



St. Anselm students may have to move elsewhere

By UMMEMA CHUTANI
The Observer

Overcrowding at St. Anselm Catholic School on Bessborough Drive has reached the point that the school board wants to talk to parents about transferring some students to neighbouring schools.

So the Toronto Catholic District School Board has scheduled a public meeting at St. Anselm for 7 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 21.

Both St. Anselm, in the Bayview Avenue-Millwood Drive area, and St. Monica, near Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue East, are overpopulated. Meanwhile, three schools to the east have some room to spare. They're Holy Cross on Donlands Avenue, Canadian Martyrs on Plains Road and St. John XXIII on Grenoble Drive.

At St. Anselm, "they've been using half the library as a classroom for the last three years," said Angela Kennedy, the school board trustee for Ward 11/East York-Toronto, "and they're using other spaces as classrooms."

She describes the Nov. 21 meeting as part of the TCDSB's standard procedure for reconciling school populations — and accommodating projections of further growth in the student bodies at St. Anselm and St. Monica.

"It's a community consultation," she said.

According to Kennedy, the St. Anselm property is too small for portable classrooms, because their installation would take away space from the schoolyard.

"By law, each child is required to have certain square feet to play in," she said. "We don't want to take that away."

Back in May, the board reached a general consensus that enrolment at the already crowded St. Anselm and St. Monica will increase in the foreseeable future.

In June, the board put forward a plan to narrow the neighbourhood boundaries of St. Anselm and St. Monica and expand the boundaries of their neighboring schools, Holy Cross, Canadian Martyrs and St. John XXIII.

But Kennedy said feedback from the community is now important. She encourages parents to attend the Nov. 21 meeting to voice their opinions on the current proposal for new boundaries.

Details of the boundary review proposal can be found under the "Planning and Facilities" section of the board's website: tcdsb.org



Veronica Agudelo Correa /// The Observer

Wynne watches Trump win

Kathleen Wynne, the Don Valley West MPP — and Ontario premier — was among the guests at an election "watch party" on Tuesday night just outside East York's southwest corner. The U.S. consulate general invited local officials, academics and others to the Ada Slight Hall at Daniels Spectrum for the event. Wynne and most guests suggested their own preference by applauding whenever Democrat Hillary Clinton carried a state. But as Republican Donald Trump's stunning upset became apparent, Wynne said Canada could work with him.

Park renovation to honour Georgia

By JODY ANDERSON
The Observer

The bright yellow signs asking drivers to "Please Slow Down" still line the streets of East York two years after the tragedy that marked their arrival.

By 2018, Jillian Walsh is sure they will not be the only lasting reminder of the need to drive safely.

Walsh is leading a fundraising campaign to renovate the playground at Trace Manes Park as a tribute to her daughter, Georgia Walsh, who played there often before her death in July 2014.

Georgia was six years old when she was fatally struck by a vehicle at the intersection of Millwood Road and McRae Drive near her Leaside home.

Her mother says the overwhelming support of the neighbourhood since the accident continues to this day and influenced her decision to oversee the rejuvenation of Trace Manes Park.

"We wanted to make sure that something positive came out of her tragedy and we could em-



Jody Anderson/// The Observer

Georgia Walsh's mother, Jillian Walsh, sits in front of Trace Manes Park's playground. She's hoping to raise \$1.2 million to redevelop the park in honour of her daughter.

brace the community and show our thanks by... giving back to the community," she said.

Walsh points out that the maintenance provided by the city is not enough to provide the quality the children in the neighbourhood deserve.

"This is a very family-oriented community and there's lots of variables that are necessary and missing in this existing playground," she said. "There are a lot of features that seem to be missing."

The redevelopment of the park

will feature additions to the playground, a fence surrounding the grounds, a new splash pad and a rubberized platform for wheelchair accessibility.

"The city just doesn't have the budget to maintain and improve playgrounds," Walsh noted.

"There's currently an 85-year playground replacement cycle (and)...in a growing neighbourhood and a growing city, it's important to have this part reflective of the needs of the community -- and it's not."

So far, with the support of the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation, the Remembering Georgia Walsh organization has raised about \$400,000.

Members intend to rebuild the park to the best of their abilities regardless of whether they reach their goal of \$1.2 million.

To raise funds for the renovation, the organization hosts an annual baseball tournament every summer.

Anyone wishing to make a donation can go to remembering-georgiawalsh.com.

POLICE & FIRE

Police seize cocaine in drug busts

Toronto police have arrested a man following a drug investigation. Sathiyavarathan Varatharajah, 47, faces five drug-related charges. A search warrant was executed at an O'Connor Drive address on Oct. 26. It is alleged that the police seized marijuana, cocaine, crack cocaine and morphine. A second warrant was carried out at a home in Jackson's Point, where police allegedly seized \$9,005.

Man facing charges in homicide

A man turned himself over to police on Nov. 1 and is now facing two charges. Simeon Harty, 22, is charged with first-degree murder and attempted murder of Nicholas Gidden, 23. It is alleged that on Oct. 27, officers found a man in a car suffering from gunshot wounds. He was taken to hospital, but succumbed to his injuries two days later.

Search on for missing woman

Toronto police are searching for a woman reported missing on Oct. 27. Jennifer Amoyette, 32, was last seen in the Danforth Avenue and Dawes Road area. She is described as 5 feet, 9 inches, with a medium build and short curly hair. Anyone with information is urged to contact police at 416-808-5500.

~ Cavel Brown



Courtesy of Michael Garron Hospital

Supporting women's health

East York's Michael Garron Hospital is getting fundraising help from local Shoppers Drug Marts. It's part of the drug chain's national Growing Women's Health campaign. This launch event at the Yonge-Bloor store included (l-r) cancer patient Lisa Martin, four-time World Series champion Ron Taylor, former Toronto Maple Leaf Mike Zigomanis, Shoppers pharmacist/owner Jay Taylor, Justin Van Dette from Michael Garron Hospital, Canadian boxer Spider Jones and Beaches-East York MPP Arthur Potts.

Ready for a shot in the arm?

Flu vaccines now available at clinics and pharmacies across East York, Toronto

By VERONICA AGUDELO CORREA
The Observer

It's that time of year. The weather is changing, Christmas stock is out in the stores... and East York's flu vaccine clinics are open.

