

Photo: St. Joe's Supper Table



Bénévole Louis Jacques (à gauche) lève des fonds pour St Joe's Supper Table en courant 40 marathons d'ici la fin août! Kathleen Strader (gestionnaire, au centre) et William Matthias (gestionnaire adjoint, à droite) espèrent qu'il pourra atteindre – ou dépasser! – son but de 15 000 \$ au profit de cette banque alimentaire qui a connu une hausse de demande annuelle de 60 % lors des deux dernières années.

St. Joe's Supper Table staff excited about youth's fundraising endeavour

Jumol Royes

Louis Jacques is a passionate and proactive young person who identified a social issue and took meaningful action to address it. The 17-year-old high school student is currently running a total distance of 1,400 kilometres, between Ottawa and Prince Edward Island (PEI), to raise money for St. Joe's Supper Table, a low-barrier food bank and community meal program in Sandy Hill.

St. Joe's Supper Table is an inner-city operation located between the University of Ottawa and the ByWard Market and close to several shelters for people experiencing homelessness. The Supper Table supports individuals in Sandy Hill who are in need of food, regardless of gender identity or expression, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, religion, age, culture, social or economic status. The meal service operates Monday through Friday, with coffee and sandwiches served in the morning and dinner served in the evening. The food bank serves individuals

by appointment only and is hosted at two locations each week: St. Joseph's Parish on Thursday and Strathcona Heights on Friday.

Louis has been a volunteer during the Wednesday evening dinner service since January 2024. He credits his father for getting him involved. "My father was the catalyst for me joining the Supper Table team," shares Louis. "He had been volunteering before me and found it to be very fulfilling. He convinced me to come along for one week, and I loved it."

The inspiration to create the Run For Your Supper fundraiser came to Louis while volunteering. "I saw a need for more money and resources for our food bank and meal program in Sandy Hill, and the need is significant," he explains. "Running to PEI will be a challenge, but I enjoy long-distance running. I hope to use my run to help people in Sandy Hill and to raise awareness of food insecurity nationally."

An avid runner, Louis is running 40 marathons, in stages, until he reaches the eastern tip of PEI. He started his

fundraising run in early April, with his father chauffeuring to different locations on weekends. He anticipates completing the journey by the end of August. His goal is to raise \$15,000.

St. Joe's Supper Table relies on financial and in-kind donations to support its operations amid increasing demand for services. According to the Supper Table's manager, Kathleen Strader, there was a 60 per cent increase in new registrations from 2023 to 2024, and another 60 per cent increase from 2024 into 2025. The proceeds from Run For Your Supper will boost the food bank's purchasing power and allow it to buy more of the foods that people want.

For Louis, it's all about taking care of vulnerable community members. "I'm in a position to succeed and I should take advantage of my luck," he said in a recent interview. "I have a duty to these people to make sure that they get to eat, too."

To donate to Run For Your Supper and support St. Joe's Supper Table visit: www.zeffy.com/en-CA/fundraising/run-for-your-supper.



SUMMERTIME FUN

Sandy Hill parks are set to shine with a vibrant lineup of arts, music, and community events this summer. Whether you're a fan of live performance, cultural immersion, visual arts, or just looking for a unique way to spend a sunny afternoon, Sandy Hill is the place to be in 2025!

Thank you to Amy Barker for pulling together this list of notable upcoming events in Strathcona Park and Annie Pootoogook Park.

STRATHCONA PARK SUMMER EVENTS

Strathcona Faerie Picnic Pop-Up

Tuesday evenings, June 17, July 22 & August 19, 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

An enchanting evening of circus arts, including aerial acrobatics and juggling, presented by Cirquonscient. Free and family-friendly. <https://www.facebook.com/cirquonscient/events/>

Shakespeare in the Park

Monday evenings, June 28 to August 11, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

For its 35th season, the Company of Fools will present its 90-minute version of The Comedy of Errors. <https://www.fools.ca/comedy-of-errors>

Summer in the parks, see page 4

ODYSSEY
theatre

THE GIRL
WITH NO HANDS



THEATRE UNDER
THE STARS

STRATHCONA PARK
JULY 31 - AUGUST 24

ODYSSEYTHEATRE.CA

! VIVA ! THE SANDY HILL BLOCK PARTY

Want to get one organized on your street this summer?

See Action Sandy Hill's step-by-step guide, page 4

IMAGE

Founded in 1972 under the direction of Diane Wood

22, av. Russell Ave.
Ottawa K1N 7W8

Fondé en 1972 sous la direction de Diane Wood

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IMAGE is published in **March, June, September and December**. 7,000 copies are printed (fewer during the pandemic) and distributed free of charge to all residents of Sandy Hill. Free issues can also be picked up at the Rideau library and at various commercial locations.

IMAGE welcomes articles, letters, photographs, notices and other material of interest to its readers in the Sandy Hill community. Name and telephone number of contributor must be included.

If you'd like to write articles, draw cartoons or other illustrations for stories, or take photographs on assignment, please send a message to editor@imagesandyhill.com No age restrictions.

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IMAGE sera publié en **mars, juin, septembre et décembre**. Son tirage est de 7 000 exemplaires (moins durant la pandémie COVID). Il est distribué gratuitement dans la Côte-de-Sable. On peut également l'obtenir à la bibliothèque Rideau et à plusieurs commerces du quartier.

Tous les articles, lettres, illustrations, photos et autre documentation pouvant intéresser les lecteurs de la Côte-de-Sable sont les bienvenus. Leurs auteurs doivent indiquer leur nom et leur numéro de téléphone.

Les personnes intéressées à contribuer un article, un dessin ou une illustration ou à prendre des photos pour un article sont invitées à envoyer un message à editor@imagesandyhill.com. Nous apprécions votre contribution, quel que soit votre âge.

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Site web : imagesandyhill.org

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Next Deadline

Reserve advertising space or let us know you have a text or photo by

September 8

(target delivery October 2)

Date de tombée

Publicité, articles, photos et autres soumissions

le 8 septembre 2025

(livraison prévue le 2 octobre)

Bytowne Birds

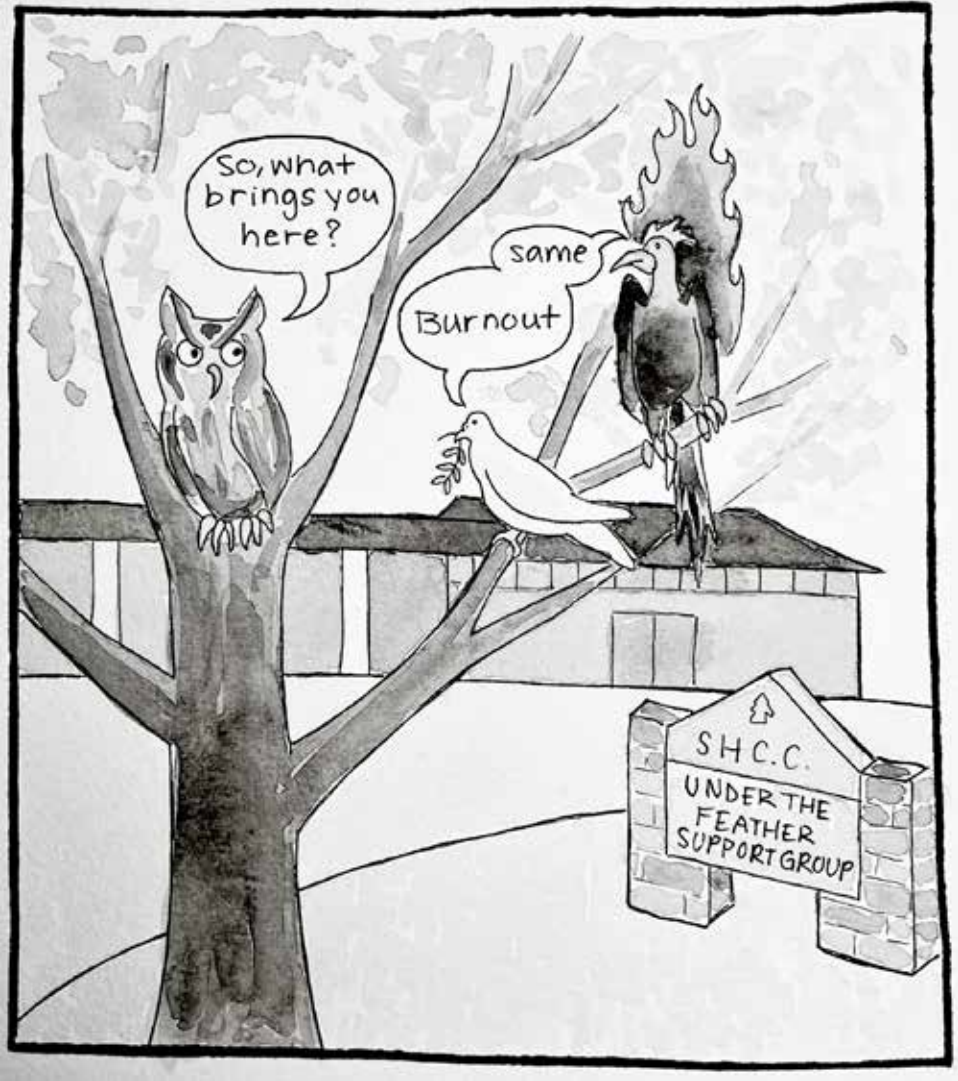


Illustration: Evelyn Baraké

Lettre à la rédaction

Pourquoi pas de panneaux d'arrêt bilingues auprès de nos écoles ?

Afin d'améliorer la représentation linguistique et culturelle du français du secteur de la Côte-de-Sable, pourquoi ne pas commencer à avoir plus de panneaux de signalisation bilingues français-anglais?

Pour arriver à cela, un bon début serait d'y faire installer des panneaux d'arrêt bilingues positionnés aux abords de l'intersection de l'école Francojeunesse. Cette école élémentaire de langue française, sise au coin des rues Osgoode et Henderson, est située à un pâté de maisons de l'université d'Ottawa. L'Ottawa est la plus grande université bilingue (anglais/français) au monde et sur son terrain nous pouvons facilement apercevoir partout des panneaux de signalisation bilingues. C'est un endroit bilingue reconnu.

Même si le mot « STOP » est un mot courant connu partout dans le monde,



des panneaux de signalisation à la forme octogonale à fond rouge avec bordure blanche qui incluraient aussi le mot « ARRÊT » en blanc seraient un atout qui pourrait aider à préserver la richesse de la langue française dans la Côte-de-Sable.

Alors, avis aux employés de la Ville d'Ottawa responsables de la signalisation routière : le temps est arrivé de dire « ARRÊT » aux panneaux de signalisation unilingues anglais ici dans la Côte-de-Sable. Tout en reconnaissant à la fois le caractère bilingue de la ville, faites de la Côte-de-Sable un terrain fertile pour le bilinguisme en y faisant installer des panneaux d'arrêt bilingues aux coins de toutes les intersections du quartier. Merci et bienvenus!

Claude Bégin
rue Range



Claude Bégin thinks it is time for our bilingual neighbourhood to follow in the footsteps of the University of Ottawa by installing bilingual STOP signs.



Chez Lucien

BARB

137 Murray @ Dalhousie Byward Market 241.3533

Sandy Hill's place in the Market
Côte-de-Sable se retrouve au Marché

From the Editor

We surveyed and you responded

What a treat it was for the IMAGE team to see the results of our readers' survey and especially all of the lovely comments! We profusely thank all of those who took the time to answer the questions and provide feedback.

Congratulations to the two winners of the Working Title Kitchen gift certificates, Barbara Aldworth and Kimberley Nicholls, and a big thank you to Leanne Moussa for supporting IMAGE with the generous donation.

While there were no big surprises out of the survey—for the most part you have told us to carry-on with the great work—we have noted a few areas where we could make changes or improvements. I note in particular one person's comment that they would like to see more diversity reflected in our pages.

About half of you do not live in single family homes, and almost 30% pick up the paper at various public locations, which confirms that we need to bolster our efforts to ensure that IMAGE is accessible to all Sandy Hillers, including the transient student community.

Despite being in the digital age, results were clear that our print edition should remain our focus. While many of you do obtain your news online, with respect to IMAGE, readers clearly prefer the experience of flipping through real pages. Should we eventually decide to make use of social media, Meta (Facebook) would probably be the preferred platform (but that's not our priority!).

As editor I was very curious about how our recent efforts to include more French content were being received. Not surprisingly, francophones love it (almost 50% said they were satisfied and 12% want more!), but that content misses about 27% of you who cannot read French.

With respect to the rest of the content, at least 30% of you want more coverage of these topics: heritage; development and planning; community events; community organizations; environment; interviews with neighbours; and restaurant reviews.



Less popular content includes news from local schools (of interest mainly to those with school-aged children), and the politicians' columns. We have conveyed to our MP and MPP that readers would like news that is more relevant to our neighbourhood, but we will continue to accept their submissions as these are paid advertisements, for which we are very grateful.

Speaking of advertising, it works: 87% of you look at the ads and 85% make an effort to support the businesses advertised in IMAGE. And the amount of advertising appears just right.

As I mentioned, the positive comments really boosted our very small team of volunteers and I want to end this note with my favourite:

I just absolutely love IMAGE. I always look forward to its arrival and wish it were more frequent. I'm so busy, I depend on IMAGE to keep me informed on what is going on in the neighbourhood. It is my guilty pleasure to sit down with the paper and a cup of coffee or glass of wine and read it cover to cover to catch up with my neighbours and neighbourhood.

And that, my dear readers, is what IMAGE is all about—not just information, but connection and community.

Christine Aubry

Test your memory and IMAG(E)ination



Last issue's mystery revealed Photos: Christine Aubry

IMAGination enthusiast **Poonam Varshni** eventually provided the correct address for the lions in front of **17 Marlborough Avenue**.



