



WEBNEWS

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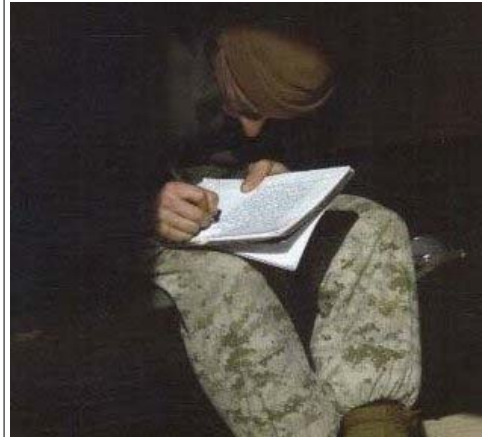
Volume - 2 Edition 42

Week Ending October 24, 2008

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Dear Sweetheart: July 10, 1941 ... I'll be back



"It was the Second World War. A million young Canadians were marching off to risk their lives. One of them, David K. Hazzard, was separated from his beloved wife Audrey, but soon found a way to fight the loneliness – with his pen.

He wrote hundreds of letters, beginning each the same way – 'Dear Sweetheart.' They are a riveting account of what he went through.

How did he cope without Audrey and his two young daughters? How did they cope without him?"

The Globe and Mail has launched a series of articles detailing the war-time lives of a Canadian family separated by the Second World War. It is presented as a homage to those who died, the 180,000 veterans who survive, their children, their grandchildren – and Canada's fighting families today.

"In the end, their story is our story."

In the weeks ahead, the series Dear Sweetheart will post new letters daily.

Saturday, October 18, 2008
Globe and Mail
Section: Miscellaneous

Stratford Council OKs Legion Move



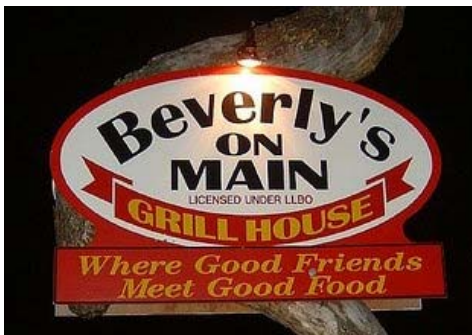
City council has given formal approval to enter into a 20-year agreement with the local branch of the Royal Canadian Legion for lease of the upper lobby at William Allman Arena.

At Tuesday evening's meeting, council passed the final motion to enter into the agreement, which will see Branch 8 lease the space for \$32,650 for the first year.

The matter still requires final consideration by Legion members. Approvals must also be received from the Ontario Provincial Command and the liquor licensing board.

Saturday, October 18, 2008
Stratford Gazette
Section: RCL

Lunch for Canadian Forces



A Wasaga Beach restaurant owner is once again serving a free meal to former and current members of the Canadian Forces.

Beverly Wood of Beverly's On Main plans to feed about 75 people on Monday at 11 AM.

She has held a veteran's breakfast for the last three years, but she's changed it to a lunch this year.

She says it's grown so much she's even had to move to a bigger venue -- the Edenvale Areodrome on Highway 26.

Wood says it all started because she wanted to give back to those who have and are currently fighting for their country and for peace.

Wood says it's become quite the social event for the veterans who come prepared to tell their war stories and bring memorabilia that Wood displays in her restaurant.

Members of the Canadian Forces get a free meal, but Wood says she is asking for ten dollars from friends and caregivers who come along just to help with some of the costs since the event has become so big.

Monday, October 20, 2008
Catherine Thompson, Bayshore Broadcasting
Section: Veterans

Whitewater gives Legion tax break



The finance and administration committee will recommend council extend a tax break to the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 550 for the next 10 years.

For the first five years, the branch will be exempt from paying municipal property tax for its building located on main street in Cobden. In each of the next five years, there will be a sliding tax break until 2019 when the building will be 100 per cent taxable.

Council is expected to pass a bylaw authorizing the tax exemption at its next meeting.