The first one organized by Toronto Public Health took place on Nov. 3 at the East York Town Centre on Overlea Boulevard. The next one is a week from today, on Nov. 18, from 2:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the East York Civic Centre, Coxwell and Mortimer avenues.

Flu vaccinations are an annual ritual for many East Yorkers; that's because the strains of flu that infect people mutate and researchers try to predict the coming strains and modify the vaccines each year accordingly.

But scientists are working on a more universal flu vaccine that would allow anyone, in theory, to be vaccinated less often, according to Dr. Vinita Dubey, a Toronto Public Health spokesperson and associate medical officer of health.

"Scientists are working on developing

a flu vaccine that could last longer than a year, and maybe even a lifetime," Dubey said. "So far, no such vaccine is on the market."

The idea, according to Dubey, is "a universal vaccine that would activate some portion of the flu virus that does not change or mutate each year." So such a shot "could be given over a longer interval. The flu viruses that circulate each year are constantly changing, which is why, with the current technology, a new vaccine is needed each year."

In the meantime, one version of this year's flu shot will protect kids and adults against four strains of the flu virus (quadrivalent vaccine).

Another, in adults, will protect against three strains (trivalent vaccine).

"Getting the flu vaccine can cut your risk of getting the flu by half," Dubey said. "Getting vaccinated protects you, your family and those around you."

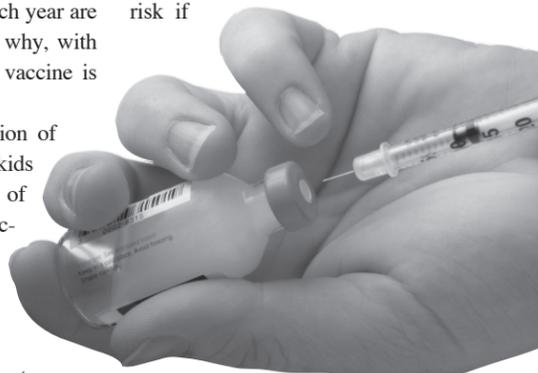
There's a medical consensus that flu shots are the most effective method to avoid influenza and its complications. But the experts admit that they're taking something like an educated guess when they predict which strains are most likely to hit.

"Strains change from year to year," said

Rosette Habib, a pharmacologist from Remedy's RX.

Each year, this viral infection affects between five and 10 per cent of adults and 20-30 per cent of children, Dubey said.

Most people recover in a week, but pregnant women and those with a weak immune system are among those who can get seriously ill. And seniors are also at higher risk if



they catch the flu.

"With the flu shot, the cold would be less severe," Habib said. "If they catch the cold with the flu shot, the symptoms would be less severe. Flu vaccines can be intramuscular or intranasal injection."

Children aged two to 17 can get either the nasal spray or injection vaccine. Children under two years old and adults 18 years and older can get the injectable vaccine.

Laughing out loud at Toilet Town

By SCOTT DELL
The Observer

No, Toilet Town isn't East York's largest retailer of discount latrines.

Instead, it's the improbable name for a lineup of comedic talent bringing offbeat laughs to the Danforth next weekend.

On Nov. 19, East York comedian Ian Fergus will helm the show at the Social Capital Theatre, 154 Danforth Ave., near Broadview.

The theatre is one of the most active comedy venues in the city's east end, and Fergus says he's proud to be bringing comedy out of downtown and into his backyard.

"I just want to show people that there is entertainment in the east end too. It's not all downtown," he said. "People don't have to go downtown to see a good comedy show. They can see it right on the

Danforth."

Fergus is a participant in a burgeoning east-end comedy scene — with other venues like the Underground Comedy Club, which has played host to Joe Rogan and Ari Shaffir.

"The east end is getting bigger and better," Fergus said. "It's like a small scene of its own with little shows and lots of comics."

Fergus describes next weekend's show as "a collection of east-end comics, with one exception, Blair Streeter. We're just trying to showcase all of the talent in the east end."

But while the comics may be almost uniformly local, Fergus says there's nothing uniform about their styles.

"Every one is unique and has their own voice and I find them all funny. We've got everything from a stay-at-home dad to a 22-year-old in Kyle Lucey — who is cra-

zy-theatrical."

Comic Che Durena plans on making a few adult jokes on the 19th, but promises a slick set.

"I'm coming off a runner-up spot in Sirius XM's Next Top Comic competition," Durena said, "so you can expect to see some tight, showcase-style material."

A showcase is a highlight of the comic's best material, meant to be used as auditions for clubs and festivals.

As for Fergus, he's already a veteran at Social Capital.

"I do the open mic there all the time and I do whatever spots I can get there," he said. "I like it because it's really close to home and the atmosphere is really nice and welcoming."

Toilet Town begins at 10 p.m. and costs \$5 to get in.

Ticket proceeds will be pooled and then split evenly among the comics.

WHAT'S UP IN E.Y.

Are you up for sketch comedy challenge?

The Social Capital Theatre is hosting a "24-hour Sketch Challenge." On Nov. 19 at 8 p.m., patrons can see the show at 1514 Danforth Ave. Performers are put into improv groups 24 hours before show time. For more information, visit www.socap.ca/events.

Church hosts opera based on novel by author Joy Kogawa

St. David's Anglican Church on Donlands Avenue near Danforth is presenting Tapestry Opera's production, Naomi's Road. Based on Joy Kogawa's novel, the opera follows nine-year-old Japanese-Canadian Naomi on her journey from Vancouver to a B.C. internment camp. The show runs from Nov. 16-19 at 8 p.m. and Nov. 20 at 2 p.m. For more information, contact Tapestry Opera at 416-537-6066.

Worried about dementia? This session might ease your mind

Michael Garron Hospital is hosting an information session called 'I have trouble remembering things; do I have dementia?' It will take place on Nov. 16. Speakers include nurse practitioner Nicole Spira and registered nurse Kathleen Dineley. A light lunch will be provided. For more information, call 416-469-6580, ext. 3205.

~ Renee Allen

A play about survival, resilience and hope

Counsellor incorporates her own childhood experiences into story about sibling abuse

By **VERONICA AGUDELO CORREA**
The Observer

For Lorene Stanwick, “Broken Branches” is the cathartic intersection between the past, her profession — and a play.

