

JANUARY 2016

# the Hummm

free

Arts,  
Entertainment  
& Ideas



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Who's Reading the Humm

Back in 2013, **Linda Taylor** (above) wrote: "In the attached photo, I'm catching up on the news in Pakenham, Ontario while in Pakenham, Victoria, Australia. Thanks so much for a terrific newspaper that I look forward to every month! (Photo taken by Mark Richardson.)"

Thanks for taking theHumm with you on your travels, Linda. We knew there was a Perth, Australia, but not a Pakenham!

And speaking of twinned towns, check out the shot of Perth's **Heidi Stepanek** (below), reading theHumm in Lanark Village in the Florida panhandle. Thanks to Peter Dixon for the photo.



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## Our February Issue: All About Volunteers

In the February issue of theHumm we plan to run our tenth annual "Get Involved, Get Connected" resource for organizations seeking volunteers (and volunteers seeking local organizations). If you are running a community organization or service club, festival, cultural event, museum, conservation area, arts or activities group within theHumm's catchment area, we'd like to hear from you! Send us 80 words (maximum) describing what your group does, what type of volunteer opportunities you offer, and how people can contact you, and we'll run them — free of charge! — in our February issue.

Due to space limitations, we can only offer **80 words per organization**, and can only include groups that serve our catchment area (Lanark County and parts of Renfrew County). We are not able to edit down longer entries or brochures, so please send the text as you wish it to appear. Please email all information or queries to <editor@thehummm.com>. All information must be received by January 20 for inclusion in the February issue.

### Tell Us About a Volunteer Who Made a Difference

If you have a story about a special volunteer or volunteer organization that made a difference in your life, we'd love to hear from you! We'd like to help put some of those positive stories out into the world via the paper, theHumm's website, and our social media channels as we head into the new year. Send your stories to <editor@thehummm.com>.

### See More Online!

We've got lots of online goodies for you this month. Kelly Thompson, Chief Librarian at the Renfrew Public Library, offers up her **suggested reading list** for anyone looking for resolution inspiration in the New Year. Our new food columnist **Sebastian Weetabix** has provided detailed information about crepes, as a side dish to his article on page 5. Movie reviewer Matt Roche has more to say about this year's **best and worst films** than what we could fit on page 14, and, as always, you can find more images of works by this month's **profiled artist**. Happy reading, both in print and online!



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theHumm is a monthly arts, entertainment and ideas newspaper delivered free to businesses and visitor attractions in Almonte, Perth, Carleton Place, Westport, Pakenham, Carp, Arnprior, Smiths Falls, Burnstown, White Lake, Balderson, and Ottawa. Our mandate is to connect and promote people and events in the small towns and rural communities of the Ottawa Valley — where the arts flourish and entertaining characters run amok!

**Submissions**  
By email or on disk.

**Content Deadline:**  
20<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication

**Advertising Deadline:**  
22<sup>nd</sup> of the month prior to publication

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**Thanks this month to:**  
Santa!... and Bailey's Irish Cream.

# Jennifer Noxon — A Duet of Art and Music

Almonte-based artist, singer and songwriter Jennifer Noxon views her artistic and musical creativity as intersecting spirals, and she lives accordingly. At the moment, her life is in a creative whirl as she choreographs a new pas-de-deux. Last June, Jennifer stopped commuting to a full-time job in Ottawa with the intention of offering her skills and creative energy to her community. "I'm shifting gears, so to speak," says Noxon. "My ultimate goal is to find a way to live and work in my community."

by Sally Hansen

Exploration is an essential component of Noxon's creativity. Her current art work celebrating Almonte's connection with the Mississippi River is a case in point. On her website she explains, "When preparing for this show, I took on three challenges. The first was to create work that would be 'local' in theme. The second was to explore a different medium. The third was to 'do a 180' — diverge from the abstract mode I have been exploring these past few years and return to representation. Why take on these kinds of challenges? It's a bit like taking a cold shower: I wake up, practise new skills, and challenge myself to see things in new ways."



As a resident of Almonte since 2002, Noxon has grown increasingly aware of the importance of the river to the community — its residents, businesses, the larger community — and as an integral component of the natural world encompassing it.

Based on photos she took in -30°C weather, Jennifer painted the river series on her Apple iPad tablet computer using Procreate — billed as "the most advanced painting app ever designed for a mobile device... the award winning weapon of choice for creatives on the move." She was able to paint things in a very new and immediate way, while becoming "more conscious of the way our river intersects

with its banks, the bridges, automobiles, humans, the sky, and the architecture."

For Jennifer, the possibilities this tool offered were irresistible — no more waiting for paint to dry, or dealing with messy clean-ups. The product proved as good as its claims — enabling her to "Explore the boundless freedom of a huge library of pens, pencils, and brushes on one portable device." It was validating to discover that David Hockney, considered one of the most influential British artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has been painting on his iPad since 2009. (Jennifer wrote and performed a song about Hockney on her 2001 CD *Sweet*.)

Noxon painted her riverscapes on her iPad with a conductive brush and her fingertips, without a preconceived idea of the finished work, "relying on her visual vocabulary of organic forms, texture, negative space and colour." The amazing results of her exploration are titled "Almonte's Mississippi: Points of View," and her prints remain on display throughout January at General fine craft, art & design at 63 Mill Street in Almonte.

## The Magnetic Properties of Creativity

The creative process is the attraction. For Noxon, it doesn't matter if it's creating lyrics, a melody, a painting, a recipe or a whimsical sculpture fashioned from objects found along the sidewalk. As she puts it, "This is when I feel most alive, most vital and most connected to the world."

She was born in Toronto and excelled in the arts and sports during high school in Don Mills. After working in Banff for a year on a ski hill, she studied graphic design for a year in Toronto and then returned to the West. She completed a three-year diploma in Fine Arts at what is now the Kootenay School of the Arts in Nelson, B.C. After working for a couple of years as an art installer and a painter of theatre sets, Jennifer returned to school for a B.Ed. at Concordia University in Montreal.

Noxon claims she developed her sense of humour after graduation while teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in Japan for a year. Her coping technique was to laugh at everything she didn't understand. For twenty-five years she has enjoyed "the best job in the world" — teaching ESL and literacy, and training volunteers to work with immigrants who were homebound. The combination of doing something productive that required lots of creativity suited her perfectly.

## A Musical Interlude

During her thirties, Jennifer turned to her childhood love of singing and music to connect with others. Her mother remembers her singing opera



in her sandbox when she was four years old. For many years she participated wholeheartedly in Writers' Block, a songwriters' support group that met at the Ottawa Folklore Centre. Along with contemporaries Christine Graves, Tony Turner and Lynn Miles, she grew and matured as a singer and songwriter. (Turner was in the news recently for writing and performing the hit song *Harperman — A Protest Song*.)

After winning a songwriting competition in 1997, Jennifer performed at festivals, coffee houses and house concerts in Ontario, Alberta and BC. She has toured with Lynn Miles and Ian Tamblyn, and shared stages with Dar Williams, Garnet Rogers and Stephen Fearing. In 2004 she joined with Ottawa-area songwriters Chris MacLean and Alise Marlane to become Frida's Brow. In 2006 their debut eponymous album was nominated for a Canadian Folk Music Award.

## Shifting Gears

Over time Noxon realized that she wasn't cut out to be a travelling solo musician and she gradually shifted gears to focus on painting. Her move to Almonte was a powerful stimulant. Nature has always been her "best teacher and primary source of inspiration." Paddling on the Mississippi River and wandering along its banks and over Almonte's multiple bridges led her to discover and celebrate the extent to which the river is at the heart of the town's character.

## A Balancing Act

With her river series of paintings still in progress, Noxon has been exploring new routes to satisfying the demands of both her introverted and extroverted selves. She has just returned from a Community Choir Leadership Training Course in Victoria, B.C., and is planning the launch of the Rhythm & Song Community Choir in January. As part of the Ubuntu Choirs Network <ubuntuchoirs.net>, the Almonte-based choir will be inclusive, non-auditioned, community-focused and socially engaged. No formal music training is required. If you are curious about this fun, stress-free new Community Choir, contact Jennifer Noxon at <randsalmon@gmail.com>.

In preparation for her new directorial adventure, Jennifer is rehearsing a "pop-up" choir for its first public appearance during the "Live from Mississippi Mills — It's Saturday Night" variety show on Saturday, January 16 at 7:30. The choir plans to pop up at the Almonte Old Town Hall, harmoniously located within sight of the Mississippi River at 14 Bridge Street. Come check it out. Her Trading Card and our links at <thehummm.com> will guide you to Jennifer Noxon's online art galleries, musical offerings and blog.

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WHO Jennifer Noxon

WHAT Artist, Singer, Songwriter

WHERE Art by appointment, 256-8809, jenoixon@gmail.com, <jennifernoixon.com>; Community Choir at <randsalmonite@gmail.com>

WHEN Saturdays and Sundays throughout January at General fine craft, art & design, 63 Mill St., Almonte, <generalfinecraft.com>, 461-3463

WHY Art satisfies the introvert in me; music provides my extrovert with social connections.

THE HUMM

ARTIST TRADING CARD



The Governor General's Foot Guards Band (shown above on a recent concert tour in Bermuda) will be performing at St. Paul's United Church in Perth on Saturday, February 6

Need 'em... need 'em... got 'em...  
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All the cool kids do it!

# GG's Foot Guards Band Returns to Perth

The Governor General's Foot Guards Band will be performing at St. Paul's United Church in Perth on Saturday, February 6, at 7:30PM.

The thirty-piece concert band is part of the most senior reserve infantry regiment in Canada, dating back to its formation in 1872. The band is based at Cartier Square Drill Hall in downtown Ottawa. They share a close connection to the Governor General and provide music for many ceremonies in the Ottawa area, including the annual, nationally-televised Remembrance Day ceremony held at the War Memorial.

Their director, Lt. Col. Frances Chilton-Mackay, is the Staff Officer of Army Bands for all bands in the Canadian Army. She became the first female director of the ensemble in 2006.

The band's full dress uniform, with scarlet tunic and bearskin hat, is immediately recognizable. Many of the musicians in the ensemble play in the Ceremonial Guard band, which supports the

changing of the guard ceremony on Parliament Hill during the summer months.

The performance will include a variety of traditional, military and popular music for concert band, including the *Finale* from Saint-Saëns *Symphony #3* arranged for band and organ involving St. Paul's Director of Music, Brad Mills.

A special segment of the concert program will feature music from the Star Wars movies, celebrating the December release of the seventh movie in the series, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*.

Admission to the concert is free, but donations will be accepted at the door to defray the costs of advertising.

Prospective concertgoers are invited to warm up an early February Saturday evening with the exciting sounds of brass, woodwind, percussion and organ, in the intimate and acoustically pleasant sanctuary of St. Paul's United Church, 25 Gore Street West in Perth <stpauls-uc-perth.org>.

**Glory to Thee!**  
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Pub Crawling

# Wednesdays at North on 29 are Di-vinyl!

As consumers flock to the convenience of downloaded MP3s and streaming music services, a few stalwart audiophiles have been happily swimming against that current and are celebrating vinyl records. Despite its size, weight, fragility and cost, vinyl is making a comeback and the owners of North on 29 are thrilled.

a few good chats with some of the kindred spirits in the room.

Vinyl Wednesdays get underway at 7PM and there is no cover charge. I highly recommend that you bring a few records so that you can more fully participate in the fun. North on 29 is located at 7109 County Road 29 South, Carleton Place. The best place to check their schedule of events is their Facebook page: <facebook.com/Northon29>.

by Rob Riendeau

In mid-November, Adam McKinty and Tori Arsenault started "Vinyl Wednesdays" at North on 29, where LP-enthusiasts could lug their stacks of old and new records and play them, trade them, boast about them, covet other people's and generally have a good time talking about them.

On the evening that I stopped in there were about a dozen folks happily flipping through each other's collections. On a central table a few albums were set out, and everyone was encouraged to vote on an album and a side to play. Al Green's *Let's Stay Together* was on the turntable and Dire Strait's *Brothers in Arms* was collecting votes at the on-deck table. The collections of albums that I looked through at the "trade" and "boast" tables were eclectic and very tempting. I was sorry that I hadn't brought along a few of my own LPs, but I did have



# Little Christmas Concert

## Blue Skies Community Fiddle Orchestra

Everyone knows there are twelve days of Christmas, and for the last fifteen years the Blue Skies Community Fiddle Orchestra has celebrated the twelfth day with a mix of Christmas, seasonal and traditional songs and tunes at the Maberly Hall.

On Sunday, January 3 from 2 to 5PM, this group of more than fifty local musicians from the age of eight to infinity will again be wrapping up the holiday season for our community. They are finishing off an exciting year by featuring songs and tunes from their performances and learning in PEI this past summer, which included an appearance at the Rollo Bay International Fiddle festival.

The line-up includes the début of this year's beginners group, the largest ever in the orchestra's history, as well as the intermediate group and the youth ensemble called "The Unspoken Rests", fresh from opening for the latest east coast phenoms — The East Pointers. Special guests include the Lanarky Fiddlers Guild (formerly Carolyn Stewart's Celtic



Don't delay! Catch the Blue Skies Fiddle Orchestra's "Little Christmas" Concert on January 3 at the Maberly Hall

Heritage Fiddlers), and the event will be emceed by local songstress and live music supporter Linda Grenier.

