

Spring
2011

*It's people
that make
communities
what they are.*

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Hespeler Happenings



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER
Published by The Company of Neighbours

Downtown Updates

by Lary Turner

The various groundhogs have agreed to jointly predict an early spring; we certainly hope they are right! Local customers of the *Java Garden* were surprised last month when *Premier Dalton McGuinty* dropped in to chat about child care issues with a group of young mothers. The *Hespeler Village BIA* held elections to their Board of Management Feb. 2nd and many of our new business interests will be well represented. Newly elected are: landlord **Dave Oleson** (Chair), back for a second term is **Lynn Craig** of *Top Drawer Consignment Store* (Co-Chair), landlords **Natasa** (Secretary-Treasurer) & **Cory de Villiers** (Advertising & Marketing), **Wendy Hood-Morris** of *Millpond Records & Books* (Website & Social Media), **Dan Dudack** of *Java Garden* (Membership Liaison), **Brent Sills** of *Monty's Tapas Bar* (Streetscape & Events). An Executive Director will be contracted to oversee the day to day operations. We wish the HVBIA board members the very best in their new positions! The *Hespeler Denture Clinic* is now open at 48 Queen St. East. Owner Alex Shadrov, DD and Assoc. offer a full range of denturist services; free consultation and laboratory on site.

Hespeler Legion Branch 272

The very popular *Friday Night Dinners* continue to pull in the hungry folk of the community. Spaghetti & Meatballs is on the menu for Feb. 25th March 4th is Roast Turkey Dinner, March 11th features Meatloaf and Mashed Potatoes, and March 25th is Hot Hamburg and home fries. All meals are \$7 and dessert is available at \$2 extra. The Ladies Auxiliary will be hosting a special *St. Patrick's Day Dinner* Saturday March 20th, with Corned Beef & Cabbage on the menu. Tickets are \$15, includes dessert

and entertainment. Get your tickets early as this will be a sellout!

March Break at the Hespeler Library

by Anna Boehnke

The Hespeler Library is offering an exciting program of free children's activities during *March Break Mania Week*, March 14th to 18th. All ages are welcome on a first come, first served basis; but children under 5 must be accompanied by an adult. Mon. is Pirate Pizzaz (10:30), Tues. is Yogi Bear's Picnic (10:30) and Mardi Parti (2:00), Wed. is Crazy for Colours (10:30) and Fancy Nancy Party (2:00), Thur. is Doodle Movers Clubhouse (10:30) and Monkey Business (2:00), Fri. rounds out the week with Box Builders (10:30). Mon. and Fri. mornings are craft programs, for more information call 519-658-4412 or go online at www.cambridgelibraries.ca.



Hespeler Street Hockey 2011
at the Legion Sat. Feb. 12th

Hespeler's Florida Reunion 2011

Plans and preparations are well underway to make this year's annual reunion a great success. Hespeler's Florida Reunion will be held Wednesday March 2nd, 11:00am, at Myakka State Park in Sarasota, Florida. Bring a potluck dish to feed approximately six people, lawn chairs, camera, your own refreshments and any old Hespeler pictures. Meet at the first picnic area inside the park entrance. For more info contact: janeeinwechter@yahoo.ca or Florida Tele: 863-402-0106.

Blue Lizard Productions

Hespeler film and video production company, Blue Lizard Productions, gets \$50K from Telefilm Canada to further develop their first independent feature film, *Wicked Wheels*. The movie is being produced by Blue Lizard Productions' president, film and video producer Scott Clevely, who resides in Hespeler with his family and has produced numerous commercial and industrial video productions for many businesses in Waterloo Region. *Wicked Wheels* is a family film about a boy who will stop at nothing to own the coolest BMX bike in town who soon learns that it comes with supernatural consequences. After the development stage with screenwriter, Ron Oliver, who is also directing the movie, the film goes into production sometime next year and it will be filmed right here in Waterloo Region. Blue Lizard Productions' movie mandate is to prove that independent Canadian feature films can be commercially successful on the world stage, not just the American films that are shot here. Find out more at:
www.wickedwheelsmovie.com or
www.bluelizardproductions.com

Bernice Adams Memorial Awards

2011 marks the 29th anniversary of the Annual Bernice Adams Memorial Awards Night. This is an evening to celebrate those whose contributions to Arts and Culture have made Cambridge a better place to live and work. Nominations are made in the following categories: Performing Arts, Music, Visual Arts, Communications/Literary Arts, Outstanding Youth and a Special Trustees Award. If you know of a deserving Cambridge resident, please nominate them. Forms are available at www.cambridge.ca.