This issue's challenge

Maëva LeBlanc deserves an honourable mention, however, for finding more stone lions in the neighbourhood. Do you know where these stately felines are perched? Send your guess to: editor@imagesandyhill.org



Peter Rinfret, stalwart

Anyone interested in helping IMAGE with advertising management and promotion, please contact Jan Finlay at imageaccounts@imagesandyhill.org

Thank you, Peter!

For over 15 years, Sandy Hill resident Peter Rinfret has solicited and booked ads for IMAGE. Like clockwork, he reached out in advance to advertisers before every issue, reminding them of the upcoming deadlines and answering queries about our rates and production standards. He introduced IMAGE to new businesses, delivering sample copies and rate sheets to their proprietors—it was invaluable work that guaranteed the paper's existence! A retired engineer—innately thorough, efficient and cheerful—Peter Rinfret injected strength and stability into our operations.

Having recently suffered a stroke, Peter is passing on his contacts list, for the moment to Larry Newman. We wish Peter all the best as he focuses on recovery.

Ward Hours

Friday, June 27th, 2025
2:00 – 4:00 pm
Planet Coffee
24a York Street

Rendez-vous de quartier

Vendredi 27 juin 2025
de 14 h à 16 h
Planet Coffee
24a rue York

Stéphanie Plante
Conseillère | Councillor
Quartier | Ward 12 Rideau-Vanier

Celebrate Canada Day in the ByWard Market!

Lots of activities, food, and fun, ongoing from Sunday June 28th to Tuesday July 1st ! Street closures in Byward Market Square for July 1st! Check ByWard-Market.com for details!

Célébrez la fête du Canada au marché By !

De nombreuses activités, de la nourriture et du divertissement, du dimanche 28 juin au mardi 1er juillet ! Routes piétonnes pour le 1er juillet. Consultez le site ByWard-Market.com pour tous les détails !

🌐 stephanieplante.ca
☎ 613-580-2482
✉ stephanie.plante@ottawa.ca





Action Sandy Hill’s call to action: Make this a block party summer!

Betsy Schuurman, with Mikaela Kennedy

My block on Besserer first started hosting a block party in 2019. I was surprised at how easy it was to plan—just decide on a date, fill out a form, and pick up the barricades and traffic cones. We use a “bring a chair and something to share” model. Usually someone will wheel out a grill, and the kids on the street absolutely love being able to run around without worrying about cars. One year a fire truck was driving by and stopped to see what was going on; we invited them to join the block party! On the east end of Besserer the annual block party brings residents together to form a band, and Blackburn has seen regular block parties since the 1980s.

This summer, Action Sandy Hill wants to help our neighbours host and promote block parties. Whether you already know your neighbours or are introducing yourself for the first time, block parties are a great way to lift our spirits and build community. So, what are the steps to hosting a party in Sandy Hill?

1. Talk to some people you know on your block. Is there a weekend that most people will be around? July and August are great for weather but more neighbors may be available in September. Besserer between Chapel and Augusta usually has its block party near the end of September.
2. Pick a block to have the party on. Neighbours on multiple blocks can come together to plan a party, but intersections at cross streets cannot be blocked off. Live on one of the main streets? Talk to neighbours on a side street where the City will have fewer concerns about limiting traffic access.
3. Pick someone to serve as the point person for the permit and for signing the City’s liability waiver. It’s all free.
4. Fill out the “residential block party permit” form on the City of Ottawa website. Remember to submit the form at least 28 days before the event so City staff have time to review the request.
5. Follow the instructions that come with the permit approval, including returning the liability waiver and picking up the barricades and traffic cones. If you need help getting the barricades, contact ASH.
6. Provide invitations and notice of the street closure to residents on your block. We recommend inviting your neighbours to bring their own food and drinks, or bring some to share if they feel so inclined. Reduce garbage by asking people to bring cutlery, dishes and cups from home. If you need help printing invitations and notices, contact ASH.
7. Make sure to have volunteers at each end of the block who can move the barricades if anyone needs to come through.
8. Have a great party!

Blackburn neighbours have shared craft materials for bike decorating and a bike parade. You may want to bring a speaker for music or games to play. It’s up to you and your neighbours to decide what you’d like to do.

If you’d like your block party to be advertised on Action Sandy Hill’s social media, send the details to info@ash-acsc.ca. You can also email us if you need help with any of the steps.



Watching out for us through the upcoming year

The Action Sandy Hill community association held its Annual General Meeting on May 29 and elected a new set of board members. Executive positions were decided by the board at their first meeting on June 2. IMAGE welcomes those new and returning to Sandy Hill’s most important elected body and thanks these leaders for volunteering lots of time and effort to neighbourhood issues.

Pictured above, with chair Betsy Schuurman front and centre, are members of the 2025-2026 board. Left to right: Masood Qureshi, Andrew Johnston, Kathleen Lalande (Secretary), Marilyn Whitaker, Michael Barnes, Betsy Schuurman (Chair), Megan Reilkoff (Treasurer), Nicholas Harrison (Vice-Chair), Calla Barnett. Not pictured: Arto Keklikian, Mikaela Kennedy, Patrick Munro, Tom Waller.

Summer in Sandy Hill parks

continued from page 1

STRATHCONA PARK EVENTS

Theatre Under the Stars by Odyssey Theatre – July 31 to August 24, Tuesdays through Sundays at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m.
See article p.13 for more details about this year’s production, The Girl with No Hands.
<https://www.odysseytheatre.ca>

Art in Strathcona Park – Saturday, September 6, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
A free outdoor art show and sale featuring local artists and artisans. Organized by the National Capital Artisans.
<https://www.nationalcapitalartisans.ca/strathcona-art-in-the-park>



Adàwe Bridge Crossing Event – Sunday, September 7, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (Rain date September 14)
The Ottawa-Gatineau Grandmothers of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers campaign initiative of the Stephen Lewis Foundation, <https://stephenlewisfoundation.org/> are holding this awareness-building event as a fun way for families, grandparents and grand-thers to celebrate Grandparents Day. A “Clothesline” will be available for individuals to write messages of hope and solidarity to African grandmothers.
<https://grandmotherscampaign.org/>

Ottawa International Animation Festival - The Animators’ Picnic – Friday, September 26, 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
North America’s largest animation festival, featuring screenings, workshops, and panels at various downtown venues including this event in Strathcona Park. See which pass options grant access to the Animators’ Picnic event at www.animationfestival.ca/box-office/.

ANNIE POOTOOGOOK PARK EVENTS

Natsu Matsuri – Sat., July 12, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Japanese summer festival will be back again this year at Sandy Hill Community Centre (indoors) and Annie Pootoogook Park (outdoors). Enjoy a full day of live performances, Japanese-themed vendors (from Ottawa and Montreal), delicious Japanese food, and fun cultural activities for the family. <https://ojca.ca/2025/05/14/natsu-matsuri-summer-festival-2025/> They also need volunteers to help on the day of the event! contact@ojca.ca


Ratha Yatra Chariot Festival – Saturday, August 23 beginning at 11:00 a.m. ISKCON’s celebration of Indian culture begins at 11:00 a.m. on the corner of Templeton and Marlborough with the chariot parade. Festivities continue in Annie Pootoogook Park starting at noon with a free vegetarian feast, performances, cultural activities and fun for all ages. <https://iskconottawa.ca/ratha-yatra-2025/>



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Photo: Ellen Bond



Une joueuse des Ottawa Charge salue les nombreux jeunes fans de l'équipe. Malgré le grand succès de ce sport, le plan avance de réduire la taille du stade Place TD, de 8 200 places en section générale à 5 050.

Ottawa Charge fans filled TD Place stadium, yet Lansdowne 2.0 reduces capacity

The Ottawa Charge made it all the way to the championship finals in only their second year, defeating the Montreal Victoire and losing in the end to last year's Walter Cup winner, the Minnesota Frost. Every game in the final round was a close-fought battle, terminating in 2-1 scores. Charge goalie, Gwyneth Philips, won the Ilana Kloss Most Valuable Player (in the playoffs) Award, a rare feat for the goalie of the losing team. She was also nominated for best rookie and best goalie in the Professional Women's Hockey League, while Charge coach, Carla McLeod, was one of three nominees for best coach—a truly remarkable success story for a two-year-old team.

The Charge have a growing and enthusiastic fan base who filled TD Place arena with almost 8,200 fans waving their towels during the playoffs. The Sports Network commentators spoke of us as the loudest and proudest fans! And as the PWHL's Executive Vice-President of Business Ops, Amy Scheer, said, "They (Charge fans) come with their kazoos, they blast their lungs out, they've got Electric Avenue a couple of people deep to greet the players and this building is so loud." The whole city has embraced the Charge, raising the Charge flag outside City Hall and christening part of Bank Street "Charge Avenue."

Yet despite this outpouring of support city council continues to move forward with plans for a smaller arena. As part of the Lansdowne 2.0 plans to build two high-rise apartment buildings, the intention is to replace the current arena, which seats over 8,200, with a smaller one, offering 5,050 general admission seats for hockey games (excluding box seats and standing areas). In other words, for a club that on average drew 7,597 to games



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

throughout the year and over 8,000 to the last home game of the series, there would be 3,000 fewer fans able to attend in the planned new arena. This makes no sense.

Why the plan for a smaller arena? Clearly, the PWHL and the city underestimated the league's success and the growth of women's professional sport in general. As a PWHL advisory board member noted, the initial projection for attendance was a mere 1,000 per game. Moreover, the TD Place Arena's main tenant, the Ottawa 67's, which used to fill the stadium, has struggled to attract over 5,000 since 2015. So the initial plan was based on what turned out to be a flawed prediction. It is not too late to change the City's position. The Charge, like its sister teams in Montreal and Toronto which switched to much larger arenas in their second year, needs an arena the size of TD Place, not the puny one currently being planned.

At the presentation of the Walter Cup, the PWHL's championship trophy, on May 26, 2025, Billie Jean King, who helped found the league, said, "Women's sports deserve the biggest stage." As the PWHL league grows along with other women's professional sports, it is incumbent on the City of Ottawa to keep up. Charge fans do not want to watch their team play in a much smaller arena, subsidized by their taxes. Time for this City to revisit the plan for Lansdowne 2.0.

Rianne Mahon and Margaret Buist



Lucille Collard

MPP / députée Ottawa-Vanier



Photo Claude Brazeau

Chers résidents et résidentes de la Côte-de-Sable,

L'été est à nos portes, apportant des événements passionnants et des opportunités de connexion! Mais avant de regarder vers l'avenir, réfléchissons à un printemps riche en événements.

Notre thé annuel de la fête des Mères a été un joli succès, offrant une occasion de célébrer et de discuter avec un bon nombre d'entre vous. J'ai été honorée de participer au 22e petit déjeuner annuel « Rencontrez les Politiciens » organisé par l'AllAO, où j'ai échangé avec des infirmières dévouées. J'ai aussi appris en personne les défis auxquels la Banque alimentaire d'Ottawa fait face dans sa mission de soutenir les résidents vulnérables. Ces conversations ont façonné ma défense de vos intérêts à Queen's Park, s'assurant que vos voix et vos préoccupations soient entendues.

Le retour à Queen's Park après les élections a été un tourbillon d'activités. Le fait d'obtenir le statut de parti officiel a offert de plus grandes opportunités de plaider pour un changement sur les questions qui comptent le plus : obtenir des améliorations concrètes du financement de l'éducation, s'attaquer à la pauvreté à ses racines et bien plus encore. Au moment où ceci sera publié, j'aurai de nouveau utilisé ma voix dans l'assemblée, défendant les intérêts de la communauté que je sers fièrement.

Maintenant, place à l'amusement estival! Nos très appréciées épluchettes de blé d'Inde approchent à grands pas, promettant des activités familiales, des vendeurs locaux, une bonne musique et bien sûr, du délicieux maïs local. Gardez un œil sur ma newsletter pour les détails des barbecues et d'autres événements dans les semaines à venir, ainsi que sur mes réseaux sociaux pour des détails des événements autour de notre chère communauté, dont j'animerai beaucoup avec mon équipe dévouée!

Bien que les vacances d'été approchent, je reste à votre service. Si vous me croisez dans le quartier, n'hésitez pas à vous arrêter pour discuter — j'aimerais savoir ce que vous avez en tête!

À bientôt!

Lucille Collard,
Députée provinciale

Dear residents of Sandy Hill,

Summer is upon us, bringing exciting events and opportunities to connect! But before looking ahead, let's reflect on an eventful spring.

Our annual Mother's Day Tea was a lovely success, offering a chance to celebrate and chat with so many of you. I was honoured to attend the 22nd Annual Meet the Politicians Breakfast hosted by the RNAO, where I engaged with dedicated nurses. I got to hear firsthand about the challenges faced by the Ottawa Food Bank in its mission to support vulnerable residents. These conversations have shaped my advocacy at Queen's Park, ensuring that your voices and concerns are heard.

Returning to Queen's Park after the election has been a whirlwind. Gaining official party status has provided greater opportunities to push for change on the issues that matter most—securing tangible improvements in education funding, addressing poverty at its roots, and much more. By the time this is published, I will have used my voice in chamber again, advocating for the community I proudly serve.

Now, on to the summer fun! Our much-loved corn roasts are fast approaching, promising family-friendly activities, local vendors, great music, and of course, delicious local corn. Keep an eye on my newsletter for details of barbecues and other events in the coming weeks as well as my socials for details of events around our beloved community, many of which I'll be hosting with my dedicated team!

Though summer break is around the corner, I remain at your service. If you see me around the neighborhood, please stop for a chat—I want to hear what's on your mind!

See you soon!

MPP Lucille Collard

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Chères résidentes, chers résidents,

Alors que la campagne électorale est maintenant derrière nous et que le nouveau gouvernement Carney a été assermenté, je tiens à remercier sincèrement les gens d'Ottawa-Vanier-Gloucester pour la confiance que vous m'accordez en m'élisant pour un quatrième mandat. Vous représenter demeure le plus grand honneur de ma vie et je m'engage à travailler pour tout le monde dans notre communauté – peu importe pour qui vous avez voté.

