very fortunate for the efforts of community members who stand up and say what kind of community they want, residents who have created a vision for the

future and are willing to stand up for that vision? Just think about the results. If we left it to others, for example, at the City, well they won’t care if you don’t. You can be sure our community would be four lanes up and down Main Street.

Because of engaged community members’ efforts, there is good connectivity throughout our neighbourhood, including the Flora Footbridge. There have been countless meetings where your neighbours have stood up to question the social benefit of every proposed development. If they didn’t stand up for us, we’d get far more housing, less social amenities, and less space for a better quality of life.

While the City talks about expanding the boundary, I can go either way. If urban intensification

brings parks, social amenities, necessary businesses, and a good quality of life, then I’m for it. In these pivotal times, I’d like to see our political “leaders” have two-way communication with us about a vision for the future and how we can participate in achieving shared goals.

The example of the City’s urban boundary expansion question, which only addresses volume - quantity not quality of life, demonstrates why communities have to have a voice. The discussion must relate primarily to issues of quality and questions of volume will have to be secondary. Old Ottawa East is an example of why the right focus builds the best communities!

Working together to feed the hungry in our community

PETER SIMPSON

Among the many partnerships and collaborations that have formed during the COVID-19 shutdown, the Centretown Emergency Food Centre (CEFC) and Flora Hall Brewing — each with roots in Old Ottawa East (OOE) — have begun a new relationship that is already benefitting those in need within the OOE community.

The food centre feeds people in the Main Street - Lees Avenue area and has volunteers who live in the neighbourhood — as do Flora Hall Brewing's owner, Dave Longbottom and head brewer, Rod Hughes.

Longbottom recently presented Allison Dingle, chair of the CEFC's management committee, with \$2,500, which was an advance on Flora Hall's pledge to donate five per cent of food sales during the shutdown to the food centre.

Dingle says the CEFC has had to "completely revise our services" due to public health protocols - face-to-face contact has been put on hold, and hours had to be reduced to noon to 1 p.m. on Mondays and Fridays. Demand remains,

however, and the Centre still provides food to approximately 250 people per week.

COVID-19 has likewise forced tremendous changes to how Flora Hall operates. The popular bar and taproom is closed, while the beer shop and kitchen remain open for takeout and delivery. The interior of the brewery has been reconfigured to protect customers and staff, hours have been reduced to 1 to 9 p.m. daily, and many changes to production schedules and procedures have been implemented for Hughes and his brew crew.

"We are proud residents of Old Ottawa East," Longbottom says, "and we can see and feel the collective responsibility and spirit of this great neighbourhood as we move together to get beyond this crisis."



The non-denominational food centre is in the basement of Centretown United Church, at 507 Bank Street. Flora Hall Brewing is around the corner at 37 Flora Street. The brewery has introduced a new online shop at: florahallbrewing.ca.


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Peter
Fowler's
Travel
Focus

CUMBERLAND FALLS, KENTUCKY

Old Ottawa East resident Danielle Washam submitted this photo of a historic setting in the United States that has special meaning for her as the former home of her grandparents and a destination for family visits over the years. Civil War historians will recognize the location as an important one. The Cumberland River, particularly that stretch which traverses the border of Kentucky and Tennessee, was a scene of many encampments of soldiers on both sides of the epic struggle between North and South.

DANIELLE WASHAM: I had the opportunity to bring my partner, Hugh down to meet my grandparents in Kentucky. It was the last time we'd go down there as they moved the next year after living there for about 30 years. I was happy to be able to show Hugh the



beautiful mountainous landscape nearby, including the famous Cumberland Falls. The falls are also known as Little Niagara. The area has a rich history of discovery, war, booming business (coal mines) and the collapse of the mining business. There are also a few state parks that are definitely worth visiting and lots of trails to hike.



With every issue of The Mainstreeter, we have the opportunity to showcase the favourite international images of our readers, who have embraced our invitation to submit their handiwork for others to admire. Please continue to send us your

favourite travel photos to editor@mainstreeter.ca, along with up to 200 words describing the image, why it is special for you and the circumstances around how it came to be taken. If we like it, we'll be pleased to include it in a forthcoming issue of The Mainstreeter.



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JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Helen Weaver and Ron Farmer represented Main Street businesses during the lengthy consultations on rebuilding Main Street and they are among those recognized by the new Main Street Transformation plaque between Singing Pebble Books and Café Qui Pense.

Main Street Transformation plaque installed

JOHN DANCE

As a result of the recently installed Main Street Transformation plaque, a vital aspect of Old Ottawa East history is now cast in bronze for the ages and for all to see.

Located on the brick pillar between Main Street's Café Qui Pense and Singing Pebble Books, the modest green plaque notes: "After decades of community effort, Main Street was rebuilt with the well-being of residents, pedestrians and cyclists key to the new design. The multi-year project was made possible through the work of hundreds of people."

It had long been the goal of many community members to make Main Street a safer and more comfortable street and, over the years, improvements such as increased parking and better sidewalks on the eastern side were implemented.

But the street remained a speedway for commuters and a misery for pedestrians and cyclists. Lane reductions had been contemplated for many years, but it wasn't until City of Ottawa staff recognized the many values of having "complete streets," that lane reductions, wider sidewalks and separated cycle lanes were seen as meritorious.

In 2012, representatives from the community association, Main Street businesses, churches, schools and others began their collaboration with City staff during a lengthy series of working group meetings that, in 2013, culminated in a "complete street" recommendation that went to the City's Transportation Committee.

There, the proposal squeaked through, but it was then resoundingly approved by City Council.

In 2015, construction work began, and in June 2017, Main Street was re-opened as the transformed artery of Old Ottawa East.

The new commemorative plaque was erected by the Old Ottawa East Community Association. The plaque specifically recognizes the significant contributions of various community members, as well as key City staff who courageously pushed for a liveable street and then made it happen.

In addition to the people mentioned on the plaque, the project's success was dependent on the residents and businesspeople of Main, Clegg, Marlowe and several other streets in the community who endured two years of construction activity.

The transformation also resulted in the rebuilding and restoration of the Brantwood Gates, an effort long championed by Eugene Haslam and the Strathcona branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. The gates are dedicated "To the memory of those who made the supreme sacrifice and to the honour of the men and women of this community who served in the armed forces."

Special thanks for the creation and translation of the plaque go to Jocelyne Caloz, Carol Alette and Margaret Moriarity. Poppy and Helen Weaver kindly agreed to hosting the plaque on their building.

An official unveiling of the new plaque will be scheduled once the pandemic is over.



GMH Project

Some progress reported on burying Main, Greenfield hydro wires

JOHN DANCE

Back when Main Street south of Harvey Street was reconstructed, advocates within Old Ottawa East sought unsuccessfully to have the hydro wires buried.

The news today is much more positive for the northern section of Main Street and the first block of Greenfield Avenue as revised plans for the rebuilding of these roads include “undergrounding” of the hydro wires.

This new development in the planning of the so-called “GMH Project” (Greenfield, Main, Hawthorne) is in line with the Old Ottawa East Community Association’s request, according to OOECA Transportation Committee chair Tom Scott. “The City should adopt this approach of undergrounding overhead wires and removing poles at every opportunity in the future, and to make it a policy-based default position for both the City and Hydro Ottawa,” Scott stated.

However, the undergrounding of wires on the Hawthorne Avenue portion of the project is still not recommended by City of Ottawa staff and Hydro Ottawa. “Hydro Ottawa has indicated that they prefer an overhead facility along this corridor, and that the current arrangement fulfills their requirements and satisfies current electrical design standards,” says Patrick Sammon, the City’s engineer responsible for the GMH Project.

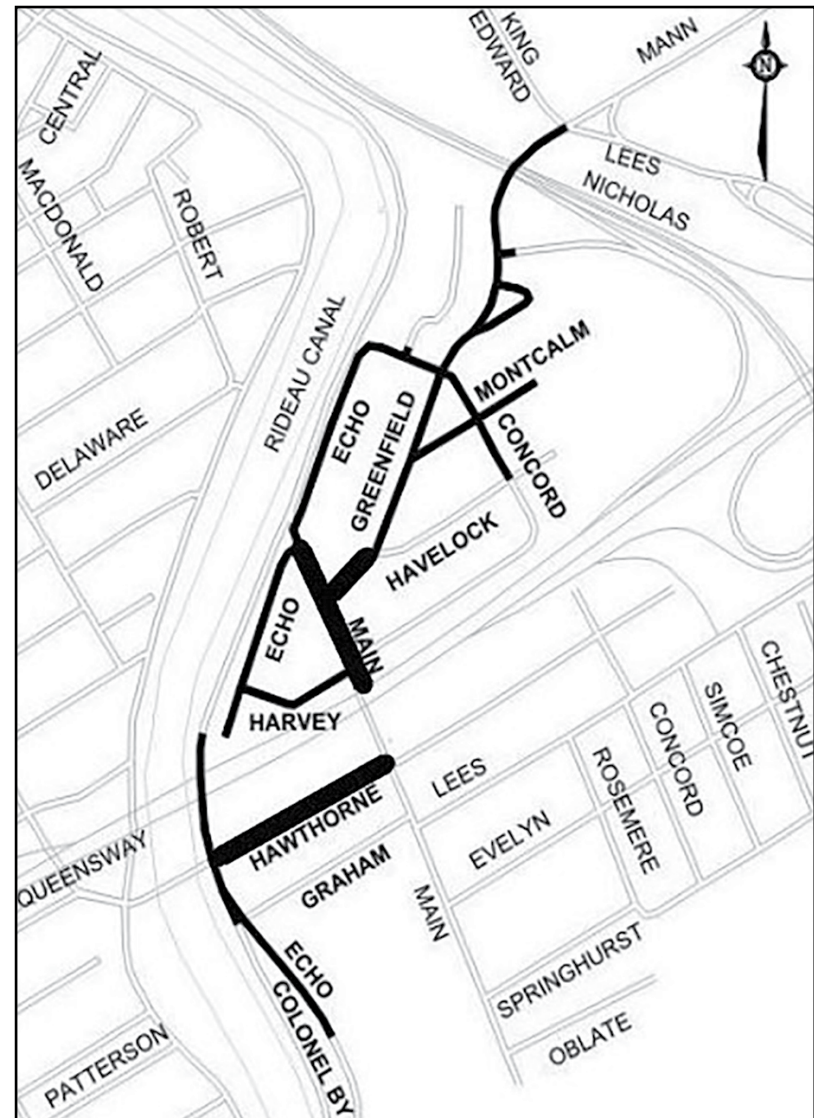
“We appreciate your preference is to

bury the overhead wires on Hawthorne Avenue,” Sammon wrote to Councillor Shawn Menard. “However, through our discussions with Hydro Ottawa, we have not identified a technical reason for burial and therefore Hydro Ottawa will not share the burial costs with the City.”

In the case of the northern part of Main Street and the first block of Greenfield Avenue, there were technical reasons that led Hydro Ottawa to support undergrounding of wires and to fund half the associated incremental cost with the other half paid for by the City. This cost-sharing also happened with the undergrounding of wires on the recently reconstructed Elgin Street.

The estimated incremental cost of undergrounding hydro wires along Hawthorne Avenue ranges from about \$600,000 to \$1.3 million. Interestingly, according to figures provided to *The Mainstreeter* by the City, the estimated cost for undergrounding the wires on Elgin Street was about \$500,000 less than the estimated cost of rebuilding the overhead service.

“I appreciate the city working with us to bury hydro lines on Main Street and Greenfield Avenue,” said Councillor Shawn Menard. “We will continue to work to bury those hydro lines on Hawthorne as a traditional mainstreet. There are many benefits to doing so and the timing makes sense. As a continuation of Elgin Street and the ‘main entrance’ to Old Ottawa East, we want to see this area enhanced.”



MAP ADAPTED FROM CITY IMAGE

Undergrounding of Hydro wires on the northern part of Main Street and the first block of Greenfield Avenue is now viewed as the best option. Councillor Shawn Menard is also requesting that the wires be buried on Hawthorne Avenue when it is reconstructed.

The undergrounding of hydro wires contributes to a more resilient electrical system in the face of climate change, and also allows the planting of trees that will form a canopy on streets, says Scott, noting that the Nova Scotia power authority has made undergrounding the new provincial standard.

The GMH project is currently at the preliminary design phase and is expected to go to tender in late fall of 2020, pending funding approval. Major construction activities are scheduled to begin next spring. No date has been set for the next public consultation session on the project.

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BRIDGES OF OLD OTTAWA EAST

The ABCs of a bridged community

JOHN DANCE

As one of the five communities that constitute Ottawa's "Rideau Island," the land between the Rideau Canal and the river north of Hog's Back, Old Ottawa East (OOE) is linked to its neighbours by seven bridges, some of them with fascinating histories.

Three of these bridges span the Rideau Canal and the others are over the Rideau River. Two were built more than a century ago and one, Flora, was opened just last year, as readers of *The Mainstreeter* well know.

The most famous of the bridges is Pretoria, designed by Joseph Baermann Strauss, who was later chief engineer of the famous Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco.

The Pretoria Bridge we use today looks very much like the structure that was first built in 1917 but, in fact, that original bridge was demolished, and a new bridge based on the original design was built and opened in 1981.

In 1967, the deteriorated condition of the original bridge led the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton to consider options.

"In keeping with the regional government's plan for high-speed arterial roadways, consultants recommended replacing the Pretoria Avenue Bridge with two new high-level spans, one on each side of the Queensway," says Heritage Ottawa's website. "The southern span would have cut through the heart of the

Glebe by way of Clegg Street."

Residents as well as the predecessor of Heritage Ottawa pushed back and, in the end, the municipality agreed to rebuild the bridge using the design and the stones from the original bridge.

During the rebuilding, a simple but well-used temporary footbridge was also erected. The community asked that, with the re-opening of Pretoria, the temporary footbridge be relocated farther south, but the municipality had other plans for using the bridge's structural members. All that remains are the circular bases for the bridge's piers which are visible when the Canal is lowered in the fall.

OOE's oldest bridge is the Canadian Pacific Railway Rideau River Bridge which is now a footbridge east of the Lees Avenue campus of the University of Ottawa. Built in 1898, by 1958, it was one of five bridges in this area of the river. Two others were also railway bridges – but they have now been demolished with no traces left behind.

The fourth bridge was the Hurdman bridge which was the primary road connection across the river south of Montreal Road. This bridge was also demolished many years ago. And the fifth bridge in this area is the Constable J. Robert Maki Bridge, which is otherwise known as the 417 Rideau River Bridge.

In a recent fascinating article,

Continued on Page 13



Pretoria Bridge then and now

ABOVE: Originally built in 1917, the present day Pretoria Bridge is actually a reconstruction that was undertaken by the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton in 1981 using the original design and stones. A temporary wooden footbridge located just to the north of the bridge and visible in the top two photos was constructed and was well used. However, despite requests from residents to relocate the wooden bridge farther south along the canal, it was taken down after the bridge was completed and the wood reused elsewhere. Today, Pretoria Bridge stands proudly as a landmark and a gateway into and out of Old Ottawa East, much used and enjoyed by residents on both sides of the canal.

LEFT: To the north of Pretoria Bridge stands the Queensway Bridge over the canal, which will undergo considerable structural work over the next number of years.



BRIDGES OF OLD OTTAWA EAST



JOHN DANCE PHOTOS

ABOVE LEFT: OOE's oldest bridge is the Canadian Pacific Railway Rideau River Bridge, which is now a footbridge east of the Lees Avenue campus of the University of Ottawa, was built in 1898.

ABOVE RIGHT: The concrete LRT Bridge that spans the river just west of uOttawa was originally used by cars but now supports the rapid transit line.

