

Fire consumes heritage mansion at 455 Wilbrod Street
Bate-Fenton house reduced to rubble

Photo: James Coode



Photo: Wikipedia

“This was my favourite house to walk past with all its intricate brickwork.”

—Neighbour, on Facebook



Photo: Christine Aubry

“I shudder to think what ugly structure will replace it.”

—Neighbour, on Facebook



The smell of smoke was noticeable as far as Nepean as firefighters battled an impressive blaze in the historic north end of Sandy Hill on September 18, 2026. The fire ultimately destroyed the house at 455 Wilbrod Street, unoccupied at the time. It was a Category 1 building in the Heritage Conservation District. Never renovated, it had only one bathroom but a ballroom, servants’ quarters, large coach house and old-fashioned garden. The stately brick structure was built in 1895 for Gerald Bate, a son of Sir Henry Bate. His brother Harry Bate lived at 440 Wilbrod and another brother Thomas Cameron at 469, while their sister Claudia lived at 396. Gerald willed his home to his daughter Marjorie St. Helene Fenton. — Editor



HAPPENING HERE

October 4 - Ward 12 Public Forum
2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Lowertown Community Centre (aka “Patro”), 40 Cobourg Street. Meet candidates for councillor and school boards.

Until October 6 – National Arts Centre
Drop in anytime between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. to see Ben Lachapelle’s Ottawa 200 Biodiversity Tree (see photo on page 22) in the O’Brien Atrium, Elgin Street entrance.

October 16 - Advance Voting Day
10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Sandy Hill Community Centre, 250 Somerset East

October 21, November 18 and December 16 - 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Stop by the Rideau branch of the Ottawa Public Library to relax with Ruth, the certified therapy dog. Program intended for students and adults.

October 24 — St Joe’s Supper Table
Autumn Harvest Fundraiser dinner 6:00 p.m. to 10 p.m. at St Joseph’s Parish Hall. Dinner, raffle, door prizes. For tickets: supper-table.ca/events/autumn-harvest-fundraiser

October 26 - Voting Day
10:00 a.m. to 8 p.m. If you are not sure of your polling station, search online at: elections.ottawa.ca/VotingLocation/VotingLocation

November 5 - An Evening with Carty House - 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
at *allsaints event space*. In support of refugee women. Includes a silent auction. Tickets at www.cartyhouse.org.

Saturday November 14, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. One & Only Arts & Crafts Fair and Book Sale return to the Sandy Hill Community Centre. See ad page 4

Illustration: Ben Lachapelle

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**Elections
Ottawa**



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Photo: Gerald Dragon



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Photo: Christine Aubry



Melaku Ethiopian Coffee Shop delights described, p. 22

Photo: Paula Kelsall

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, October 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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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.

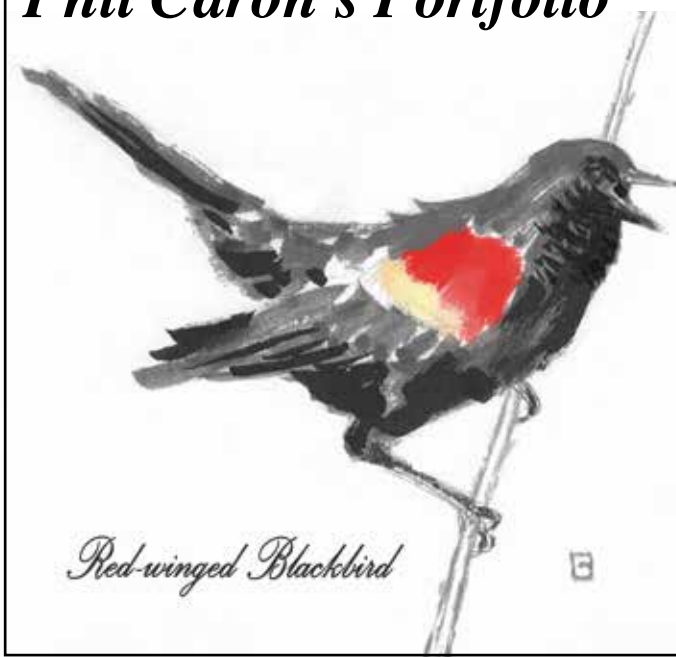
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Phil Caron's Portfolio



At the end of summer, red-winged blackbirds migrate south from Sandy Hill. Some fly as far as Mexico!

Red-winged Blackbird

Illustration: Phil Caron, Stewart Street



To the IMAGE Editor

Résidente de la rue Chapel Sabrina Mathews est ravie d'entendre, ou plutôt de ne pas entendre, les autobus électriques passant devant chez elle!

Loving the electric whoosh

Our house is across the street from a bus stop. At different times of the day this summer, with the bedroom window open, I began to notice a series of sounds I'd never heard before. Out on the street, I would dimly hear a recorded voice and an electronic tone, and then a quiet wooshing sound.

To my delight, I realized that I was hearing the OCTranspo Route and Next Stop announcements coming from the bus that had pulled up to the stop. And then the sound of the bus pulling away.

I could hear these quiet sounds because I was hearing an electric bus! So much less invasive than the roar of the internal combustion engine of a diesel bus. Hurray! I'm looking forward to the gentler presence of more electric buses (and more electric vehicles) on our streets. And a cleaner and quieter city for us all.

Sabrina Mathews
Chapel Street

Our next issue

Issue	NEWSLETTER EMAIL Deadline reminder & event listings	DEADLINE Articles	DEADLINE Advertising	DISTRIBUTION
Winter 2026/27	October 10	November 5	November 16	December 3 (Dec. 3-6)

Do you live in an apartment or condo building?

Help IMAGE reach more of your neighbours! We are looking for distribution help in apartment buildings. Email Rich Glasgow at: distribution@imagesandyhill.org

Join the IMAGE team!

Do you enjoy writing? IMAGE is always on the lookout for more volunteer contributors. We are especially looking for people willing to write about city planning, development, transportation, and socio-economic issues, but we will happily discuss other ideas. We are also looking for volunteers with experience researching and writing grant applications as well as using Quicken accounting software.

Email Christine Aubry at: editor@imagesandyhill.org

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Do you love IMAGE? Can you help keep us going? IMAGE is brought to you by a very small team of volunteers and advertising revenue only covers printing and distribution. We want to expand the team and purchase much needed software and equipment. We are not a registered charity, so we cannot provide a tax receipt, but we can guarantee the joy of giving to your community! You can send an etransfer to imageaccounts@imagesandyhill.org or drop off a cheque made out to IMAGE in the mailbox at 22 Russell Avenue. Nous vous remercions d'avance pour votre soutien!



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Sandy Hill's place in the Market

Côte-de-Sable se retrouve au Marché

Editorial

Election priorities

The municipal elections are just weeks away and because the 2025 snap federal elections did not line up with our publication schedule, this is my first time covering elections as editor of IMAGE. I want to share with you IMAGE’s process for covering these elections as well as some personal reflections on the challenges we are currently facing as a community.

IMAGE collaborated with Lowertown’s community newspaper The ECHO to reach out to the candidates for municipal councillor of Ward 12 Rideau–Vanier. With four school boards electing trustees and 14 candidates for mayor, we agreed to limit ourselves to the councillor position. On page 6 you will find answers to two broad questions we posed to all of the candidates. Answers to more specific questions will be emailed to those who subscribe to our newsletter as well as posted on the IMAGE website by October 4.

To narrow down the key issues of concern in our neighbourhood, IMAGE posted this question in the Sandy Hill Neighbours Facebook group: What do you feel are the most important issues/problems in Sandy Hill? The post generated 60 comments, under two broad recurring themes:

Property standards and housing: lack of enforcement of property standards; vacant buildings left derelict (many owned by the University of Ottawa); loss of built heritage and “uglification” of the neighbourhood, even in parts of Sandy Hill with heritage overlay designation; failure to preserve and protect the built heritage and streetscapes of Sandy Hill; unscrupulous developers and “slumlords” facing few repercussions.

Safety and Crime: increase in porch thefts, bicycle thefts, car vandalism, graffiti, and the overall lack of crime deterrence through proactive enforcement. The one-week police “blitz” in the summer (Operation Restore during July 13–19, 2026) was heavily criticized as insufficient. Residents are also concerned with open substance use and drug paraphernalia on our streets, and drug dealers circling the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre on Nelson at Rideau.



LETTER
TO THE
EDITOR

City attitude shocking

I wholeheartedly agree with the June editorial which was critical of City officials’ opinion that there will be no transit or traffic impact from the four towers—two with 32 storeys and two with 28—apartment buildings on Lees Avenue. It has become increasingly difficult to find on-street parking; you have to time your exit from the neighbourhood to avoid the back-ups on Lees Avenue. Of course, the new building will increase traffic even if most tenants are students and especially if OC Transpo remains unreliable and does not foresee higher demand. What is shocking is that the City is not monitoring this and that it makes projections based on hope and speculation and doesn’t seem the least bit interested in verifying its data or plans.

Laura Farquharson
Marlborough Avenue

For details on the Lees/Robinson towers, see Ralph Blaine’s article “Another Roadside Attraction” in the October 2025 issue of IMAGE, available online at www.imagesandyhill.org — *Editor*

I moved to Sandy Hill 20 years ago for the same reasons as many of you: to raise my family in a vibrant, walkable, green, diverse, and bilingual downtown neighbourhood. My children went to the local French schools, we developed strong friendships with neighbours of all ages, and now my family has chosen to invest in and preserve some of the heritage of Sandy Hill.

I can see and have experienced many of the problems expressed by neighbours (including Tereza Kumpera, page 3). We have experienced home, bicycle and porch thefts, car vandalism, and my daughter was randomly assaulted by an intoxicated stranger. We assisted an unhoused young woman to find a safe place to sleep and charge her electric wheelchair overnight. We have called ANCHOR and 911 to report unconscious individuals in parks.

I have immense gratitude and respect for neighbours like Larry Newman and Ralph Blaine who have not only written in IMAGE about some of the problem issues in Sandy Hill, but who have also made a point of talking to the most vulnerable among us, so we can hear their voices. You can search the IMAGE website for their archived articles at www.imagesandyhill.org and see Ralph’s latest article on page 8.

It is also important to remember that many of the problems we face here in Sandy Hill are not unique to our neighbourhood—nor to Ottawa, nor to Canada. There is a worldwide mental health, substance use, and housing crisis. To think a single municipal councillor, or even mayor, can solve all of the problems in a few years is unrealistic.

I do hope, however, that the representatives we elect will listen to all of us, including the most vulnerable, and encourage all levels of government and social service providers to work together. As Nick Grover argues on page 9, real solutions will also require a serious re-examination of how funds are raised and allocated. For my family, a safer, healthier, and more compassionate community is definitely worth an increase in taxes.

Christine Aubry
Editor



Sandy Hill resident Stephen Smith was impressed during a recent visit to North Vancouver. Residential construction projects must post these large signs with contact information for the project—something many residents of Sandy Hill would likely appreciate, and make use of!



Sandy Hill photographer Philip Owen got up close and personal with the mounted police on Parliament Hill this summer!

Enough is enough!



LETTER
TO THE
EDITOR

I have lived in and around Sandy Hill for the past ten years, with only a short break when I moved temporarily to Centretown. I have watched this neighbourhood change, and what I am seeing today is deeply concerning.

For the past two years, Sandy Hill residents have watched attention, investment and revitalization happen elsewhere while our neighbourhood continues to deteriorate. This is not about saying Vanier or other Ottawa neighbourhoods do not deserve investment. Of course they do! But Sandy Hill deserves attention too.

Residents here pay substantial property taxes. We care about our community, yet our sidewalks and parkways are old, damaged and in many places, dirty. Basic infrastructure and public spaces are not being maintained to the standard residents should reasonably expect. But infrastructure is no longer my biggest concern—safety is.

Sandy Hill residents are dealing with robberies, solicitation, property crime and visible drug use. I am part of a small neighbours’ group that regularly sends messages, photos and videos showing people breaking into houses, backyards and driveways, and stealing property. I often recognize people in these reports from the same areas around the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre (SHCHC).

I walk through that area almost every day with my baby. Almost every day, I encounter people visibly intoxicated, apparent open drug use, and people lying on the ground in such a state that you cannot tell whether they are simply passed out or need medical assistance. Recently, a friend visiting us from Montreal was shocked by how bad the situation had become.

Then, it happened directly in front of my own home on Augusta Street. I saw a couple openly using what appeared to be crack cocaine and called the police. No officers arrived while they were there. Ultimately, my neighbour and I had to confront them and forcefully tell them to leave. Why are residents being put in this position?

This is not about abandoning people who need help. People struggling with addiction, homelessness or mental illness deserve dignity, treatment and appropriate support. But whatever we

have been doing clearly is not working well enough. Compassion without results is not a solution. The system is failing both those who need help and the residents who live alongside the consequences.

Where has our councillor been? Stéphanie Plante has represented the ward for the past four years. From the perspective of many Sandy Hill residents, there is very little visible improvement to point to. Sandy Hill appears to have taken a back seat to other priorities and neighbourhoods.

Affordable housing is important, but a city can have more than one priority at a time. What about public safety? Property crime? Our deteriorating sidewalks? The conditions around the SHCHC?

The October municipal election is an opportunity for residents to demand answers. Frankly, the candidate pool does not exactly inspire confidence. But whoever is elected city councillor for our ward needs to listen to Sandy Hill residents.

We need to report problems, document incidents, communicate with our councillor, contact the appropriate authorities, and hold our elected representative accountable. Because apparently, for now, Sandy Hill residents have to do it ourselves.

So let’s do it. Let’s organize, let’s report, and let’s document. Let’s ask questions! Let’s demand answers—and keep asking until someone listens. This is our neighbourhood. We care about it. We pay our taxes here. We raise our families here. And we deserve better.

