

I had a choice— they didn't

As I sat at my work station this week to compose this column, I was faced with a nagging dilemma.

What could I say about Remembrance Day that hadn't been said a million times before?

Over the years, I've written about local residents who served overseas, and I once interviewed a First World War vet who could vividly recall the day the Armistice was signed in 1918.

Re-writing those columns seemed redundant. And it's not that our veterans aren't worthy of the praise and honor for their contribution to the preservation of peace— God knows that's the last thought in my mind.

But I'm afraid my 40-something generation, and those even younger, have absolutely no idea of what our vets had to endure, simply because we've lived in an insulated environment of peace and freedom for so long.

As a result, I fear we sometimes aren't able to fully grasp the gravity of their sacrifices, or imagine the stress and fear endured by those waiting back home for their return.

In short, we're total strangers to war. I have no idea of what it would be like in the middle of a battlefield. But this past summer, I may have had an inkling.

I saw a movie called Saving Private Ryan. The story centered around a group of U.S. troops landing at Omaha Beach on D-Day. And it was bloody graphic.

Apparently, veterans experienced flashbacks after seeing the film, because it was so realistic.

In the film, a group of terrified soldiers were tossed about in a landing craft, vomiting from seasickness and shivering from unadulterated fear, as they prepared to land on the beach.

The ramp splashed down and the first three men were slaughtered by machine gun fire from the bunkers on the cliffs above, before they could so much as take a step forward.

Those who were lucky enough to make it to shore crouched behind the narrow metal obstacles on the beach, in a feeble and sometimes

A
TED
BIT



Ted Brown

futile attempt to avoid being hit.

The noise level was brutal, with a constant barrage of machine gun fire and artillery, as they clawed through the bloodied water in an attempt to make it to some sort of cover.

I'll admit— that battle scene was an eye-opener for me, and certainly elevated my pulse rate. And I was simply a spectator at a movie.

I was there by choice, with the option of closing my eyes, covering my ears, or even walking out of the theatre, if the going got too rough.

Later that night, as I slept in the comfort of my bed, I awoke more than once seeing the image of those first three guys in the landing craft, being cut in half by machine gun fire.

It occurred to me that if viewing a movie like that could wake me up in the middle of the night with images going through my mind, how great of an affect did it have on those who were actually there, facing the bullets, or watching their colleagues being blown to bits beside them?

Our veterans didn't have the option of being able to walk out of the theatre when the going got rough. They had to fend for themselves, live by their wits, kill or be killed, and hope like hell they made it through the next day.

Miraculously, many did. But every November, we must take time to remember those who weren't so lucky— as well as those who returned with ever-present images of their deaths seared in their minds.

And in doing so, never forget.



**HAVE THE BEAUTY OF A GAS FIREPLACE
WARM YOUR HOME THIS WINTER**

up to
\$150⁰⁰ OFF
any in stock
fireplace or stove
* offer expires November 21/98

**We Want To Move
Our Wide Selection
Of In Stock
Fireplaces And
Stoves!**

*** WE ACCEPT
OURTOWN
CHRISTMAS
CHEQUES**
up to 6 months to pay
INTEREST FREE!



GAS • WOOD • PROPANE

**LOSING YOUR
ELECTRICITY
DOESN'T
LEAVE YOU
POWERLESS
TO HEAT
YOUR HOME!**

**OUR GAS
FIREPLACES**

- Provide heat without electricity
- Have a burner lifetime warranty!
- Are installed by friendly factory trained technicians!

NOW OPEN SATURDAYS "Come in and check out our great prices!"

**MAJESTIC
Fireplaces**

**"Georgetown
Owned and Operated"**

**VERMONT
CASTINGS**



ASBUILT MECHANICAL

**5 ARMSTRONG AVE.
GEORGETOWN**

877-8023

Lakeview FLOORING & KITCHENS INC.