ABCs of OOE Bridges

Continued from Page 12

local architect and heritage expert Barry Padolsky examines the design of the CPR Bridge... He says, "On my morning walks along the Rideau River, I discovered the fact that the bridge possesses an extraordinarily beautiful curve." He notes, "I always assumed that it was straight. Yet when you squint along its axis, a most subtle curve is revealed, creating a visual

liveliness that Ictinus and Callicrates, the architects of the Parthenon well understood in 438 BC."

"Having discovered the 'curve' I became curious about its radius," he continues. "I revisited my forgotten high school geometry lessons. Using the 'intersecting chords theorem' I calculated that the radius was approximately 1.6 kilometres away, somewhere near the bowling alley on McArthur Street in Vanier. Unearthing this trivial fact was

almost as satisfying as experiencing the epiphany of the curve."

The other bridges of Old Ottawa East – the Queensway bridge over the Canal, the LRT bridge, McIlraith connecting Smyth Avenue and Main Street, and Flora - don't have lengthy histories but they are major engineering accomplishments and make it possible to readily get to, out of and through Old Ottawa East by rail, car, foot and bicycle.

In the future, OOE is likely to be the most "bridged" community in the city. The city still wants to build the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor bridge over the river and through the Springhurst green space. And the Hurdman Transit Oriented Development plan proposes two new footbridges over the river, including one at the foot of Clegg Street, a proposal that the OOE Community Association recently endorsed.



The majestic span of the Flora Footbridge has brought dramatic new design to the infrastructure of Old Ottawa East.

Demolition plan

Continued from Page 1

sought a purchaser for Deschâtelets but was unsuccessful until CECCE became interested. Along with CECCE's interest came the proposal that the City could secure a new community centre within the main building with an adjacent gymnasium serving both the school and the community.

Regional proposed that the chapel wing be used as the gym, but the City declined because the chapel wing "does not meet their standards to be repurposed as a full-sized gymnasium." Similarly, the Ottawa Housing Corporation deemed the upper floors of the chapel wing "inappropriate for future residential use." (See the Regional Group's full position in the sidebar article)

The Community Activities Group (CAG) of Old Ottawa East, which currently runs Old Town Hall as the community centre and would also be in charge of a new community centre if it were located in Deschâtelets, supports Regional's application, noting "the demolition of the chapel wing is counterbalanced by the

public use (community centre, grade school and affordable housing for seniors) of the original north-south wing and the preservation of the most significant heritage element of the building - its front facade." (See CAG's full position in the sidebar article)

However, in several Zoom online meetings held over the last month, a number of residents have questioned the justification for demolishing one of Old Ottawa East's few heritage structures. In a follow-up to one such meeting, resident David Henderson emailed: "The [heritage] designation is very clear, [and] the 1950 Chapel, including the interior, is identified as a key attribute. This does not translate into an open season for demolition. The Chapel, both architecturally and by function, complements the other components of the building and should be respected in this way."

Similarly, during these calls, former Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) planning chair Paul Goodkey questioned the demolition application's contention that the chapel wing has significant structural deficiencies.

Barry Padolsky, who was involved in the initial heritage assessment of Deschâtelets in 2011 and now sits on the

Built Heritage Sub-Committee, told *The Mainstreeter* that the key question in considering the proposed demolition of the chapel wing is whether the community benefits and positive contributions of the "adaptive reuse" of the main Deschâtelets building will balance the loss of the chapel wing. He also noted the importance of the community getting assurance that the school and community centre will really happen.

Sally Coutts, the City's coordinator of heritage service, was responsible for the original heritage designations of Deschâtelets. She has expressed her support for the community benefits and new uses of the main Deschâtelets building and, in this context, favours the proposed demolition of the chapel wing.

Community members have also raised a related question: What will be built on the land vacated by the chapel wing if it is demolished, as well as on the other lands to the east of Deschâtelets. According to existing zoning, the specific area to the east of Deschâtelets is restricted so that the sum of all of the area's buildings' floor space cannot exceed twice the land area.

When the Greystone Village Retirement residence was proposed, OOECA was advised by Regional that, although

the residence would have more than twice the floor area its property, the floor area of the new buildings on the remainder of the east of Deschâtelets area would total less than twice their property size.

Hobin Architecture's preliminary design drawings show the proposed adaptive reuse of the Deschâtelets building. The scheme assumes the inclusion of the community centre, which will occupy the north half of level one with a link to a gymnasium to be constructed as a separate building to the north of the Deschâtelets. The school will occupy the south half of level one and all of levels 2 and 3. The school will have its own internal link to the community centre gym from level two. It is proposed that the top two floors will be converted to affordable housing owned and operated by Ottawa Community Housing.

[Editor's Note: Full disclosure - on the issue of the proposed new school and community centre, writer John Dance has represented OOECA in discussions with the City, CECCE, the Community Activities Group and The Regional Group.]

Stakeholders

Continued from Page 1

recreation programs.

We therefore take the view, supported by heritage experts, that the demolition of the chapel wing is counterbalanced by the public use (community centre, grade school and affordable housing for seniors) of the original north-south wing and the preservation of the most significant heritage element of the building - its front facade.

Regional Group's Position

Regional has been looking to

repurpose the Deschâtelets building since the site was acquired but has been unsuccessful until now in finding the right user.

The chapel wing and chapel room, which spans two floors of the building, has presented recurring challenges over the years as interested parties have been unable to find an appropriate use for it.

The City of Ottawa has determined the chapel wing does not meet their standards to be repurposed as a full-sized gymnasium. In addition, the school board was not able to repurpose the space for their programming needs. Both the City and the school board have deemed the upper floors inappropriate for future residential use, as has Ottawa

Community Housing. In addition, extensive work and capital costs are required to remediate the wing and bring the structure and building up to current seismic and building code standards.

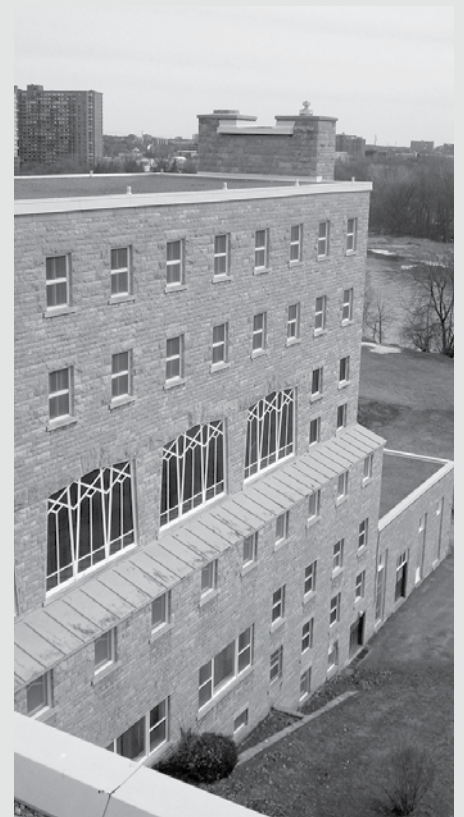
Through discussions with the City, it was determined that the parcel north of the Deschâtelets Building meets the City's requirements to provide a new gymnasium space and an opportunity to create a connection to the building for future community centre space and use. A "land swap" was therefore suggested involving potential development lands north of the Deschâtelets building and the lands where the chapel currently sits.

Regional understands the historical importance of the Deschâtelets building as an anchor in the OOE community. It feels that the current proposal presents the best possible outcome for the building. It will allow the building to continue to play a central role within the neighbourhood and will allow it to be opened-up and remain accessible to the entire OOE community in a way that it has never been before.

Old Ottawa East Community Association's Position

Having considered the proposed benefits to the community resulting from the conditional sale of the Deschâtelets building to the Conseil des Ecoles Catholique du Centre-Est, the community association does not support the proposed demolition of the chapel wing unless the sale of the building

to the CECCE is completed and the City of Ottawa commits to the timely construction of a community centre in the Deschâtelets building and an adjoining gymnasium / multi-purpose facility.



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

The chapel wing located to the east of the older part of Deschâtelets has three components: the ground floor which served as a large dining room with kitchen, the two-storey high chapel and above that two floors for residences.

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Two tales of two neighbourhood benches

JOHN DANCE

Old Ottawa East has a growing number of benches that invite pedestrians to pause a moment and enjoy our community's sights and sites. Although sitting on these benches during the pandemic is discouraged by the City administration, weary walkers often succumb for a moment to catch a break.

Many of these benches exist due to the generosity of residents who, through the bench installation, memorialize the death of a friend or family member.

In the case of the "Life is Good" bench on Echo Drive between Mount Pleasant Avenue and Mason Terrace, Bob Gagnon, the husband of Echo Drive resident Dona Bowers is remembered.

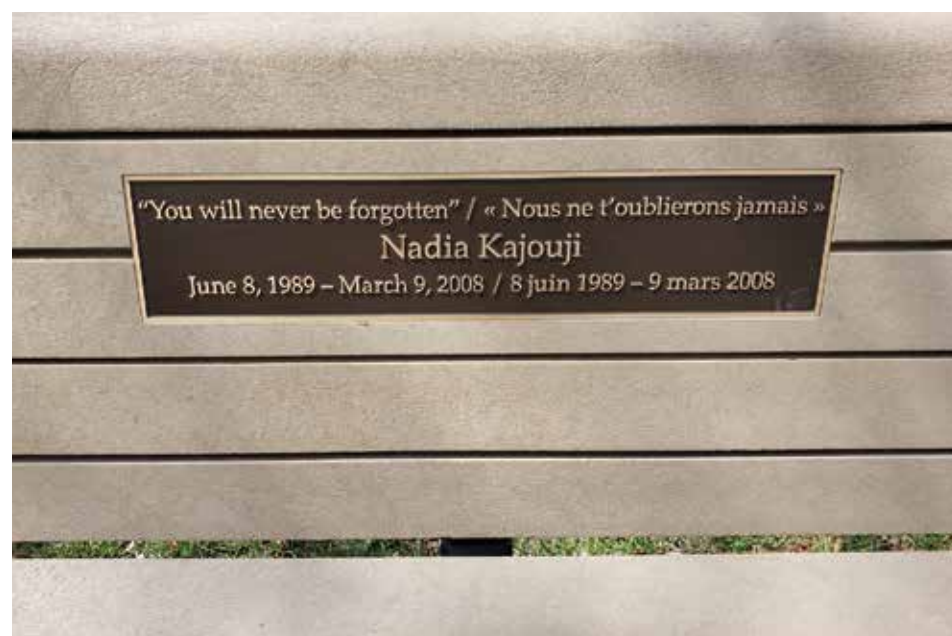
"He was very gregarious – he would sit on the porch and talk with everybody going by," says Dona. When Gagnon died in 2014, Dona's brother Roy from Invermere, B.C. suggested that a bench overlooking the Canal would well commemorate his life.

Initially, Bowers checked whether the National Capital Commission had a program for memorial benches, but it didn't, and the City of Ottawa's memorial bench program wasn't relevant since no City parkland exists near the Echo Drive location.

Recognizing that Echo Drive residents' property extends right to the edge of the sidewalk, Bowers decided to install a bench in front of her house— complete with a plaque with the simple message "Life is Good" - Gagnon's motto in life.



Dona Bowers and her dog Sandy enjoy the Echo Drive bench she had installed in honour of her late husband, Bob Gagnon.



JOHN DANCE PHOTOS

ABOVE: The plaque memorializes a life lived but not forgotten.

BELOW: Walkers take a quick break to enjoy the view from the new Nadia Kajouji bench in Brantwood Park.



"It has been so well used – people of all ages just stop and take a break. Bob would be thrilled," says Bowers. The view is superb: beyond Echo Drive, Colonel By Drive and the Canal wind their way downtown, with the Flora Footbridge in the distance and Lansdowne Park with its Aberdeen Pavilion off to the west.

The story behind the Nadia Kajouji bench near the foot of Clegg Street is more complicated and tragic but, in the end, consoling.

In 2008, Carleton university student Nadia Kajouji drowned herself in the Rideau River and her body was found on the riverbank near Clegg Street.

The sadness of her death was compounded by the fact that a former nurse in Minnesota had encouraged her to die by suicide. The malicious individual "posed online as a woman and trolled suicide-themed chat rooms, counselling others to take their lives," noted Bruce Deachman of the Ottawa Citizen.

Following Kajouji's death, an informal memorial was made with a bench and an urn of plastic flowers. The Old Ottawa East Community Association approved the expenditure of \$500 for the creation of a permanent memorial bench, but in the absence of other contributors a permanent bench was not erected.

Last June, Deachman wrote a lengthy article on Kajouji's death and how the informal bench had become derelict. This article prompted Ashling Cassidy and Katie Ambler, the latter a resident of Old Ottawa East and both employees of eQ Homes of The Regional Group, the developer of Greystone Village, to check out the derelict memorial.

"My colleague Katie and I had remembered the story of Nadia from years past and both of us being mothers of teen and preteen kids, we were saddened by her story and the state of disrepair that the original bench was in," says Cassidy.

Their concern led them to contacting the City of Ottawa and to eQ Homes covering the approximately \$3,000 cost of a memorial bench. Last fall, the bench was installed just to the south of the original memorial. The wording on the bench's plaque was written by Kajouji's brother who lives in the United States, and it reads, "You will never be forgotten."

So, this second bench tale was born of very sad circumstances but lived on through the efforts of the initial memorialisers; diligence of a curious journalist; and the compassion and generosity of two empathetic parents and their employer.

OPINION

Public toilets

Where to go when there's no place to go?

BESSA WHITMORE

More than ever, COVID-19 has made clear that a network of clean, safe and accessible public toilets is fundamentally a public health issue.

Recent media attention to truckers, taxi or uber drivers, bus drivers, garbage collectors, delivery persons, journalists, photographers and anyone doing essential jobs that involve moving around the city, has highlighted this problem. What are they supposed to do when the public toilets that do exist are all closed during this pandemic? Normally, these people use public toilets or facilities at businesses (cafes, eateries), but these are now closed as well.

People who are homeless have always had a problem, but it's worse now that there is 'no place to go.' This includes access to water for handwashing, something we are told to do frequently. For many people experiencing homelessness, access to clean running water and disinfectants is not a given. They may need to walk several city blocks or further to reach the nearest public restroom.

And then there's the rest of us. While being told to stay home, we're also encouraged to go out for walks to get exercise and fresh air. What to do when we need a toilet? Can we tell a small child to 'hold it' until they get home? Must such walks be unavailable to those with chronic diseases, such as Crohn's and Colitis, that require readily available facilities? Menstruating women caught short? Older adults whose bladders require more frequent attention?

Recently, the National Capital Commission opened Queen Elizabeth Drive for walkers and bikers, a positive move. But there are no public toilets - and facilities at Patterson Creek and the Canal Ritz, for example, are generally closed. And even when these facilities are open, there is no signage.

The banality of the subject means we don't often consider public toilets as a basic human right as they should be. Arguments exist for the human right to shelter, food and water in the city — but what happens after that? Toilets are something everybody needs (<https://theyee.ca/Culture/2019/08/29/Real-Cities-Have-Washrooms/>).

Why is building and maintaining roads considered an unquestionable necessity and legitimate expense, but having public toilets is deemed a superfluous luxury, asks Andre Picard (<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/when-you-gotta-go-but-theres-no-public-toilet-in-sight/article35782108/>)? The answer is not to refuse to build public toilets, it is to value and maintain them as any other public infrastructure.

In Canada, according to Picard, we behave as if urination, defecation and menstruation are not routine bodily functions, but are somehow optional if we are away from our homes. Toilets need to be considered a No. 1 (and No. 2) priority of urban design; they are essential for an inclusive, healthy society. We design, construct and maintain public spaces such as roads, sidewalks and parks, but act as if people using those spaces will never need toilet facilities unless they are



attending an "event" such as Canada Day.

