

First World War hero featured in satellite exhibit at Colborne Art Gallery

By John Campbell

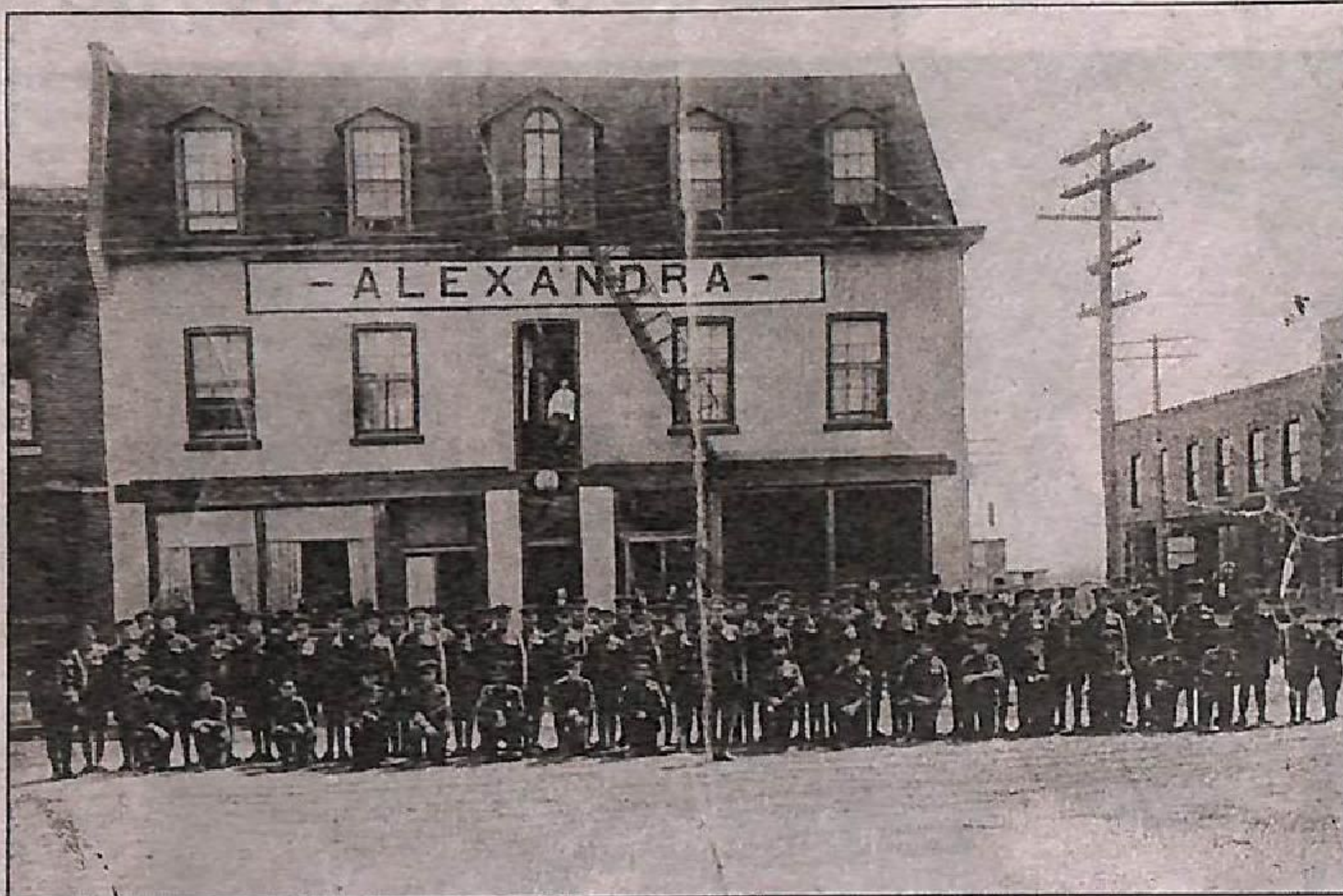
Colborne – The story of First World War hero Captain Charles Rutherford VC MC MM will be featured in a satellite exhibit, Northumberland Went to War, that re-opens the Heritage Room Gallery at the Colborne Art Gallery Oct. 13.

His exploits will be brought to life in a 12-minute video produced and directed by professional film-maker Sean Scally and scripted by Barrie Wood, who portrays a comrade in arms of Rutherford.

“It’s important that we know who our heroes are – the ordinary folk who in extraordinary circumstances became heroes or were heroes all along and finally got a chance to show it,” Wood said. “In the extreme circumstances of the Great War and the trenches of Europe [Rutherford] got to show exactly what he was made of.”

Rutherford was the last surviving Canadian to have received a Victoria Cross in the First World War when he died in 1989 at age 97.

