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PROJECT HABBAKUK - the '1942 What Might Have Been'



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION OF PROJECT HABBAKUK

HISTORY HAS ALWAYS BEEN FASCINATING. Consider, for example, the Trojan Horse, that giant wooden statue built by the Greeks under Ulysses in order for some of their soldiers to hide inside while the Trojans took it into their city, and during the night those soldiers then opened the city gates and Ulysses and his army entered the City. Only a myth, you say? Maybe so, but we can't be sure. But in the 1870s [Heinrich Schliemann](#) began archaeological work at a site he identified as Troy, and today it is recognised as such. So perhaps the "myth" of the wooden horse may also have been a historical fact, one more actual event long hidden in the mists of antiquity. Noah's Ark may one day prove to be another. And who believed in the reality of dinosaurs a century ago?

One other incredible idea occurred to a man called [Geoffrey Pyke](#). In 1942, at the height of the German U-boats' successful raids on the North Atlantic bringing munitions, food, fuel, and other essential supplies to the British forces fighting against Hitler's Nazis, Mr Pyke, knowing that ice floated and was an extremely strong material (it had ripped open the *Titanic* in 1909) had the idea of building an aircraft carrier of ice. He envisaged ships up to 4,000 feet/1200metres long, 600feet/180metres wide, and 130feet/40metres in depth, able to carry more aircraft than any other ship afloat, cheap to construct, and virtually indestructible. He named his vessels "Habbakuk", misspelling the name which should have been "Habakkuk", after the Biblical prophet who wrote, "*Behold ye among the heathen, and*

regard and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told to you." Hab. 1:5.

Winston Churchill and Lord Louis Mountbatten, both involved in running naval operations at the time, and looking for any ideas that would assist in the British war effort, welcomed the project enthusiastically; such a juggernaut would be a fantastic addition to the North Atlantic fleet, and dozens could be built in Canada.

It was pointed out that ice, while strong and hard, was relatively easy to split, but after some experimentation, Mr Pyke came up with the idea of adding something to strengthen it, and a couple of Americans developed a compound of paper pulp and salt water which approached the strength of concrete. It was named "Pykecrete".

Plans were drawn for a vessel of 2,000ft length and almost 2 million tons dead weight. But first, a scale model would need to be made to test out the concept.

Large quantities of steel would be needed, to be supplied by the Americans, but first they had to be convinced of the viability of the project. So Lord Mountbatten demonstrated to them the difference between plain ice and Pykecrete. He fired a revolver into a block of ice, which immediately shattered; but a block of Pykecrete simply caused the bullet to ricochet, leaving the block intact. Unfortunately it almost hit the American Admiral Ernest King. The Americans were not impressed.

By 1943 the war situation in the North Atlantic had changed. Ships and men were still being lost, but the U-boats were no longer the threat they had been in 1942. Demand for steel had increased, airports became available from which aircraft with longer operating ranges could be deployed, and more conventional aircraft carriers had been constructed. At a meeting in December 1943 the Habbakuk Project was terminated. The ice model that had been constructed took three summers to melt.

Thus ended the saga of one of the more intriguing projects engendered by man's military obsessions. Maybe the project would have worked, given more time for development and experimentation. After all, other projects that seemed to many experts to be equally unlikely, did succeed: submarines, parachutes, rockets, ASDIC, radar, and the bouncing bombs developed by Barnes Wallis to destroy the Moehe & Eder Dams in Germany, were all criticised as lunatic projects, but they all worked when given the chance.

Continued on page 4

Obituary

SUSAN FORREST SWIFT HARVEY

1940 March 22 - 2014 December 30

THE FAMILY OF Susan Forrest Swift Harvey of Lark Harbour, NL, are sad to announce her sudden and tragic death at the age of 74 in a car accident on 30 December 2014 in York Harbour, NL, leaving a community in mourning. Three others, including her husband Stuart, also sustained severe injuries.

