

GRAPEVINE

IT'S IN YOU TO GIVE

Canadian Blood Services will be holding a Blood Donor Clinic on Thursday, January 19 at the Acton Legion at 15 Wright Avenue from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Donors should make an appointment by calling: 1-888-2 DONATE (1-888-236-6283). For more information, please visit the Canadian Blood Services website, blood.ca/en.

UPGRADE YOUR COMPUTER SKILLS

Do you need to upgrade your computer skills for the workplace? The Adult Learning Centre offers an Intermediate Computer Course in Acton. The course covers an introduction to Excel and business email writing. Call to register at 905-873-2200

RECOGNIZING ONTARIO VOLUNTEERS

Two Ontario Volunteer Recognition Programs are accepting nominations for 2017. Every day thousands of Ontarians of all ages give their time and talent to thousands of community organizations, and help hold our communities together. By submitting a nomination, you can help ensure volunteers receive the recognition they deserve.

The Ontario Medal for Young Volunteers is presented to outstanding young volunteers between the ages of 15 and 24 for their contributions and dedication to improve quality of life in their communities. Deadline for nomination is January 15.

The Ontario Volunteer Service Awards are presented in recognition of continuous years service to a single community organiza-

tion. Deadline for nominations is January 25.

Instructions for submitting a nomination can be found on the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration website: ontario.ca/honoursandawards.

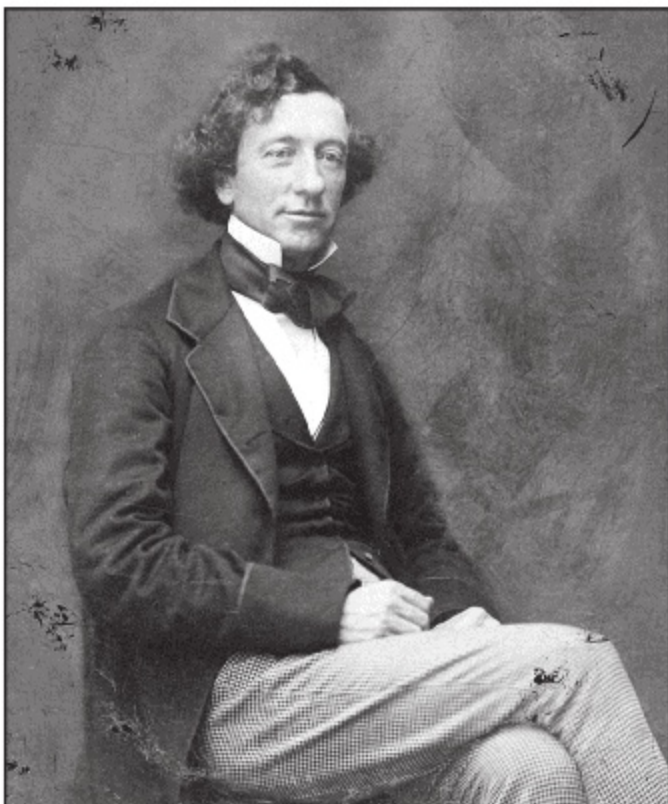
CANADA'S FIRST PRIME MINISTER

Sir John A. Macdonald was appointed Canada's first Prime Minister on July 1, 1867. John Alexander Macdonald was born in Glasgow Scotland in January 1815. A lawyer and a business man, he served twice as Prime Minister. First, from 1867 to 1873, where he is described as a 'nation builder' when during his time as Prime Minister, Manitoba, the North West Territories (presently Alberta and Saskatchewan) joined the four original provinces in the Canadian Confederation.

As well as building a strong Conservative Government, he is credited with building the Transcontinental Canadian Pacific Railway. However, he was voted out of office as a result of the 'Pacific Scandal' when his party was accused of accepting bribes connected with the railway. He returned to power in 1878, and remained Prime Minister for the rest of his life.

His time as Prime Minister was not without Scandal. Aside from his involvement with in the 'Pacific Scandal,' Macdonald was described as a heavy drinker, and more than once he had to be carried from the House of Commons. Most recently, Macdonald's Aboriginal policies, including the development of residential schools, have faced criticism.

Macdonald died in Ottawa on June 6, 1891.



Sir John A. Macdonald

Credit: Library and Archives Canada/C-009267. LAC



- Les Schmidt photo

JUST A THOUGHT

Do as I say, not as I do?

In so many ways, it appears 2017 will be a year of juxtapositions, with the contrast between the loathed, albeit incredibly candid US President Elect and our adored but seemingly guileful Prime Minister front and centre. Yet, even when attempting to read past the Trump headlines, there are many duelling ideologies at play and our hypocritical responses to them abound. Take equality. We talk about equality as if we have actually moved past curves, colours, and classes and now value actions on their unique merits alone; instead, we seem to recognize individuals only to clear our conscious of past transgressions. Actions today can never change the past and if we had actually learned, we'd pay homage by not repeating the same mistakes. Case in point: the new ten-dollar bill. Viola Desmond was unquestionably a righteous woman who stood up; however, when compared to many other Canadian heroines, her act does not represent the larger Canadian identity (even today only 2.5 percent of the entire Canadian population is black, 11 percent mixed). This does not negate her plight or the importance of this population, yet our whole nation should recognize and relate to those we see on our cur-



By
Trish Bell

rency. Emily Carr or Lucy Maud Montgomery helped share Canadian culture with the world. We might never have prevailed the aggressions of 1813 were it not for Laura Secord's bravery. And Agnes McPhail's contributions to farmers, prison reform, old-age pensions, and equal pay for equal work should be recognized, let alone her significant place in the history of Canadian politics. Even Nellie McClung, or the entire Famous Five, make sense for work on women's voting, property and divorce rights, and her efforts to get immigrant's accepted into Canadian culture during World War II should have at least met the political correct tick box, considering today's environment. Still, in what appears like copying off our American classmates, we'll honour the "Canadian Rosa Parks" and make a politically correct gesture instead of a real human rights statement.

Another area where we appear to be great charlatans is nationalism. Brexit, Syrian Refugees, Make America Great Again - while we all shake our little fists at the idea of putting national

identity ahead of globalization and inoffensiveness, we actually continue to celebrate nationalism on a grand scale. \$210 million plus of our tax dollars has already been set aside to fund a year of celebrating our nationalistic pride, right down to, yes, turn the kids away, Canadian stereotypes. But our national appetite isn't just once in a while; every December, the World Juniors see our coast-to-coast pride become the responsibility of 18 and 19 year old kids playing hockey. Our game; the NATIONAL game. (Heaven forbid, you'd rather swim than skate.) We wear our colours and shout our pride loudly acting as though the fate of an entire nation's mental fortitude was hanging in the balance (no pressure boys). It appears undeniable that we find pride in being labelled polite and brag about our shared cultural addiction to caffeine and beer just because we are Canadian. Certainly, we can't keep having our national birthday cake while yelling no to it too. We puff up like peacocks to say we are a nation of peacekeepers in this world, despite the fact that peace is made with guns and force, showing that even here our contrasts thrive. Society needs to start making choices and then standing by them.