Tay Valley Township is a sponsor of the orchestra and will be at the concert promoting the upcoming 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. Fiddle music has always been central to the cultural life

of this area and once again our community gathers to share some light refreshments and great tunes with friends and neighbours. Admission is \$5 at the door.

For information about the orchestra, please contact the conductor, Cindy McCall, at 278-2448 or <cindy.fiddlemusic.mccall@gmail.com>.

The Reever Report

## Feet Up, Mother Brown

There now, we did it: Christmas is put away, the shortbread is eaten, the eggnog is finished and we can get back to basics again. But not for a while. Let's relax into winter, put our feet up, and consider this a month of contemplation, knitting, and activity planning. We don't have to actually do the activities, just think about them. There's likely some housework to do, but that can wait, since company isn't arriving before summer, are they? I plan on tackling it sometime in the near — or not so near — future. (You can write your initials in the dust on the table, but not the date!)

by Glenda Jones

I'm planning on getting my paints out again. First I have to sort through myriad photos to decide which one to tackle, and quite frankly they all seem complicated. Perhaps I shouldn't do any painting while the light is not quite right anyway. April will be a much more suitable time.

I'm also planning on reorganizing my workspace in the basement so I can create some new mosaics. First I'd have to get the fire going to make it cozy. I'm tempted to try a woodworking project while I'm down there, but can't figure out what to build. That'll have to wait till summer, I think. I could do the mosaics though, once I build a little frame, get new glue, clean up the tile clippers, choose the colours of china. Oh, it's going to take more planning than I can muster right now.

It would be a good plan to haul in the summer tools and repaint all the handles and sharpen the blades. Think how spiffy they'd look the first time I needed to use them! It seems like a plan, but the

tools are securely stored in the shed behind the tractor where I can't even reach them. Bad plan, for sure.

Oh, I know: wouldn't it be a nice touch to write proper letters to all those people who sent e-cards for Christmas? It could be a sort of revenge move. However, since that isn't at all charitable, I won't do that. Scratch that plan!

Here's a good one though: I'm going to plan on doing one good deed per week for someone who doesn't expect it. It might be a big thing or a small thing, and I won't tell anyone I've done it. Now, isn't that the best plan you've ever heard?

All this creative thinking is beginning to wear me out. And hey, I've just realized I don't have a lot of time to get the rest of my planning done because the middle of January is nearly here, and I'm eager to get back to our lectures, my agility training, the Hub, choir practice and all the people who make our days.

I'm going to plan on doing one good deed per week for someone who doesn't expect it. It might be a big thing or a small thing, and I won't tell anyone I've done it. Now, isn't that the best plan you've ever heard?

I guess I'm going to have to leave off planning anything for the time being. Maybe that's for the best: my plans rarely work out the way I expect they will, but there's always something fun to do while I'm thinking about them. Didn't someone say that making plans is what gives God a good laugh every day?

Opinion Are It..

## Creping Around Town

Once again, Weetabix is called to his role as Sherpa for the Humm's peripatetic arts reporter, and once again our vehicle is found to lack adequate provisions. Potential crisis! Risk of food deprivation with consequential risk of severe crankiness (the arts reporter must be fed and Weetabix is not known for stoicism). Must try to find some suitable establishment.

by Sebastian Weetabix

Time-constrained but rescued by geography; we can lunch in Almonte, a town I know to offer an embarrassment of gastronomic pleasures. Thinking aloud... should we just abandon this artist interview and go for a sybaritic afternoon of tasting? A stern reminder of Weetabix' place in the food chain follows a careless voicing of this notion. Now another quandary: how to select an establishment?

A fleeting thought is to drop by Hummingbird Chocolate and attempt to recapitulate a scene from the movie *Chocolat* wherein M. Le Comte de Reynaud falls from grace. Something must be left for Lent, however, and fantasies of orgiastic overindulgence are set aside in favour of a practical decision.

We have no trouble parking behind the Heritage Court, and make our way to a reliable establishment known for a French rendition of the burrito.

According to <answers.yahoo.com>, crepes are the French answer to fast food with flair. There is a very wide range of styles, ranging from the most basic to highly elaborate; a cladogram would branch at savoury and sweet. At the root of all crepes is a batter traditionally made from one of several grains (wheat and buckwheat for savory preparations, and wheat for the sweetened versions); the batter contains other ingredients and must be quite fluid (close to the consistency of milk) so that it can be rapidly and thinly spread on a hot surface to cook. Sometimes heat is applied to only one side; sometimes both. The key is to cook the basic crepe rapidly while maintaining sufficient moisture to allow flexibility in the end product. Crepes come in a range of sizes, and there is a convergence between crepes and thin filled pancakes of other culinary styles. A true crepe is not leavened, although the crepe maker may be. If you wish to make crepes at home, a fundamental methodological problem must be addressed; should you use a flat pan or surface or a convex pan? This is a watershed decision since there are few (if any) other uses for a convex pan (other than blinis — another variation on the theme of flexible flatbreads with toppings or fillings).

Regardless, there is a learning curve, and the exercise is best undertaken by those with both dexterity and patience. Weetabix is happy to point out that in Almonte there is an excellent source of crepulence in several of its variations.

The **Mill Street Crepe Company** is the anchor of Gordon Pike's outstanding redevelopment of the Heritage Court. He often personally works the front of the restaurant, making sure that his customers are looked after and keeping a benignly watchful eye on the busy room. We score a table with a street and river view. Menus are perused and crepes (what else?) are ordered. The presentation is crepe folded over a portion of savory filling with some visually appealing garnish and a side salad. The chosen dessert crepe is light and offered with one fork, but another is procured and domestic equilibrium maintained.

Service is prompt and friendly and, as with previous visits, the food does not disappoint — well presented and well prepared. The menu offerings are clear, and flavours are well balanced with a range of choices. Sticker shock is not an issue — by my standards the establishment delivers good value. Payment by credit card is accepted and we are back on the road, happy to have visited.



# Expecting the Impossible

## Civitas Advance Syrian Refugee Campaign in Mississippi Mills

“One can’t believe impossible things,” said Alice. “I daresay you haven’t had much practice,” said the Queen. “When I was your age, I always did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I’ve believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.”

— from Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland*

There are few among us who haven’t heard the heart-wrenching stories of millions of refugees fleeing their Syrian homeland. In response, our community has come together, under the banner of the “Syrian Refugee Committee of Mississippi Mills” (SRCMM), to reach out and help with a seemingly impossible situation.

This past September, a few voices spoke up and, in harmony in a living room in Almonte, those voices generated a community outpouring that has been making many unimaginable things come true. The formation of the SRCMM, a community-level umbrella organization, galvanized action, spun off groups of neighbours and friends, and culminated in the creating of four local Constituent (sponsorship) Groups in Mississippi Mills. Each group has accepted the responsibility to focus on sponsoring a Syrian Refugee Family. Around that commitment, the SRCMM coordinates and facilitates the many volunteers, resources and donations that are needed to as-

sist the work of the individual groups. The groups and their members are the ones who are making refugee safety a real possibility through the hope of settlement within the borders of our welcoming community.

The four groups include:

- The Almonte-Blakeney-Clayton-(ABC) Welcome Group: A non-denominational group working under the auspices of the Presbyterian Sponsorship Agreement Holder. (Contact: gsmith@consilium.ca)
- The Team Almonte Group: A non-denominational group working under the auspices of the Jewish Family Services Sponsorship Agreement Holder. (Contact: slkblair@hotmail.com)
- The St. Paul’s/Almonte United Church (SPAUC) Group: This is a group of multi-faith and non-affiliated persons working under the auspices of the Anglican Dioceses Sponsorship Agreement Holder. (Contact: residecathy@gmail.com)
- The Holy Name of Mary (HNM) Group: A group of Catholic and non-affiliated persons working under the auspices of the Catholic Centre for Immigrants Sponsorship Agreement Holder. (Contact: sandy\_ohara@hotmail.com)

integration of children, health needs, education, employment and many pathways to assimilation. As the groups work out their individual settlement plans, the SRCMM acts to turn the challenges into opportunities for community engagement. And so enters Civitan President Alice Puddington and the Civitans, whose creed ends with the pledge “to practice the Golden Rule and to build upon it a better and nobler citizenship.”

### Fundraising Dinner Dance

Now, as we begin 2016, the Almonte Civitan Club is helping to do one more impossible task — if not before breakfast, then before Valentine’s Day! On Saturday, February 13, the Civitans are sponsoring and hosting a “Won’t You Be My Valentine” dinner and dance. The purpose of the event is to raise funds for the Syrian Refugee Committee of Mississippi Mills in support of our sponsored Syrian families. But even more, the event is to mark and celebrate a time when Mississippi Mills opened up its heart to welcome distant, distraught people who found refuge in the welcoming arms of the citizens of this community. Giving refugees a life here is our gift to them.

Delicious dinner, live music with Mike Wattie and Friends, refreshments, silent auction and fun! Come celebrate and support, beginning at 6PM at the Almonte Civitan Hall. Tickets are \$40, and can be obtained by calling the Civitan Club at 256-6234 and leaving a message, or by contacting SRCMM.

— Alice Puddington

### The Call of Citizenship

While the groups have been successful in meeting their sponsorship funding thresholds, there is much more that the SRCMM is aiming to do in order to help make settlement and support a successful reality. There are challenges with housing, the

# Local United Ways are “United for Refugees”

Three United Ways serving the communities of Lanark County, Prescott-Russell, and Renfrew County have joined the United for Refugees campaign to support refugees of the Syrian crisis. Funds raised will be used to support the sponsorship and settlement of refugees in these counties.

“We’re all heartbroken by the Syrian crisis, and members of our community are telling us they want to help,” explains Fraser Scantlebury, executive director of United Way Lanark County. “Together, we want to be prepared to support these refugees as they build a life in our communities.”

United for Refugees is a community initiative to raise funds for the sponsorship and settlement of people affected by the Syrian crisis. The Government of Canada has committed to bringing 10,000 refugees to Canada by the end of 2015, and another 15,000 by March 2016.

Following on United Way Ottawa’s successful launch, the United Ways of Lanark County, Renfrew County, and Prescott-Russell are launching United for Refugees in an effort to make sure that newcomers to our regions have the right tools to start a new life.

“This fundraising effort focuses on getting resources to where they are needed the most and

will have the greatest impact,” says Jodie Densmore, executive director of Centraide United Way Prescott-Russell. “Donations will be used to assist with sponsorship, provide counselling for refugees in their native language, mental health support, English and French language training, employment supports and more.”

Each regional United Way Centraide is now



United Ways serving Lanark County, Prescott-Russell, and Renfrew County have joined the campaign to support refugees of the Syrian crisis

accepting donations for United for Refugees on their website. For Lanark County, please go to <lanarkunitedway.com>.

“United Way has a long history of helping newcomers in our community,” said Gail Logan-McMeekin, executive director of Renfrew County United Way. “We know we can make a difference in the lives of those affected by the crisis in Syria.”

Join us for our 2nd Annual

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Almonte Fair Board Annual Winter Dance featuring The Valley Rovers Band starts at 8PM

Saturday January 9, 2016

Almonte Civitan Hall \$12 advance • \$15 at the door

Light Lunch Silent Auction

Proceeds go towards the Agricultural Hall Fund

For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Debbie Brydges 613-256-3879

almontefair.ca

The Almonte Lectures

29 January **Richard III: The Bunchback’d Toad** Paul Marland

Next Lecture: 26 February **The Artist Meets a Chemist** Don Wiles

All Lectures: 7:30PM in the Almonte United Church Hall For information: almontelectures.net

Blue Skies Community Fiddle Orchestra presents their annual

**Little Christmas** Christmas concert

Sunday, January 3, 2-5PM At the Maberly Hall

featuring:  
The Blue Skies Community Fiddle Orchestra  
The Unspoken Rests youth ensemble  
The Lanark Fiddlers Guild

\$5 at the door, children 12 and under are free For information contact Cindy McCall 613-278-2448 or cindy.fiddlemusic.mccall@gmail.com

# Live From Mississippi Mills – It's January!

Not wanting to let any brown slushy grass grow under its feet, Almonte and Pakenham are both packed with fun things to do in the New Year.

by Miss Mills

First up is the Almonte Fair Board's annual **Winter Dance**, taking place on Saturday, January 9 and featuring the Valley Rovers. The band starts at 8PM at the Almonte Civitan Hall, and tickets are \$12 in advance or \$15 at the door. In addition to great music and dancing, the evening includes a light lunch and a silent auction supporting the Agricultural Hall Fund. For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact Debbie Brydges at 256-3879.

Next up is a high-energy variety show that will be shining the spotlight on the many festivals in this area. Entitled "**Live from Mississippi Mills – It's Saturday Night**", it takes place on Saturday, January 16 at 7:30PM at the beautiful Almonte Old Town Hall, and I'm told it will be a blast. In fact, I can assure you it will be a blast, because I myself — your favourite (OK, only) puppet mascot of Mississippi Mills — will be one of the performers!

"This really will be an entertaining variety show, and a great way to sample all our wonderful local festivals," explains Noreen Young, artistic director of the Puppets Up! International Pup-

pet Festival. "The lineup includes puppets, fiddlers, bicycles, basketball, pipers, classical music, and even a mystery performance featuring Fibrefest," she adds.