La Côte-de-Sable est un quartier dynamique où cohabitent étudiants, familles et résidents de longue date, mais c'est aussi un secteur aux premières lignes des défis liés à l'abordabilité du logement et à l'itinérance. Je continuerai de me battre pour des investissements dans le logement abordable et avec soutien, notamment des projets comme le Richcraft Hope Centre. Ce nouvel immeuble de 48 logements représente une avancée importante pour notre communauté : il offre un soutien 24 heures sur 24 aux personnes en situation d'itinérance, ainsi qu'un service de repas communautaire qui prépare et distribue plus de 650 repas chaque jour.

Je suis également déterminée à créer des occasions concrètes pour les jeunes, les nouveaux arrivants et celles et ceux qui amorcent une carrière dans les métiers spécialisés. Cet été, grâce au programme Emplois d'été Canada, 340 emplois sont offerts à Ottawa-Vanier-Gloucester, permettant à des jeunes d'acquérir une précieuse expérience auprès de 100 employeurs, y compris ici dans la Côte-de-Sable. Par ailleurs, nous augmentons le financement pour la formation professionnelle et l'apprentissage afin de répondre à nos besoins croissants en matière de logements et d'infrastructures.

Sous la direction du premier ministre Mark Carney, notre gouvernement est résolu à offrir un véritable soulagement aux familles. Nous avons éliminé la taxe carbone pour les consommateurs, réduit le taux d'imposition marginal le plus bas de 15 % à 14 %, supprimé la TPS sur les premières maisons de moins de 1 million de dollars, et élargi le Régime canadien de soins dentaires aux personnes âgées de 18 à 64 ans, ce qui permet d'économiser jusqu'à 800 \$ par an sur les soins dentaires essentiels.

Ma porte vous est toujours ouverte. J'ai hâte de poursuivre nos échanges – dans le quartier ou à mon bureau.

Continuons, ensemble, de bâtir un Canada plus juste, inclusif et solidaire.

Mona Fortier
Députée Ottawa-Vanier-Gloucester

Dear residents,

With the election campaign behind us and the new Carney government sworn in, I want to sincerely thank the people of Ottawa-Vanier-Gloucester for placing your trust in me for a fourth mandate. Serving you remains the greatest honour of my life, and I am committed to working for everyone in our community – no matter how you voted.

Sandy Hill is a vibrant neighborhood that has been on the frontline of housing affordability challenges and homelessness. That's why I will continue fighting for investments in supportive and affordable housing, including projects like the Richcraft Hope Centre. This 48-unit building is a major step forward, offering 24/7 supports to residents experiencing homelessness and over 650 meals daily in its community kitchen.

I'm also focused on creating opportunities for youth, newcomers, and those pursuing careers in the trades. This summer, through the Canada Summer Jobs program, 340 positions are available in Ottawa-Vanier-Gloucester, giving young people valuable experience with 100 employers, including here in Sandy Hill. We're also boosting funding for skilled trades training and apprenticeships to help build the homes and infrastructure our communities urgently need.

Under Prime Minister Mark Carney, our government is focused on real relief for families and communities. We've eliminated the consumer carbon tax, saving families an average of 18 cents per litre on gas. We're cutting taxes for up to 22 million Canadians by lowering the lowest income tax rate from 15% to 14%, saving two-income families up to \$840 a year. We're removing the GST on first homes under \$1 million and doubling housing construction to 500,000 homes per year. The expanded Canadian Dental Care Plan now covers people aged 18–64, saving families up to \$800 annually on essential dental care.

My door is always open. I look forward to continuing our conversations—in the neighbourhood and at my office.

Together, let's keep building a fairer, more inclusive, and more caring Canada.

Mona Fortier
MP Ottawa-Vanier-Gloucester

Get on your bike and ride!

Patrick Munro

Biking in Sandy Hill is undoubtedly the best way to get around. Purchasing a bike is the best money you will ever spend. With the cost of everyday life rising, the only thing unaffected by inflation is used bike prices. For a couple of hundred dollars and some annual maintenance, you can get around almost for free!

Cycling numbers have been consistently rising every year, and it's easy to see why. Cars are getting more expensive, climate concerns are becoming more apparent, and electric bikes and scooters are making mobility accessible to all ages, abilities, and incomes.

We are blessed to live in a compact neighbourhood where everything is close and convenient. Our side streets have low vehicle volumes, the grid makes it easy to avoid busy streets, and connections to other neighbourhoods mean your daily needs are less than 15 minutes away.

We have great routes, such as the active transit bridges to Centretown and Vanier, the Rideau River and Canal pathways, the Confederation Line Trail to Old Ottawa South, and bike lanes on Stewart, Wilbrod, and Somerset. There are even more improvements planned or under construction, all connecting a network of safer streets for all ages.

Seeing your neighbours while biking with the pack makes you feel part of the community. There's a sense of camaraderie during the morning or afternoon rush, quietly pedaling along with strangers, all heading to different destinations. Moving through our community at a slower pace gives you time to appreciate different sights and sounds, making every ride feel unique.

Within a few kilometres radius, biking is the fastest way to get around. Recently, I drove from the east end during rush hour and covered 8.5 km in 53 minutes. My commute home from the west end is 15 km, almost entirely on separated paths. It takes about 40 minutes, or 5-10 minutes more than driving.



Photo: Patrick Munro

Membre du conseil d'Action Côte-de-Sable, Patrick Munro nous encourage à profiter du réseau de pistes et rues cyclables d'Ottawa, surtout lors du mois de juin, désigné « Mois à vélo Ottawa ».

Biking has many benefits besides easier mobility. It's good for your physical and mental health, helps ease congestion, contributes to road safety, improves the local air quality, and puts money in your pocket. Every dollar saved on gas is a dollar spent at local patios, shops, or you can put it towards your next big purchase.

I'll admit, bikes aren't the perfect tool for every trip or every person. Despite biking year-round in all conditions, I do use my car from time to time. However, any trip where I can use my bike is more fun and beats sitting around or staying inside. It's completely possible to bike most of the year, so I would rather check the weather, put on a coat, and enjoy what nature has in store. Plus, you'll never have to search for parking!

If I can accomplish anything in writing this, it's to convince you to get on two wheels and bring positivity to the biking discourse. June is Let's Bike Month (visit www.letsbike.ca), so in the words of Freddie Mercury, "get on your bikes and ride." For any trip, now is the time to get back on the saddle and be a part of making your streets safer, quieter, and more fun. Ride safe and I hope to see you on the trails!

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Urban “fencification” is a sign of our housing crisis

Ralph Blaine

Have you noticed all the new fences going up around Sandy Hill? In a minor way, I seem to have been at the forefront of this phenomenon. About six years ago, not many months after the Supervised Injection Site at the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre opened, my neighbours said they were seeing people walking through the alley on the east side of my house. Shortly thereafter, one of the owners of the multi-family house next door to me reported that someone was sleeping in the same narrow alley between our two buildings. He showed me a pile of rumpled bed clothes, various food scraps and what seemed to be human feces. I cleaned up the mess and built a six-foot fence at both ends of the alley.

Since then, there has been a steady increase in attempts to deter incursions onto private property in the northwest corner of Sandy Hill. Often, the first step was a “No Trespassing” sign. The owner of the lovely row house, just across the street from the Supervised Injection Site, discovered how effective this approach was when his building was broken into and set afire.

Gradually, these signs gave way to metal or wooden fences with gates guarding the walkway to the front door. But it was not uncommon to see people hopping over these fences or simply pushing open the gates to the front walkway. As time passed, the fences became even taller and the gates were equipped with locks. Private residences, apartment towers, local businesses and even churches have added fences in the past few years.



I’ve begun to see these fences as a warning that something is going amiss in our society. Part of the problem results from an

ever-decreasing housing stock that is designed to accommodate fellow citizens of low income. Rooming houses and other cheap living spaces used to be common in the downtown core of most cities; they certainly were much more common in Sandy Hill when I moved here in the early 70s. Larry Newman has written a number of articles for IMAGE chronicling the renoviction tactics of local developers as they pressure residents to leave cheap lodging. This conversion of affordable housing into pricey houses and small apartments has been going on for many years. As property values go up and rents increase, there will likely be more and more people forced into the street. Consequently, more and more fences will be built.

Ralph Blaine décrit et déplore l’augmentation des propriétés clôturées dans notre quartier, d’après lui, conséquence de l’augmentation du nombre de sans-abris dans notre crise de logement. *Photos: Ralph Blaine*

The book *Abundance: How We Build a Better Future* by Ezra Klein and Derek Thompson provides a good analysis of how our current affordable housing shortage arose and how it has contributed to the serious homeless crisis in North America. Anyone interested in a possible solution to this crisis would find much food for thought in these pages.

Additional photos will be posted at the IMAGE website.

Then again, when: Two books by Cypriot author Christos R. Tsiaillis

UGGA: Spinal Historicisms (2025, 85 pages) and *Klotho Surfaces* (2016, 550 pages) by Christos R. Tsiaillis

Maureen Korp

Recently, the Parnassos Hellenic Cultural Society of Ottawa and the High Commission of the Republic of Cyprus in Canada hosted an evening at the Hellenic Event Centre to celebrate the work of Christos R. Tsiaillis, a Cypriot author new to some of us that evening, myself included.

Tsiaillis, an engaging presenter, is an internationally published novelist, playwright, and poet with nine books in print. I am delighted to have the opportunity to review two for IMAGE. Both are wondrous treks through what was or may have been, and what is, or did it end already?

UGGA: Spinal Historicisms, (2025, 85 pages) is an epic poem, presented as a small book of linked, time-placed verses. *Klotho Surfaces*, (2016, 550 pages), a hefty, enthralling historical-scientific-fantasy, is Volume I of the Omniconstants Trilogy.

We begin with *Klotho Surfaces*: Klotho, Klotho, where are you? What are you? Klotho is a gene, one found in each of

us. Its anti-aging properties, the “secret of life,” comprise the raison d’être of this story.

Klotho Surfaces is a tale told and retold from different points of view throughout a fifty-year period. The story begins in Athens, 2045 – 46; then sidles back to Rome, 1996, and Dallas, Texas, 2015, before heading underground, returning to Athens, 2046.

Many are the people met, lost, and found again along the way. Not all are fictional creations. The novel’s acknowledgements note that this story has been written “with the permission and blessing of the eminent Dr. Makoto Kouro-o, inventor of the Klotho solvent.” This is the Japanese scientist who discovered Klotho. In Tsiaillis’s novel, he is a key player.

Klotho Surfaces gathers tales aplenty into narrative webs of social control and lived realities. We read of the 2011 Japanese tsunami, as well as the Illuminati, Freemasons, and a good many machinations of the Order of the Amaranth. Might World War III be now underway?

Physical locations are vividly, accurately described: Lycabettus Hill in downtown

Athens is one important site, the Bank of America in Charlotte, North Carolina, another. Why? In its lobby is a fresco known to be encoded with Masonic data.

Many factors are at play in *Klotho Surfaces*. How many times can we die? Who is to say one is dead?

The book’s cover is a photograph of two figures in a scary tunnel. Were the Diefenbunker to have a graffiti make-over, this scene would be a mere half-hour’s drive away from Ottawa. (Note: The Diefenbunker was secretly built in 1959 – 61 as a hideaway for Canada’s key political and military personnel in case of a nuclear attack. Today, it is Canada’s Cold War Museum, open to all.)

Klotho Surfaces whispers secrets to the reader. There is a love story, too. Will the lovers, Jordan Dabelmort and Roxanne Fell, remember what matters? What about Lilith? Volume I opens the door to Volume II. May it soon be published.

UGGA: Spinal Historicisms, a small book, is a hopeful meditation, an epic poem presented as an elegant sequence of numbered verses, one to a page. What matters is the whole and how the story is

told. It is sequential—past, present, near future.

UGGA’s spatial compositions enable the reader to enter into thought lines, spinal constructions. What is seen can be remembered.

The first verses of the poem, a section numbered inversely from 30 to one, take us into the long ago. Here, language begins: “Ugga, ugga,” Denisovans, Mitochondrial Eves, Homo Sapiens all making their way, somewhere, at the outset. After all, “the ice pushes you to emigrate.”

In the midsection of the poem, numbering shifts to a progression, zero to 17. Why? A time shift into the present, “Zero, the borderline of Time.” Subsequent verses warn of Bluetooth as “we hide in the QR code,” avoiding the Great Digitalis. But there can be something else. Between “downloading” and “zero,” there can be a “fluttering... truth.” The near future forms the concluding section. Its verses, numbered one to 30, are truths told simply.

Do not forget. Our first ancestral sounds were “UGGA, ugga.” There is always tomorrow.

Bygone Sandy Hill

Building, saving, and now preserving the ByTowne

Beloved cinema receives important designation

Ken Clavette

Sandy Hill is getting a new heritage designation for one of its buildings. It's not a home that belonged to one of the upper crust of our community or one that was designed by a famous architect. It is the ByTowne Cinema, once the Nelson Theatre. A building that is connected to the community and to our bygone days.

In February 1947 Mayor Stanley Lewis cut the ribbon on a new theatre on Rideau Street. *The Ottawa Journal* reported him recalling the days when as a boy he used to "play over backyard fences in this very spot." He added, "This is not intended as encouragement to children to play over backyard fences; they might get to be mayor too." A highlight of the opening ceremonies was the mayor's presentation of a \$100 cash prize to the winner of the Theatre Name Selection Contest. Assisting the mayor in cutting a ribbon to raise the curtain was Mrs. H.J. Goyette of 70 Henderson Ave (home still standing). Her suggestion of the "Nelson" was chosen out of more than 4000 suggested names.

The lot at 319 Rideau where the theatre sits was, *The Ottawa Journal* believed, the oldest home on Rideau Street, built in 1850. It had served as a confectionery and grocery store before the Berlin family operated the "Star Cleaners and Dyers" in it. In 1945 Hyman Berlin obtained a building permit for a new theatre. The theatre was managed by his brother Morris who ten years earlier had opened the Somerset Theatre near Bank St. He told reporters, "We selected this site because we felt a theatre was needed in the Sandy Hill district." It has served our neighbourhood well for the past 78 years.

