HEADLINES

This is the final day Ruth will enjoy work

There aren't many who have spent more than 40 years in one job who can say honestly there wasn't one day they minded going to work. But despite snowbanks, mud and ditches, that's how Ruth Elliott feels about delivering mail on the Glanworth-Belmont rural route. Today she's packing it in. **Page B4**

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Jeff Brooke/*The London Free Press*

Ruth Elliott, 66, who retires today, flips a mail flag on the Glanworth-Belmont rural route she has taken care of for more than 40 years

MAILWOMAN

Rural-route Ruth packs it in

She started in 1948, and now it's her last day delivering on the Glanworth-Belmont route.

By Jeff Brooke
St. Thomas Bureau

GLANWORTH — Ruth Elliott flips up the red flags for the last time today on the rural mailboxes she has visited for more than 40 years.

The Glanworth area grandmother, 66, has roamed the dusty, country roads between Glanworth and Belmont delivering mail each morning since 1948.

And year after year, Elliott says, she has tried to bring the "personal touch."

"For all these years, I've been dealing with my neighbors. Therefore, I've always tried to do my job just a little better."

She figures she drives about 32,000 kilometres a year. In her career, that's equivalent to almost 33 times around the world.

LAST MAILBOX: The last of the 93 mailboxes on her 45-kilometre route is her own century farmhouse just northeast of here.

"I've been in the snowbanks, mud, ditches. But I've never had an accident, never had a ticket.

"And I never, ever hated to go on my route. It was never any trouble. But it's time I was through."

A few of her friends along the route are taking her out tonight for dinner in Port Stanley. A "surprise party" that she's pretending she hasn't heard about will follow at a Glanworth hall.

WOMAN SUCCESSOR: After today, Elliott turns the route over to another area woman. "That way it's like keeping it in the family. It's always been someone local. That was the way it was and it should always be that way."