I'm told that the audience will be treated to a screening of an "awesome underwater dance performance" by the Dandelion Dance Company that was researched and created by Kea McKay, a former student of Naismith Public School in Almonte. There is also going to be a celebration of the new basketball court in Augusta Park, and of Almonte's special relationship with the NBA. In addition, the evening will offer an art show and sale, a homemade pie sale, and even door prizes!

Tickets are just \$20 each, available in Almonte at the Town Hall and Baker Bob's, and in Pakenham at Nicholson's Sundries. For more information, please call 256-1077 x26. Information is also available on <exploremississippimills.ca> or on Facebook <facebook.com/MississippiMills>.

Then, from January 21 to 30, Pakenham offers up a variety of indoor and outdoor activities at their annual **Frost Festival**. Things kick off on Thursday the 21<sup>st</sup> with a movie night and euchre tournament, and then swing into high gear over the weekend with a wine and beer tasting event (Valley-style — I've heard it described as a "big house party!"), a concert by Dave Kalil, a pancake breakfast, a snowmobile rally and vintage snowmobile show. More euchre and bingo will get you to the



She's back! Miss Mills, puppet mascot of Mississippi Mills, will reprise her recent role by performing in a scene from *Trash Dance* at the variety show "Live From Mississippi Mills — It's Saturday Night" Taking place on January 16, the show is a celebration of festivals and events in this area, and thus features fiddlers, bicycles, pipers, classical music, basketball, and much more!

following weekend, when you can attend a Junior B hockey game, a fish and chip dinner, a fishing derby, a tobogganing party and a pub night with The Ryans (and Elvis!). Some of the outdoor activities are weather-dependent, but you can always depend on a great time and wonderful small-town hospitality! A complete line-up of events with times and locations will be posted at <exploremississippimills.ca>, but if you drop in to Nicholson's Sundries they are sure to have details and tickets for you.

Then it's back to Almonte for a most musical end to the month. On Saturday, January 30, the hugely talented **Harry Manx** opens this year's Folkus Concert Series. Winner of numerous

awards, Manx has been dubbed an "essential link" between the music of East and West, creating musical stories that wed the tradition of the Blues with the depth of classical Indian ragas. The resulting sound is uniquely bewitching and deliciously addictive to listen to.

Folkus artistic director Sandy Irvin tells me that sales of season's passes are already double last year's numbers, and are still a great deal (only \$90 for four shows!) since the concerts take place over the next four months. Individual tickets will go on sale the second week of January, and can be purchased from Mill Street Books (256-9090) or <folkusalmonte.com>.

*Sitting on any Gold?*

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# Humm Bits

## Learning Expo Grows in Carleton Place

The annual Learning Expo is returning to Carleton Place on January 16 from 10AM to 4PM for the third year in a row. Previously held at the Carambeck Community Centre, the event has grown and will be moving to the upper hall of the Carleton Place Arena (75 Neelin Street) this year.

From early childhood development to college prep, this event brings together industry experts, community programs, education-related businesses and educators in one location. Admission is free and the first fifty visitors will receive a swag bag of freebies and information from participating organizations. The show will feature talks on childhood health/nutrition, car seat safety and more! There will also be exhibits and vendors from area schools, extracurricular programs, summer camps, youth groups, community programs and services, with more being added daily. Learn about options for enrolling your children in school, child ID programs, health and safety, college prep and student employment services, driver's education, playgroups and all things children and youth.

A children's craft area, free play zone and an interactive dance and art workshop will entertain youngsters while their caregivers and parents browse. For information about the event or to sign up as a vendor, guest speaker or community group, please contact Sarah Cavanagh at <sarah@creativemindseventplanning.ca> or 253-8952.

## Memories of Mexico at MERA

MERA (McDonald's Corners-Elphin Recreation & Arts) is pleased to welcome photographer Abigail Gossage as the art exhibitor for the month of January. Everyone is welcome to come and meet the artist on Sunday, January 10, from 2 to 4PM. Refreshments will be served.

*Memories Of Mexico 1958* is an exhibition of photographs taken in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, in 1958. The photographer spent a year attending the Escuela Superior de Arte del Instituto Allende, where part of the curriculum covered the photographic arts and the use of film cameras, such as the twin-lens reflex used for these photographs. Over the ensuing years, negatives were lost or badly damaged, but modern photographic techniques made it possible to reconstitute and digitally edit the existing prints. The resulting photographs became an October 2014 exhibition at the Atrium Gallery run by the City of Ottawa.

The many tourists now flocking to San Miguel and Guanajuato would hardly recognize the empty streets, and lack of vehicles and North Americans. The photographs evoke nostalgia and document a bygone era. For directions to the MERA Schoolhouse, visit <meraschoolhouse.org>.

Words From Westport

# Shirley Mancino — Artist Extraordinaire

From the tender age of three, Shirley Mancino was an artist — colouring and drawing life around her. She is a Westport native, and her family has always felt anchored back home in our town, despite having lived in many areas of Canada, as her father was stationed in many different parts of the country.

by Georgia Ferrell

Grade 3 found our young artist hiding in the cloak room when all the other kids ran outside to play. When all were out, even the teacher, she would go back to her desk to colour, much to the surprise of her returning teacher.

Shirley has had an amazing art career, even though for many of her years she felt that being an artist was not part of her journey, given the cultural stereotype of the artist not being able to make a living. So Shirley took the route of becoming a teacher — teaching business skills and human rights to supervisors and managers. Her teaching experience would serve her well in the years ahead, as she now holds extremely popular and well-attended workshops in painting at her studio.

Along the way, Shirley attended evening classes at the Ontario College of Art while working full time in the Ontario government. She retired from her senior executive position in 1990 to open her own management consulting business. She still painted, however, and showed her work at various public venues, including the Queens Park Gallery. Accepted into the Rideau Valley Art Festival, she won so many awards that they organizers insisted she join the professional artist category.

Still not believing that she would be a professional artist, Shirley then took some classes at Haliburton School of Fine Art. Returning from a summer session in 2001, she stopped in at Studio 737 and was immediately asked to leave her work for them to sell, despite the fact that some of her pieces were not even yet dry. However, she did talk



Painter and teacher Shirley Mancino is very active in the thriving Westport arts scene

them into letting her take them home first to show her family, with a promise to bring them right back. Her work sold so well in the next two months that her paintings were accepted into nine other galleries in Ontario and Florida.

Shirley has travelled extensively, and her work shows the influence of many cultures. India and Southeast Asia are two of her favourite places to find subjects for her "portraits of a culture". When travelling, she paints onsite to capture the ambience of the place.

Shirley will now admit to being a professional artist, and currently teaches and mentors artists who are beginning their journey to professional status.

You can find Shirley's paintings at Cambridge Design Gallery and online at <shirleymancino.com>, as well as on the Ottawa Media Art Association's online art gallery <omma.ca>.

We are delighted that Shirley has once again settled here in Westport!

# Almonte Fair Board's Winter Dance

The Almonte Fair Board extends sincere appreciation to all sponsors and supporters of the ongoing Agricultural Hall renovation campaign. The generous support and attendance from the community at their various events throughout the past year was greatly appreciated. These funds allowed them to complete phase one by replacing the hall's roof. The next phase will be replacing the exterior siding on the hall.

Many more fundraising events are planned for 2016, beginning with the **Annual Winter**

**Dance** on January 9 featuring the Valley Rovers. The band starts at 8PM at the Almonte Civitan Hall, and tickets are \$12 in advance or \$15 at the door. The evening includes a light lunch and a silent auction supporting the Agricultural Hall Fund. For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact Debbie Brydges at 256-3879.

The Fair Board thanks everyone for their ongoing support and interest!

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# Perth Set to Celebrate its 200<sup>th</sup> with Fire & Ice

The Town of Perth will officially launch its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary in a way that celebrates the true Canadian spirit: in the middle of winter!

Fire & Ice is a two-tiered, day-long celebration taking place on Saturday, February 13, that focuses on both family-oriented and nighttime celebrations. The fun begins in the afternoon at Conlon Farm (1–4PM) with activities for every single member of the family. From competing in snow-based obstacle courses, to tobogganing down the big hill, to throwing snowballs from behind a custom-made fort — we've got your winter-day activities covered.

You'll be able to warm up in the chalet, as it will be open for the canteen and washroom services.

Once you get home that afternoon and eventually tuck the kids into bed, it's the adults' turn for a night out on the town.

## Did Someone Say "Ice Bar"?!

That's right. We've got an amazing night planned to officially launch the Town of Perth's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations! The Fire & Ice nighttime event will take place at the Crystal Palace, a gorgeous glass structure sitting beside the Tay Basin. Doors open at 7PM, when you'll hear some sweet tunes coming from the Riq Turner Band.

Inside, you'll discover a custom-made ice bar, with our popular brewers and spirit makers behind the bar: The Perth Brewery and Top Shelf Distillers. Watch them serve drinks travelling down an ice luge and into your glass — it's going to be an unforgettable showcase of how we can celebrate our climate in a cool setting.

We'll also have a bonfire going outside of the Crystal Palace, and you can get set for a fireworks show, which will take place off the Drummond Street bridge at 9PM. With the Tay Basin as backdrop to this event, it's a special way to launch our milestone year.



Perth's Fire and Ice event takes place on February 13, and offers plenty of fun for the kids during the day, and a concert and Ice Bar for adults in the evening!

## Let's Recap the Day...

1–4PM: Family activities at Conlon Farm — tobogganing, outdoor skating, custom-made obstacle course, toddlers' play area, snolf, official snowball fight facility.

4PM: Get home, get changed, feed the kids (or your pets — or both, for that matter!).

6PM: Head out on the town and dine at one of our popular restaurants.

8PM (ish): Head to the Crystal Palace to dance in your winter boots, grab a drink at the ice bar, cozy up at the bonfire, and celebrate all things Perth while watching the fireworks show.

Fire & Ice is the first of three Signature Events hosted by the Town of Perth to celebrate its bicentennial. The Provincial Town Crier Championships take place from May 21–22, and the Blast from the Past Homecoming Weekend happens July 22–24. For more information about the Town of Perth's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, please visit <perth200.ca>.

Speaking Volumes

## Resolution Inspiration at Your Library

Once again we have reached that time of year that can be more stressful than the entirety of the holiday season. It is the time when resolutions are made with determination and confidence, followed almost always by a time of self-loathing, as many of us are unable to meet our not-so-realistic expectations. This year can be different.

by Kelly Thompson, Librarian

This year choose an attainable goal! Choose something that you love, that will make you a better person, a better member of society. The grand thing is there is a place that can guide you on your journey... Of course you know... it's your local library!

How about trying a new hobby? Knitting is experiencing a revival, and is said to be a great way to relieve stress. Or perhaps origami, photography or woodworking is where your interests lie. Whatever you choose, library staff will guide you to the resources you need. Maybe it's time to start displaying all of the beautiful art you have secretly been working on in your home studio. Many libraries are more than willing to display the work of local artists. Make 2016 your time to shine! If giving back to the community is on your New Year's list, there are tons of opportunities for volunteering at the li-

brary. This helps to make the library's reach go even further and impact more of the community.

I am not telling you anything you haven't heard before... Public libraries are no longer just quiet places for independent study and discovery. In fact, they never were the quiet, dull places they are sometimes portrayed as. Libraries contain the stories of those who came before us. They contain the resources that can allow you to take a small spark of an idea or a dream, and build it into a raging fire. We all have different aspirations, goals, interests and dreams. We want to live our best life. Be better. Do better. Sometimes, we just want to relax. Take a breath. Escape into someone else's life for a little while. All of this is happening all the time. In fact, it is happening right under your nose. People are buried behind a book, exploring the new maker-space, searching their family's history, or learning something new in a program. They are all dreaming, exploring, and visioning.

Libraries are alive. They are places with resources and services that encourage you to dream, explore and discover who and where you want to be. So dream big in 2016! We will be there to help you on your journey.

— Kelly Thompson is the Chief Librarian/CEO of the Renfrew Public Library

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# Claiming Column

**The Game's Afoot**, Perth, Feb 4-14  
**Governor General's Foot Guards Band**, Perth, Feb 6  
**Fire and Ice (Perth 200<sup>th</sup>)**, Perth, Feb 13  
**Valentine's Dinner Dance (Syrian Fundraiser)**, Almonte, Feb 13  
**BOTR: Jack de Keyzer Band**, Westport, Feb 19  
**A Life in the Theatre**, Perth, Feb 19-28  
**Folkus: Craig Cardiff w/Jennifer Noxon**, Almonte, Feb 27  
**Mid-Winter Milling**, Almonte, Feb 27  
**Ottawa Cape Breton Session Concert**, CP, Feb 20  
**200-Voice Jubilee Choir & Orchestra**, Perth, Mar 19  
**BOTR: Angel Forrest Band**, Westport, Mar 25  
**Folkus: Allison Lupton/KEWT**, Almonte, Mar 26  
**Self Help**, Perth, Mar 31-Apr 10  
**Maple Run Studio Tour**, Pakenham, Apr 2-3  
**PPAC: Toronto All-Star Big Band**, Perth, Apr 15  
**Under Milk Wood**, Perth, Apr 15-24  
**BOTR: Ria Reece Band**, Westport, Apr 22  
**Folkus: Slow Leaves w/Jill Zmud**, Almonte, Apr 23  
**BOTR: Harrison Kennedy Band**, Westport, May 13  
**Town Crier Championships**, Perth, May 21-22  
**9 to 5 the Musical**, Perth, Jun 2-12  
**I Ought to Be in Pictures**, Perth, Jun 24-Jul 17  
**Almonte Celtfest**, Jul 8-10  
**Stewart Park Festival**, Perth, Jul 15-17  
**Arms and the Man**, Perth, Jul 22-Aug 14  
**Puppets Up!**, Almonte, Aug 5-7  
**An Inspector Calls**, Perth, Aug 19-Sept 11  
**N. Lanark Highland Games**, Almonte, Aug 27

# Visual Arts

**Vernissage: Abigail Gossage**, Sun, Jan 10, 2-4PM, Photographs of 1958 Mexico, MERA Schoolhouse, 974 9th Concession A, McDonalds Corners.  
**Almonte & Area Artists' Assoc**, Mon, Jan 11, 7:30PM, Speaker: TBA., Almonte Public Library, 155 High St., Almonte. 4-artists.ca.  
**Mississippi Wood Carvers Mtg**, Fri, Jan 22, 1-4PM, Coffee, cookies & carving. Experienced & newbies., Almonte Public Library, 155 High St., Almonte. Info:mwcarvers@gmail.com.