Stanwick is a counsellor for students with disabilities at the East York campus of Centennial College. She’s officially retired to a small farm in Prince Edward County, between Belleville and Kingston. But she still returns to East York for short-term counselling stints at the Carlaw Avenue school.

And she’s written a powerful play based on her own childhood experience. It will be staged next spring, but on Oct. 21 it was previewed with a read-through at the Workman Arts theatre on Dufferin Street.

It’s about sibling abuse. Not sibling rivalry, which is common among siblings. This variation is beyond the normal jealousy, competition and fighting between brothers and sisters. And some of the time, parents don’t see the abuse for what it is.

Stanwick defines it as the physical, emotional or sexual abuse of one sibling by another. She said her play, Broken Branches, represents family relationships, the bond and the inter-connections among family members — and how sibling abuse makes those connections stretch to the breaking point.

The Oct. 21 reading was hosted by Stanwick and Joanne Latimer, who is also the producer/dramaturge. The purpose was to get feedback from the audience for fine-tuning the production — and for the audience to get a glimpse of the play’s structure and meet the actors.



Veronica Agudelo Correa /// The Observer

Lorene Stanwick (far left) is an East York college counsellor and the author of the provocative play “Broken Branches.” She and other members of the play’s cast and crew held a read-through of the script on Oct. 21 at the Workman Arts theatre on Dufferin Avenue.

“At its core, Broken Branches is about survival, resilience and hope,” Stanwick said.

Her script tells three different stories, not related to each other. It explores various circumstances arising around its three main characters — and the long-term problems that those characters experience into adulthood.

Stanwick and Latimer explained that abuse can occur when parents are not around much at home, or they download too much responsibility, or they haven’t taught their children how to

manage struggles in a healthy way.

One of the stories is about two best friends talking about their childhood — when one of the characters confesses to her best friend the sexual assault that she suffered from her brother.

Although the topic was difficult to digest for some people in the audience at the read-through, Stanwick said that she wants to start a conversation. She added that it’s important to educate people about the abuse that can occur

between siblings.

In this particular scenario, psychological and social agony lingers in the main character long after the abuse — and despite the character’s genuine family love for the brother who abused her.

The second story depicts sister-sister abuse, overlooked by the mother despite its frequency. The character “Jade” eventually goes on to an arts college. Jade spends her semester drawing her rage on white canvases — and cutting herself. But a teacher helps her redirect her anguish into the style of Japanese hand-drawn animation known as anime. Jade creates her character with superpowers.

Broken Branches is lightened somewhat in its final act, a bit of dark comedy in which the main character imitates the voices of the family members.

The character is presented writing a letter to his mom. After an older brother leaves, the middle brother starts to physically abuse his younger brother. It helps drive home the point that the mistreatment won’t stop if parents ignore it, attribute it to the victim, or just excuse it as sibling rivalry.

The issue behind the abuse is abandonment. His mother abandoned the character “Josh” on Christmas day.

But while the characters of Broken Branches deal with drugs, alcohol, abandonment, self-harm and helplessness, the play has moments of laughter, hope, strength, support and happiness.

The play encourages the audience to realize that sibling abuse is real, but it can be managed with love from close friends, and with counselling and even humour.

Broken Branches is scheduled to run from late April until mid-May at the Tarragon Theatre Extraspace on Bridgman Avenue near Bathurst and Dupont streets.

More information on the production can be found at brokenbranches.ca

DEVELOPMENT

Historic E.Y. church to be converted into condominiums

Project to be a blend of building’s original 1925 architecture and modern elements

By **RENEE ALLEN**
The Observer

The sound of Sunday-morning hymns sung at Temple Baptist Church has faded to a memory now.

They’re being replaced by the sounds of construction.

Grid Developments is converting the church at 14 Dewhurst Blvd., in the Danforth-Donlands area, into condominiums.

The project is a blend of the building’s original 1925 architecture with modern elements such as rooftop terraces.

Justin Aykler at Grid Develop-

ments said that he understands the value of maintaining the church building’s heritage. It has been a fixture in the community for almost a century.

“The retention of the existing façade is the main thing,” Aykler said.

“That’s going to be preserving the history of the building,”

The Georgian classical style of the building dates back to designs in 18th-century England. The architect was George Evans Thomas.

The church’s congregation sold the building in 2013 after moving the previous year.

The interior of the structure is being gutted, but the developers will be looking for unique features such as plaques and pews during the demolition process to repurpose in the final product.

Ultimately, “Sunday School Lofts” will contain 32 residential

suites.

Grid Developments was attracted to the East York neighbourhood and the possibility of a mid-rise building nestled in a residential community, Aykler said.

He added that the developers have faced little opposition to the project, except for concerns about parking and the height of the structure.

“The neighbourhood has been generally supportive,” he said. “We’ve had quite a few people on Dewhurst Boulevard buy units in the project.”

The developer is hoping that potential residents will be attracted to the idea that although the building is no longer a place for church-goers to congregate and worship, it will create a space for its dwellers to live in as a part of East York’s history.



Renee Allen /// The Observer

Grid Developments is converting the historic Temple Baptist Church building near Danforth and Donlands into condominiums.



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NEIGHBOURLY NEWS

Highlights from the pages of the East York Observer.
Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. and Fridays at 4 p.m.
On CJRU/AM 1280.

■ COMMUNITY

Program 'lifts hearts' with artwork

Jazz festival's multi-arts program brings local art into East York hospital

By JASMINE HUI
The Observer

It's been said that art has the power to heal. If that's true, patients at Michael Garron Hospital (MGH) will soon be a step closer to better health, thanks to a program that brings art created by the community into local hospitals.

The Beaches International Jazz Festival's multi-arts program was launched in 2014 after the festival received a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for new initiatives, including the donation of art to area hospitals. Its co-ordinator, Joanna Katchutas, developed the program with Denny Petrovski, manager of volunteer services at MGH, formerly known as Toronto East General.

Katchutas says the donation of art to the East York hospital is the festival's "last grand" project.