In giving the building a heritage designation, the report to council provided the following justifications: "The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community."



Photo: Ken Clavette

Le Cinéma ByTowne fut désigné comme bâtiment patrimonial par la Ville d'Ottawa le 13 mai dernier. Ken Clavette nous raconte l'histoire de cette salle de cinéma, depuis son ouverture en 1947, jusqu'à sa renaissance en 2021 après une fermeture causée par les conséquences économiques de la pandémie.

The theatre was designed by Toronto architects Harold Solomon Kaplan (1895-1973) and Abraham Sprachman (1894-1971) who were notable for designing many movie theatres across Canada in the 20th century, as well as significant buildings for the Jewish community. The theatre is in the "Moderne style" characterized by streamlined surfaces and a lighted marquee. Once ubiquitous outside movie

theatres, the ByTowne marquee is now the last remaining one in the city. All others are gone, along with the theatres that sported them.

The Berlin family ran the theatre for five years before renting it to the Famous Players theatre chain. It prominently advertised that the theatre was air-conditioned, a great selling point in Ottawa's humid summers. The cinema found a

niche market as movie houses competed with TV and later the development of small-screen cinemas that came on the scene in the late 1970s. With its large 70-mm screen, the Nelson would host block-buster epic films: *Ben Hur*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Hair*, *2001 Space Odyssey*, *Jaws*, *Dune*, and *The Exorcist*. I remember lining up around the corner onto King Edward with friends to get into that last movie in 1974. It was restricted to age 18 which I would not be until many months later. Ushers were provided smelling salts, and religious groups leafleted outside.

As the large movie chains retreated to the small-screen multiplexes in the suburbs, they shuttered their larger downtown theatres. Lease agreements prevented them from being used as movie theatres after they left, and we lost them one by one. But since the lease on the Nelson dated to the 1950s, that clause had not been included.

In 1988 when Famous Players departed, it stepped Bruce White and Jean Cloutier who were operating the trendy "Towne" repertory cinema in New Edinburgh. The Berlin family sold them the Nelson, and it became the "ByTowne"—just in time, as redevelopment on Beechwood closed the Towne. Independent, Canadian, and foreign films found a home in Ottawa at the theatre as did film festivals. Local groups used the theatre for fundraising events.

In 2020 the effects of the COVID pandemic caused a temporary closure. The ByTowne was purchased by Daniel Demois and Andy Willick and reopened in 2021 under the same name. I reached out to the theatre to get their response to the designation. They are welcoming the news that the theatre is being recognized for its cultural and architectural importance in Ottawa. "This designation under the Ontario Heritage Act will help preserve the cinema for future generations, reflecting our community's dedication to the arts." The owners say they are "encouraged by, and grateful for, this recognition. As we celebrate this announcement, we look forward to the ByTowne Cinema continuing to inspire and entertain audiences for many years to come."

You can learn more about Ottawa's movie theatre history in the book *A Theatre Near You: 150 Years of Going to the Show in Ottawa-Gatineau* by Alain Miguélez, or online at <https://urbansite.blogspot.com/2016/02/coming-soon.html>

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The Swiss Hotel on Daly Avenue embodies a century and a half of history, change and renewal

John McQuarrie

Besserer Street bears the name of Louis Besserer, a visionary whose early confidence in Sandy Hill’s promise would shape the neighbourhood’s destiny. In 1838, just six years after completion of the Rideau Canal, Besserer commissioned a formal survey of the land, dividing it into neat parcels with five cross-streets and lots measuring 66 by 99 feet. He called his planned community “Besserer Place”—a name now lost to time, replaced by the enduring identity of “Sandy Hill.” His remarkable foresight would prove prophetic, as the area blossomed into one of Ottawa’s most distinguished enclaves.

Among the grand residences that once lined Daly Avenue—then considered the “popular street” of a new Capital—stood the building now known as the Swiss Hotel. Built between 1872 and 1873 as part of a row house containing three separate residences (#87, #89, and #91 Daly), the structure was part of the investment portfolio of Henry Inglis, a prosperous gentleman merchant. His purchase reflects a common strategy of the time: using land speculation and real estate to elevate one’s place in Ottawa’s emerging economic elite.

By the late 19th century, Daly Avenue had become synonymous with refinement. To reside there was to enjoy an air of respectability and distinction. Yet it wasn’t solely the domain of the wealthy. Modest homes built by early investors who seized the opportunity presented by Besserer’s subdivision stood side by side with more opulent dwellings, each reflective of the owner’s means and ambition.

Over the decades, as Sandy Hill’s character shifted with the currents of history, the stately house at 89 Daly Avenue likewise assumed new roles. During the First World War, when even Ottawa’s quiet



Le bâtiment au 89 avenue Daly célèbre en 2025 son 150e anniversaire! John McQuarrie nous raconte l’histoire fascinante de cet immeuble, acheté en 1985 par Sabina et Josef Sauter, qui l’ont soigneusement transformé en hôtel de charme et qui continuent aujourd’hui à accueillir chaleureusement les voyageurs dans un des rares hôtels indépendants d’Ottawa. Photo: John McQuarrie

neighbourhoods felt the impact of the conflict, the house was pressed into service as a military rehabilitation centre caring for wounded soldiers. In the years that followed, it continued to adapt—at one time serving as a nuns’ rooming house—with each incarnation reflecting the evolving needs and spirit of the community around it.

In 1945, like many properties in the post-war city, it was converted into apartments, part of a housing boom sparked by returning veterans and an expanding desire to live and work in downtown. The 1960s saw yet another transformation as it became a rooming house, serving a new generation, including Ottawa University students, many of them children of veterans.



Photo: Swiss Hotel website

But it was in 1985 that the true renaissance of 89 Daly began. In a stroke of good fortune, the property was purchased by an affable Swiss couple, Sabina and Josef Sauter who, after coming to Canada on holiday in 1982, liked it so much that they emigrated from Switzerland a year later. Their vision was not to demolish or diminish, but to elevate and restore. Eschewing the “Do-It-Yourself” trend, they enlisted esteemed Ottawa architect Barry Padolsky to reimagine the space with care and precision. The result: a boutique hotel with 22 elegantly appointed rooms, each

featuring modern glass-walled bathrooms while yet retaining the warmth of the original, hot-water radiators, still functional and full of character. Individually controlled air conditioners deliver cool summer comfort to guests.

In working alongside co-owner Sabina to shape this story, I was utterly charmed, not only by her luminous smile, but also by a warmth and spirited enthusiasm that surely lit the air on that very first day back in 1985, when the doors of the couple’s dream opened to the world.

Today, as their website proudly declares, the Swiss Hotel is one of the few independently owned and operated hotels in Ottawa. Nestled in a beautifully restored stone building, it marries modern comfort with the timeless charm of Swiss hospitality. A secluded courtyard garden and a fireplace-lit meeting room complete the experience, offering guests a serene retreat in the heart of the city.

From its roots as a merchant’s investment to its current role as a haven for travellers, 89 Daly has witnessed—and embodied—over 150 years of change, resilience, and renewal.

Adapted from: A Social History of #89 Daly Avenue by Mark Lowell (1997) and www.swisshotel.ca

Photo: John McQuarrie





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Notre mission d'aider les sans-abri d'Ottawa, un dimanche à la fois

Elliott Crichton

Ayant grandi à Ottawa, nous avons toujours su que le sans-abrisme était un problème, mais nous n'en avons jamais vraiment compris l'ampleur jusqu'à récemment. Ensemble, Theliao, Justin Jakob et moi croisons chaque jour des dizaines de sans-abri et de personnes défavorisées sur le chemin de l'école. Cela nous a tous profondément touchés. Pendant un certain temps, nous étions coupables de ce que font la plupart des gens : se sentir mal mais continuer à vivre. Un jour, nous avons réalisé que le sans-abrisme n'était pas un problème ou une crise que nous pouvions ignorer, reléguer au second plan ou laisser quelqu'un d'autre s'en occuper. Il était temps d'agir. C'étaient des personnes, pas seulement des visages que nous croisons. Ce fut un signal d'alarme pour nous en tant que groupe et nous nous souvenons de nous en être parlé les uns aux autres.

« Pourquoi ne pas faire quelque chose ? » L'idée a fait son chemin et avant même de nous en rendre compte, nous planifions comment nous pourrions aider. C'est alors que nous avons décidé de lancer notre propre collecte de fonds pour les sans-abri. Au départ, une simple conversation a rapidement pris de l'ampleur. Notre plan était de faire du porte-à-porte tous les dimanches pour collecter des denrées non périssables et tout l'argent que les gens étaient prêts à donner. Peu importe qu'on puisse donner seulement une boîte de haricots ou quelques dollars : chaque don compte. Notre objectif était de rassembler suffisamment de provisions pour organiser un événement où nous pourrions distribuer des hamburgers aux sans-abri et donner le reste des denrées non périssables à la Banque alimentaire d'Ottawa. Chaque dimanche, nous nous séparons tous les quatre et visitons différents quartiers pour expliquer notre cause. Nous commençons par nous présenter et



De La Salle high school students (left to right) Elliott Crichton, Maasilan Etchart, Justin Brown, and Thelieu Jaouen-Steffner want to be part of the solution to homelessness and poverty. They collect food and monetary donations throughout Ottawa neighbourhoods, to benefit the Ottawa Food Bank and to offer free meals to the homeless. Their first event was a BBQ this past May 10 at *highjinx*. Photo: Jakob Peterson

parler de ce que nous avons vu : les conditions de vie difficiles des sans-abri près de notre école. La plupart des gens que nous rencontrons nous soutiennent immédiatement, ce qui est incroyablement motivant. Nous sommes toujours surpris de la volonté des gens de nous aider une fois qu'ils ont compris ce que nous essayons de faire. C'est un processus assez simple. Nous frappons aux portes, expliquons notre présence et demandons tout ce que les gens peuvent nous donner. Thelieu, Justin, Jakob et moi sommes généralement accueillis avec gentillesse et générosité. Même si nous le faisons depuis des semaines, nous sommes toujours étonnés de la diversité des réponses que nous recevons. Nous nous souvenons qu'une personne nous a donné un carton entier de provi-

sions, disant qu'elle était heureuse de pouvoir aider, car elle avait elle-même vécu des situations difficiles. Ce sont des moments comme celui-là qui nous motivent. Nous avons collecté des centaines de denrées non périssables et les dons ont largement dépassé nos attentes. Nous avons utilisé cet argent pour financer notre premier barbecue pour les sans-abri le 10 mai dernier, en collaboration avec l'entreprise sociale highjinx, sur la rue Kent.

Mais il ne s'agit pas seulement de nourrir les gens. Pour nous, il s'agit de reconnaître les sans-abri, de leur donner le sentiment d'être considérés et de les traiter avec le respect qu'ils méritent. On peut facilement s'endormir face aux gens dans la rue, mais en s'arrêtant et en observant attentivement, on réalise à quel point il

est facile de tomber dans cette situation. Un peu de malchance, et cela pourrait nous concerner tous. C'est pourquoi nous avons senti qu'il fallait faire plus que simplement en parler.

Cette expérience nous a ouvert les yeux sur le pouvoir de l'action communautaire. Nous avons appris que même si nous ne sommes que quelques élèves, nous pouvons avoir un réel impact si nous y consacrons du temps et des efforts. Nous réfléchissons déjà à la manière de poursuivre cette initiative au-delà de l'événement. Qu'il s'agisse de poursuivre nos collectes dominicales ou de trouver de nouvelles façons de soutenir les sans-abri d'Ottawa, nous sommes déterminés à poursuivre nos efforts.

La version originale de ce texte a paru dans le Glebe Report, octobre 2024.



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Odyssey Theatre’s 39th season of Theatre Under the Stars in Strathcona Park features a new work by founder Laurie Steven

Britney Forget

A beloved tradition returns to Sandy Hill this summer! Odyssey Theatre launches its 39th season of Theatre Under the Stars with the premiere of *The Girl With No Hands*, a darkly comic fantasy by award-winning local theatre creator Laurie Steven. The production runs from July 31 to August 24, 2025, on Odyssey’s open-air stage in scenic Strathcona Park.

Laurie Steven, Odyssey’s founding artistic director, has been at the creative helm of the company for nearly four decades. The longtime Sandy Hill resident introduced imaginative, outdoor theatre to the community, giving shape to Odyssey’s unique masked, physically theatrical productions under the open sky.

This summer, Steven premieres her new original work, *The Girl with No Hands*, taking audiences on an adventure both fantastical and deeply human. At the heart of the play is a girl who has lost her hands—a dreamer who has lost her ability to dream. With the walls of her life closing in, she is lured into a crumbling fantasy world where she becomes the reluctant heroine of a story with a mind of its own.

She is hailed as a long-awaited saviour by a trio of bumbling outcasts, courted by a desperate king, entangled in the romantic schemes of an eccentric spirit, and hunted by a devil hell-bent on destroying her. But when true love doesn’t deliver a happy ending, she must take charge of her own story.

The play is inspired by the Brothers Grimm’s “The Handless Maiden,” one of few classic folktales centred on a female lead. Though often touted as the feminist answer to the hero’s journey, Steven found its vision of healing through love, marriage and motherhood limiting.



Performers Tracey Guptill, Landon Nesbitt, and Jesse Buck (left to right) in Odyssey Theatre’s past production: *The Miser*, 2023 Photo: John Forster

“I thought, what if she was angry after what happened to her and inclined not to trust people?” explains Steven. “What if she balked against marriage and motherhood?” The result is a haunting, darkly funny and moving tale of a modern heroine battling inner demons and reclaiming her voice.

Set in a gothic, fantasy world brought vividly to life by an accomplished creative team, the production showcases Odyssey’s signature style. Stunning masks, bold costumes, elaborate movement and original sound and music will create a

surreal world haunted by pig-nosed demons, soaring wraiths, a sharply wicked queen mother, and a devil with multiple disguises.

