

News from the Mapleton Township area in 1906, 1956

THORNING *Revisited*

BY STEPHEN THORNING
1949-2015

The following is a re-print of a past column by former Advertiser columnist Stephen Thorning, who passed away on Feb. 23, 2015.

Some text has been updated to reflect changes since the original publication and any images used may not be the same as those that accompanied the original publication.

117 years ago February 1906

Winter 1906 brought an up-and-down season of weather.

Three weeks of bitter cold, with very little snow, followed a mid-January thaw. Then the thermometer shot up again, frustrating those harvesting blocks of ice from the river at Drayton. During the last week of February temperatures remained well above freezing, producing open water on the Conestogo.

Drayton's 1906 council waited until Feb. 8 for its first meeting, with reeve Henry Irvine presiding. Much of the meeting involved hiring the village staff for the year, and council tackled the job with a sharp pencil: A.C. Woodman as clerk for an annual salary of \$50, J. Lunz as treasurer for \$50, and E.G. Andrews as constable, sanitary inspector, poll tax collector, truant officer, and hotel inspector, all for \$45 for year. They deferred appointing a tax collector, and decided to dispense with a caretaker for the town hall.

Shoppers in the Drayton area could find bargains everywhere a hundred years

ago this month.

Many of the deals were in Moorefield. Vic Lewis was selling off his entire stock of men's wear. Innes & Sons offered good buys in groceries: four tins of peas for 25 cents, 20 pounds of oatmeal for 25 cents, and 25 pounds of sugar for \$1. The store also marked down all its winter goods, including three men's fur coats.

In Drayton, the Hefkey & Metz shoe store advertised a "big slaughter of prices," and accepted either cash or eggs for its footwear. There were bargains at all three Drayton clothing stores: Gibb Bros, had a "monster sale;" John Lunz wanted to clear out his old stock; and John Whyte complained about "stock too large." Many flocked to the Pollock and Co. store which, after about 30 years in business at Stirton and Drayton, was "giving up business." Pollock claimed to have more than \$5,000 in stock to liquidate, a diverse inventory of dry goods, clothing, and groceries. He had men's suits priced from \$4.95.

There were some business changes in Moorefield. Jim Forest purchased John Schneider's coal and lumber business, and down the street, George Wilson expanded his hardware business by hiring a tinsmith. L.C. Korstedt sold Moorefield's other hardware store to Erb Cober.

The Spring Bank Debating Society, in the Wyandot area, undertook a series of interesting discussions through the winter. In mid-February

they tackled the subject, "Resolved, that the press has done more than the pulpit in elevating mankind." Not surprisingly, the verdict was for the latter.

Moorefield's Foresters' Lodge undertook a major membership drive over the winter, hoping to get their roll up to 100. By the end of March they surpassed that goal. Moorefield's Presbyterian church, after considering several applicants, offered a unanimous call to Rev. D.L. Campbell of Dromore to take over their pulpit permanently.

Glen Allan's small lending library continued to enjoy success. A fundraising concert drew a good crowd and added funds to the 1906 book budget.

Drayton and 21 other villages with continuation schools (those offering Grades 9 and 10 only) pooled their resources to petition Ontario's Whitney government to put their provincial funding on the same basis as full high schools. Continuation schools received \$100 per teaching position; high schools had other costs that qualified for grants. The Drayton school had two teachers and 66 students. Some high schools in Ontario were no larger.

Drayton's library board tried to raise operating funds with a play, *The Squire's Daughter*, performed by the Drayton Dramatic Society at the town hall on Feb. 14. With very cold weather and sleighing poor, the crowd was small. After the performance, Dr. and Mrs. Flath served an oyster supper for the cast.

The Women's Institute for the West Wellington district gathered at Drayton's town hall on Feb. 24 for an all-day convention. Among the at-

tractions was a demonstration on homemade candy. There was also a session on salads, which in 1906 were still something of a novelty on most dining room tables in Ontario.

67 years ago January 1956

Both township councils held their first meetings of 1956 on the morning of Jan. 9.