"We did a donation program to the Scar-



Courtesy of Joanna Katchutas

Multi-arts program staff Joanna Katchutas (left), Nicole D'Amario and MGH Volunteer Services Manager Denny Petrovski introduce the artwork from the Hang Arts, Lift Hearts program.

borough Hospital last year, similar to what we did with Michael Garron Hospital," she said. "This year the project was on a much grander scale. We had a lot more schools involved and different programs that we didn't have in the past."

One of these was the "Hang Art, Lift Hearts" program, where students and teachers at local schools created artwork on ceiling tiles. The tiles are currently being installed in MGH's emergency wing.

All artwork needed to follow the multi-

arts program's theme of music, diversity and community. It held community art workshops during the jazz festival and the resulting artwork was then donated to various hospitals, including MGH.

Nicole D'Amario is the art instructor for the workshops. She says the project gave schools in the area an opportunity to contribute to a good cause.

"The hospital's involvement gave the program so much of its meaning," D'Amario said. "The schoolchildren really started to understand the impact of mural work as they took part in building their own mural legacy within their own schools. It helped them gauge the impact that Hang Art, Lift Hearts could make."

Katchutas said no matter where its creators end up, their artwork will stay in the hospital forever.

"This is something that will always be there," she said. "The hospitals will always have these paintings and they're going to make people happy."

The artwork is still in the process of being displayed throughout the hospital. A plaque naming all the contributors to the project will be erected in MGH's emergency department when the installation has been completed.

■ REMEMBRANCE DAY

Jackman students tell story in dance

Observance includes poetry, drama and songs from junior choir

By SHERIKA HARRIS
The Observer

On Tuesday, Narin Shamsi joined her classmates in the gym at Jackman Avenue Junior Public School, in the Broadview-Danforth area of East York.

As a recording played out the music, Narin swung her arms behind her back and then back in front of her chest in a prayer motion; occasionally she froze in a tableau.

"All my life I've been waiting for, I've been praying for people to say... 'We don't want to fight no more,'" the song said.

She was performing to the song "One Day," by Matisyahu, a Jewish-American reggae vocalist.

"I always sing the song in my head and then I look at myself as if I'm doing it," Narin said.

In mid-September, Grade 4-6 students began rehearsing for their annual Remembrance Day ceremony, to take place today, Nov. 11. Grade 4 teacher, Sara Cheng, has helped organize the school's ceremonies for 13 years.

Cheng shared the preparation with fellow teachers Mandy Csamer and Raul Selberg. They all worked together, creating a dramatic program to commemorate the day.

Narin said she's been practising the dance routine every chance she gets.

As the song played in her head, she said she could recognize how important her movements were.

"I do it sometimes in class while I'm correcting my math," she said at Tuesday's rehearsal.

When the children completed their run-through, they sat at one end of the gym on



Sherika Harris /// The Observer

Students from Jackman Avenue Junior Public School practise for today's Remembrance Day performance. They began rehearsing for the event in mid-September.

the floor. Selberg began to explain that, because there are no words, the students have to use their bodies to convey the message.

"Facial expression is key. It's still tableau. It's all visual," he said.

"The first tableau (talks) about blood in the streets, war and all those terrible things; (so) listen to those lyrics.... I want to see it in your face."

Cheng said she thinks a dance-drama piece gives children a chance to really express themselves.

"The thing about little kids is, they have

little voices. When you try to do an actual play, their voices get lost," she said. "Although they may have worked for months and months, they get up there and they get scared and nobody can hear them."

Cheng encouraged her students to remember to look big on stage:

"Show me big movements, so even your granny can see it."

The Jackman Avenue Junior Public School Remembrance Day observance also included performances from student poets as well as the junior choir.

East York remembers at separate services

By OBSERVER STAFF
The Observer

Today's municipal Remembrance Day ceremony starts at 10:45 a.m. in the Memorial Gardens of the East York Civic Centre.

Royal Canadian Legion Zone D3 Commander Walter Vaughan will lead that ceremony with Warrant Officer Kendra Humby of the 337 Royal Canadian Army Cadets, Ward 29 councillor Mary Fragedakis and Rev. Alex Bisset of Westminster Presbyterian Church.

A flypast will be performed by the Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association and the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum.

Then, at 2 p.m. in the library of Centennial College's East York campus on Carlaw Avenue, journalism professor and war historian Ted Barris will be hosting a ceremony where the French consul general in Toronto, Marc Trouyet, will present the l'Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur (the Legion of Honour) to two veterans.

Jim Jenkins of the 19th Field Artillery, Royal Canadian Artillery, and Martin Maxwell of the British Glider Regiment are receiving honours for their service in the Second World War liberation of France.

Barris will also do a live interview of war veterans Theo Thompson and Esther Thorley.



James Dalgarno // The Observer

Martin Maxwell, pictured above in full pilot uniform, says the war “changed my life... made me who I am.”

Veteran recalls deadly role in D-Day invasion

By JAMES DALGARNO
The Observer

On a moonlit night in June 1944, Martin Maxwell, a glider pilot with Allied forces, landed his aircraft near a bridge in Normandy, France. He then joined invasion troops, who quietly killed the German sentries with bayonets and seized the bridge. Maxwell, 20, hadn't even finished high school.

“It didn't feel good, let me tell you that,” he said. “It changed my life; the war made me who I am.”

Maxwell, now 92, was born in Austria in 1924. He will be speaking of his service in the Second World War during a Remembrance Day observance at Centennial College's East York campus on Carlaw Avenue this afternoon, Nov. 11, at 2 p.m.

Maxwell landed his Horsa glider, filled with 30 Allied soldiers and supplies, near Pegasus Bridge in

Normandy on the eve of D-Day, June 6, 1944.

“We were lucky we had some moonlight,” he said and added that the men in the glider sang until they neared the target. “(We) knew what we had to do.”

Maxwell was not just a pilot. After he landed his glider, he said he engaged in hand-to-hand combat against enemy troops.

“Gliders are quiet. If we had (motorized) planes, the whole (German) garrison would hear,” Maxwell explained. “We had to kill... the guards on the bridge. It feels terrible, especially the first time.”

The D-Day veteran said he does not think of himself as a lucky man, but he never thought he would die.

“When you go into (war) you never think that you're going to get killed,” he said.

“The guy next to you may get killed, but not you.”

