

OPINION

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Phone: 905-873-0301
Fax: 905-873-0398

Vimy must never be forgotten

As defining moments go, Vimy Ridge is arguably Canada's turning point as a nation.

Only 50 years young as an independent country in 1917, the battle at Vimy was Canada's coming out as a nation.

The 30,000 Canadian soldiers who scored a stunning military victory over the Germans— where British and French troops failed earlier— forever changed the way the world viewed our country. It was, perhaps, our finest moment.

"Every nation has a creation story. The First World War and the battle of Vimy Ridge are central to the story of our nation," said Prime Minister Stephen Harper at Monday's ceremony in France to mark the 90th anniversary of the battle.

Approximately 500,000 Canadians fought in The Great War and 3,500 gave their lives at Vimy Ridge on April 9, 1917.

However, with each passing year the memory of Vimy Ridge and its significance to this country's history is fading. Only two Canadian veterans from that war are still alive today and their sons and daughters, many who served in the Second World War, are, on average, 86 years old.

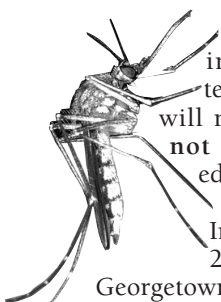
That is why it is important that ceremonies like Monday's— and remembrance tours such as the one *Independent & Free Press* staff writer/photographer Ted Brown is part of— continue. Today's youngsters should not only be told about Vimy Ridge, but come to understand its importance to this nation's history.

For decades Canada's veterans— of all wars— have proudly kept alive the memory of the sacrifices our soldiers have made. With only 200,000 war veterans still alive and more than 300 dying each week, it is time now for today's generation to step forward and assume the responsibility for keeping that memory alive.

Surely, it is not a task too onerous, considering the one our forefathers at Vimy not only endured, but also conquered.

Something bugging you?

Send us a letter!



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Independent & Free Press,
280 Guelph St., Unit 29,
Georgetown, ON., L7G 4B1

E-mail:

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

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Steve Nease



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Spring thaw reveals litterbugs' handiwork

Dear editor,
Recently we had a thaw and guess what appeared in all its not-glory? Garbage. And plenty of it.
Just take a walk behind the A&P on Guelph Street— it is disgusting. Unfortunately some idiots think that the snow will not only cover their filth but will magically make it disappear in the spring. There may be acid

rain or other pollution in the snow but not enough to dissolve cans, plastic bags, cups, bottles and lots of paper.
Maybe take-out restaurants should put a tariff/tax on "take-outs" to compensate for those who will do the clean-up, heal the animals who have plastic caught in their guts, etc. This should also apply to all stores

using plastic bags— when cloth bags would be so much more environmentally friendly and paper bags can break down.
Now, come April the good citizens of this town must rally to pick up their lazy habits of throwing junk anywhere. Walk along almost any sidewalk, sideroad or park area. I dread to think of the condition of their cars and homes.

I hope some of the guilty people are reading this and will do something about it.

Chris and Sally Miller,
Georgetown

Cinema owner was community-minded

Dear editor,
As saddened as I am by the apparent loss of our movie theatres, I am also distressed at the level of discourse this has occasioned.
Perhaps instead of calling our neighbour's names and offering to help them leave town, we should gratefully acknowledge what Mr. Edwards has given our community.
When other smaller Ontario communities— including for many years, Milton— were losing their movie screens, he kept ours alive with as many as five first-run movies each week. Admission prices were far below those of the multiplexes in nearby cities. Indeed, an adult admission on Tuesdays was less than the price of the smallest buttered popcorn at Square One in Mississauga.
Mr. Edwards has been community-minded, as others have noted, and I wish to add my thanks. His cinemas were available for special screenings for church groups and schools. In 2005 a theatre was made available

to a former Georgetown District High School student to show a film he made. During at least three Christmas seasons, Mr. Edwards brought in cinematic holiday delights. It was a pleasure to see *It's a Wonderful Life* on the big screen and in 2002 when he had a new print of *White Christmas* he generously provided a table of Christmas baking as a treat for customers.
But mostly, he gave us new pictures in our own community— economically and accessible. I have enjoyed seeing movies since I moved here and hope I will do so again. I have no desire to see a multiplex in town, but if I had, I would be practical enough to realize that it won't appear in the foreseeable future.
I hope our cinemas reopen and that the community will support them and then maybe it will be possible to make improvements in the theatres that some have wished for.

T. Ramond,
Georgetown

Property owners should keep their sidewalks clear for joggers, others

Dear editor,
In response to the March 16 letter (Joggers should stick to sidewalks). Perhaps they would if owners of sidewalk property would keep their sidewalks clear of snow and ice and also if they refrained from parking their vehicles across the sidewalks because they have too many cars for their driveways and stop forcing pedestrians onto the streets.
I am sure people using scooters, strollers and walkers would really appreciate them doing these neighbourly acts.

John McGeoch,
Georgetown