# Youth

**Pakenham Frost Festival: Movie Night**, Thu, Jan 21, 6:30-8PM. Pakenham Public School, 109 Jeanie St., Pakenham. Info: 613-256-1077.  
**Pakenham Frost Festival: Kids Races**, Fri, Jan 22, 7:30-9PM, Races plus Little Miss & Little Mr. Pakenham. Stewart Community Centre, 112 MacFarland St., Pakenham. Info: 613-256-1077.  
**Pakenham Frost Festival: Toboggan Party**, Sat, Jan 30, 12PM, weather permitting. Pakenham. Info: 613-256-1077.

# Theatre

**Audition: Under Milk Wood**, Mon, Jan 18, 7PM, Singing parts: all ages. Barn Door Productions. Full Circle Theatre, 26 Craig St., Perth. Info: 613-267-1884, www.barndoorproductions.ca.

# WHAT'S ON IN

## Monday

## Tuesday

## Wednesday

## Thursday

CP & Beckwith Heritage Museum presents "Memories of the Eaton's Christmas Catalogue" <cpbheritagemuseum.com>  
 Diefenbunker presents Group 6: The Canadian Forces Artists Program, 2012-2013  
 Fairview Manor Lobby presents Jan Gilbert's acrylic paintings  
 General Fine Craft, Art & Design features Jennifer Noxon's paintings <generalfinecraft.com>  
 Heritage House Museum presents Art Show & Sale <smithsfalls.ca/heritagehouse>  
 MERA Schoolhouse presents Abigail Gossage's photos of 1958 Mexico  
 MVTM presents Surface Fabrications by Diane Laundry & Robin Laws Field <mvtm.ca>  
 The Mississippi Mills Chambers Gallery presents Donna Lynd's acrylics/figurative  
 The Almonte Library Corridor Gallery presents Jacquie Christiani's watercolour

<p>4</p> <p>🎵 <b>Carp Celtic Jam</b>, Carp Masonic Lodge                  🎵 <b>Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club</b>                  🎵 <b>Trivia Night</b>, Westport</p>	<p>5</p> <p>🎵 <b>4-Hand Euchre</b>, Perth                  🎵 <b>Green Drinks</b>, Perth                  🎵 <b>Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club</b></p>	<p>6</p> <p>🎵 <b>Almonte Duplicate Bridge Club</b>                  🎵 <b>Open Celtic Jam</b>, Naismith Pub                  🎵 <b>Jimmy Tri-Tone Band</b>, Valley Food &amp; Drink Co.                  🎵 <b>Shawn McCullough</b>, The Cove                  🎵 <b>Vinyl Wednesday</b>, North on 29                  🎵 <b>Karaoke</b>, Golden Arrow</p>	<p>7</p> <p>🎵 <b>Jazz at the Queen's</b>, Queen's Hotel                  🎵 <b>Jimmy Tri-Tone Band</b>, Barley Mow                  🎵 <b>Musicians' Circle</b>, Bolingbroke                  🎵 <b>Open Mic</b>, Alice's Village Cafe                  🎵 <b>Ted Lalonde</b>, Golden Arrow</p>
<p>14</p> <p>🎵 <b>Almonte &amp; Area Artists' Assoc</b>                  🎵 <b>Carp Celtic Jam</b>, Carp Masonic Lodge                  🎵 <b>Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club</b>                  🎵 <b>Trivia Night</b>, Westport</p>	<p>15</p> <p>🎵 <b>4-Hand Euchre</b>, Perth                  🎵 <b>Perth Hort. Society: Sustainable Food</b>                  🎵 <b>Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club</b>                  🎵 <b>W. Carleton Garden Club</b>, Carp</p>	<p>22</p> <p>🎵 <b>Almonte Duplicate Bridge Club</b>                  🎵 <b>Open Celtic Jam</b>, Naismith Pub                  🎵 <b>Jimmy Tri-Tone Band</b>, Valley Food &amp; Drink Co.                  🎵 <b>Shawn McCullough</b>, The Cove                  🎵 <b>Vinyl Wednesday</b>, North on 29                  🎵 <b>Karaoke</b>, Golden Arrow</p>	<p>23</p> <p>🎵 <b>Jimmy Tri-Tone Band</b>, Love That Barr                  🎵 <b>Musicians' Circle</b>, Bolingbroke                  🎵 <b>Open Mic</b>, Alice's Village Cafe                  🎵 <b>Ted Lalonde</b>, Golden Arrow</p>
<p>18</p> <p>🎵 <b>Astronomy Talk w/Frank Hitchens</b>, CP                  🎵 <b>Audition: Under Milk Wood</b>, Perth                  🎵 <b>Bereavement Support Group</b>, Almonte                  🎵 <b>Carp Celtic Jam</b>, Carp Masonic Lodge                  🎵 <b>Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club</b>                  🎵 <b>Trivia Night</b>, Westport</p>	<p>19</p> <p>🎵 <b>4-Hand Euchre</b>, Perth                  🎵 <b>Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club</b></p>	<p>26</p> <p>🎵 <b>Almonte Duplicate Bridge Club</b>                  🎵 <b>Jimmy's Hall</b>, Perth                  🎵 <b>Open Celtic Jam</b>, Naismith Pub                  🎵 <b>Jimmy Tri-Tone Band</b>, Valley Food &amp; Drink Co.                  🎵 <b>Shawn McCullough</b>, The Cove                  🎵 <b>Vinyl Wednesday</b>, North on 29                  🎵 <b>Karaoke</b>, Golden Arrow</p>	<p>27</p> <p>🎵 <b>Jimmy's Hall</b>, Smiths Falls                  🎵 <b>Jimmy Tri-Tone Band</b>, Barley Mow                  🎵 <b>Musicians' Circle</b>, Bolingbroke                  🎵 <b>MVFN: Nature Talk</b>, Almonte                  🎵 <b>Open Mic</b>, Alice's Village Cafe                  🎵 <b>Ted Lalonde</b>, Golden Arrow                  🎵 <b>Pakenham Frost Festival: Movie Night</b></p>
<p>25</p> <p>🎵 <b>Carp Celtic Jam</b>, Carp Masonic Lodge                  🎵 <b>Mark Twain's Patent Scrapbook</b>, Perth                  🎵 <b>Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club</b>                  🎵 <b>Trivia Night</b>, Westport</p>	<p>26</p> <p>🎵 <b>4-Hand Euchre</b>, Perth                  🎵 <b>Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club</b></p>	<p>26</p> <p>🎵 <b>Almonte Duplicate Bridge Club</b>                  🎵 <b>Open Celtic Jam</b>, Naismith Pub                  🎵 <b>Open Mic w/Jimmy Tri-Tone Band</b>, Valley Food &amp; Drink Co.                  🎵 <b>Shawn McCullough</b>, The Cove                  🎵 <b>Vinyl Wednesday</b>, North on 29                  🎵 <b>Karaoke</b>, Golden Arrow</p>	<p>28</p> <p>🎵 <b>Jimmy Tri-Tone Band</b>, Love That Barr                  🎵 <b>Musicians' Circle</b>, Bolingbroke                  🎵 <b>Open Mic</b>, Alice's Village Cafe                  🎵 <b>Ted Lalonde</b>, Golden Arrow</p>

**Jimmy's Hall**, Film Night International presents Jimmy's Hall, Jan 20, 2 & 7PM (Full Circle Theatre, Perth); Jan 21, 7PM (Station Theatre, SF). filmnightinternational.blogspot.ca  
**Mark Twain's Patent Scrapbook**, Jan 23-24, 8PM; Jan 25, 2PM. Barn Door Productions., Full Circle Theatre, 26 Craig St., Perth. Info: 613-267-1884, barndoorproductions.ca.

# Music

**Little Christmas Fiddle Concert**, Sun, Jan 3, 2-5PM, Blue Skies Community Fiddle Orchestra & friends., Maberly Community Hall, 172 Maberly Elphin Rd., Maberly. Info: 613-278-2448, cindy.fiddlemusic.mccall@gmail.com. \$5; kids under 12 free

**Musicians' Circle**, Thursdays. Musicians only, all ages. Althorpe Bolingbroke Community (ABC) Hall, 3166 County Rd. 36, Bolingbroke. Info: 613-273-9005. \$5 for hall  
**Party for Pudd**, Fri, Jan 8, 8PM-12AM, fundraiser for Adam Puddington with Brothers Chaffey, Kelly Prescott and more. Almonte Civitan Hall, 500 Almonte St., Almonte. \$25 from Mill Street Books or Gemmills.  
**Almonte Fair Winter Dance**, Sat, Jan 9, 8PM, Ag Hall fundraiser feat. Valley Rovers. Almonte Civitan Hall, 500 Almonte St., Almonte. Info: 613-256-3879. \$15; \$12 adv.  
**Jazz House Concert for Local Hospitals**, Sat, Jan 9, 8PM, Herbie's Hill. Fundraiser for AGH/FM & CPDMH., Bean Chevrolet, 375 McNeeley Ave., Carleton Place. Info: jazzn.ca. \$35

**BOTR: Steve Strongman Band**, Fri, Jan 22 & Sat Jan 23, 7-11PM, Blues on the Rideau. Proceeds to Rideau Waterway Trust/WAC., The Cove Country Inn, 2 Bedford St., Westport. Info: 1-888-COVE-INN, bluesontherideau.ca. \$65+tx dinner & show. Call to reserve  
**Pakenham Frost Festival: Entertainment**, Fri, Jan 22, 9PM-1AM, with Dave Kalil., Stewart Community Centre, 112 MacFarland St., Pakenham. Info: 613-256-1077.  
**Choral Evensong**, Sun, Jan 24, 4PM, Church service; prelude/postlude w/guest musicians on flute, clarinet, sax, bass clarinet., St. James the Apostle Anglican Church, 12 Harvey St. cnr Drummond, Perth. Info: 613-267-1163, stjamesperth.ca.

**SRO Big Band Tea Dance**, Sun, Jan 24, 1-4PM, Standing Room Only 14-pc Big Band., Almonte Old Town Hall, 14 Bridge St., Almonte. Info: 613-692-5380, sro.teadances@sympatico.ca, sroteadances.org. \$14; \$25 couple  
**Trad Song Session**, Sun, Jan 24, 2-4PM, Join in traditional songs w/choruses. Anyone can lead., The Barley Mow, 79 Little Bridge Street, Almonte. Info: 613-355-5552, dpbaril@gmail.com, shantyman.ca/TradSing/.  
**Folkus: Harry Manx**, Sat, Jan 30, 8PM, Multi-instrumentalist. Folkus Concert Series. \$30 at Mill St Books, folkusalmonte.com, or door., Almonte Old Town Hall, 14 Bridge St., Almonte. Info: 613-256-9090, folkusalmonte.com.  
**Pakenham Frost Festival: Pub Night**, Sat, Jan 30, 8PM-1AM, Featuring The Ryans & Elvis., Stewart Community Centre, 112 MacFarland St., Pakenham. Info: 613-256-1077.