Following the D-Day invasion,

Maxwell returned to England by submarine. He was later involved in Operation Market Garden in Arnhem, in the Netherlands, where he was severely wounded and captured by German troops.

But Maxwell's wounds were not just physical. He said he bore emotional scars from the war too.

“For years (after the war), my wife, Eleanor, told me (that) I screamed in my dreams,” he said.

He added, however, that speaking to school groups about his experience helps to deal with the memories, good and bad.

“I like to speak and to impart my knowledge to students. I remember my first day in the army; I remember the POW camp,” he said. “The night after I speak, I usually don't sleep.”

Maxwell said he cannot change the bad memories, but “I try to think of the positives. Otherwise, I would not have survived.”

Volunteer looks back with pride at her role in Second World War

Woman inspired to join up after losing one of her classmates during bombing raid on Wales

By VARAD MEHTA
The Observer

The loss of a personal friend pushed Theo Hopkinson to volunteer during the Second World War. At the time, she lived in Cardiff, Wales, where German aircraft regularly bombed the city docks.

“One day, when I was at school, I was sent home to see why one of the girls in my class hadn't come (to school),” Hopkinson said. “I walked to her house and bodies were being brought out.”

Then only 17, she decided to volunteer for service in the military.

Hopkinson will be among the veterans featured during the annual Remembrance Day observance this afternoon, Nov. 11, at 2 p.m. at Centennial College's East York campus on Carlaw Avenue.

Hopkinson served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) in the U.K. before being sent to the University of Edinburgh to study tele-printer operating, touch type and Morse code.

The ATS first stationed her at Luton Hoo, then in 1945, transferred her to Hanslope Park, near Bletchley Park, where she sent and received messages on a tele-printer and the Rockex machine. During the war, she and thousands of others served in top-secret operations.

“(I worked) in the fight to decode the Enigma (machine) and the Lorenz machine; so we read (German messages) and sent out false messages,” she said.

Hopkinson said mathematicians such as Alan Turing and William Thomas Tutte were among the many people whose work, historians say, saved 22 million lives and shortened the war by



Varad Mehta // The Observer

Theo Hopkinson was recognized by the Government Code and Cypher School for her contributions during the Second World War.

two years.

During her time at Hanslope Park, she met a radio technician, Dennis Hopkinson, whom she would later marry.

As the war ended, and years passed, Hopkinson along with her husband and two daughters (Claire and Barbara) moved to Canada.

For years, Hopkinson and her husband kept their work at Hanslope Park a secret due the Official Secrets Act. They had sworn an oath of secrecy about their work on Enigma.

Hopkinson, 89, now recognizes that her work contributed to ending the war. For her service she was awarded a Bletchley Park Medal and was also recognized with the Government Code and Cypher School certificate, signed by the United Kingdom's former Prime Minister David Cameron.

“I'm not in the same class as Alan Turing, William Thomas Tutte, or any of them,” Hopkinson said. “They have the grateful thanks of a nation, but we also had pride.”

Grandson follows family tradition of military service

By SAMI KOLJONEN
The Observer

The man after whom Jim LeRoy is named was wounded in the last month of the Great War.

“He was in a lot of pain,” LeRoy said of his grandfather.

James A. LeRoy, from a farm near Belleville, Ont., joined the Canadian Army at 18 and was wounded in the second battle of Cambrai in France two years later in October 1918.

“He had never experienced... combat and the life in a trench wasn't easy,” his grandson said.

Jim LeRoy serves as chaplain with the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 11, in East York.



JAMES LEROY



JIM LEROY

Members there staged a parade and remembrance service on Nov. 6.

In an interview, the grandson reflected on the grandfather's wartime experience. He said that James A. LeRoy travelled to Windsor, Ont., in 1916 to join the Canadian army.

“He joined like everybody else, because it was a matter of duty to King and country,” grandson Jim LeRoy explained.

LeRoy Sr. became a machine gunner and was shipped to Europe to fight in the Great War. He thought it would be a great adventure.

“But it was not as fun as he thought,” his grandson said.

Machine gunner LeRoy suffered from several diseases and saw his friends fall beside him.

The First World War was different from what he – or anyone – could have imagined, Jim LeRoy said. No one had thought that thousands of men could lose their lives in a day.

The bullet that hit LeRoy at Cambrai entered his torso and stopped near his spinal column. The bullet couldn't be removed, but he was still alive. The war ended a month later.

In 1934, James A. LeRoy was told that the bullet could be removed from his body. He underwent surgery, but something went wrong. He didn't survive. He left behind his wife and two sons, aged 11 and three.

Many other members of the LeRoy family have served in the armed forces. James A. LeRoy's father served in the Boer War. Robert K. LeRoy, Jim's uncle, served in the Second World War. And Jim LeRoy himself served from 1979 to 1985.

“The wars affected everyone, and still affects people,” Jim LeRoy said.

“Even though there are no World War I veterans alive (today), the history is there and through history we are able to see how brutal a man was,” he said. “That's something that I hope we never have to go through again.”

■ EDITORIALS

Honour veterans by helping oppressed

This editorial is being published on Nov. 11, Remembrance Day. As they have for years, East Yorkers will gather at the Memorial Gardens of the East York Civic Centre around 10:45 today to pay homage to our war dead.

Remembrance Day began as an occasion to observe the sacrifice of those who died in the line of duty during the First World War. Not only in Canada, but across the British Commonwealth. It is an observance created by a British monarch, and it reflects the day that the armistice ending the First World War came into effect.

That was 1918. Perhaps after a near-century, it is time for Remembrance Day to shift somewhat from its historically British origins and align more directly with Canadian and contemporary experience, not just the experience of Canadian soldiers in the two major European wars of the 20th century.

Perhaps it is even time to shift some of the Remembrance Day emphasis to the horrors of war faced by people — especially civilians — outside of North America and Western Europe. After all, the Canadian mosaic is increasingly reflective of people from other parts of the world... some of them war-torn.

In the simplest of terms, Remembrance Day traditionally honours Western military lives lost. But both world wars and wars between and since have also been fought in Asia, the Middle East, Africa and South America. Asia and the Middle East, in particular, are parts of the world that have brought masses of immigration to Canada. Not to mention culture, diversity and economic growth as well.

