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HOME ON THE Green

P.O. Box 849 Stouffville, ON L4A 7Z9

**A magazine for and about the residents of
The Ballantrae Golf & Country Club Community.
A positive community voice to inform and entertain.**

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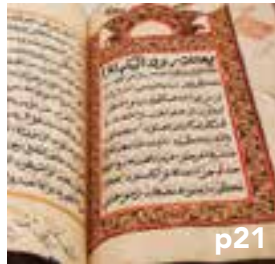
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Home on the Green welcomes submissions from residents of our community for possible inclusion in the magazine. Send articles and news items to homeonthegreen@rogers.com. *Home on the Green* reserves the right to accept, edit or reject any submitted article. All such contributors are deemed to have consented to the publication – either in print or online – of any information submitted by them.



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A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Being the editor on *HOTG* has its advantages. I get to work with a wonderfully creative and dedicated team, and, in our endeavours to bring you interesting stories about our community and the people who live here, I am constantly meeting new neighbours and discovering new things.

Our cover photo, for example, was shot at the home of Jacqueline Kemball. She has been collecting Victorian Christmas decorations for years. Since moving to Ballantrae, she's decided to leave them out for the enjoyment of her family and friends year-round. Thanks to Brian Freedman for discovering this and to Pat Whittingham for taking the pictures.

Pat has also agreed to organize another photo contest. The last contest featured the winning shot of the Keukenhof Gardens in Holland by Robert Pitour on the spring 2015 cover. For this contest, we are giving you plenty of time to get out and shoot. The winning photo will be featured on our fall 2016 cover. See Pat's contest details on page 34.

Results from our readership survey last year indicated that you wanted more stories about food. We introduced the Neighbourhood Noshing section by Susan Gamble last spring, and in this issue we're starting a new "foodie" page called Pot Luck (page 33) in which we publish favourite recipes submitted by our residents. I hope you will try some of them and consider sending us some of your recipes to be published in future issues.

I also encourage you to send your suggestions for upcoming profiles and features. In this issue we've got a story by Lynne Balfour on Lowell and Bonnie Dennis. They were responsible for providing the great food we enjoyed during the week of the Ballantrae Summer Games last August. There's also a story by Lee Pollock about how a kidney transplant gave him a new lease on life and led to his meeting his wife, Lydia.

I must commend assistant editor, Karen Clark, who has proven herself to be a fabulous community "snoop" with a wonderfully positive spirit and energy. For those of you not going south this winter, Karen's piece, "Home for the Holidays," suggests some interesting diversions close to home.

We are always looking for articles about our residents, so please feel free to send your suggestions. All feedback, suggestions, recipes, etc. should be sent to homeonthegreen@rogers.com.

Happy Holidays

Anita Draycott

Check out these Past Events on our Website

Due to our publishing lead times, we were unable to cover the following Past Events:

Bonspiel, Nov. 21; Ladies' Christmas Luncheon, Nov. 26; Christmas Concert, Dec. 8; Christmas Dinner Dance, Dec. 5.

Please visit ourbgcc.com to view photos.

Enjoy your holidays

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR COUNCILLOR

MORE FROM MAURICE



Your town councillors have been busy working on a number of initiatives in pursuit of spending wisely the tax dollars entrusted to us. This article is an update on a few of the projects.

EXPANDED LEISURE CENTRE, MEMORIAL PARK

The town must continue to upgrade the services provided to residents and to satisfy the needs of our ever-growing population. An expanded Leisure Centre in Memorial Park, located in the heart of town, is one of the areas requiring Council attention. I was chosen by my fellow councillors to represent them on the steering committee for this project. Public hearings have been held. It appears that shovels could be in the ground by mid 2016. At a cost of approximately \$13 million, this will be a significant undertaking. Included in the design is a 16,000 square foot addition to the current public library space, plus a new 4,000 square-foot home for the arts and cultural activities of the Latcham Gallery. You can view the current design/layout on my website. In conjunction with this project another facility in town will be renovated to be used as a centre for activities geared to seniors.

FALL FAIR 2015

The weatherman did not co-operate this year, but the town staff made do with what we had been given. I hosted the event and those who turned out enjoyed their day. This will continue as an annual event.

WINTER CARNIVAL

If you remain in BGCC over the winter, please be sure to mark your calendars for Saturday, February 6, 2016, when our town's annual Winter Carnival will be held at Musselman's Lake. While this is not a new event, there are a few special twists being planned for 2016.

BALLANTRAE PARK

This public park on Aurora Road has been the site of many public and privately held events over the years. It is the home of public tennis courts, one of the town's baseball diamonds and a number of soccer fields. Some events for the BGCC Summer Games were held in the park. There is also a permanent concrete structure where weddings and other social events are held on a regular basis and a small building used exclusively by the Ballantrae Tennis Club (BTC).

For a long time there has been talk of adding another permanent field house for those using the location for sporting events. I was instrumental in costing the construction for such a facility and for incorporating it into the town's 2016 capital budget. The plan is to remove the smaller BTC building and replace it with a 1,400 square foot facility that will have a dedicated area for the BTC, but will also have space available for other groups using the sports fields. The design has been completed and construction will take place in the early spring.

COULTICE PARK

For generations, a family by the name of Coultice farmed a 130-acre parcel of land on the south side of Musselman's Lake. With the passing of the patriarch of the family, the land was donated to the town and region through a series of transactions. The town has allocated funds to transform a small section of these lands into a family park setting. The balance, in excess of 100 acres, will contain hiking/walking trails and be open to the public. Initial parts of this project will begin in 2016 and all should be completed in 2017.

SEASONS GREETINGS

On behalf of our family, Jane and I wish all of you and your family the best of the season. Enjoy the festivities held at this time of year and may 2016 be a year of health and happiness.

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Keep Busy This Winter

BY LYNNE BALFOUR



PROBUS

Do you know what **PROBUS** is?
(No, it's not a medical instrument!)

Probus is an acronym for Pro (fessional) Bus (iness), a social club for active men and women retirees initially sponsored by Rotary International. One of the earliest clubs was formed in Saskatchewan in the 1920s. While the initial clubs were philanthropic, Rotary saw the need for a social club for professional retirees. The idea spread over the years to the U.S., England and Australia, as well as to other countries. The groups are non-sectarian and non-political, providing speakers, social events and smaller group activities. We first heard of Probus when friends moved to Collingwood and told us they were on a waiting list for two Probus clubs—a popular group! (There are now 8 groups in Collingwood.)

BGCC's Al Moldon is a high school friend of Ron Smith who helped found the Stouffville chapter two years ago, having been president of the Scarborough group. Ron enjoys the speakers and particularly the people that he meets through Probus. The Stouffville group has about 86 members and has developed small interest sections interested in ancestry research, a book club, luncheon socials, travel and golf. In January 2016 they are looking forward to hearing Barbara Dickson speaking on her new book *The Bomb Girls*. This is a story of 5000 Canadian women during WWII who assembled bombs in a secret factory located at Warden and Eglinton in Toronto. Have you ever heard of that?

If you are interested in this speaker, any of the social activities, or an opportunity to meet

new friends, you are welcome to join the fun at any Probus meeting held at the new Stouffville Legion on the second Thursday of each month (9:45 a.m. to noon). More information is available at stouffvilleprobus235@gmail.com or from Pat Weddell at 905-640-4343.

BLUE HERON BOOK STORE

For all the book club members and avid readers in BGCC, the **Blue Heron Book Store** in Uxbridge is a treasure-trove of information. It was the recipient of the Canadian Booksellers Association Bookseller of the Year award in 2012 and 2014 as well as one of the CBC's top 10 bookshops in Canada. Owner Shelley McGrath integrates her well-stocked bookstore into the community with activities such as *A Series of Fortunate Events* and with presentations of authors reading and discussing their recent works. These events are often held at Wooden Sticks Golf Club and include either brunch or wine and cheese, depending on the time of day. They are a bargain at \$25 per session.

Blue Heron also presents writing courses such as Basic Creative Writing, Turning your Life into a Story, Make Money Writing, and Creating Short Stories; workshops including Find your Voice, Presenting with Pizzazz, and Hand Lettering; a monthly book club and art classes for kids.

The Blue Heron Book Store is located on the main street of Uxbridge. Several BGCC residents are devotees of these workshops and presentations. Why not join them as they meet interesting authors?





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Take My Advice... *For What It's Worth*

BY JOHN GORMAN



Many years ago my father told me that, “even when people ask for your opinion, they really don’t want it.” Nevertheless, I have to admit that I am quick to offer my wise insight whether or not it has been asked for.

Now there are several questions which are universally acknowledged by men as potential land mines to be avoided in order to preserve a relatively peaceful marriage. Chief among these is the ever popular, “Does this dress make me look fat?” This is only slightly less dangerous than the volatile, “Do you think our neighbour Suzie is attractive?”

At least the first question masquerades as a sincere quest for advice. The latter is simply a trap from which there is no escape. Even if you pretend that you have never noticed your neighbour you are doomed.

Recent events that have resulted in expensive decisions have demonstrated to me that I should be cautious when seeking advice in the future.

Consider these three situations. Several of my neighbours mentioned that they were replacing their roofs and suggested I have mine checked. So, in due course, I contacted a recommended roofing contractor who apparently brought his ladder and camera to my home one day when we were out. Shortly after he emailed me some pictures of my roof. At least I gather they were of my roof. I personally have never been up there so I couldn’t recognize anything in the photos.

My roofer friend advised me that the pictures clearly demonstrated serious damage. When I asked his advice on making repairs he informed me that I should replace the entire roof. Of course I was shocked, first by this drastic analysis but then more so by the estimate he provided. I had replaced a roof some years prior on a much larger home for an amount which I recalled as about a third of what this new one was to cost me.

Of course, back then one could buy an entire house in a good neighbourhood for less than my car costs me now.