What's the most intimate way you engage with your city's architecture? Answer: when you go to the toilet. Real cities give their people places to pee (<https://theyee.ca/Culture/2019/08/29/Real-Cities-Have-Washrooms/>).

The GottaGo! Campaign has been advocating for a network of clean, safe and accessible, public toilets in Ottawa since 2014. Though there have been some notable successes (e.g.: public toilets in the node stations of the LRT; porta potties at some splash pads and sports fields), our pleas have been pushed aside as too expensive, an 'extra' compared to other infrastructure.

And, here we are, in the midst of an historic pandemic. Maybe this is what it takes to get some serious attention to the issue of public health, including

toilets. A crisis can be an opportunity, so now is the time for all of us to advocate for a network of public toilets, to include running water and soap for handwashing.



For the past six years, the GottaGo! campaign has been pressuring the City of

Ottawa and the National Capital Commission to do something about this issue. If you wish to help advocate for a network of clean, safe and accessible public toilets in the City of Ottawa, visit the GottaGo! website at <https://www.ottawapublictoilets.ca>.

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BUSINESS BEAT

Greens and Beans

Tough timing, but community support buoys the spirit of OOE's newest business owners

QUINN ABUGOV

As Old Ottawa East and the rest of the world has been shuttered over the past few months, the same can't be said for the neighbourhood's newest business, *Greens and Beans*. The small North African and Mediterranean eatery, located next to Nu Grocery in the Corners on Main development, opened its doors in early March, just as the pandemic sent people into their homes to physical distance.

Co-owners Krista Arnold and her husband Ali Nahlé, a chef originally hailing from Lebanon, with stops in Spain and Gabon, offer a wide variety of healthy dishes inspired by Ali's Middle Eastern and Mediterranean roots. "My husband doesn't like any processed or junk food. He's a purist," says Arnold when discussing the restaurant's menu. Popular menu items include homemade Falafel, Hummus, Babaganoush and speciality Arab dishes such as the classic, Kushari, a mixed rice delicacy which is considered to be Egypt's national dish. Arnold also makes a new soup each day for customers to try.

When asked what inspired her and her husband to open a business in Old Ottawa East, Arnold says they were drawn to "the beautiful culture and unique village-feel of the neighbourhood." She was quick in praising the virtues of local residents. "People are proud of their neighbourhood and are very friendly. Having owned a number of businesses around Ottawa, we've never met people as friendly as the people in this neighbourhood," says Arnold.

Nahlé and Arnold care a lot about the environment, hate waste and have ensured all of their containers are compostable, which lends itself to the eco-friendly feel of Old Ottawa East. She mentions that they've received outstanding support from the community thus far, despite the challenging circumstances, and that the pandemic has allowed her to spend more one-on-one time with customers, something she cherishes.

When asked how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the couple's business in the early going, she explained the measures they've had to put in place.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Healthy fruit juices and Middle Eastern and Mediterranean-inspired cuisine are helping to build a faithful following for the new owners of Greens & Beans who enjoy the unique village-feel of Old Ottawa East.

For instance, opening hours have had to be reduced and staffing has been kept to a minimum. "It's just Ali, our nephew and I working at the moment." They've also had to rely on Uber Eats and curbside pickup to fulfil orders, which has been "bittersweet" for Arnold. Importing specialty foods from Montreal

has also become more difficult with interprovincial checkpoints in place.

Despite the unfortunate timing of their opening and some early changes to their business model, Arnold is optimistic for the future. Next time you're tired of making dinner, stay local and let Greens and Beans do the cooking!

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HOME BUSINESS FOCUS

PHYSIOTHERAPIST KATIE IRELAND

In this Home Business Focus interview, The Mainstreeter's Bess Fraser talks shop with registered physiotherapist Katie Ireland, who also holds group fitness and personal training qualifications. Over the last 20 years, she has effectively combined her love of training and fitness with her passion for helping clients through injury or pain. The current pandemic has presented challenges and opportunities for her and her unique business.

Ireland says that "it's the people that make Old Ottawa East such a special place to work. I have met so many incredible people during my classes and physiotherapy sessions. Some have become lifelong friends and others remain a friendly face when we pass on the street. I feel so lucky to have been supported by the community."

The Mainstreeter: Katie, you seem to have a rather unique local practice here in Old Ottawa East. How would you describe the component parts?

Ireland: There are three parts to my practice, beginning with one-on-one physiotherapy assessment and treatment, directed to adults, young athletes and in-home treatment for seniors. With COVID-19, I have been forced to learn how to direct my services via ZOOM. It has gone smoothly but it has challenged me to deliver physiotherapy a bit differently. I feel privileged that I can still interact with my clients online, but I really worry about the impact on seniors.

The second practice area is one-on-one fitness training. This aspect has attracted many women 60+ who are looking to improve strength and bone density, lose body fat and simply feel better overall.

My clients usually have a past injury that requires assistance and building an exercise program to address rehabilitation goals or make modifications.

Finally, I offer Bootcamp class for women only, which attracts women 35 years and older. I love working with this group; they have busy lives and save one to two hours each week to devote to their health. They trust me 100% and come open-minded to every class.

The Mainstreeter: And then along comes COVID-19! What have you had to do to adapt your practice to the restrictions of the pandemic?

Ireland: Initially, I was advised by the College of Physiotherapy to stop all home-based services. Frankly, I was shocked we were not considered to be essential workers. For the first two weeks, I thought the break was great, but I worried about my clients, especially the seniors. Once the restrictions on earnings were loosened, I was able to reach out to my clients and instantly we were working through ZOOM. My caseload is less and limited, but it has given me purpose and allowed me to help my kids with their schooling.

With COVID-19, I have grown my partnership with the Community Activities Group (CAG) in OOE, and we have gone online. It has turned out to be a chance for growth. CAG has supported me in keeping classes running. I now teach four classes per week, two in the evening and two in the morning. I have had a great attendance rate. The two extra classes per week fulfills a five-year dream for me. Since we are online, there is no travel time to consider - I simply show up in people's living room straight from my living room.

For those Bootcampers who cannot afford to attend classes, I run a private Facebook group, where I post workouts



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

OOE Physiotherapist and fitness trainer Katie Ireland is working hard to adapt her home business during times of COVID-19.

and nutrition advice. My personal training clients opted out of tele-health, but we did a few sessions early on to get their programs updated and to set expectations. I also delivered equipment for those that were in need.

This COVID-19 situation has demonstrated people's need for accountability. A lot of clients resist coming for regular visits, but it is so important for fitness and rehabilitation goals. These visits allow me to fine-tune their program; sometimes it is technique, sometimes a regression and often a progression. I have learned that when accountability is missing, clients skip their exercises. I can relate, since clearly motivation during this time has been particularly challenging for most people. I am really proud of my clients that have chosen to work with me for support and accountability.

The Mainstreeter: What are your thoughts on the future if and when we are able to return to circumstances that existed prior to the pandemic?

Ireland: As restrictions are being lifted, I am starting to think about my first phase of return to work. I have ordered gloves and masks, and plan to visit the seniors first in order to help get them moving regularly again. From my perspective, they are a very vulnerable demographic for many reasons. I will be limited on how many visits per week I can make.

It will be tricky and a new way of thinking. Overall, I feel lucky that I am a sole proprietor. I have more flexibility than physiotherapists in a clinic and I can adapt my schedule to meet my clients' needs. With a model of one-on-one care, I feel the steps to reducing the spread of COVID-19 will be easier to follow, but we will have to wait and see.

The Mainstreeter: What are the lessons that COVID-19 has taught you about the business and about yourself?

Ireland: I have learned that my life was crazy before COVID-19. We were all disconnected and running to just

complete all the events in our lives. I was exhausted and experiencing burnout. We took time for granted. I find it hard to slow down, but it has been a gift for many reasons. I think our family bond will be stronger when this is done.

I have also learned that I love teaching group fitness, it has been fun yelling commands into my computer and coming up with home workouts every week. I will definitely be keeping some online classes once we return to "normal".

I am still waiting to hear from the College of Physiotherapy in order to commence home visits. I am also constantly updating clients and scheduling future visits when they feel comfortable. I will start slow, in order to balance my family with work life and reduce the risk of spreading the virus. My PPE is starting to arrive, so I will be ready in the next few weeks. I will only do home visits at first and restrict clients from coming to my home until further notice.

The Mainstreeter: To conclude, what are the greatest rewards for you in your business dealings with clients in this community?

Ireland: It is always rewarding to see people meet their goals, and everyone's goal is different. I am not a miracle worker, but I have helped a lot of people return to sports they love, to maintain independent movement in their home, to recover post-surgery, lose weight, have more energy, be able to care for their family pain-free.

My greatest rewards are always through the education I can provide. I think I forget the knowledge I possess is not common practice to everyone.

And lastly, I think I give people hope. Our medical system is set up to rush people through the process. I believe everyone has potential to improve until they have exhausted all methods, and that can take a long time. Big rewards come when doubting clients start to see a light in their rehabilitation journey.



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Pictured here prior to COVID-19, Katie Ireland leads strength and fitness Bootcamps in the community.



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Wake Robin Law's name was inspired by the provincial flower, trillium, which is also known as wake robin. Did you know there are five native trillium species found in Ontario? See below for the names!

White Trillium (shown), Red Trillium, Painted Trillium, Drooping Trillium, and Nodding Trillium. Source: Ontario Parks; <https://www.ontarioparks.com/parksblog/trilliums/>

Photo by Thomas Barnes on pixnio.com

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The Justice Storytelling Quilt

BONNIE WEPPLER

There is a most unique quilt hidden away in two large suitcases in office L353 at Saint Paul University.

The Justice Storytelling Quilt hosts 27 English-language quilt blocks and 13 French-language; each one was created by a victim of crime, an offender or a family member, and the blocks represent their stories.

With funding from the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada, the quilt will soon be much more accessible. An interactive online version of the quilt was expected to be available by the middle of May. Use <https://ccjc.ca/current-projects/> to access the online quilt.

With the aid of a computer, a click on any of the blocks allows participants to listen to the person tell his/her story, while looking at the block on the actual quilt. The stories are heartbreaking and sometimes extremely difficult to listen to: a wife whose husband unsuccessfully attempted to kill her; a man who intended to commit a robbery but instead ended up murdering someone; a woman who expresses empathy for the teen who killed her husband; a man who shares his pain after a drunk driver kills his father; a step-daughter whose step-father sexually abused her from the time she was four years old.

The idea for the creation of the original Justice Storytelling Quilt came from Lorraine Berzins, former Executive Director of The Church Council on Justice and Corrections (CCJC). Berzins was inspired by another interactive story quilt, *First Kissed*, by artist Meaghan O'Shea.

The purpose of The Justice Storytelling Quilt is ultimately an attempt to humanize justice: by hearing people

speak from their hearts about what they have been through and what they need to help them recover.

Creating the quilt, and their individual blocks, helped these victims, offenders and family members to find understanding and meaning. It reassures them that life can still be good and worth living, despite the suffering and horror they have been through. Ultimately, the quilt was designed to bring people together to empathize with the suffering, hope and courage of victims, offenders and family members.

Some of the victims and family members met offenders through a restorative justice program which allowed them to get answers to questions they had, and which is not usually possible in a criminal justice process. It also helped them to realize that a person who commits a crime is not only a criminal or a monster: he/she is a human being. Some offenders who met their victims were able to understand the impact of their behaviour on someone's life. One of the offenders said he never realized his actions actually hurt someone until he met them.

A diverse range of materials was used in the blocks including pieces of baby quilts; photographs; a triathlon ribbon; a feather; beads. A number of the blocks contain similar images including the sun, flowers, hearts, and people.

The Justice Storytelling Quilt debuted during Restorative Justice Week 2005. During that week, the quilt was exhibited at the Ottawa Court House, Ottawa City Hall, Justice Canada and Saint Paul University. During Restorative Justice Week 2020 (November 16-22), it is hoped that the quilt can be displayed again at these four locations as part of its 15th



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Now available with online stories from crime victims, offenders and family members, the quilt was designed to bring people together to empathize with the suffering, hope and courage embodied in each of the quilt's 40 blocks.

anniversary.

The CCJC is a national faith-based coalition of eleven founding churches, created in 1974, to promote a restorative approach to justice with an emphasis on addressing the needs of victims and offenders. Through research, projects, workshops and presentations, CCJC promotes education on restorative justice

and sponsors initiatives to build healthier and safer communities.



To book the quilt for an event in Canada, please contact Bonnie Wepler at bwepler@ccjc.ca or 613-563-1688.

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**Have a story for
The Mainstreeter?**

CONTACT: LORNE ABUGOV editor@mainstreeter.ca

COVID-19 SUPPLEMENT

OOE business in the time of COVID-19

CAROL WORKUN

The global pandemic has turned all our lives upside down, and the Old Ottawa East business community is no exception. No one had a “how to handle a global pandemic” case study in their business plan! But in conversation with business owners up and down Main Street, some common themes and some positivism have emerged.

In general, the long-established businesses that remained open to the public in some capacity have reported sales for April that were between two percent and 10 percent compared to the same time last year. These established businesses were happy to have recourse to the new government grants.

For new businesses, however, there are no government grants, as eligibility is based on showing a decrease in income over last year.

More established businesses

Mika Weaver has owned Singing Pebble Books on Main Street since 1992. While she advised that her sales are only 10% of this time last year, she nonetheless had a cheery and optimistic outlook. She indicated that she is feeling the support of the community and was glad to have already had an online store up and running.

Weaver added that in times of COVID-19 she has seen a shift back to what it was like running a bookstore before the advent of amazon.com. She has noticed that people get a book recommendation and, rather than turning to the online retailer, they are calling their local bookstore. Singing Pebble is responding to that demand “If you hear a book recommendation on Canada Reads, you can be sure we have it,” said Weaver.

She has also seen a huge upturn in the number of puzzles she is selling. “People want something to do that they have control over, and that has an end” was her thought on the upsurge in puzzle sales.

In late May, Singing Pebble re-opened for in-store shopping Tuesday to Saturday from noon - 3:00pm. Curbside pick-up for online/phone orders remains available Monday to Friday from 10:00am- 5:00pm and from 11:00am - 3:00pm on Saturdays.

For Helen Weaver, owner of 3Trees, the situation is trickier as their doors were closed since mid-March and their business is stocked through regular visits to India. It is extremely uncertain what that might look like in the future. Also, 3Trees does not yet have an online store. She is working on that but in the meantime, she urges “Don’t wait for the online store, give me a call or send an email, we will help you”. But selling clothes over the phone is not straightforward, and income is only around two percent of what it was at this time last year. She is looking towards sanitation procedures for clothing and jewelry and investigating a tent for their June “basement” sale.

3Trees also re-opened its store with hours of operation from 11:00am - 4:00pm from Tuesdays to Saturdays. Personal appointments may be available outside of opening hours.

Newer businesses

New businesses in the community face daunting challenges that more established businesses do not. Greens & Beans is a prime example. The business opened just as the pandemic struck, and on their best days they are only serving 10-12 customers.