# JANUARY 2016

## Friday

## Saturday

## Sunday

<p><b>1</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>HAPPY NEW YEAR!</b> 🎵 Shawn McCullough, Golden Arrow</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>🎵 Matt Dickson, Golden Arrow 🎵 Static(s), Rhetorics, Brent Dickie, John St. Pub</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>APEX Jazz Band</b>, The Royal Oak 🎵 <b>Little Christmas Fiddle Concert</b>, Maberly 🎵 <b>Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan</b>, Ashton Pub</p>
<p><b>8</b></p> <p>🎵 Jef Leeson, The Cove 🎵 Riq Turner, Golden Arrow</p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>Almonte Fair Winter Dance</b> 🎵 <b>Head Over Heels</b>, The Cove 🎵 <b>Brea Lawrenson</b>, Golden Arrow 🎵 <b>Jazz House Concert for Local Hospitals</b>, CP</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>Magnolia Rhythm Kings</b>, The Royal Oak 🎵 <b>Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan</b>, Ashton Pub 🎵 <b>Valley Singles Lunch</b>, Renfrew 📺 <b>Vernissage: Abigail Gossage</b>, McDonalds Corners</p>
<p><b>15</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>Head over Heels</b>, The Cove 🎵 <b>Brian Downey</b>, Golden Arrow</p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>40 Plus Singles Dinner/Dance</b>, Smiths Falls 🎵 <b>Learning Expo</b>, Carleton Place 🎵 <b>Luther Wright Birthday Hootenanny</b>, The Cove 🎵 <b>Under the Covers</b>, Golden Arrow 🎵 <b>Paradise City (GnR tribute)</b>, John St. Pub 🎵 <b>Saturday Night Variety Show</b>, Almonte 🎵 <b>Seminar: Twitter 101</b>, Carleton Place</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>APEX Jazz Band</b>, The Royal Oak 🎵 <b>Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan</b>, Ashton Pub</p>
<p><b>18</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>BOTR: Steve Strongman Band</b>, Westport 🎵 <b>Jimmy Tri-Tone Band</b>, The Barley Mow 📺 <b>Mississippi Wood Carvers Mtg</b>, Almonte 🎵 <b>Pakenham Frost Festival: Entertainment</b> 🎵 <b>Pakenham Frost Festival: Kids Races</b> 🎵 <b>Steve Barrette Trio</b>, The Swan at Carp 🎵 <b>Brea Lawrenson</b>, Golden Arrow</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>BOTR: Steve Strongman Band</b>, Westport 🎵 <b>Special Edition Open Stag</b>, Golden Arrow 🎵 <b>Mark Twain's Patent Scrapbook</b>, Perth 🎵 <b>Pakenham Frost Festival: Pancake Breakfast</b> 🎵 <b>Algonquin College Open House</b>, Perth 🎵 <b>Pakenham Frost Festival: Snowmobile Rally</b></p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>Choral Evensong</b>, Perth 🎵 <b>Magnolia Rhythm Kings</b>, The Royal Oak 🎵 <b>Mark Twain's Patent Scrapbook</b>, Perth 🎵 <b>Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan</b>, Ashton Pub 🎵 <b>Pakenham Frost Festival: Vintage Snowmobile Show</b> 🎵 <b>Scottish Tea &amp; Music</b>, Almonte 🎵 <b>SRO Big Band Tea Dance</b>, Almonte 🎵 <b>Trad Song Session</b>, Almonte</p>
<p><b>20</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>Almonte Lectures: Richard III</b>, Almonte 🎵 <b>Karaoke</b>, The Cove 🎵 <b>Riq Turner</b>, Golden Arrow 🎵 <b>Matthew Hornell</b>, Sharbot Lake Country Inn 🎵 <b>Pakenham Frost Festival: Fish &amp; Chip Dinner</b></p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>Folkus: Harry Manx</b>, Almonte 🎵 <b>January Thaw Dinner &amp; Dance</b>, Richmond 🎵 <b>Pakenham Frost Festival: Fishing Derby</b> 🎵 <b>Pakenham Frost Festival: Pub Night</b> 🎵 <b>Pakenham Frost Festival: Toboggan Party</b> 🎵 <b>Seminar: Family Finances</b>, Carleton Place 🎵 <b>Shawn McCullough &amp; Henry Norwood</b>, The Cove 🎵 <b>Brocolees</b>, Golden Arrow</p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p>🎵 <b>APEX Jazz Band</b>, The Royal Oak 🎵 <b>Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan</b>, Ashton Pub</p>

**Perth Hort. Society: Sustainable Food**, Tue, Jan 12, 7-9PM, Mike Nickerson: food production in a sustainable world., St. Paul's United Church, 25 Gore St. W., Perth. Info: 613-253-5690, perthhortsociety.com. \$3

**W. Carleton Garden Club**, Tue, Jan 12, 7:30PM, Rail line turned into park in NYC., Memorial Hall, 3739 Carp Rd., Carp. Info: www.wcgc.ca. \$5 for non-members

**40 Plus Singles Dinner/Dance**, Sat, Jan 16, 7PM, 8PM DJ dance. Casual dress-no jeans., Smiths Falls Civitan Hall, 12468 Hwy 15 N., Smiths Falls. Info: 613-285-5557, jabet@live.ca. \$10

**Learning Expo**, Sat, Jan 16, 10AM-4PM, Childhood health & education info., Carleton Place Arena, 75 Neelin St., Carleton Place. Info: 613-253-8952, sarah@creativemind-seventyplanning.ca.

**Saturday Night Variety Show**, Sat, Jan 16, 7:30PM, Variety show presented by the festivals & events of Mississippi Mills. Tickets at Baker Bob's, Nicholson's Sundries., Almonte Old Town Hall, 14 Bridge St., Almonte. \$20

**Seminar: Twitter 101**, Sat, Jan 16, 2-4PM, Introduction. Sign up at library. Carleton Place Public Library, 101 Beckwith St., Carleton Place.

**Astronomy Talk w/Frank Hitchens**, Mon, Jan 18, 6:30-7:30PM, The Case for Human Spaceflight. Sign up at library., Carleton Place Public Library, 101 Beckwith St., Carleton Place.

**Bereavement Support Group**, Mon, Jan 18, 10:30AM-12PM, Hub Hospice's monthly group led by Barbara Carroll., Parish House, St. Paul's Anglican Church, Almonte. Info: 613-883-6646, barbaracarroll@rogers.com, hubhospice.com. Free

**MVFN: Nature Talk**, Thu, Jan 21, 7:30PM, Talk by Chad Clifford. Almonte United Church, 106 Elgin St., Almonte. Info: mvfn.ca. \$5 non-members

**Pakenham Frost Festival: Pancake Breakfast**, Sat, Jan 23, 7:30-11AM, Stewart Community Centre, 112 MacFarland St., Pakenham. Info: 613-256-1077.

**Pakenham Frost Festival: Snowmobile Rally**, Sat, Jan 23, 9AM, Weather permitting., Pakenham trails. Info: 613-256-1077.

**Algonquin College Open House**, Sat, Jan 23, 10AM-2PM, Algonquin College Perth Campus. Info: edmonda@algonquincollege.com.

**Scottish Tea & Music**, Sun, Jan 24, 2-4PM, Scones w/jam & cream. Live music. Almonte Legion, 100 Bridge St., Almonte. Info: 613-257-8503, appletonmuseum@hotmail.com. \$10

**Almonte Lectures: Richard III**, Fri, Jan 29, 7:30PM, Paul Marland, "Richard III: The bunchback'd toad". Almonte United Church, 106 Elgin St., Almonte. Info: almontelelectures.net. free; donations accepted

**Pakenham Frost Festival: Fish & Chip Dinner**, Fri, Jan 29, 4:30-7PM., Stewart Community Centre, 112 MacFarland St., Pakenham. Info: 613-256-1077.

**Pakenham Frost Festival: Fishing Derby**, Sat, Jan 30, weather permitting. Local ponds, Pakenham. Info: 613-256-1077.

**January Thaw Dinner & Dance**, Sat, Jan 30, 5:30-10PM, Chili, salad, dessert. Fundraiser for Munster United., Richmond Legion, 6430 Ottawa St., Richmond. Info: 613-838-5473. \$15

**Seminar: Family Finances**, Sat, Jan 30, 10AM, Sign up at library., Carleton Place Public Library, 101 Beckwith St., Carleton Place. Info: www.facebook.com/CarletonPlacePublicLibrary.

**The Cove** (Westport, 273-3636):

Wed Shawn McCullough 6-9PM  
Jan 8 Jef Leeson, 6-9PM  
Jan 9, 15 Head Over Heels, 6-9PM  
Jan 16 Luther Wright Birthday Hootenanny w/Oh Susanna, Rueben DeGroot & more, 8-11PM, \$10  
Jan 29 Karaoke, 8-11PM  
Jan 30 Shawn McCullough & Henry Norwood, 6-10PM

**The Swan at Carp** (Carp, 839-7926):

Jan 22 Steve Barrette Trio, jazz, 7-10PM.

**The Royal Oak** (Kanata, 591-3895): jazz

on Sun, no cover, 2-5PM  
Jan 3, 17, 31 APEX Jazz Band  
Jan 10, 24 Magnolia Rhythm Kings

**Naismith Pub** (Almonte, 256-6336): Wed

Open Celtic Jam, 7:30-10PM  
Carp Masonic Lodge: Mon Carp Celtic Jam, 7-9PM

**Golden Arrow Pub** (Perth, 267-4500):

Wed Karaoke, Thurs Ted Lalonde, \$5 Student Night  
Jan 1 Shawn McCullough  
Jan 2 Matt Dickson  
Jan 8, 29 Riq Turner  
Jan 9, 22 Brea Lawrenson  
Jan 15 Brian Downey  
Jan 16 Under The Covers  
Jan 23 Special Edition Open Stag  
Jan 30 Brocolees

**Ashton Pub** (Ashton, 257-4423): Sundays

Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan, 2-5PM

**The Barley Mow** (Almonte, 256-5669):

Jan 7, 21 Kitchen Party w/Jimmy Tri-Tone Band  
Jan 22 Jimmy Tri-Tone Band

**Love That Barr** (Pakenham, 624-2000):

Thursdays Open Mic, 8PM  
Jan 14, 28 Kitchen Party w/Jimmy Tri-Tone Band

**Alice's Village Café** (Carp, 470-2233):

Open Mic Thursdays, 7:30PM

**North on 29** (CP, 253-2276): Vinyl Wednes-

days, 7PM

**John St. Pub** (Arnprior, 623-8149): 9PM

Jan 2 Static(s), Rhetorics, Brent Dickie, \$5  
Jan 16 Paradise City (GnR tribute), \$10

**Valley Food and Drink Co.** (613-752-

2676x311): Wed Open Mic w/Jimmy Tri-Tone Band 8PM

**Queens Hotel** (Carleton Place, 257-7639)

Jan 7 Jazz at the Queen's, 6-9PM

Sharbot Lake Inn (279-2198):

Jan 29 Matthew Hornell

**Community** 

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**, Fri, Jan 1, Ev-

erywhere.

**Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club**,

Mondays 7PM, Tuesdays 1PM. Smiths Falls Legion, 7 Main St. E., Smiths Falls. Info: 613-256-4747.

**Trivia Night**, Mondays, 5-8PM. Prizes. The

Cove Country Inn, 2 Bedford St., Westport. Info: 613-264-5568.

**4-Hand Euchre**, Tuesdays, 2-4PM. Lots

of parking. No stairs., Perth Legion, 26 Beckwith St. E., Perth. Info: 613-264-5568.

**Green Drinks**, Tue, Jan 5, 5:30PM, Informal

meeting of environmental folk., Golden Arrow, 71 Foster St., Perth. Info: Perthgreendrinks@gmail.com, Greendrinks.org.

**Almonte Duplicate Bridge Club**,

Wednesdays, 7PM., Almonte Legion, 100 Bridge St., Almonte. Info: 613-256-4747.

**Valley Singles Lunch**, Sun, Jan 10, 1PM,

Singles lunch, all welcome., Finnigan's Road House, 302 Raglan St. S., Renfrew. Info: 613-622-5693.

# Things to Do in January... in Perth!

After a very merry December, January can often feel like a let-down. The weather gets cold and icy. Credit card bills roll in. Marriages dissolve. (In legal circles, it is said, January is gloomily nicknamed "Divorce Month.") None of that is much fun. So it does seem a good time of year to make some hopeful, positive resolutions.

Last year I resolved to eat a chocolate chip cookie larger than my head. But that never happened. It's also good to be realistic.

by John Pigeau

## Take to the Stage

Say you really enjoy all the wonderful plays staged in Perth and you've always had an inkling that you might be able to pull off a funny line or dazzle an audience with your singing voice. Why not give acting a shot? There are, after all, a plethora of theatre companies in town; they often hold auditions for local talent. I'm a rather nervous sort but I think that would be a whole lot of fun — and what a rush of accomplishment too.

You could also inquire about working behind the scenes — building sets, taking tickets, helping make costumes and so on.

BarnDoor Productions is staging *Mark Twain's Patent Scrapbook* at the Full Circle Theatre January 23 to the 25<sup>th</sup>. Perhaps you could take in the show for a bit of inspiration.

I think it's best to ease your way into these things. Unlike, say, a Polar Bear plunge. So see a show, talk to the actors afterwards — casually even. Take the pressure off. I've found that makes doing something you've always wanted to do much less daunting.

## Bored? Start a New Business!

I couldn't be more serious. I did it when I first moved to Perth, and I still consider it one of the best, most rewarding things I've ever done in my life. It was a dream come true opening Backbeat Books & Music. I surrounded myself with things I loved: books, vinyl records, CDs, movies, musical instruments, vintage collectibles. Sure, starting the business was a lot of hard work, but creating a warm, charming, inviting, eclectic space was beyond gratifying. It elevated my spirits; it gave me purpose. Customers loved the place, too — book lovers, vinyl record junkies — so going to "work" was often extremely enjoyable.

My dream lives on too. I had to sell the shop (a rather long story; an impossible situation) but leaving it in good hands — with current owners Dan and Christine Chu, who both have a passion for books and music — was a nice feeling.

Creating a place that brings people joy is fulfilling beyond words. Sincerely, I cannot recommend it highly enough. Follow your dreams, folks.

## And Fall in Love...

If you're single, yes, fall in love with a person. Get out and volunteer, with the Table Community Food Centre or, say, with the Friends of Murphys Point. Volunteer at the Perth & District Union Public Library or the Perth & District Historical Society. See how you can help out at the hospital. You just never know where you're going to meet someone. If you don't fall in love — or if you're married or coupled already — volunteering is a great way to meet new friends and to be a useful part of a healthy community, so you really can't lose either way. And it remains true as well, I believe: There are few things more rewarding in life than helping others.