Canada's First World War veterans are all gone now, and the ranks of Second World War vets are rapidly (and sadly) thinning. With their passing, there may be a bit of a vacuum in Canadians' thoughts and feelings around Remembrance Day anyway.

Perhaps as the torch passes to more overt recognition of veterans of later conflicts — in places like Korea and Afghanistan — there's an opportunity to, for instance, show some interest in the brutalities still happening today in North Korea.

Many of us may not know that Canada has a small population of North Korean defectors. Canadian law, liberating as it is, bars North Koreans from seeking asylum in Canada because they are entitled to South Korean citizenship. Although that sounds ideal, imagine living in a country where you are looked down upon because of that inevitable gap of class and culture.

Think about it: We can honour our veterans and their service by continuing to strive to unshackle the chains around the very people whom they fought to liberate.

So perhaps it is time for Canada to offer the same refuge to North Koreans as we have proudly extended to Syrian and Iraqis. What better way is there to remember our soldiers than to continue their mission on a peaceful scale?

The same goes for Afghanistan.

In 2014, when Canada demobilized in Afghanistan and withdrew the troops, our country could have made Afghanistan a priority among the countries that we accept refugees from. But according to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in 2014 Afghanistan wasn't even in the 'top 10' — the priority countries where our government was assisting refugees. That is not to say Canada didn't accept them. Privately sponsored refugees coming through organizations such as the Afghan Association of Ontario have paved the way for more Afghans over the years.

But in the period of 2003-2014, when Canada was at war in Afghanistan, it accepted far more refugees from countries like China and Mexico. Neither were war-torn states at the time. Neither had parts of their country ruled by extremist militias and warlords at the expense of civilian lives.

So the question remains: How can we honour the sacrifice of our troops if we are not seeing their mission through to our best ability? Canada's campaign in Afghanistan was not only to stabilize the nation, but also to protect civilians. If civilians are still not safe in their country, then Canada should focus more on government-assisted refugees from Afghanistan.

In an important way, civilians arriving in Canada from war-torn parts of the world also connect this country more directly with a terrible side of modern warfare — the horror of war often deliberately inflicted on non-combatants. Canada escaped direct assault on its own soil and civilian population during the major wars of the last century. But that was a blessing not shared by many people in many other lands. In the last few years, the true terror of war has been brought home to us — literally.

Refugees from countries such as Libya, Iraq and Syria are becoming part of our Canadian diaspora, our identity. They have become part of us. Their fears and pain have been bequeathed to thoughtful Canadians. Their memories have become our stories. Their struggle for their lives is something that we promise they will not face again.

Because refugees are part of our mosaic, we can now say Canada's civilians have indeed felt the fear of war and the trauma of death. Canada has felt war.

This is why Remembrance Day should not be limited to honouring veterans and their deceased comrades. Because troops are not the only ones to have faced conflict. Many of Canada's new residents have a chapter in that age-old story of courage and sacrifice. Their part is not glorified, but it is still there... and one story cannot be told without the other anymore.

~ Ummema Chutani

■ COLUMNS

Discussion will produce reminders of war efforts

Today's Remembrance Day observances are fine as far as they go. But they don't go far enough. We need to pay attention to veterans for more than just a day each year. I'm not the only one who thinks this. According to a recent poll by Ipsos, nine in ten Canadians think that we should be doing more to honour those who were involved in war.

Of course we should have an occasion to honour the dead of the First World War. And the dead and living from the Second. And those from more recent war efforts. And Canada's peacekeepers. But the Ipsos poll

things that we could be doing in addition. For instance, the poll shows that only four in ten Canadians think that our schoolchildren are learning enough about Canada's war history.

Many schools are good about inviting veterans to share their experiences today, Re-

membrance Day. But we need to make sure that those valuable experiences don't get lost over time and through the generations, and one way to do that might be to create appropriate elementary and secondary school curriculum covering Canada's war and peacekeeping efforts.

Another might be a new, ambitious and dramatic Canadian

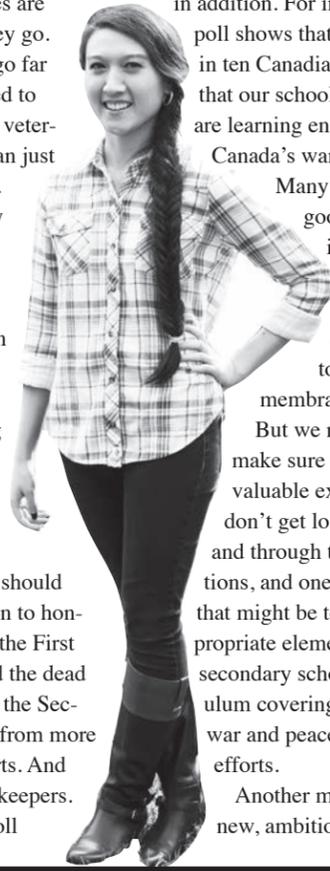
war memorial in Toronto or Ottawa, like 'the wall' in Washington officially known as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Today, Nov. 11, puts the spotlight on veterans living and dead — but for the other 364 days of the year, the light isn't focused on them the way it could be.

Reminders such as memorials and more comprehensive education are just a couple of ways for sharing the priceless stories of the heroic people and the dramatic events that have helped cement the enviable Canadian way of life since the turn of the 20th century.

These stories need to be preserved and having iterations throughout the year will help keep them alive. Let's commemorate them.

The men and women of Canada's military have risked — and in many cases lost — their lives for this country. The least we can do is honour them more than once a year.



Rose Hetherington

A clash between big cities

And I thought Halifax was a big city. Still, when I lived there, it felt like I knew everybody. Like I could walk into any store or go to any bar and there would be at least an acquaintance for me to connect with.

It was a blessing and a curse — especially when it came to the pub scene that I was part of as a wayward youth.

In Halifax, bars were plentiful. Seriously. In fact, Halifax has one of the highest numbers of bars-per-capita around. And beers were cheap. But rather than go back down the road of my formerly wastrel ways — reckless drinking in a beautiful, historic city — I'll explain how it all changed when I 'went west' for school.