Phil Rowland, re-elected by a substantial majority for his eighth term, presided in Maryborough. Filling the council chairs were veterans Gord McArthur and Boyd Campbell, with newcomers Fred Noble and Merrill Mitchell. The meeting was largely ceremonial, with brief speeches by the councillors. Several old-timers came out, including a couple of men who had served in the 1910 era. In the business portion, council paid road accounts of \$2,024 plus several smaller items.

In Peel Township, reeve V.A. Walker had also been re-elected handily. His 1956 council consisted of deputy reeve Basil Peel, and councillors Len Schieck, Cliff Kells, and Russ Day. After the official ceremonies, councillors tackled some agenda items, including salaries for township staff. The amounts, by the standards of 67 years later, seem ridiculously small. Councillors received \$5 per day and five cents per mile. Labourers drew 75 cents per hour. Those owning and operating snow removal equipment enjoyed standby fees of \$100 per month for four months, and \$1 per hour operating time. Clerk L.A. Flewelling's annual salary was \$900, as was that of assessor Algeo Koelln. Treasurer S.C. Whale received \$700. Stan Snow and George Bates each

enjoyed annual salaries of \$20 as truant officers. And the township headquarters, Lynch's Hall in Goldstone, was rented at \$100 per year.

As well as setting the 1956 salaries, Peel councillors passed a motion authorizing council and staff to attend both the Good Roads and AMO conventions in Toronto, with all expenses covered.

The staff of Drayton's Royal Bank branch went to the Harriston Inn for their annual dinner, hosted by branch manager J.A. Fleming and his wife. The dinner was also a farewell for accountant Morgan Lewis, who had been transferred to Dutton.

J.A. Fleming was busy a week later, as president of the Drayton Rotary Club. The first meeting of the year was largely a social event, with a brief talk by B.B. Davis, and concluding with the singing of some popular favourites.

Police captured a pair of Elmira youths who were responsible for a crime wave of thefts and break-ins through the area. Victims included the gas station at Tralee, School Section 11 in Maryborough (where they stole money raised for the Red Cross), Welsh's Feed Mill in Moorefield (where they made off with the cash register), and several businesses in Woolwich Township.

Two fires occurred in the area during the first week of 1956. On Jan. 6, Drayton Fire Chief Alva Cherrey had his men and equipment on the road quickly to the residence of Egbert Klassens on Con. 4, Peel. By connecting a hose to the water supply in the barn they managed to extinguish the blaze. The house suffered major damage from water and smoke, as well as the flames.

Two nights later, a fire claimed the barn of Walter Gadke, about two miles from Palmerston. Firefighters arrived quickly, but there was little they could do. As well as claiming the barn, the flames killed 16 cattle and a new motor car parked outside. The fire started when Gadke used a blowtorch to thaw out water pipes in the barn.

Councillors from Minto, Wallace and Howick got together to petition the province for another addition to the provincial road network. They wanted to bring a 12-mile stretch of road, linking Highway 23 in Palmerston with Highway 86 at Molesworth into the provincial system. The road was then under county jurisdiction, but was in need of upgrading.

A large crowd turned out at the Moorefield Town Hall for an evening of euehre, followed by an ample lunch. Proceeds from the event went to support the Junior Exhibition at the fall fair.

Area hockey teams enjoyed a lively season, helped by the good natural ice that came with the cold January weather. In a shootout at the Palmerston arena on Jan. 6, the Drayton team upset the favoured Teviotdale Tigers by a score of 10-8. The result further inflamed the rivalry between the two squads. In the Intermediate League, Drayton defeated Alma 9-3 before a packed hometown crowd on Jan. 9.

Though the popularity of television, especially after the start-up of CKNX, was affecting participation and attendance at many local events, the impact on local hockey was yet to be felt.

**This column was originally published in the Drayton Community News on Jan. 20 and Feb. 3, 2006.*

Watters makes a splash at Chamber of Commerce event

By Joanne Shuttleworth

ELORA – Centre Wellington has some hard challenges ahead and Mayor Shawn Watters used his time at the Mayor's Breakfast, hosted by the Centre

Wellington Chamber of Commerce on Jan.18, to prepare his audience for what he sees on the road ahead.