Not too long after this experience, I had a minor tooth problem so I contacted a local dentist who agreed to accept me as a patient. Shortly thereafter I found myself in her office where she dealt with my cavity and took a full set of x-rays that she advised were necessary.

Of course she found some additional problems that concerned her. So I asked her what her recommendations for these new-found problems would be. To my horror, the estimated cost for the restoration of my dental health exceeded the cost of my new roof!

Lastly, as luck would have it, some digestive problems resulted in an ultra sound that caused me to visit a recommended surgeon. Following a nice chat during which we developed quite a rapport, this doctor informed me that, in his opinion, my gall bladder was the cause of many of my problems. I asked him what solution he would suggest. I know you will be surprised to learn that the surgeon recommended surgery. Duh!

Now of course these examples are of a somewhat different type than ones like, “If I die would you re-marry?” They fall into the category of questions which generate a predictable response.

Nevertheless my friends have been quick to offer personal advice on how I should handle each of these situations. Most have experts in both roofing and medicine that they are quick to quote. Frankly, I am surprised at just how many of my friends are dealing with doctors that are the “tops in their field.” It seems that I have been dealing with the marginally qualified.

In summary however I am told that I should have every confidence that my doctor, dentist and roofing contractor are giving me sound guidance. At least that’s the opinion of 62 per cent of my neighbours and friends.



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Stretching Exercises... For The Canadian Dollar

BY KEN MIYAUCHI



The annual snowbird trek to southern climes has begun while the value of the Canadian dollar (CAD) continues to decline. It's now time to reconsider seriously your winter escape plans and to re-examine measures to stretch the buying power of our dollar.

Can you avoid buying U.S. dollars (USD)? If you own U.S. investments, consider selling some for your USD needs. If the value of this investment is down, you may even realize a capital loss to save even more at tax time.

The best way to purchase USD is to find someone who receives income in U.S. dollars and who regularly buys CAD. By exchanging funds at the Bank of Canada rate, each of you can save 3% in bank fees. Most people convert CAD into USD at a bank. Consider the Canadian Snowbird Association and foreign exchange companies who usually offer better rates. Forecast your needs for the entire vacation and buy sufficient USD at one time. One large exchange will get you a better rate than multiple smaller amounts. If you prefer to stay with a bank, TD as an example will give you a preferred exchange rate if you open a USD account.

Never, ever, use a CAD credit card in the U.S. Avoid the 2.5% surcharge by using a USD credit card and promptly pay the balance using your USD account. Even better, use cash or a debit card. A finite bank account will foster better spending habits than a seemingly unlimited credit card.

Let's look at our spending habits. If we spend less while in the U.S., we need fewer U.S. dollars. For small purchases, adopt the "10- Second Rule." If, in 10 seconds, you can't come up with a good reason why you NEED it, put it back. For more expensive items, use the "30- Day Rule." Often after a month has passed, the urge to buy will have passed as well.

Have you noticed that Amazon.com now has a "one click purchase" option that makes it oh so easy to buy? Don't succumb. Instead, remove your credit card number from the account. The time you spend getting your card and entering the numbers will give you time to reconsider the purchase.

While in Florida, many of us regularly dine out. Consider not only eating in more often, but also inviting friends over. By the time you have exhausted your return meal invitations, you will definitely be ahead.

When eating at home, pay more attention to your grocery bill. According to a University of Pennsylvania study, avoiding impulse buying can save up to 23% of a grocery bill. Always make a grocery list and stick to it. This will not only avoid unnecessary items but may trim your waistline as well. Never shop while you're hungry as this encourages you to buy more.

If you own in the U.S., look at your home expenses for savings. Examine your property tax bill. The U.S. National Taxpayers Union estimates that 60% of assessments are too high but only 2% of homeowners appeal them. A small change can lead to big savings, this year and every year. Converting lights to LED or CFL bulbs, installing a programmable thermostat and doing the maintenance chores yourself will also reduce your USD needs.

Another vacation option is to trade homes. You can save on accommodation costs and also food costs by eating in more often. Even better, there are no U.S. tax implications because no money is exchanged.

There is no better way to save on U.S. funds than by vacationing in Canada. For many of us, however, going south is an important rite of winter, so exchanging and spending fewer U.S. dollars is a must.

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Life On The Pond

BY ENID SANDERS

I had a dream of living in the country but working and children kept us in the city. When our last child left home we decided that it was time to move. I assumed we would find a lovely piece of property in the country. The two main requirements: it must have a pond and enough acreage so that the nearest neighbour was not visible. I wanted to be able to open the door and allow our dogs to run free.

Reality soon set in and we realized that we were getting older and were not really equipped to become gentlemen farmers.

Then we found Ballantrae Golf and Country Club and with a little imagination, it met most of our requirements. The country was close by and we chose a lot on a pond. The only difference was that we now also acquired some wonderful neighbours who definitely were within sight. Well, you cannot have everything!

When we moved here 12 years ago, the pond was not the active beehive that it has become. I was fascinated by the fox that obviously had its home somewhere on the other side of it. I would watch him every morning when he was on the hunt for food. Sadly he disappeared when the homes on the opposite side of the pond were built, but this summer he made a reappearance. I am sure that he has a family hidden nearby.

Animals all require water and therefore many of them have found our pond. What this means is that I spend a great deal of time looking out the windows or sitting on the deck.

There are now at least three Great Blue Herons that return every spring. I cannot wait to open the blinds in the morning to see what is sitting on or

near the pond. The heron is the most incredible bird to watch. He has an inordinate amount of patience but when he sees a fish that he wants, he rarely misses. The osprey is also an amazing bird to watch. We never get tired of watching him fish and are amazed at how he carries the fish off to his nest, wherever that may be. I was sitting on the deck reading a book and a hummingbird was confident enough to come and drink from the plant that was sitting on the table. If only I had had a camera and not a book.

I keep the binoculars close at hand as there is always something exciting to watch. The Koi fish have grown so big that we hardly see them jumping anymore and it is almost impossible for many of the birds to catch them. I know that the muskrat has a home somewhere along the side of the pond but as many times as I watch him swimming back and forth, I cannot find its location.

Probably the most interesting birds to watch are the ducks. It seemed that we were not going to see any babies this summer but suddenly they appeared. Art counted at least 25 ducks that now appear every morning. I do not know where they sleep at night or where they keep the babies hidden, but I can hardly wait to see them each day. They play on our neighbour's lawn, pushing and chasing each other. I could watch them all day. One winter day, we saw a coyote walking across the frozen pond.

We are very lucky to live here and one day I will prove that I actually saw a beaver in the pond. I cannot find anyone to back me up on this one but I swear he was there.



Active Aging Week HIGHLIGHTS

BY DAYNA
STODDART



Age is just a number. This message was prevalent throughout the 17 seminars during Active Aging Week. Your chronological age may be 65, but it's NOT your biological age. We are all aging and we cannot stop the clock. We can, however, make an impact on our biological age by the lifestyle choices we make. Our well-being and how we age go hand-in-hand. Active Aging Week's goal is to spread positive messages of aging by energizing the community with experiences, current research, information and strategies that foster well-being and growth in all dimensions of wellness.

Here are some key points that our presenters shared during the weeklong event:

- The 85+ year-old is the largest growing segment of our population.
- In 2003 there were 6,300 centenarians living in Canada; by 2050 there will be 80,000.
- In Canada, as of September 29, 2015, the 65+ demographic is larger than that of children under the age of 15.
- 80% of chronic disease is preventable through diet and exercise.
- Including more greens in your diet will decrease inflammation and cellular damage, as well as improve energy levels.
- As we age, our diet should consist more and more of nutrient-dense foods and less of the processed kind. Eating the rainbow on a daily basis is the goal. Stay tuned for "Optimum Nutrition for Healthy Aging" programs and workshops to be offered by a registered dietitian on topics ranging from cooking classes to how to shop the grocery store, and more.
- Exercise can reduce the risk of macular degeneration up to 70%.
- 80% of strokes can be prevented. Following a stroke, 1.9 million neurons die every minute; hence the necessity for recognition and immediate action.
- If your goal is to have a more efficient, calm and organized home, use the five principles of organizing (**SPACE**): **S**ort, **P**are down (purge), **A**ssign a home, **C**ontainize, **E**valuate.
- Professional "Healthcare Navigators" will help you manoeuvre through our complex Canadian healthcare system. Their role is to help you understand your healthcare options, the resources available and to provide some guidance during what could be a very stressful time.
- Future planning is imperative. Create a binder of essential information: lists of assets; lists of advisors; your will; funeral arrangements; passwords; how and when bills are paid; etc. You do not want to leave your loved ones with the burden of figuring this out.
- Psychologist and Researcher Andree- Ann Cyr presented a seminar on Memory and Aging. She explained how semantic memory improves with age, and episodic memory declines with age, but there are strategies that we can use to help cope with this.
- Does this happen to you? You head from one room to another and can't remember what you are going to get? Is this a problem

of memory or attention? Dr. Cyr explained that this is actually an attention issue. She highly recommends joining a meditation class as recent research shows that meditation is very helpful at improving attention. Join a meditation class at our centre.

- Aerobic exercise has the biggest impact on brain health. Aerobic exercise increases the size of the hippocampus, the memory area of the brain.
- Recent research indicates an association with oral health and brain health.
- 25% of Canadians are informal caregivers. Are you a caregiver? You are not alone. There are over eight million informal caregivers in Canada today and the numbers are increasing daily. There is a growing strain on informal caregivers to keep their loved ones at home. Memory &

Company is an 11,000 square foot social club, health club and spa that just happens to operate a day program for people living with Alzheimer's and related dementias. Memory & Company is not your typical day program but an individualized club where their members' happiness and engagement is the priority. At the same time, caregivers get the support and life balance they need to keep their loved one living with dementia in the community as long as possible.

- Lesley Bonar, a resident of BGCC is considered to be an expert in her field of advanced skin care, specialising in European traditional facials, customised to suit your specific needs. Lesley has moved her business from midtown after 18 years and is now working from her home in our community.

