

# Inspirations

People who made a difference in our lives

By Lori Wensley

COLBORNE CHRONICLE  
JAN. 1/04

One of my happiest discoveries upon moving to Cobourg was Hazel Bird, a Harwood woman and a well-respected naturalist.

Prior to coming to Cobourg, my husband and I had sighted a few Eastern Bluebirds in Ontario. When I learned, upon our arrival 18 years ago, that one could not only observe bluebirds here with a local naturalist, but one could also walk bluebird trails with her. I was eager to begin.

What wonders awaited a hiking companion of Hazel Bird's — sparkling dew on meadow grasses, hillsides sprinkled with flowers, air filled with songbirds and, best of all, bluebirds — their soft calls drifting from gnarled oaks and sturdy nest boxes.

Over the hills we would tramp, squeezing through gates, scrambling over fences, circling clumps of poison ivy. It was a challenge to keep pace with this diminutive yet mighty woman whose enthusiasm knew no bounds. It was as if she too were seeing each wildflower or bluebird for the first time.

In reality, it was far from the first time. In 1968, Hazel began to realize that natural nesting cavities for bluebirds were becoming alarmingly scarce. So she decided to do something about it. That year, with the help of friends, family and school children and the cooperation of land owners, she built and diligently maintained 19 nest boxes. This number grew to 425 during the peak year of 1987.

"Diligently maintaining" means organization and hard work. Her walks are scheduled so that nesting boxes are checked regularly for such things as number of eggs, number of young, predation, successful fledglings or late spring snowstorms. Aging boxes were replaced and others moved if necessary. Hazel shares her data far and wide.

Over the years, many have helped on and off, and Willow Beach Field Naturalists have provided some finding, but there is no doubt that this has been Hazel's project. She has never faltered and has adjusted to challenges with creativity and an unstoppable positive attitude. She has been interviewed, photographed and written about. She has walked with and been a resource person for well-known scientists as well as countless school children and others.

Hazel still shares her knowledge with groups or even one person who wants to walk with her and her steadfast little dog.

Although my husband and I have hiked many other natural habitats in Northumberland County and beyond, I always cherish those early morning walks with this local mentor for so many naturalists. Hazel Bird is one woman who is truly making a difference.

*Lori Wensley is a member of the Willow Beach Field Naturalists and an avid birder living in Cobourg.*

*More stories of inspiration will be published in a special section in the new year.*



PHOTO BY TED AMSDEN

Lori Wensley, left, with her inspiration, Hazel Bird, and canine friend.

## 600 DEATH NOTICES

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MCIVOR, DORIS MARIA

(JULY 29, 1920-JANUARY 5, 2004)

Suddenly at the Northumberland Hills Hospital, Cobourg on Monday, January 5, 2004 with her family at her side. Doris Maria McIvor (nee Suter) was the beloved wife of the late Henry. Loving mother of Terry (Alan) Brooks, Bruce (Brenda), Sue (Larry) Chisholm, John (Hilda) and Sandy (Tom) Syrad. Step mother of Bud and Frank of Cobourg, also Bill predeceased. She will be sadly missed by 7 grandchildren, also Jason predeceased and 13 great grandchildren. Sister of Eleanor Grubb of Hawaii, U.S.A. and Jacqueline Vout of Toronto, also Edward Suter predeceased. At Doris's request no funeral service will be held. If desired, memorial donations in memory of Doris can be made to the Northumberland Hills Hospital Foundation or the Canadian Cancer Society. Donations and condolences to [www.maccoubrey.com](http://www.maccoubrey.com)

PEARSON, WIVIAN BERYL

Peacefully at Maplewood Nursing Home, Brighton on Saturday, January 3rd, 2004 in her 81st year. Beloved wife of Sidney Pearson of Colborne. Loving mother of Sandra Hartford (Kris) on their boat "NO MOTOS", Susan Black (Norbert) of Colborne, Stephen Pearson of Peterborough, and Shane Wilson of Edmononton. Dear grandmother of Jeffrey Black (Lynn) of Peterborough, Benjamin and Brandon of Cayvan and Adam, Justine and Julia of Edmononton and the late Matthew. Great-grandmother of Liam Black. Friends called at the MacCoubrey Funeral Home, 11 King Street West, Colborne on Monday from 7-9pm. A funeral service was held in Salem United Church on Tuesday, January 6th, 2004 at 1pm, with visiting in the church one hour prior to service time. Interment in Walter's Cemetery. If desired, donations may be made to Salem United Church. Condolences received at [www.maccoubrey.com](http://www.maccoubrey.com)

DALE, CECIL CHARLES

Suddenly at his residence on Sunday, December 28, 2003, age 80 years. Cecil Dale, of R.R.# 2, Colborne, Dale Road, loving husband of Dorothy Marie (Eddy), Dear father of Karen and Bob Laver, Elaine and Bob Coles, Chris and Gary Cochrane, Brian Dale, Bob Hazel, Peter and Carol Eddy, David and Meng Ge Eddy, Bev Cooper and Bob Peoples, Dan Eddy and Jean Rikvage and John and Loreta Eddy, Dear brother of Glen and Betty Dale, Evelyn Veeman, and Florence Weese. Predeceased by his brother Clarence, his brother-in-law Edlie and his sister-in-law Mary. Sadly missed by several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The family received friends at the Waiias Funeral Home, 130 Main Street, Brighton on Wednesday from 11 o'clock. Service was held in the funeral home on Wednesday, December 31st at 1 o'clock. Interment Shiloh Cemetery. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Alzheimer Society, care of Box 96, Brighton, Ontario, K0K 1H0, would be appreciated by the family.

CARR, WALTER SYDNEY  
(PAST PRESIDENT OF ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION  
BRANCH #133)

Suddenly as the result of a motor vehicle accident on Friday, January 2nd, 2004 in his 55th year. Beloved husband of Esther Dunk of Cobourg. Dear son of Gladys Carr and the late Kenneth Carr. Loving father of Dwayne Carr (Tracey) of Cold Springs, Debra Charlene Carr (Dave) of Cobourg and Tracey Woodner of Cobourg. Fondly remembered by his grandchildren, Steven, William, Christine, Seth, Christian and Megan. Brother of Jean Kimball (Bill) of Newonville, Ken Carr (Donna) of Edmononton, Mary Clarke (Richard) of Cobourg and Margaret Sherwood (Al) of Strathroy. Remembered by many nieces and nephews. Friends called at the MacCoubrey Funeral Home, 30 King Street East, Cobourg on Monday from 2-4 and 7-9pm. A funeral service was held on Tuesday, January 6th, 2004 in the MacCoubrey Funeral Home at 2pm. If desired donations may be made to the Kidney Foundation, Heart & Stroke Foundation or Royal Canadian Legion Br. #133. (Cheques Only Please). Condolences received at [www.maccoubrey.com](http://www.maccoubrey.com). Comrades of the Royal Canadian Legion gathered at the MacCoubrey Funeral Home, 30 King St. E., Cobourg on Monday evening for a Legion Service at 6:45pm.

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