Jenny Ong at the Green Door was enthusiastic despite the restaurant’s business being only around five percent of sales compared to the same time last year. With the Green Door confined to offering curbside pick up only, she is looking at what the future might look like. “Generally, our business is about 70% eat in and 30% take out. With expected limits on capacity when we re-



CAROL WORKUN PHOTO

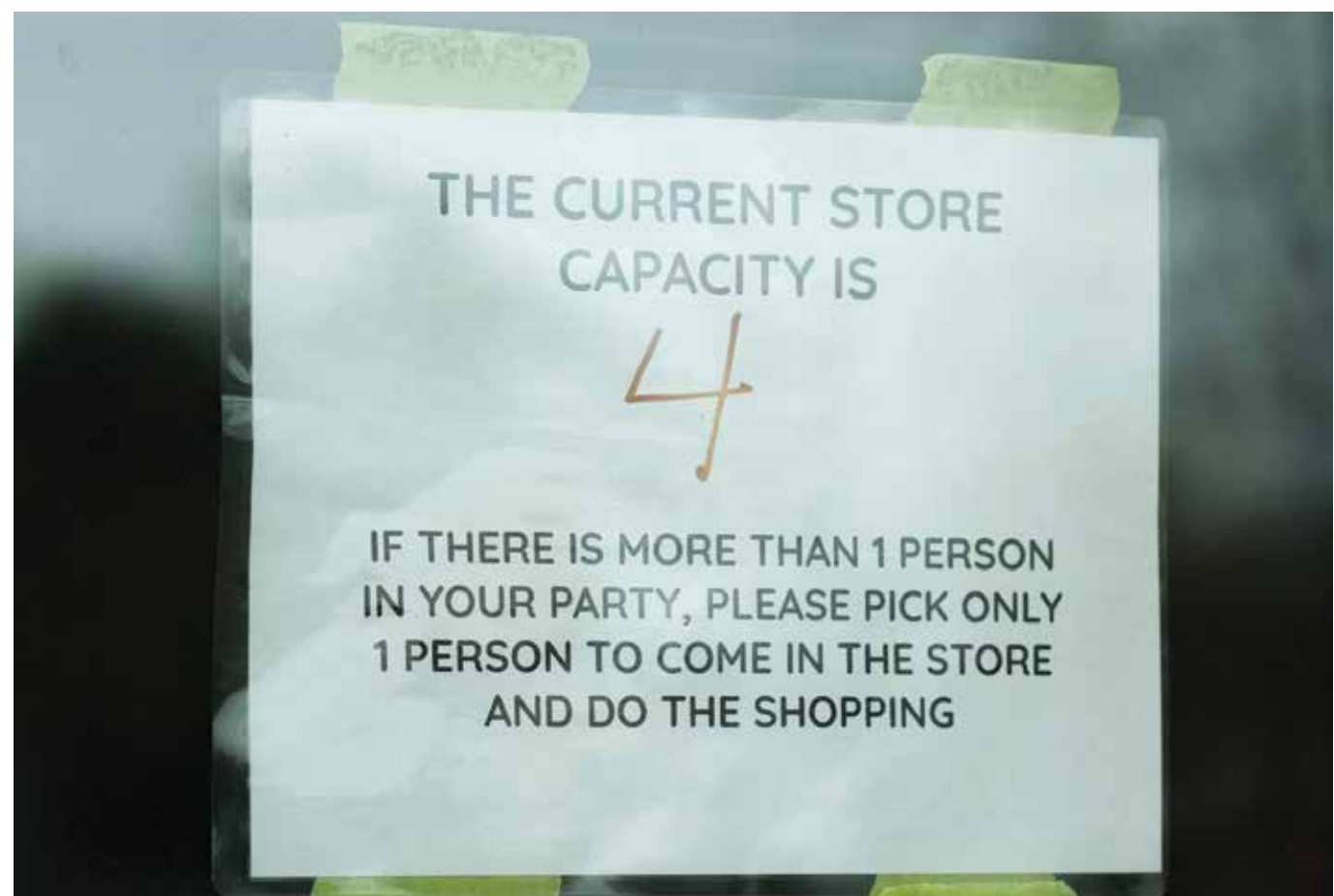
OOE businesses are having to rethink how they do business to ensure safe separation and distancing for customers and staff. Café Qui Pense has fashioned an artistic screen from vintage windows rather than standard plexi-glass.

open we may need to reinvent ourselves and move to flipping those numbers to a more take out based business.”

For many years now we have been going to our businesses for sponsorships, raffle prizes and more, but now these businesses need us.



For additional stories relating to businesses in times of COVID-19 and updates on how we can support our businesses as the province re-opens, sign up for the Old Ottawa East Grapevine Community Newsletter by email to ooegrapevine@gmail.com.



GREG MACKAY PHOTO

COVID-19 SUPPLEMENT

Family medicine during COVID-19

Why you could lose medical care in urban communities

DR. NILI KAPLAN-MYRTH, MD, CCFP, PHD

“I had no idea,” patients are saying when they hear that my medical colleagues and I are talking about the risk of family medicine clinic closures in Ottawa on the radio or read our articles in the papers.

I’m a family doctor down the road from you. I take care of 1,400 patients, many of whom live in Old Ottawa East. If I’m not your doctor, then one of the 25 family doctors in our practice group in central Ottawa probably takes care of you, your kids, your parents, your colleagues, or your neighbours. You also rely on medical specialists in Ottawa whose clinics may also close.

Here’s a snapshot of family medicine before the COVID-19 pandemic began: Work begins at 9am with my pediatric patients, then I’d see the rest of my patients (infections, injuries, chronic illnesses, addictions, women’s health issues, geriatrics, and mental health concerns). I’d end my clinic day; I’d then do home visits to my palliative patients.

All of that is integral to family medicine. I’ve sat in people’s living rooms with them as they grieved the death of a family member and stood at their side to welcome newborns into their lives. I work 50-60 hours/week. My commitment to my patients is to maintain a long-term relationship with them, give them a “safe” space, advocate for them.

Since the pandemic began, I’ve been working 8am to 8pm, phoning patients at home, trying to address all their primary care needs, and also triaging and managing symptoms of COVID-19, supporting patients through their isolation. I ration limited PPE to assess infants, give immunizations, and other essential treatments. Patients wait in cars while we screen them. When they leave, I disinfect every surface.

My colleagues and I who work in

central Ottawa are stuck in a **fee-for-service (FFS)** model of care. Most of us don’t want to be FFS. It’s a model that prioritizes quantity over quality; we have to see enough patients in a day to pay our bills. If patients don’t show up, we don’t get paid. If we get sick or miss work for education, we’re not paid. When patients ask for prescription renewals by fax, to fill in forms, we’re not paid.

We bill OHIP codes for each visit. When COVID-19 began, new OHIP codes were introduced for caring for patients by phone and video. But even with “virtual care,” our patient volume dropped substantially. Why? 1) PPE shortage; 2) bringing patients into the office is very slow now; 3) many revenue-generating procedures had to be cancelled; and 4) telephone/video is frustrating when people don’t answer!

Why are we stuck in FFS? Some colleagues already work in a better model, known as **Family Health Organizations (FHOs)**. They receive “capitation” payments each month: they are paid by the number of patients registered with them, not by the number of people they see in a day. FHOs provide income stability. In 2015, the Ontario Ministry of Health decided that doctors could only form new FHOs in suburban/rural areas. As a new graduate at the time, there was no option for me to form an FHO, and all the spots in FHOs in Ottawa were taken.

Why doesn’t the Ministry consider Ottawa’s urban populations “in need” of services? Who knows? Thousands of people in our cities don’t have a doctor. In Ottawa, FFS family doctors care for approximately 335,000 patients. Those patients will be left without care if we close our clinics to move out to suburbs/rural areas.

Patients keep asking how I’m doing. I don’t want to freak them out, so I say, “Don’t worry.” But I’m worried.




TIA PHOTOGRAPHY


Dr. Kaplan-Myrth is pictured here in her office waiting room prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.



What can you do? The challenge is getting the Ontario Ministry of Health to consider cities as important as suburbs. Write to the Ontario Minister of Health, Christine Elliott, to our MPP, Joel Harden, to Capital Ward Councillor, Shawn Menard. Make it clear that it would be serious if you lost your family doctor. Sign this petition to allow family doctors in the city to form FHOs, as almost 5,000 have done so far: <http://chnng.it/gH45G7RdM4>.



Sandy Hill
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TO ALL MEMBERS:

NOTICE OF DEFERRAL OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SANDY HILL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

As the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak continues, Ontario and the City of Ottawa are taking action to ensure the province and city's readiness to contain and respond to a range of outbreak scenarios.

Given that SHCHC is only operating essential services, and given that physical distancing measures will continue to restrict Ontarians' ability to gather in groups of more than five people, we have determined that holding the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on our usual late June date would not be in the best interest of the public, staff, clients or Board of Directors.

As a result, the SHCHC Board of Directors approved the deferral of the AGM until September 2020. Notification of the final meeting date will be posted in the local newspaper, on our website at www.shchc.ca, and sent by mail to our corporate members at least 30 days before the meeting.

À TOUS LES MEMBRES :

AVIS DE REPORT DE L'AGA DU CENTRE DE SANTÉ COMMUNAUTAIRE CÔTE-DE-SABLE

Alors que l'impact de la pandémie de COVID-19 se poursuit, l'Ontario et la Ville d'Ottawa prennent des mesures pour assurer que la province et la ville sont prêtes à contenir et à répondre à une gamme de scénarios.

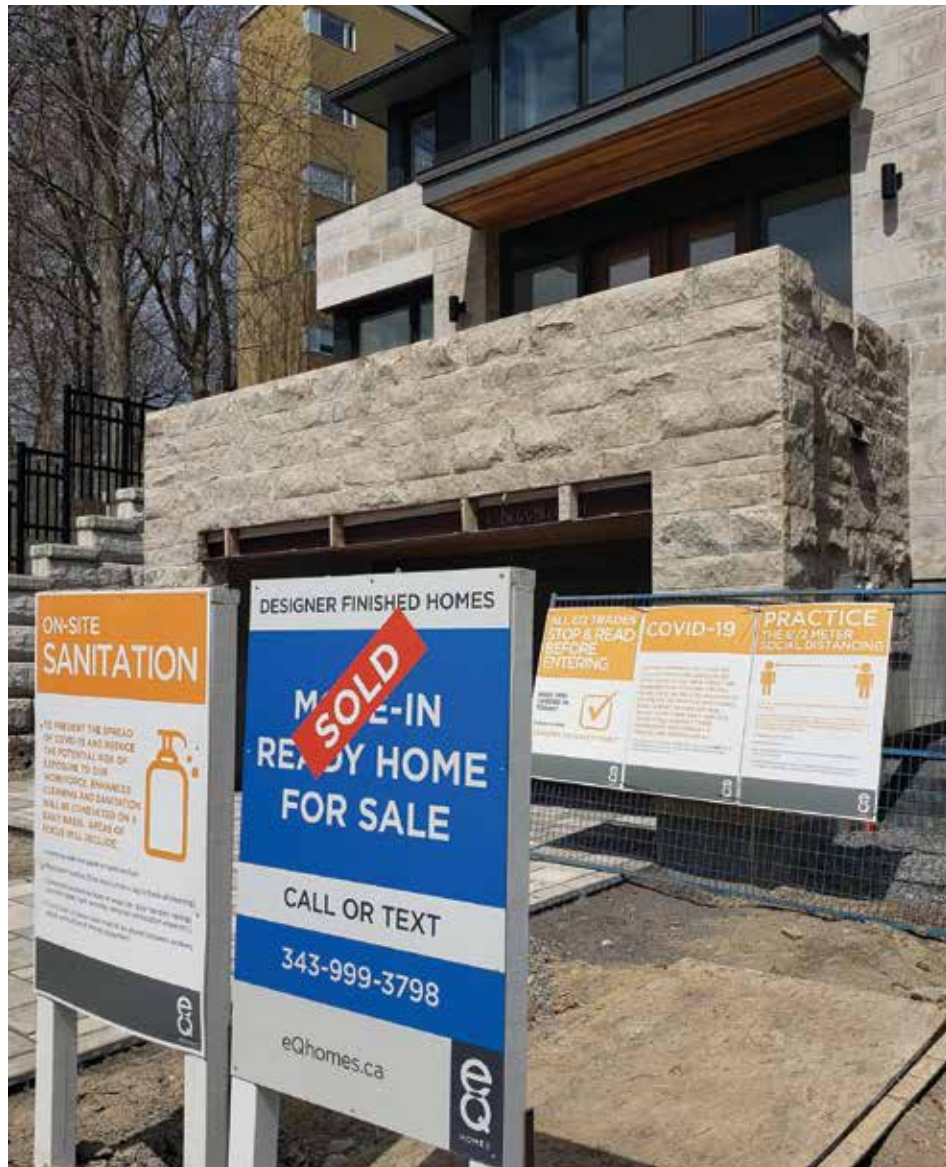
Étant donné que le CSCCS n'offre que des services essentiels, et que les mesures de distance physiques continueront de restreindre la capacité des Ontariennes et des Ontariens à se réunir en groupes de plus de cinq personnes, nous avons déterminé que la tenue de l'Assemblée générale annuelle (AGA) à notre date habituelle de fin juin ne serait pas dans l'intérêt du public, du personnel, des clients ou du conseil d'administration.

Par conséquent, le conseil d'administration du CSCCS a approuvé le report de l'AGA à septembre 2020. Un avis de la date de la réunion sera affiché dans le journal local, sur notre site Web à www.shchc.ca/fr, et envoyé par la poste à nos membres corporatifs au moins 30 jours avant la réunion.

COVID-19 SUPPLEMENT

OOE real estate market - Part 1

Pandemic plays havoc with home listings and sales, but prices dip only slightly



April 2020 has proven to be a most challenging month for real estate professionals across Canada, and those in Old Ottawa East were hit as hard as any by COVID-19. Despite the uncertainty for what the next few months will hold, some encouraging signs point to increased sales ahead.

LORNE ABUGOV

In real estate, as with the stock market, the higher they rise, the harder they fall.

Old Ottawa East's red-hot real estate market was off to an explosive start in 2020, continuing an 18-month-long trend that had driven record home sales and prices in the community.

But that chapter of the story ended abruptly in mid-March when the COVID-19 pandemic sucked most of the oxygen from home sales and listings throughout the community, as evidenced by recently released industry data covering the March and April 2020 time period.

The coronavirus lockdown has impacted real estate in Old Ottawa East harder than in most areas of the City of Ottawa. Indeed, figures for April 2020 show that the situation in Old Ottawa East, as reflected by year-over-year home sales, was more than 20% worse than Ottawa citywide and surrounding area

statistics for the month.

During April 2020, residential and condo sales in Old Ottawa East plummeted to only five in total, compared with 21 during April 2019, a precipitous drop of 76%. City-wide, the April 2020 data reveals a significant but lesser drop of 55% in residential and condo sales, from 2468 sales in April 2019 to 1100 in April 2020.

Pronounced drop in sales

The extent of the drop in the Old Ottawa East market this April is even more pronounced given that March home sales year-over-year in the community were flat, with eight sales registered in each of March 2019 and 2020. In Ottawa overall, the head of steam in home sales during the first two months of 2020 continued into March 2020, as more homes were sold during the month than a year earlier – 1826 versus 1784.

However, according to several real estate professionals contacted by *The*

Mainstreeter, March 2020 was very much a “lion and lamb” month for the industry. Ottawa home sales and new listings continued to boom for the first half of the month before COVID-19 struck with a vengeance and the bottom dropped out of the residential home market on or around March 15, and the condo market a week later.

Kerri Magee is a Broker, Manager for Royal LePage Performance Realty and resides in Old Ottawa East. She observes that Ottawa faced a lack of inventory for the past two years, and that the spring market for new homes was feeling that impact even before the COVID-19 crisis ushered in an even greater inventory shortage.