Tereza Kumpera
Augusta Street

Sandy Hill does have a neighbourhood association: Action Sandy Hill. See notes from its recent meetings on page 4. You may email ASH to become a member and receive the monthly newsletter at: www.ash-acsc.ca, or follow ASH on Facebook. Join the association, attend meetings, or better yet, volunteer! — *Editor*

Notes from summer meetings of our community association

Ralph Blaine

The following are highlights from the Action Sandy Hill (ASH) board meetings of June and August (no meetings are held in July) and do not represent official ASH record.

Open drug use around the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre

In response to concerns about the crowds gathering in and around the premises of the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre (SHCHC) and the problem of open drug use in this area, Lauren Lemoine from Councillor Plante’s office encouraged residents to report these issues to the police. She assured the Board that the City is working on getting housing for the unhoused, including clients of the SHCHC.

The Chair expressed concern that no one seems to be in charge of supervising this area, and it was agreed that she would write a letter to the appropriate authorities expressing the ASH Board’s concerns about these issues.

Presentation from the President of uOttawa, Marie-Eve Sylvestre

Ms. Sylvestre, a longtime resident of Sandy Hill, and two of her assistants attended the August board meeting to introduce themselves and invite further cooperation between ASH and uOttawa.

She confirmed that the Brooks residence is being demolished and will be replaced with new student housing with a capacity to house 2600 students, which she said would be the largest student housing complex in Canada. (For more details, see IMAGE’s Fall 2025 issue online at www.imagesandyhill.org.)

A person in the audience expressed safety and other concerns about the many vacant houses in Sandy Hill owned by the



Photo: Christine Aubry

Like last summer’s clearing of the bushes by Dutchie’s Pool (still yet to be replanted as promised by the City), this cleared area beside the Adawe Crossing at Strathcona Park surprised many, including the Sandy Hill Green Team. No one seems quite sure why the City has removed the dogwood it planted 10 years ago.

university. The chair of the ASH Town and Gown committee said he would bring this issue up at the next meeting with uOttawa.

Relocation of Centre 454

This drop-in centre at the corner of King Edward and Daly, run by Belong Ottawa, is set to lose its City funding in January 2027, which will force the closure of the centre.

ASH received two letters expressing opposite opinions regarding this deadline. One requested ASH support the Centre’s request for a delay in this deadline; the other letter requested ASH support the current deadline.

Shauna Young, Executive Director of Belong Ottawa, spoke at the meeting making the case for the delay of the Centre’s move to another location, explaining the difficulties in finding a new site.

Councillor Plante suggested that before making a final decision, the ASH board should speak to City planners about their views on how the grant money now going to Centre 454 could be used more effectively. Councillor Plante feels that the \$1.5 million dollars per year the city pays out to Centre 454 would be better spent creating wraparound housing for the homeless population, even if it’s just two bunks in a room. She also pointed



Photo: Andrew Johnston

The Sandy Hill Green Team worked hard this summer to clear the overgrown pollinator garden in Strathcona Park, including the deadly nightshade plant seen here wrestled out by Gabrielle Dewalt. Insects and humans can now appreciate the results of their hard work!

out that if this housing model proves successful, it could be expanded into other parts of the city.

At this meeting, a resident of Sandy Hill asked that the ASH board not take a stand on this issue without directly consulting members of the community. However, the Board reached a consensus to give its support to the new model explained by Councillor Plante.

The Good Books Sale

Saturday
November 14
2026

Samedi
le 14 novembre
2026





**Sandy Hill Community Centre /
Centre communautaire Côte-de-Sable**
250 Somerset St. East, Ottawa
10am to 3 pm / 10 h à 15 h



Email Leila_Heikkila@hotmail.com to donate books

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ONLY

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PLUS

Book Sale

VENTE de Livres!

NOV. 14

SATURDAY SAMEDI 10 am - 3:00 pm

SANDY HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE communautaire Côte-de-Sable
250 SOMERSET ST. EAST, OTTAWA



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Photo: Christine Aubry



This park improvement project was completed mid-summer, just in time for families to enjoy. Strathcona Park was one of 30 City of Ottawa parks to benefit from multi-level funding for improvements which were announced back in April 2021. The federal government contributed \$3.5 million, the province \$2.9 million, and the City of Ottawa over \$1.4 million.

ASH committees seek volunteers

There are several ASH committees looking for more volunteers. You do not need to be a member of ASH, but you do need to be over 18 and a resident of Sandy Hill. Email ASH at info@ash-acs.ca to express interest in joining any of these committees:

Bylaw Committee —Chair Alec King
Environment Committee—Co-Chairs Marilyn Whitaker and Bryan Dewalt
Heritage Committee—Chair Andrew Johnston
Membership & Outreach Committee—Chair Cilaine Maurin
Planning Committee—Co-Chairs Masood Qureshi and Aidan Kennedy

Town & Gown Committee—Chair Patrick Munro

Municipal elections

ASH is organizing with the Lowertown association a public forum for the elections for city councillor and school board trustee. It will happen on October 4 from 2:30- 4:30 p.m. at Patro on Cobourg St. The first hour will be a meet and greet to talk to school board and councillor candidates. The second hour will have remarks from councillor candidates and questions from the audience. A similar meeting for the mayoral candidates will be held in Centretown.

Photo: Christine Aubry



Photo: Christine Aubry

There is now a boating ramp by the beach area at Dutchie's Hole/ Robinson Park.

Unlike other Rideau River parks that have docks, Sandy Hill was given a concrete and asphalt ramp, with complementary bicycle parking, for a posted price tag of \$169,000. Sandy Hill residents posted mixed reviews on Facebook. Some welcomed the ramp while others said they would continue to use the sandy beach for ease and to protect their boats.

The stories we carry

Afaf Janjua

As an artist and Chair of the One & Only Arts and Crafts Fair (sponsored by Action Sandy Hill), I feel privileged to help organize an event that brings together local artists and neighbours.

Creating gemstone bracelets is my own form of art. I call my bracelets Cosmic Reveries. Each one brings a small reflection about curiosity, resilience, joy, self-discovery, or simply a reminder to pause and appreciate where we are in life. I hope that when someone wears one, it becomes their own little reminder, too.

Gemstones are created slowly. Deep within the earth, minerals are transformed through pressure, heat, and time. What begins as something ordinary becomes something unique, shaped by forces that are invisible yet powerful.

I have always found that idea fascinating: some of the most remarkable things are formed through difficult circumstances. Perhaps that is why I have always been drawn to the stories hidden inside ordinary things.

A stone. An old house. A street walked on for decades by generations of people. Everything around us carries traces of the people, moments, and experiences that came before us—if we take the time to notice.

My partner and I often talk about this while walking through Strathcona Park and the streets of our Sandy Hill neighbourhood. We think about all the other people who have walked these same paths before us. John Turner, Canada's 17th prime minister, grew up in Sandy Hill and walked these streets as a young

Photo: Aidan Kennedy



Alaf Janjua se sert de gemmes naturelles pour créer ses bracelets. Elle organise la vente d'arts et d'artisanat One and Only et a hâte d'y voir les gens le samedi 14 novembre.

man. He recalled former Prime Minister Mackenzie King also walking his dog here, and the two of them sitting together on a bench in Strathcona Park.

How many conversations have taken place along these roads? How many lives have unfolded inside the houses we now call home?

In our house on Somerset Street East, we have hung a piece of artwork painted by the lady who lived here for more than 30 years before us. Seeing her work on our walls creates a quiet connection between strangers who have shared the same space, separated by time.

For me, that is what art does: it connects stories.

When I moved to Canada about six years ago, Sandy Hill was one of my first homes. As a newcomer, I arrived carrying a dream: to build a life shaped by my own choices. Some people believe gemstones carry meanings rooted in ancient traditions. Amethyst has long been associated with clear-headedness, agate with protection, and jade with prosperity, good luck and clarity of mind.

Being an avid skeptic, perhaps to my own detriment as a natural gemstone small-business owner, I prefer to think of the meaning as something we create ourselves.

I am grateful for the warmth I have received from this community. I look forward to meeting my neighbours and fellow artists on November 14, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Sandy Hill Community Centre for the One & Only Arts and Crafts Fair (see poster page 4).

Together, we can celebrate the creativity within our community and share the stories behind the things we create. We hope to see you there!

Meet the municipal candidates for Ward 12 Rideau-Vanier

IMAGE and the Lowertown *Echo* collaborated to reach out to all six candidates for Ward 12 Rideau-Vanier municipal councillor with a series of questions. The first two broad questions were answered by five of the six candidates in time for our deadline. Answers appear in alphabetical order and may have been cut to comply with the word limit requirement. No replies were received from the sixth candidate, Eric Smith.



Julie Fiala Chartrand

Julie Fiala Chartrand, Ph.D, is a proud Franco-Ontarian artist, museum curator and volunteer. She piloted a free university project near Chandigarh, India, and hosted a dialogue about public safety in Hyde Park, Leeds. She worked as a housing consultant and was a board member for the Vanier Community Association.



Lyra Evans

Lyra Evans is a multi-award winning 2SLGBTQIA+ community leader for over 15 years, former non-profit executive director, and twice elected public school board trustee. She has a diversity of lived experience, including being homeless for years as a teen, and overseeing large public budgets in excess of one billion dollars.



Brian James Paquette

I am an Ottawa native, martial arts instructor, entrepreneur, personal trainer, and youth mentor. As the owner of multiple academies, I've dedicated years to empowering people through fitness, leadership, and self-defence. My community work focuses on supporting youth and families while building confidence, resilience, discipline, and stronger, safer communities across Ottawa.

Why do you want to be the councillor for Ward 12 Rideau - Vanier?

As an artist and curator, I believe in the importance of care; to curate means to care for. When we beautify our lives, we help create the world we want, and the community we need to grow. My dad recently reminded me of the Benedictine saying, "listen with the ear of your heart." This has always been the way I operate. When we die, it doesn't matter what we did or the wealth we had. What matters is how we cared for others. I pledge to be a councillor for every person and to improve your quality of life.

I look around the ward, and see things are getting worse, not better. I have a long history of improving things, particularly for marginalized identities and amplifying other peoples' voices. My experience as a formerly homeless teenager, followed by my working with homeless teens and youth at the Youth Services Bureau, have given me a great deal of insight into how to start to solve the problems affecting the neighbourhood. I have enjoyed bringing the concerns and needs of the community to the school board over the past eight years and want to carry that passion into the future.

As a local small business owner, father and Ottawa native, I have seen the incredible highs and lows of our ward. It has grown tremendously in both splendour, nightlife, arts, culinary offerings, yet sadly also grown in homelessness, addiction and violence. I long for a Ward 12 where all are thriving and safe. Running for council is but one of several ventures I am undertaking to do my part to manifest this ideal.

What do you think are the most important issues affecting Sandy Hill and Lowertown, and how do you propose to deal with them?

I want to focus on stewardship to improve City services (OC Transpo, parks, culture facilities; recycling, solid waste management; the Social Housing Registry, and affordability; basic health and dental care). It is by addressing the needs of the most vulnerable that we begin to build a better world. We must deal with heavy topics like homelessness, mental health and addiction. Considering the bleakness coming from the USA, I think it is time for artists to contribute to building this better world. As *Ottawa Life Magazine* argues, we need to build communities - not just homes. A roof is simply not enough!

- 1) Homelessness, which is improved by matching the off-ramps from homelessness to the care and support necessary to get people out of the cycle of homelessness. Specifically, supportive or wraparound housing for those who need it.
- 2) Affordability of housing, which is improved by increasing the vacancy rate through building more city-owned and affordable housing, and making it easier for individual owners to turn single occupancy homes into multi-residential units.
- 3) Transit, which is solved by increasing reliability through a spare driver and bus program, reversing cuts-by-inflation, and changing the expectation that it is 50% fares, 50% city funding.

I believe we should be compassionate toward people who are struggling, uncompromising about public safety, and accountable to taxpayers. Public safety isn't an either-or choice between policing and social services. We need effective enforcement when crimes are committed and effective treatment when addiction or mental illness drives the problem. We must respect people's rights while protecting residents, businesses, and vulnerable people from violence, exploitation, and disorder. Compassion cannot mean abandoning public safety. I believe in safer streets, responsible spending, practical solutions for homelessness and addiction, and a government that listens and answers to the people it serves.

Vote! Votez!

Advance Voting Day

Friday, October 16

10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Sandy Hill Community Centre

Election Day

Monday, October 26

10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Not sure of your polling station?

Search online at: elections.ottawa.ca/VotingLocation/VotingLocation

For more coverage of Ward 12 candidates:

- Action Sandy Hill and the Lowertown Community Association are jointly hosting a public forum that will include candidates for Ward 12 Councillor as well as school board trustees. The first hour will be a meet and greet to talk to school board and

councillor candidates. The second hour will have remarks from councillor candidates and questions from the audience.

October 4 - Ward 12 Public Forum 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Lowertown Community Centre (aka "Patro"), 40 Cobourg Street.

- Search YouTube for the Rogers "The Local Campaign" Ward 12 debate.



Stéphanie Plante

A proud francophone, Stéphanie has called Ward 12 home since 2004. She lives in Sandy Hill with her family. Stéphanie was a surrogate for a gay couple in 2017 and believes that LGBTQIA+ rights are human rights. Stéphanie is a basketball referee who loves coffee, audiobooks, reality TV.



Michael Karl Sewanaku

Born here. Lived in Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) on Bernard Street through high school and university, also stayed with my sister above Eastview Pizza in Vanier. My father relied on OCH on Rochester St. Earned three uOttawa degrees, then worked as labourer in Ft. McMurray before earning JD and MD.

I have lived in Rideau-Vanier since 2004 and am raising my family here. This is my community, and I understand both what makes it special and the pressures our neighbourhoods carry. Since my election in 2022, we have accomplished a great deal together, from securing investments in parks, recreation and affordable housing to improving road safety and advancing the revitalization of the ByWard Market. We have also brought greater attention to challenges that have been allowed to fall disproportionately on downtown communities. I have the experience, relationships and determination to turn the work we started into lasting change.