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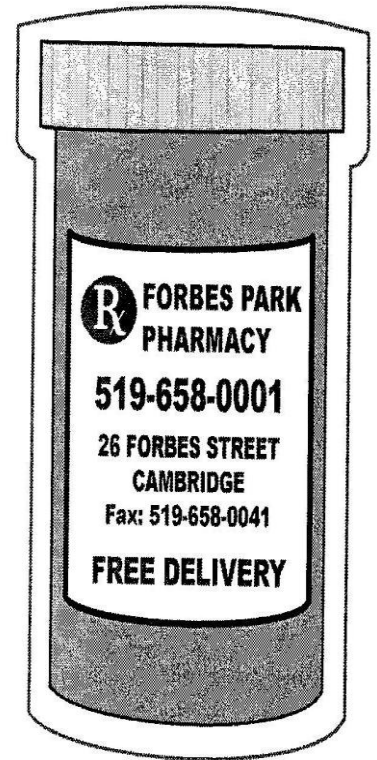
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Hespeler Heritage Centre

A donation to the HHC was received from Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Walker in memory of Walter (Herb) Coles who passed away Jan. 29, 2011. Born at Hespeler in 1920, Herb Coles was a veteran of the Second World War, serving in England and Italy. Sgt. Coles survived the sinking of his troop ship, the S.S. Nerissa, on April 30th 1941, following a torpedo attack by a German U-boat, 200 miles off Northern Ireland. Sgt. Coles swam to a raft and looped his arm through a rope and clung for several hours before being pulled on board in the wee hours of the morning. The survivors were rescued at daybreak by the H.M.S. Veteran. Eighty-five servicemen and several of the ship's crew and civilians lost their lives, and were the only Canadian servicemen to die as a result of a ship sinking from enemy action. Another recent donation from Mrs. Mary Schneider included her husband Carl (Spike) Schneider's Industrial Hockey League 1954-55 Champs jacket, 1956-57 'B' Champs

Hockey jacket, 5 hockey & ball team crests and many newspaper clippings.

Forbes Street

by Lary Turner

This is the next in a series on how Hespeler streets got their names.

Forbes Street was named to honour one of the town's most prominent families. **Robert Forbes** and his sons **James** and **George**, and George's son "**Alex**", played an immense part in the industrial, cultural and political life of our community. In industry alone, the family's contributions stand as large as those of Jacob Hespeler. **Robert Forbes** was born July 2, 1814 in Kinrosshire, Scotland, the son of a saddle maker. He immigrated to Hamilton in 1836 and worked as a wholesale merchant before moving to Galt. Robert, in partnership with his brother **David H. Forbes** opened a store in the early 1840s, before turning their hand to manufacturing. The brothers built and operated a paper mill which did not prove as successful as they had envisioned. David relocated the business to Georgetown and in 1844 Robert entered into a new partnership with John Forwell to operate a tannery and later a stave mill in Hespeler (just off Queen St. East where the "Colonnade" stands today; hence Tannery Street). In 1854, following his marriage to Ann Duthie, he moved into a small cottage across from the tannery. By 1856, with business doing well, he moved his family to a 600 acre farm in Puslinch Township which featured a prosperous stave mill. In 1870 he tore down the old tannery and stave mill in Hespeler and replaced it with a modern stone factory to manufacture woollen goods in partnership with Jonathan Schofield. The new company known as J. Schofield and Co. later changed its name to Star Woollens and manufactured flannels, tweeds and druggets (carpets) as well as cloth with large plaid designs. In 1871, the Forbes family moved again to an estate he named "Summerhill" in Guelph. His new factory operated only until 1874 when the partners purchased the large woollen mill of Randall, Farr & Co. on Queen St. West (Len's Mill Outlet today). Following business and personal