“When the government decided that real estate would be maintained as an essential service, the industry understood things were going to be scaled back. We were told that open houses would no longer be allowed, and we had many recommendations regarding face-to-face contact and meetings. Everything was going digital in terms of looking at houses and meetings with clients, trading via electronic signatures to carry out contracts,” Magee recalls. “While it allowed us to continue, we were really dealing with a much smaller segment of the market because, combined with the inventory shortage, all of this was happening on “a need to move” basis, rather than “a want to move basis”.

Unwilling to list

Other popular inner core neighbourhoods saw similar patterns of reduced home sales during March and April 2020, measured again by year-over-year data. For example, sales in Old Ottawa South registered a 70% drop during April 2020 compared to a year ago – from 10 sales in the month in 2019 to only three in 2020.

In the Glebe, the drop in year-over-year home sales for April was only fractionally lower than in Old Ottawa East – 75% versus 76% - from 16 sales in 2019 down to four sales in 2020.

New home listing data for April 2020 shows that homeowners were preoccupied by COVID-19 and unwilling to list their homes, given the social distancing and industry restrictions established in mid-March that suspended open houses and home inspections.

During April 2020, new inventory effectively dried up in the inner core markets, with new listings down from April 2019 by 73% in both Old Ottawa

East and The Glebe, and by a whopping 80% in Old Ottawa South. During the month, a combined total of only 9 new properties hit the market, whereas citywide inventory fared somewhat better, with 920 new residential listings and 281 new condo listings coming online. Even so, compared to April 2019, new listings in the month were down by 59% on residential listings and 46% on condo listings.

There are, however, some silver linings, according to real estate professionals. While the impact of COVID-19 has placed a deep chill on home sales and listings, homeowners looking to sell their properties can expect to do so into a depleted inventory of available homes over the coming months. While demand for properties has dropped, it continues to outstrip supply, which means that sale prices across Ottawa have remained somewhat stable despite the pandemic, though they have dipped citywide relative to sales prices in February of this year.

The average residential home sale price in Ottawa was actually 6.8% higher in April 2020 compared to the average sale price one year ago – from \$488,826 in April 2019 up to \$521,694 this April. However, citywide, average home sale price fell by \$34,652, or seven percent, between February 2020 and April 2020.

For the time being, homeowners who do not have to sell, simply aren't, and those that are choosing to do so are not having to deeply discount their asking prices.

Many unknowns

According to an Ottawa Region market survey forecast issued by Royal LePage on April 14th, “if business activity in the region resumes by the end of the second quarter, Ottawa may see a year-over-year gain of 2.5 per cent to its aggregate home price by the end of 2020. If business activity resumes in late summer 2020, the region's aggregate home price is expected to remain flat.

The report concludes: “There are many unknowns about the long-term economic impact of COVID-19 on real estate. However, low inventory is supportive of home price appreciation, or at least home price stability. While we are not expecting to see 2019 price gains this year, at this stage it's not likely that prices will notably decline either.”

Figures for May 2020 will not be available until early June; however, some real estate agents report an uptick in home sales listing and activity generally among buyers and sellers. Jim Cox of Royal LePage Performance Realty acknowledges that the April numbers were significant and should not be ignored, “however,

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COVID-19 SUPPLEMENT

Greystone Village couple working to support those who have lost loved ones

ELAINE DEAN

In 2016 my husband, Sean and I moved to Greystone Village. We were thrilled to move back close to Lady Evelyn Public School, which is where my two boys went to elementary school. We love our new home and have made some good friends here.

In December 2013, my son Christopher was supposed to have come home for Christmas, but he never made it. The day before he was hit by a car while crossing the street. He was a second-year architect student at the University of Waterloo in Cambridge. He had just turned 20. We spent that Christmas and New Year's in Hamilton, fighting for his life, a fight that

we lost on January 7, 2014.

I will always feel the pain of losing my beautiful son. I was devastated and my whole world was turned upside down. I know now that I will never be the same. Nor would I want to be. I've learned to take things one step at a time and to forgive more. As time goes on, the pain lessens. But the love that I have for my son always shines through. He will always be part of me and will always be in my thoughts and in my heart.

It is because of the love I have for my son that I became involved in Bereaved Families of Ontario – Ottawa Region (BFO Ottawa). Sean and I participated in one of their closed groups, led by trained facilitators who have lost children of their



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Elaine Dean and her husband, Sean, pictured here, are recently moved to Greystone Village, from where they have been running video conferencing webinars and support groups on behalf of Bereaved Families of Ontario – Ottawa Region.

own. Over 10 weeks, we met with the same group of parents, to work through different aspects of our grief. I can't tell you how much this helped me during the most difficult time of my life. The parents who were in the same closed group have become good friends of ours, because we share such a close connection to each other.

Sean and I both chose to become volunteers with BFO Ottawa in memory of Christopher. We have become part of a small, local charity that is committed to helping others deal with their own grief.

When our government asked us to all stay home because of COVID-19, we did so. For BFO Ottawa, that meant that people who are grieving could no longer come out to our peer support groups. I know firsthand how hard it was for me when I first lost my son. Now, people experiencing grief bear the added burden of having to stay at home, in isolation, and alone. Some of them can't even celebrate the lives of their loved ones the way they would like to.

Sean and I worked with Board members and staff to offer our support, and to share programs weekly using Zoom video conferencing. More than 40 people joined our first monthly webinar in April, about grief during a pandemic. We are also running weekly support groups for many different types of losses.

Every year at Beechwood, Canada's national cemetery, we hold our Butterfly Memorial Event. Last year more than 250 people came to the ceremony to remember their loved ones, and then released their live butterflies in the botanical gardens. On July 12, 2020 we will hold our 9th Annual Butterfly Memorial Event again at Beechwood, however, this time we will broadcast it live, knowing that this is the best way for us to gather as a community to remember our loved ones at this time.

I wish that people didn't have to experience grief, but if they do, I know that it is better if they stay connected to the people around them. When I think of my son Chris, there will always be both sadness and happiness at the same time. Sadness because he is no longer here with us living his life, happiness because I love him so much and I will always be so proud of him. I know that what I've experienced is not something that anyone else should have to go through. But if they do, I hope that in some way I can help.

To sign up for Bereaved Families of Ontario - Ottawa's support and share programs or this year's Butterfly Memorial Event, visit bfo-ottawa.org or @[bfo.ottawa](https://www.facebook.com/bfo.ottawa) on Facebook.



Real estate

Continued from Page 23

it's not all doom and gloom. Demand is still high, especially in urban core neighbourhoods like Old Ottawa East, interest rates remain historically low and employment numbers seem to be strong so far in Ottawa," notes Cox.

"To me this shows that Ottawans took the stay-at-home measures seriously, and those who could do so delayed their housing decisions. The vast majority of my clients decided to put their real estate needs on hold during March and April. But we could possibly see the new "Spring Market" this summer."

For her part, Magee notes that the lead indicators of confidence are starting to return to the market, beyond just the absolute necessary transactions. "Where we had a real shortage of listing inventory and a lot of

buyers, those buyers haven't been absorbed anywhere. And so, while they might have put the brakes on a little bit in April, the anticipation is that those people, for the most part, are not going to go away, and they're just waiting to re-enter the market.

According to Magee: "Where we live in this neighborhood, it's a high demand area. If you look at average days a home was on the market, you see that it was 57 days in April 2019 and only eight days on the market in April 2020. And the sale-price-to-list price ratio for April of 2019 was 100.4% of asking, and for April 2020 it was 100.2% of asking. So, that tells us that demand is still there, and I know from our own office that we're still seeing multiple offers on properties in the downtown core areas," she concludes.

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WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?

The Main Farmers' Market returns – with a few new wrinkles

MAINSTREETER STAFF

Have you heard the great news? The Main Farmers' Market is back, ready to provide the people of Old Ottawa East, and the surrounding communities, with locally grown and produced food.

The Farmers' Market will be open every Saturday, from May 30 to October 31, at 210 Main Street (in the Green Door parking lot). Opening hours this year are 9 a.m. to noon to start the season, but those hours may change as the pandemic takes its own course, so it's best to check the www.mainfarmersmarket.org website or follow the Farmers' Market on social media to get the most up-to-date information.

Clearly, it's been a challenging spring—for everyone. According to Sue Cavanaugh, the Chair of the Main

Farmers' Market Board of Directors, her group of community volunteers has been especially engaged. "Back in February, the market board and manager were busy planning a season full of fresh food, music, new vendors, and fun events. Needless to say, those plans had to be put on hold," she says.

"But if there's one thing this pandemic has made clear, it's that the Farmers' Market mission of supporting local farmers, bakers and other producers is more important than ever. Our market board members believe strongly that encouraging and nurturing a local food supply is not just a nice thing to do, it's the right thing to do" states Cavanaugh.

The Farmers' Market has been working closely with Ottawa Public Health and has been approved to reopen, with strict safety protocols in place. For the first part

of the season (at least), there will be no shopping on Saturdays – instead, orders must be placed online beforehand, with market day reserved for pickup only.

Cavanaugh notes that shoppers will notice hand-sanitizing stations, a limited number of people allowed into the market at any given time, and clear markings in place to help everyone to keep 2 metres apart while in the market space. Volunteers will be on hand if shoppers have any questions or concerns.

Ordering is easy, Cavanaugh says, and is open from Monday to Thursday for Saturday pickup. To order, shoppers should go to localline.ca/main-street-

market to create an account and then fill their cart with fresh produce, baked goods, meats, honey, eggs, and more. More vendors will be coming online each week as their products become available, so shoppers should check in regularly.

Cavanaugh and the market board were particularly grateful for the support of The Green Door Restaurant, without whose parking lot there would be no home for the market. "And we thank all of our loyal vendors and customers for sticking with us. We cannot wait to see all of them this season, from an appropriate distance, of course," she notes.



For up-to-date information about this year's vendors, check the www.mainfarmersmarket.org website, and follow the Farmer's Market on Facebook (/mainfarmmarket613) or Instagram (/mainmarketottawa).

YES, THE MARKET IS BACK!

Please note that until further notice, we are only offering **ONLINE PRE-ORDERS** and **Saturday PICKUPS**.

We hope to get back to regular market shopping as soon as possible.

To order, go to mainfarmersmarket.org and follow the link to our online shop. It's super easy!

Every Saturday, May to October, 9 a.m. to noon

(times may change, please check our website for up-to-date information)

More vendors are being added each week.
210 Main Street in the Green Door parking lot.



Ordering is open from Monday to Thursday
for Saturday pickup.

mainfarmersmarket.org

Follow us on Facebook (@mainfarmmarket613) and Instagram (@mainmarketottawa)!

ART BEAT



**TANIS
BROWNING-
SHELP**

TANIS@BROWNING-SHELP.COM

A finger on the pulse of the arts in OOE

ARTIST FEATURE: PIERRE BRAULT, PANDEMIC-READY PERFORMER AND PLAYWRIGHT

As our theatres have gone dark these many weeks, Pierre Brault has been setting the stage alight online. “When the pandemic hit, it was clear to those of us working in the performing arts that we were in big trouble,” Brault says. “We were losing our entire *raison d'être*—performing for a live audience.”

The practised playwright and performer (actor, comedian, and musician) says that the buzzword for the pandemic is *pivot*. “Performing artists need to develop new approaches,” he says. “When the plague closed theatres during Shakespeare’s lifetime, he wrote his sonnets. This pandemic is both a great challenge and a unique opportunity for us to realize what we have to do from here.”

When Canada’s theatres closed, the National Arts Centre and Facebook acted quickly to create #Canada Performs, a program that provided one-time funding for artists to perform a live 45-60 minute session online. Six thousand five hundred artists applied right away and Brault was among the first selected.

“We saw a lot of performers go online immediately,” Brault says. “But, of course, you need *content* in order to do that.” As a stage actor, Brault is in a unique position. He has written and performed several solo plays (no need for physical distancing). And Brault’s experience performing them for live audiences has made him aware of what he calls their beats and rhythms. “Having performed my plays so many times, and in some cases *hundreds* of times, I know where audiences react and can play to that while livestreaming the works.”

While most of the #Canada Performs actors presented their plays from home, Brault was able to perform his from the Gladstone Theatre. “When I performed the abridged version of *Will Somers 1*

on April 17, I had the entire stage, I had privacy (no barking dogs), I had access to lighting, and it was my director AL

Connors’ brilliant idea to show the theatre seats *behind* me, to remind people where we were.”

Livestream audience member Natalia Vesselova remarked in the real time comments during Brault’s performance: “I have seen the show before at the Gladstone, but what a privilege to be in the front row!”

At the opening of the performance, Brault looked behind him at the empty seats and said: “I like to think of good theatre as being like an energy—a fire as it were. The fuel comes from the playwright (his or her words), the spark comes from the artists (the actors, the designers, the directors), but the real energy, the *oxygen*, comes from you the audience...and I think I’ve taken that for granted over the last little while. I don’t think I ever will again.”

Using humour to cope with difficulty is one of the things that drew Brault to the character of Will Somers. “He was the Court Jester for King Henry the 8th and for three bloody monarchs after that,” he explains.

His ability to laugh at dangerous situations is not unlike our situation today. And, as a playwright and actor, I’m serious about humour or, rather, humorous about being serious.”

Will Somers 1 chronicles the Fool’s experiences with Henry from when he first entered the court through to the King’s death. Brault’s latest solo play *Will Somers 2* chronicles his experiences with Henry’s children King Edward the 6th, Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth the 1st.

Brault was happy with the result of the #Canada Performs show and has been overwhelmed by the support of the Ottawa theatre community during this challenging time. More people watched the livestreamed performance than could have filled the Gladstone Theatre that day. A virtual tip jar was available for people to donate to performers and the theatre. And livestreaming made it possible for people to see Brault perform who had been unable to do so in recent years. “People with mobility or scheduling issues, or people who had moved to other cities or countries, told me they were so happy to be able to see me again,” Brault says. “This show gave us a prototype for performances going forward.”

Livestream performances of *Will Somers 2* and *Blood on the Moon*, Brault’s award-winning play about the trial of James Patrick Whelan for the murder of D’Arcy McGee, were planned for May 15 and May 29 respectively. “If these performances are successful, there will be more livestreaming to come,” Brault says.

After residing in Old Ottawa East for more than 16 years, Brault moved to the Byward Market this past November. But with his son still living in the neighbourhood, OOE remains home. Brault’s recent work includes writing and performing in a two-man show called *Dief the Chief: October 1962*. It was performed at both the Diefenbunker and the Gladstone Theatre last year. Brault also teaches a stand-up comedy course out of the Absolute Comedy Club. He is now “pivoting” to teaching the course online.



JAMINE ACKERT PHOTO

Actor and playwright Pierre Brault rehearses his solo play *Will Somers 1* at the Gladstone Theatre (with the theatre’s empty seats behind him) in preparation for livestreaming it for #Canada Performs on April 17. Director AL Connors operates the computer and switches on stage for lighting and sound effects.



Author Tanis Browning-Shelp (<http://www.browning-shelp.com>) pens her *Maryn*

O’Brien Young Adult Fiction series, published by Dog-Eared Books, from her home in Old Ottawa East. Contact tanis@browning-shelp.com if you have information about artists or art events that you believe would enrich our community members’ lives.

OUR 35TH ANNIVERSARY 1985 - 2020

Before there was *The Mainstreeter*...

The *Wildwood Echo* – Old Ottawa East’s first newspaper

LORNE ABUGOV

Who knew?

When we announced in our April issue of *The Mainstreeter* that 2020 marked the 35th anniversary of our community newspaper, we overlooked another significant milestone in the history of Old Ottawa East journalism.

Almost exactly 100 years before *The Mainstreeter* first hit the streets in 1985, the eight-year-long lifespan of the *Wildwood Echo* (published fortnightly between 1877 and 1885), the first newspaper ever produced in this community, was drawing to a close.