Susan is survived by her husband Stuart of 52 years, also of Lark Harbour, her son William (Eileen) of Halifax, NS; daughters Margaret (Kevin MacNeil) of Lakeland, FL, USA, and Frances (Dean Hutchings) of Brantford, ON; three grandchildren: Juliet, age 13, of William, Susan, age 22months, of Frances, and Will, age 10 months, of Margaret; also a new grandson due in March, of Frances. Susan is also survived by her sister Mary (John Black) of Portland, OR, her brother James (Dee) of Macon, GA, and sister Margaret (Don Bjoring) of Orlando, FL, USA. She was predeceased by both parents in Winter Haven, FL, USA: Lyle J Swift in 1991 and Frances E Swift in 2006.

Susan was much beloved by her family and by many friends in the communities of Lark Harbour and York Harbour for her selfless generosity and lifelong compassion for those in need. She is remembered for her notable contributions to St James Anglican Church, Lark Harbour, where she attended regularly, taught Sunday School for a number of years, sang in the choir, and fulfilled many other roles. She volunteered for many years with the [The Food Bank Network of the Bay of Islands Ministerial Association](#) until her untimely death. Throughout her life, she was a regular contributor to many charities which work to reduce or eliminate human suffering in many regions of the world. These charities include Amnesty International, Plan Canada, Oxfam, Christian Blind Mission International, Doctors Without Borders, and others. Above all, though, Susan was an ideal mother for her three children.

Because of her husband Stuart's ongoing hospitalization, Susan has been cremated. A memorial service will be held at St James Church in Lark Harbour at a date to be announced in late spring. In lieu of flowers, donations would be appreciated to either the Christian Blind Mission International to which Susan has been a regular contributor for over 40 years, or to the Bay of Islands Ministerial Food Bank for which she organised local collections for some twenty years.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Country Haven Funeral Home, 167 Country Road, Corner Brook, NL, Canada.

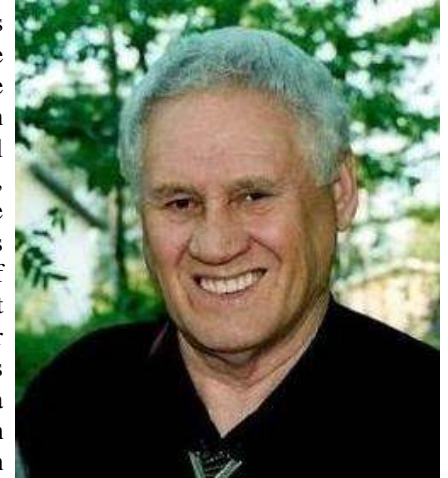


Obituary

ARTHUR (NOBLE) VINCENT

1931 April 19 - 2015 February 11

IT IS WITH great sadness that the family of the late Arthur Vincent announce his passing at the Western Memorial Regional Hospital on Wednesday, February 11, 2015 at the age of 83 years. He was predeceased by his wife of 56 years Christina Vincent (née Collier); daughter Elaine Park; parents Augustus and Veronica Vincent; brother Joseph Vincent; sisters: Evelyn Carroll, Doris Jones, Laura Greene, Ruby Vincent, and Helen Vincent; sons-in-law: Eric Humber and William O'Keefe.



Leaving to mourn with fond and loving memories his children: Mary Humber (the late Eric), Ellen Dormody (Derrick), Ruby MacDonald (Bill), Arthur Vincent Jr. (Mary), Bonnie Evoy (Jerome), Rosanne Albert (Floyd), Louise Revells (Harold), James Vincent (Judy), Frank Vincent (Cynthia), Ted Vincent (Wanda), Nancy Vincent (Dan), and Tracy Sheppard (Dean); 27 grandchildren; 35 great grandchildren; one great-great-granddaughter; son-in-law Rodney Park; brothers: Ivan (Linda), Russ (Melinda), William (Eileen), Ronald (Ann), and Donald (Ann); special friend Ruby Osmond, and a large number of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Friends may visit Country Haven Funeral Home, 167 Country Road on Sunday February 15, 2015 between the hours of 2-4 & 7-9pm. Funeral service will take place from Our Lady Star of the Sea Roman Catholic Parish, Benoit's Cove on Monday, February 16, 2015 at 2pm, officiated by Sister Mildred Chabassol. In keeping with Arthur's wishes cremation will follow. Interment will take place at a later date. As expressions of sympathy flowers are graciously accepted or donations may be made in Arthur's memory to the Children's Wish Foundation. The family guest book may be signed by visiting our website at www.country-haven.ca.