Over the past 10 years, homelessness and rents have become absurd, the OCH waiting list has become unacceptable, and OC Transpo became unreliable. Yet in Canada’s capital, where all federal MPs convene, every level of government has failed to act with urgency. Same politics, same problems. I want to bring a different approach. I’ll assemble the best team possible, calculate the true cost of homelessness in Rideau-Vanier, and demand adequate funding. If governments still refuse, I will live on the street in protest while using \$1,900 of my monthly councillor’s salary to help someone else get off the street.

Sandy Hill and Lowertown are asked to absorb a disproportionate share of the city’s shelters, social services, traffic and public-safety pressures. These are compassionate communities, but compassion cannot mean expecting the same few neighbourhoods to carry responsibilities that belong to the entire city and region. We need to distribute housing and services more fairly across Ottawa, while improving the management, security and funding of existing facilities. I will continue pushing for permanent and supportive housing as an alternative to large emergency shelters, along with properly funded mental-health and addiction treatment. The downtown truck route is another longstanding injustice; I support the proposed eastern interprovincial crossing.

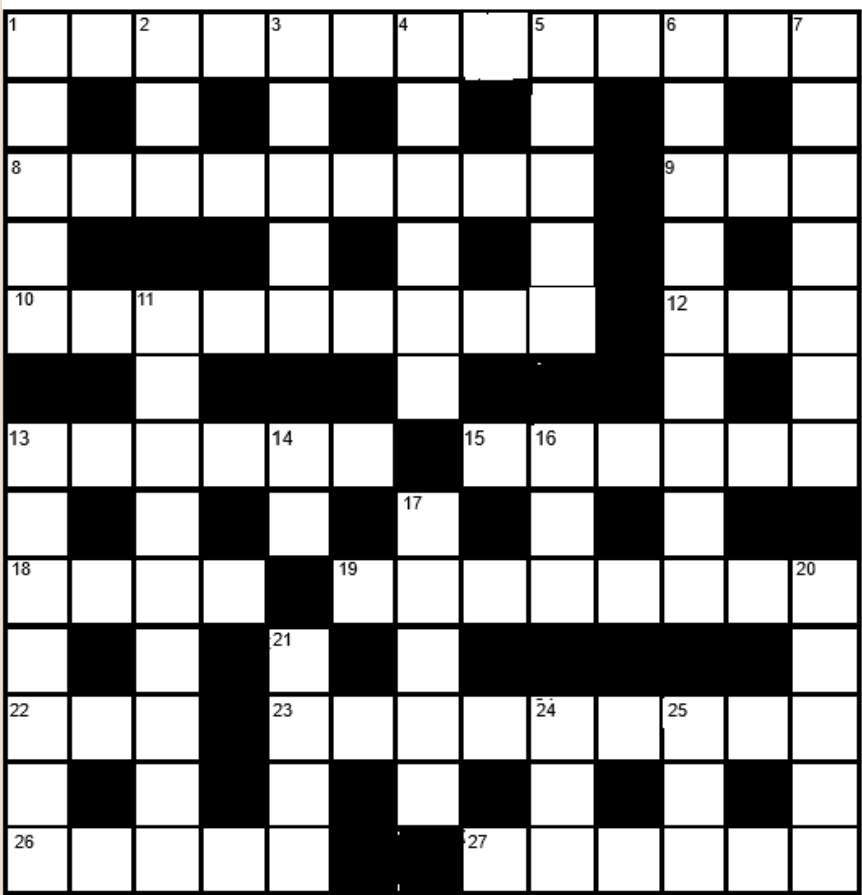
The most urgent issues are homelessness, affordability and crime. You can see the issues by standing at Nelson and Rideau or speaking with local businesses. These problems cannot be solved with slogans. I will assemble the strongest team possible, gather reliable data and press all levels of government for the funding and cooperation needed for housing, prevention, treatment and public safety. Governments can’t claim to keep people safe by building jails while failing to build housing. If they still refuse to act, I am prepared to live in a tent in protest. This political nonsense must stop.

- CTV News Meet the Candidates coverage: www.ctvnews.ca/ottawa/article/meet-the-candidates-for-councillor-in-ward-12-rideau-vanier/
- The non-partisan civic organization OPEG (Ottawa Public Engagement Group) asked candidates two questions:
1) Articulate a public position on engagement—not a generic

statement about “listening to residents” but how and when residents will have influence over the decisions that affect them;
2) Explain how residents will influence decisions—not just be consulted but influence. Replies from mayoral and municipal councillor candidates can be found on its website: <https://www.ottawapublicengagementgroup.ca/election-2026/responses>

WHAT’S IN A NAME

By Ralph Blaine



ACROSS

1. The name of this long serving PM might lead one to think he was a proponent of authentic bread ingredients—as long as one ignores the “stony” (en français) first name? (6, 7)
8. What the Vikings did to the settlements they invaded. (9)
9. Sty inhabitant. (3)
10. Les six dernières lettres du nom de famille de ce député fédéral bien connu pourraient vous faire penser à un lapin sauvage (wild rabbit). (8)
12. Moved fast. (3)
13. When this area of west Ottawa was a city itself (before amalgamation), the longstanding mayor was Ben Franklin. It includes neighbourhoods like Bells Corners and Barrhaven. (6)
15. See 18 across.
18. The name of this prominent MP might make one wonder if he had a past career as a worker in travelling shows involving midway rides and games like balloon darts (with 15 across). (4, 6)
19. The name of this bridge across the Canal might lead one to think it led to a place where bottle stoppers were fashioned. (8)
22. Could be mint or Darjeeling. (3)
23. Could this Sandy Hill politician and resident be found in a garden? (first name only) (9)
26. Bill, of billions.
27. A word for human beings in general. (6)

DOWN

1. A temporary retail space that opens suddenly and lasts for a short time. (3-2)
2. Flightless Australian bird. (3)
3. The straight lines going from the centre of a circle to the outer edge. (5)
4. To grow strong, do very well and be successful. (6)
5. Excessive, unwarranted, unfair. (5)
6. A constructed language designed as a universal second language. (9)
7. The state of needing immediate attention or response. “This is a matter of great ____.” (7)
11. Significant, crucial, vital. (9)
13. A label attached to a person’s shirt for identification purposes. (7)
14. The postal abbreviation for the province of someone living in Red Deer. (2)
16. Noah built it. (3)
17. Dollar, Pound or Euro. (5)
20. The daughter of one’s sibling. (5)
21. Inquires (4)
24. A garden tool used for light digging or weeding. (3)
25. A party in the Canadian parliament which currently has only five elected members. (abr) (3)

➤ Crossword solution, page 9

What has changed, and what has not, since the closure of supervised consumption site at the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre

Photo: Ralph Blaine

Ralph Blaine

The Consumption and Treatment Services Site at the corner of Nelson and Rideau (formerly known as Supervised Injection Site or SIS), that was located inside the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre (SHCHC), closed in mid-June of this year after losing funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health. Three months after the closure, I decided to take an early look at what had changed for some of the clients, neighbours, and staff of the Centre.

But first, let's look at the changes the supervised consumption site brought to our neighbourhood over the past eight years so we can better judge the post-closure changes in that context.

What was then known as the Supervised Injection Site opened in April of 2018. Even before this opening, the proposal generated a great deal of controversy. Both Mayor Jim Watson and Police Chief Charles Bordeleau announced their objection to the service, citing concerns over public safety and community stability. Many citizens also expressed concern about the impact of such a service in the neighbourhood.

But the SHCHC argued they were responding to a serious public health crisis involving, among other things, a significant number of Ottawa residents dying of drug overdoses.

It didn't take long to see the impact of the SIS on the Sandy Hill residents living near the SHCHC. Following the opening of the site, clients and other unhoused people had set up a semi-permanent camp across the street. This concentrated population of people who use substances naturally attracted drug dealers and began to form a community.

People living in the neighbourhood began reporting disturbing encounters as they walked by the SHCHC, and Ottawa Police reports showed a substantial increase in crime in Sandy Hill. (See the October 2019 story by Larry Newman in IMAGE's archives at www.imagesandyhill.org.) On September 11, 2019, City Councillor Mathieu Fleury called a public meeting to discuss these and related problems and to propose solutions.

Two initiatives proposed at the meeting were implemented with immediate effect. First, it was made clear that no encampments would be allowed near the SHCHC. The Centre also agreed to hire security guards to police the area around their building. It wasn't long before the TD Bank (now Mary Brown's Chicken), Ottawa Public Library's Rideau branch, Loblaws, and Dollarama on Rideau Street all hired their own private security guards.

Meanwhile, those who used substances and got their safe consumption supplies at the SHCHC but chose to inject off-site were soon finding their own spots to consume—backyards, alleyways, vacant lots, even right out in the open. Soon, residents



Various drug paraphernalia found discarded in the side yard of McGee's Inn on Nelson Street in August. According to resident Ralph Blaine, the small chain link barrier had been pushed down to gain access to a secluded area next to the house. A week later the debris was gone and a new fence erected. Only days later the new fence had also been pushed down and more drug debris was present.

were finding hypodermic needles with their bright orange caps discarded in various locations. Gradually, condo buildings, private residences, businesses, and even churches were constructing fences around their premises to curb the littering, trespassing, and drug consumption on their property.

Between March 2020 and February 2026, Health Canada (www.health-info-base.canada.ca/supervised-consumption-sites/) reported that the Sandy Hill supervised consumption site handled over 97,000 visits from a total of over 19,000 clients.

Now, let's get down to what I discovered about the situation in Sandy Hill since the closure of the consumption and treatment services site.

Crime rates

I feel I have heard more stories from neighbours than usual this summer about break-ins to cars and houses, stolen bicycles, and strangers entering backyards.

Has crime in Sandy Hill actually gone up since the closing of the site? A check of the Ottawa Police Community Safety Data Portal shows that the number of assaults, thefts under \$5000 and mischief for July and August were within the range of the numbers for the twelve months previous to the closing of the program, although they were in the upper end of that range. It is probably too early to draw any clear conclusion at this point. Still, it is worth noting that the crime rate in Sandy Hill did go up substantially after the open-

ing of the site and, so far, has remained at those higher levels since the program was shut down.

The surroundings

I suppose that many people assumed that once the site was shut down, all the problems associated with it would disappear. But the opening of the site didn't just supervise drug use; it also, albeit inadvertently, created a community which grew around the vicinity of the SHCHC. A police officer I spoke to some years ago explained that unhoused people and those who consume substances were coming to Ottawa from outlying areas to be part of this community, and although its individual members may change over time, the community is still around us. It should also be noted that, although the supervised consumption site has been closed, clients can still obtain harm reduction supplies funded by Ottawa Public Health and the Ministry of Health.

The clients

In the first week of September, I asked two people outside the SHCHC about the changes they had experienced since the closure of the site.

The first person I spoke to explained that she had never used the Centre's supervised consumption site because she didn't inject. Not much had changed for her because she could still get clean "bubbles" (glass pipes for smoking drugs) from the SHCHC.

Alicia was the second person I spoke to. She was sitting on the pavement bordering the SHCHC and unwrapping the syringe she had just obtained there. Alicia said she had been a client of the supervised service and regrets its closure. She said she doesn't like injecting in public as she waved her hand in the direction of a bent-over man in the street, adding that the area around the SHCHC has become dirtier and more strewn with injection debris since the closure of the site. She also pointed out that the personnel in the supervised clinic encouraged the clients to stay in the building for a time after injecting until they felt ready to leave. But now people who inject on the street sometimes fall almost comatose to the ground. They are then easy victims of theft or even violence from people who claim they are owed money. Alicia also says she sees more overdoses outside the clinic since the closure of the supervised clinic.

The staff

I spoke to two employees from social service organizations that collect needles and do community outreach. They reported seeing an increase in the number of drug consumption supplies that have been left on the streets, sidewalks, yards, etc. I also spoke to an employee of the SHCHC who said that there had been an increase in ambulance calls since the closure of the supervised site.

Dean Dewar had been involved with the CTS site for a little over a year when it was closed down. He is now Director of Community Engagement and Outreach at the SHCHC. He explained that those who wish to obtain safe drug consumption equipment must register with the SHCHC.

Closure, to page 9

Found by Ralph Blaine on Besserer Street, just across the street from the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre: a drug dose ready to be dissolved and injected, as well as a syringe and bubble pipe, both available at the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre.



Photos: Ralph Blaine

Closure, from page 8

Each of these registered clients is given an anonymous code which enables them to access equipment as needed. Dewar made the following statement about the services now provided to his clientele at the SHCHC:

“Harm reduction supplies [meaning hypodermic needles, tourniquets, etc.] distributed throughout Ottawa are funded through Ottawa Public Health and the Ontario Ministry of Health. Funding through the AIDS Bureau supports our Junction Worker, who assists people in accessing supplies while also providing harm reduction education, service navigation, and basic-needs support. In July, there were 3066 interactions at our site, supporting approximately 1088 individuals. This number has significantly increased since the closure of the SIS.

“We remain open to, and actively encourage, ongoing dialogue with residents, businesses, community partners, and other stakeholders. This includes opportunities such as the Sandy Hill Community Liaison Committee, our participation in multiple outreach and municipal tables, and direct conversations with community members who reach out to us with questions or concerns.”

Dewar also assured me that the SHCHC will continue to employ security guards.

So what has changed around the SHCHC since the closure of the CTS?

Supervised injections at the SHCHC have stopped; there is more litter and drug paraphernalia scattered around our neighbourhood; there are more ambulances called to treat drug consumption emergencies; and there are more people injecting drugs in public.

What has not changed

The gathering of people who use substances is still in place and the dealers still have their clientele; the SHCHC still provides access to counselling and harm reduction equipment; the crime rate in Sandy Hill has remained higher than what it was before the opening of the supervised site; there will continue to be security guards around the SHCHC.

After going over this list while talking with Dewar, I summed it up by saying: “It seems like the situation after the site closure has actually gotten...” and he took the words right out of my mouth, finishing my sentence with “worse, much worse.” It’s hard to disagree.

Have those people who campaigned with such fervour against the supervised consumption site funding scored an own goal?