Positive Feedback on Active Aging Week from a New Resident



Susan Edasi, a new resident to our community, attended EVERY seminar. I was grateful to get her perspective and input.

What were the highlights of Active Aging Week for you?

The highlight for me was the opportunity to attend workshops discussing many matters related to aging well at one convenient location. The topics addressed the physical, mental, emotional and financial aspects of aging.

What main thing did you learn and what will you start to incorporate into your life?

I found the naturopaths' presentation from the Stouffville Natural Health Clinic very professional and informative with a focus on healthy aging and prevention of disease or ailments impacting one's lifestyle.

Is there anything that you learned that was really astonishing?

One surprising fact I learned from multiple presenters is that all vitamins are not created equal. This is one area in which I will be making a few changes.

How would you evaluate the Active Aging Week and its presenters?

I am really impressed with Active Aging Week and will look forward to attending any future workshops. I found the majority of the presenters very professional, approachable and sincerely interested in providing you with information that would be valuable and useful.

Susan Edasi



Ashley Kwong, Memory & Company



Dr. Lazier, Stouffville Family Dentistry



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बॉलीवुड COMES TO BALLANTRAE

BY AJIT SAPPAL

By popular demand, Bollywood came back to the Recreation Centre last September 19. Many revellers dressed up in traditional Indian clothing with some ladies in flowing, colourful saris and men in silk kurtas.

The display of the *Paalki* (Palanquin), a sedan chair dressed up in colourful Indian silk and flowers was a show stopper. Many residents had their pictures taken with the *Paalki*. Another table decorated with fresh rose petals and peacock feathers displayed some musical instruments that are played to accompany Indian classical vocal music.

Attendees thoroughly enjoyed the bountiful Indian buffet and the evening's entertainment. Dolly Bhatia-Frolic began with Indian classical, semi-classical and then modern dancing. She was followed by a group of brilliantly costumed, intensely energetic young boys who enthralled the crowd with their various dance routines. Dolly concluded the evening by interacting with the crowd, teaching dance steps and hand movements.

All in all, we enjoyed another successful, sold-out Bollywood evening. A very big THANK YOU to everybody for helping and for participating.





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The Dave Parsons Concert: A Tribute to Jerome Kern

BY JOHN GORMAN

A Ballantrae tradition – between Thanksgiving and New Year's each year – is a concert by the Dave Parsons Quintet.

That tradition continued on the afternoon of October 25 when the popular group entertained over 125 residents with ballads and swing versions of familiar favourites.

This concert focussed on the music of Jerome Kern, the great American composer of music for Broadway and Hollywood films. Folks were transported back to a classic era in music via the melodies of the iconic Broadway success, *Showboat* and such motion picture award winning tunes as *The Last Time I Saw Paris*. Kern was also the fellow who wrote *Ol' Man River* and *Smoke Gets In your Eyes*.

The Quintet has had some changes in personnel in recent years but Dave has managed to maintain

performance excellence by recruiting established, professional newcomers. Of course Ballantrae resident Dave remains as the affable leader of this wonderful group that also features the vocals of the popular Lisa Levy.



HOTG Volunteer Appreciation Lunch

BY ANITA DRAYCOTT

It takes a lot of people to create and distribute *Home on the Green*. On Friday, October 23 almost 80 volunteers who contribute their time and talents on behalf of our community publication attended a "thank you" lunch in the Recreation Centre hosted by publisher, Donna Clark and the magazine's board of directors. A delicious lunch, catered by Flutes & Forks, consisted of arugula salad, roasted chicken, seasonal veggies and quinoa spiked with black olives and cranberries, along with brownies and fresh fruit for dessert.

Ballantrae resident and our very own town councillor, Maurice Smith, gave an entertaining talk about how *HOTG* kickstarted his journalism career. As a token of appreciation for all they've contributed to *HOTG* and our community, a framed mock cover of Al and Marna Moldon riding their motorcycle at the opening parade of our Summer Games was presented to the couple. A number of past volunteers were also thanked, including Linda Dallman, who served as controller and then as a board member for a few years. To absolutely everyone who helps on *HOTG*, sincere thanks for your continued support.





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Aga Khan Museum Trip

BY KATHY BILLINGTON

Have you noticed two very distinct angular structures while traveling on the DVP near Eglinton Avenue? You've spotted the Aga Khan Museum and Prayer Hall that are surrounded by gardens and five infinity pools. Built on seventeen acres by the philanthropist and religious leader, Aga Khan IV, it is the first museum in North America dedicated to everything Islamic.

A small but enthusiastic group of Ballantrae history buffs visited the museum on October 21. Samir, our knowledgeable tour guide, gave us a combined tour, explaining about both the architecture and the many artifacts housed in the main building. We climbed a blue marble spiral staircase to view a wonderful theatre made of teak with excellent acoustics. Next we visited a room full of beautiful ceramics, some plates dating from 900 CE, all donated by Caroline Khan.

We also admired a huge wall hanging that looked like a plush carpet but was in fact made of one million straight pins depicting the four sides of Paradise.

Precious metals of gold and silver were evident in the numerous volumes of the Qur'an on display throughout the main exhibit. Many of the books contained intricate and colourful drawings.

Besides religious artifacts, secular objects such as household items including traditional carpets, ewers, candlesticks—even a man's silk tunic dating from 1500 CE—were on display. It was amazing to see books on anatomy and medicine that were used in Muslim countries during medieval times.

Did you know that the tulip is native to Turkey and holds religious significance to Muslims? It is often depicted on Islamic ceramics and textiles because the petals look like praying hands, even when the flower is dying. Twenty-two thousand tulips that have been planted on the Aga Khan Museum grounds should make a very welcome sight next spring.

We agreed that the Aga Khan Museum excursion was a worthwhile and informative trip to a unique cultural venue in Toronto. Many thanks to our charming chauffeurs: Ron Brewing, Ron Mikitish and Robert Pitour.





Swinging in LOS CABOS

BY ANITA DRAYCOTT

Hollywood stars such as Bing Crosby and John Wayne, lured by the legendary sport fishing, initially put Mexico's Los Cabos on the tourist map in the 1950s. While fishing still draws avid anglers to what's called "marlin alley," Los Cabos has also become one of the world's top golf destinations where the desert meets the Sea of Cortez.

Jack Nicklaus officially opened his epic layout, Quivira, last December, arguably his most daring design to date. It has the fewest bunkers and the smallest green. The front nine is par-34; the back nine is par-38—another departure from the norm.

Quivira boasts more oceanfront exposure than any other course in Los Cabos. All 18 fairways feature views of the Pacific. From December to March you will likely spot whales leaping in the wild blue yonder. The layout with four tee placements, ranging from 7,139 to 4,326 yards, starts at sea level, scales cliffs more than 275 feet above the surf, spans canyons and arroyos, meanders through dunes and desert and returns to the sea at the finish.

There's not a weak hole at Quivira; many are spectacular. For example, the ten-minute drive to the fifth traces a switchback route up the side of a mountain. The fairway, slanted below a dune on the right, traces the edge of sheer granite cliffs to the left as it tumbles downhill to a transition zone before dropping to a rock-walled, cliff-hanging green 106 feet below the tee.

When asked to predict how Quivira will impact his legacy, Nicklaus says, "I think some people will say it's the most spectacular and best golf course they have ever seen and others will say, 'You have got to be kidding.' I don't think there will be a lot of middle ground. If you look at the game of golf as having a fun experience, and playing in an exciting and beautiful place, you will absolutely love it. From start to finish, I'd say Quivira has as much pace, variety and spectacular beauty as any course I've ever designed."

All-Inclusive Golf

To play Quivira you must be a resident or guest of one of four Pueblo Bonito Oceanfront Resorts and Spas in Los Cabos: the adults-only Pueblo Bonito Pacifica; the family-friendly Pueblo Bonito Sunset (both share property with Quivira); Pueblo Bonito Rosé; or Pueblo Bonito Los Cabos (both located on El Médano beach). Stay-and-play packages are available.

A golf day at Quivira Golf Club starts with a complimentary shuttle to the club. Warm up on the range. Perhaps you'd like to relax your swing with a Bloody Maria? Snacks, such as tuna sliders and fish tacos and drinks are included in your green fee.

After the fourth hole, golfers maneuver their carts to the first comfort station, perched 200 feet above the ocean. Help yourself to more refreshments. The Oasis halfway house offers inventive takes on classic Baja cuisine, plus a tequila bar. Players may indulge again at the 16th.

A Tale of Two Towns

The dramatically different towns of Cabo San Lucas and San José del Cabo act as bookends to the 20-mile corridor of hotels and golf courses known as Los Cabos. San José del Cabo has retained the vibe of an authentic Mexican *pueblo*. Cobblestone streets, intimate restaurants and boutiques radiate from the central main square and mission church. Cabo San Lucas, at the other end of the corridor, is party central with funky

bars and the slick Luxury Avenue Mall centered on a marina.

Golf Galore

Los Cabos boasts about a dozen terrific courses. Nicklaus's Ocean Course at Cabo del Sol is a must. For bragging rights, hit El Cardonal, Tiger Woods' design debut at Diamante. The sister course here is the Dunes by Davis Love III.





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Coach House Pub: Visit Your New Local

BY SUSAN GAMBLE

Last January, when Bill Perrie noticed a “For Lease” sign on Highway 48 south of the Aurora Road, he thought, “This would be a great site for a lovely wee pub.” As you might guess, Bill hails from Scotland! His three soon-to-be-partners in this venture were his wife Debbie, and friends Barb and Andy Jones. Debbie is also Scottish, Andy is English and Barb is a Maritimer.

All of them having had experience in the hospitality field they had lightheartedly joked about opening a pub one day. They visited the site and wasted no time getting their new pub ready. Through word of mouth and advertising they soon located an executive chef and a sous-chef. By early July the Coach House Pub was open for business.