Councillor Joe Trimm suggested the sliding scale so the branch does not go from paying no taxes to the whole amount in one year.

In 2008, the legion's municipal tax bill for the building was \$1,712.62, chief administrative officer Dean Sauriol told the committee.

As a non-profit organization, the legion depends on volunteers to maintain its viability, branch spokeswoman Eleanor Tabbert said.

"At Branch 550 we are keeping our heads above water, but it would be beneficial to have some relief," she said.

She was joined by branch president Rick Robinson and treasurer Fred Schwan.

This year the branch has donated \$5,800 to various sports, school and community organizations, according to Mr. Schwan.

Coun. Ron Lowe believes the legion plays an important role in the municipality and council should do what it can to help relieve some of the tax burden.

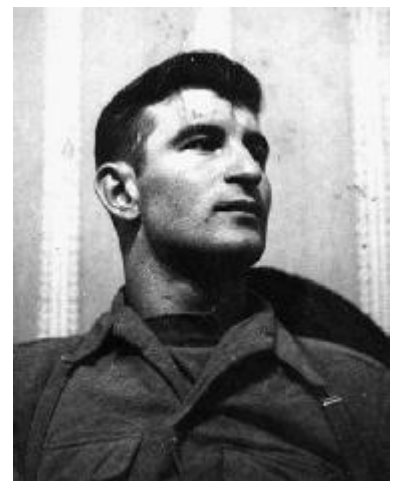
"We are lucky to have one (Legion) in the municipality and in a time when troops are sacrificing their lives for the country we love so much, we should help," he said.

The Royal Canadian Legion has eight branches in eight municipalities in Renfrew County. Earlier this year, the county of Renfrew agreed to provide all branches with a 10- year tax exemption to demonstrate ongoing support for the men and women of the armed forces and respect and support for veterans.

Recent changes to provincial legislation allow municipalities to offer tax breaks on occupied properties owned by Royal Canadian Legion branches for no more than a decade.

Monday, October 20, 2008
TINA PEPLINSKIE, The Daily Observer
Section: RCL

Funeral held for another distinguished veteran



Pte. Leo Major is seen in this undated family photo. Pte. Major served Canada during the Second World war and single-handedly liberated the town of Zwolle, and also captured 93 German soldiers during The Battle of the Scheldt in southern Holland. This after losing his left eye shortly after hitting the beaches of Normandy.

Montreal's Regiment de la Chaudiere. He distinguished himself early in his

army career.

After losing an eye to a grenade on D-Day on the beach in Normandy, he refused a medical evacuation. He claimed he could still sight a rifle with one eye.

"He always said doctors were a bunch of fools," his son Denis said in an interview.

But it was his bravery on a cold, rainy April night in 1945 that won him his first medal and the lasting respect of the people of Zwolle.

On that night, Mr. Major single-handedly liberated the town.

It was April 13, 1945 when Pte. Major and another French-Canadian soldier, Willie Arsenault, were sent to scope out the German presence in the Dutch town, about 120 kilometres northeast of Amsterdam.

Mr. Arsenault was killed by German machine-gunners on the outskirts of the town.

But Mr. Major, using a combination of luck, cunning, and guts, was able to capture Zwolle from the Germans by killing them when he could and setting off enough grenades to create the impression a large Canadian force had entered the town.

By early morning, they had fled the town.

Since he died, the town hall flag has been flying at half-mast, a register has been opened so townspeople can record their condolences, and Lt.-Col. Henri J.L. Schevers from the Dutch embassy attended his Montreal funeral on Saturday.

Betty Redemeyer's stepfather, Hendrik van Gerner, met Mr. Major that night. It began a lifetime of friendship as Mr. Major, in his later years, frequently travelled back to Holland to speak to schoolchildren about his experiences.

"Because of Leo, [the Allies] knew they didn't need to bomb the city, the Germans were gone," she said.

Ms. Redemeyer recalled Mr. Major's visits back to Zwolle with fondness.