The 135th anniversary of the demise of the *Wildwood Echo* may have slipped by us back in April, but this window into the life and times of the village of Ottawa East and the prominent family that was responsible for its creation will, as per the parlance of the period, henceforth and hereinafter get its just rewards.

Much of what we know today about Robert Lees and the *Wildwood Echo*, which was written and distributed by the daughters and son of this early scion of Ottawa East, stems from the historical research and dedication of an OOE historian, as well as a Lees family

descendant and archivist.

As it happens, the original issues of the *Wildwood Echo* seem to have survived in excellent condition and were donated to the City of Ottawa Archives, whereupon they are believed to have been returned to local historian, Rick Wallace, who is responsible for compiling and writing *A History of Ottawa East* (see: <http://history.ottawaeast.ca/>).

For her part, Susan Hill, a lifelong resident of Old Ottawa East, retains complete photocopies of 79 issues of the *Wildwood Echo*, which were handed down lovingly from her great-grandmother, Lizzie Lees Brown, a daughter of Robert Lees and a key contributor to the *Echo*.

Four issues of the *Echo* – published between June and August 1877 – along with several family photos, were loaned by Hill to *The Mainstreeter* to prepare this account.

In her historical portrait of the Lees family which can be found in the Notables section of *A History of Old Ottawa East*, Hill describes the *Wildwood Echo* as follows:

“The *Wildwood Echo* was a collection of contributions by many members of



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Pictured here on the front porch of Wildwood is the family of Robert Lees, publishers of the *Wildwood Echo* from 1877 to 1885. L to R: Robert Lees, who contributed poetry to the *Echo*, and was referred to as “Pater”, Jessie Lees (the youngest daughter, born at Wildwood), Lizzie Lees Brown (great-grandmother of Susan Hill), W.A.D. Lees (Willie), Ella Lees Preston (the eldest daughter), Sidney Preston (husband of Ella Lees) and Victoria Lees.

the Lees’ circle. They took it in turn to serve as editor to hand-write the pages and distribute them by mail around the province [posting each issue to relatives in Pakenham, Perth and as far off as Chatham]. [The *Echo*] contained poems; a romance novel serialised over several months, essays, drawings, photographs and watercolours. [Neighbour, friend of the family and *Echo* contributor] May Ballantyne was a prize-winning painter of flowers.

“Also in the *Echo* was “Thistledown”, a column on the doings at Wildwood and Ottawa East. These doings included: fighting off fruit thieves at Halloween, gypsies with a dancing bear in the neighbourhood, a chimney fire in which Cousin Bob (Robert Dickson Brown of Ottawa) proved a hero by climbing the roof and extinguishing the blaze, and listing the many visitors from Perth, Pakenham, Brockville and other places.”

Taken together, issues of the *Wildwood Echo* present a vivid and detailed portrait of the Lees family, their adventures and misadventures.

After his marriage in 1852, Robert Lees and Jessie Dickson of Pakenham took up residence in Ottawa. According to Hill’s account, “...they lived at first in the Matthews Hotel (later became the Rideau Convent). With their growing family, they lived in a building on George Street, also housing the law firm of Lees and Gemmell. Four of their children were born in Ottawa: Ella in 1853, Victoria in 1856, Elizabeth in 1857, and William in 1859. Victoria was a sickly infant and not

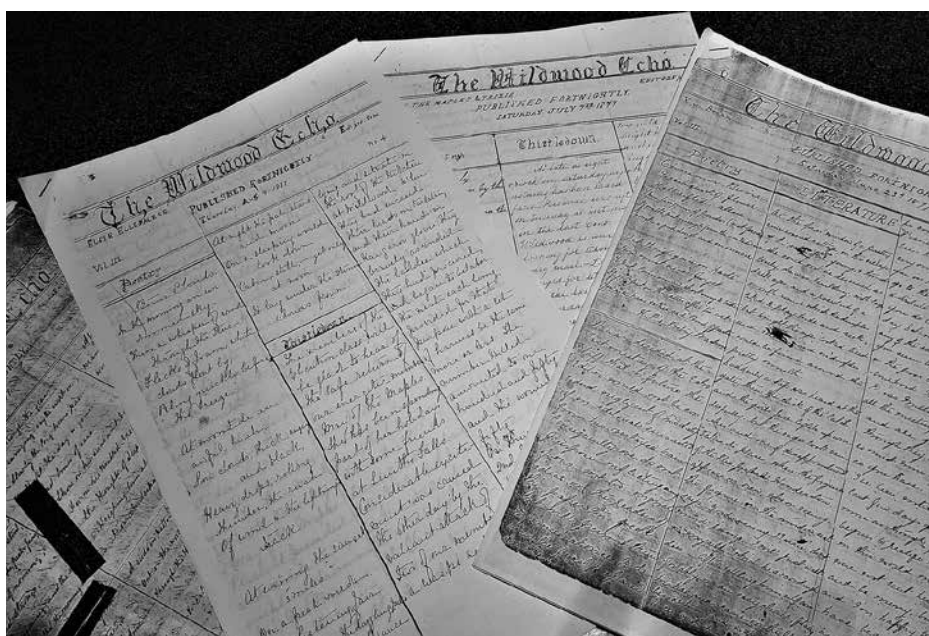
expected to live, so they did not name her but called her “Sister” for several years. She chose her own name - Victoria, after the Queen.”

While affluent for the times, the family nonetheless experienced some harshness and privations of daily living. The Lees initially lived within Ottawa city limits before fleeing to the “country” where they lived in a homestead setting on land within the village of Archville stretching south from what is now the Queensway between Main Street and the Rideau River that was well outside the Ottawa city limits at the time.

Indeed, according to Hill, life within Ottawa at the time was not without its own perils, as the city struggled to maintain rudimentary sanitary standards and services for its inhabitants. “The crowded town, epidemics of disease and bad drains in the summer led them [the Lees family] to move to the country in the early 1860s, to the suburb of Ottawa East, Nepean Township, just south of the Rideau Canal. When a friend asked why he wanted to live “in the wild woods”, Lees took that as the name of his house and estate.” A fifth child, daughter Jessie, was born after the family moved to their Wildwood property.

A prominent lawyer of his day, Robert Lees was better able to provide for his family than all but a few of the largely working-class families of the community, allowing his daughters and sons to enjoy

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SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Several copies of the *Wildwood Echo*, dating back to the summer of 1877, display the fine writing, sharp wit and excellent penmanship of the members of Robert Lees’ family who took turns writing and editing the content.

BE THE CHANGE

Here's five apps to help you live a greener life

KELSEY COBURN

We all want to do our part to make our neighbourhood look great and to help our city and country to prosper, but being environmentally conscious isn't always the easiest or clearest of choices.

Fortunately, there are plenty of resources to help you navigate your green path ahead! For residents of Old Ottawa East, the following apps can help you reach your personal sustainability goals while also helping Ottawa to achieve its climate change objectives. Try them out!

1. Up your recycling game

When it comes to composting and recycling, keeping track of what goes where can be confusing and even overwhelming. Can dirtied pizza boxes be composted? Is aluminum foil recyclable? Are receipts considered to be

paper?

Find the answers with the *City of Ottawa's Collection Calendar* app. Use the waste finder feature to check what is recyclable according to the city's waste management program and also keep track of the garbage and recycling schedules for your home.

Find it here: ottawa.ca/en/garbage-and-recycling/recycling

2. Reduce your footprint

Estimates suggest that globally, we will need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 to avoid brutal consequences to the planet. In an effort to help, many are trying to reduce their carbon footprint as best they can, but results can be hard to measure.

Enter *RePrint* — here, you can set goals for yourself and track the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of each one



SUPPLIED PHOTO

These five apps can help our readers reach their personal sustainability goals while helping our community to become more eco-conscious.

of your activity and lifestyle changes. The app compares your progress against the national average (U.S. data) and estimates your cost savings.

Find it here: getreprint.com

3. A wrap on food waste

The impact of food waste on the environment is staggering, creating roughly 56 million tonnes of CO₂-equivalent emissions each year in Canada. Moreover, food waste puts a big dent in your wallet: the food rescue organization Second Harvest says households lose up to \$1,766 in food waste each year!

NoWaste is a food inventory app that allows you to keep track of the food in your pantry, fridge and freezer, helping you reduce your food waste by keeping track of expiration dates. You can also use it to make shopping lists and meal plans based on the food in your home and track your monthly food waste and cost savings.

Find it here: nowasteapp.com

4. Become brand-aware

It is no secret that the fashion industry is a major polluter, producing astronomical amounts of greenhouse gas emissions and millions of tonnes of textile waste every year. And while some companies are open and transparent about their efforts to operate as sustainably as possible, others not so much.

Good on You is an app that gives you the power to search over 2,000 brands to see how they stack up when it comes to their impact on people, animals, and the planet. With Good on You, you can rest easy knowing the clothes you buy

are ethically and sustainably made.

Find it here: goodonyou.eco

5. Trade and save

In a consumer culture, finding ways to reduce consumption and reuse items can be difficult, but as the old adage goes, one man's trash is another man's treasure.

Bunz, a trading platform, has really taken this message to heart. Through the Bunz app, traders can offload unwanted items for other goods and services. By giving your items a second life, you can help reduce waste with the added bonus of saving money.

Find it here: bunz.com

Honourable mention

Although not an app, *Savour Ottawa* deserves a shout-out for its online map of the region's local food and farms. Using the map, users can search for local producers, breweries and wineries, retailers, restaurants, and farmers markets. At a time when buying local has arguably never been more important, *Savour Ottawa* makes it easier for Ottawa residents to support local businesses.

Find it here: savourottawa.ca



Be the Change is a regular column in *The Mainstreeter* about climate change and sustainability in OOE. Residents wishing to contribute a column are encouraged to contact Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE) at sloe@ottawaeast.ca.

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Wealth Advisor

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In-person program suspension continues until further notice.
www.ottawaeastcag.ca • admin@ottawaeastcag.ca



SPRING AND SUMMER 2020 includes Spring Online Adult Fitness Programs—Better Body Boot Camp, Body Sculpting by Essentrics®, Cardio-Strength-Core Blast, Hatha Yoga, Pilates, Vinyasa Flow Yoga, Yin Yoga and Zumba.

Summer online Better Body Boot Camp, Vinyasa Flow Yoga and Zumba programs confirmed, with others continuing to be confirmed, including adult fitness and children’s programs.

For program information: www.ottawaeastcag.ca/programs

To register: www.ottawaeastcag.ca/registration



FALL 2020 Programs are being developed and confirmed, with format and class to be determined according to COVID-19 pandemic physical distancing requirements. For updates visit us at www.ottawaeastcag.ca/programs.

Pre-registration continues for CAG After School Programs — www.ottawaeastcag.ca/after-school



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I love that tree...

SLOE launches the Old Ottawa East Tree Recognition Project

MAINSTREETER STAFF

As the “stay at home” mantra of the pandemic has now evolved to one urging us to get outside and enjoy the great outdoors – suitably spaced, mind you – many residents of Old Ottawa East will be walking our neighbourhoods as never before.

To make the splendour of springtime more pleasurable and engaging this year, Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE), in collaboration with *The Mainstreeter*, has initiated the “I Love That Tree” challenge as a component of their Old Ottawa East Tree Recognition Project.

“This is the chance for readers of *The Mainstreeter* to wax poetic about that one tree in the neighbourhood which always brings them delight,” says Jayson MacLean, chair of SLOE. “Everyone’s got a favourite tree in the neighbourhood. Maybe it’s in your own backyard, or maybe it’s a tree in the park with the best shade, or the one with the best fall

colours. Whatever you love about your favourite tree, we want everyone to know about it.”

In this issue, our first entry is a much-loved majestic red maple tree that graces the front yard of **Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay’s** home at 49 Herridge Street. Get to know it a little better in the accompanying submission, and feel the love that trees can inspire in all of us.



If you have a favourite tree – and who doesn’t! – send a couple of photos and an accompanying submission of up to 250 words on why you love it, adding any particular details you might know about the tree (history, approximate age, species, etc.) to sloe@ottawaeast.ca. All entries will be published on the Old Ottawa East Community Association website and one entry will be featured in the pages of each of the next few issues of The Mainstreeter.



Imagine! An infill that can co-exist with a mature tree.

Our red maple at 49 Herridge Street

If you were to take a Google street-view walk down our street, you would not find our house, but in its stead, you would see a parking lot that had been there for years before our home was built. Our house, firmly in place for the past five years, does not yet exist in Google’s virtual streetscape.

But, in front of the virtual parking lot, and likewise in front of our real-world home, you will see the same taller-than-our-house majestic red maple tree.

The tree is one of the first things visitors to our new home notice: “What a beautiful tree! Imagine! An infill that can co-exist with a mature tree!” At which point we say a silent prayer of gratitude to the City of Ottawa’s planning folks’ insistence that a new build would need to preserve the maple.

The maple tree is the first thing I see upon coming close to home, and it is also the first thing I see when the blinds are raised, as I wish it good morning. Its fall buds remind me of the surety of spring, the spring flowering sends a giddiness throughout the household, as we wait for the first leaves to follow. Fall brings an artist’s delight.

The old tree, our new home, this beautiful deeply rooted neighbourhood of Old Ottawa East. - **AG-M**

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POLITICAL PAGES

ROB GORDON A/PRESIDENT OLD OTTAWA EAST COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



COMMUNITY UPDATE

In this COVID-impacted world, we are all adjusting to a new normal. Some community members are working from home while juggling parenting and home schooling. Others are walking/running/cycling while trying to respect physical distancing rules. Still others are staying indoors to self-isolate. Whatever your personal situation, please help those of your neighbours who require assistance. Also, many of our local businesses remain open or are providing take-out or on-line purchase options. If you can, consider providing your support to help ensure they will survive this tumultuous time.

Your community association has moved to on-line meetings. In April, we experimented with an on-line meeting limited to board members; our May meeting was able to accommodate other residents of the community interested in hearing updates and engaging on issues of interest.

Following the April meeting, Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE) advocated in favour of opening Ontario's community gardens by sending a letter to provincial Health Minister Christine Elliott. Happily, the provincial government has now moved to ensure that community gardens can open for the season. Also, SLOE is collaborating with *The Mainstreeter* in launching a new initiative called "I Love that Tree!" - see details on page XX of this issue.

The need for open and accessible greenspaces and recreation spaces has been felt acutely during this recent time of isolation, particularly in central urban areas such as Old Ottawa East (OOE). In areas of dense housing, private yard space often is limited or non-existent, and as a result, many families have been struggling with finding adequate space for physical activity and play. The current crisis has also raised important issues about the ongoing need to develop communities that have sufficient space for walking, running, cycling, and play. Housing intensification policies, such as those contemplated in the R4 zone review and the Ottawa new urban boundary discussion, ought to take the very real public health consequences of reduced greenspace into account.

In Greystone Village, construction and move-in dates have also been impacted by the coronavirus. Block 2A construction is continuing, as is the excavation, shoring up and associated activities for Block 2B. Note that a special Local Planning Appeal Tribunal conference call is likely to allow for the mediated settlement described in the last issue of *The Mainstreeter* to be approved; this step is necessary before a building permit can be issued for this building. Some construction work on the Terraces has been delayed due to COVID restrictions. Tower 1A occupancy is minimal beyond the 6th floor; Tower 1B is sold out but occupancy has been pushed back from this October to summer 2021. The planned opening of the Greystone Village Retirement Residence on April 1 was also delayed due to COVID; management are working on an opening plan.

