

HERITAGE CORNER



This enduring image shows bronze Olympic medal high jumper and St. Clair Township resident, Derek Drouin, proudly holding the Canadian flag aloft as he savours his achievement.

Maple Leaf Forever!

"The Maple Leaf / Our Emblem Dear, / The Maple Leaf Forever! / God save our Queen and heaven bless, / The Maple Leaf Forever."

- Alexander Muir, 1867

It may not be politically correct now and you may be showing your age if you admit to singing it at school assemblies, but the pride and the patriotism inspired by the chorus to *The Maple Leaf Forever* is a fitting way to wish Happy Birthday to our iconic and immediately recognizable national flag.

Our red-and-white maple leaf flag has presided over some of the most noble, as well as some of the most heart-breaking, events our country has ever witnessed. Its genesis was controversial but its legacy thus far has been one that millions have taken solace from during times of emergency and conflict, and millions more have cheered for during times of achievement and victory.

On Feb. 14, 50 years will have passed since Canada officially adopted the red maple leaf as its national flag. Today, it is one of the most recognized and respected flags and Canadian symbols in the world - a tremendous source of pride, identity and national unity.

Until it was adopted, the Red Ensign had been Canada's unofficial flag. It represented our British heritage incorporating a unique crest to represent the Canadian identity. But many Canadians felt the Ensign was not truly representative of Canada's heritage and cultural identity. The rationale that Prime Minister Lester Pearson used to justify a new design was that a new flag was necessary to keep Quebec's separatist aspirations at bay. The presence of the British Ensign on the existing flag was also problematic for some foreign countries that did not have an amicable relationship with England.

The new flag was chosen from amongst hundreds of submitted designs, most of which featured a maple leaf somewhere in the design. The winning design was developed by George Stanley, a Canadian civil servant and history professor. It was selected by a House of Commons committee and presented to the house for consideration, passing by a vote of 163 to 78.

-With files from Allan Anderson

Moore Museum volunteers busy in 2014

Volunteers at the Moore Museum kept busy throughout 2014. Museum Curator Laurie Mason says the 58 volunteers contributed a total of 2,065 hours to many heritage preservation tasks at the site. Because of their diligence and their commitment, there will be new things to enjoy and many improvements to existing displays and buildings to admire. For instance, the façade of the Francis E. Shaw Exhibition Hall has been upgraded and the toyshop exhibit has been expanded. In 2015, the museum will continue to welcome new volunteers. One particular skill that is currently being sought is that of a printing press operator. A roller-style printing press in the print shop requires the skills of a printer who has worked on this type of equipment. But volunteers are also needed to help with a wide variety of projects, from building and handling heritage demonstrations to helping with special events and even collecting admissions. If you would like to discuss how your interests and talents could assist your community museum, call the Moore Museum at 519-867-2020. **Work continues in 2015 as volunteers bring their skills and expertise to projects such as the restoration of the Courtright fire boat. Right, volunteers Dave Taylor, left, and Dan Hayward are shown repairing a seat in the vintage vessel.**

Photo submitted



Sombra Museum cash calendar answers revealed

The Sombra Museum's *What's It All About? 2015* cash calendar displays a photo of a mystery vintage item with each month. This fundraiser challenge dared people to identify each of the items and submit their answers by Jan. 31, 2014. The answers are: January, linen thread cutter; February, needle case; March, surveyor's instrument; April, lightning rod insulator; May, cigarette roller; June, perfume decanters; July, cigar cutter; August, milk bottle cap pick; September, butter stamp; October, bicycle wrench; November, *Sticking Tommy* (candle holder used in mines); December, stamp holder.

WWI items still being sought

World War I items, memorabilia and/or stories are still being sought for the Sombra Museum's exhibit commemorating the 100th anniversary of "the war to end all wars". Call 519-892-3982 for more information.