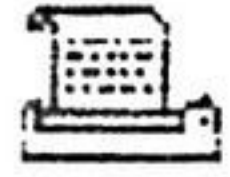


**The South Marysburgh Mirror** is published to present current, interesting, fund and frivolous information to the residents of South Marysburgh, and those who wish they were. It is intended to entertain, and if in the process, it edifies, the editor apologizes.

**Editor:** Bev Walker. To complain, explain, disclaim, inform, or advise; to contribute items for the paper; or for additional copies; please contact the above at tel. (613) 476-6771, or write to RR #3, Picton, Ontario K0K 2T0. This paper is published regularly (perhaps 11 issues per year) when there is something of interest to put into it. If nothing is happening, you will know by its not being written about.

**Opinions expressed are those of the editor, unless otherwise stated.**



From the Editor's Desk:



## D-DAY - The Day Canada Came of Age

By the time you are reading this you will have grown tired of seeing, hearing and reading about the invasion of Normandy, on June 6th, 1944. You may even have grown irritated by hearing that more than 18,000 Canadian military personnel lost their lives that day, as they swept the mines from the English Channel ahead of the invasion, provided the transport and stormed Juno Beach. You will have grown weary of the sight of aging veterans, standing shakily to attention, tears in their eyes, as the new memorial to this event is dedicated on those same beaches. You will have become bored with the sight of rows and rows of grave stones at Benys-sur-mer. What's all the fuss about? This all happened 50 years ago. That was then, this is now.

What you don't realize is that not only was the course of history changed by that landing, but that war established Canada as a country and united its peoples, or that our present prosperity and industrial competence owes its origins to the vast numbers of tanks, trucks, weapons, armoured vehicles etc. that were built in factories in this country. And what a country we were, sending one twelfth of our population to war, while mobilizing the rest of the country to works to support the war. Examples come from some little known facts about the Royal Canadian Navy.

Prior to World War II, the Royal Canadian Navy had six destroyers; old ships from the British navy if my memory serves me right. These were manned by 2,000 personnel in 1939 at the outbreak of the war. By 1945, Canada had a navy of 471 warships (the 2nd largest navy in the world at that time) and a complement of 99,688 men and 6,508 women. A large number of those ships were built in Ontario for use on the Atlantic. By 1943, the Royal Canadian Navy was performing 48% of the protection of convoys from North America to the United Kingdom. The Royal Canadian Navy also had a major role in the North Africa landings in 1942 as part of the Mediterranean Fleet. But how many Canadians are aware of this?

Ask a Canadian under fifty, who General Paton was and they can give you a fair chunk of his life history. Ask that

same person who General Crerar was and they will at best, tell you he died on the Plains of Abraham during the Israeli conflict. And should you be interested, he was the Canadian General commanding the First Canadian Army in France from 1944 to 1945. His biographical sketch, or what I could find of it, reads like an adventure story.

Born Henry Duncan Graham Crerar in Hamilton, Ontario on April 28th, 1888, he was educated at Upper Canada College in Toronto and the Royal Military College in Kingston. He served as a staff officer in the Canadian Corps in 1918, going on to become the director of military operations and intelligence in the Canadian Department of National Defence from 1935 to 1938. He was appointed chief of the General Staff after the outbreak of World War II. He led the 1st Canadian Corps which fought in Sicily and Italy, and the First Canadian Army in France. After his retirement in 1946, he became the first Canadian to be made aide-de-camp to the king in 1948.

Then there was a Major Keller who was decorated for heroic service during the invasion of Normandy, on June 11th by King George VI, on that same beach. I can find no mention of this man in Canadian history books. Surely something of his life would be worthy of mention, perhaps even to take a quiet pride in as a Canadian.

There were no women on the beaches that day, but I am sure there were women who served on the ships that stood in the channel to receive wounded. Women who were as much a part of the invasion as the men on the beaches, but because they were doing what women always have done, picking up the pieces and putting them back together, their contribution is not mentioned, nor is the danger they were in considered worth even a footnote to the events of the day. These women would have moved up as soon as the hospitals could be established behind the lines, to care for the wounded, and with the randomness of shelling in a war some would have been killed along with the wounded they were tending.

And what of the Canadians who volunteered to fight? They were white collar workers, students, young people who left families to enlist and defend that in which they believed. They were from all ethnic backgrounds and all parts of the country. Most important, they were Canadians.

*D-Day cont'd pg. 3*