READERS PLEASE COMMENT

Readers will have noticed that many key items in the BMD are highlighted as [Hyperlinks](#). By clicking these when your computer is logged into an active Internet connection, you may access additional information on the topic. Use of these Hyperlinks is of course optional. Sometimes they may not work, if they are outdated or have been relocated to other websites.

If you like the Hyperlinks in the BMD, please let me know by sending a brief email to blowmedowner@gmail.com.

Obituary
NAOMI H DARRIGAN
1924-2015

IT IS WITH SAD and heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our dear mother, Naomi Darrigan, at the Palliative Care Unit of Western Regional Hospital on Monday, February 2nd, 2015 surrounded by her loving family, at the age of 90.



Left with precious memories are her three daughters: Carol (Adrian) Payne, Elaine (Roy) Park, and

Jeannie (Garland) Childs; loving grandmother to: Michael (Jane), Joanne (Gregg), Roger (Shawn), Rick (Joanne), Greg (Kari), Brad, Steven (Chris), Jeff (Patti) and Ryan (Lori); 15 great grandchildren; special friend Victoria Travers; as well as numerous nieces, nephews other relatives and friends. She was predeceased by her husband John (1989); parents Richard William and Mary Jane Sheppard; sister Hazel Parsons; 5 brothers-in-law and 4 sisters-in-law.

Visitation will be held at St James Anglican Church, Lark Harbour, on Tuesday from 7-9pm and Wednesday from 2-4 and 7-9pm, followed by the funeral service on Thursday February 5th at 2:00pm with Reverend Nelson Chatman officiating. The interment will follow at the Church Cemetery.

As expressions of sympathy flowers are gratefully accepted or donations may be made to St James Anglican Church Memorial Fund, PO Box 39, Lark Harbour, NL, A0L 1H0. The family guestbook may be signed by visiting www.fillatre.ca.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Most of my readers are aware that I have been confined to hospital since the accident of 2014 December 30. It was not until some time later that I began to realise that time was lying heavily on my hands. The idea then occurred to me when I was able to connect to the Internet on January 28 that I could spend some of my time preparing a *BMD* that was not planned earlier.

So here it is. There are some items missing from the regular issues, but we have the reports on the Lark Harbour Council meetings, the Obituaries, and some of my usual political or social rants that I call Editorials. The feature on the Habbakuk was a topic I came upon by accident and found fascinating. I do not recall ever hearing about it before, despite quite extensive reading about World War Two, but I couldn't resist researching it a bit and passing it on to you. For me it was almost unbelievable, quite like something you could read about in a science fiction novel. But it is fact, not fiction, and I hope you enjoy it as I did.

I have recently become interested in what I consider to be somewhat of an enigma of our time. Read about that on page 7.

→ Continued →

Obituary
MARJORIE LILLIAN SHEPPARD
1932 November 13 - 2015 January 10

IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS that the family of the late Marjorie Sheppard announce her passing at the Western Memorial Regional Hospital on January 10, 2015 at the age of 82 years.



She leaves to mourn with fond and loving memories her daughters: Shirley Lidstone and Joan Ledrew of Fort McMurray, AB; son Darren (Kim) Sheppard of Lark Harbour; grandchildren: Dion (Lori), Denny (Leah), William

(Wanda), Chad (Nickie), Shawn (Patty Lynn), Shannon (Norma), Kyle (Amanda), Cody (Jemea); great grandchildren: Shelby, Cameron, Kerry, Charlie, Rowan, Sydney, Sophie, Zackery, Rylee, Emily, and Brandon Lidstone; brother Lawrence Park (Marina); brothers-in-law: Archie Sheppard (Bertha), Allen Sheppard; sisters-in-law: Marie Higgins (Ches), Olive Sheppard, and Sarah; special niece: Margaret Hynes; her card buddies: Stella Humber, Joan Hearn, Lenny Payne, Theresa Hunt; special friend Wayne, also a large circle of nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends. She was predeceased by her husband William; sons: Rendell, Larry; grandson Bruce Lidstone, parents Joseph and Annie Park; sister Ella; brothers: Garland Park and Ronald Park.