differences, Mr. Forbes bought out the interests of Mr. Schofield and the partnership was dissolved in 1880. The company operated as R. Forbes & Co. until 1888 when it was incorporated as R. Forbes Co. Ltd. with **George Duthie Forbes** as president and older brother **James Hyde Forbes** as a company director. It is said that James Forbes put so much effort into the company that his health failed and he passed away Feb. 6, 1891. He is buried in New Hope Cemetery. In addition to his textile company, Robert Forbes was a director of the Guelph and Ontario Investment and Savings Society and the Guelph Light & Power Co. He died on May 9, 1895 at his estate. Known affectionately by the nickname "The Chief", **George Duthie Forbes** was born in 1860 on the family farm in Puslinch Township. At the age of twenty he began his education in the textile industry when he was sent to work in the worsted department of the Farr Alpaca factory in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Two years later he returned home ready to take an active part in the family business. By 1888, he was named president and upon his father's death he assumed full responsibility for the company. In 1890, he married Amy Victoria Ellis of Brantford. During the intervening years, George built the family company into the largest woollen mill in Canada, the largest textile mill in the British Commonwealth and the largest industrial plant in what is now Waterloo Region. The plant had a floor area of 544,678 square feet (12.5 acres) on its four floors. George Forbes led the company until its sale in 1928 to Dominion Woollens & Worsteds Co. Ltd. The Forbes had operated the successful company for 54 years. George Forbes' business interests were far reaching. He was also president of the Hespeler Machinery Company, the Canadian Machinery Company, the C. Turnbull Co. Ltd. of Galt, the Taylor Forbes Co. Ltd. of Guelph, the Guelph and Ontario Investment Society, the Guelph Trust Co. and Simplicity Products Ltd of Hespeler. He was vice-president of the Dominion Life Assurance Co. of Waterloo and Galt Malleable Iron Ltd. He was a director of

Royal Trust Co., the Lake Erie & Northern Railway, the Waterloo Trust and Savings Co (now Canada Trust), the Hespeler Furniture Co, Stamped and Enamelled Ware Ltd, and Kondu Manufacturing Co. of Preston. In civic life he also excelled. George Forbes was the first elected mayor of the newly incorporated Town of Hespeler serving from 1901 to 1913, President of the 1926 Hespeler Homecoming Committee, a consistent and generous supporter of the Freeport Sanatorium, active with the Red Cross and Patriotic Society during the First World War. The Forbes family generously donated Victoria Park and Forbes Park to the citizens of Hespeler. George Forbes died at his home on Sept. 27, 1934. The front page of the local newspapers declared "The Chief is Dead". George Duthie Forbes is buried in New Hope Cemetery. **George Alexander "Alex" Forbes**, the son of George and Amy Victoria (Ellis) Forbes, was born Jan. 2, 1897 on his family's Hespeler estate. After completing his education at Hespeler Public School and Ridley College in St. Catherines, Alex flew with the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War 1. Upon his return, he joined the family business; sorting wool at the mill and learning from the bottom up. In 1928, just a few months before the Stock Market Crash, his father sold the large woollen mill for a hefty sum. Following the death of his father five years later, Alex inherited the family business empire including the directorships of various corporations and insurance & trust companies. He became president of Simplicity Products and remained in an active role until the company was sold in the mid 1970s. Although he was obligated to look after the family's business interests, his love was always hunting and fishing. The family maintained hunting lodges in the Sudbury area accessible only by small aircraft and Alex became a crack shot and a champion skeet shooter. In the mid 1950s, Alex noticed that the lakes were becoming "fished out" and the waterfowl population was in sharp decline. He gave up hunting and fishing and turned his hand to conservation work. Alex began stocking fish in the

streams on his 240 acre estate and created ponds for a waterfowl sanctuary. Noticing the wood duck population was endangered, he began a restoration program. He purchased several pairs of birds from a local research station and began a breeding program. Together with Pete Robertson and Bill Carrick, Alex collected between 1700 and 1800 eggs for incubation. When they hatched, the birds were turned over to Wayne Azumi, a University of Guelph student, who dispersed them in a 150 mile radius. He also designed, with Pete Robertson, a new knock down nesting box kit that was distributed across Canada and into the United States. Bill Miller, head of the Canadian Wildlife Service, credited Alex with bringing the wood duck back from endangerment. He was also instrumental in the reintroduction of the Canada goose into Ontario. For his work in conservation he became known as "the Birdman of Hespeler". In 1984, the GRCA added his name to their "Honour Roll". Outside of this work, Alex was also very involved in the Hespeler community. He was active with the Hespeler Patriotic Society during WW11, a life member of the Waterloo Historic Society; Executive Member of the 1947 Hespeler old Boy's Reunion, and Honorary Chairman of Hespeler's Centenary Committee. Alex Forbes died on May 2, 1986 and is buried in New Hope Cemetery. (Note: Robert and George Forbes have been inducted into the City of Cambridge Hall of Fame.)