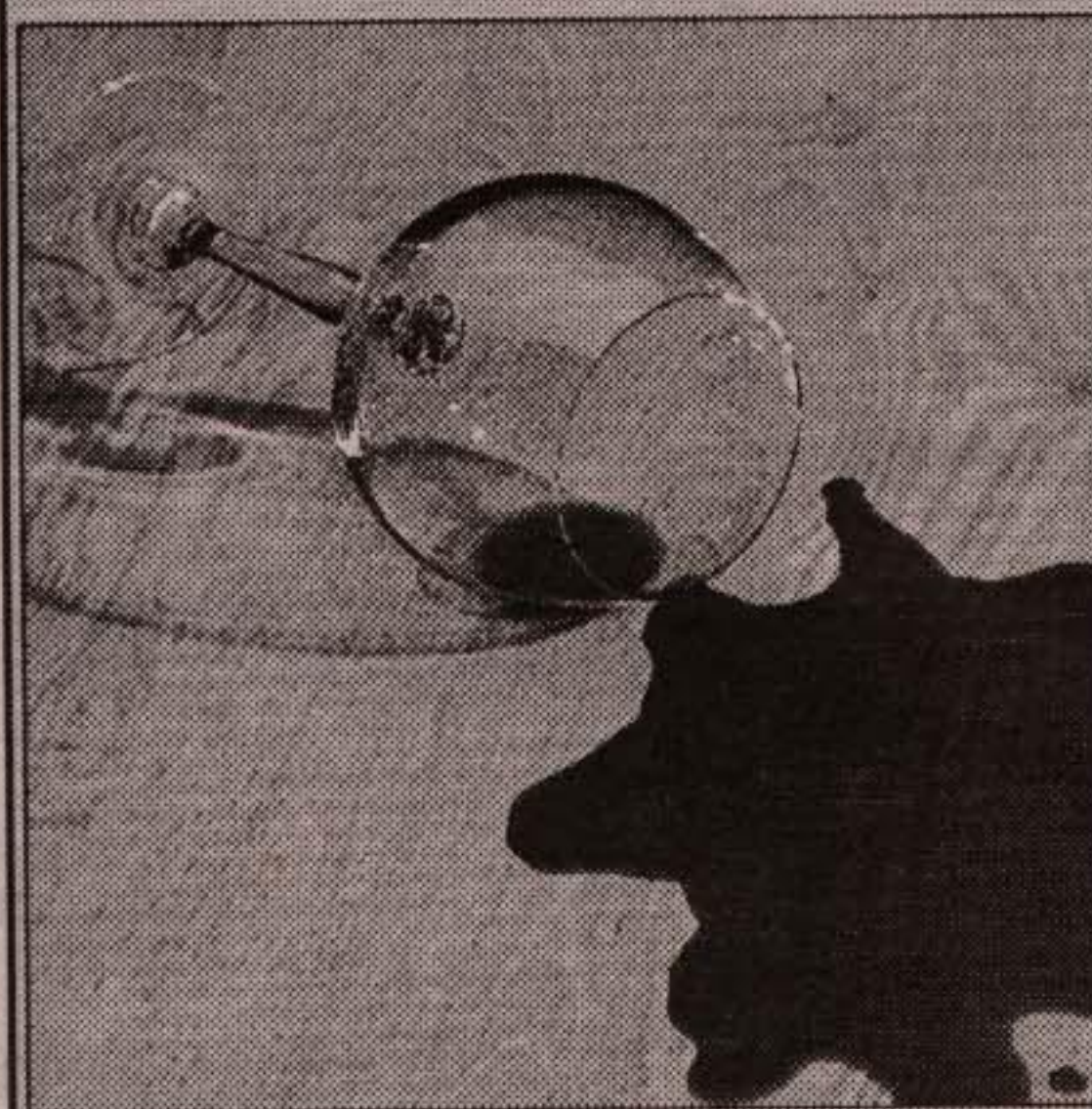
Home Design Centre



Financing Available O.A.C.

**FORMICA®
LAMINATE
FLOORING**

**\$6⁹⁹ / sq. ft.
installed**



**FORMICA®
CERAMIX**

\$7⁹⁹ / sq. ft. installed

Special Prices in effect until Dec. 31/98

**RICHMOND
CARPET**

• Super Selection
• Quality
Products for
every room in
your home.

**OUR
CHRISTMAS
NOVELTY
CARPETS HAVE
ARRIVED!**

The **Regal
Color
Sale**

You could
WIN
One of three
**TOSHIBA
HOME THEATRE
SYSTEMS**
at your participating
Benjamin Moore Dealer!
Details in store.

This fall, surround yourself in color with a cascade of classic and contemporary shades in your choice of finish with Benjamin Moore Regal paint... on sale now.



Fresh Start \$32⁹⁹
Regal - AquaPearl \$37⁹⁹
Regal - AquaVelvet \$35⁹⁹
Regal - AquaGlo \$38⁹⁹
Muresco Ceiling White \$25⁹⁹

Hurry In!
Sale prices
end
Nov. 13/98



A STROKE OF BRILLIANCE™

519 853-4577

New Store Location 130 MILL ST. E., ACTON

519 853-1190