The production’s talented ensemble includes Odyssey veteran actors Bruce Spinney, Chandel Gambles, Nicholas Koy Santillo, Marlow Stainfield, Scott McCulloch, and William Beddoe. Joining them are newcomers Erin Mackey and award-winning film actress Valerie Buhagiar. Together, they bring to life over thirty unforgettable characters for a memorable night of theatre.

Since introducing open-air theatre to Ottawa 38 years ago, Odyssey has been a cultural cornerstone of Sandy Hill, drawing thousands each summer to its stage on the scenic banks of the Rideau River at the north end of Strathcona Park.

The Girl with No Hands runs Tuesdays through Sundays at 8 p.m., with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. For tickets and information, visit odysseytheatre.ca.

Rideau branch public library offers summer fun for all ages

Ann Davis

If you’re searching for things to do this summer, look no further than the Ottawa Public Library! The Rideau Branch, located at 377 Rideau Street, will be hosting a variety of activities from the beginning of July until the end of August, and all are welcome to participate.

Children can sign up for the TD Summer Reading Club, an annual library tradition dating back to 1996. TD Summer Reading Club is a bilingual summer reading program offered across Canada, helping young people develop a lifelong love of reading through fun books and activities. Drop in to the Rideau Branch any time beginning on June 9 to register your children for the program. Then, visit the branch on June 28 for the “Get Your Summer Read On” party, when the library kicks off a summer of fun! You can find more information about TD Summer Reading Club on the library website.

In addition to summer reading programs, OPL will be offering a variety of activities for all ages. Starting in July, families can look forward to Storytime every Thursday morning, with a mix of stories, rhymes and songs in French and English for children of all ages and their parents or caregivers.



Photo: Betsy Mann

The library will be running crafts, games, and activities each week, presented by library staff. This includes a map-making art project (July 4), a chance to explore Canada’s past with a History Box full of replica artifacts donated by the Canadian Museum of History (July 31), and a chance to play with robots at a Cubetto Storytelling Program (August 7).

The Rideau branch will also host several visitors over the course of the summer. Parks Canada will be presenting a workshop on identifying urban Canadian wildlife (July 9),

and kids can meet a variety of critters with Little Ray’s Reptiles (August 12). Families are invited to spend a magical afternoon with magician Luc Leduc when he visits the library (July 16, program offered in French). Pre-registration for these programs is encouraged and can be done online.

All information and registration for summer programs at the library can be found on the OPL website at www.bibliottawalibrary.ca, or you can visit the Rideau Branch to ask staff for more information. We look forward to seeing you this summer!

Rideau Branch Summer Activity Schedule	
TD Summer Reading Club starts June 9	Mini Masterpieces – Intro to Cross Stitch for ages 10 – 12 July 23
“Get Your Summer Read On” party June 28	History Box July 31
Map-making Art Project July 4	Stay & Play with games, Lego, and/or crafts August 1
Parks Canada July 9	Cubetto Storytelling Program August 7
Bilingual Storytime Thursdays starting July 10	Little Ray’s Reptiles August 12
Magician Luc Leduc (French program) July 16	STEAM activities for ages 4 – 6 August 14
Stay & Play with games, Lego, and/or crafts July 18	Stay & Play with games, Lego, and/or crafts August 15

Little store with a big heart supports many charities

Betsy Mann

“May Court Bargain Box.” The sign over the little shop at 228 Laurier East tells you what you’ll find inside: a staff of friendly volunteers from the May Court Club and lots of affordable items, all in a space that, while bigger than a box, does not overwhelm you like some large second-hand stores. In spite of its small size, the Bargain Box has flourished on Laurier East since 1971. Through the years it has contributed over \$1,000,000 to community charities, principally the May Court Hospice.

In addition to its mission in support of community causes, the Bargain Box plays its part in reducing waste. “Sometimes people just put a lot of stuff in a bag and leave the decisions up to us about what is really useful,” says the shop’s manager, May Court Club member Sandra Ferguson. Is this sort of like “wish recycling,” when people ignore the list of accepted items and put broken plastic toys in the blue recycling bin? Like City workers, volunteers would certainly appreciate it if people always followed guidelines, but they know that not everything in donated bags will end up on Bargain Box shelves. As Ferguson observes, “Even though it requires extra work, our aim is that nothing we take in will end up in landfill.”



Patricia Sanders et Janet Branigan, bénévoles du May Court Bargain Box, sont heureuses d’accepter vos dons et de vous aider à trouver des articles uniques et précieux : vêtements, bijoux, articles ménagers, livres, casse-têtes et bien plus encore. En faisant vos achats ici, vous respectez votre budget, contribuez à la réduction des déchets et soutenez de nombreux organismes communautaires. Photo: Betsy Mann

The May Court Bargain Box

DONATION GUIDELINES

Only donate when the store is open - Tues-Sat 11:30 - 3:00PM

Pack items in bags and limit to 3 bags per visit

Items need to be clean and in good wearing/working condition

ITEMS ACCEPTED

Clean women's and men's clothes

Shoes, boots, sandals and runners

Unbroken jewelry and watches

Clean linens for table, bath and bed

Accessories such as ties, belts, scarves, handbags, hats, gloves

Housewares such as vases, small baskets, kitchen utensils, cookware

Both fine and everyday tableware, silverware, crystal and glasses

Decor items such as small pictures, figurines, cushions, centrepieces

Books, puzzles, craft items, unused candles, stationery

PLEASE DO NOT DONATE

Medical devices or medications

Furniture, electronics or sports equipment

Food, liquids, make-up or creams

Baby / children's clothing or toys

Registered Charity 10769854RR001

Ferguson describes what this means for how the store is stocked. “We are open from 11:30 to 3:00, Tuesday to Saturday.* On Mondays, volunteers spend the day sorting through the donations that have come in during the previous week.” She explains that this sorting job involves curating donations while keeping in mind both the store’s clientele and its limited display and storage space. What is likely to sell fairly quickly? And what should be passed on to other organizations?

In spite of donation guidelines that stipulate no children’s clothing or toys, volunteers sometimes find these items in the bags people bring in. When enough accumulate, volunteers will take them to

an organization like Debra Dynes Family House or the Dalhousie Food Cupboard. Other goods may be given to the Salvation Army or the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre. The Street Outreach Society, which supports the downtown unhoused population, gratefully receives clothing that May Court volunteers set aside for its clients.

If you’ve been in the Bargain Box, you know that the men’s and women’s clothing for sale is clean and good quality. “Sometimes we get clothes that are torn or too dirty, and we know that no one will ever want to wear them again,” Ferguson says regretfully. “We used to have someone who regularly picked those up for

textile recycling. Unfortunately, we’ve lost that contact. I’m looking for another outlet to reduce textile waste in landfill.”

Whether you’ve been spring cleaning and have items to donate or you’re looking for something to wear to a summer wedding, think of our neighbourhood new-to-you shop. Note: cash or debit only please. Your budget will thank you, and so will many worthwhile organizations in our community.

**The first Saturday of every month, the Bargain Box provides the trans community a safe place to shop, between 3:15 p.m. and 4:15 p.m. Call ahead to confirm: 613-235-0333.*

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Planning for end-of-life care with compassion

Krista Ranacher

Living in a community that supports people through all stages of life is a source of peace in an increasingly anxious world. It could be said that we’re all dying from the moment we take our first breath, but that’s also the moment when we are all set on our individual path to the inevitable. We’re all the same, and we’re all different.

It is natural to desire a good quality of life and a dignified and peaceful passing. Yet, it is also natural to avoid hard conversations with our loved ones or to take steps to communicate our desires for end-of-life care, when circumstances may require someone to make decisions on our behalf. Here to help us take action to put these anxieties to rest is Compassionate Ottawa, “a movement that builds on the capacity of the citizens of Ottawa to be more capable and confident of helping themselves, their families and their communities to live well and to die and grieve well.” (www.compassionateottawa.ca)

Compassionate Ottawa provides resources for dealing with grief and bereavement for individuals, schools, workplaces and faith communities. A big part of their work is to provide information and resources on

Advance Care Planning (ACP): “Compassionate Ottawa helps people and their communities start conversations about the values, wishes and beliefs that go into ACP. We do this by conducting workshops with trained volunteer facilitators to raise awareness of the issues. These issues include the need for ACP, how to choose and inform a substitute decision maker, and the types of decisions that may need to be made to maintain a meaningful quality of living until the end of life.”

Indeed, leaning in and preparing for the end of life and supporting others to do the same can help relieve the existential anxiety of our times. Your correspondent is of the Mr. Rogers generation who learned to “look for the helpers” in challenging moments and times of crisis. In aging, one comes to realize that being a good citizen and neighbour means finding opportunities to be a helper. In our Sandy Hill neighbourhood, the May Court Bargain Box shop at 228 Laurier Avenue East supports the May Court Hospice. Volunteers run the Bargain Box shop, and volunteers are also a big part of the team that makes the hospice a peaceful and welcoming place for those in their final days.

Volunteerism and entrepreneurship bridge the gaps between the medical system and the social aspects of dying. A volunteer at May Court Hospice now offers services as a “death doula.” Just like birth doulas, Christopher offers care services (including in Sandy Hill), ranging from dog walking and light housework to accompaniment on outings to simply sitting with people that need company. <https://www.christopher-cares.com/>

Ottawa has an aging population. Many older people have little intergenerational support, and often those that one might turn to are living at a distance and don’t have a lot of free time to devote to evolving and increasing needs. Christopher describes this as an “underground of people suffering alone.” Clearly, one doesn’t get into this line of work to get rich. But addressing the growing needs of our aging population is engaging and fulfilling work, no matter your entry point.

Compassionate Ottawa is a great place to start when thinking about your own Advance Care Plan and to help others do the same. Shopping at May Court Bargain Box or donating the results of a spring closet clear-out to their cause can provide a similar sense of satisfaction from doing something to support our community in these challenging times. It isn’t going to fix everything, but it helps us practice the proverb “better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.”



The team of the francophone non-profit organization Réseau Ontario, located in Place de la Francophonie on Rideau, which supports French-language performing arts. Left to right: Dieng Diop, Ingrid Cabezas, Maëva Leblanc, Marie Ève Chassé, Aurélie Marié, and Nicolas Formell.
Photo: Catherine Archambault

Réseau Ontario soutient les arts de la scène en Ontario, jusqu'en France!

Maëva Leblanc

Dans l'édition précédente d'IMAGE, nous avons survolé les organismes qui se trouvent à la Place de la francophonie au 450 rue Rideau; je vais prendre un peu de temps pour vous les présenter de plus près dans les prochaines éditions. Commençons par Réseau Ontario, un organisme à but non lucratif provincial.

Réseau Ontario (RO) est le réseau de diffusion des arts de la scène en Ontario français et rassemble, représente et outille ses membres afin d'assurer la vitalité du milieu artistique francophone et le rayonnement des arts de la scène partout en province.

Cette année, Réseau Ontario compte 27 membres communautaires et 13 membres scolaires (qui représentent plus de 400 écoles francophones partout en Ontario, dont les écoles de notre quartier).

Réseau Ontario travaille autour de plusieurs valeurs qui sont l'engagement, la bienveillance, la collaboration et l'adaptabilité. L'équipe de RO et son conseil d'administration s'assurent de respecter ces valeurs tout en adhérant aux principes d'équité, de diversité et d'inclusion.

Mais que fait cet organisme au quotidien? L'équipe offre plusieurs services

à ses membres tout au long de l'année : des formations, des rencontres en ligne et en personne, un événement de réseautage et de découverte en janvier (Contact ontariois), de la programmation en groupe (négociation de tournées à l'échelle de la province), des projets spéciaux d'appui au développement de public en théâtre et en danse ainsi qu'un appui en général dans leur travail.

La programmation en groupe de Réseau Ontario représente environ 600 spectacles chaque année partout en province, de Hearst à Windsor en passant par Sudbury, Thunder Bay et Alexandria.

Les membres de Réseau Ontario dans la région de la capitale sont La Maison de la francophonie d'Ottawa, La Nouvelle Scène Gilles Desjardins, le MIFO à Orléans, l'Alliance Française d'Ottawa ainsi que les conseils scolaires CECCE, CEPEO et le Consortium Centre Jules-Léger. Certains des spectacles que vous pouvez voir ou que vos enfants ont la chance d'accueillir dans leur école font partie des tournées Réseau Ontario!

Et Réseau Ontario représente même la province... en France! L'organisme a un partenariat avec un festival dans la région de Lyon où une délégation ontarienne va chaque année, accompagnée par des artistes choisis lors de Contact ontariois pour jouer dans la programmation officielle du festival Changez d'Air.

Local initiatives



Free Advice

One afternoon in April, Jean-Philippe Torunski, Tara Tompkins offered Free Advice on the Adawe Crossing. Will there be more free sessions? ...join the Facebook group Sandy Hill (Ottawa) Neighbours to find out.