Another planning file that has generated a lot of community interest is the proposal for the demolition of the Deschâtelets chapel (see details on page XX of this issue). The view of the OOECA board is that the community benefits of a new school and community centre outweigh the loss of the chapel wing of the Deschâtelets building. While we recognize that there are few designated heritage structures in OOE, we believe that the current proposal, which repurposes the main part of this building in conjunction with a new community centre and gymnasium, would be a very positive addition to the community.

On the transportation front, the planning for the reconstruction of Hawthorne, Greenfield, and the northern end of Main Street is progressing (see details on page XX of this issue), but again COVID is forcing City of Ottawa staff to consider how best to perform consultation for the Public Advisory Committee through electronic means.

Have questions? Want to learn more or volunteer to make improvements in the community? Then please consider participating in our regular monthly board meetings, check out the OOECA website at <http://www.ottawaeast.ca/> or contact me at info@ottawaeast.ca.

SHAWN MENARD COUNCILLOR-ELECT, CAPITAL WARD



SHAWN.MENARD@OTTAWA.CA
SHAWNMENARD.CA

COPING DURING COVID-19

We are now almost three months since the COVID-19 pandemic hit Ottawa and much of the city was shut down. At City Hall, we're dealing with transportation issues, implementing provincial orders, and generally trying to find ways to help people cope with the pandemic. This is a tough time for us all, and we have to do what we can to look after our financial, emotional, physical, and mental well-being.

Greenspace and food security have been a big concern. Many of you who live in apartments or homes with small yards rely on public space to exercise, relax, and play with your kids or pets. When the City and province began closing parks, residents suffered. We raised this issue, passed a motion at the Ottawa Board of Health, wrote a letter with seven other councillors, and moments before writing this, the City announced that they'd be re-opening park green spaces. Playgrounds, sports fields, and off-leash dog areas will remain off limits as of this writing.

We also wrote to the Premier of Ontario regarding community gardens and food security. I was pleased to see the Province exempt community gardens to allow them open in conjunction with guidelines from Ottawa Public Health. Everyone working in gardens needs to practice physical distancing, but it is good to know that people can be outside planting and harvesting local food.

Core infrastructure projects, however, continue. We've received some good news about burying hydro wires as part of the Greenfield-Main-Hawthorne Renewal Project, which you can read about at page XX of this issue. Our office is still pushing to bury the hydro wires along Hawthorne Avenue from Colonel By Drive to Main Street.

The Heritage Section at the City has received an application to remove the northeast wing (or the chapel section) of the Deschâtelets building at 175 Main Street. This overall project is envisioned to be a multi-stage process that will result in the building's adaptive re-use to serve not only as a school, but also as a community centre, new gym, and affordable housing for seniors. There's been feedback and concern from some members of the community about this heritage asset, and rightfully so. Our office is working with staff to ensure proper process and a guarantee for future use of the site.

Another big issue as people stay closer to home has been active transportation and pedestrian space. We have successfully opened the outer curb lanes on the Bank Street Canal Bridge for active transportation. We've known for a long time that this section was perilous for people on the narrow sidewalk and cyclists in traffic. We are happy to make this safety improvement now that there's less traffic.

The pilot with the NCC along Queen Elizabeth Drive between Laurier and Fifth Avenue has been well received, with people giving their neighbors distance and enjoying the spring weather. It's been a joy to see kids learning to ride bikes and families walking along this stretch of public space. We are now in talks with the NCC to expand this project, and hopefully by the time you read this more people will have access to this stretch of roadway.

On Main Street, we have eliminated all beg buttons from 7am to 7pm at every traffic light. This means that pedestrians do not have to push a button to activate the walk signal, they will get one automatically. Pushing a button can be onerous when you are holding groceries, with children, or in a wheelchair. And during these times people are trying to limit their contact with surfaces they don't need to touch.

Please stay well.

POLITICAL PAGES

JOEL HARDEN MPP, OTTAWA CENTRE

COMMUNITY OFFICE
JHARDEN-CO@NDP.ON.CA
613-722-6414
109 CATHERINE ST, OTTAWA, ON,
K2P 0P4



LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENTS DESERVE ANSWERS, AND ACTION

What we are seeing in Ontario's long-term care (LTC) system is heart-breaking. COVID-19 has exploited weaknesses that were established decades ago.

Since the Mike Harris government came to power in 1995, governments in Ontario have given for-profit operators a larger and larger role in LTC. Today, they represent 58 percent of facilities in Ontario's LTC sector.

The consequences of that shift are clear: to maximize profit, most owners run facilities with part-time staff, often at minimum wage. They contract out cleaning and food preparation to companies who do the same.

Care staff are given impossible workloads, leaving them unable to give residents the hands-on care they need. Residents languish in soiled diapers or go without showers for days on end. Staff are burned out from the trauma of watching people suffer and are frequently injured themselves. Many leave the profession.

Essential care workers become disposable people. Seniors and people with disabilities are hurt, often despite the best efforts of staff. These are the conditions COVID-19 has exploited.

Take the story of Peter Collins, whose story I was made aware of after his sister Christine contacted our office. He moved to Carlingview Manor (a for-profit LTC home in Ottawa) on April 1, 2020 after spending two months at the Civic Hospital.

Peter is 68, and lives with dementia. Soon after he moved to Carlingview Manor, his sister Christine was alarmed by several things.

It was impossible to reach staff caring for her brother. She had given him a cell phone and was stunned by his daily updates.

Residents were using common areas without any social distancing. A non-verbal resident would wander into Peter's room constantly looking to steal things. Christine was told there was nothing staff could do given workload issues, and that she "shouldn't worry".

But on April 22, a resident who tested positive for COVID-19 was taken to hospital. The next day, residents were told to stay in their rooms (an order that was impossible to enforce without appropriate levels of staff).

On April 26, 2020, Peter tested positive for COVID-19. Christine was told the next day, and she urged staff to ensure he takes his puffer medication every six hours. From what she can tell, that is not happening.

Meanwhile, Carlingview Manor has seen a massive outbreak of COVID-19. The facility has 303 beds, and 137 residents have tested positive along with 73 staff. 46 residents have died, and Christine is terrified for her brother's safety.

This is well beyond unacceptable, it is catastrophic, and it continues elsewhere. Recently, Ontario lost its third worker at a for-profit LTC home in Orleans. And yet, there have been no deaths at Ottawa's four public nursing homes, and COVID-19 outbreaks are contained.

If for-profit care homes are unable to protect staff and residents, they must be immediately taken over by the province, and run by public health officials. These officials must ensure that residents and staff are protected, and that staff are fairly compensated for their work.

It is time for a reckoning in LTC. The issues that are being so tragically exposed by COVID-19 are not new, they have festered for years despite the pleas of advocates for governments to act. We can never return to normal, where normal meant understaffing, poor pay and inadequate inspections.

Let this pandemic be the moment where we say enough is enough, we will no longer tolerate an LTC system that compromises the safety and dignity of our elders who built this province. Let's have a public inquiry, end for-profit care, and ensure that meeting human needs is always the first priority.

CATHERINE MCKENNA MP, OTTAWA CENTRE

EMAIL: CATHERINE.MCKENNA@PARL.GC.CA
PHONE: 613-946-8682
TWITTER: @CATHMCKENNA
FACEBOOK: MCKENNA.OTTAWA
INSTAGRAM: @CATHMCKENNAOTTEN



FUNDS AND PROGRAMS TO HELP CANADIAN STUDENTS

The arrival of beautiful weather and spring buds, as well as the relaxation of some pandemic restrictions, are all very welcome in Ottawa Centre!

Whether you've recently graduated and were looking forward to starting your career, or you're still in school and counting on summer employment to pay tuition or pursuing a national service opportunity – our Government has your back.

With the new Canada Emergency Student Benefit, we're getting help to students and recent graduates not covered by CERB, ensuring that Canadian students have the help they need to continue their studies, and that young Canadians can get the experience they need to start their careers.

These significant new supports will help young Canadians get through this crisis and play a central role in ensuring Canada emerges from these challenges stronger than ever.

Students can now apply for the Canada Emergency Student Benefit. If you have not done so already, open a CRA MyAccount and sign up for direct deposits in order to get the CESB as quickly as possible.

The Canada Summer jobs program is now officially open - If you're a student, aged 15-30, and looking for a job, the Canada Summer Jobs program has thousands of opportunities available. You can check out the options and apply at jobbank.gc.ca.

Our Government is unwavering in its support for Canadian workers and their families as we deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is a difficult time for many families, and we need to continue helping parents and investing in our children.

We've increased the Canada Child Benefit again this year. Families will get \$300 extra per child in May to help them deal with the added pressures of COVID-19.

As Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, during the pandemic, I have been focused on working with my provincial and territorial colleagues in preparation of investing more than \$3 billion in federal infrastructure money on projects to make facilities more pandemic-resistant and encourage outdoor activities in the age of COVID-19.

The federal government is also adapting our historic Investing in Canada infrastructure program to the new health and economic realities of the pandemic.

These changes include:

- Faster project approvals, with hundreds of projects approved and ready to go;
- Support for more resilient social infrastructure, like hospitals and schools; and
- Increased federal government share for "shovel-worthy" projects, from building retrofits to new pathways and bike lanes that will help Canadians physically distance while staying active and healthy.

We will continue to respond to the wide-ranging impacts of COVID-19, and act as needed to protect the health and safety of Canadians and stabilize the economy. Together, we can slow the spread of COVID-19 by making a conscious effort to keep a physical distance between each other.

- Non-medical masks can add an extra layer of protection for yourself and others that you come into contact with

- Even if you choose to wear a mask, you must practice social distancing

The best protection against COVID-19 is to:

Wash your hands regularly and clean commonly used surfaces

If you are sick, do not go outside and do not go to work

Continue to practice social distancing

Ottawa Public Health recommends you wear a non-medical cloth mask whenever physical distancing is not possible.

It takes a community to beat a virus. All our actions add up to protect everyone in our city. Keep doing your part to protect your friends, family and neighbours.

We are all in this together, take care and be safe.

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10 tips for a great urban walk

“You can go outside (for example, to take a walk). While outside, avoid crowds and maintain a distance of two metres (six feet) from those around you. Make an effort to step-aside or pass others quickly and courteously on sidewalks. Passing someone on the sidewalk is not considered close contact or a significant risk for exposure to COVID-19.” — Ottawa Public Health, April 20, 2020

PETER BLANCHARD

We all know how to put one leg in front of the other. But how many of us have really learned how to walk? Once you’ve mastered the tricks of the trade, walking is fun, great exercise *and* good for the environment.

(1) Time of day — Morning can be ideal... it tends to have the bluest skies and is the best time to enhance your circadian rhythms, e.g. a good night’s sleep. But anytime is good, whatever works for you. Once or twice a day is ideal, but if you can’t do that, aim for every second day.

(2) Plan a route, or spontaneous? — If you’re new to walking, it can be a good idea to plan your route, along quiet streets, through parks, etc. But sometimes the most fun is to “follow your nose”. Just step out your door, stand still for a moment and turn your head left and right. Then go whichever way you *feel* like. At each intersection do the same thing. It can be quite liberating, and you never know where you’ll turn up.

(3) Out-and-back or one way? — I usually prefer an out-and-back or circular route that starts and ends at home; no car or bus required. But to change things up sometimes, try a one-way route. I walk as

far as I can, then take a bus or cab home.

(4) What to bring? — A reusable water bottle, your cellphone, a jacket or rain jacket, a hat or cap. Maybe a snack? Your bus pass or cab fare? Other options: pen and paper; laptop; lunch; backpack and/or reusable bag for groceries? I always bring a pen and pad of paper... for any thoughts or creative ideas that might pop out of my brain that day.

(5) Rainy day? — With a little practice, walking can be fun in almost any weather. You need the right clothes. Cotton jackets, shorts or jeans are terrible if you get caught in the rain.

Jacket or umbrella? An umbrella is not much fun for walking more than a few blocks and offers no warmth if the temperature dips. Instead, choose either a light, synthetic jacket, or a semi-permeable rain jacket. I prefer one that I can either comfortably tie around my waist, or stuff in my pack.

Convertible or rain pants? The most flexible option is nylon “convertible” pants — the lower legs quickly zip off for warmer weather, and are very light and compact, so you can carry them in even the smallest pack. Nylon pants are much lighter, thinner, and cooler than jeans. If the weather is cool or damp, wear a pair of synthetic long underwear underneath. No need for fancy “semi-permeable” pants unless you’re planning a long walk in pouring rain. They’re also heavier. Just stay away from cotton! Another option is to carry along a pair of lightweight rain pants. If you get caught in the rain, you can pull over whatever you’re wearing. Lightweight is crucial: if they’re at all heavy or bulky, you won’t want to carry them with you.

Wait it out. Or, if you have no raingear

but get stuck in an unexpected shower, just wait it out under a roof or nearby cafe. If you’re stuck, call a taxi home.

(6) Shoes and socks — Much urban walking is on sidewalks or other hard ground. Good *walking, hiking or ‘approach’ shoes* can make or break your love of walking.

Where to buy? If possible, always buy from a reputable outdoor store where you can find great walking and hiking shoes, as well as qualified staff to help you choose the right one. If there’s no outdoor store near you, a sports/fitness store might have one or two decent walking shoes, such as *Merrell*.

Shoes or boots? Walking should be a pleasure. Shoes weigh much less than boots — and if you’re walking any distance, more pleasant to walk in. Choose boots if you’re going to be hiking rough terrain, or in winter, or have ankles that easily twist. Otherwise, shoes are usually the best option. In either case, take the time to test several different shoes by walking around the store at a brisk pace. You won’t get far in shoes that bind or chafe.

Full leather or mesh? Shoes with mesh tend to be cooler, lighter, breath better and be less expensive. On the other hand, good leather boots can be stronger for rugged hiking. There are also some stylish urban leather options for those who don’t like the mesh look.

Waterproof? For better or worse, many hiking shoes these days have waterproof-breathable membranes, such as *Gore-Tex/GTX*. They will keep your feet dry if it’s pouring rain, or you step in a stream. Problem is, such shoes can be too warm in summer. So, unless you’ll be walking in the rain or bushwhacking the wilderness, you can do just fine without.

Dress shoes? Looking for something more dressy or stylish? There are a few stores that carry high quality urban shoes, a few of which are designed for walking (try brands like *Rockport, Dunham, Clarks*). But for longer walks, there’s usually a trade-off between style and comfort/walkability.

Can I wear sneakers? Yes, if you like, it’s certainly better than nothing. But if you invest in a good pair of walking shoes, you’ll probably find yourself having twice the fun, while easily covering longer distances (without it feeling like it’s longer).

Socks. Padded socks can make it even more comfortable for longer walks on sidewalks or pavement. I’ve always found *Fox River Trampler* socks to have the best padding, but they’re too warm for summer. For wet or cool weather, always choose wool or synthetic, never cotton.

Shoes or sandals? How far can you walk, comfortably, without tiring, in sandals? I guess it depends. I’ve never taken them seriously for walking more than a few



JUNE ADMIRAAL PHOTO

Walking can be fun in almost any weather, so long as you have the right gear.

blocks. For summer I prefer **summer walking shoes** with a thin, light mesh such as the *Vasque Breeze* (without *Gore-Tex* if possible).

(7) Alone or with company? — Walking is great, it should be experienced in as many ways and as often as possible. I very much enjoy walking alone, with a friend, or occasionally with a group. All three can be fun, social experiences, in different ways.

(8) Leave the car at home? — Many of the best walks don’t involve getting in a car at all. It’s better for you *and* the planet. If you need to drive to get to nature... sometimes it’s worth it. But why not try more walks right in your ‘hood? There may be much more right under your nose, than you ever expected.