Friends and family may visit St James Anglican Church, Lark Harbour, on Sunday January 11 from 7-9pm, and on Monday between the hours of 2-4 & 7-9pm. The Funeral service will take place on Tuesday January 13, 2015 at 2pm, officiated by Reverend Nelson Chatman with interment to follow at the church cemetery.

As expressions of sympathy flowers are graciously accepted or donations in Marjorie's memory may be made to the St James Anglican Church Memorial Fund. The family guest book may be signed by visiting our website at www.countryhaven.ca. The family would like to extend a special thank you to the nursing staff on the third floor of the Western Memorial Regional Hospital and thank you to the Lohnes Complex for the two great years they looked after her.

← Continued from ←

I can't say yet whether I shall produce a *BMD* for April, as it will depend on my personal circumstances, where I am at the time, etc. There is a good chance I may still be here in the Restorative Centre at 40 University Drive, but everyone will be advised in the usual way, by either email or my Facebook page.

SLH

Obituary

DOROTHY SHEPPARD, née PARK

1934 April 24 - 2014 December 27

IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS that the family of the late Dorothy Sheppard announce her passing on Saturday, December 27, 2014 at the Western Memorial Regional Hospital in Corner Brook at the age of 80 years.

She leaves to mourn with fond and loving memories her children: Tony (Celine), Peggy (Gary) Earle, Denise Reid and Colin (Tammie); grandchildren: Michael, Leigh-Ann, Ryan and



Samantha; great-grandchildren: Isabella and Tyler; sisters and brothers: Olive, Mona, Russell (Louise), Derek (Ellen), Christine and Bill (Sheila); as well as a large circle of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends; special thank you to Marie Jones, Ruth Brown and the Mennonite Association of Canada for their time spent volunteering and visiting Dorothy. She was predeceased by her parents Robert and Helena Park.

Friends may visit St. James Anglican Church in Lark Harbour on Monday from the hours of 2-4 & 7-9 p.m. from where the funeral service will be held on Tuesday, December 30 at 11:00am with Rev Nelson Chatman officiating. Interment to follow at the Anglican Cemetery. As expressions of sympathy flowers graciously accepted or donations may be made to the Kidney Foundation. Funeral arrangements entrusted to Fillatre's Funeral Home, Corner Brook. The family guest book may be signed or a memorial donation may be made through our website www.fillatre.ca.

PROJECT HABBAKUK *continued from page 1*

The project was certainly an imaginative one, and had it begun earlier rather than at a time when the Battle of the North Atlantic was at its height and Allied resources of every kind were stretched almost to breaking point, it may have progressed much further, even to completion. History is full of such imaginative projects which in their time were written off as unlikely, impossible, even crazy. Christopher Columbus's voyage of discovery was branded by many as a madman's flight of fancy, but he changed the world. So it was for the early balloonists, like the Montgolfier brothers, early aviators like the Wright Brothers, and even Henry Ford's early automobiles were written off by many as merely playtoys for the very wealthy. Many groundbreaking discoveries were similarly mocked. But without the persistence of these inventors, who were often eccentrics, many of the most influential discoveries we take for granted today, may never have reached completion. The human race owes much to those independent explorers, inventors and experimenters who "thought outside the box".

Obituary

LOUISE SYLVIA CHILDS

1936 June 06 – 2015 January 01

IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS that the family of the late Louise Sylvia Childs announce her passing on Thursday, January 1, 2015 at the Western Memorial Regional Hospital in Corner Brook at the age of 78 years.

She leaves to mourn with fond and loving memories her daughter: Karen; son Christopher (Leanne); daughter-in-law Valerie; grandchildren: Danielle, Vanessa, Alex (Ashley), Colby, Brooke and Paige; great-grandchildren: Logan and Landon; sister Emma (Stan); brother Myles; sister-in-law



Louise; as well as a large circle of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. She was predeceased by her husband Ralph, son Karl, infant son Karl, infant daughter Lois, parents Harold and Mary Sheppard, brothers Warren and Harold, sister Marion.