Photo: Philip Owen

Drop-in Art Opportunity

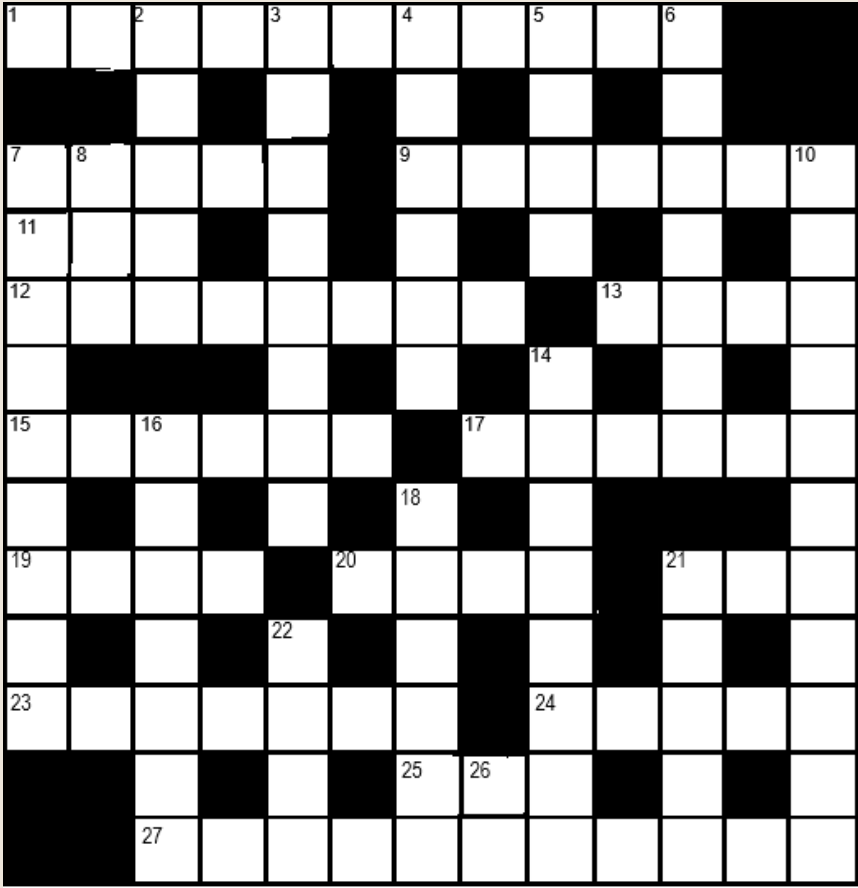
St Joe's Supper Table assistant manager, Will Matthias, is trying out something new: a free drop-in art space on occasional Saturday mornings. Bring your art supplies, grab a coffee (by donation), and connect with others. Some art supplies are available for those who need them and donations of art materials always welcome! St. Joe's Coffee & Studio, occasional Saturdays 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., 151 Laurier Ave. For more information, email supporttable@st-josephs.ca or follow St Joe's Supper Table on Facebook and Instagram.

Photo: Christine Aubry



MORE FOREIGN OUTPOSTS

By Ralph Blaine



ACROSS

- This European country's embassy is at 5 Marlborough Ave. This country is known for its banks (sometimes dodgy) and chocolate (always delightful). (11)
- The people who built Machu Picchu in Peru. (5)
- An extremely large number of things. [Informal, plural] (8)
- Lacking care or attention to duty; negligent. As in "It would be very _____ of me not to tell him." (6)
- Measure of land area. (4)
- Charles _____, the author of *David Copperfield*. (7)
- This oil-rich South American country's embassy is in a beautiful stone mansion at 32 Range Road. The capital of the country is Caracas. (9)
- Mature female's reproductive cells. (3)
- Completely finished (often of something unpleasant); often followed by "with." (4, 3, 4)
- A person from the former communist country that included Bosnia, Slovenia, Serbia, Croatia, etc. (8)
- Moving from one place to another rather than living in one place all of the time. (7)
- This European country's embassy is at 443 Daly Ave. This country is wedged between Germany and Belarus. Lech Walesa is a former president. (6)
- Yeasts, molds and mushrooms, for example. (5)
- A child, typically one that is badly behaved. (4)
- A prefix meaning two. (2)
- This West African country (and former French colony) has its embassy at 9 Marlborough Ave. This country is sandwiched between Ghana and Liberia on the Atlantic Ocean's Gulf of Guinea. (4, 1', 6) [in French; note the apostrophe, which is not counted as a letter.]

DOWN

- This European country's embassy is at 5 Marlborough Ave. This country is known for its banks (sometimes dodgy) and chocolate (always delightful). (11)
- A word that might be used to describe a person who strongly expresses their opinion; uttered by the voice. (5)
- This North African country's embassy is at 38 Range Rd. Casablanca is a city on the Atlantic coast of this country. (7)
- The wife of post-war Argentine President Juan Perón. (3)
- The most unpleasant or spiteful person. (8)
- Mother in Quebec City. (4)
- The section of the Ottawa by-laws that regulates what can be built on a given location. (6)
- This country's embassy is at 285 Charlotte. Protesters carrying yellow and blue flags are often seen there. (6)
- The ticklish Muppet; or "St. _____'s Fire". (4)
- Done by one person alone. (4)
- Temporary craze or fashion. (3)
- This tiny country is located in the Pyrenees mountains between France and Spain. It has no embassy in Ottawa. (7)
- Duo _____ (A language learning app); jargon of a particular group of people. (5)
- The professional sports league to which the Toronto Raptors belong. (abbr.) (3)

► Crossword solution, page 23



Share your ideas of how the City can support and expand community waste reduction and reuse initiatives.

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Les élèves de De La Salle ont démontré leur talent musical en Asie ce printemps

La Chorale senior de l'Ecole secondaire publique De La Salle a eu la chance au mois d'avril de voyager jusqu'au Vietnam pour plusieurs performances et une expérience culturelle inoubliable. Parmi le groupe, plusieurs jeunes de la Côte-de-Sable, dont Emma Barrette, Henri Trépanier et Zoé Parizeau.

Un grand bravo aux choristes et leur directeur Maxime Bégin pour avoir remporté le Grand prix de la chorale Hôi An 2025 lors de la 8e Vietnam International Choir Competition! Photo: Phuoc Tri (Charlie) Vuong

Une autre expérience incroyable pour les jeunes musiciens doués de l'école De La Salle, dont Sofia Barrette, Julian Tchen et Simon Gracia Cherian de la Côte-de-Sable : au mois de mai, l'orchestre à cordes senior fut invité à EXPO 2025 au Japon, pour jouer devant le pavillon du Canada. Photo: Catherine Sauvé.

Photo Lena Capkun

Photo Paula Tchen

Pour financer leurs voyages en Asie, l'orchestre à cordes senior et la chorale senior de De La Salle ont offert des spectacles à l'église St. Bartholomew (ci-dessus) et dans l'espace allsaints de la Côte-de-Sable (à droite).

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News from Viscount Alexander Public School

Viscount Alexander P.S. shoots for the stars!

Scott Macklin

Basketball season truly energized Viscount through the month of May, culminating in a tournament at Glashan Public School and a field trip for the junior students to see the BlackJacks at Lansdowne Park. Grade 4 student, Om, describes the field trip to the see the Ottawa BlackJacks in action:

On Wednesday May 14th, our class went to the BlackJacks basketball game. We went on a bus with all the students in Grades 4 to 6. It took about 30 minutes to get there. When we got there we took the tickets and went inside the TD Place. We went to gate number 18 and sat down. The mascot music was playing. On the jumbotron it said, "Make Some Noise" and everyone started yelling and screaming. The BlackJacks and Allstars started their warm-ups. Their mascot, a bunny, was walking around high-fiving some people. As the game started some people in our group held up a sign that said "BlackJacks!" We tried to get on the jumbotron but it was hard because we were so high up. After an hour, the BlackJacks were leading 67 to 50. It was all because of Justin Jackson and this guy who was 6 foot 10 who kept scoring 3-pointers and Justin Jackson kept slam dunking. At the end the BlackJacks won 109-81 and we all got BlackJack sport sacks at the end of the game.

At the highly anticipated Glashan Middle School tournament on May 7, our school proudly fielded two teams. Each comprised twelve boys and twelve girls who committed to several weeks of in-



Viscount Alexander students Norah, Friida, Skyra and Amen enjoying the Ottawa BlackJacks inaugural School Day Game at TD Place on May 14.

Photo: Annie Butler

tensive practice sessions. These sessions were guided by our dedicated coaching staff: Ms. Bruin, Mme Annie, Ms. Leet, and Coach Noah. The teams showcased their honed skills and teamwork during the tournament.

Through their perseverance and competitive spirit, both the boys' and girls' teams achieved commendable results, each earning second place overall in their respective divisions. This achievement reflects the significant effort invested by our student athletes and coaching team.

Scott Macklin is Principal of Viscount Alexander Public School on Mann Ave.



Mme Annie's Grade 1/2 class pause after planting gardens in the schoolyard.



Wednesday, July 2 - Book Launch

Sandy Hillers are invited to the Ottawa launch of Adam Kahane's book *Everyday Habits for Transforming Systems: The Catalytic Power of Radical Engagement*. Discover the seven habits that enable ordinary citizens to become extraordinary agents of transformation and hear about the process of co-creating the book with over 300 individuals, including Claude Schryer of Sandy Hill. Reservations required! Email: claudes@conscient.ca
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at Perfect Books, 258A Elgin Street

SAVE THE DATE!

Sandy Hill Neighbourhood Yard Sale

Saturday, August 30
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Let us know you are participating in the sale by sending an email to info@ash-acsc.ca with your address and postal code, so that we can add the information to our online yard sale map. If you or your children are setting up a table to sell drinks and baked goods, include that in your email and we will add it to the map. Check out the Facebook event at <https://www.facebook.com/ActionSandyHill>, and share it! If you'd like a "Yard Sale Here!" sign for the end of your street, say so in the email and we'll let you know where to pick one up on the day.

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Green Team is not afraid to get their hands dirty

Bryan Dewalt

The Sandy Hill Green Team is a volunteer group that takes a hands-on approach to expanding and enhancing public greenspace in Sandy Hill. As spring gives way to summer, the Green Team is well into its field season, managing several projects in the neighbourhood.

The oldest initiative of the Green Team is a series of garden beds and planters along Somerset Street East that were established as a “depaving” project in 2016. In addition to cleaning and weeding these plantings, we are undertaking a full rehabilitation of the beds beside and in front of the Quickie at Somerset and Russell. As part of this work, we are putting in more native plant species, which attract beneficial insects and the birds that feed on them, thus helping to restore food webs that have been disrupted by urbanization.

We are also continuing our work to restore biodiversity in the woodland along the Rideau River between Strathcona Park and Mann Avenue. Since 2021, with funding from a variety of grants, Green Team volunteers have worked hard to control invasive plants on public land along the riverbank and upland slopes, with particular focus on Japanese knotweed and common buckthorn. An important part of this biodiversity restoration is to plant a range of native trees, shrubs and perennials to outcompete the alien plants and provide food and shelter for native fauna.

This spring we were excited to see most of our plantings from last fall leaf out successfully. If you are walking along the river, you can identify these trees and shrubs by their blue flagging tape. This year our target will again be common buckthorn, and its cousin, glossy buckthorn, and we are expanding our project area as far north as the Adawe Crossing and along the southern edge of the baseball diamond. We will also be returning



Le Green Team de la Côte-de-Sable continue ses efforts à éliminer les espèces envahissantes et à planter des arbres et arbustes indigènes. Dans cette photo de mai 2022, deux bénévoles travaillent le long de la rivière Rideau près de Robinson Village. Vous pouvez repérer les nouvelles plantations grâce à de petits rubans colorés. Photo: Marilyn Whitaker



Heart in the park

Amidst all the disheartening polarization in our society today, where compassion is partisan (if present at all), and calls for inclusion are exclusive in practice, I stumbled upon this serene scene of love at Strathcona Park. As the poem *Desiderata* states: “Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass....With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.”

- Sharon O’Sullivan

to sites where we have been controlling Japanese knotweed to remove regrowth and continue to weaken their tenacious root systems.

Both these projects incorporate native perennials raised by Green Team volunteers as part of the “Replacing the Grass” project. Over the winter and spring volunteers germinated and potted hundreds of wildflower seeds. Many of these plants were sold at our native plant sale before the annual general meeting of Action Sandy Hill on May 29. The remainder are being planted in our projects along the Rideau River or on Somerset Street.

Finally, this year the Sandy Hill Green Team will be supporting Carefor, the organization that has created the pollinator garden in the circular bed just north of the parking lot in Strathcona Park. We

will be assisting with weeding, watering and planting.

The Green Team holds twice monthly work sessions on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. To align with people’s varied schedules, this year we are alternating between evening sessions and daytime sessions. Certain projects might also involve weekend work, but nothing has been scheduled for this season yet.

If you happen to be out on a Thursday, watch for us in our stylish new Sandy Hill Green Team T-shirts. You might even be inspired to join us. Whether you enjoy grubbing out buckthorn, planting trees, starting seeds or tending planters and garden beds, there is something for all tastes and abilities. If you would like to help out, please email bdewalt.ash@gmail.com.

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Tales of a Sandy Hill backyard garden

The evolution of a pond

Gabrielle Dewalt

In 2001, my husband and I bought a house in Sandy Hill with a grassy backyard shaded by a massive silver maple and surrounded on two sides by unkempt cedar trees. For many years our backyard remained mostly in grass with a hedge at the back and a vegetable garden at the side. Then something unexpected happened.

Three of the houses behind us were bought by a developer who built additions onto the back of each property and paved the backyards with asphalt. The following spring our backyard, which is in a natural hollow, began to flood more than usual, and our shed was threatened by flooding for the first time. We quickly discovered the culprit: water runoff from the newly paved backyards and even more so, the runoff created by three sump pump output pipes directed along our back fence line.

The City of Ottawa informed us that the bylaw regarding problematic water runoff from neighbouring properties only covered adjacent properties. Properties behind were not considered “adjacent” but we could take the issue on ourselves by bringing it to small claims court. Thanks for your help, City of Ottawa! When the cedars began to die one at a time because of the constant soaking of their roots, we knew it was time to take action, but then a new plan began to form. Why didn’t we take advantage of the runoff and capture it to create something like a swale?

A swale officially refers to a shallow depression used to collect rainwater or snow melts. So in the fall, we examined our yard to see where the low spots were and proceeded to dig a trench several metres long and about a metre and a half wide to capture the runoff from the yards behind us. We lined the shallow trench with landscaping fabric and rocks and pebbles, many of which we had unearthed from our yard over the years. And then we waited for the spring. How satisfying it was to see the water captured by our wee swale. The added bonus was the many birds that came to bathe and drink from its waters. Now we just needed to add plants that suited this newly created wetland habitat.

Over the years we planted the area around the swale with many different native plants, including swamp milkweed, blue-eyed grass, sensitive fern, red-osier dogwood, boneset and meadow-sweet. In the summer the swale dried up but was occasionally refilled by periodic rain. At the same time, we began to create a native wildlife garden adjacent to the swale to provide additional food and shelter for the wildlife. We also stopped trimming the remaining cedars as we realized their towering canopy provided a great habitat for the birds.