The chef helped to design a traditional British menu, in addition to offering daily specials and a variety of desserts. Does steak and Guinness pie (one of my favourites) tickle your taste buds? How about liver and onions or slow roasted prime rib (a Sunday special)? Or the all-time favourite—fish and chips in beer batter? For those preferring lighter fare, their Cobb or roasted beet salad might appeal. The daily features usually include a soup, a chicken and a pasta dish.

Their delightfully decadent dessert offerings include carrot cheesecake with caramel sauce, sweet and salty chocolate truffle cake, key lime pie, rice pudding and, last but by no means least, raspberry yogurt cheesecake with caramel (which from personal experience I can attest is scrumptious!). Stay tuned for sticky toffee pudding that the chef hopes to add to the menu soon.

Already popular with many Ballantrae residents, the pub has a well-designed, comfortable interior, and in summer months also has a shaded patio. Take-out service is available should you prefer to eat at home.

And what is a review of a pub without some mention of its beers? The Coach House serves

nine beers on tap, including Mill Street Brewery’s Cobblestone, and Stouffville Brewing Company’s Red Falcon.

In true British tradition, the Coach House Pub will open for several hours on Christmas Day. They will also put on a Christmas event with details to come.

The Coach House has what every local should: ample (free) parking, open seven days a week, reasonable prices and extremely friendly service. Even the credit card machine says, “Thank you for your business!”



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Playing the Slots at Georgian Downs

BY MARIETTE BLOUIN-JOHNSON

October 7 was a beautiful autumn day, perfect for a drive to Georgian Downs in Innisfil, Ontario. Before boarding our bus, Marna Moldon recorded the moment in a group photo of 54 enthusiastic would-be gamblers. *En route* we admired the fall colours, enjoyed refreshments and started gaming as 10 lucky people won prizes. A choice of 1000 slot machines greeted us on arrival at Georgian Downs! At the end of the day, some of the luckiest winners were Nancy Pieterse, Sandy Howson and Margaret Rochon.

Make plans to join us next year and test your luck!



Stratford Fall Trip

BY KATHY BILLINGTON

A warm, sunny day last September was ideal for a bus trip through rural Ontario to attend the musical, *Carousel* at Stratford's Avon Theatre. Pre-theatre, we enjoyed a complimentary glass of wine and a tasty meal with our fellow "theatre-goers."

Creative staging of *Carousel* incorporated an actual moving merry-go-round at the start and end of the performance on the small stage—a feat in itself! The superb soloists gave us goose bumps with their pitch-perfect vocals. Well known tunes had us humming *If I Loved You*, *June Is Bustin' Out All Over*, and *You'll Never Walk Alone* during intermission and on the way home.

Many thanks go to Ron and Anne Brewing who organized this sold-out event.

Stratford
FESTIVAL

Ladies' Tuesday No-Stress Golf League

BY DEB KIMPTON

In 2015 we had more than 70 new and returning members sign up for a season of golf at Maples of Ballantrae. How exciting to have so many newcomers interested in golf! If you're interested in taking up the game or just want to golf in a stress-free, fun environment, please consider joining us next season.

This year we continued to use a shotgun format. Monthly games at other area golf courses added to the fun and enticed new members to join our league. Each of these games was arranged by our members to provide different golfing challenges.

Of course, all good things must come to an end (only temporarily!) and on Tuesday, September 22, the Ladies' No Stress League wound up the season with golf and lunch at Maples of Ballantrae. A warm fall day made for an enjoyable final round. Thanks to all of our members for making this a great summer of golf.

Our thanks for the additional prizes offered this year go to DJ Halvorsen for the "laptivity" box and to Alasdair Patton, RBC Wealth Management Group, Aurora, for the many golf-related items. Money raised by league registration dues was donated to the Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank.

Our Coffee Meet & Greet will take place on Tuesday, April 26, 2016 at Maples of Ballantrae at 10:00 a.m. See you in the spring!

For further information, please contact:
Deb Kimpton - nostressgolf@yahoo.ca or
905-642-6426





Q&A WITH LOWELL & BONNIE DENNIS

BY LYNNE BALFOUR

We were all impressed with the volume of food served from our small Recreation Centre kitchen during the summer games. How did you manage?

We estimated the number of people attending the Games, calculated the number of servings and the timing. It is really like production in a factory. Of course we had a budget. We picked favourite foods that were quick to prepare. Our Recreation Centre kitchen has only one convection oven and no stovetop facilities. Foods such as French fries were cooked in a truck by a caterer. Mary Freedman was a great help with her background of cooking courses. Volunteers made sandwiches and husked corn. (Lowell)

What is your background? Did you train as a chef?

No. After university, my younger brothers and I started working in a restaurant that our father was involved with. Chefs were hired, mostly with English training or military experience, and I

learned by watching them. We operated about 15 restaurants and bars over the years, many types from buffet to family to delicatessens. The first was the Town and Country Buffet in downtown Toronto. We owned Sunshines Restaurant outside Bayview Mall for 35 years. In fact, I worked in the restaurant business for 44 years! (Lowell)

I owned and operated two large spas in Toronto, one at Bayview Village and one at York Mills and Leslie. In addition I raised five children. (Bonnie)

How do restaurants judge the amount of food needed so that they don't waste a lot?

They base their ordering on the past history of orders, the weather, and whether there are large-group reservations. (Lowell)

Do you have a favourite restaurant or food?

We enjoy going to Scaramouche in Toronto. We don't eat in restaurants often. I will order fish or

risotto or prime rib, never steak in a restaurant. We tend to entertain at home a lot. (Lowell)
I have a rule never to order something I can prepare at home where we enjoy pasta, fish, and stews. I do a lot of baking. (Bonnie)

What do you like about living in Ballantrae?

We have met so many friends here. I enjoy competitive tennis, golfing and gardening. (Lowell)

I enjoy golf and long walks. We have lived here five years but previously we lived in the Ballantrae area in Trail of the Woods for years. (Bonnie)

Tell us about your family.

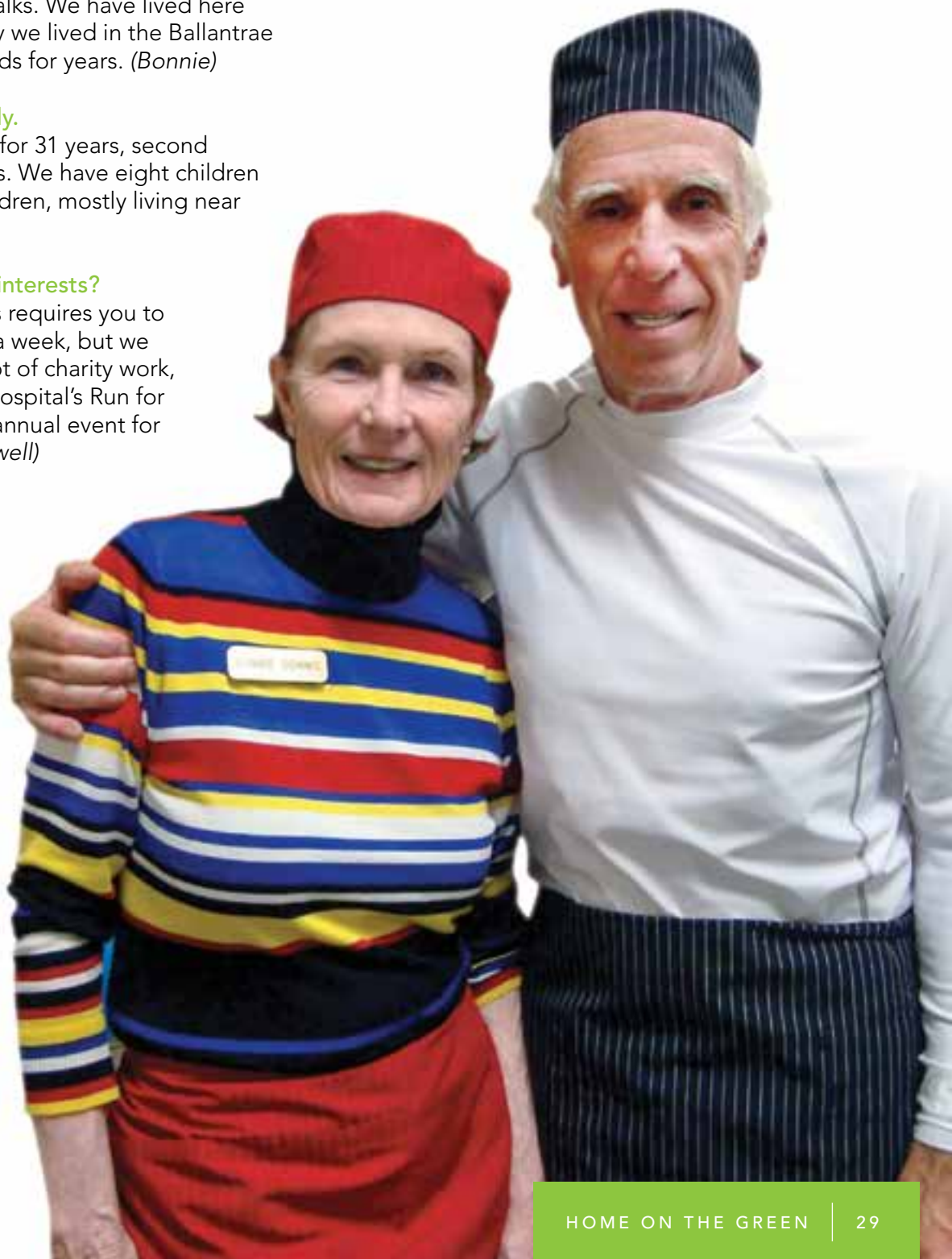
We have been married for 31 years, second marriages for both of us. We have eight children and nineteen grandchildren, mostly living near Toronto. (Bonnie)

What were your other interests?