Toronto. Now that's a really big city. On my second night in The Big Smoke, I went to a bar with my brother and tried to order a pitcher of Pabst Blue Ribbon. But with no success. Apparently it's illegal to serve a single person a pitcher. OK. Heaven forbid there be serious drinking. So I'll have a pint of anything. Something local, the server suggests. I naively agree. My brother and I catch

up, he's excited to have me in the city, and we get the bills....

Like a lot of students, I like to drink on the cheap. So excuse my jaw hitting the table when that local pint of beer clocks in at \$8... the most expensive beer I've ever had (by a margin of \$2.25). I was close to walking back to Nova Scotia right then and there.

And that's another thing: In Halifax, you walk everywhere because, well, everything is close enough to walk to. Not so much in Toronto; it seems like plans to get from Point A to B need to be made weeks in advance — and that

includes just finding somewhere with those overpriced beers and a TV to watch the ball game. Then factor in the geography of friends and their desire to find a mutually convenient meeting spot. And don't forget the imperative

consideration of a thin wallet. Oh, and the problem of the subway line closing before the bars do... leaving one with no alternative but to convert the station closest to the watering hole into a makeshift Holiday Inn.

Granted, Toronto has some attractions. But in my experience, it's lacking incentive to imbibe.

Now 2.6 million people like the city just fine, thank you — enough to call it home anyway. OK. You can have it. For me, home is still Halifax.



Kirk Budden

Love in the air at aviation meet



Courtesy of City of Toronto Archives

The Observer resumes its look back on East York history through photographs from the City of Toronto Archives. These two pictures stir a romantic impression of what that old movie called “Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines.” In this case, we could add this subtitle: “And the Women They Loved.” That’s because the woman on the left is Mrs. Charles F. Willard (her own first name not provided). And the city archivists quote a researcher who believes that the setting is an “aviation meet” held at Donlands Farm, Todmorden Mills, Aug. 3-5, 1911. The man on the right is Mr. Willard — her husband. The archives’ researcher says that he’s the pilot of a “Curtiss-type ‘Pusher’ bi-plane with inset ailerons and rotary engine,” and that the photo was taken either at the same Todmorden meet where his wife was photographed, or at a meet in Hamilton one week earlier.

COMMENT

Tory misled us

It seems that when it comes to transit in East York and the rest of Toronto, politicians have made many promises — almost all of which have been broken.

During the 2014 election, then-mayoral candidate John Tory put fixing the city’s inadequate public transit system at the centre of his campaign.

A signature proposal of his was the SmartTrack project, a ‘surface subway’ using existing GO railroad tracks to enhance public transit in this city. Tory ambitiously claimed that it would be finished in just seven years, and would come at no additional charge to Toronto taxpayers.

Now, a report from city staff says that not only is the project expected to take 12 years, it is also going to require a new source of revenue in order for it to be completed.

In addition to complications with the SmartTrack system, the same city report revealed that Toronto is going to be on the hook for additional transit costs that were previously not known. As part of an agreement with the province of Ontario, Toronto residents are now responsible for the day-to-day operations and maintenance costs of future light rail transit (LRT) projects. This includes the Finch West, Sheppard East and Eglinton-Crosstown, which will directly service the East York community.

City councillor and TTC Chair Josh Colle has made the point that the costs laid out in the city report are what it takes to expand Toronto’s transit system and “if we want these things, then citizens and councillors have to be willing to take steps to pay for them.”

It is true that creating a reliable transit system with adequate coverage is going to cost a lot of money and Toronto residents realize that some of the burden of paying for it will fall on their shoulders. But what the taxpayers of this city don’t want is to be misled by a mayor who apparently makes campaign policy proposals that he is not sure he can follow through on.

In order to pay for the SmartTrack system, taxes will have to be raised (three per cent or more). And that means that Mayor Tory will have to break the promise he made to Torontonians when he was asking for their vote in 2014.

We should remember that the next time he asks.

~ Andrew Holland



Renee Allen /// The Observer

Jan Wong (left) listens intently as Cliff Lonsdale shares an anecdote about his experiences with mental health during a recent panel discussion at the Story Arts Centre.

When mental illness hits the newsroom

By RENEE ALLEN
The Observer

Ten years ago, then-Globe and Mail reporter Jan Wong was sent to cover the Dawson College shooting in Quebec. After her controversial story was published, she received hate mail, death threats and a rebuke from her employer.

“We don’t go into journalism to win Miss Congeniality, so I thought I was going to be OK,” she said.

However, Wong was far from OK. She wasn’t eating or sleeping properly. She cried all the time and suffered from memory loss. The Globe and Mail published 15 of the hundreds of letters to the editor it received complaining about her story, one of them from then-Prime Minister Stephen Harper. She felt abandoned by her own newspaper.

“I couldn’t have a mental illness because I’m strong; I am tough,” she said. “But I did.”

Wong went on to write a book about her journey through depression -- *Out of the Blue, A Memoir of Workplace Depression*,

Recovery, Redemption and, Yes, Happiness. She spoke about her experiences during a panel discussion called *Mental Health & the Newsroom*, held Oct. 22 at Centennial College’s East York campus.

Fellow panelists included Cliff Lonsdale, journalism professor and president of the Canadian Journalism Forum on Violence and Trauma; Dr. Anthony Feinstein, a psychiatrist at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and University of Toronto professor; and journalist Scott Simmie, who acted as moderator.

The two-hour discussion, co-hosted by the Toronto chapter of the Canadian Association of Journalists and the Canadian Media Guild, focused on how journalists are affected by their environment and how they cope.

Simmie said he experienced an episode of mania in China after being demoted from his post as CBC’s Moscow bureau producer. While in a delusional state, he spent most of his money on antique furniture and believed he was a powerful salesperson.

When he returned to work at CBC after

a period of time on disability, he no longer felt at home.

“I returned to a very different place... When I would walk down the hallway, people would turn their heads,” he said. “They would look at the floor. They would refuse to look at me.”

Statistics show that one in five Canadians will have mental health issues in their lifetime.

The panelists agreed that as stress in the workplace escalates, an open dialogue about mental health needs to occur.

“When you think about it, it’s not really one in five. It’s all of us,” Lonsdale said. Feinstein, who has conducted extensive research into how covering conflict affects journalists, believes that education about mental health takes away the stigma.