WHAT’S IN A NAME
ANSWERS

FROM PAGE 7

ACROSS

- 1 PIERRE TRUDEAU
- 8 PLUNDERED 9 PIG
- 10 POILIEVRE 12 RAN
- 13 NEPEAN
- 15 CARNEY 18 MARK
- 19 CORKTOWN 22 TEA
- 23 STÉPHANIE 26 GATES
- 27 PEOPLE

DOWN

- 1 POP-UP 2 EMU 3 RADII
- 4 THRIVE 5 UNDUE
- 6 ESPERANTO 7 URGENCY
- 11 IMPORTANT 13 NAMETAG
- 14 AB 16 ARK 17 MONEY
- 20 NIECE 21 ASKS
- 24 HOE 25 NDP

Act now to keep your bike safe! (and what to do if it has been stolen)

Charlotte Garay

Photo: Paula Kelsall



Parfois un vélo volé réapparaît mystérieusement dans la cour de quelqu’un. Le nombre de vols de vélo augmente à Ottawa. Charlotte Garay suggère des façons de protéger son vélo et comment signaler un vol.

Ottawa is a wonderful city to ride a bike. But take a moment now to look at your bike. Take a few pictures of it, write down any key information, and research how to find its serial number if it isn’t obvious, because today could be the last time you see your bike.

There is evidence that bike thefts are on the increase. According to the Ottawa Police Service (OPS), thefts \$5,000 and under were up 17% year to date in August (<https://data.ottawapolice.ca/pages/safety-snapshots>). However, it is also likely that these statistics only include a small proportion of bike thefts.

Your first point of contact to report theft and suspicious activity should be the OPS. However, the process can be difficult to navigate. If your home, shed, or garage was broken into, call 911 (if theft is in progress) or the Police Reporting Unit at 613-236-1222 ext. 7300 between 8:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. (press “1” for the more urgent calls). Online reporting is only allowed if no break and entry was involved. Once a report is filed, I suggest reaching out to PropertyServices@ottawapolice.ca with any pictures and identifying information. If a bike is turned in to police, they are the ones who will have it.

Crowdsourced recovery tools are increasingly effective. The group 529 Garage allows you to download an app and register your bike. You’ll also get a tamper-proof decal to put on your bike that will help with recovery. If it is stolen, the app will send a notification to others, including police, with details of your bike. It’s never too late to register, even after your bike is stolen. Visit <https://project529.com/garage> for more information.

Facebook is another valuable resource, both for reporting and for finding stolen bikes for sale. Be careful, as not all sites are equal. The STOLEN Bikes Ottawa Facebook page administered by James Thompson is highly recommended. If you see suspicious activity or find an abandoned bike, you can also post here. Thompson’s insights into larger trends are eye opening, and chances are, you will see a familiar bike or someone you may know already who is part of the group. You can also join the Sandy Hill (Ottawa) Neighbours group on Facebook. Sadly, there are regular posts about bikes stolen from backyards, sheds and garages,

or bikes that have mysteriously appeared, dumped on someone’s front lawn!

My son’s bike was stolen from our Sandy Hill shed in August. I filed a police report online. It was rejected four days later because as a break and enter, I should have reported by phone, and so I had to report it again. By the time police actioned my file, possible supporting security camera footage nearby was no longer available. But on a positive note, I managed to find a bike reported on the STOLEN Bikes Ottawa Facebook group and helped return it to its owner!

I hope you enjoy many wonderful bike rides in our beautiful city.

A city of neglect or a city for all?

Nick Grover

As we prepare to vote in the 2026 municipal election, let’s take a moment to reflect on the city we have, the one we want, and what we need to do to realize it.

Step out the door and it is not hard to see the cracks in the city. The streets of Sandy Hill, like those across the city, are full of potholes and many sidewalks are so uneven they aren’t usable. Basic services like snow removal are dangerously inadequate. When buses aren’t cancelled due to mechanical failures, they are often late. Shelters are overcrowded and some 20,000 people languish on waiting lists for social housing. A growing number of people are living (and even dying) on the street with many more struggling to afford rent.

Responsibility for this sorry state of affairs lies with our mayor and city council. Year after year they’ve chosen to keep tax increases below the rate of inflation and much lower than fellow Canadian cities, inhibiting their ability to solve the major issues facing our city.

Mayor Mark Sutcliffe has framed low taxes as an affordability measure, but poor services cost us far more. Every

one percent tax increase deferred saves ratepayers \$45 a year on average. Lousy bus service compels many people to spend \$16,000 a year in car payments. A lack of affordable housing options bleeds the average renter \$1,900/month for a one-bedroom and \$2,400/month for a two bedroom.

No candidate for mayor or city council should be taken seriously unless they call for a 5–6 % property tax increase, a realignment of spending priorities, and strong investments in public services that meet the needs of the average person.

Many around the council table claim it’s not the role of government to take on massive public investments, but they already do. We’ve seen substantial investments in the LRT expansion, Lansdowne 2.0, and a slate of suburban road widening projects. It’s time to turn the political enthusiasm towards the more basic needs of Ottawa residents.

We must drastically scale up the number of units built or acquired by Ottawa Community Housing. Places like Vienna and Singapore have such good quality public housing that most people across income brackets happily live in it. In Finland, they’ve reduced homelessness by 81% thanks to their investments in social housing.

On transportation, we need a function-

al bus network, not just the LRT. With Ottawa’s population set to grow by 500,000 people in the coming decades, gridlock will go from bad to worse if they all travel by car. We urgently need more buses, dedicated lanes to keep them out of private vehicular traffic lanes, and fare relief to get people riding again. We needn’t look far for examples to emulate—Brampton, Edmonton, and Calgary are putting us to shame.

Measures to increase revenues ought to be accompanied by others that reallocate current or planned expenditures away from unproductive uses. Much of the police budget falls into that category. More policing doesn’t address the homelessness and despair that make parts of downtown chaotic and unsafe, nor has a growing police budget seemed to have reduced crime. Similarly, the \$50 million projected annual spending for road widening won’t reduce traffic congestion; it will just attract more cars.

When local government treats public goods as “last resort” options, that’s all they’ll ever be. We need a real alternative to private market options that are increasingly too expensive for most of us.

Ken's Bygone Sandy Hill

Sandy Hill firefighters were sent to England in the Second World War

Ken Clavette

There are parts of our history that remain unknown to all but those few dedicated to the minutia. This summer, I stumbled across a bit of Second World War history while doing some research for the Workers' History Museum and the Bytown Fire Brigade. Have you ever heard of the Canadian Corps of Firefighters? I hadn't, and of course since it involved a few Sandy Hillers, I was intrigued.

During the first year of the war, United Kingdom firefighters were thought of by many as army dodgers. This attitude changed immediately when the Battle of Britain began. During the first 22 nights of the Blitz in London alone, firefighters had to tackle some 10,000 fires. Bombs started falling on September 7, 1940, then for 57 days, English cities would burn. For many of the auxiliary members, this was their first experience of firefighting. Most of the young men had joined up with one of the military services, leaving those too old or too young to go to war to face the fires. It also meant that for the first time, women joined the Brigade. Those left to fight those nightly fires became known as "the heroes with grimy faces."

Halfway around the world, the Chief of the Vancouver Fire Department proposed that a 500-man Canadian firefighting corps be sent to help the British. However, nothing came of the idea until Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King visited Britain in 1941. London's bomb-damaged areas made an impression on him; he committed to send Canadian firefighters to help.

In 1942, the Canadian Corps of (Civilian) Firefighters was created. At first, the intention was for the corps to be a branch of the Canadian Army under the Department of National Defence. However, since the Fire Service in Great Britain was operating as a civilian organization, the Canadian contingent would also be a civilian body.

It would achieve a full complement of some 410 men quickly. The Corps was a mixture of personnel from all walks of life: 148 of the enlistees were from professional urban fire departments, 113 from volunteer or auxiliary fire services, and 149 joined with no firefighting experience at all. The ranks of the last category included university students, truckers, accountants and clerks. They were paid \$1.30 per day for this dangerous work! The four contingents of the Corps that went to England represented 23 Canadian cities and towns.



Canadian Fireman, Overseas Contingent, 1944 by British artist Norman Hepple (1908-1994)

Image provided by U.K. Imperial War Museums

Ottawa was made the centre for training the Corps. Fire Station No. 4, which had opened in 1911 at 387 Cumberland Street, was where recruits from across the country gathered for training and lodging. The three-storey fire station was built to serve as the Ottawa Fire Department's training centre, so it was a perfect place for their work to start. Among the 38 from Ottawa who joined, seven were from Sandy Hill. Lloyd G. McEvoy, Leading Fireman, living at 257 Daly Ave., was a member of the Ottawa Fire Department before joining, the only professional in the group.

Once in England, Corps members underwent four weeks of intensive training with the National Fire Service (NFS). They learned to use the unfamiliar British fire equipment such as trailer pumps, aerial trucks, and "wheeled escape ladders." Water had to be trucked along when the Thames River was at low tide. Mask drill, hydraulics, first aid, and physical educa-

tion were all part of their training. Once that was done, the Canadians were sent in detachments to four English cities that needed the extra support: Southampton, Bristol, Portsmouth and Plymouth. These important ports were targets of German air attack. At first, the Canadian firefighters worked alongside their British colleagues to familiarize themselves with their assigned area before they withdrew, leaving the Corps on their own.

Once when the Canadians were doing standby duty on docks while ammunition and fuel was being unloaded, an explosion on a ship set fire to gasoline. The Canadians fought for a full day to save the vessel. In addition to smaller local fires from time to time, they would join the National Fire Service units and United States military firefighting squads. As the war progressed, new hazards came in the form of phosphorous bombs and V-1 rockets—the "Buzz Bombs."

Sandy Hill members of the Canadian Corps of (Civilian) Firefighters

Lloyd G. McEvoy – 257 Daly Ave.
J. E. Dale – 162 Chapel St.
P.P. Desroches – 78 Friel St.
G. A. Lefebvre – 102 Nicolas St.
W. J. Pilon – 108 Besserer St.
D. J. Proulx – 464 Rideau St.
W.A. Schults – 194 Marlborough Ave.

Chief Huff, their commanding officer and a former fire chief from Brantford, Ontario, made sure that Corps members attended the "National Fire Service College," the largest of its kind in the world, when Canada had no such school. Huff said, "It will help make them outstanding in the fire profession when they return to Canada."

It is unknown how many lives they may have saved, but the few stories that have come down to us speak of their willingness to jump into danger. On July 2, 1942, while training in Ottawa, members were watching a military display in the canal. When several officer cadets taking part got into trouble, members of the corps joined others diving into the water to try and save them. Sadly, two of the cadets drowned. In July 1942, a member taking a stroll by the Test River in England heard children in distress. He didn't hesitate to jump into the water, pulling a 9-year-old boy to safety and reviving him with artificial respiration.

There were 11 casualties including three deaths among the corps, far fewer than the 327 London firefighters who lost their lives. If you visit the Corps Headquarters at 10-14 Inner Park Road, Wimbledon, look on a fence in the pub garden for a metal plaque that honours those who did not return.

Arrival back in Canada in February of 1945 signalled the disbanding of the unit. The UK government expressed its deep appreciation for the assistance to Britain rendered by the firefighters. Awards were given to the Corps, Chief Huff received the Order of the British Empire, and two members received British Empire Medals in the King's New Years Honours list. Three others received Royal Humane Society Life Saving Certificates.

The Canadian government was not so generous. Many professional firefighters on leave lost pension protection because unlike in the army, they were not considered on "active service." While classified as a civilian corps, they had been promised that they would get the same treatment as members of the military. Once home, they learned they could not wear the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal they were given because they were civilians. To make matters worse, the government reneged on the promise that they were to receive veterans benefits. Through lobbying, the survivors were able to get the government to present the Memorial Cross to the widows of the Corps members killed overseas. When the Canadian Merchant Navy veterans gained full veterans benefits in 1992, the Corps pushed for inclusion. In March 2000, the federal government announced extending veterans benefits to the Canadian Corps of Firefighters, Red Cross Nurses, and Ferry Command Pilots. Thus, their contribution was finally fully recognized, even if 55 years late.



Durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, le Corps des pompiers (civils) canadiens a été envoyé au Royaume-Uni pour aider les pompiers britanniques qui combattaient les incendies causés par les bombardements allemands. Sept des membres de ce contingent étaient des résidents de la Côte-de-Sable.

Image provided by: Leo Clusiaux

From IMAGE's Archive: December 2019

The impact of World War II on Sandy Hill

François Bregha

2019 marks the eightieth anniversary of the start of the Second World War. World War II had a lasting impact on Sandy Hill, notably in the conversion of former private homes into offices, diplomatic missions or barracks. Once converted, these homes did not return to their former residential use when the war ended. The war thus cemented a slow transformation in Sandy Hill that had already begun earlier, from a largely upper-class neighbourhood distinguished by large mansions, into a mixed neighbourhood featuring smaller houses, higher density and a greater institutional footprint.

Three major factors accounted for this transformation. First, Sandy Hill acquired a noticeable military presence in the second half of the war, particularly along Laurier Avenue East. Several large Sandy Hill mansions were re-purposed to serve the war effort, among them:

- Kildare Annex (now Amnesty International at 312 Laurier Ave.) became a barracks for the Canadian Women's Army Corps and would house the Canadian Army Provost Corps immediately after the war;
- Bremner House (345 Laurier Ave. E., now the site of an apartment building) became the Examination Unit, Canada's espionage centre;
- Munross (formerly the house of Ambrose O'Brien, now the Cordon Bleu at 453 Laurier Ave. E.) was used as a residence for the Women's Royal Canadian Navy Service and was renamed Kingsmill House in 1942;
- Kildare House (323 Chapel St., formerly the home of James Woods) served as barracks during the war;
- Hardy House (now the Polish embassy at 443 Daly Ave.) provided officer training for the Women's Royal Canadian Navy Service.