Friends may visit St James Anglican Church in Lark Harbour on Friday and Saturday from the hours of 2-4 & 7-9 pm from where the funeral service will be held on Sunday, January 4 at 2:00pm with Rev Nelson Chatman officiating. Interment to follow at the Anglican Cemetery. As expressions of sympathy flowers graciously accepted or donations may be made to St James Anglican Church Memorial Fund. Funeral arrangements entrusted to Fillatre's Funeral Home, Corner Brook. The family guest book may be signed or a memorial donation may be made through our website www.fillatre.ca.

PROJECT HABBAKUK**FURTHER INFORMATION and RESEARCH TIPS**

Further Information on the Habbakuk/Habakkuk Project may be found at the following links. Either spelling should work.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_Habakkuk

http://www.royalnavalmuseum.org/info_sheets_Habbakkuk.htm

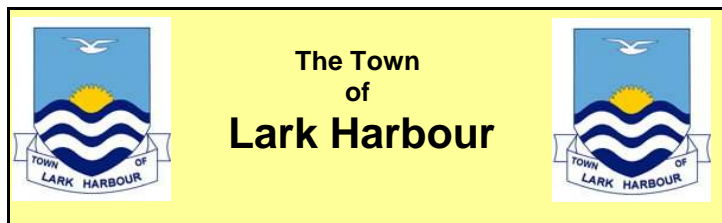
https://images.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search;_ylt=A0LEVvRHq95UrzYAugAnnIIQ;_ylu=X3oDMTB0b2ZrZmU3BHNIYwNzYwRjb2xvA2JmMQR2dG1kA11IUzAwMI8x?_adv_prop=image&fr=yhs-mozilla-001&va=project+habakkuk&hspart=mozilla&hsimp=yhs-001

http://www.cbc.ca/radio_template_2012/audiopop.html?autoPlay=true&clipIds=232790772

<http://project-habbakuk.blogspot.ca/>

<http://www.oddlyhistorical.com/tag/project-habbakuk/>

If these links do not work, a general search using the name Project Habbakuk (either spelling) should yield results too.



The Town of Lark Harbour

NOTICE OF BY-ELECTION

As the Town requires one more Councillor to complete the full slate of 5 members, a By-Election is scheduled for **2015 March 24th (Tuesday)**.

Nominations will be accepted at the Town Office on **Monday, March 2nd and Tuesday, March 3rd**.

Nominees must be fully paid up taxpayers and must be supported by signatures of two other paid-up taxpayers; a fee of \$10 will also be collected at the time of nomination.

In the event that only one valid nomination is received, that person will be appointed by acclamation.

Report of Meeting of 2015 Jan 12

Present: Mayor : Jamie Park
Deputy Mayor: Jeremiah Barry
Councillors: Dennis Sheppard, Rose Sheppard
Clerks: Peggy Sheppard (Rec), Joanna Pottle

Absent: Councillor: Kerry Barry

Meeting commenced at 6:30 pm

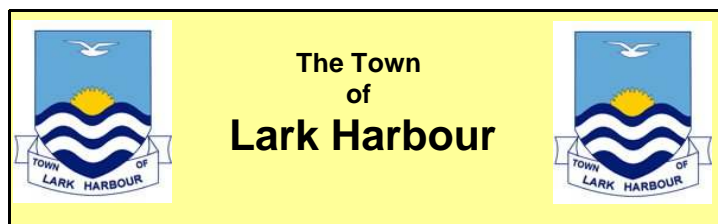
- ! Minutes of 2014 December 9 adopted.
- ! Water/Sewer Update - After speaking with the [Dept of Municipal & Intergovernmental Affairs](#), Clerk advised that there is currently no update; it will likely be spring before any announcements are made regarding phase 2 funding.
- ! Council had a brief discussion on the incident at the gate of the water dam site whereby the chain, lock and sign have all been removed and the gate is now left open. Agreed to contact RCMP and advise them of the incident. Also, motion made to have gate repaired and purchase new chain and lock.
- ! Amalgamation - Clerk had spoken with [DMIA](#), hoping to hear something soon.
- ! [Community Enhancement Employment Program \(CEEP\) 2014-2015](#) – The breakwater portion of this project has now been completed. Council discussed jobs for the remaining worker to do. Motion made for worker to build cupboards for storage in the Council Chambers.
- ! Fire Truck – The order for the new fire fighting vehicle has been sent to [Camions Carl Thibault Inc.](#)
- ! Financial Report approved, with accounts payable of \$3580.59.
- ! Collections Update – Clerk presented report on overdue accounts as of 2014 December 29. Clerk directed to follow up with [DMIA](#)

regarding delinquent tax payer.