"He could have been my grandfather," she said. "He was so sweet. I honoured him so much, just because he was so humble. We realized what he had done for our city was enormous."

Memories of the war haunted Mr. Major.

"At night he became quiet," Ms. Redemeyer said.

"In his memories he went back to the war. Sometimes I think it was difficult for him."

Mr. Major's son Denis said he rarely spoke of his exploits. In fact, he only told his family in the late 1960s about some of what he'd accomplished.

"Even my mother didn't know," Denis said.

"One of the most difficult memories came at the end of the war. He had killed two Germans, and when he approached the bodies he found they were adolescents of 13, 14 years old."

Mr. Major still answered the call of duty when in 1950, a Canadian general asked him to serve as a sniper in the Korean War. He left his civilian plumbing practice and went overseas once again, even with lingering injuries from his first tour of duty.

A severe back injury sustained during the Second World War would cause him pain his whole life.

It was in the Korean War that he won his second medal for bravery after leading a company to capture a key hill.

His family lost what Denis called "man of great courage, justice, a very humble man."

So did the people of Zwolle.

"I know that everyone, but everyone, will think of Leo as their liberator," Ms. Redemeyer said.

"He will never be forgotten. To us, he really is a hero."

Mr. Major is survived by his wife of 57 years, Pauline De Croiselle, his four children and five grand children.

Monday, October 20, 2008
JESSICA MURPHY, The Canadian Press
Section: Veterans

An unforgettable veteran

OBITUARY: Canadian Second World War Spitfire pilot and hero Charley Fox spent a lifetime instilling in young people the lessons he learned in battle.

The tragic death Saturday of Canadian war hero Charley Fox -- who escaped death many times during a remarkable

military career -- has left family and friends reeling and wondering who will take on the huge role Fox filled as an educator of youth and spokesperson for veterans.



In this Nov. 11, 2005, photo, veteran Charley Fox displays a 'Lest We Forget' wrist bracelet he designed to raise money to support the Torch Bearers program. Fox dedicated much of his life to ensuring young people appreciated the human cost of war. Credit: Susan Bradnam, Sun Media

Fox, 88, a Second World War Spitfire pilot, was killed in a car crash in Oxford County, shortly after attending a Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association meeting near Tillsonburg.

With Remembrance Day less than a month away, the popular Fox's schedule was packed full of activities.

"He'd want us to continue to remember our veterans. Somebody else (must) pick the torch up and continue those things he started because it was so important to him," said Fox's daughter, Sue Beckett of Thamesford.

His family said his activities put 70,000 kilometres on his vehicle each year.

Fox's son, Jim, said Fox, a London resident, stopped in at his grandson's hockey game in Kitchener last Thursday even though he had business to take care of.

"He had a to-do list for the day and I'm sure there were 17 things on it."

Said Beckett: "He had all of these other things to do . . . but he always had time for us, too."

Fox travelled to Ottawa at least once a month for veterans' business and there was talk of taking him to the 2009 Grey Cup festivities in honour of the 100th anniversary of the first controlled power flight in Canada and the British Empire.

He also planned to travel with students overseas on memorial pilgrimages next year.

Joan Sullivan, president of the Air

Force Association of Canada (AFAC), 427 London Wing, said Fox had told her Friday about some of his upcoming engagements, including one next Saturday at the AFAC national convention in Ottawa.

"He was willing to talk. A lot of veterans won't talk about their experiences," said Sullivan, who had known Fox for more than 50 years.

Teacher Robin Barker-James, who owns a farm near Tillsonburg where Fox took part in war simulation events and who travelled with him to Normandy in 2004 for D-Day anniversary events, said Fox drove his car around the farm like it was a fighter jet.

"I don't think you could take that out of someone who spent so many hours of their young life in one of those machines," he said.

Barker-James said that 12 years ago Fox told his students at Glendale high school an amazing story that riveted them.

"Two of his fellow air crew had been killed in an airplane crash. Since he was the duty officer, he went to verify their identities. They were soaked in gasoline. The smell was overpowering.