In addition, the government built the Varsity Oval Barracks on the University of Ottawa's athletic field south of Somerset Street in 1942. Composed of eight buildings designed to house 400 women of the Canadian Women's Army Corps, the barracks were sold to the University in 1946 and became classrooms and residences for the new faculties of medicine, engineering and sciences. At least one of these buildings stood until 1972.

A second change to Sandy Hill as a result of the war arose from Canada's increasing international importance. This new status led more countries to open diplomatic missions in Ottawa, several of which were in Sandy Hill: the Soviet government acquired the former Booth house at 285 Charlotte St. in 1943; the Australian High Commission replaced the German consulate at 407 Wilbrod St. in



Official opening of the Varsity Oval Barracks, June 16, 1944

1940; the Royal Norwegian Legation was housed at 192 Daly Ave.; the Free French government opened a mission at 464 Wilbrod St. The Belgian government moved from a more modest address to Stadacona Hall on Laurier Avenue after the war.

The third change arose from the huge backlog in residential construction that had accumulated as a result of the Great Depression and the war, and the need to accommodate returning veterans. While the post-war construction boom was Canada-wide, in Sandy Hill, it was most evident in building up Strathcona Heights which until then had stood largely empty.

These, of course, were not the war's only lasting impacts on Sandy Hill. As the memorials in our churches and at the University remind us, several Sandy Hill men died at war, including 9 from St Alban's, 16 from All Saints and 20 from St Joseph's. In addition, 69 University of Ottawa students or graduates perished in the war. While not all were from Sandy Hill, many were.

Daily life, of course, was also profoundly affected by the war. Rationing and war-induced shortages reduced the variety of goods and food available to all. An indication of the collective belt-tightening is that the number of private cars on Ottawa's roads fell by 13 per cent during the war even as the city's population grew by 17 per cent. All media were dominated by

war news. Drives to collect blood for the Red Cross, sell Victory bonds or collect metals for recycling were frequent. In politics, the conscription crisis split the country along linguistic lines as it had in 1917. These changes, however, were temporary and life returned to normal as war-time restrictions were gradually lifted.

But it did not return to what it had been pre-war. In September 1945, Igor Gouzenko walked out of the Soviet embassy on Charlotte Street carrying documents re-

vealing the existence of a Soviet spy ring in Canada, kicking off a new Cold War between the West and the Soviet Union. One of the persons he denounced lived in Sandy Hill and was jailed. Sandy Hill would never be the same after the war.

To see more articles like this from the IMAGE archive, visit our website at <https://home.imagesandyhill.org/>



Photo: HS Canada

Firefighters serving the Sandy Hill community helped celebrate the Parent Resource Centre anniversary party on Goulburn Avenue on August 22.

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Bella Notte B&B

Welcoming international guests in an historic Sandy Hill home since 1999

Photo: Betsy Mann

Betsy Mann

Preservation of Sandy Hill’s built heritage is an ongoing challenge. The Duplancic family has been doing its part for almost 30 years at 108 Daly Ave. Bella Notte, their bed and breakfast establishment, occupies what, more than 150 years ago, was the home of Sir Alexander Campbell, a founder of Confederation, Canada’s first postmaster general and later, lieutenant governor of Ontario.

I learned about Bella Notte’s beginnings over a coffee and croissant in the well-appointed breakfast room with its 12-foot-high ceilings. “Our family came to Canada from Yugoslavia in 1993, when I was six,” Sara Duplancic told me. “My parents were both musicians. My father, Oscar, soon started working as a pianist accompanist for The School of Dance, a position he retired from just a few years ago. My mother, Lillian, began taking private piano students, something she continues to do on the baby grand piano that followed us to Canada. Ottawa welcomed us, and we found a community here in Sandy Hill.”

Among their new friends were Sabina and Josef Sauter, owners of the Swiss Hotel at 89 Daly. When, after a few years, the Duplancics were looking for a career to supplement their work as musicians, Sabina Sauter suggested that a B&B would fit well with their schedules. They wanted to stay in Sandy Hill; they enjoyed being close to everything and reasoned that tourists would appreciate that too. When the house at 108 Daly came up for sale, they purchased it in August 1999. With the help of their friends at the nearby Swiss Hotel, they were ready to open the following month.

“The former owners of the property, David and Nancy Currie, had worked hard to preserve the historical character of the house,” Sara explained, “something my parents valued.” The Curries had succeeded in saving the house from a City demolition order after a fire in 1977 had severely damaged the roof and upper storey. Their subsequent restoration of the property contributed to the row of houses being designated a heritage property in 1979. The heritage plaque refers to it as “Varin Row,” named after its builder, and cites its “Italianate” style, its “rounded dormers, projecting entry porches, and polychromatic brick.”

Sara observed that while many old houses in Sandy Hill have been transformed and subdivided, it has been important for her parents to maintain the character of the house while also creating comfortable



Sir Alexander Campbell, un Père de la Confédération, a déjà logé au 108 avenue Daly, adresse depuis 1999 du B & B Bella Notte. La plaque historique sur cette rangée de maisons de style italienne tire notre attention à « ses lucarnes arrondies, ses porches d’entrée en saillie et sa brique polychrome ».

spaces to receive guests. “There’s a big difference between most Airbnb lodgings and the personal touch you get in a B&B,” she points out. “My parents love people, and people can sense it.” The Duplancics are hosting guests in their own home, offering them not only private spaces upstairs but also a copious spread at the breakfast table where they can meet other travellers.

Bella Notte offers guests a unique start to their day: listening to Oscar Duplancic playing light jazz on the piano in the liv-

ing room while they breakfast. Sara has observed that if guests come down in the morning in a bad mood, it soon changes. She feels that as artists, her parents have attracted many tourists interested in the arts. “We’ve had many wonderful guests, both Canadian and international,” she remembers. “The world comes to us.”

Sara gave me a tour of the house, including the lower level where the family has its private quarters. She pointed out the basement room that was the location of the original kitchen, as was usual at the time the house was built. It is now her father’s music studio, filled with instruments and recording equipment. The stone foundation walls are visible here, further evidence of the house’s age. As we climbed up to the guest rooms on the second and third floors, Sara confessed that this is the first time she has managed the B&B on her own while her parents are travelling overseas. “It’s a lot more work than I thought,” she admits. “I understand better now why my mother insisted on doing things certain ways.”

The neighbourhood has changed a lot since Bella Notte opened 27 years ago. I asked Sara how that has affected the B&B. “Tourists now worry about what they see on the streets around us. It’s not a good face to put on Canada’s capital,” she says with regret. She recognizes that the issues are complex, but wonders if the City has given up on the area. She hopes with more people living downtown, in both old and new buildings, a positive momentum will build that will bring solutions. Meanwhile, she assures guests that it is safe and encourages them to visit the many attractions within walking distance. “We are urban people and want to live downtown,” she insists. “We are proud to be able to preserve a piece of Canada’s history in this house and share it with visitors.”

For more information and photos: www.bellanottebb.com

Photo: Betsy Mann



Dans le salon du B & B Bella Notte, Sara Duplancic se tient à côté du piano qui a suivi sa famille quand ils sont venus de la Yougoslavie au Canada en 1993. C’est ici que sa mère Lillian enseigne le piano et que son père Oscar joue du jazz durant le petit déjeuner pour le plaisir des clients.



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Claude Bégin

Un bâtiment n'existe pas seul; il s'intègre dans un paysage et un quartier. C'est le cas de l'édifice sis au 453, avenue Laurier Est. Il est dessiné par l'architecte James Mather pour son frère John Mather, magnat de l'industrie forestière. Reconnu comme bâtiment à valeur patrimoniale au sein du paysage culturel urbain du quartier de la Côte-de-Sable, il se construit entre 1872 et 1877. Sa conception originale s'inscrit dans le style architectural Second Empire, en vogue au Canada de 1855 à 1885. James Mather conçoit de nombreux autres édifices à Ottawa, dont la maison Laurier située au 335, avenue Laurier Est, qui devient un musée et un lieu historique national.

Le style architectural Second Empire connaît ses débuts en France durant le règne de l'empereur Napoléon III (1852-1870) et influence aussitôt plusieurs architectes à travers l'Europe, puis en Amérique du Nord. Une caractéristique principale de ce style est son toit mansardé, un comble brisé composé de deux pentes de chaque côté : le terrasson (la pente douce supérieure) et le brisis (la pente raide inférieure). Le célèbre architecte français François Mansart (1598-1666) popularise ce type de toiture au XVIIe siècle.

Surnommé « le manoir Munross » par son propriétaire John Mather, qui y vit jusqu'à sa mort en 1907, cet édifice doit plutôt s'appeler « le manoir Montrose » d'après des rumeurs répandues par ses descendants. Ce nom ferait référence à une ville proche de son lieu de naissance en Écosse. Cependant, en raison du fort accent écossais de Mather, et toujours selon la tradition orale, la demeure finit par être connue sous le nom de « Munross ».



Sandy Hill artist Claude Bégin's playful painting of the Cordon Bleu restaurant on Laurier Avenue East. Bégin details the building's history, from its construction between 1872 and 1877 to its sale to the Cordon Bleu school in 1999.

Illustration de Claude Bégin

Au fil des décennies, le manoir change maintes fois de propriétaires et de résidents, et de nombreuses rénovations y sont effectuées. À titre d'exemple, un troisième étage est ajouté à la tour et son toit mansardé est remplacé par un parapet de château. L'étable est convertie en garage et une véranda est ajoutée à l'entrée principale, laissant place par la suite à une longue terrasse orientée à l'est du bâtiment.

L'année suivant la mort de Mather, le manoir est vendu à Clarissa Ami qui y vit avec sa famille. John Ambrose O'Brien en devient le nouveau propriétaire au début des années 1920 et accepte de louer l'édifice au ministère de la Défense na-

tionale du Canada. Au début des années 1940, l'édifice se transforme en résidence pour le Service féminin de la Marine royale du Canada. En 1948, l'Université d'Ottawa achète le manoir, qui sert désormais de dortoir pour étudiants. L'édifice est vendu à l'Université Saint-Paul en 1955, puis au Cercle universitaire en 1975.

En 1999, le groupe Cordon Bleu se porte acquéreur de l'historique manoir Munross. Son président, André J. Cointreau, séduit par le caractère et l'esthétique unique de l'immeuble, en fait le nouvel emplacement de l'école spécialisée dans l'enseignement des arts culinaires français et du management hôtelier. De nou-

veaux travaux de rénovation sont réalisés, notamment la construction d'une annexe à l'arrière du bâtiment afin d'y installer des cuisines de formation. L'édifice est aussi aménagé pour faire place au restaurant « Signatures Le Cordon Bleu ». S'appuyant sur les techniques classiques et le savoir-faire ancestral, le restaurant offre une cuisine française contemporaine dans une ambiance sans conteste exceptionnelle.

Pour continuer cette réflexion sur l'époque et l'histoire du manoir Munross, pourquoi ne pas vous offrir un repas gastronomique au restaurant Signatures Le Cordon Bleu? À vos assiettes, prêts, dégustez!

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Summer 2026: shows, sports and destructive storms



Photo: HS Canada

In addition to fine productions by Company of Fools and Odyssey Theatre, Strathcona Park saw the return of many crowd-pleasing events this summer, including acrobatics by Faerie Pop-up circus (above), and excellent one-of-a-kind treasures at Art in the Park (below).



Photo: Betsy Mann

Blackburn Avenue resident Betsy Mann captured World Cup fever in Sandy Hill this past July. The Embassy of Morocco on Range Road created a large banner to show its pride as their team made it to the quarter finals.



Photo: HS Canada

Photographer Caleb Ficner and sales helpers at Art in the Park had a great selection of cards and prints on offer. The Ottawa Art Gallery boutique is another place to find Caleb's cards.



Photo: Betsy Mann

SAFI Fine Foods put out flags of all teams still in the running for the World Cup, taking them down as they were eliminated (with the exception of the Canadian flag, which held its honorary spot).



Sandy Hill was spared the record flooding of the July 1 storm (probably thanks to the storm water tank under Annie Pootoogook Park!), but will mourn the loss of many stately trees. You couldn't walk anywhere this summer without seeing the damage—on our streets, in our parks, and along the river.

Photos: Christine Aubry

An eventful summer in Strathcona Heights

Gerald Dragon

Summer camp

From early July to mid-August, the halls of Viscount Alexander Public School were bursting with an abundance of energy from 60 participants who came to the annual summer camp held by the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre.

Children and youth took part in a wide variety of activities, games, recreation and outings. Partnerships and support from Youth Futures, The Centre for Resilience and Social Development (CRSD), the Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group (OSEG) and Employment Ontario helped to make the camp a memorable experience.

Green communities funding

The Sandy Hill Community Health Centre was awarded \$5000 from Green Communities Canada which went towards the rehabilitation of the Gathering Garden, located behind 430 Wiggins Private. The previous wooden raised beds had reached the end of their life, and it was time to replace them with something more durable: galvanized steel. Alongside the new beds, a pergola will now grace this back area making it perfect for gardening days. A big thank you to the Ottawa Community Housing Volunteer Engagement team and their volunteers for their support in building this rehabilitation project.

PRC 50th anniversary

On August 21 and 22, the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre was delighted to participate along with Ottawa Community Housing in celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Parent Resource Centre. Friday night was a craft and movie night, bringing back the very popular “movie in the park.” Saturday saw families descend on Strathcona Heights to take part in the petting zoo, Luv 2 Groove, The Ottawa Native Women’s Association demos, jumbo games, soccer, a basketball game between neighborhood youth and the Ottawa Police Hoopstars, a BBQ, firetrucks and Monkey Rock. Congratulations to the Parent Resource Centre on reaching this milestone!

Photo: Annabelle Gisanza



Du début juillet à la mi-août, le Centre de santé communautaire Côte-de-Sable a organisé les camps d’été de Strathcona Heights. Les enfants ont pu participer à de nombreuses activités dans le quartier.



Grâce à une subvention de Green Communities Canada et au travail d’une équipe de bénévoles de la communauté, le jardin derrière 430, Wiggins Privé est maintenant doté de nouvelles jardinières surélevées et d’une nouvelle pergola.