- ! Building Permits – Approved.
- ! Upcoming Training/Workshops – Motion for Deputy Mayor Jeremiah, Clerks Peggy and Joanna to attend [MNL](#) Western Regional Meeting in Stephenville February 20-21st.
- ! 2015 Budget has been approved by [DMIA](#).
- ! Clerk directed to complete application for [Provincial Health and Wellness Grant Program 2014-2015](#).
- ! Letter from Lark Harbour Taxi – no longer in service.
- ! Letter received from property owner expressing concern with the emergency service tax. Clerk directed to respond.
- ! Request from Family Outreach Resource Center to put a storage unit upstairs that can be locked. All agreed that this was ok.
- ! Complaint regarding snow clearing on Park & Youden Road. Clerk directed to respond.
- ! Tax Assessment Review Commissioner – remain same.
- ! Complaint regarding traffic flow at Town Hall building. Clerk directed to respond.
- ! Deputy Mayor Jeremiah presented cost of pens with town logo to distribute to tax payers. Agreed to hold on this for now.
- ! Motion to purchase a clock for Council Chambers.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm

Words in blue type are Hyperlinks. Click on them while online for additional information about the topic or organisation.



The Town of Lark Harbour

Report of Meeting of 2015 Feb 16

Present: Mayor : Jamie Park
Deputy Mayor: Jeremiah Barry
Councillors: Rose Sheppard, Dennis Sheppard
Clerks: Peggy Sheppard (Rec), Joanna Pottle

Meeting commenced at 7:00pm

- ! A resident voiced concerns about snow clearing in front of their property. Council held a brief discussion and directed the Clerk to check further since it has been an issue in the past.
- ! Minutes of regular meeting of 2015 January 12 adopted.
- ! Water/Sewer Update – RCMP have been contacted regarding the chain, lock and sign being removed from the gate of the water dam site. This will be replaced and the gate will be repaired in the

spring. Letter received from [DMIA](#) indicating that the project application for Phase 2 funding has been fully reviewed and assessed and that all required information was in order.

- ! Amalgamation – Letter received from Mr Keith Hutchings indicating that [DMIA](#) has completed its analysis of the amalgamation request and a formal response should be received within the next month.
- ! Crown Land Applications – Council discussed the Crown Land applications received for land on Harbour View Road. Clerk directed to look into minutes of previous meetings to determine why these applications were not approved at the time.
- ! Property located at Devils Head – Review of package received from Public Works and Government Services regarding Surplus Federal Real Property. Agreed that Council is not interested in obtaining the access road and property located at Devils Head.
- ! Emergency Response Tax – Clerk advised that letters have now been sent to all property owners and poll tax payers. Response has been positive and there have been several payments received at the office.
- ! Health and Wellness Grant – Mayor Jamie gave an overview of the grant application that has been submitted to promote overall health and wellness in the community.
- ! Global GeoPark – Clerks Joanna and Peggy attended a meeting regarding the [Cabox Aspiring Geopark](#) on Tuesday, Feb. 10th at MUN's Grenfell Campus in Corner Brook. Update received since the meeting indicated that The Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme's Drifting Apart Project has been officially announced. Councillor questioned if having the area designated as a Global Geopark would limit industry coming to this area. Clerk directed to follow up on this.
- ! Financial Report approved with accounts payable of \$3580.59. Write offs of \$570.00 approved.
- ! By Election set for Tuesday, March 24th. Nominations accepted at Town Office on Monday, March 2nd and Tuesday, March 3rd.
- ! Training sessions/Workshops – Clerks Peggy and Joanna to attend PMA Convention in Corner Brook Wednesday, April 15th to Friday, April 17th. Agreed that clerks would stay in Corner Brook Wednesday and Thursday nights as sessions run late into the evening. Acting Clerk to cover the office for those 3 days.
- ! ACAP Environmental Explorer Days – ACAP has expressed interest in hosting a week long summer camp instead of Environmental Explorer days as was held in the past. A reply was sent that Council is interested in this for the children of our community.
 - ! Complaint received from resident regarding property damaged due to snow clearing in the area.
 - ! 5 complaints received regarding snow clearing.
 - ! Complaint received regarding roaming dogs.
 - ! Complaint received regarding dilapidated properties.
- ! Request from CYN to have a cupboard space upstairs that they can lock.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Editorial :