Last fall we decided to improve the swale by digging in a small hard-shell plastic pond container towards its front edge, so we could have a permanent water source even during the summer and fall months. Running water is a must if you install a pond



La famille Dewalt a tiré le meilleur parti d’une situation terrible (des inondations causées par le développement voisin) en créant une mare et une rigole de drainage d’arrière-cour qui attire beaucoup d’oiseaux.

as it helps maintain adequate oxygen levels and ultimately improves the pond’s water quality. Additionally, female mosquitoes like to lay their eggs in still water so a pump is needed to prevent this from happening. An added benefit of running water is that birds are attracted to its sound. We chose a pond pump powered by a solar panel with a backup battery as our power outlet was too far away for an electric pump.

The adage, “Build it and they will come!” was never so true. Spring birds stopped by at our pond and wildlife garden during the spring migration including yellow-rumped warblers, ruby-crowned kinglets, Nashville warblers, juncos and hermit thrushes. Other visitors included cardinals, American goldfinches and house finches. And let’s not forget the squirrels who still continue to frequently visit the pond for a drink of water and the rogue raccoons whose unwelcome nighttime antics of playing with the pond pump have finally been thwarted by putting the pump in an enclosed container!

What a joy it is first thing in the morning to wake up and sit on the back deck with a cup of coffee in hand, and watch the world unfurl before us.

Eyecatching planters installed on the campus



Photos: John McQuarrie

The uOttawa campus is even more colourful now with the recent painting of the concrete planters with Indigenous-themed artwork. IMAGE tried to find out more about the artist(s) but unfortunately had no answer by press time.

Email us at editor@imagesandyhill.org if you know! — Christine Aubry

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Lloyd Axworthy is alive and well and living in Sandy Hill

Judy Rinfret

Among our many illustrious Sandy Hill residents is one who will need no introduction— Lloyd Axworthy. About two years ago, he and his wife, Denise Ommanney, arrived here from Winnipeg. They find Sandy Hill a very amenable and agreeable community, a central place in Ottawa both geographically and historically.

Lloyd Axworthy joined the Liberal Party in Winnipeg when he was in high school. By the time he was persuaded to seek political office, he had acquired wide-ranging and significant experience—community work, debating and discussion clubs, marching for civil rights, an impressive university education. His outstanding political achievements are well documented in his recently published book, *Lloyd Axworthy: My Life in Politics*, reviewed in the March issue of IMAGE.

Now that he is a Sandy Hiller, Axworthy kindly agreed to an interview with IMAGE. He told me his ideal of Liberalism was compromised during the governments of Stephen Harper and Justin Trudeau: power became too centralized in the prime minister’s office; there was an assumption that private markets would take care of essential public needs; important crown corporations were cut off. For example, the Connaught lab, an outstanding international centre for vaccination development, was sold to a company in France and now Canada pays millions and millions for vaccines.

Axworthy says he is “increasingly interested in deliberative democracy”—an outcome of serious conversations and



Judy Rinfret est avec Lloyd Axworthy, auteur du livre qu’elle nous a présenté dans l’édition printemps 2025 d’IMAGE. L’ancien député libéral et sa femme sont installés dans la Côte-de-Sable depuis deux ans. La conversation continue ici, touchant des sujets politiques mais aussi ses accomplissements en tant que président de l’Université de Winnipeg. Es-pérons que la nouvelle présidente de l’Université d’Ottawa, Marie-Ève Sylvestre, sera inspirée!

Photo: John Branigan

forums among Canadians — a much “broader base of involvement than just working through elections.” Political parties have become “mere election machines, too conceptualized, too mechanical.” Though he was elected eight times with the first-past-the-post system, he recommends electoral reform to encourage those who feel disinterested or non- or misrepresented, especially Indigenous Canadians, to become more engaged with our democracy.

Axworthy says the current American administration may have the benefit of forcing Canadians to be more independent. He points out that even Stephen Harper said we may have to pay a price for that. When asked what he might suggest to the current government, he said, “I’m an elder. It’s up to a younger generation of leaders to respond to current challenges—a transition that may not be easy, but it will be healthy.” However, he continues to speak and write to bring well-founded perspective to current affairs.

An aspect of Axworthy’s long service to public good that may not be as well known is what he achieved after his political career. As president of the University of

Winnipeg, he sensed that residents of the surrounding downtown Winnipeg community felt alienated from that institution and that “the university was not living up to its responsibility to provide learning in the inner-city community.” Axworthy started by knocking on doors to find out what neighbours wanted and needed and hoped for; there was no shortage of ideas and aspirations.

As a result, the university has been “energized” as a genuine community resource — “a real gathering place” — offering education especially for those who might otherwise be left behind, a sports centre, employment and language training, summer camps, and more. Out-of-town, inner-city students are now part of the university community. A Community Charter was negotiated with local groups guaranteeing access to a new university recreation facility. “The community feels the university belongs to them.”

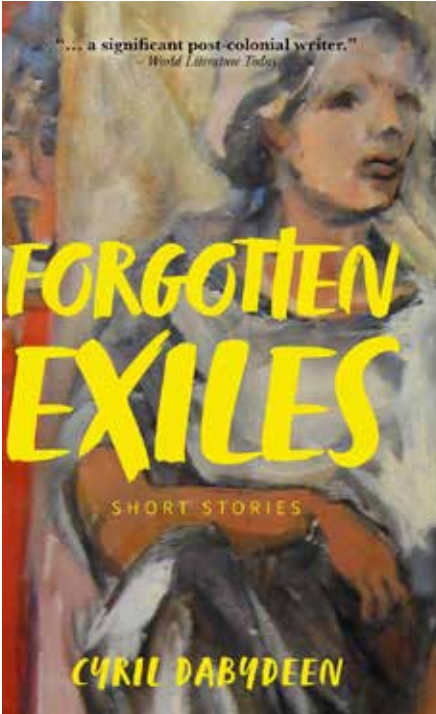
Axworthy also organized and founded a development corporation to build low-cost housing for single mothers (25 %), seniors (20%), and students (30 to 40%), as well as a few (10%) who could afford market rent. Affordable food is provided by local farmers and other agencies. Those tenants befriend and help one another; for example, students babysit, support and assist seniors; elders provide wise perspectives.

At a Christmas carolling party here in Ottawa last December, the pianist, on learning Axworthy was among us and celebrating his 85th birthday, switched from carols to *When the Saints Go Marching In*. A saintly politician would seem to be an oxymoron but perhaps not in the person of the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy.

Exciting new book of short stories by Sandy Hill author

K.R. Kinnis

It is refreshing to read Cyril Dabydeen’s new book of short stories, *Forgotten Exiles* (Mosaic Press, November 2024), which has gained high praise from readers. This volume follows upon *My Undiscovered Country*, a story collection also released by Mosaic Press about two years ago. The author, who lives in Sandy Hill, prefaces his new collection with a quote from Maya Angelou: “The greatest agony is an untold story.” Dabydeen explores exile and displacement: how personal and cultural identities evolve when people are uprooted from their homes. Identity and belonging are central here in the nuanced portrayal of his characters. Some of the narratives in this new volume go back to the 1970s, especially seen in the shift between Canada’s Lake Superior region where Dabydeen first lived and planted trees—giving the stories a genuinely “Canadian” reality—and Guyana where he was born. Whether writing about Africa, the USA or elsewhere, the author



blends contrasting settings while crossing boundaries.

The poet in Cyril Dabydeen is evident in these stories. As the reviewer in *World Literature Today* puts it, “His use of language is concise and meticulous, his scenes dynamic and distilled.” Stories such as “West Meets East,” “My Teaching Days,” “The Guitar,” “Muskeg,” “Forgotten Exiles,” and “The Other Half” are evocative. Dabydeen explained that a good short story writer combines the poet’s sense of style with the novelist’s sense of drama.

Dabydeen frequently references history, both personal and collective; memory and the past are key elements in his fiction as they shape the characters’ sense of self when they recall moments from their past that define their present experiences. He shows the tension created between nostalgia and the need to integrate into new social environments.

Cyril Dabydeen looks into the proverbial mirror and what is behind its cracked glass with stories reflecting an earnestly searching soul, as seen, for instance, in “Welcoming Mr. Anang,” “A Father’s Son,” “Jagnath and Tomby,” and “Black Like Who?”. He also introduces humour mixed with irony in some stories. His style is suf-

fused with his inflection tied to oral and dialectal energy and poetic rhythms—a hallmark of his work.

Cyril Dabydeen has taught writing for many years at the University of Ottawa and has contributed to IMAGE over the years. This new collection adds to the list of his books of fiction, both novels and short stories, that include *My Multi-Ethnic Friends and Other Stories*, *North of the Equator*, and *My Brahmin Days*. His major poetry collections include *Imaginary Origins: New and Selected Poems* and *God’s Spider*, published by Peepal Tree Press, UK.

His storytelling is praised as “seamless between past and present, fantasy and reality” (*Canadian Literature*). The webzine *Montreal Serai* states: “There is a kaleidoscopic quality to these short stories, a shifting and colliding of the bits of coloured glass held up to the light. Much to share that is not necessarily easy to render in a short story format.” Cyril Dabydeen’s poetic storytelling enhances his themes. The book is a powerful reflection on what it means to live between worlds.

Red Dress Day marked in Annie Pootoogook Park

On May 5, the non-profit Tungasuvvingat Inuit organized an event in Annie Pootoogook Park to mark Red Dress Day, also known as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people, a day of remembrance and action. The day is marked by the display of red dresses, often in public spaces, to symbolize the lives of those who have been lost to violence. — Philip Owen



Photo: Christine Aubry



Photo: Jane Waterston

A longtime IMAGE volunteer remembers

Betsy Mann

Looking back on when she helped produce the first issue of IMAGE in December 1972, Jan Meldrum shakes her head, thinking of the project the group had taken on. “It was a bit much,” she remembers, “we were crazy.”

Fifty years ago, the process was very different from today’s. “The articles were typed up in columns on an old Smith-Corona mechanical typewriter,” she explains. “Then we would literally cut and paste them on boards that the printer supplied. We’d begin after dinner and work together until 2:00 am. And that would happen every month.”

This year, Jan Meldrum is retiring from IMAGE after contributing her time and energy to the paper over the last five decades. She has seen lots of changes in the technology available to the IMAGE production team, but it is still a community effort.

Along with Meldrum, early volunteers included Diane Wood as editor and Elinor Mueller in charge of finding advertisers. “Elinor was a whiz at selling ads,” Meldrum recalls. “We owe a lot to those neighbourhood businesses who bought ads in our first issue without knowing what this paper might look like.”

What those early volunteers lacked in experience with journalism and design, they made up for with enthusiasm and energy, along with some early technical assistance from a young man, Stephen Rector, who was paid under the federal government Opportunities for Youth program.

At first, the paper consisted of eight pages and came out once a month. An issue was barely out the door and it would already be time to start work on the next one. More craziness! Still, local businesses continued to buy ads and new volunteers joined the team. Gradually, each issue got larger, and the interval between issues eventually got longer and more manageable.

Over the years, Meldrum took on practically every role at the paper: writing, layout, door-to-door delivery, photography, copy editing, taking the proofs to the printer; she even filled the job of editor one year. “The one task I never took on



Jan Meldrum thinks 50 years with IMAGE should be enough.



What a difference 20 years, and computers, made in the look of IMAGE. Above, left, Vol. 1 No. 1, 21 January 1973. Right, June/July 1990.



was typing,” she admits. “But I did drive the IMAGE typewriter around to the volunteer typists.” All the articles had to be

typed on the same machine so they would look the same. It was a great day when IMAGE could purchase two IBM Selectric typewriters with their spinning typeball.

At one point, to get larger letters than what could be typed, IMAGE volunteers used Letraset. These were letters and symbols that could be individually rubbed onto paper to write headlines. Meldrum describes a time when a Letraset malfunction could have caused quite a stir in the neighbourhood. “The headline was supposed to say ‘Osgoode School to Close?’,” she recounts, “but the question mark had come unstuck somewhere between our layout and the printing. Closure sounded defi-

nite!” Fortunately, the error was spotted when the issue came back from the printer. “We opened up the packages and spent a few hours drawing the question mark by hand on around 5000 copies,” she says with a chuckle.

In recent years, Meldrum has used a computer and email to do her copy editing. Driving typewriters around and correcting Letraset malfunctions are things of the past, along with some of both the craziness and the camaraderie that accompanied those early days.

IMAGE continues to be supported by local advertisers and still depends on loyal volunteers like Jan Meldrum. Many thanks to her for her contribution to keeping the Sandy Hill community informed for all these years.

Should Sandy Hill follow the lead of Overbrook?

Photos: Christine Aubry



There is a fantastic new learning opportunity just across the Adawe Bridge, on the east side of the river: the Overbrook Rideau River Kiosk. This Overbrook Community Association (OCA) legacy project includes six kiosk panels presenting bilingual information on the Rideau River and Overbrook with a focus on Indigenous and Overbrook history and heritage, the natural environment of the river, and planning and protection of the waterway. <https://www.overbrook.ca/centennial-kiosk-project>

— Christine Aubry





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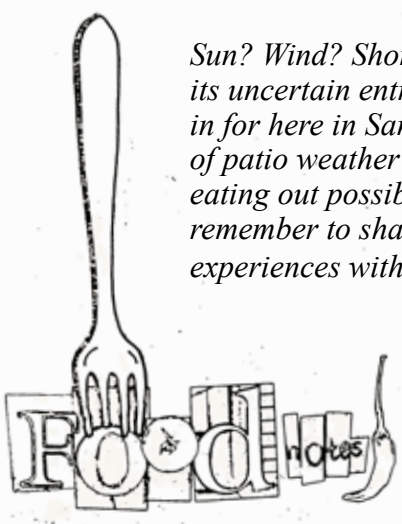
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Sun? Wind? Shorts? Puffy coat? As summer makes its uncertain entrance, it's hard to know what we're in for here in Sandy Hill. But surely a reliable season of patio weather is near at hand! As you explore the eating out possibilities in the neighbourhood, please remember to share your favourite Sandy Hill food experiences with editor@imagesandyhill.org.