Photo: Gerald Dragon



Depuis 50 ans, le Parent Resource Centre est un lieu où les enfants jouent et les adultes qui les accompagnent se retrouvent pour se ressourcer. Cet été, ces enfants ont trouvé un bon jeu durant les célébrations du 50 anniversaire du Centre tenues le 22 août.

Super Learners

For more than a decade, the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre has been fortunate to benefit from the quiet generosity and steadfast commitment of George Gaty, a dedicated private donor whose support has helped sustain our after-school program and the many children it serves. His longstanding belief in the importance of providing safe, enriching spaces for students has made a meaningful and lasting impact on our community. In a moment when the program faced a financial deficit, his leadership once again proved invaluable. Recognizing the importance of maintaining these critical services, he stepped forward to rally additional donors, bringing together a small network of support that will ensure the continuation of the program without interruption. The Sandy Hill Community Health Centre is deeply grateful not only for his years of personal generosity, but also for his initiative, advocacy, and ability to inspire others to invest in our shared mission. Their contributions have strengthened the foundation of this program which will continue to benefit students for years to come.

PRC photos: HS Canada



Summer snaps



Return of the Food Truck Festival

The 4th Annual Sandy Hill Food Truck Festival organized by Councillor Stéphanie Plan-te took place Sunday, September 6, bringing together over 300 residents from Sandy Hill and Lowertown onto Chapel Street between Wilbrod and Laurier to enjoy some of Ottawa’s incredible local food vendors. In collaboration with Laurier House National Historic Site, visitors also enjoyed free admission to the Parks Canada site while sharing a meal and spending the afternoon with friends, neighbours, and community members.

Photo: Lauren Lemoine

Sandy Hill’s Nessie grew!

The painted Rock-Ness Monster on Goulburn Avenue grew quite a bit over the summer! There is still time to add your painted rock before the snow arrives.

Photo: Christine Aubry





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Spirit of Place: an afternoon with John McQuarrie

Image provided by John McQuarrie

Houji Yao

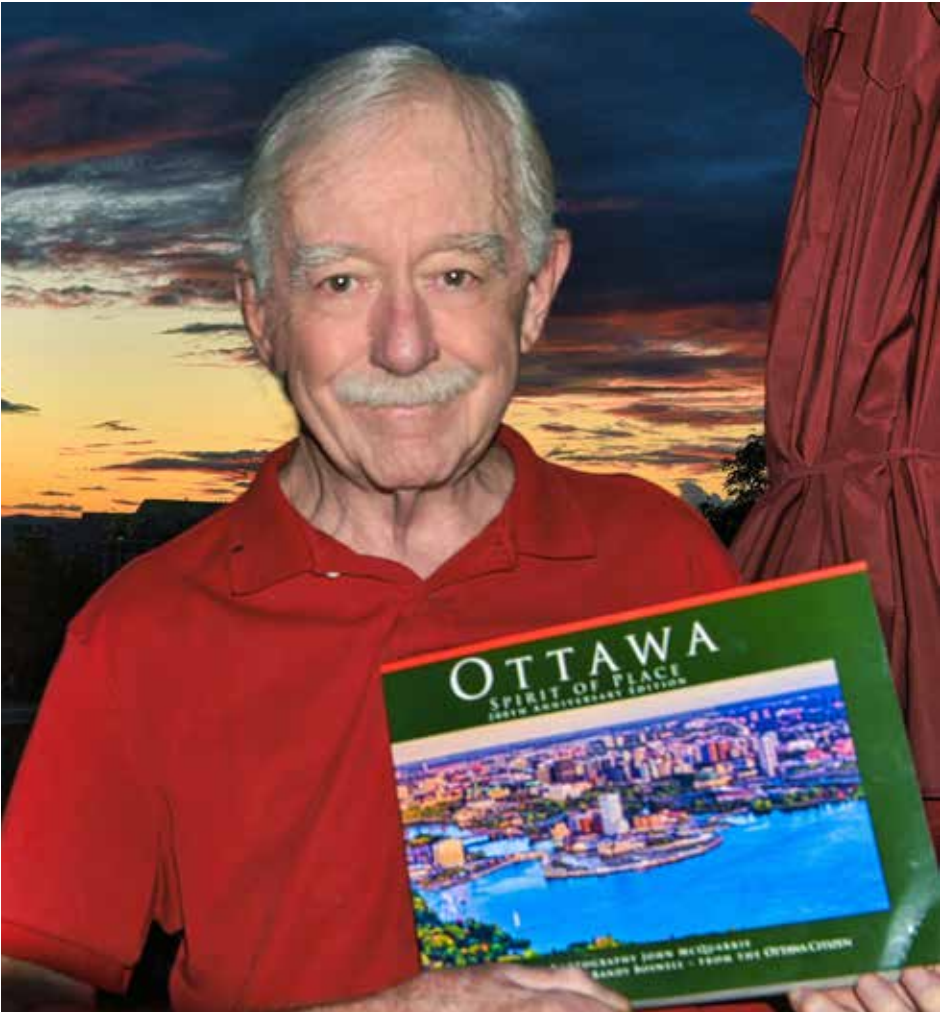
IMAGE sent its newest volunteer writer on assignment to interview another IMAGE volunteer, John McQuarrie, about his series of photography books.

Browsing John McQuarrie’s catalogue, a series of titles stands out: Spirit of Place. The latest is *Ottawa: Spirit of Place, 200th Anniversary Edition*. I asked him what Spirit of Place meant. He got right into it, barely touching his coffee.

The idea started 25 years ago in Scotland, where McQuarrie had gone to shoot a book on whiskey—only to find the market for whiskey books already crowded. Touring distilleries anyway, he learned each one drew its water from a spring bubbling up on site. “That gives it the spirit of place,” a young tour guide told him. “So when you sip the whiskey, you’re getting the spirit of that location.”

By then, he’d already built a “Then and Now” series, and that name, not the new one, is what nearly cost him. A British publisher, Pavilion Books, held a US trademark on “Then and Now” and, as McQuarrie tells it, assumed it extended into Canada. They threatened to sue for \$5,000; he countersued for \$12,000 and won. Having grown fonder of the “Spirit of Place” title anyway, he later sold Pavilion the “Then and Now” name outright for another \$12,000.

McQuarrie has lived in Ottawa since 1956, when his family moved from Nova Scotia after his father, a civil engineer with the Canadian Pacific Railway, was transferred. Arriving by train that April, his father woke him as they crossed the Interprovincial Bridge into Ottawa. “As the sunrise was happening,” McQuarrie remembers, “I saw the Peace Tower, the Supreme Court, and all that good stuff I had seen in books in school in Nova Scotia, but never thought I would see it live.” That Christmas, he asked for a Kodak Starflash—Eastman Kodak’s new



Le photographe John McQuarrie tient son plus récent livre, *Ottawa: Spirit of Place, 200th Anniversary Edition*. On y trouve des photos, tant aériennes que terrestres, prises par McQuarrie, jumelées avec des articles par l’auteur et journaliste du *Ottawa Citizen* Randy Boswell.

\$12 camera, built-in flash included—and Santa delivered!

He has gone on to make several books on the city he loves. His latest book, *Ottawa: Spirit of Place, 200th Anniversary Edition*, runs 296 pages and pairs McQuarrie’s aerial and terrestrial photography with journalist and author Randy Boswell’s pieces, new and archival sto-

ries from the *Ottawa Citizen* that speak eloquently to Ottawa’s 200th.

One pairing stayed with me: the piece on the Martin Terrace restoration at 519–525 King Edward St., a row of buildings I walk past most days without a second thought. Seeing its own history laid beside McQuarrie’s photograph of it changed how I look at it now.

Set beside his 2018 Ottawa book, the anniversary edition is noticeably more vibrant. The tradeoff is sizable. At 296 pages and built for the larger format, this is not a book you flip through one-handed on the couch; it’s a coffee-table book in the literal sense, meant to be laid open and lingered over. Not every page is as legible as it is beautiful. The chapter header for “A Patch of Earth, Sculpted by Time and Ice” sets pale text against a pale glacier photograph, one of the few spots where the design gets in its own way.

The cover’s vibrant colours on a dark green background invite readers to take notice. “The inside’s where you tell the story,” McQuarrie said. “The outside is where you attract the customer to pick the book up.” In this edition, the aerial photograph on the front wraps around the spine onto the back, the binding falling squarely on the Ottawa River. McQuarrie chose the crop deliberately, he says, to put Hull—historically Philemon Wright’s 1850s settlement, now downtown Gatineau—on the back cover, beside an 1859 bird’s-eye rendering of the city by architects Thomas Stent and Augustus Laver, the “future capital” imagined a century and a half before the photograph next to it.

At \$46, McQuarrie’s work is built for a specific reader, someone who already loves archival photography and anyone who’s spent too long looking at Ottawa on a screen. It provides an opportunity for all to discover the spirit of Ottawa. You can see McQuarrie’s work at www.magiclightphoto.ca.

Cocktails and colours at beloved Sandy Hill thrift store

Ana Júlia Galvan

Everyone has their preferred colours. When it comes to purchasing clothes and accessories, maybe you are the type of person who likes to stay within your comfort zone, keeping it basic and simple; or maybe you like to explore and try out different hues, patterns, and textures. But are you sure you are wearing the colours which best suit you?

Leah Geller’s Ottawa Colour Lab aims to help people better know themselves in that regard. Inspired by a friend whose career as a colour analyst spanned decades, Leah started researching the subject out of curiosity. Since 2024 and as a colour analyst herself, she has helped hundreds of clients discover their “true colours”.

On September 13th, Sandy Hill’s beloved thrift store Bee You Creative Styles hosted the monthly edition of the Colours and Cocktails event, during which a few

participants had their best-matching palettes assessed and shared the joy of discovering new wardrobe possibilities.

Colour analysis reveals which colours and hues best match your skin, eyes, hair colour, and undertones. The palettes consist of four major quadrants — Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter. Each quadrant is divided into three sections — Deep (or Dark), True, and Bright. Whether you are a Bright Spring or a Deep Winter, figuring out a palette that truly works for you brings out your best features for a more refined presentation. It makes you think about your own clothes in a more creative, exploratory, and even playful way. It gives you more confidence when choosing what to wear and helps you make smarter wardrobe decisions — a great way to save money and be a more conscious consumer.

For more information about Colours and Cocktails, ticket prices, and upcoming event dates, visit the website at www.beeyoucreativestyles.com.



Photo: Ana Júlia Galvan

Notre voisine Ana Júlia Galvan a assisté à une des soirées mensuelles “Colour & Cocktails” au magasin BeeYou sur la rue Somerset est. De gauche à droite: Jess Vaillancourt (propriétaire du magasin), Pam Gerow (marchande de produits vendus au magasin, @paperbagprincess) et Leah Geller (analyste de couleurs, @OttawaColourLab).

Restoring and repurposing a historic home for well-being, community, and connection in the heart of Sandy Hill

John McQuarrie

As a photographer and writer, I have had the pleasure of working with Christine Aubry while doing a couple of stories for IMAGE. Our more recent collaboration however, was more personal. Christine had engaged me to photograph the remarkable historic home at 320 Chapel Street, built in 1892, to help illustrate its new purpose—a transformation project she and her husband, Jason Kitchen, are undertaking together. They aim to restore and renovate the property, if granted approval from the City to change its designation from residential to commercial use under the zoning bylaw.

That new purpose, as described online (www.espace320.ca) is “being developed in consultation with the community to create a space for health and wellness programming and professionals, community organizations, educational activities and gatherings that contribute to individual and collective well-being.”

This was what I knew when we met on the doorstep of the house this past August. Christine first pointed out the ornate, heart-shaped doorknob and its elegant backplate. The Victorian Era transformed doorknob designs with delicate yet bold patterns and the use of more expensive materials like porcelain and brass. These beautiful elements served as status symbols, reflecting the wealth and social standing of the homeowners, as well as serving a functional purpose as they became easier to hold and use. We can only imagine that the original owner had specified this charming detail, perhaps with the intention of surprising his wife when they first crossed the threshold of their new home.

From the vestibule, a second door led into a magnificent foyer, its ornate woodwork and chandelier clearly intended to impress and delight visitors. It certainly worked its magic on this photographer!

As we moved from room to room, Christine pointed out the architectural features she wanted me to capture, and my camera loved the spaces as much as she obviously did: the multiple fireplaces, elaborate woodwork, cornices and beautifully fashioned light fixtures. Many of these, I suspected, were original, or at least dated



L'élégante maison situé au 320, rue Chapel, construite en 1892, a récemment été acquise par Christine Aubry et Jason Kitchen, résidents de longue date de la Côte-de-Sable. Le couple consulte actuellement la communauté afin d'y créer « un espace dédié aux programmes et aux professionnels de la santé et du bien-être ». Pour plus de détails et pour suivre le cheminement du projet, visitez www.espace320.ca

from the early years of the house, when electricity was beginning to make its way into Ottawa residences.

In 1903, the first recorded owner appearing in City records was Elizabeth Mary Brophy, wife of George Patrick Brophy, a prominent civil engineer and one of the founders of Ottawa's electric streetcar system. The purchase price was \$12,000.00. Records show it remained in the family until 1949, according to the

classified ad on page 36 of *The Ottawa Journal* of May 27, 1949: “320 Chapel Street: Large solid brick 14 room home, suitable for large residence or conversion. \$17,000.00.”

As we stepped outside into the garden, Christine indicated that its neglected state would receive a landscape makeover to return it to the splendour it is said to have displayed back in the day.

In the *Ottawa Citizen* of July 14, 1944, page 12, reporter Austin F. Cross wrote: “Happiest Bastille Day since before the war was celebrated today at the unofficial embassy of France at 320 Chapel Street. Honoured with a visit by Prime Minister Mackenzie King, and graced by representatives of a dozen other countries, the Friends of France rallied to drink a toast to Liberté, Égalité and Fraternité. The gathering exuded colour. First of all, there was the Prime Minister, bowing, smiling and in radiant good humour, exchanging pleasantries here and there looking as though he hadn't a care in the world. Mr. King stayed a while, then rushed away to a [wartime] cabinet meeting. The hostess wore a smart costume of black and white with touches of gold. Several hundred guests were present and towards the close of the event gathered on the spacious lawn.”