ASSISTED SUICIDE - IT'S ABOUT TIME

Finally, the Supreme Court of Canada has taken the bull by the horns and placed him where he belongs. I refer to their unanimous decision on January 30th making assisted suicide no longer a criminal offence in Canada. Back in 1993 [Sue Rodriguez](#), a terminal sufferer of Lou Gehrig's disease (*amyotrophic lateral sclerosis*) fought on her deathbed to have the law changed and provide her and many other Canadians with the right to end their lives with dignity when to continue living became intolerable. The law at that time forbade it, but Ms Rodriguez found a doctor willing to risk his licence to practice medicine in order to assist her anonymously. Since then, many others, including [Conservative MP Steven Fletcher](#), victim of quadriplegic paralysis due to an accident who has energetically promoted a private member's bill, opposing his party in his efforts for change. Now, after twenty-two years, that change is coming about. But over the years how many Canadians have been forced to undergo the indignity of a death racked with pain when they would have chosen otherwise?

Why do so many people feel they have the right to interfere in other peoples' lives? This change in the law, if or when it takes effect, in no way forces anyone into assisted suicide; it merely makes the option available to those who sorely need it, as did Sue Rodriguez and many others who before and since have had to live out their lives in pain.

Numerous arguments can be presented, such as "we don't allow our dogs or cats when they become old or sick to suffer the way many Canadians have been forced to suffer" from debilitating and painful diseases such as various forms of cancer or other prolonged and painful illnesses. But these arguments are not really relevant. The main point at issue is that Canada is a free country where citizens have the constitutional right to make decisions about their own lives. This is not to say that assisted suicide should be readily available for every ache or pain that makes itself known, or for everyone who feels tired of life: it is simply to say that when an individual's pain reaches the excruciating point at which competent and experienced physicians are unable to provide adequate relief, then the patient should have the constitutional right to request, and receive, the assistance of a physician to terminate the suffering. This is not a barbaric act; it is one of basic humanity.

Those who oppose such an act will often cite the possibility of mistake, or even misuse. However a carefully-framed law defining effective supervision and a clause requiring regular detailed review every few years, should be possible. We have many Canadian physicians and lawyers capable of formulating such a law. After all, we are not a country lacking good experience of jurisprudence. Our laws are based on some of the oldest and most thoroughly tested judicial principles of any nation, and we have a Charter of Rights and Freedoms second to none.

It is hard to think that none of our more conservative compatriots will challenge this Supreme Court decision, and if they do, it is their right. Canada is their country too. But if such challenges do appear, we must be vigilant to ensure that one of the most important guarantees under our Charter, that of the "right to life, liberty and security of the person" will not be downgraded. Some minor changes may be needed

in the first formulation of the law, and a five-year “sunset clause” could be incorporated. But the fundamental principles of the right to self-determination should neither be weakened nor significantly changed.

The change will not be immediate, as the Supreme Court has given Parliament a year to develop a new law; but one province, Québec, has already introduced legislation of its own, and others may follow that lead.

Canada has for the past few years been gradually, and sometimes not so gradually, losing her status as one of the world’s leaders in humanitarian issues. Perhaps this decision by our nine Supreme Court justices will also help to redress some of our country’s recent shortcomings on the international scene.