"Three times after that, Charley was in near-fatal car accidents and he smelled gasoline and slowed the car down.

"Did he smell it (Saturday)?" Barker-James wondered.

"He had a lot of unexplained incidents involving those who had died and those who are still living. Charley believed there was a much bigger dimension to life than what we give credit for."

His family said Fox spent his life wondering why he survived numerous dates with death.

He was searching for a way to make sense out of what happened and to find a way to contribute through the life he felt was saved and to honour his fallen comrades, son Jim Fox said.

He was in the process of telling his story and those of other veterans in a book titled Why Not Me?, which the family hopes to finish.

"It did give him a purpose in life and he was searching for that," his son said.

Barker-James said Fox dealt with death a long time ago and wasn't afraid.

"He wanted to die, as he would put it, 'With his boots on.' In other words, doing things to promote the remembrance of what happened.

"He was dying with his boots on. He had just come from the Harvard society. He was in his car, a machine," said Barker-James, who added that the crash scene was directly on the Harvard flight path.

"There's an eerie appropriateness about this."

Fox is also survived by another daughter, Adrienne Black, who lives in New Jersey, nine grandchildren, three step-grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. His wife Helen died in 1993.

The Betzner funeral home in Thamesford is in charge of arrangements.

AMONG THE MANY EVENTS IN CHARLEY FOX'S COLOURFUL LIFE:

He was credited with injuring German commander Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, the Desert Fox, during a July 1944 strafing run over France.

Fought in the battle immortalized by Sir Richard Attenborough's film A Bridge Too Far.

Attacked enemy locomotives and enemy vehicles 153 times during the war, leading to the Distinguished Flying Cross honour and the nickname of Train Buster.

Fourteen of his planes were rendered no longer usable after being hit by enemy fire.

Bailed out of his Harvard after colliding with a Hurricane fighter plane over Bagotville, Que.

A fiery ball of lightning once hit the wing of his plane, then rolled across the canopy of his cockpit and bounced off the other wing.

AMONG HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

He pushed for recognition for Polish veterans, who worked closely with First Canadian Army personnel.

Educated people about The Great Escape, a mass escape attempt from PoW camp Stalag Luft III located near the Polish town of Zagan. Fox knew one of the men killed during the Great Escape attempt and he set up the

twinning of Polish and Canadian towns. The story was immortalized in a movie.

Founded Torch Bearers, a non-profit organization that educates youth about Canadian military exploits.

Regularly took on speaking engagements to keep veterans' stories alive.

Fought with school boards to ensure Remembrance Day ceremonies are held annually.

Monday, October 20, 2008
KATHY RUMLESKI, The London Free Press
Section: Veterans

The voice of Charlie Fox



Second World War II Spitfire pilot Charley Fox was killed in a car crash this weekend near Tillsonburg.

The 88-year-old decorated veteran was scheduled to join Jeff Allan this Friday on his radio talk show on 570 News.

Today, in honour of his life and service, Jeff present an interview with Charley Fox that originally aired on The Jeff Allan Show last year.

We are, with Jeff's permission, making these incredibly interesting stories available to you at the links below.

Part 1, Part 2, Part 3, Part 4

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Monday, October 20, 2008
Interview with Jeff Allen
Section: Veterans

Poor Boy Lunch-Trinity Village Kitchener



Poor Boy Lunch will be held on Monday November 10th,2008 at 11:30am, Cost \$5.00 per person, at Trinity Village Chapel Auditorium.

Come out of the cold and enjoy a hearty beef stew lunch, and support local veterans! Beverage and dessert included.

Proceeds benefit the K-W Poppy Fund,Branch 50.

RSVP by Wednesday,November 5th,2008.

Debbie 519-896-3112 ext.243

\$5 per person

Limited Seating-Reserve Your Spot Today.

Trinity Village,Retirement Community.
2711 Kingsway Drive, Kitchener- Near Fairview Park Mall.
519-896-3112 ext.243

Thursday, October 23, 2008
Alf Ash
Section: Poppy Campaign