From a stately residence of turn of the century civil engineer George Patrick Brophy and his growing family, to wartime embassy of occupied France and, at war's end, a return to a typical, post-war Sandy Hill home and now, a dramatic repurposing is on the horizon. Follow along by signing up at www.espace320.ca, following on Instagram @espace320.ca, or email Christine at info@espace320.ca.

Les passants admirent depuis longtemps le magnifique jardin qui borde la maison du 320, rue Chapel. Ils seront ravis d'apprendre que les nouveaux propriétaires ont l'intention de préserver cet espace vert et de redonner au jardin toute sa splendeur d'antan.

Images provided by John McQuarrie



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Nostalgia

Sandy Hill residents remember the past, captured in their family photos, their memoir writings, and even their old phones.



Photographe de la Côte-de-Sable Philip Owen a profit  de la pr sence   Ottawa de la journaliste de la mode Clara Tosi Pamphili pour lui pr senter une photo qu’il a prise   Florence en 1982 de la top-mod le Pat Cleveland.

A Photograph Across Time

There are moments in photography when the distance between past and present seems to disappear. For me, one of those moments came when I met Italian journalist, curator, and cultural commentator Clara Tosi Pamphili, and had the opportunity to present her with a photograph I had taken in 1982 at Florence’s Pitti Donna (an influential women’s fashion trade show in the early 1980s), featuring the legendary supermodel Pat Cleveland.

The photograph was more than an image to me. It was a piece of fashion history — a visual record of a remarkable period when Florence’s Pitti Donna brought together designers, buyers, journalists, models, photographers, and fashion personalities from around the world.

I was there in 1982, camera in hand, witnessing and documenting that atmosphere. Through my lens, I captured Pat Cleveland, one of the most recognizable models of her generation, modeling Gucci during the event. Looking back more than four decades later, I realize that I was not simply photographing a fashion presentation. I was preserving a moment that could never be recreated.

Cleveland’s presence gives the photograph a particular historical significance. She was already an internationally recognized model, and the image connects her career with Gucci and with the extraordinary energy surrounding Italian fashion in Florence at the beginning of the 1980s.

For me, the photograph has always carried a personal connection to that era. I remember the atmosphere, the excitement, and the sense of being surrounded by people who were shaping the international fashion world. The camera allowed me to freeze one small part of that world in time.

More than forty years later, meeting Clara Tosi Pamphili gave that photograph a new chapter. When I presented her with the print, I felt that I was doing more than giving away a photograph. I was passing on a memory—one that I had personally witnessed and preserved in 1982.

Photography works in this remarkable way. The shutter closes in an instant, but the image can survive for generations. Faces change. Fashion evolves. Places are transformed. Memories become distant. Yet, a photograph can continue to speak.

-- Philip Owen



Combien de personnes savent pourquoi nous avons sur la rue Templeton un parc nomm  St.Germain? A vous le d fi!

A challenge for readers: who was Saint Germain?

Recently, there was a news story about Linda Thom Park, which is situated near the north approach to the actual Billings Bridge. I wonder how many people know or remember Linda’s accomplishment when she won the Olympic gold medal at the 1984 Los Angeles games for her shooting in the women’s 25m pistol event.

I will never forget her. In the summer of 1984, we were camped near her tent in Algonquin Park. Her children and ours were close in age. Linda was friendly and I stupidly asked, “... and

where do you keep your medal?” She replied, “Oh, I brought it with us. Do you want to see it?”

But that was 42 years ago. Millions of people born since 1984 will have no reason to remember her, which brings my thoughts to a park here in Sandy Hill: Saint Germain Park at 88 Templeton Street. The park is kept up but the sign shows signs of neglect, just like Linda Thom’s commemorative piece.

Here is my challenge to readers: do you know who Saint Germain was? Have you ever met him? You can email your answers to IMAGE at editor@imagesandyhill.com, or better yet, write a small article on Saint Germain for a future issue of IMAGE!

-- Bob Meldrum

The end of an era

Am I the only customer in Sandy Hill who has faced this problem?

First, Bell regularly called us warning that our copper wire landline that we had used for 56 years had to go. Then, Bell paid for a salesman from an Oakville company to come to the door. Finally, Bell sent us a note that our landline would be cut.

Panic! What to do?

Most of our friends and family are “mobile savvy”; they just got their landline number changed to one of their mobile phones. My wife and I are in our eighties and not too comfortable with our Apple and Android devices. Besides, I had set up an extensive “RJ11” network based on the landline. (RJ11 refers to the type of plug that comes with the phones.)

One other feature of the copper landline that we appreciated was that Bell supplied the electricity even during power failures, so that one phone kept going even during the ice storm.

Even more annoying was that Bell could change our service to Bell FIBE if we paid \$150 to have the new modem installed. Imagine, you have to pay to have your service cut!

There Was a Time

There was a time when milk was delivered to our home by a horse-drawn wagon and the milkman, in his uniform and wearing his hat, was dropped off milk bottles at our side door and picked up the empties in which payment had been left by my mother. Meanwhile, the horse took this opportunity to relieve himself in our unpaved, gravel driveway. As I recall this was not an infrequent event!

There was a time when bread was delivered to our home—yes, you guessed it, by horse-drawn wagon—and our choice was simple... enriched white, doughy bread wrapped in some sort of waxed-paper. For those families wanting freshly-baked egg bread, or sourdough bread or pumpernickel bread or rye bread or raisin bread or as I recall possibly three-grain bread, one had to go to specialty bakeries to buy these products and that was indeed a treat; the smell was to die for. Bagels were not yet a household staple.

There was a time when “the iceman cometh.” Electric refrigerators were just starting to reach the consumer market and most of us had iceboxes to refrigerate the food. The iceman, as I remember, actually had a truck and a huge pair of tongs which wrapped around large square blocks of ice which he brought into the house.

There was a time when the man who delivered coal to fire our furnaces came to the house. He also, to my recall, drove a truck, something like a large dump truck, and it had a removable slide or chute. Our house had a “coal door” at ground level facing the street, and when this door was opened and the chute placed in position from the coal truck into the coal door opening, that was when I and my friends would watch a steady flow of coal nuggets slide down the chute and into our basement coal storage room. How none of us contracted black lung disease is a mystery.

There was a time when mail delivery to our homes was twice a day and also on Saturdays.

There was a time when streetcar tickets cost 5 for 25 cents and a “transfer” was good for the entire day. If you took the streetcar on its complete route, you could watch the conductor manually turn the streetcar around and re-connect the contact antenna to the overhead wire.

There was a time, in some of the newer, semi-planned communities after both World Wars when properties had “lanes”



Ce t l phone   cadran d’une autre  poque a  t  rendu d suet par le modem de Bell T l  Fibe.

Anyhow, I decided that there was no choice. I bit the bullet and accepted their offer. It took four technician visits but finally the “RJ11 network” is working fine, though I think the RJ11 output from the modem is weaker than that from copper landline, and as a result, any imperfection in the network causes difficulty.

The only sad thing now is that our historic dial phone has no use.

-- Bob Meldrum

or easements running between the houses, presumably to allow for hydro and gas service personnel, but I am not 100% certain about this. Perhaps they were just shortcuts from one street to another?

I recently took a walk into the neighbourhood where I spent the first 10 years of my life. It is not very far from the condo where we now live on Wurtemberg Street. I passed by our old house, sort of a nostalgia outing, and I tried peering into the backyard to see if the “lane” was still there behind the house. I could not see it and I then walked to each end of the block figuring I would see where the “lane” accessed the streets, but to my surprise, there were no access points and no lane. Some 68 years have passed since I last saw/used that lane behind my childhood home. It’s not there anymore nor is there any visible sign that it was ever there. This was indeed a bit unsettling and upsetting. Where have all the flowers, er, lanes gone?

There was a time, when as kids, we were sent out to play and told to come home from the park or playground when it got dark.

And finally, there was a time when there were no electronic devices, or cellphones, or iPads or game-boxes and as children we had to use our imaginations and create our own adventure and excitement. We would build and maintain skating rinks by flooding our backyards, or stage impromptu “circus acts” on our swingsets or simply play shinny and other street games and not be concerned about buying high-priced tickets to professional hockey, football, baseball or basketball games. Soccer was a “European” sport not even on the North American map in those days.

Those were simpler times and today the times are not quite so simple. Now if you are a Canadian and want to play professional soccer, better steer clear of using drones to spy on your competition.

There was a time when one would ask, “What’s a drone?”

-- Allan Schwartz

Excerpt from a previously published chronicle “There Was A Time” in B.C.’s INSPIRED 55+ Lifestyle Magazine



Sandy Hill photographer Philip Owen captured jazz pianist Hiromi Uehara during the performance of Hiromi's Sonicwonder at the 2026 Ottawa Jazz Festival.

Photo: HS Canada

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Sandy Hill’s Emily Thomas is now Emily Darlington, British Labour MP

Bob Meldrum

Here in Sandy Hill, we often honour people who have become famous later in life. Instead, I would like to honour a young woman who grew up on Goulburn Avenue and spent many hours as our daughter’s friend. As a result of that friendship, she was often a part of our household.

Emily Darlington (née Thomas) was born in London, England. Due to a lack of funding for scientific research in England, her father moved to Canada where he did research for the National Research Council. Emily was part of our life for many years, starting with kindergarten at Viscount Alexander Public School. Sadly, we lost touch when her father’s work was moved to Montreal.



Young Emily, in blue, at her friend Allison Meldrum’s eighth birthday party on Blackburn Avenue, and above in red in her official portrait for the UK parliament.

Recently, we learned that Emily has been elected the Labour MP for Milton Keynes Central in the British Parliament.

Prior to becoming an MP in 2024, she worked in international development, including as a board member of a Kenyan charity working to alleviate poverty. In her maiden speech to Parliament she talked about her “passion for international development.”

Sandy Hill can be proud of giving Emily a great start.

Photos: contributed by Bob Meldrum

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Compassion campaign: Planned OHS community veterinary clinic in Vanier still needs to raise millions

Rendering: OHS-website

Christine Ng

There is an exciting new development happening within our Rideau-Vanier ward, just a skip east across the Rideau River. The Ottawa Humane Society (OHS) will be setting up a new, non-profit community veterinary clinic that aims to help people who face challenges in accessing veterinary care for their beloved family pets.

“We know that there are a lot of pet owners who face barriers to care, and hence their animals are not receiving any veterinary care,” said President and CEO of the OHS, Sharon Miko, at a recent town hall meeting. “Too often, small issues become larger chronic issues and if we can address it in the beginning, that may make the difference between someone having to give up a pet and being able to keep it.”

According to the OHS, an average of four pets are surrendered to its shelter daily, with close to half of owners citing financial difficulties as their reason, while 50% of pets in Canada do not regularly visit a vet. This new community veterinary clinic will not only provide affordable veterinary care to the general public; it will also provide reduced rates for partnered rescue groups and subsidized care to income-qualified pet owners living within the City of Ottawa boundaries. The services offered will include wellness visits, sterilization, urgent care, dentistry, microchip clinics and euthanasia services. It will operate as a weekday community pet health centre, not as a 24-hour emer-



Une visualisation architecturale de la clinique vétérinaire communautaire sans but lucratif que la Société protectrice des animaux d’Ottawa veut installer dès avril 2028 au 258, rue Durocher à Vanier. Le but sera de faciliter l’accès aux soins vétérinaires aux gens pour qui les coûts seraient autrement trop élevés.

gency clinic, and will not house lost, surrendered or adoptable pets. With all this the OHS hopes to see a massive reduction in stray/feral cats and an increase in animals remaining with their owners.

Rideau-Vanier City Councillor and proud dog mom Stéphanie Plante is an enthusiastic supporter of this project. She recognizes that many of her constituents rely on Community Veterinary Outreach (CVO) and the Kibble Cupboard, support

programs that she has helped to operate out of Vanier. She believes that this new community vet clinic will do great things for the people and pets in our neighbourhood.

The OHS currently sees a significantly high intake of stray and feral cats coming from the Vanier area, making the location of the new clinic particularly advantageous. Set to open in April 2028 in the former Canada Post office at 258

Durocher St., the 10,000 sq. ft. building will also house community support programs such as an emergency food bank, dog training and behaviour classes, pet care seminars and workshops, a pet thrift store and potentially grooming and youth outreach programs. The vision, in its full operation, will be a complete and central hub for animal welfare within the nation’s capital.

“This has not been an easy project to get across the start line,” says Jeff Morrison, a member of the OHS board, “and it certainly won’t be easy to get across the finish line.” Between now and then, \$15 million needs to be raised to make the project come to fruition. Each room at the clinic will have naming and recognition opportunities for donations between \$25,000 and \$500,000, as well as opportunities for naming equipment and a donor wall beginning at \$5,000. Donations of any amount big or small will help to contribute to this much needed service for Ottawa’s vulnerable pet population.

To join the Compassion Campaign and support the development of this non-profit community veterinary clinic at 258 Durocher St. in Vanier, please visit www.ottawahumane.ca/donate-fundraise/compassion-campaign.



Ottawa Humane Society QR code

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Getting healthier and stronger with age

Nina Jabouin

Our bodies don’t stop adapting as we get older - they simply need different challenges. Have you ever watched someone doing Pilates and wondered what all the fuss is about? Maybe you’ve seen the impressive equipment and perfectly controlled movements and thought, “That looks great; but definitely not for me.”

The good news is that Pilates doesn’t require fancy equipment. In fact, some of its most valuable principles can be practised with something you already have at home: a chair. Joseph Pilates originally called his method Contrology, emphasizing precise and controlled movement using inspiration from yoga, gymnastics and classical ballet which focused on developing strength, coordination, posture and body awareness.