The restaurant business requires you to work six to seven days a week, but we became involved in a lot of charity work, primarily Sunnybrook Hospital's Run for Research as well as an annual event for Providence Health. (Lowell)

At Christmas we often have big dinners for family and friends. Do you have any helpful tips for entertaining large groups?

I always cook the turkey early in the day, until just done. It is then neatly carved, and placed in a perforated steamer insert over a pan of water. Covered tightly with foil, it is reheated on the stove top or in the oven for at least 30 minutes just before we eat. That way the meat is moist and there is less kitchen confusion amidst the guests! (Lowell)



Ballantrae Craft Show

BY JOHN GORMAN

The 2015 Ballantrae Craft Show & Sale featured the works of a talented group of 20 crafters on October 31. Items on sale included jewellery, handmade greeting cards, original paintings, birdhouses, charcuterie boards, knitting and needlework, pottery...and much more.

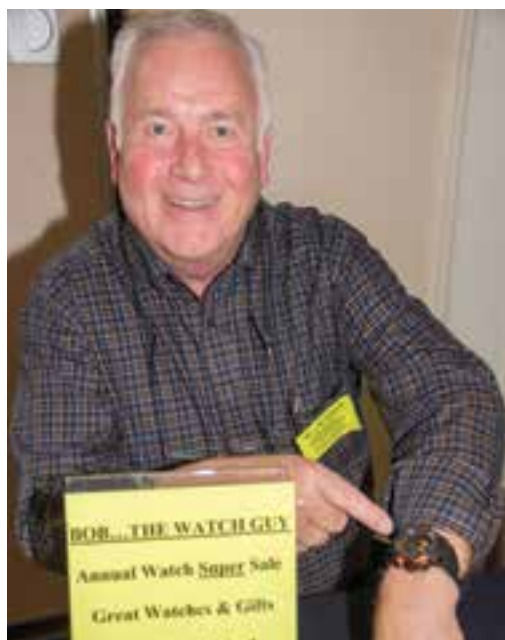
This annual exhibition encourages residents to share their "products" with their neighbours. Not only does the exhibition reveal the wide variety of excellent material produced by this group, but there is the added benefit of an opportunity to get started on your holiday shopping.

In addition, attendees are encouraged to share their experiences and knowledge with others so that, in the future, they might expand their hobby or take up a new and rewarding activity.

This show has become a tradition in BGCC each fall and consistently draws a substantial attendance. It is a unique event, inasmuch as all of the exhibitors are required to be residents of our community and "merchandise" is the product of their efforts only. No outside vendors are permitted to participate and no advertising of the show is done outside of our community.

This is an annual event. So mark your calendars and plan to drop by the Recreation Centre on the last Saturday of October 2016. Drop in for free coffee and home-baked goodies and enjoy the show. There is no admittance fee, but bring your wallet anyway.





WHERE EVERYDAY IS *Christmas*

BY ANITA DRAYCOTT

At Jacqueline Kemball's house it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas—every day of the year!

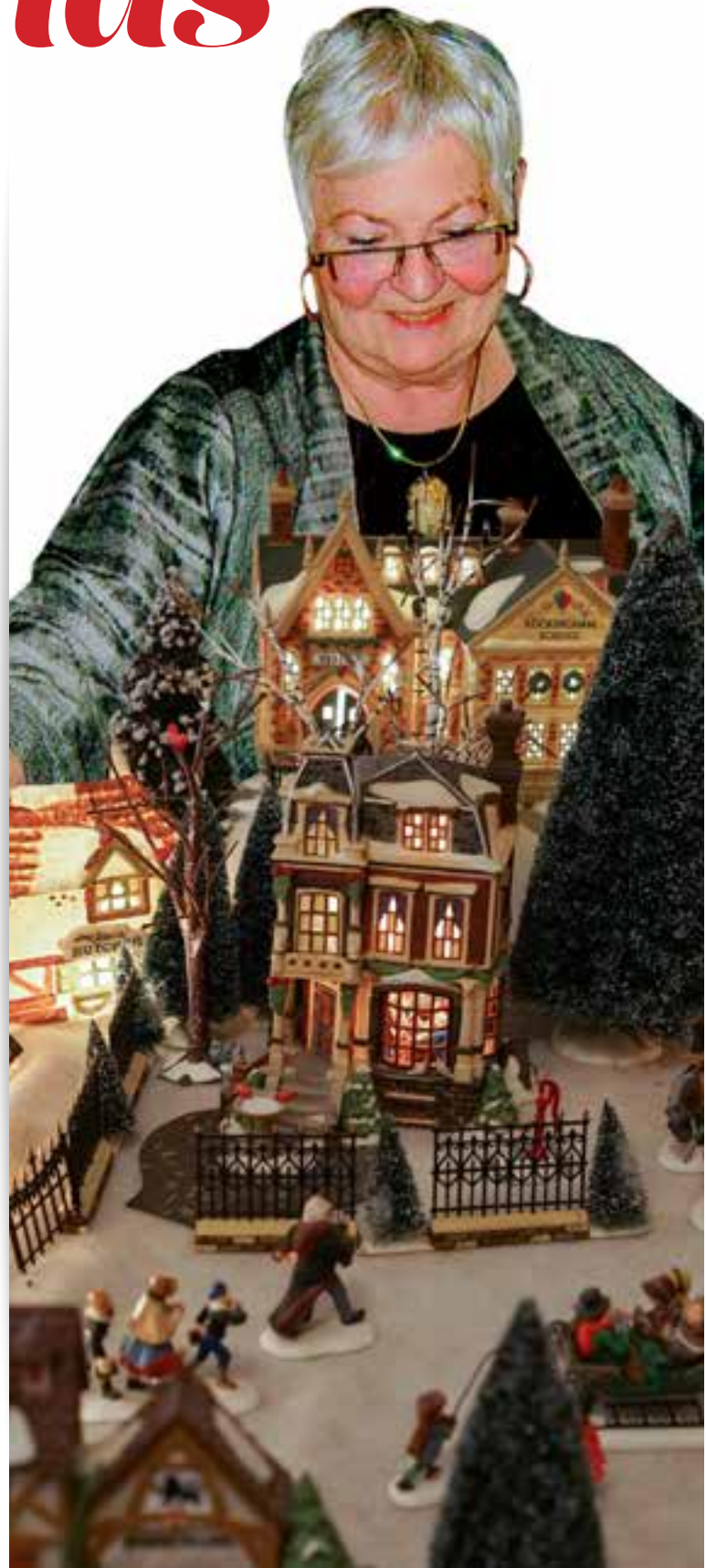
Jacqueline's collection of Christmas decorations began innocently enough in 1984 when her late husband Walter bought her six small thatched cottages to put under the tree. They were made by Department 56, an American company best known for its hand-crafted lighted villages. The collection started growing in 1986 when the company started to produce more elaborate miniature houses and ornaments evoking Victorian England village life. Jacqueline loved creating her winter villages and her husband and family showered her with more and more.

In 2010, when Jacqueline moved to Ballantrae, she decided it was too much work to set up and light her various villages and then pack them away every year. So why not leave the house decorated for Christmas permanently? It brings back fond memories of family and friends. Now she has miniature Dickens-style scenes in various rooms of her home.

Highlights of her whimsical collection include Scrooge's house complete with dancing ghosts, Fezziwig's Warehouse where you can see couples dancing through the window and a working skating rink. In addition to the houses and buildings Jacqueline brings her snowy scenes to life with miniature trains, trees, horse-drawn carriages, street vendors and more.

A self-confessed collector, Jacqueline also has shelves of Royal Doulton figurines, a row of nutcrackers, casserole lids and potty covers.

"Some people might think I'm a bit over the edge, but this is my passion and pleasure," she says.





Potluck

We asked some of our favourite cooks in Ballantrae to share some holiday recipes. Enjoy.

HOT CHEESY DIP

From Richard Hughes

This dip is super easy and a party hit. There's never any left.

8 oz cream cheese
8 oz shredded Swiss cheese
3 chopped green onions
½ cup Miracle Whip
5-6 slices crisp bacon

Combine cheeses, onion, Miracle Whip in an ovenproof bowl. Mix well and then bake in oven for 25 minutes at 350 F until mixture is hot throughout. Stir well, then break up bacon into small bits and sprinkle over the top of the heated mixture. Serve with favourite crackers.

BRAN SPICE MUFFINS

From Ginny Tullis

This is a recipe I often make and deliver to friends when they need a little comfort food to "start" their day.

Dry Mixture

1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
1 ½ cups natural bran
¼ cup wheat germ
½ cup lightly packed brown sugar
2 tsp baking soda
½ tsp salt
1 tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp nutmeg
½ cup chopped walnuts, sunflower seeds, pecans... your choice
1 cup chopped dates or raisins

Moist Mixture

2 large eggs
¼ cup vegetable oil
¼ cups cooking molasses
1 ½ cups milk
2 tbsp white or apple cider vinegar
1 cup finely grated carrots or pineapple

Preheat oven to 400F and grease 24 muffin cups. Combine all dry ingredients in a large bowl. In a

medium bowl, beat eggs lightly and stir in remaining moist ingredients. Combine moist and dry mixtures stirring just enough to moisten. Fill 24 muffin cups ¾ full. Bake 15 minutes.

FAST & FLAVOURFUL SQUASH SOUP

From William Orr

This recipe proves that soup doesn't have to be made from scratch to taste great.

10 oz frozen pureed squash
2 cups chicken bouillon
1 tsp ground cumin
4 whole green onions, thinly sliced
¼ cups crumbled creamy goat cheese, Stilton or Parmesan

Combine the squash, bouillon and cumin in a medium-size saucepan. Cover and place over medium heat. Cook stirring often until squash is completely melted. Stir in the green onions. Sprinkle crumbled cheese over each bowl of hot soup.