## Create Some Joy

Start a book club. I can't tell you how many people I've gotten to know who adore their book clubs. It's not just reading and discussing a good book, of course, it's about friendship, sharing, laughing, and more often than not, wine and chocolate.

Here's a tip, too, on making your book club loads more fun and fascinating: Invite the author of whatever book you're reading to your club. As a former bookseller, founder of a reading series, and as an author who has many friends who are authors, I can tell you this is much more easily done than you might expect. Say you're reading Terry Fallis' latest book, *Poles Apart*. All you need to do is visit Terry's website and send him a charming email. Tell him all about your book club and I can all but guarantee one of two things will happen: he will either visit your home for a night or have a chat with you on Skype.

I can think of very few authors, in fact, who would not be happy to do this — and simply because they're colleagues, I know many authors. Don't shy away because their books are national bestsellers or have been made into films. Writing is their job. Part of that job is interacting with their readers. And just think — you can found the coolest book club in town! It's whole a lot of fun having an author involved in a book club meeting.

You could also team up with the library or one of your local booksellers on this one. They should be happy to help.

How many remarkably talented musicians play in Perth every year? A lot! Maybe resolve to take in more live music in the New Year. "Music," it's been said, "is the moonlight in the gloomy night of life." See more live musical acts in 2016. Elevate your spirit. Light up the gloom.

On a (more) personal note, the last three years have been very difficult and painful for me. I know how bleak the winter months can feel. Being kind to yourself is so important; being gentle is too — so please resolve to go easy on yourself. We are all trying to be as well as we can be: to find peace, to feel joy, to be of use, to love and be loved. I think that may be the most important thing to remember when you're making resolutions, big or small — you are not alone.

We are all, as Miriam Toews once said, in this big barroom brawl together. So let's be good to one another this year.

# A New Year's Revolution at Musicworks

Mississippi Mills Musicworks, Almonte's music teaching centre and music store, is going through some exciting, evolutionary changes in the new year. Owner George Turcotte has decided that it is time to focus on providing top-notch music lessons and expanding the scope of the music school. This new emphasis will mean that, for the time being, the retail side of the business will cease.

But, as George is quick to clarify: "We're not closing the retail division, and we're certainly not going out of business. On the contrary, I'm quite optimistic. We're investigating some very interesting possibilities for the store to stay open in a far more unique way than we already are. A few things will stay the same. The ukuleles are certainly not going anywhere and we'll be beefing up the vinyl department. While it's too early to say exactly where we're going, I'll say this: the first step is to liquidate our existing inventory, in order to make way for what just may become a new breed of music store."

In order to clear the way for the changes that are to come, Musicworks will be having a huge inventory liquidation sale. If you or your musical friends have some Christmas money set aside, you should definitely head down there on Saturday, January 2 (10AM–5PM); Monday, January 4 through Thurs-

day, January 7 (noon–8PM); or Saturday, January 9 (10AM–5PM). The deals will be unbeatable!

George is very enthusiastic about the changes that Musicworks will be undergoing. He is especially happy about some of the new opportunities that are on his horizon. "Two distinct advantages of the new plan are big wins for me personally. I'll be getting back to the reason I built this business in the first place: the music. Firstly, I'll be able to teach more. The reward of seeing our students excel is a precious thing to all good teachers and I take our school motto "to inspire" to heart. Heck I oughtta — after all, I wrote it! The other great benefit is the unveiling of a very well kept secret: the unearthed gem of our studio The Launchpad. I built this facility in the spring and summer of 2014, but found myself too busy running the rest of my business to take advantage of it. It's time to let the cat out of the bag, start documenting the creations of our rich talent pool, and share the fruit of our labours of love with the world."

Mississippi Mills Musicworks is located at 453 Ottawa Street (unit 5), near Equator Coffee, and you can give them a call at 256-7464 or visit online at <mmmusicworks.weebly.com>.

— Rob Riendeau



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but after so much of them over the holidays, you can wait until Easter to see them again!

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Every Wednesday Wings 'n Tunes with **Shawn McCullough** (Country/Guitar) 6-9  
Fri Jan. 8 **Jef Leeson** (Former lead singer of Ambush, Marmora) 6-9  
Sat Jan. 9 **Head Over Heels** (Guitar/Vocal Duo, Gananoque) 6-9  
Fri Jan. 15 **Head Over Heels** (Guitar/Vocal Duo, Gananoque) 6-9  
Sat Jan. 16 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual **Luther Wright Birthday Hootenanny** with guests Oh Susanna, Rueben DeGroot and more (Folk/Bluegrass, Wakefield) 8-11, \$10  
Fri Jan. 22 & Sat Jan. 23 Blues on the Rideau presents **Steve Strongman Band** (Hamilton) 7-11, \$65 for buffet and show  
Fri Jan. 29 A Night for Emily and Bryce with **Chinese Buffet** 6-8, \$25 and **Karaoke**, 8-11  
Sat Jan. 30 **Jr. B Hockey \$5000 Elimination Draw**, 7PM with **Shawn McCullough** and **Henry Norwood**, 6-10

# Drop-dead-funny Whodunit Opens Feb. 4 at Studio Theatre

Perth's Studio Theatre has chosen another winner for its next play, opening on February 4. *The Game's Afoot* garnered the 2012 Edgar Award for Best Play from The Mystery Writers of America. It's one of playwright Ken Ludwig's most recent scripts, and is distinguished by Ludwig's witty, fast-paced dialogue and fascinating, believable characters.

I sat down with Director Lucas Tennant to get his thoughts on casting a play in which every character is significant and distinct. With a small eight-person cast, everyone has multiple scenes in which to shine.

The central character is William Gillette, a Broadway actor highly regarded for his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes. It is December, 1936, and Gillette has invited his fellow cast members to join him and his indomitable mother at his Connecticut castle for a Christmas Eve weekend celebration, as he recovers from a mysterious attempt on his life. As with any good "whodunit," the plot takes numerous twists and turns after one of the guests is stabbed to death. Gillette himself assumes his Holmes persona to try and solve the crime before another guest falls victim to the mystery killer.

Lucas Tennant, like many directors, had his "dream cast" in mind, and was fortunate to land just the actor he wanted for the role of Gillette. Garry Welsh is well known to Perth audiences for his wonderful performances in such diverse shows as *Rabbit Hole* and *The Full Monty*.

"Garry and his character, Holmes/William Gillette, both have a dry sense of humour," says Tennant. "They can throw out a joke and carry on perfectly seriously. Garry practically wears comedy as clothing."

Alison Kirkpatrick, another well-known Studio Theatre actress, teams up with Nelson McCulloch to portray a newly married couple who are appearing in "Sherlock Holmes" with Gillette. Tennant describes the two as "the embodiment of a newlywed couple, still very distinct from one another, but in that recognizable 'honeymoon' stage of their relationship."

The older actor couple, deftly played by veteran Krista Duff and newcomer Jerry Logan, "have

a physical resemblance that shows their years as a couple," according to Tennant, "including their indifferent behaviour around, for example, issues of jealousy."

The luminous Mary Ann Majaury takes on the role of the beautiful but evil theatre critic Daria Chase. Tennant notes that Mary Ann and Daria are polar-opposites, but that "Mary Ann has the acting chops to portray the shady critic, who has power but no scruples." Annette Hutton plays Inspector Goring, a Colombo-type detective, and a female — unexpected in the '30s but not unusual in a Ludwig play. Lucas says that Annette "had already nailed the complexity of the character in her audition."

**Director Lucas Tennant is thrilled with his cast, and delighted to be directing a comedy full of physical gags, one-liners, skits within a play, and vaudeville elements**

And Studio Theatre audiences will be familiar with Barb Guthrie, who plays Martha, Gillette's mother. "She is exactly right for the part," says Tennant, who has worked with Barb in previous productions where he was the actor and she was the director.

Lucas Tennant is thrilled with his cast, and delighted to be directing a play he describes as a comedy, full of physical gags, one-liners, skits within a play, and vaudeville elements that he intends to shamelessly play up, creating "a theatre world sit-com."

Don't miss the murderously funny *The Game's Afoot*, playing on February 4, 5, 6, 12 and 13 at 8PM and on February 7 and 14 at 2PM at the Studio Theatre, 63 Gore Street East, in the Tay Basin. Tickets are \$22 cash at The Book Nook (60 Gore Street E.), and online or by phone at Shadowfax (67 Foster St., 267-6817, shadowfax.on.ca) and Tickets Please, (485-6434, ticketsplease.ca) where a convenience fee applies. Tickets are \$24 at the door, and \$10 for students with ID. Visit <studiotheatreperth.com> for details. Attend opening night and save \$5!

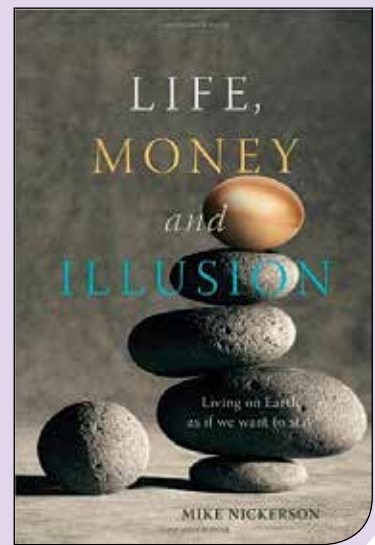
— By C. Lee Bates

## Talk on Sustainable Food Production

On January 12, Mike Nickerson will be speaking on an important subject at the Perth Horticultural Society meeting: "food production in a sustainable world" Mike has published several books on sustainable development: *Change the World I Want to Stay On* (1977); *Planning for Seven Generations* (1990); and his most recent, *Life Money & Illusion, Living on Earth as if We Want to Stay* (2006), 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (2009). He has been gardening organically since 1975. He supports his study and writing by designing and building custom furniture. Since publishing his last book, Mike has been touring the country encouraging people to think and talk about how we might adapt to our planet's limits.

This meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 12 at St. Paul's United Church, 25 Gore Street West in Perth, beginning at 7PM. Please use the D'Arcy Street entrance. Everyone is welcome — membership in the Society is only \$10 per year; visitors pay \$3 for admission. We look forward to seeing you there.

— Submitted by Perth and District Horticultural Society



Studio Theatre Productions  
presents  
**The Game's Afoot**

**By Ken Ludwig**  
**Directed by Lucas Tennant**

**A murderously funny who-dunnit with gasp-out-loud twists and turns to keep you guessing!**

**February 4, 5, 6, 12 & 13, 2016 at 8:00 pm**  
**February 7 & 14 at 2:00 pm**

**See our article in this edition or visit**  
**[www.studiotheatreperth.com](http://www.studiotheatreperth.com)**  
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**Music Works**

# Films of 2015: The Best and the Worst

What a magical time of year it is; Christmas, good food, New Year's, snow (hopefully). The start of a new year brings hindsight. And nothing makes me happier than looking back at the films of the year and compiling a Best Of and Worst Of list. Indeed, we had many great films and many turkeys in equal measure. As happens every year, you never get to see all the films you want to. It is a near-impossible task. This year I failed to catch *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, *Joy*, *Creed*, *The Hateful Eight*, *Trumbo*, *Steve Jobs*, *The Danish Girl* and *In the Heart of the Sea*, which all look great and very well could have made my list. And with the Oscars on the horizon (the nominees are announced on January 14, the ceremony is held on February 28), the tension is rising.

by Matt Roche

So, without further ado, here are the best and the worst films of 2015. As is customary, the bottom of the barrel will be provided first to make you aware of these horrendous films and to suggest avoidance and at the very least fair warning. Without ranking these duds, as they are all equally bad, the worst films of 2015 are *The Boy Next Door*, *Jem and the Holograms*, *Love*, *Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2*, *Hot Tub Time Machine 2*, *Victor Frankenstein*, *50 Shades of Grey*, *Jurassic World*, *The Green Inferno*, *Unfinished Business*, *Aloha!*, and *Pan*. But the worst film of the year, hands down, in my opinion, was *The Age of Adaline*. It is a tedious and uninspired film made worse by a weak concept and dull script. It is a relatively clever premise that, in the right hands, could be used as an interesting social commentary, perhaps, but is instead utilized for melodramatic, romantic benefit. Unfortunately, the benefits are not present. At all. Finishing this film felt like a Herculean task.

Now, on the opposite side of the spectrum we have the finest films of the year, films that restore and rejuvenate my faith in cinema, knowing that there are still studios and filmmakers making innovative, daring, original films. And this year had plenty of that.

For starters, the Honourable Mentions. These films failed to make my Top 10 but are all phenomenal films and are highly recommended. They are: *99 Homes*, *Amy*, *Ant-Man*, *Best of Enemies*, *The Boy*, *Brooklyn*, *Carol*, *Chappie*, *Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief*, *The Look of Silence*, *Room*, *Slow West*, *Spotlight*, *Straight Outta Compton*, *While We're Young* and *Youth*. All great films well worth your time. But the best of the lot are as follows:

## Top 10 Films of 2015

For reviews of #10-6, please see <thehummm.com/January2015>

10. *Inside Out* (Pete Docter)
9. *Trainwreck* (Judd Apatow)
8. *The Martian* (Ridley Scott)
7. *Beasts of No Nation* (Cary Joji Fukunaga)
6. *Sicario* (Denis Villeneuve)
5. *The Lobster* (Yorgos Lanthimos)

*The Lobster* is an acquired taste. If you are at all familiar with Greek filmmaker Yorgos Lanthimos or his films (especially *Dogtooth*), you will know what to expect: absurdity at its finest. Not since Luis Buñuel passed away has a filmmaker achieved such heights of contemporary absurdist filmmaking. With *The Lobster*, Lanthimos has given us his finest film yet, which also happens to be his English language debut. Starring Colin Farrell, Rachel Weisz and Léa Seydoux, *The Lobster* shows an alternate reality where coupling is mandatory, and if your spouse leaves you you must go to a hotel for 45 days to find another mate. If you fail, you get turned into an animal of your choosing. Now, I'm sure there is an allegory here alluding to contempt of marriage and conformity but you can never know for sure, which is what makes the film so fascinating. It's beautifully shot, filled with marvellously dry humour and a wonderful deadpan performance from Farrell. *The Lobster* is vivid and abstract and overwhelming, and one of the finest films of the year.