Today, Pilates is part of many professional athletes’ training routines. But you don’t have to be an athlete to benefit from the same principles; strength doesn’t have an age limit. As we age, maintaining muscle strength becomes increasingly important. We naturally lose muscle mass and strength over time, but regular physical activity can help preserve our ability to do the things that make everyday life enjoyable, such as carrying groceries, climbing stairs, gardening, or walking the dog.

Pilates emphasizes quality of movement rather than quantity. Exercises are performed slowly and intentionally, encouraging us to pay attention to

posture, breathing and how different parts of the body work together. And you don’t always need to get down on the floor to experience those principles.

For some people, getting down onto a mat and back up again can be challenging. Others may be returning to exercise after an injury, or taking their first steps back into physical activity. Chair Pilates adapts many Pilates principles into seated and standing exercises. The chair provides stability while still allowing you to challenge your muscles, work on balance, improve mobility and practise controlled movement.

And don’t be fooled by the chair! An exercise can look deceptively simple while your muscles are working hard to keep you stable. You may even discover muscles you forgot you had! As an instructor, one of my favourite moments is seeing someone realize that an exercise they assumed would be easy is actually challenging their strength, balance and concentration. It’s a reminder that exercise doesn’t have to look difficult to be meaningful.

Movements can be adapted. You begin with a gentler version and gradually progress as your strength and confidence improve. Whether you’re 40, 60 or 80, your body is still capable of adapting. Strength can improve, mobility can be maintained, and confidence in movement can grow. Sometimes, getting stronger simply means learning to move better. And sometimes, that journey starts with a chair.

Nina Jabouin is a certified Pilates instructor.

Sustainability Day on campus

The University of Ottawa's Campus Sustainability Day, held on September 18 at Montpetit Terrace, was an opportunity for students to discover the many ways to get involved in sustainability, both on campus and throughout the community.

The event gave students the chance to meet student clubs, research teams, university services, and community organizations working on a wide range of environmental and sustainability issues, as well as discover opportunities for volunteering, research, and future careers. Participating organizations included CAFES, the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, the City of Ottawa, the City of Gatineau, the Insti-

tute of the Environment, OPIRG, Plato's Closet, Ottawa Environment Forum, OC Transpo, and the uOttawa Sustainability Development Centre, along with various sustainability clubs and services on campus. The event also featured a free pop-up by the uOttawa Free Store that collects used items such as clothing, books, school supplies, kitchenware, and other household goods, as well as an "Art Build" station, where students could make signs and pins in preparation for the 2026 Climate March.

- Hannah Robidoux
Office of Campus Sustainability, uOttawa



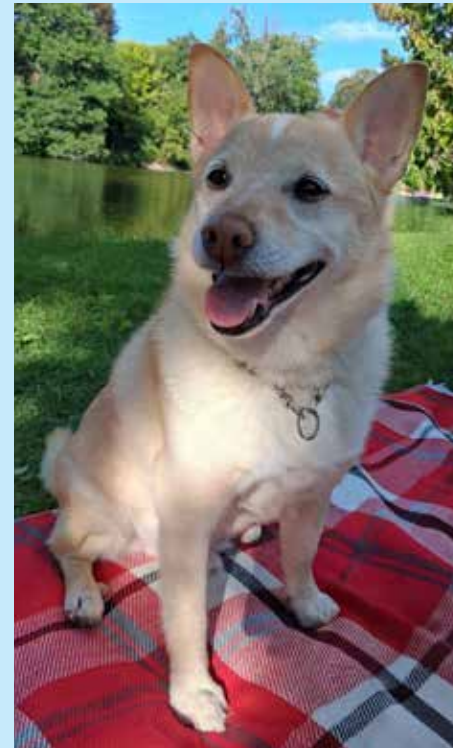
Photo: Hannah Robidoux

Roberts draws from nature...

Illustration: Tom Roberts



Happy ending



Chewy, long-time Sandy Hill foster pup from the Minpinerie Dog Rescue, has finally been adopted! Please wish him the best of luck with his new family in Orleans.

Photo: Christine Ng

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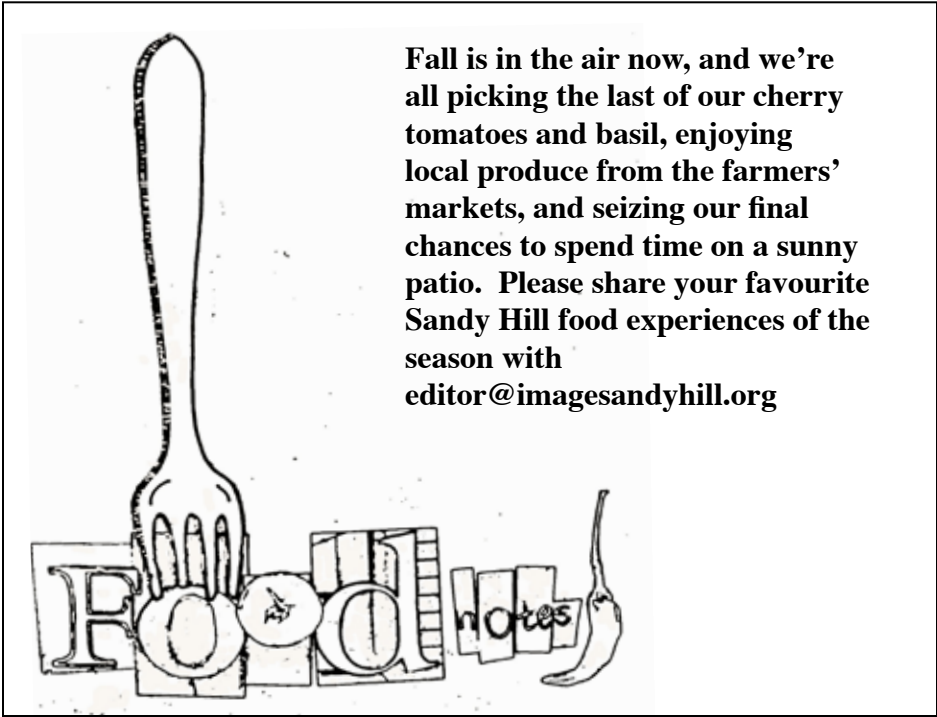
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Fall is in the air now, and we’re all picking the last of our cherry tomatoes and basil, enjoying local produce from the farmers’ markets, and seizing our final chances to spend time on a sunny patio. Please share your favourite Sandy Hill food experiences of the season with editor@imagesandyhill.org

Paula Kelsall

Cafe Rideau,
25 Montreal Rd.

Just across the Cummings Bridge from Sandy Hill, and a pleasant walk in fine fall weather, there’s a new café ready to serve you a snack and a beverage. Cafe Rideau’s menu is pretty modest; there are a few sandwiches and salads and an interesting assortment of hot and cold drinks, including saffron tea and pistachio latte. Live-edge pine counters and tables make an inviting place to sit and watch the world go by on Montreal Road, or to contemplate the dazzling new Rideau sculpture at the corner of Montreal and River Road. I enjoyed my recent chicken salad sandwich on a croissant, and the date milkshake I had with it was a dessert and a beverage in one frosty cup. The café’s most tempting offerings may be their baked goods, supplied by local Algerian and Afghani bakers. We took some cookies and a slice of peach cake home, and they made a great treat with afternoon tea.



You’ll want to try all the baked treats on offer at the Café Rideau. Fortunately, their cookies and cakes are good to take home for tea.

Photo: Paula Kelsall

Madhuban Indian Cuisine
610 Rideau St.

In June, my family and I found ourselves taking the longer walk to the east end of Rideau Street when our go-to restaurant was actually too busy to serve us on Father’s Day! Our party was quite large, and we were delighted by the flavour and qual-

ity of everything we ordered. The aloo gobi was delicious, with perfectly cooked cauliflower that still had some crispness to it, and everyone enjoyed the sauces on the kadai paneer and palak paneer. I was not in note-taking mode and can’t swear to the other dishes we tried, but I can affirm that it was good all around and that we will gladly be back.

Melaku Ethiopian Coffee,
503 Rideau St.

The article below is about Melaku and its wonderful decor and delicious food, but I wanted to add an enthusiastic endorsement of their jebena bunna, a ceremonial Ethiopian approach to coffee which is a very pleasant way to spend some time with a friend or two. Give the café a call ahead of time to make sure they can accommodate you, and you will arrive to find the beans for your beverage being roasted on the spot, filling the whole café with their deliciously toasty aroma. The coffee arrives in a small ceramic pot with a long spout, from which your brew is poured from a height so it reaches the little cups at the perfect sipping temperature. We found the coffee strong but rich and well-rounded in flavour; we didn’t feel any need for the brown sugar that came along with it. A basket of fresh popcorn was the perfect snack to nibble as we enjoyed the aromas and flavours of the whole experience.

Lost opportunities

Many of us in the neighbourhood were waiting with keen anticipation for Antica Cafe & Kitchen to open this summer on Cobourg Street, in the former premises of Bamm’s Snack Shack. After what seemed like many delays, they opened quietly in



Photo: Paula Kelsall

After less than two months of life, Cafe Antica on Cobourg Street has closed its doors for good. There was a lot of love in the newly fixed-up interior; here’s hoping that another dream can flourish here.

mid-July. I dropped by in August and was favourably impressed by the cheerful new paint job, the refinished wooden tables, the cozy armchairs, and the brownie I took home with me. I was looking forward to trying their lunch offerings, but when I returned in early September, they were permanently closed!

Meanwhile, down on Somerset Street East, Foodinator’s window blinds are closed, and there’s an ominous landlord’s letter on the front door. It’s hard to believe that this place, with its Asian fusion menu that seemed to appeal to students and local retirees alike, has closed and that we’ll never sit down again to enjoy a monstrous plate of pork ribs and all that exuberant anime art on the walls. “Actually heart-breaking,” reads one comment on Facebook.

The restaurant business has always been tough, and perhaps our neighbourhood is a little extra challenging. So, if there’s a place that makes the neighbourhood feel more like home to you, don’t forget to drop in and show them some affection before autumn is over!

Melaku’s family chose Canada for compassion towards neurodiversity

Sharon O’Sullivan



Mentwab Kassa, the owner of Melaku Ethiopian Coffee, presenting the jebena bunna, or traditional Ethiopian coffee service. The mingled aromas of freshly roasted and brewed coffee beans, Ethiopian incense, and popcorn guarantee that this experience is a treat for the nose as well as the tongue!

Melaku Ethiopian Coffee Shop is a charming café that’s been running out of 503 Rideau St. for two years now. I wrongly assumed that they were “just” a café and that there would not be gluten-free or dairy-free options, so it was only recently that I stepped inside, as my husband was hankering for coffee and a dessert.

They have a variety of desserts that are not specifically Ethiopian, as well as many styles of coffee. However, they also have traditional Ethiopian coffees and sweet and savoury treats. (See Food notes above.)

The biggest delight for me though, was discovering that given 48-hours notice, the owner, Mentwab, can whip up a delicious traditional Ethiopian meal on gluten-free injera bread. I’ve missed Ethiopian food since the restaurant Habesha moved further eastwards on Montreal Road.

Melaku’s vegetarian platter includes a beet/potato mix, a mild lentil curry, traditionally spicy lentils, and a cabbage/onion dish. The combo version (meat and vegetables) replaces the spicy lentils with a beef portion. Both dishes are ample for two people and cost under \$30.

The upstairs is thoughtfully decorated with a tropical vibe, and large windows. The space is also available for event bookings, and Mentwab will gladly cater.

Melaku means “angel” in Amharic and the staff (Mentwab and her daughter) fit the name well; they were truly sweet and angelic to interact with. However, the deeper meaning behind the name is that it is dedicated to Mentwab’s son, who has Down’s syndrome. Mentwab diverts a portion of her restaurant profits to a Down’s syndrome community support program that her son Melaku attends. He was the key impetus in Mentwab’s move to Canada; in her experience, Canadians are more culturally accepting of this type of neurodiversity.

In the future, Mentwab hopes to open another restaurant. For now, Melaku’s website (<https://melakuethiopiancoffee.ca>) is in the process of being set up to order full meals. If you’d like to enjoy a tasty Ethiopian dinner, you can contact them with 48 hours notice at info@melakuethiopiancoffee.ca or better yet, call them directly at 613-857-3316. Bon appétit!



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Curiosities on our streets



Dynamic home on wheels settled into Sandy Hill's north end

Yoann Girard and his partner Lyric Calabrese-Layland attend to their ambulance, which was parked on the streets of Sandy Hill this summer. Yoann, who admits to having been "a tiny tad bit impulsive," bought the former Lanark County fire department ambulance when he was shopping for a vehicle to support his laser-engraving business. He has since installed solar panels on its roof and is working on making it a livable space for travel and camping, as well as for work transportation. Possible future destinations include British Columbia, Newfoundland and the 2027 summer festival circuit. — Paula Kelsall



A Sandy Hill family vacationing in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia this summer enjoyed the area's second seasonal Faerie Trails walk. They made their own faerie houses and have placed them in their front garden on Blackburn Avenue for all passersby to enjoy. Thank you Katie and Tillie for bringing back a little East Coast magic to Sandy Hill!

Roberts draws from nature...

Illustration: Tom Roberts



Ben's Biodiversity Tree on display at the NAC



Now on display in the National Arts Centre O'Brien Atrium...

As reported in the Summer 2026 issue of IMAGE, the six foot tree carved by Sandy Hill's Mio Jovanovic (right) is modelled after the oaks in Strathcona Park. It houses miniature clay sculptures by Ben Lachapelle (left) of past, present, and at-risk species of the National Capital Region. Drop by before October 6 to see it.

Photo: Julie Chou



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OLD OTTAWA SOUTH

Yard Sale: Blackburn Ave. vendors

Photos: Christine Aubry

September 12 was a perfect day for the 10th annual Sandy Hill Yard Sale. Blackburn Avenue was hopping with families and kids selling all kinds of treasures and treats!



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