HOT MULLED APPLE CIDER

From Karen Clark

A mug of this hits the spot on a frosty winter night when you and friends are gathered around the fireplace.

1 apple
2 tsp whole cloves
1 orange, thinly sliced
2 litres apple cider
½ cup brown sugar
1 tsp allspice
pinch of grated nutmeg

Studd the apple with cloves. In medium pot, combine studded apple and other ingredients. Bring to a simmer over low heat for about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, discard apple and ladle into mugs.

Garnish with a cinnamon stir stick. Some might want to add a wee dram of rum.

Enter our 2016 Photo Competition:

Deadline July 1, 2016

BY PAT WHITTINGHAM

Imagine the satisfaction of winning the next *HOTG* photo competition and seeing your image on the cover of the fall 2016 issue!

Images will be judged on originality, technical quality, composition, overall impact and artistic merit. Technical quality relates to image clarity (sharpness), image size in portrait orientation, image noise, and colour balance. This year we'll allow submissions that have undergone basic colour adjustment, resizing, cropping and noise reduction in either the camera itself or with post-production in an image editor such as Apple Photo, Picasa, Lightroom, etc.

There are no restrictions on when the images were taken. We are especially interested in images that showcase the wide range of habitats across our planet including forests, grasslands, lakes and rivers, deserts, sunsets and sunrises, oceans and coasts, wildlife and world wonders. Please do not include photographs of pets or domestic animals. Images of captive animals photographed in zoos and commercial game farms or wildlife photographed in provincial, state and national wildlife preserves are allowed. If you include people in your submission, you will need to obtain the necessary releases from the individuals depicted, and to provide copies of those releases to *HOTG*. A standard release form is available from *HOTG* upon request.

Here are a few suggestions on getting the best from the camera. If you have a very high-resolution camera (16 megapixels or more) you could shoot in horizontal (landscape) or vertical (portrait) orientation as you would probably have sufficient resolution to crop for an 8.5" x 11" cover from a horizontal shot. Otherwise, you would be well advised to shoot in portrait orientation. Ideally the camera will be set for its highest resolution (fewest pictures stored on the memory card), Auto White

Balance (AWB) and Auto Focus (AF). Shooting in good light or using a flash can minimize image noise. If you are using a zoom lens, I suggest you get as close as possible to the intended composition to minimize cropping.

Of course creativity trumps all this guidance. Often deviation from these guidelines creates a winning image. So don't be afraid to "break the rules."

As we are looking for images for the front cover of the magazine, a portrait (vertical) orientation is preferable or a landscape shot of high quality that allows the image to be cropped to a final 8.5" x 11" portrait print size.

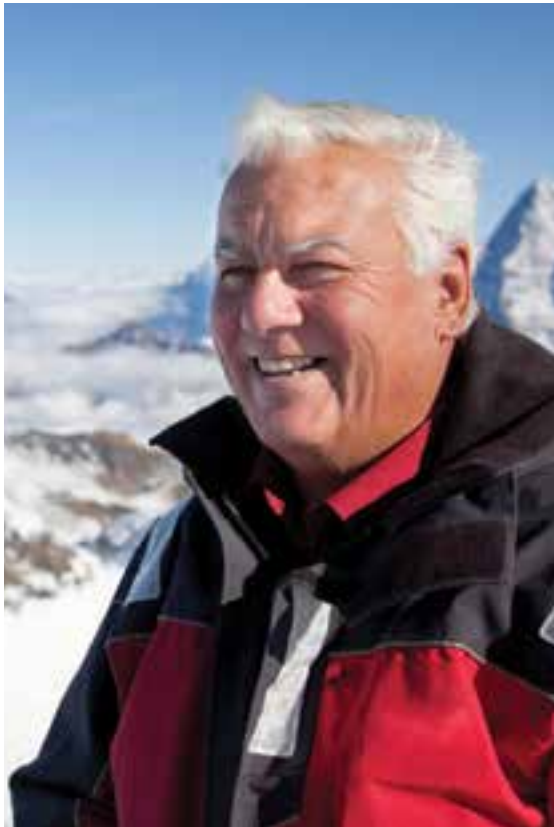
Note that the two photos below show the results of cropping a landscape horizontal shot down to a vertical portrait shot. But the suitability of a snowy winter scene on a fall issue cover would likely not make the cut. So please keep in mind that the winning image will be used on the fall cover when submitting your entries.

Details of the contest will appear before Christmas on the website <http://ourbgcc.com>.

Good luck and good shooting.

Below left: Original landscape orientation
Below right: Portrait (cropped)





Smile! Golf season's just a few weeks away

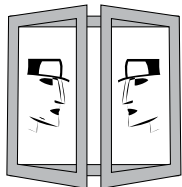
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BGCC Tennis Club 2015 Highlights

BY GARY STODDART

It seems just yesterday that we had our registration day, enrolling 123 players. Our Annual General Meeting provided membership feedback on the 2015 season involving various skill-level programs offered, insurance coverage, review of our financial statement (budget versus actual figures) and acquiring replacement volunteers for our 2016 team of executive and directors' positions.

To those homeowners new to the community, our tennis club is always looking for new members regardless of skill levels. We offer several programs to accommodate your past experience and to help promote new levels of expertise. Our club pro, Slavko Radek, provides private lessons and tutoring for all levels. We host a number of socials throughout the year providing the opportunity to meet, mingle and be involved in round robin competition.

John Perz (Vice President) received a good response from our members who donated old or unused tennis racquets to the Ontario Tennis Association Philpott Children's Fund for their inner city kids' program. We will collect more racquets in the spring of 2016, so if you know of others willing to donate please let us know.

Over the course of the summer, team championships were held in the men's, ladies' and mixed divisions. As with last year, the teams were chosen by draw and resulted in some interesting and very competitive matches. With the help of the social committee, who did everything from preparing breakfast cinnamon buns to providing barbecue lunches for the competitors and fans, the three competitions were well attended and socially successful. Thanks

to all of the members who came out to support friends and spouses, as well as to the competitors who showed up and showed off their skills.

The club was also highly involved in the 2015 Summer Games giving all five condos an opportunity to participate in men's, ladies' and mixed divisions. The final matches in each category drew lots of support from spectators (neighbours, friends and family), as well as others interested in tennis.

We wrapped up the 2015 season with a western-themed awards night that featured a pig roast, hay bales and lots of western clothing to make the evening a rousing success. Awards were given to the team champions and to the house league champions from the spring and summer sessions. As usual, the social committee put on a memorable, fun event to end the season on a high note.

I would like to thank the executive, the directors and all the volunteers administering our programs, championships and socials for their support in 2015.



Pacemaker's Sing-A-Long BY PAT WOOD



On a rainy October 28, Ballantrae folk gathered at the Recreation Centre for a sing-a-long fest. Our resident Pacemakers, Bob Ross, Ray Stadnick, Tom Clarke and Sam Guadagnolo, chased away the gloomy day with their great renditions of many old favourites.

A ladies' trio of Margaret Lunn, Kay Corlett and Erma Dominico reminded us it was good to be on *The Green Side of the Grass*. Frank Weis charmed us with his *Wooden Heart*, an old Elvis song, and Ray Knight performed a lovely rendition of *Edelweiss*. Jim Gillies, teasing he was Benny King's brother, sang *Stand By Me*. What a wealth of community talent we've got here! It was a fun afternoon, and if you missed it, the Pacemakers plan another songfest in spring. As we sang *I Wanna go Home*, it was good to know we were already there.



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For the Love of Reading BY ALMA BOYD

On the evening of last September 16, at the invitation of The Page Turners (aka Book Club 2), members of various other Ballantrae book clubs gathered to hear two very diverse speakers.

Marissa Campbell introduced us to her debut novel *Avelynn*. While this is her first novel, Marisa also co-authored an award-winning self-help book entitled *Life: Living in Fulfillment Every Day*.

Avelynn, titled after the protagonist, is an historic romance set in Anglo-Saxon England. Ambition, lust, and betrayal weave their fateful threads through *Avelynn*'s destiny. Against the political backdrop of Alfred the Great's war against the Vikings, *Avelynn* brings the Dark Ages to light and illuminates one woman's struggle to fight for what she believes in.

In addition to reading from her book, Marissa took us through the writing process and described the methods used to create a work that is hopefully worthy of publication. Though *Avelynn* was just released on September 8 of this year, Marissa is already busy, at the request of her publishers, writing the second book in an *Avelynn* series.

Hugh Hallam, a community resident and our second guest of the evening, told of his volunteer association at CNIB as a Braille transcriptionist. He began his talk by introducing the audience to Louis Braille who was blinded at age three, due to an accident in his father's harness-making workshop.

At age 10, he was admitted to the school for the blind in Paris. Here he was exposed to a tactile reading system designed by Captain Charles Barbier. This system used a cell which was too large and had too many raised dots for the size of the students' hands. By the age of 15, Louis had created his own system using a smaller six-dot cell. Known as Braille, this system is used throughout the world today.

When he completed his studies he was hired at the school as a teacher of history, algebra and geometry, becoming a full professor in 1833. Louis Braille died in 1852 at the age of 43.

Louis was an accomplished musician, playing the piano, cello and organ. During his years at the school he was also the organist at a large cathedral in Paris and travelled widely throughout France giving music concerts.

While electronics has advanced in the field of Braille transcription, there is still a need for a transcriptionist to proofread the copy to insure that the final text is "as written" and that the formatting is correct.

Hugh's presentation made our audience extremely aware of the time and dedication it takes to learn Braille and to bring the love of words to those who do not have the gift of sight.

The Page Turners wish to thank the speakers and the audience for making this a most enjoyable evening.



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Consider Joining the Stitch'n Chat Group

BY SUSAN GAMBLE

For all of you who enjoy knitting, crocheting or needlepoint in a friendly, social environment, the weekly Stitch 'n Chat Club meets at the Recreation Centre every Friday from 10:15 a.m. to noon. Elaine Gorman, who has been running this for more than seven years, says it's her favourite day of the week.