SLH

RADICALISATION

An Unexpected Enigma of Our Time

RADICALISATION is one of the most disturbing and perhaps surprising social trends we have heard of in the last year or two. The UK Home Office defines it in rather blunt terms as “*the process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, then join terrorist groups*.” In Canada the RCMP has been a little less direct, calling it “*the process by which individuals are introduced to an overtly ideological message and belief system that encourages movement from moderate, mainstream beliefs towards extreme views.*”

It seems surprising that many young people today would reject the glamorous world that Hollywood and American culture in general has created for us, but it seems that there is a number that have. It may be tempting to believe that this rejection is comparable with the environmentalist and back-to-nature movements of the last few decades, but this does not seem to fit. Instead of embracing a clean if rather freewheeling lifestyle that originated with the Hippies and the Ban-the-Bomb marchers of the 60s and 70s, they have embraced a life of risk, danger, violence and destruction on a scale not seen before. And the purpose is to wrest from the world’s wealthy nations the means of living out their own radical religious (sacrilegious to most of us) aspirations for a new world that they can control.

Despite the increasing numbers of people — mostly young, in some cases scarcely in their teen years — little research has been done to assist in understanding this radical phenomenon. However a few factors do emerge as being important, if not essential, components that can cause a person to start on the descent towards radicalisation.

One of the most significant factors may be a **feeling of alienation** felt by many young people when they are unable to find a job. While the vast majority who experience this will not immediately or may never turn to violence, the longer the feeling persists, and the more occasions when the person comes up against this “stone wall”, the greater is the likelihood that he, or she, will eventually succumb. Without support from moderate members of society, the individual may become the prey of recruiters of a questionable religious or paramilitary group only too willing to prey on disgruntled persons. This is of course the way many influential social organisations began

— political parties, trade unions, and religious groups — during the Reformation period. Fortunately most of the leaders who emerged from those movements — [Tommy Douglas](#), [Martin Luther](#), [John Calvin](#), for example — were moderate in their views, nor did they encounter violent opposition from the established leaders, although some were treated quite harshly by the political or religious authorities of their day. It is unfortunate that sometimes the alienated individuals chose the route of violence and the authorities responded in like manner, such as in the famous [Gunpowder Plot](#) of 1605. History is full of such examples.

Alienation is perhaps the easiest of potential causes to understand, but others include *isolation; hatred; and martyrdom*. Strangely, poverty itself is not found to be a major cause, but it may of course lead to other factors like isolation and hatred that may become causes.

One thing however is certain: we cannot sit back and ignore the problem. Increasing numbers of young people of both sexes are falling prey to those trying to radicalise them to join their groups, and it is certainly proving to be effective. Al Qaeda, ISIS/ISIL, and Boca Haran are recruiting thousands by the day. One of the surprising facts is that many of the recruits are young women from Western Europe and North America, who seem to be willing to enter a life which to most Western women would be a life of intolerable bondage, the absolute antithesis of what they would want.

Even more surprising is the fact that many of these recruits, both men and women, are well educated and middle class. One potential reason for their recruitment may be that such women will not only produce children helpful to the terrorist group, but will also provide valuable leadership that men would be unable to furnish, although family values do not seem to have much priority.

[Zachary Chesser](#), is an American citizen from Virginia. He is not from a poor family, and he is well educated. His mother is a lawyer. , wrote in a report entitled *Raising Al-Qaa'ida*, that women are “*responsible for producing a new generation of mujaahidiin [Muslim warriors] ...*” Much of this is not new. This kind of inveigling into the lives of Western nations has been going on for decades, but we have been doing nothing about it. However, this is no reason for panic. What the West needs to do is to use its huge resources to enable these disenchanted young (or not-so-young) people to realise a valid and satisfying position for them in Western society, giving them the opportunity to develop their potential in the countries that their parents or grandparents chose. Some have achieved this on their own, already, but there is an increasing tendency now for Westerners to back off, isolating immigrants of all races and creeds.

This is not an easy task, especially now since much damage has been done between Westerners and immigrants, especially those of Middle-Eastern origins. But we cannot afford to give up. Of course, there will be many failures along the way, but the effort must be made, if we value our Canadian mosaic culture and the nation that has been built now for almost 150 years.

SLH