Breaking down stereotypes and misconceptions helps show people they can live healthy lives, even while dealing with mental illness, he said. It also makes people more likely to seek treatment.

“When people understand what’s going on,” Feinstein said, “they feel empowered to do something about it.”



Courtesy of DHX Media

Degrassi High's most famous band, The Zit Remedy, filmed the video for their hit single, Everybody Wants Something, in East York.

College helped bring Degrassi to life

Centennial's East York campus used for the filming of popular television series Degrassi High

By UMMEMA CHUTANI
The Observer

Centennial College is celebrating its 50th anniversary this fall, and among the special moments in the east-Toronto school's history, the East York campus on Carlaw Avenue may take the cake — for being the filming location of the “Degrassi High” television series.

The Degrassi franchise spans many different series, but Linda Schluyer produced them all. And Schluyer believes the stars aligned when she came upon the Centennial building at 951 Carlaw Ave. back in the early 1990s.

The show “Degrassi Junior High” was filmed in a building that was once Vincent Massey Public School in Etobicoke. Although the cast and crew stayed there for three years, having to work with one floor and four classrooms just wasn't feasible anymore.

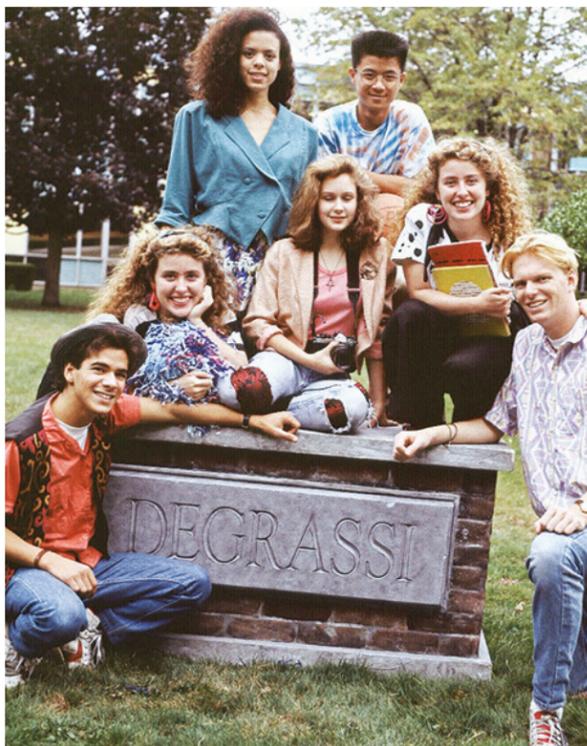
“Those classrooms not only had to be our sets but they had to be the holding tanks for our extras and we had to fit in wardrobe and hair,” said Schluyer. “It was just crazy; the space was far too small.”

Meanwhile, Schluyer's team had made a dramatic decision to burn the school down — in the script of course — during the series finale, after the kids had graduated from junior high.

“So there we were as producers,” Schluyer said. “We'd burned our school down and now we had nowhere to continue shooting the show.”

Schluyer believes luck was on her side when a young Centennial College broadcast and film student, David Yonson, invited her to his end-of-year film project screening. Yonson had been doing his placement on the set of Degrassi Junior High. And his final film project was screened at Centennial's Carlaw Avenue campus.

It wasn't the first time that Schluyer had been in the building. It wasn't even the first intersection of the campus and Degrassi. Before 951 Carlaw Avenue was acquired by Centennial, it was the Toronto Teachers College. And Schluyer had once used space in the building to hold auditions for a certain pilot pro-



Courtesy of DHX Media

Cast-members gather around the show's iconic sign at their East York set.

duction, called “Ida Makes a Movie.” That happened to be the pilot to “The Kids of Degrassi Street” — the initial instalment in the Degrassi franchise, which first aired in 1979.

At that point, the building was in need of refurbishing and little-used by the college. Most of Centennial's activities were at other campuses in Scarborough.

Schluyer remembered: “They bought this building and they had all these great plans for renovations and looking at all this space I was thinking, ‘Okay, you have all these plans for renovations but you don't have the money yet.’”

That's when she approached Don Gray, a broadcasting professor at the time, and asked what Centennial planned to do with this space during the three years they were going to spend fundraising for renovations.

“I said to him, ‘Well, would you like a tenant who might not have a lot of money to pay but could offer placement jobs for

your students?’ And there it began,” said Schluyer. “The beginning of what turned out to be a beautiful relationship for two years.”

The kids of Degrassi Junior High were then graduated to Degrassi High in a brand new setting, and during the two years the filming took place, Gray's students would observe the filming process.

One of the main reasons Schluyer loved being in East York was that she herself is from the area. Prior to producing the Degrassi franchise, Schluyer was a teacher at Earl Grey Senior Public School near Pape and Danforth. A lot of the actors were also neighbourhood kids.

“It was fantastic for us to be shooting in the east end because a lot of our actors and extras actually came from the east end of Toronto and Centennial was a wonderful location for us,” she said.

Aside from the location, Schluyer loved the fact that there was a great parking lot for the production company's trucks. Furthermore, the main entrance that's set back quite far from the street was perfect for morning scenes of the kids arriving at school.

Schluyer said she was glad that by not having trucks parked on the street, and by shooting exterior scenes far from the sidewalk, she and her team were good neighbours to the residential area around the school.

But for Schluyer, the best asset of the building was the outdoor courtyard in the centre of the structure — an original feature of the campus dating from its construction in the 1950s as the Toronto Teachers College.

“We loved shooting out there because you could be outside but you didn't have the traffic,” she said, “and visually, you could have kids in the courtyard eating lunch and you could look through those beautiful glass walls and you could see kids in the hallway. It was visually a very attractive place.”

After a 10-year hiatus, Schluyer began her next Degrassi project, “Degrassi: The Next Generation” and although it was filmed in a studio, the sets were designed with certain aspects of Centennial College as the architectural inspiration.

Today, the East York campus lives on as the headquarters for Centennial's communications and arts programs.

And Degrassi lives on with “Degrassi: Next Class” on Netflix.

Looking back on the show's tenure in East York, Schluyer said, “I remember it as a very happy experience and a wonderful partnership between the folks at Centennial and ourselves.”