His hour-plus speech felt more like a conversation than a speech as he spoke without notes and welcomed

questions as they came up – even questions that led down a tangent.

Although he is new to being mayor and admitted there's lots to learn, he is not new to local politics.

Watters served a total 17 years on local and county councils, and as mayor he is automatically back on county council.

Watters extended an invitation to keep lines of communication open with residents, the business community and other levels of government.

"We need your collective energy to navigate these difficult times," he told his audience of 125 local businesspeople at the GrandWay events centre in Elora, along with 10 participants who watched via Zoom.

"Reach out. We have big ears."

The biggest challenge for Centre Wellington, and one that will impact almost every aspect of municipal government, is growth.

"It will have a substantive impact on our community," Watters said.

The province wants to build 1.5 million homes in the next 10 years to accommodate anticipated growth in Ontario, and it has allocated some of that growth to Wellington County, which in

turn has allocated growth to its member municipalities.

Centre Wellington is to double in population to 60,000 people in the next 20 years according to those allocations, Watters said.

And it will be up to council to decide where and how those new residential units will be built within the constraints of the newly passed Bill 23 and Bill 109, both of which deal with housing and planning.

The options are to grow out, grow up or intensify. Watters said it will probably take all three, along with out-of-the-box thinking, to reach those targets and still have a liveable, well-planned community.

Intensification – building on brownfield sites and adding height to buildings – "will challenge our downtowns," he said.

"We want to preserve farmland as best we can," he added, though he acknowledged the township will likely need to expand its urban boundaries.

He said the township will have to consider allowing multiple dwellings on large



SHAWN
WATTERS

lots and he sees potential in the bylaw passed by the previous council that allows residential units in highway/commercial zones.

"There's not one answer to the problem," he said. "But we'll figure it out and that's exciting."

To his business audience, Watters said he understands some businesses are unable to fill vacancies because potential employees can't find a place or afford a place to live in Centre Wellington.

Without staff, "restaurants won't be open long (hours), retail won't be open long (hours), businesses in the industrial park won't be able to find employees," he said.

"It's not just single-family homes we need," he continued. "This is important for the labour pool" to have a variety of housing styles and price points available in the community. "This is our number one challenge."

On a question about Airbnbs taking space that could otherwise accommodate long-term rentals, Watters said the township needs to balance accommodating tourism with the need for rental housing.

He said a staff report on the issue is expected later this year, which will open the door for more discussion

around the horseshoe.

"Wow," said Elora Centre for the Arts executive director Lianne Carter, as Watters closed his speech.

"It was so conversational and so engaging. I was at the edge of my seat and I feel excited about the future of our community."

Chamber CEO Sally Litchfield said the event – the first in-person Mayor's Breakfast since the pandemic – went very well and Watters seemed well-received by the room.

"It's early in this council's term of course, and a lot of what was discussed was the list of significant things they are tasked with this term," she stated in an email.

"What was clear," she continued, "was that there will continue to be dialogue and conversations about these big topics – things like housing, parking, infrastructure, managing the growth of the community – these things don't necessarily get solved quickly or at a Mayor's Breakfast."

"But what does happen is a conversation begins, ideas are shared, interest is piqued, and then it's our job, in partnership with the township, to keep the lines of communication open between the business community and council."



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Gartshore House – The house has four bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs, an eat-in kitchen and living room on the main floor, and a covered patio out back. The ReStore provided much of the furnishings while other businesses provided supplies for the kitchen. President and CEO of Groves Memorial Community Hospital Angela Stanley, above left, said the partnership between the hospital and township is unique and she's grateful for the involvement of the local business community as well. Photos by Joanne Shuttleworth

Is there a doctor in the house? It won't be long now

Groves, township partner to offer 'Gartshore House' to host locum doctors, interns, medical residents

By Joanne Shuttleworth

FERGUS – It's been cleaned, furnished and hooked up to the internet and now Gartshore House is ready to host locum doctors, interns and residents testing the waters at Groves Memorial Community Hospital.