Paula Kelsall

**Chef Ric's,
384 Rideau Street**

The restaurant and food services training program associated with the Ottawa Mission has expanded its hours in the last few months. It's now open seven days a week, from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., making this affordable option available for any meal you might think of. The menu seems somewhat simplified compared to the restaurant's early days. Breakfast is the same every day of the week—eggs with bacon or sausage—and each week seems to move through a similar rotation of daily specials. The most interesting item on offer over the last few weeks has been the Thursday special: butter chicken with basmati rice. We were pleasantly surprised to find that this is a very tasty rendition of the classic Indian favourite with a creamy and flavourful sauce, a couple of tender pita wedges and a nice little side of tomato and cucumber salad. For \$7.99, this is a pretty unbeatable bargain for a quick lunch or supper, and it supports a worthy cause.

**Working Title Kitchen's new family-style dinner,
330 Laurier Avenue East**

Working Title Kitchen is trying out something new on Sunday evenings—family-style dinner. For \$36 per person (\$18 for kids under 12), a generous amount of food is delivered to your table in shared platters. The menu will vary somewhat from week to week, but we tried out the first night's menu of roasted beef tenderloin, Juniper grilled vegetables, herb and garlic new potato, and garden salad. The delicious, copious meal was followed by a decadent dessert of sticky toffee pudding with fruit, served alongside in-house, homemade ice cream. We left with full bellies and boxes of leftovers! Now we wait patiently to try out the other flavours of homemade ice cream, including bars and sandwiches, which Working Title is set to launch soon, hopefully by the time you read this.



Le nouveau repas “style famille” du Working Title Kitchen offert le dimanche soir. Vous partirez tous le ventre bien rempli, avec des restants à emporter! Aussi, ne manquez pas le retour cet été de la vente de crème glacée, faite maison sur place. *Photo: Christine Aubry*

**Nostalgica Pub & Beer Garden,
601 Cumberland Street**

Surely no restaurant in our neighbourhood has taken longer to re-open after the pandemic than Nostalgica. After five quiet years, it will be good to see some life on their roomy terrace this summer. The bar has an impressive two-page list of beers on tap, most of them Canadian and many of them from local breweries. It's great that those of us whose beer capacity is limited (or who might want to try more than one) can get a modest 10-ounce glass. The food menu is also brimming with possibilities, with a nice assortment of pub food and all-day breakfast. I really enjoyed my banh mi fish sandwich, a battered filet served on a soft, crusty Portuguese bun with lightly pickled vegetables, chilies and coriander. It's very nice to see the menu offering a half fries, half salad option with all sandwiches and burgers. My companion's smoked salmon salad was a hit—a generous filet, nicely cooked, atop a bowl full of baby greens with sun-dried tomatoes, green beans, and roasted potatoes.



Le burger Nostalgica est servi avec du guacamole, des poivrons grillés et une généreuse portion de brie. Si vous êtes végétarien, vous pouvez choisir n'importe lequel de leurs burgers avec un steak haché aux haricots noirs et à la betterave. *Photo: Paula Kelsall*

**High Tea at Laurier House by Working Title Kitchen,
330 Laurier Avenue East**

How lucky was I to be invited to taste-test the 2025 offerings for the return of high tea on the scenic terrasse of Sandy Hill's historic Laurier House. A copious array of decadent hand-held nibbles, both sweet and savoury, served alongside a large personal pot of my choice of tea, all served in gorgeous porcelain dishes from a time gone by. Be transported to another time and revel in self-indulgence (note, this is not for those avoiding gluten, dairy or sugar!), Thursdays and Fridays, until September 26. - *Christine Aubry*



L'expérience “High Tea” est de retour sur la terrasse du site national historique de la Maison Laurier. Au menu : une variété copieuse de bouchées salées et sucrées, tel que des scones, quiches, sandwiches, tartelettes et gâteaux. Le tout servi avec votre choix de thé, bien sûr! *Photo Christine Aubry*

**Jackson Café,
10 Daly Avenue**

Off to a late start on a recent Sunday morning and wanting a quick breakfast before visiting what remains of the Byward Market, we stopped in at the cafe in the Ottawa Art Gallery. Our spirits were raised instantly by the sight of families working away creatively in the studio space on the gallery's lower floor, as well as the smell of coffee in the air. The cafe's morning offerings are limited, but they're good. We enjoyed a breakfast sandwich with fried egg, bacon and roasted tomato on excellent sourdough bread, as well as a bowl of creamy overnight oats adorned with berries and a sprinkling of nuts and seeds. The lattes were delicious, and the apple turnover, from the excellent Maison ODDO in Gatineau, was exceptional.



Café latte, gruau sans cuisson et sandwich petit-déjeuner : un petit-déjeuner simple et bien préparé dans le cadre agréable du Jackson Café & Bar à la Galerie d'art d'Ottawa. *Photo Paula Kelsall*

No yard? Think pots!



In Japan, a growing trend called “potting gardens” offers a practical and stylish solution for anyone wanting to enjoy the beauty of gardening in a limited the space, such as beside the front door, on a balcony, or even in a parking space. Since the pots are grouped compactly, watering is simple and efficient. You can easily refresh the look by rearranging the pots or swapping out plants as they bloom and fade. This flexibility makes it easy to maintain a beautiful and vibrant garden year-round. - *Hiromie Sugamo and Philip Owen*

Pulling together at Dinette Atomique

Trina Cooper-Bolam

At the corner of Somerset East and Blackburn, formerly the home of Reggae Rooster, the Sandy Hill Lounge and Grill, and Drumlin's Pub, chefs/owners Vu Duong and Jeffrey Cassidy are concocting something truly special for us: a community-oriented café/bistro with a social mission.

By the time you are reading this, fingers crossed, Dinette Atomique will be open. "Dinette" is shorthand for small-scale French diner, which conveys a sense of the feel if not the cuisine. A bit of French yes, especially in the pastry, but essentially more North American with a dash of Vietnamese. "Atomique" is a bit more challenging. It conjures retro space-age dining. But that's not it. "Atomique" as it happens, is connected to "Atomic Servant," a concept, spirit, and project at the core of the enterprise. But first, food.

Readers, I've seen the menu. You will be very pleased with what's in store. Vu is a pastry chef (and chef in general) who wakes at the crack of dawn to make breakfast goodies from scratch, which co-owner Jeff will pair with cappuccino or some such so that you can fuel up from 7 am. Take out or eat in, breakfast, lunch, and dinner are all on the menu. Dinners are served family style and, wait for it... there's weekend ROAST with devilled eggs, jam and biscuits, horseradish, crispy potatoes, popovers, gravy, and greens. Serving the whole community, a range of price options are available whether for light bites or big plates. Alcohol (beer and wine) will be served, but Dinette Atomique is by no means a bar. Apologies in advance to seekers of margarita pitchers and sex on the beach shooters who will be disappointed.

Moving along, let's return to the "atomic-ness" of the Dinette. Truth be told, the diner itself is not very space-age. I know this because I'm working on its design



Au coin des rue Somerset Est et Blackburn, un nouveau bistro-café nous attend! Trina Cooper-Bolam, architecte et résidente de la Côte-de-Sable, aide les propriétaires Vu Duong (anciennement de Corner Peach) et Jeffrey Cassidy (de Chez Lucien) à créer un espace rétro qu'ils espèrent deviendra aussi un espace communautaire animé. Photo Trina Cooper-Bolam

and décor. It is a little 1940s-ish, a little retro. When I came onboard, I interrogated Vu and Jeffrey in an attempt to understand their concept of both the diner and its social mission, coming up with an "Imagine statement" in the process. Here goes:

Imagine it's the 1940s:

We've pulled together; we've rationed; we've survived the war. We're scared as hell of atomic power, as well we should be, but we're cautiously optimistic too.

Then, as now, the world is full of possibility amid lingering and emerging threats. Between terror and optimism comes "Atomic Servant," a project with a social mission in the wartime spirit of pulling together, but with drag bingo and other pop-up events.

It's the ethic of pulling together (less the terror) that really informs the spirit of the place. In the end, Dinette Atomique is a retro-ish café/bistro that will hopefully become a hub for community events to lift the whole community. For Vu and Jeffrey, formerly from Corner Peach and Chez Lucien respectively, it's a place of culinary and event-based experimentation and community building. Let's help them out. Come by for a coffee, ice-cream, or a Bánh Mi Muffaletta (sandwich). No robot butlers or drag queens will bite you. Everyone is welcome.

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MORE FOREIGN OUTPOSTS

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Sandy Hill photographer Philip Owen was able to get close and snap this great shot of the king and queen during their brief visit to Ottawa in May. Photo Philip Owen



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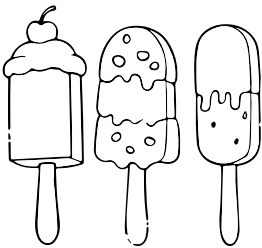
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Photos Ana Maria Cadena



“Dancing is life”: How salsa encourages human connection

Ana Maria Cadena

It is a Tuesday night inside the bright and open Terminus space at the University of Ottawa. The air is warm, bags are scattered around the room, and people chat amongst themselves while others take a breather to prepare for the next part of the night: the salsa class.

“For salsa, we dance on only six of the eight counts,” says Élodie Ouellette, University of Ottawa Salsa Club instructor. “We step on 1-2-3 and on 5-6-7.” At first, people seem hesitant. They apprehensively step forward, step back, do a turn and slowly get the hang of it. With each step, people move with more confidence and let the rhythm take control.

Strangers introduce themselves as they hold each other’s hands to practice the combo before moving on to the next person. The learning dynamic continues until it is time for the dancing social. Salsa music from different eras blasts through the speakers. Someone holds out their hand and invites another to the centre of the room, and for one song they communicate without words.

Every Tuesday night, the University of Ottawa Salsa Club hosts beginner and intermediate-level bachata and salsa classes for the general public. Around 40 to 60 people from different nationalities gather each week at the Jock Turcot University Centre to practice salsa among strangers.

Social dancing has become an important way to physically connect with others. Raphael Roy-Laurore, a former instructor, said that after the isolation of the pandemic, people were coming out because they had “lost that sense of touch” due to physical distancing. He believes salsa’s social dancing aspect makes it different from other dance practices and describes the feeling of dancing with a partner as connecting with one’s own body, mind and spirit and then connecting the same way with the other person. “Dancing is life,” he says.

Laura Celis-Bertin, the vice president and instructor at the salsa club, completed her first year of university online. Feeling disconnected from her university experience, she started following the salsa club on Instagram. “Even though participants are usually dancing with strangers, they share a mutual understanding that they will be connected for the duration of the song while they practice the moves they learned. It’s just like those three minutes... it might start off a little bit awkward because you don’t know them, but it’s just like towards the end of the song, you’re both just kind of having fun,” she explained.

Shiva Moin, a Carleton University graduate, started attending the salsa club’s classes in early January. Moin said people are stuck in “little bubbles,” which makes meeting people and having physical interactions with them less common. She said it is important to learn how to communicate with others beyond words and in this case, through social dancing.

Celis-Bertin says salsa is an important part of Colombian culture. “Salsa is very important to me because of the tether it has to back home with my family,” Celis-Bertin said, adding that the nationalities of people who attend the salsa club’s events are “all over the place.”

“At this point, salsa is everywhere. While the style and influence may differ, the heart of salsa is there,” Roy-Laurore said.


Ouellette’s focus is on growing the club’s community by fostering connections and organizing events. “Humans are very social creatures. We like to connect with people, we like to meet new people, and we like to interact and share interests,” she said. “So, if you’re in a room with a bunch of other people that like doing what you do, you’re bound to connect.”

Follow the club’s Instagram page @ uosalsa (where they post updates, information, and the steps learned in class) or check out the website at: <https://uosalsa.wixsite.com/uosalsa>




Le mardi soir, à partir de 19 h dans l’espace Terminus au 2e étage du Centre universitaire (édifice Jock Turcot, 85 University Private), le Salsa Club de l’Université d’Ottawa offre des cours de salsa de différents niveaux, suivi par une danse sociale de 21 h à 23 h.

130
Year Anniversary



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Ottawa History Timeline



1895

Paris cooking school


French journalist Marthe Distel launches a culinary magazine entitled “La Cuisinière Cordon Bleu” in Paris. In October, subscribers are invited to the first Le Cordon Bleu cuisine lessons.



1948

Julia Child enrolls at Le Cordon Bleu


Le Cordon Bleu receives Pentagon accreditation for providing professional training to young American soldiers following their period of service in Europe. Julia Child, former member of the Office of Strategic Services, begins training at Le Cordon Bleu Paris.



1954

“Sabrina” starring Audrey Hepburn


The success of the film Sabrina, starring Audrey Hepburn in the title role, contributes to the increasing fame of Le Cordon Bleu.



1979

Eleanor's Cuisine Française


Eleanor Orser, Ottawa native and the first ever Canadian to graduate from Le Cordon Bleu, earned her Grand Diplôme® from Le Cordon Bleu Paris in 1979 studying under Madame Brassart. Eleanor began teaching at her home and through word of mouth, the classes grew and she opened Eleanor's Cuisine Française.



1984

Cointreau family


The Cointreau family, descendants of the founding families of Rémy Martin and Cointreau liqueur, takes over the presidency of Le Cordon Bleu Paris, following Mrs. Elisabeth Brassart, Director of the school since 1945.



1988

M. André Cointreau


Eleanor's Cuisine Française was sold to M. André Cointreau in 1988 after being in business for 8.5 years. The Ottawa campus was the first Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Arts Institute outside of Europe.



2022 – 2024

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Le Cordon Bleu Ottawa gets third consecutive win as “North America’s Best Culinary Training Institution” at the World Culinary Awards.




2025

Much more to come!

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