### 4. *Mad Max: Fury Road* (George Miller)

This is George Miller's fourth installment in his franchise and it's also his best. Everything you'd expect is delivered here in spades. *Fury Road* is essentially one massive chase through a barren wasteland. There is non-stop action and some of the best cinematography of the year. The action is all realistic and authentic; not a stitch of CGI

was used in the making of these scenes (except for one scene involving an insane sandstorm) and it's a testament to Miller's perseverance to bring this action fable to theatres. *Mad Max: Fury Road* is the most fun you will have at the theatre this year.

### 3. *Ex Machina* (Alex Garland)

*Ex Machina* is writer Alex Garland's directorial debut and he has made a spellbinding, impeccably realized film. Like this year's *Chappie*, it deals with the dangers of an artificial intelligence become self-aware. Garland has created a haunting, subtle film that tackles these issues in a very clever, abstract way, leaving us wondering what exactly happened.

### 2. *It Follows* (David Robert Mitchell)

With *It Follows*, writer/director David Robert Mitchell has created a truly elegant horror film. His minimalist approach to his material allows the haunting visuals and unbearable tension to rise to

better and will get Oscar nominations, if not wins, for their respective performances. And as with last year's *Birdman*, Iñárritu and cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki have given us another virtuoso performance, showing off unbelievably complicated and ambitious camera shots, capturing shocking and beautiful images, creating moments I will never forget. Even writing this I cannot describe the terror I felt when the bear attacked DiCaprio and I screamed out loud, or the absolute disgust I felt for Hardy's slimy character Fitzgerald, or the awe of following Iñárritu's camera around, taking in all the beauty and horror. *The Revenant* is so intense, so elemental, so compelling, it's a wonder it even got made. It was shot in isolated locations with the cast and crew enduring harsh weather conditions, the production going over-schedule and over-budget, crew members quitting, and

Iñárritu's needing to have a lens created to capture natural light (no unnatural or electrical lighting was used in any way during filming). Yet much like Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* production hell, brilliance emerged through the madness. At 2 hours and 36 minutes, you'll be riveted the entire time, though it is not for the faint of heart. *The Revenant* is one of the best films of the last twenty years and the must-see film of the year.

And if I may be so bold, I predict Iñárritu will make another Oscar sweep this year, and he couldn't be more deserving.

And here ends our journey through 2015's cinematic landscape. We can only hope 2016 brings us just as many. We are in the midst of our third Golden Age of Cinema and I couldn't be happier.

Happy New Year to everyone, and happy movie watching!

[See More Online!](#)



Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu's *The Revenant* (starring Leonardo DiCaprio, above) is Matt Roche's top pick for 2015

a visceral, metaphysical level. Not only is the film an homage to the genre, it is also a highly original and horrifying film that will no doubt become itself a classic. With a brilliantly simple plot and a cast of talented newcomers, *It Follows* is one of the scariest and one of the best films of the year.

### 1. *The Revenant* (Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu)

Without question this year's finest film, as expected, is Alejandro G. Iñárritu's *The Revenant* — an unrelenting, shocking, breathtaking film. Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hardy have never been

To see all of Matt's movie reviews from this column, please visit <thehummm.com/January 2016>. And our friends at Videoflicks in Arnprior ask you to consider renting them locally!

## FiNI's Internationally Acclaimed Films

Film Night International (FiNI) has a great line up of films in both Perth and Smiths Falls for its winter series starting this month.

On January 20 in Perth and January 21 in Smiths Falls, from Ireland, *Jimmy's Hall* tells the story of a man who returns to his homeland after a decade abroad, and the dancehall that led to his deportation. Then on February 3 & 4, *The Second Mother* (Brazil) tells of a nanny who is given a second chance to connect with the daughter she left as a baby. On February 17 & 18, they screen the critically-acclaimed film *Trumbo*, which stars Bryan Cranston as Hollywood screenwriter Dalton Trumbo, who was blacklisted in the '40s for his political beliefs but went on to win two Oscars. Then March 2 & 3 brings the German film *Labyrinth of Lies*. It's been twenty years since the end of WWII, and a young attorney discovers the extent to which Germany is still in denial about what happened. There will be five more films in the season, which have yet to be announced.

FiNI founder Faye Cunningham suggests checking <filmnightinternational.blogspot.ca> for updates to the schedule and trailers for each of the confirmed films.

Passes to all nine films are \$75, and tickets at the door are \$10 each. Screenings are at 2PM and 7PM at the Full Circle Theatre in Perth, and at 7PM at the Station Theatre in Smiths Falls.

**Film Night International** is a non-profit group run entirely by volunteers in partnership with the Film Circuit, a division of the Toronto International Film Festival Group. The Film Circuit now has almost 200 locations across Canada screening Canadian and international films in communities that would otherwise not have the opportunity to see them. All FiNI profits, after expenses, are donated to the Perth and Smiths Falls public libraries.

For more information about how to purchase tickets for the FiNI winter series, email <filmnightperth@gmail.com> or call 267-1224.

# Thanks, Newfoundland, For Sharing Your Gifts

I was at a kitchen party recently with many talented local musicians strewn around the room, singing and playing their instruments, each adding to the cumulative sound. They were honouring a Canadian legend — the late Ron Hynes — by singing his most famous song, *Sonny's Dream*, and a cavalcade of memories flashed me back to the times I'd seen Ron perform. I say "perform" rather than just "sing," because he put his all into a performance. Via Ron's distinctive sing-

by Steve Tennant

ing voice, as Cape Breton singer songwriter Bruce Guthro stated so well in a recent *Toronto Star* article: "He could capture a character in a song and you could just slide your feet right into that man's or woman's shoes." His passionate delivery portrayed whatever he was expressing in his lyrics. Hearing him sing his song *Dry*, you are suddenly parched yourself. Oh, how he could deliver.

Known as "The Man of a Thousand Songs" and the pride of Canada's East Coast and especially of Newfoundland, Hynes had a mastery of lyrics that helped us listen, taste, feel and see. His song *Atlantic Blue* was a tribute to the 84 people lost when the off-shore oil rig the *Ocean Ranger* sank off Newfoundland in 1982. He asks: "What colour is a heartache from a love lost at sea? What shade of memory never fades but lingers to eternity? And how dark is the light of day that sleepless eyes of mine survey? Is that you, Atlantic Blue? My heart is as cold as you." I'm feeling cold and lonely just typing this.

Dave Gunning is a wonderful singer/songwriter from Nova Scotia who has played Stewart Park Festival a few times, as well as several house concerts in the area. I remember him telling me how he and Ron had met at some event, each appreciating the other's skills and saying they should write together sometime. Months later, while sitting at a bar after a show, Ron handed Gunning a torn-off matchbook cover with three words on it — "hard-working hands" and said: "see what you can do with this". Well, Dave took him to heart and wrote his beautiful song *Hard Workin' Hands*, which ended up being their first of numerous collaborations as well as winning numerous awards. All thanks to Ron's instigation. Gunning goes on about Hynes, saying his creativity was incessant. "He was always making things up and singing. He would be in a hotel room and singing all the time, writing and creating all the time," said Gunning from his home in Pictou, N.S., "It was non-stop with him. He was almost tortured by it. He couldn't rest."

Ron was born in St. John's, but was raised in Ferryland, Newfoundland. Many of his songs give us glimpses of life on or near the sea, and the effects of this locale on the folks affected by it. He was also an actor, having been on stage and screen in earlier days with the infamous CODCO gang, later as Hank Williams in a stage production of *Hank Williams — The Show He Never Gave*, as well as several stints on TV shows.

Late one night on my front porch, scotch in hand, Ron told me about being on tour in Ireland. After playing a set that included *Sonny's Dream*, he was enjoying a beverage at the bar when a patron accosted him, claiming it wasn't his song. They ended up engaging in fisticuffs outside. In fact, Ron had written the song in 1976 and recorded it with his Wonderful Grand Band in '81. The song was heard by Hamish Imlach, a Scottish folkie, while on a trip to Canada, who modified it somewhat and played it in folk clubs around Britain. There, it was heard by



The late, great Ron Hynes

Christy Moore, who recorded it and passed it on to other artists in Ireland, which explains why his antagonist was so adamant. In fact, the song has been recorded by many, including Emmylou Harris, Great Big Sea, Stan Rogers, Valdy and many others.

Ron fought his demons. He'd battled addictions in the past and came back to write and perform with the same determinedness as ever. More than once I've seen him have a whole audience in the palm of his hand. There've been many tributes to him since his passing on November 19, and one I read reminded me of him bringing the room to a standstill, stepping forward and singing a cappella to a mesmerized house. He also battled throat cancer back in 2012 and, considering his heavy smoking, I know many were quite surprised and pleased to see him make his comeback, touring nationally, constantly writing and recording for an upcoming album. We hosted a concert of Ron's here in Perth in December 2013.

They say it was a fire on a pole that put the lights out in St. John's around the same time Ron died, but I'm sure the loss of this legend was really the cause. He was Newfoundland's treasure. Sheilagh O'Leary, a former St. John's town counsellor summed it up well when she said: "He sang who we were as Newfoundlanders and who we are, the beauty but also the pain and some of the ugly stuff too — there was no brushing it over." Keith Glass knew him for over twenty years, having shared many festival stages over the years and having played on a couple of his records. Of Ron's passing Keith said: "He was a national treasure, an inspiration as a songwriter and a great guy, and I will miss him." We've lost him but he's left a major legacy of his musical works for us to immerse ourselves in and enjoy forever. Rest in Peace, Ron Hynes. And thanks, Newfoundland, for sharing Ron and all your other marvellous musicians who make the world a better place.

## Upcoming Events

- The **Mississippi Blues Society Blues Jam** has moved to the first Friday of the month at the Waterfront Gastropub in Carleton Place. Great to hear that Barry Buse is back hosting and playing with his stellar crew, keeping their long tradition alive.
- On Saturday, January 16, Luther Wright's 2<sup>nd</sup> annual **Birthdays Hootenanny** takes place at The Cove in Westport, featuring Oh Susanna, Rubeen deGroot, Lyre Bird, Megan Palmer, Clem Chesterfield, The Wrongs and others. This will be a CD Release for Luther's *Hearts and Lonely Hunters*. Tickets are \$10 (273-3636).
- On Friday, January 29, **Matthew Hornell** plays the Sharbot Lake Inn. Call 279-2198 for reservations.

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## Music Matters

# And All That Jazz...

"There's something beautifully friendly and elevating about a bunch of guys playing music together. This wonderful little world that is unassailable. It's really teamwork, one guy supporting the others, and it's all for one purpose, and there's no flies in the ointment, for a while. And nobody conducting, it's all up to you." — Keith Richards

I'm writing this column the morning after a gig with my partner in The Somerset Combo, Ric Denis. For me, being a

by Tony Stuart

jazz musician embodies all of my favourite things about music, and I think jazz has many elements that we should be putting into practice in music classrooms as well.

Ask most jazz musicians what their favourite part of their craft is, and they are likely to mention a couple of things: playing with other like-minded musicians and having the freedom to express yourself through improvisation.

One of the coolest things I've ever experienced is sitting down with other musicians and having the rhythm section start up a blues number. Within moments everyone is engaged, and this organic creation springs to life. Ric and I hired a bassist and a drummer for a recent house concert, and when we sat down to play together for the first time, within moments it was like we had known each other for years. They say that a picture paints a thousand words, but I would argue that a jazz tune does the same thing.

Improvising a solo is a wonderful thing. Drawing upon many hours of practice, a jazz musician spontaneously creates something new and unique every time they solo. My favourite part of improvising occurs when I hear the rhythm section react to something that I'm doing in a solo, and also noticing myself drawing inspiration from the groove

that they are laying down. It's like an intimate conversation is going on without any words being spoken. Of course, the goal is to make improvising seem effortless, but in reality it takes many hours of practicing scales and patterns to make this happen. It also requires a lot of listening to other artists to gain insights and inspiration.

I was a very classically-trained musician who did not "discover" jazz until later in life. I still practice and play classical music, but now approach what I am playing with a much more open mind. Classical music is all about attention to detail and trying to come as close to perfection as possible. Those are very important things, but I think classical musicians who are exposed to jazz and blues are better because of it. Off the top of my head, I am thinking of two great American musicians: clarinetist Eddie Daniels and trumpeter Wynton Marsalis. Both of these gentlemen are comfortable moving back and forth between genres and acknowledge that they use elements from both styles in their musical toolboxes, and frequently use classical-style elements in their soloing.