He was awarded the Com-



This photo of troops mustering on King Street in Colborne and numerous other photos will be on display in Northumberland Went to War, a satellite exhibit that re-opens the Heritage Room Gallery at the Colborne Art Gallery, 51 King St. E.

BRIGADIER INDEPENDENT NOV 3/16
 monwealth’s most prestigious alone, and then taking another medal for having bluffed 45 35 of the enemy prisoner after German soldiers, including he was joined by other members of an assault party he two officers and three machine gun crews, into surrendering by making them think they were Rutherford took part in a surrounded when in fact he was number of major battles in

the Military Cross.

Wood has related the story of Rutherford at a number of venues, including a Doors Open Northumberland event last year at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 187, which also bears Rutherford’s name.

“He was a very modest, humble man and never wanted to make anything out of all the fuss that was made over him, so I guess we’re making it a fuss for him now,” Wood said. “It’s a pretty exciting thing to introduce multi-media to this exhibit so it’s not all static.”

In the video completed a month ago Wood talks about Rutherford’s life before and after the First World War as well, which included his serving as Colborne’s postmaster and sergeant-at-arms at the Ontario Legislature.

“He was a pretty great guy all around, not even considering the medals,” Wood said.

The Colborne exhibit is one of nearly a dozen satellite exhibits throughout Northumberland County opening the same day that are part of a larger exhibit at the Art Gal-

lery of Northumberland in Cobourg, which will run from Nov. 3 to Dec. 4.

The local exhibit put together by Heritage Cramahe opens with a reception Oct. 13, starting at 7:30 p.m., and continues until Dec. 11. The hours are Thursday to Sunday, from noon to 5 p.m. Admission is free.

“Different aspects of World War One are reflected: life in the trenches and at home, local heroes, the drive to create a volunteer army, even the music,” the county, which contributed to Northumberland Went to War, stated in a release.

“It is said that World War One changed everything: societies, cultures, national boundaries, power structures, poetry, art and literature, music, technology and politics. Nearly everything about life in Canada can be divided into ‘Before’ and ‘After’ the Great War of 1914-18.”

Infinite Light, the art of Jillian Roos-Markowitz, is running simultaneously at the Colborne gallery.

“Art and history in one fell swoop,” Wood said.

Colborne Legion 85 years old – but was close to expiring a decade ago

BY JOHN CAMPBELL

BRIGHTON INDEPENDENT NOV 10/16
Colborne – Royal Canadian Legion Branch 187 was “close to the edge” of closing about 10 years ago because of weak finances.

“We were in a year that was make it or break it,” president Patti May said. “There were people who believed it wasn’t if the branch closed, it was when.”

But May, who had served as president from 1990 to 1996, got a group of legion members to come together as an executive to save the organization from folding.

They would be either the branch’s last executive or they would start “pulling [it] out of the hole,” she said.

“Apparently we made it,” May said with a laugh in an interview Oct. 14.

Colborne currently has 155 members, far below the nearly 300 it once had years ago, but “we’re fairly healthy,” she said. “We’re not rolling in dough but as long as we’re very careful as to how we spend our money, bills are paid, there’s money in the bank, [and] we’re able to put some money into the community. That’s not a bad thing.”

Last month the legion held its 85th anniversary dinner and the highlight of the evening was past president Don Prentice being presented his 60-year service bar.

He is the only branch member to have earned the Royal Canadian Legion’s highest award, the Meritorious Service Medal.

For many years Prentice, a motorcycle dispatch rider in the Second World War, spearheaded the legion’s Christmas hamper program and ran the food bank it supports.

A former Colborne Citizen of the Year, he was also the first recipient of a random acts of kindness award in the community.

He’s “the definition of service,” and served as an example for her to follow, said May, who has been branch president since 2007, apart from one year.

She has been working on starting a Catch the Ace game in the January that has the promise of being a big revenue generator for the legion. It’s a combination of a 50-50 draw and a progressive draw, in which half the money collected each week in ticket sales goes to the legion, and 20 per cent to the weekly draw winner, who has the chance of winning the remaining amount by drawing for the ace of spades.

If the ace isn’t drawn, the money is set aside to the next week and the pot keeps building until the ace is drawn, with the odds of winning increasing as the deck grows smaller.

One community on the East Coast, where the game is hugely popular, had a jackpot that grew to more than \$1 million, May said.

Her legion will set a limit of \$50,000 on the main prize.

A licence to operate the lottery will need to be obtained from the municipality.

“We’re hoping to establish a capital account towards future renovations and repairs here,” she said.



Colborne Legion president Patti May said the branch was close to calling it quits a decade ago but is now “fairly healthy.” The painting is of First World War hero Charles Rutherford, after whom the branch is named, who was awarded the Victoria Cross for taking 45 soldiers prisoner single-handedly.

John Campbell/Metroland