**Ward 1 New Councillor
Donna Reid**

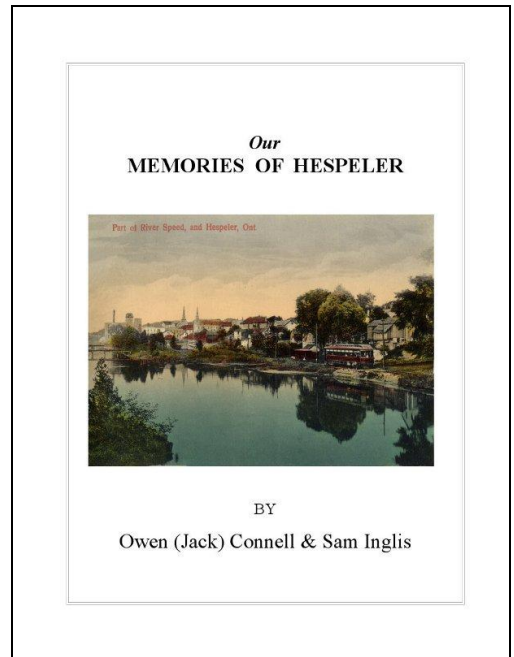
I am pleased to represent Ward 1 that contains North Hespeler up to Kossuth Rd, Nantucket Village between Langs Dr. and Eagle St., Preston Heights and Blair. It is a large geographic area that has subdivisions, an industrial basin and rural sections and is growing with new subdivisions planned in 2 areas. (the Hunt Club and Limerick Rd). As a Board Member of the Hespeler BIA, I will support revitalization of the core area. Historical Hespeler Village contains many elements of our heritage with its beautiful buildings and access to the river. Please call or email me with your

thoughts and ideas on making our community vital and open to all. As a new councillor, I need your input to take to the table. I am proud to live in Cambridge and proud to serve my community as your ward councillor. Donna Reid: 519-740-4517 x 4741 Reidd@cambridge.ca

HOST AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT THIS SUMMER

Give your family the experience of a lifetime. Are you looking for something exciting and interesting to do this summer? Do something out of the ordinary and host a student from Spain from June 29 to July 27. The students range in age from 14 – 18. We need all types of families. It is not necessary to have children at home. Families providing room and board receive \$640.00 for the 4 week session. Weekdays include classroom instruction and organized activities as well as full day trips to Niagara Falls, Toronto, Canada's Wonderland and more. The program is designed to encourage language fluency and teach the students about Canadian family life and culture by having host families welcome students into their home. - Each student group is accompanied by a teacher from their home country. All students receive transit passes to travel to school and all have full medical insurance. **Canada Linc English** believes in linking youth to a world of opportunity. The goal is to provide an unforgettable experience by sharing our rich culture and opportunities with families and young people worldwide. We hope you will consider being part of this enjoyable and enriching experience. **Please contact: Diane @ 519 580-9813 or diane@canadalinc.com online at: www.canadalinc.com**

Hespeler Happenings Community Newsletter is published four times a year by **The Company of Neighbours**. It is available at Zehr's, Food Basics, Hespeler Library, W. G. Johnson Centre, many businesses and the **Hespeler Heritage Centre, 11 Tannery St. East**. Deadline for submissions for the next issue is Friday May 13, 2011. Submissions are welcome, but articles should not exceed 500 words. Ad rates are available upon request, please contact editor Lary Turner at 519-658-9290 or email lary_turner@msn.com. **Hespeler Happenings** is a newsletter devoted to the promotion of information and activities, in and around the Village of Hespeler, for the greater good of the people of our community.



"Our Memories of Hespeler" Available again at the Hespeler Heritage Centre, 11 Tannery St. East and Millpond Records & Books, 4 Queen St. West. Priced at \$10, it's a great deal!

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