(9) Music, podcast... or creative silence? — Some people prefer to walk only with music in their ears. Nothing wrong with that, but there is another way. Could you entertain yourself... follow your own thoughts... or just relax into the rhythm? Could you walk for an hour with no music, just thinking, observing, and enjoying your surroundings? With a little practice, you might find that another part of your mind wakes up and keeps you good company along the way.

If you listen while you walk, always be extra cautious of your surroundings and of traffic.

(10) Motivation — Need something to get you going? Would a destination help? When I walk, I often choose a destination such as getting down to the river or walking by my favourite cafe (even if I’m not going in). When possible, I try to include errands or social visits in my walk. Or, set up a favourite podcast or radio program. Another option is to wear a *Pedometer/Fitbit* on your wrist — set yourself a goal in time or kilometers, whichever works for you. Or make it a rule to walk at the same time every day.



CECI BRAV PHOTO

Good walking, hiking or ‘approach’ shoes can make or break your walk.

Two moms' perspectives on...

Raising their world famous daughters

LORNE ABUGOV

In conversation with Old Ottawa East residents, Heather Moxley and Colleen Wrighte, three things in common emerge. First, they have both resided on Marlowe Crescent in Old Ottawa East, a block apart from each other, for many years. Second, they have shared rollicking times together over most of those years in a neighbourhood book club.

The third thing in common is a little less common.

They both have internationally renowned and highly talented daughters – Amanda Nimmo, the international fashion model we profile in our interview this issue, is Heather Moxley's daughter, and Wallis Giunta, the acclaimed Metropolitan Opera singer now based in England who will be featured in the August issue of *The Mainstreeter*, is Colleen Wrighte's daughter.

Both of their daughters left Ottawa at tender ages to pursue glamorous careers in their respective fields on a global stage. This experience left each of the moms bursting with pride for their daughters,



SUPPLIED PHOTO

This photo of the Nimmo/Moxley family and family friends was taken in the context of OOE's Christmas Eve sleigh ride. Pictured from left to right are Geoff Nimmo, wife Heather Moxley, youngest daughter Amanda, Brandon Simins, eldest daughter Victoria, and John Pratt.

but with some concerns for their well-being.

In discussing her daughter's modeling, Moxley says: "From a mother's perspective, it's an interesting career. Whether it's short term, part time or full time, it's a career where you absolutely want to validate who it is that's partnering with your daughter in the business.

"Amanda was always with agencies that commanded a lot of respect. It's really important as a parent that the girls have agents that you trust, because for agents in New York or in London, you just can't meet them personally all the time. Amanda worked with agencies with bigger, well renowned clients, and they were quite reputable. I don't know if everybody's been fortunate enough to have those experiences. I think it's an industry that definitely has a dark underside that Amanda and I wouldn't dream of going anywhere near."

Colleen Wrighte remembers how nerve-racking it was when her daughter,

Wallis, was selected to travel on her own to Japan as an 11-year-old for a month long choir tour as part of a hand-picked group of talented young Canadian choristers. "That was probably the formative time in Wallis' life, but you can imagine how hard it was for Mike and I to send off our 11-year-old daughter halfway around the world."

Both moms share a love of Old Ottawa East and relish the time they have spent raising their families in this community.

Moxley moved to Marlowe Crescent in Old Ottawa East in 1991, along with her husband Geoff Nimmo and older daughter Victoria. "After we were in the house for a year and a bit, Amanda wandered by to complete our family. And we've been very happy in Old Ottawa East since we've moved here, we love it," she says.

During the first week of the pandemic lockdown, daughters Victoria and Amanda returned home from Toronto. Victoria, now 29 years of age, is

pursuing her doctorate in geography at the University of Toronto, conducting research and doing some teaching. Amanda, now 26, has been enjoying life at home with her parents for the past eight weeks of the lockdown as she completed third year online.

Wrighte and her husband, Michael Giunta, along with their three children, moved from Old Ottawa South to a home they built on Marlowe Crescent, where they have lived since 2003. Although her daughter Wallis spent only three years living on Marlowe Crescent before moving to Toronto and then New York to learn her singing craft, "she knows this whole area really well, because all of our kids went to Lady Evelyn School right from kindergarten onward, so this community was a big part of their lives," Wrighte remembers.

Although their world-famous daughters spent three or four years living across the street from one another on Marlowe Crescent, the girls didn't really know one another too well growing up. "Our girls I recall might have been heading into high school when Wallis' family moved into the neighbourhood, and both of those girls are older than ours, so the kids didn't really cross paths too much," says Moxley.

Wrighte remembers that Wallis was just turning 17 when they moved to Marlowe Crescent, and was attending Lisgar Collegiate, whereas Amanda, who was considerably younger, was going to Hopewell and then on to Glebe for high school. "I think they knew of each other, but I don't think they really had that much interaction."

The two moms, however, were a different story, as they came to know one another well in a neighbourhood book club that is still going strong. "I'm a pretty social person, and I quickly integrated into our little neighbourhood community around us," says Wrighte. "The neighbours on Marlowe sort of embraced me and said you must join our book club and so I met everybody that way, including Heather. There's 12 of us and we're still a pretty tight group!"



SUPPLIED PHOTO

This photo of the Giunta/Wrighte family was taken on the front steps of their Marlowe Crescent home. Pictured from left to right are Colleen Wrighte, eldest daughter Wallis, son Cal, husband Michael Giunta (in the Santa hat) and youngest daughter Marley.

Joel Harden

MPP, Ottawa Centre




Our office is here for you with:

- Monthly Town Halls
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ECLECTIC EVENTS

Odyssey Theatre's Online Summer Youth Apprenticeships, August 3 to August 28, 2020 - Apply by June 19th at www.odysseytheatre.ca or call at 613-232-8407

Do you know a student who has an interest in theatre? For the month of August, Odyssey Theatre will be taking up to 15 apprentices on an online theatre adventure like no other! These students will spend a month with professional theatre artists honing their talents and learning everything about what it takes to create innovative theatre productions. And for the first time, all from their computer.

This online program is "an innovative new way for students to explore their creativity and interest in theatre with professional actors and artists. They will learn everything about creating live theatre," says Odyssey's Artistic Director Laurie Steven.

Odyssey is Ottawa's award-winning professional summer theatre renowned for its productions featuring masks, physical theatre, clown, and puppetry. Their *Theatre Under the Stars* in Strathcona Park has been a highlight of the Ottawa summer theatre scene for the past 34 years.

Odyssey has offered a unique theatre apprenticeship program every summer in the park. Due to the pandemic, this year they are offering it online. The program is not only a chance for students to express their creativity but a great way to develop the skills needed to create their own theatrical works and learn under the guidance of theatre professionals.

Over the course of the four-week program, students will learn how a theatre production is run from inception to performance. Students take 12 workshops in each area of the theatre (performance, directing, writing, stage management, design, production) and receive professional coaching from local artists. At the end of these sessions, they will present their own theatre creations and get professional feedback. Students will also get candid career advice from artists and build lasting connections in the theatre community.

The program is free, and participants earn volunteer hours, complimentary tickets to next summer's production, and a letter of reference!

CAG Presents Vinyasa Flow Yoga, currently planned for online

Re-connect with your mind and body in this active VINYASA FLOW YOGA practice. Each class includes breath awareness, postures, and the linking of both. A variety of standing and seated postures, balancing poses, backbends, twists, and inversions will be linked to create a flow or "vinyasa." Good form and alignment are emphasized. Instructor, Peter Kusovac, was certified as a yoga instructor in 2003. He continues to train with Shiva Rea, Rodney Yee, Yogi Vishvketu and others and integrates these experiences in his teaching.

Dates and Program Fees are: July 8 - August 19 (7 weeks) Wednesday, 5:45 - 7:15 p.m. (Beginner/Intermediate), \$66 Classes will be held online if physical distancing requirements continue over the summer. Visit <https://ottawaeastcag.ca/registration> to register for these or other CAG programs.

CAG Presents Zumba, currently planned for online

Ditch the workout and join instructor, Carolina Izaguirre Campos, for the ZUMBA party this summer! Come join us for Latin-inspired dance fitness classes that dancers and non-dancers alike can easily master. This cardio-based dance class incorporates easy to follow steps that anyone can learn. The workout will target legs, arms, core and butt, as well as the most important muscle in the body - your heart!

Dates and Program Fees are: July 2 - August 20 (8 weeks) Thursday, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., \$75 Classes will be held online if physical distancing requirements continue over the summer. Visit <https://ottawaeastcag.ca/registration> to register for these or other CAG programs.

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Helping to feed the hungry during the pandemic

CAROLINE PHILLIPS

For 25 years, Knox Presbyterian Church in Ottawa has been running a weekly dinner over the winter months to give vulnerable folks the opportunity to sit down to a warm and nutritious meal.

While the ice and snow are now gone, the cold elements have been replaced by something far worse: a global pandemic that has created an unprecedented impact on everyone - including the homeless and those at risk for homelessness.

That's why Knox Church has extended and expanded its Out of the Cold program beyond March 31st to continue feeding neighbours in need. It's handing out dinners each Saturday and Wednesday at the church, located at the corner of Elgin and Lisgar streets.

Out of the Cold receives donations from many individuals, organizations and businesses, including Faulkner Real Estate.

The Ottawa residential brokerage has become the single largest donor to the extended program. The brokerage is owned by Judy Faulkner, a realtor with nearly 40 years' experience.

"In all honesty, Judy's contribution really gave us the confidence to continue," said Rev. Jim Pot, minister of Knox Presbyterian Church.

Since 2018, Faulkner Real Estate has been donating 100 percent of its profits from fees on winter sales back to the community, in order to help others.

The idea to generously give back hit Faulkner one day as she was driving down Elgin Street.

She spotted a number of homeless individuals trying to stay warm. It was one of those late autumn days, when the weather quickly drops from mild to downright cold. "I was inspired to do something," Faulkner explained.



Volunteer and donor Judy Faulkner, owner of Faulkner Real Estate, hands out bagged dinners as part of an extended and expanded community meal program run through Knox Presbyterian Church in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

The Centretown Community Association has stepped up to coordinate the extended meal program and to provide the extra volunteers needed to deliver it.

The program serves, on average, about 100 people each day that it runs. Some of its guests are homeless or street-involved individuals while others appear to just be in need of an extra meal.

Organizers are doing "everything possible" to follow public health guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19, said Rev. Pot.

Implemented steps include frequent hand washing, the wearing of face masks and gloves, maintaining proper social distancing and the serving of take-away meals only.

Along with financial support, Judy is occasionally called to volunteer. "It is a heartwarming and fulfilling experience to serve the needs of others," said Faulkner. "It feels good."

"Every guest receiving a meal looks at me and says, 'Thank you'. They mean it. You can see it in their eyes."

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STORM CLOUDS

*In the morning an untrimmed
sky,
Then a whisper of wind
through the trees,
Flecks of foam, white clouds
float by,
Piling quickly before the
breeze.*

*At noon time an awful hush,
Low clouds, thick, angry and
black,
Heavy drops, rolling thunder,
the rush
Of wind in the lightning's
track.*

*At evening the sunset smiles
On a fresh world, glistening
fair,
And touches the dazzling piles
Of clouds into brilliance rare.*

*At night the pale stars and
moon
On a sleeping world look
down,
Calm, still - yet, only at noon
It lay under the storm clouds'
frown.*

*Elsie Ellesmere
August 1877*

SUPPLIED PHOTOS

ABOVE LEFT: The home of Robert Lees was built in the 1860s and was named Wildwood since it was located in the wild woods outside the city limits of Ottawa. ABOVE RIGHT: An original poem authored by Ella Lees, using the pseudonym Elsie Ellesmere, was one of many literary works featured in the *Wildwood Echo*.

Wildwood Echo

Continued from Page 27

the benefits of a privileged lifestyle. The Lees children were all accomplished in music, writing, drawing and other arts, skills which were drawn upon and put to good use in the pages of the *Wildwood Echo*, as well as in their daily housework, gardening, canning, marketing and farmwork.

According to Hill, every week for years, Lees family members and close friends and neighbours, such as May

Ballantyne, “would meet by the dining room fire for Elocution Class. Members took turns reciting selections of poetry or prose, some written by other members of the class. One member each week was delegated “Critic” and wrote up commentary on the performances for the...*Echo*”.

Excerpts from one of the commentaries in the *Echo* reveal both the wit and the stinging humour of the reviewer, as well as the pseudonyms by which the family members referred to themselves in prose. For example, consider the plight of poor Venetia Von Braun (Victoria Lees) “who recited *At the Window*, quite

a sentimental string of verse, in a sadly pathetic tone she no doubt imagined would, of itself, touch her audience to tears, but which only succeeded in making them uncomfortably inclined to laugh.”

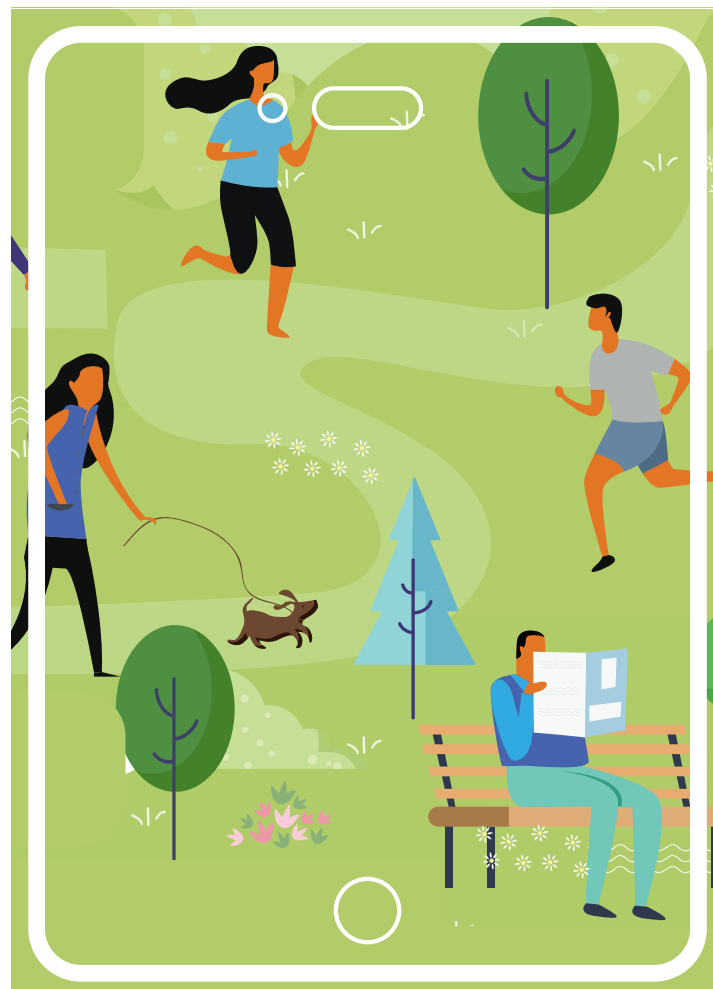
Other prominent contributors to the *Echo*, also known by their pseudonyms, included Trixie (Jessie Lees), Cassie Banks (Lizzie Lees), Elsie Ellesmere (Ella Lees), Will Percival (W.A.D. (Willie) Lees) and May of the Maples (May Ballantyne).

Despite its consistently readable mix of news, gossip, poetry and romance, the *Wildwood Echo* published its final

edition in 1885, as a combination of out-of-town universities, marriages, children and other realities of “getting on in life” appear to have caught up with the Lees children.

Once gone, it took another 100 years for the *Echo*'s successor to materialize, but materialize it finally did, in 1985, when the first issue of *The Mainstreeter* rolled off the printing press. So, in 2020, now that we know, it's hat's off to *The Mainstreeter* - and to the *Wildwood Echo*!

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- Martin Luther King Jr.

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