Attendees exchange patterns, help one another, or join in knitting baby hats for charities if they don't have a project of their own. Earlier this year 105 baby hats made by club members were delivered to Markham Stouffville Hospital for their preemie and newborn wards. Alternatively, some attendees knit brightly coloured lap blankets for wheelchair patients at Bloomington Cove.

If you wish to participate, call Elaine and she can provide the patterns and needles if necessary, as well as some yarn, unless of course you have spare yarn in your basement.

Alternatively, your work could be entered in next year's annual BGCC Christmas Craft Sale, where Elaine usually has a table of her creations.

All you need to do is just show up, or call Elaine for further information at 905-642-0861.

Table Tennis Club

BY SUSAN GAMBLE

The Ballantrae Table Tennis Club plays every Tuesday and Friday, from 2 to 4 p.m.

The group consists of eight core men, although the number can vary on any given day, depending on the season, and whether players are up north or down south. The men pay for their own equipment, and have invested in two tables. They usually contribute \$20 every six months or so for new paddles and balls.

The two tables can accommodate eight players at a time. If more people wish to participate, members are only too happy to take a break between games.

Occasionally the BGCC group is invited to play at the Newmarket Senior's Centre which has five tables. In return the Newmarket folks are invited to BGCC for a friendly match.

Not surprisingly, there have been inquiries about whether a ladies' group will be formed. This is definitely being considered, although there are some logistical issues still to be resolved.

Anyone interested in taking part in Table Tennis should contact: Art Stefan at 905-591-1540.



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BALLANTRAE Ladies' Golf League Fall Lunch

BY SANDY HINCH

On Monday, October 5 the Ballantrae Ladies' Golf League met at the Recreation Centre for the season's final luncheon. A record number of people (almost 70) attended and a good time was had by all.

During the season, we played every Monday morning. Special events included the popular "Bring a Friend Day" in June and the Mary Carole Lant tournament in July when our club champion was determined. This year Joan McKee was crowned champion, with Helen Hunt and Claire Littlefield coming a close second and third. Once again Smith Rogers Financial generously donated "liquid assets" to our weekly "closest to the pin" competition. It was extremely popular as we all wanted to take home the bottle of wine.

We wish to thank all of our generous sponsors who donated to our closing lunch: Jim Zizek (Redfearn, Zizek & Assoc. Inc.), Nike, Adidas, Patti-Lynn Interiors, Fischer Custom Cabinetry, Porcupine Management Ltd. (Ballantrae Golf Club), Barons, Smith Rogers Financial and Joyce Dow.

Once again Newmarket's Rose of Sharon was our charity of choice. Not only does it help women and children but the Ladies' League appreciates the fact that it is local. Many thanks to all our golfers for their contributions.

If you are interested in joining our enthusiastic and fun group of ladies, our coffee and registration for 2016 will be Monday, April 25. Our first golf day will follow on Monday, May 2. Contact Sandy Hinch, 905-591-3552; sandyhinch@hotmail.com



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BALLANTRAE Men's Golf League 2015 Season Summary

BY PHIL KOSTANDOFF



The year kicked off with a meeting and a luncheon provided by The Marleigh Retirement Residence in Unionville. The Marleigh has earned the title Platinum Sponsor for their dedicated support throughout the golf season.

We are proud to add that the Ballantrae Men's Golf League has completed its most successful season ever. More than 1500 rounds of golf were played, 88 prizes were awarded to the weekly team winners, plus 66 bottles of wine went to winners of the closest to the pin contests. Our thanks to the sponsors of the closest to the pin contest for their generous support: The Marleigh Retirement Residence, Unionville; Smith Rogers Financial, Aurora; and Gary Hodder, Royal LePage Real Estate. Thanks to the generous support from Harold Kennedy, each member received a special gift at the conclusion of the golf season.

The Carrick Cup this year was an additional special event. Players were divided into two teams. A Ryder Cup format was designed for this match. The Ballantrae Bashers and the Ballantrae Scramblers played six holes of regular golf, six holes of two-man best ball and six holes of alternate shots. The Bashers defeated the Scramblers by a slim margin. Each winning player received a medallion for this team victory.

The annual Bill Burrow Team Championship winners were Harold Kennedy, Jim Murray, Keith Hawthorn and Doug Simmons.

Individual champions for 2015 were awarded as follows: best low gross white tees, Larry Hay; best low net white tees, Romie Lat; best low gross blended tees, Colin Shimmin; best low net blended tees, Keith Hawthorn; best low gross red tees, Frank Winter; and best low net red tees, Phil Kostandoff. Each winner received a suitably engraved trophy.

Again this year at our final event there was an opportunity for a player to win a car in the hole-in-one contest sponsored by Stouffville Nissan.

For the past four years, the Ballantrae Men's Golf League has collected funds in support of prostate cancer research. To date these funds total more than thirty thousand dollars. We especially thank our sponsors who have helped us with this fundraising: Kelly & Sons Roofing for supplying a Muskoka Bay golf package for our end-of-season lucky draw; Ballantrae Golf Club; The Marleigh Retirement Residence, Unionville; Gary Hodder, Royal LePage Real Estate; Smith Rogers Financial, Aurora; Hanson's Restaurant; Boston Pizza; Stouffville Nissan; Alasdair Patton, Royal Bank Wealth Management; Danny Huang, TD Bank Business Banking; Golf Town; Frank's Wexford Service Centres; Stouffville Hyundai; Stouffville Toyota; Elite Mouldings; Inside Out Decorating, Stouffville; Willow Springs Winery; Gary Davis, Royal LePage Real Estate; Redfearn Zizek & Assoc. Interior Painting; Wooden Sticks Golf; Harold Kennedy; Brendan Cunneen; Kelley Richards; Mill Run Golf Club.

We sincerely thank our sponsors for their generous support.

Ballantrae residents interested in joining the Ballantrae Men's Golf League should contact: Jay Adams, 905-640-2843, jaystoy69@hotmail.com or Phil Kostandoff, 905-640-6222, pgkay1966@rogers.com

Our opening meeting will be held on April 26, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. in the Recreation Centre.



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BY
LEE
POLLOCK

My wonderful wife, Lydia and I are about to share a very special and unique 20th anniversary. In January 1996, while attending a meeting at the headquarters of the U.S. Air Force's Electronic Systems Centre outside of Boston, my pager alerted me to a call I had awaited for over four years. A donor kidney, having five of a possible six-antigen match, became available at the University of Miami. Following a final four-hour dialysis session, I flew to Miami where the transplantation surgery was performed.

The next day, I learned by reading a Miami newspaper that the donor was a nine-year-old boy who tragically had lost his life playing with his father's gun. A gentleman from Buenos Aires, Argentina, received the donor's other kidney.

After 90 days recovering together, Alfredo became my "kidney brother," and his wife and their three daughters became family. I returned to Boston and reported back for duty at the Electronic Systems Centre. The smell of the fresh spring air and the real taste of food, lost while on dialysis, had returned. My life had essentially "re-booted" with this remarkable gift.

Facing the prospect of reassignment to Washington, D.C., I decided to retire from the Air Force. This was a difficult decision as I had had great assignments with wonderful people spanning more than 24 years of service. I had also earned a doctorate degree in engineering and had even met President Clinton. But could living in D.C. beat Boston?

No. So at age 47 and with renewed health, I entered private industry gratefully accepting a position at EMC Corporation, a Boston-based firm specializing in complex information storage systems. My final ten years of work was for Air Academy Associates headquartered in Colorado Springs.

While transitioning from public service to the private sector, I established a website that helped patients better understand and prepare for the transplantation process. Such websites already existed, but they were not written from the perspective of a transplant recipient. Upon launching this website, I met Lydia who was working in marketing for an online medical information company in Toronto. After collaborating with her for about a year, we decided to have lunch together in Toronto. I flew out and the rest, as they say, is history. On May 20, 1999, I came to Canada with a renewed lease on life to be with a very special lady.

In 1998, my kidney brother, Alfredo, asked if I would join his family on the occasion of his daughter Gabriela's wedding in Buenos Aires. When I arrived, Alfredo abruptly turned ill and was unable to participate. He asked me to give Gabby's hand in marriage on his behalf. Humbly and without speaking Spanish, I did. Alfredo thankfully returned to health and I have since returned to Argentina many times to visit.

Lydia and I moved from Markham to Ballantrae's Condo 2 in May, 2008 and to Condo 5 in May, 2010. We have thoroughly enjoyed it. In 2014, we welcomed our first grandchild, Remy.

We remain profoundly thankful to our donor family for this second chance at a good life. I have written to them over these 20 years in an effort to describe what their sacrifice has meant for our family and me. Correspondence must go through the transplant centre to ensure privacy. I have yet to receive a response, yet I feel compelled to convey my continuing gratitude. Perhaps their loss and suffering has not abated and they do not wish to know.

I will never forget those who are less fortunate, who are on dialysis, either waiting for their calls or those who are not eligible for such a precious, rare and life-enhancing gift.

So as January 20, 2016 approaches, I shall wish Lydia "Happy 20th Anniversary." This is not to commemorate our wedding, but for a wonderful and fulfilling life with her that might otherwise have not occurred.