In terms of my own teaching practice, I have started incorporating jazz and blues into my classroom on a regular basis. What I am seeing is students who are becoming much more comfortable playing in front of people, who are less afraid of making mistakes, and who are willing to put themselves out there by taking a solo in front of their peers. I'm also noticing that spontaneous, mixed-grade jam sessions are occurring more frequently at lunch hours.

Making music makes us feel good and brings people together, and no doubt this is something that students are picking up on. Perhaps Miles Davis said it best when he said: "I don't care if a dude is purple with green breath as long as he can swing." — Tony Stuart is the Music Director at Notre Dame Catholic High School in Carleton Place, and a freelance professional musician

## A Shout-Out to Great Teachers

Our Classes, Courses, Lessons section is always full of ads from many great teachers, artists and studios in the area, but this year we thought we would ask some students to weigh in too. We have invited everyone who advertises in this section (either in January or again in our

August and September issues) to submit a testimonial from one of their students. We will run these in print, and also on our website at <thehummm.com>, to help potential students gain a better understanding of the strengths and abilities of these local teachers.

### Almonte Potters Guild

The Almonte Potters Guild is first and foremost a friendly and warm group of knowledgeable potters. They offer a wide variety of opportunities to learn — from paid courses in hand building and throwing on the wheel, to casual potluck evening workshops, to weekend courses on more advanced aspects of clay art making. There is always a helping hand available to guide you. I enjoy every minute I spend in the studio, and I encourage everyone to come and experience this wonderful place.

— Lola Docherty



# Mississippi Wood Carvers

For years there have been wood carvers residing and working in Almonte and area, three of whom have been members of the Outaouais Wood Carvers of Ottawa. In the same time frame, another member of that club moved to Carleton Place. We started gathering in the workshop of one of these carvers to share information and help one another on our individual projects. Some friends also indicated an interest in learning something about the hobby, and they joined the small informal group.

When the size of the group began to exceed the space in the workshop, we started looking at other meeting venues. The one that best fit our needs — and non-existent budget — was the lecture room at the Almonte Public Library. We had been meeting on alternate Friday afternoons, and those were available at the library. So ten of us put together the needed dollars to book the room and we were in business. However, as part of renting the room we needed to take out a rider on the library's insurance policy in the name of our group. But we didn't have a name. So on the spur of the moment, we became the Mississippi Wood Carvers since we came from Carleton Place, Almonte and Pakenham (and area) — all communities along the Mississippi River.



The Mississippi Wood Carvers invite both novice and experienced carvers to attend their meetings at the Almonte Library

We are now paid up till next June at which time, if enough are interested in continuing this embryonic group, annual dues will be assessed (in the range of \$40 for twenty carving sessions) and hopefully the library will continue to provide us space. We meet from 1 to 4PM on alternate Friday afternoons to share a cup of coffee and a cookie while carving. More experienced carvers share what they know with those who are new to the hobby. We also have access to carving workshops and seminars through the Outaouais club, and carving tools through the new L.G. Lee &

Sons store in town and Carve It Up tools.

This is a perfect group for both experienced and non-experienced woodcarvers. Anyone interested in finding out more about us can find our meeting dates through the library or by emailing <mwcarvers@gmail.com>. Then drop by and let us introduce ourselves. If you are an experienced carver, we would love to learn from your experience as we share ours with you. And if you are new to woodcarving, who knows, you may find you have creative skills you never knew you had!

— John Peters

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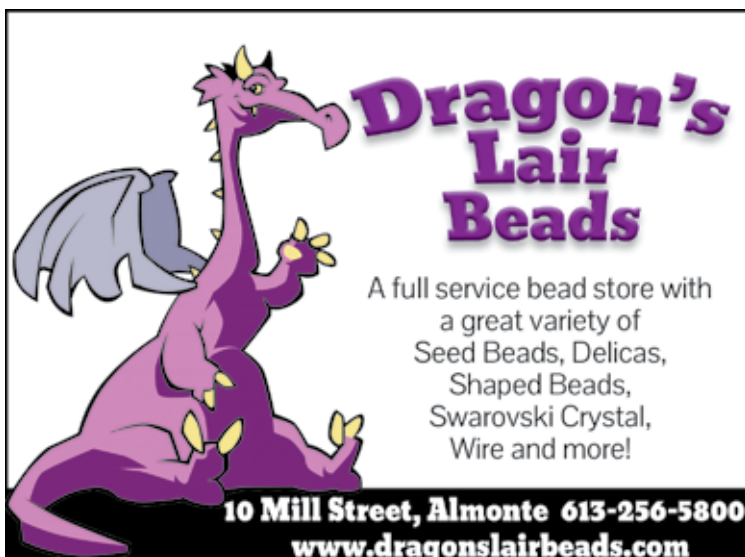
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January 23-31

To register, or for more information:  
[margferraro@xplornet.ca](mailto:margferraro@xplornet.ca)  
[www.ferraro-art.com](http://www.ferraro-art.com) [www.margaretferraro.blogspot.com](http://www.margaretferraro.blogspot.com)

# Jubilee Tribute Concert Coming Up in Perth

2016 will be a banner year for both Perth and Queen's University. The Military Settlement on the Rideau, which later came to be known as Perth, was founded two hundred years ago in 1816. A prominent Perth settler and businessman, William Morris, was instrumental in establishing Queen's College, later to become Queen's University. Queen's will also be celebrating their one hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary in 2016. A Perth-based committee of Queen's graduates and friends, called the "Friends of Queen's/Perth Anniversaries", was formed to institute ways to celebrate these milestones and the Perth/Queen's connection.

The committee didn't have to look too far to realize that three local residents conduct musical ensembles that have Perth and Queen's connections. Shelley McLaren, conductor of the Men and Women of the Tay choirs, and Brad Mills, Director of Music at St. Paul's United Church, are both

Queen's music grads. Gordon Craig, owner of the Perth Manor Boutique Hotel, conducts the Queen's University Orchestra. Through a collaborative effort, a signature musical event has now been planned which will involve the Men and Women of the Tay, the choirs of St. Paul's, St. James and Friends, the Queen's University Choral Ensemble, and the Queen's Orchestra.

This massed 200-voice choir and orchestra will perform a Jubilee Tribute Concert to be held at St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church in Perth on Saturday, March 19, at 7:30PM. The concert will feature Schubert's *Mass in C*, written the year of Perth's founding in 1816, among other selections from 1916 and 2016.

Please circle March 19 on your calendar and plan to attend. Further information and where to obtain tickets will be forthcoming in the February and March editions of *theHumm*.

— Glenn Tummock

# Auditions for Dylan Thomas Play

In April, BarnDoor Productions will be presenting *Under Milk Wood*, a "play for voices" by Dylan Thomas. This poetic, comic, tragic, ironic musical is undoubtedly a masterpiece and arguably the culmination of Thomas's life's work. It is performed by a varying number of "voices" as they tell the story of a spring day in Llareggub, a small town in Wales.

If an interesting and challenging theatrical experience is right up your alley, and you can sing, then come out to the auditions: Monday, January 18 at the Full Circle Theatre (26 Craig Street in Perth), starting at 7PM. You can find a link to a PDF of the complete script on the Auditions page at <[barndoorproductions.ca](http://barndoorproductions.ca)>.

## Margaret Ferraro

Margaret Ferraro is inspiring and vibrant, providing a wonderful atmosphere in which to learn pastel painting. She begins with exercises in blending, textures and, most importantly, composition.

Her advice is excellent and consistently to the point. Her studio has a warm atmosphere. She creates a welcoming mood, positive and professional, encouraging individual work and offering helpful advice. For me, it is the perfect balance of learning, enjoyment and collegiality.

I highly recommend her classes and her studio drop-in time.

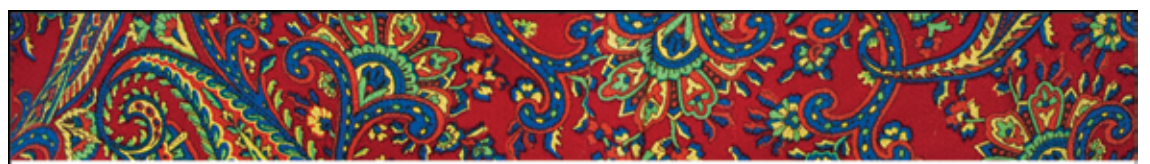
— Miriam Bloom

## Adrian Baker

When I first viewed Adrian's painting, I was in awe; her technical skill and her ability to share stories with her art I found quite impressive.

It was this fascination with her work that drew me to Adrian as an instructor. In each course I have taken with her, she has willingly shared tips and thoughts from her vast knowledge, which she customized to my level of development. And in her subtle way, she has challenged me to think outside the box and accelerate the growth of my own capacity. Thank you Adrian!

— Craig Angus, Carleton Place



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# Almonte in Concert is Back in Force!

On November 20, Penny Blades and Michael Macpherson spearheaded a meeting at the Almonte Old Town Hall. Many friends and supporters of Almonte in Concert attended to discuss how the organization could be revived and renewed. Many offers of support came forward, and it became clear that a new Board could be formed.

Recently, Almonte in Concert had been struggling with the recruitment of new board members to carry out the multiple functions associated with an annual series of high-level classical music concerts. The absence of concerts this fall led to much concern in the community, but also had the effect of rallying support to perpetuate the excellence of our long-standing organization and its cultural activities.

Almonte in Concert held its Annual General Meeting on December 14, at which eleven board members were elected. Michael Macpherson will assume the role of President, and Maureen Nevins will remain as Artistic Director. In addition, Almonte in Concert can count today on a long list of people with varied expertise and interests who are willing to contribute to its success by working as volunteers alongside the new board. Our new, dynamic Board of Directors will set to work exploring the possibility of presenting some concerts this spring, and anticipates returning in full swing in the 2016-17 season.

If you would like to add your name to our list of volunteers, please email us at <info@almonteinconcert.com>.

Here's to an exciting musical future!  
— Penny Blades and Michael Macpherson

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### Colleen Singbush

I really look forward to the class each week. The mix of laughter and learning is a great combination. I call it healthy brain food.

— Lucy C.

Colleen's classes are fun! The atmosphere is relaxed and encouraging!

— Kay A.

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# We'll Do It Our Way!

## Perth Seniors Plan Their Own Retirement Community

Silver Sage and ElderSpirit, Babayaga's House in Paris, Wolf Willow and Harbour-side... these communities with colourful names are examples of an exciting new development in retirement living. They are cohousing communities created by seniors to support a lifestyle of freedom, independence and connection to others as they age.

According to Wikipedia, cohousing is a type of intentional community composed of private homes supplemented by shared facilities. It is intentional in that those who form it commit to live, work and learn together in a relationship that could be described as a cross between extended family and good neighbours. A cohousing community is owned and managed by its members. Private homes are self-contained and residents jointly own common spaces and amenities such as laundry facilities, gardens, and a meeting/dining room for activities including shared meals once or twice a week. Many cohousing communities are committed to sustainable living, incorporating environmental values in the building process, as well as in agreements such as car-sharing and common gardens. Cohousing is often multi-generational, but as baby boomers begin looking at options for "aging-in-place", senior cohousing is seen as an attractive possibility.

For a couple of dozen adventurous Perth-area residents (of whom the author is one!), senior cohousing is more than an

exciting concept: we are working to create a cohousing community in Perth.

The Perth Cohousing Initiative held its first meeting on June 4, 2015, combining discussion with a potluck meal, a tradition we have carried on ever since. At that first meeting we shared our motivations for exploring cohousing: to remain independent as we age; to feel capable, alive and stimulated; to put our skills and knowledge to good use; to expand our horizons through mental and spiritual growth. We like the idea of living in a community of people diverse in knowledge, life experience, income, talent and insight, all sharing similar values of community, sustainability and compassion. Mindful of our grandchildren, we hope to have a positive influence on their future by choosing a way of living modest in environmental footprint and rich in social value.

Since that first meeting, we have met bi-weekly to work our way through the process of forming a community inspired by aspirations and grounded in reality. We have developed a vision statement and agreed upon our mission and intentions. Currently, we are addressing the legal and financial aspects of establishing the community as a viable non-profit corporation. A sub-group is compiling a list of potential building sites within walking distance of downtown. Learning as we go is a challenge, and we are fortunate to have had the advice and guidance of the knowledgeable



The Perth Cohousing Initiative, soon to be known as Tay Commons Cohousing, invites interested folks to attend their potluck meetings at McMartin House

and generous individuals we have consulted, including friends from Terra Firma cohousing in Ottawa. We grow week-by-week in cohesiveness and commitment to our venture and each other.

The Perth Cohousing Initiative, soon to be known as Tay Commons Cohousing, holds potluck meetings biweekly on Thursdays at 6PM at McMartin House in Perth. All are welcome! Agendas and meeting reports are on our website <perth-cohousing-initiative.com>. For more information, or to attend a meeting, please contact Susan Samila at <ssamila@storm.ca> or 264-1196, or Louise McDiarmid at <louise\_43@sympatico.ca> or 264-8590.

If you missed it, check out the radio documentary *BC Seniors Build a New Way to Age in Place*, a CBC Sunday Edition podcast available online. Although our Perth cohousing project will be more modest in scope than those discussed, we share the same enthusiasm for cohousing.

"To be happy in our old age we will need a sense of engagement, and where we live will be a factor in whether we can find that 'deep connect to something positive, meaningful, invigorating and inspiring.'" (From *The Perfect Home for a Long Life*, by Lyndsay Green.)

— Louise McDiarmid

# POSH PAWS

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