Centre Wellington Township has partnered with the hospital in its efforts to bring health care professionals here and offered up the historic farmhouse at 965 Gartshore Street, on property the township recently

purchased to build a new operations centre.

As construction at the site won't begin for another year or two, and the house is in good condition, the township offered the house as a temporary fix for doctors, who want to work at the hospital short-term but have trouble finding accommodation in this bustling, tourist town.

Now dubbed Gartshore House, the township and hospital held a media open house on June 7 allowing a peek inside before it's occupied.

Angela Stanley, president

and CEO of Groves hospital, said there's a significant shortage of family physicians in the area and they work in the emergency department as well as keep their own office hours.

The hospital has tried getting locums, "but they often need a place to stay and that is one of the biggest barriers," she said.

"Locums are a good pool to draw from. Once we get them here, we can entice them to stay." She added, "The communities we serve are beautiful - that in itself is a good sell."

The Centre Wellington Chamber of Commerce and its member businesses have also stepped up, providing furnishings and other provisions to make the house comfortable.

Much of the furnishing came from the Habitat for Humanity ReStore.

Wellington County purchased new mattresses and bedding; Giant Tiger provided smaller household items; Shades4u installed black-out shades; and Pam Stumpf of Refreshed and Refined Interiors gave the place a decorator's touch.

The house was built in the 1870s and has four bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs, and an eat-in kitchen and living room on the main floor.

Up to four doctors can stay at a time. Three doctors are booked for June for one- or two-week stays.

Stanley said she's grateful the business community has stepped up because "health care is a community issue and this community is taking it seriously."

While many municipalities are facing the same issue, the partnership between the township and hospital is

unique, Stanley said.

"We knew we had this property," said Mayor Shawn Watters.

"It didn't take long for council to figure out this is the right thing to do. And this house - we knew we could get it going right away."

Locum doctors can stay in the house at no cost. Bookings are done through the hospital.

While the house is not designated as a heritage structure, the township intends to retain it and use it as office space when the operations centre is built.

Fergus Curling Club begins fundraising to replace outdated equipment

By Nicole Beswitherick

FERGUS – The Fergus Curling Club (FCC) is hosting its first "ABC's 4 FCC" Fundraiser beginning on June 21 from 5 to 9pm.

The idea is to embark on a multi-year, multi-stage fundraising program to help replace the club's outdated ice making equipment and concrete pad.

"The equipment we use to create and maintain the ice is about 70 years old," said FCC board chair Chris Krupicz.

"It's in dire need of replacement, enhancements – it needs a lot of help."

The fundraiser

ABC stands for alumi-

num, bottles and cans/cash/coins.

The club is asking community members to save cans, cooking pans, bottle caps and anything else made of aluminum.

There will be a drop-off bin at the curling club and monthly bottle drives will take place from 5 to 9pm on July 19, Aug. 16, Sept. 6, and Oct. 18.

Costly project

The FCC's current refrigerated floor was installed in the 1950s when low/high spots were not recognized as a big deal like they are now in the world of curling.

Fluctuation in the level of the floor means thicker



The Fergus Curling Club is fundraising for new equipment.

and thinner patches of ice will be seen across the floor which has led to an increase in energy, water and labour costs.

Club officials say their goal is to continue providing curling, reduce the hydro

and manpower used, and to provide a more enjoyable game.

Krupicz said if equipment fails, curling will stop because it's not a quick fix.

ABC's 4 FCC is not the only way the club will fund-

raise for the equipment, but it is a start.

Officials estimate the total cost to replace the equipment is about half a million dollars, with inflation increasing the prices.

"When we [start to] get the money, we will take another look at what is available," Krupicz explained.

'Bang for our buck'

She added club officials plan to "get the most bang for our buck" when it comes to energy used and the people helping with it.

Ideally, the club will be able to raise enough funds that the pipes, which cool the ice, will be the same distance apart, and that they are close

to the surface of the cement floor.