From Top to Bottom: Alfredo, Lee & Alfredo's Wife Maria Nora; Lee & Baby Remy; West Point Graduation

Coming Soon

Mark your Calendars! Here are Your Social Committee's Upcoming Events for 2016

Sunday, January 31 **A Breath of Fresh Air**

Activities &
Homemade Soup
Contact:
Mariette Blouin-Johnson
905-591-2032

Friday, January 29 **Friday, March 18** **Movie Nights at the** **Recreation Centre**

Contact:
Ajit Sappal
905-591-2307

Tuesday, May 17 **Ladies' Dine Around**

Restaurant: Peter's
Steakhouse
Contact:
Kathy Billington
905-591-1390

Saturday, May 14 **Welcome Back Party**

Recreation Centre
Contact:
Ron Brewing
905-640-8836

Thursday, May 26 **Fallsview Casino**

Contact:
Gisela Weger
905-642-2503

Friday, June 17 **Woodbine Race Track/** **Luncheon**

Gisela Weger
905-642-2503

Wednesday, July 1 **Canada Day Celebrations**

Contact:
Jenny Gould
647-448-4022

Tuesday, July 19 **Ladies' Dine Around**

Restaurant to be
announced
Contact:
Pam Tulino
905-591-4004

Saturday, August 13 **Summer on the Patio**

Contact:
Ron Brewing
905-640-8836

Wednesday, September 7 **Niagara Wine Tour**

Contact:
Gisela Weger
905-642-2503

September (date to **be determined)** **Stratford Festival** **A Little Night Music**

Contact:
Ron Brewing
905-640-8836

Tuesday, September 13 **Ladies' Dine Around**

Restaurant to be
determined
Contact:
Carolynne Kaise
905-642-0647

Wednesday, October 5 **Georgian Downs**

Contact:
Mariette Blouin-Johnson
905-591-2032

Mystery Dinner Theatre **(date to be determined)**

Contact:
Pam Tulino
905-591-4004

Saturday, December 10 **Annual Christmas Dinner** **& Dance**

Recreation Centre
Contact:
Social Committee

Men's 9-Hole Golf League at BGCC

We play Thursday mornings.

Tee Times: 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Cost: 1 pre-paid ticket covers 2 people or \$41+HST
per person without a ticket (each includes cart).

The intention is to make this league relaxed, fun
and stress free. For the 2015 season there was no
cost to join, but next year there may be a small
joining fee, plus your green fees.

For more information and to register for the league
please contact: John Pittaway at 905-640-9342 or
johnpittaway@rogers.com

Include your name, telephone number and email
address. Please note: This league is only for men
who are BGCC residents.

A Breath of Fresh Air Join us on Sunday, January 31, 2016

We'll meet at the Recreation Centre at 10:30 a.m.,
then participate in outdoor activities at a nearby
forest until noon.

Later, we'll return to the Recreation Centre for
homemade soup and dessert at 12:30 p.m.

Bring your own beverage

Cost: \$5 per person

Tickets go on sale Tuesday, December 1

Please call:

Mariette Blouin-Johnson at 905-591-2032

Two Movie Nights at the Recreation Centre Friday, January 29, 2016 Friday, March 18, 2016

Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Cost: \$5 per person

- First 80 people will be admitted
- Free popcorn
- Bring your own beverage

For further information contact:
Ajit Sappal 905-591-2307



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NOTICES

Ballantrae's Volunteer Assistance Program

**"Residents helping residents to meet temporary,
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**We celebrate our resident volunteers, who gladly assist a growing
number of our fellow residents just needing a little help.**

CALL US FOR:

DRIVES

To doctor's appointments, physiotherapy, grocery shopping, etc.

ODD JOBS

Such as changing light bulbs, dog walking (short-term only), etc.

FRIENDLY VISITS

INFORMATION

About community and local resources

PHONE: 289-800-2540 (leave a message) or **EMAIL:** help4residents@rogers.com

An Intake Volunteer will respond as soon as possible Monday to Friday
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with confidential service.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT now available FOR LOAN - See BGCC website: www.ourbgcc.com

Judy Flow, Coordinator

Ballantrae Bereavement

Providing support to
neighbours in need

Ballantrae Bereavement is a group of trained volunteers within BGCC offering free grief support and caregiver stress relief programs to members of our community. Our goal is to support fellow residents through the grieving phase so they can move forward to resume active and meaningful lives.

If you feel you might benefit from a visit by one of our volunteer counsellors - or perhaps know of someone else in need - please call:

Our Dedicated Message Centre:
647-999-8070

Name Tags Available for \$10 each

Are you new to Ballantrae Golf & Country Club?

Do you need a replacement name tag?

Please contact:
Gisela Weger 905-642-2503

Ballantrae Residents' Directory

The BGCC Social Committee has received numerous requests to print an alphabetical directory containing email addresses and telephone numbers of Ballantrae Golf & Country Club residents.

If you wish to have your information published in this directory, please email your name, address, telephone number and email address to:
pam.tulino@gmail.com

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with the heart.

~ Helen Keller ~

MORE GOOD REASONS TO VISIT www.ourbgcc.com

BY PETER SIMS, WEBMASTER

BALLANTRAE SUMMER GAMES

Thanks to all the residents who contributed to the Games pages both during and after the big week. All Games-related information, including results and pictures, will stay posted on the website until the end of January. Share the smiles with your neighbours down south.

TRADE REFERRALS

This page (under Helpful) lists almost 60 tradespeople in 29 categories with whom at least one of your neighbours has had a recent good experience. No one guarantees satisfaction. Nonetheless, residents have found that this is a good starting point (along with ads in *HOTG*) when they need to find someone. If you have had a recent good experience with someone that you would like to recommend, just drop us a line with the contact information.

HOME ON THE GREEN

Heading down south or already there? The December issue of *HOTG* is available for download

to your laptop or tablet. Just visit the *HOTG* page, click or tap on the image of the front cover and the issue will download. Then Save the issue to have it available as you move around. The magazine is a large file so it is best to download it over Wi-Fi rather than on a cellular connection.

RESIDENT ACTIVITIES

This page provides contact information for resident-organized activities. Some 40 different activities are listed, mostly taking place at the Recreation Centre. Not sure which of the four bridge groups is for you? Just call any of the organizers listed. Are you involved in an activity for BGCC residents that is not listed? Just drop us a line at the usual ourbgcc@rogers.com.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Our group just had a celebration and we were wondering about posting pictures on the Photos page. How do we go about this?

Just attach (paperclip) the photos to an email with a brief description of the event and send to ourbgcc@rogers.com.

Rumour has it that Ourbgcc sends out a monthly Newsletter. How do I arrange to get this?

Just email ourbgcc@rogers.com and ask to be put on the mailing list. You will receive a confirmation reply.

RECREATION CENTRE NEWS

Another year is coming to an end and what an exciting 2015 it has been! With the tireless selfless assistance of so many residents, the amazing contributions of our Wellness Director Dayna Stoddart, the ongoing commitment of FSR and the outstanding staff we have here, the 1202 Board has been very fortunate in being able to accomplish many things on behalf of the residents of our wonderful community of Ballantrae.

The budget continues to be a major influencing factor as we move forward and the Board is committed to accomplishing more in 2016 in the most effective and efficient ways possible.

We thank *HOTG* for affording the 1202 Board an opportunity to communicate with our community within this always much-anticipated voice of

Ballantrae. It is our goal to make the Recreation Centre the cornerstone of health, wellness, illness prevention and community interaction described in our Vision Statement.

We take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and to wish all residents of our fantastic Ballantrae community the joy, peace, happiness and reflection that this time of the year brings to us all.

Happy Holidays to you all.

Carole, Wayne, Bill, Ken, Heinz

~ Your 1202 Board



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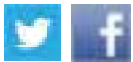
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are you "HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS"?

BY KAREN CLARK

Ballantrae in the winter can be a quiet place as many residents head for warmer climates, but for those who are home for the holidays, there are endless activities at the Recreation Centre, local clubs to join and of course a daily workout at the gym. You can always borrow a new novel from the library or solve that 2000 piece puzzle. But if you like to get out and about and to stave off cabin fever read on.

Why not wander back in time and enjoy an old-fashioned **Candlelight Christmas** at the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum? On Saturday, December 12, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m., the grounds and museum are open for an enchanted evening. Decorated for the season, the museum's historic buildings come to life with the traditions of Christmas past. Enjoy a visit with Father Christmas and go on a horse-drawn wagon ride. Taste traditional cider and baked goods and enjoy performances by EmBellished and a reading of *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* by characters in period costume. Pre-registration preferred. Adults \$16, Children under 12, \$10. If you can't make it for this unique event, the grounds and museum are open throughout the winter on Tuesday through Saturday, 12 to 5 p.m. Guided tours are available for a minimal charge. 14732 Woodbine Avenue, south of Aurora Road; 905-727-8954.

If you are really up for adventure, head out the back gate and turn east! We are fortunate to live near several Christmas tree farms. One of the best is **Taylor Tree Farm** with more than 100 acres of Balsam, Scotch Pine, White Pine, White Spruce and Colorado Blue Spruce. You can chop your own or choose from a pre-cut selection. Remember to bring a saw. Even if your traditional tree is wrapped in the crawl space and just needs unfolding, you can still enjoy the bonfire, tractor ride and refreshment stand at Taylor's. Note: Credit cards are not accepted.

Open weekends from November 28 to December 20, 2015, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

4479 Concession 2, Uxbridge
www.christmastrees.on.ca/taylorreefarm.html

Now that you have ventured beyond Durham Road 30, continue east to watch the story of the first Christmas come to life in a **Living Nativity** presented by the Uxbridge Baptist Church. Held at Centennial Park, December 18, 19 and 20, there are two performances each evening at 7:30 and 8:15 p.m. More than 100 volunteers coordinate costuming, lighting, sound, direction and sets for this live enactment based on the birth of Jesus Christ, the "Reason for the Season." The scenes will portray Roman soldiers on horseback, shepherds tending their sheep, Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. Visitors are welcome to chat with the actors and meet the animals at the end of each performance while enjoying a cup of hot chocolate. This sounds like a wonderful outing for visiting grandchildren! Centennial Park is located behind the Town Hall on Toronto Street in Uxbridge.

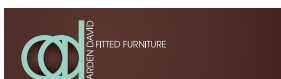
When you return from your winter escapades, turn on the Yule Log channel or your own fireplace and warm up over a hot apple cider (see recipe page 33) and enjoy your home... for the holidays!

cheers!





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