Along with the ABC fundraiser, the club has also hosted other fundraisers to get new rocks and other equipment needed for the sport. More than anything, it is always welcoming people to attend its "learn to curl" and "try curling" nights.

"We're there for the community, we're there for our members," Krupicz explained.

"We really feel that there's importance in keeping us going, and keeping us open, because of the physical and mental support that we can give to our members and to anyone who wants to join."

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She gave him her kidney – and he stole her heart

Elora couple urges others to become organ donors after whirlwind romance leads to successful match

By Joanne Shuttleworth

ELORA – Whether it was a match made in heaven remains to be seen, but doctors certainly approved the match between Emma Smith and Ben Doerksen.

As it turns out, it's a match that has been life saving for Doerksen and life affirming for Smith, who started investigating whether she could donate a kidney to Doerksen just a few months after meeting him for the first time.

The story of this Elora couple is magical in many ways, Smith said in an interview.

They met at a Halloween party in 2021. Their eyes met across the room, they chatted all evening, and there was an immediate connection, she said.

They are both 33, both business owners – she the Lost and Found Café in Elora and he is co-founder of Rowantree Landscapes – and Smith said she was smitten.

“Our eyes met, and we fell in love,” she said. “Ben is the most humble, kind person with a heart of gold.”

Doerksen was in fine health until spring of 2021, when suddenly he wasn't.

“He suddenly had kidney failure and had to go on dialysis – five sessions a week, a very restricted diet and fluid intake. He was on dialysis when we met,” Smith said.

It was a restrictive lifestyle. He could never be far from the hospital and those almost-daily treatments.

He was a candidate for a kidney transplant, but it's no simple matter to find a donor who is compatible. Usually family members are the best bet, but not in Doerksen's case.

As time went on and they got to know each other better, Smith started thinking maybe she would be a match. Maybe she could donate her kidney.

She started the testing process in January 2022

– blood tests, background health check and so on. And every time she passed a test, she advanced through the screening program.

She kept it a secret until she had passed the first few hurdles. Then she told Doerksen what she was up to.

“He was shocked; it floored him. He had no idea and he never asked me to do it,” Smith said.

She continued with the tests until October 2022 when doctors in London, Ontario said it was a good match.

“My coordinator called and said I got the green flag to donate. I was thrilled,” Smith said.

The surgery was booked for Nov. 16, 2022.

“I never like to use the word ‘easy,’ but it was pretty easy for me,” Smith said.

Surgeons used laparoscopic surgery, which involves small incisions that are quicker to heal.

Smith was in the hospital for four days and it took about two months for her to feel she was back to normal.

Doerksen's surgery was more complex. He was in hospital for two weeks and had to be monitored closely to ensure his body did not reject the kidney.

But everything went swimmingly.

“I found out how rare it is to be as compatible as we are,” Smith said, adding they grew as a couple as they recovered together.



Perfect match - Emma Smith donated her kidney to her then-new beau Ben Doerksen last year - a match made in heaven and approved by surgeons. Submitted photo

It was a bold move to decide to donate a kidney, especially to someone she hadn't known that long.

What if they broke up? Would she come to resent it? Smith said she gave it a lot of thought.

“For me, I just kept saying, why not? None of us knows what tomorrow will bring so why be afraid. And this could save someone's life.

“I learned that I'm fearless,” she said with a laugh. “A lot of people donate to

strangers. With Ben, I saw my future with him.”

And now, almost a year later, they are heading to Newfoundland for a week's holiday, something Doerksen could never have done without a new kidney.

“Seeing Ben healthy is my reward,” she said. “Seeing him live his life again is really cool. Seeing him chug four glasses of water makes me happy.

“I would do this three times over just to see him live.”

As one might expect, the couple strongly supports organ donation and signing that organ donor card.

They are also committed to kidney research and have registered as a team for the Kidney Walk in Guelph on Oct. 1, a fundraiser for the Kidney Foundation of Canada.

The walk is at the Guelph Golf and Country Club. Registration time is 9am and the walk begins at 10am.

For more information, visit kidneywalk.ca.

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