

Seventy-year romance endures

Second World War brought together this special love match

By Michelle Cochrane

After 70 Valentine's Days, love is no longer a battlefield for a local couple.

The Second World War brought difficult times but nothing could stop the making of an everlasting love match. From pen pals to lovers, a romance was made.

Born and raised in Belleville Gordon Cook, now 91, met his war bride, Alice, on July 31, 1940 in London, England in the midst of a global conflict.

In an era where emails and eHarmony were non-existent, the pair exchanged addresses in Trafalgar Square and proceeded to write each other.

"This happened with all kinds of service people, I met Polish, Australians and they all wanted to know where I lived and if they could write," said Alice.

For Canadian soldiers, local women in Britain offered friendship and peace during overwhelming situations, this relationship typically carried on through letters.

"There were all kinds of soldiers writing. I answered back because it was all that they could think of, that they were in touch with people."

Gordon consistently wrote to Alice while he was stationed in Surrey, England.

"[Gordon] continued to write and I'd write back. I let the other letters go and some of them quit writing."

"We wrote each other for about a year and then we got engaged ... He proposed through a letter because he couldn't get away too much" said Alice.

With very few opportunities to see one another prior to their engagement, the courting phase of their relationship consisted of a pen, paper and a postage stamp.

Although Alice never imagined she would one day marry Gordon because she had no intention of coming to Canada, his letters won her over.

"He's a good writer, he could make letters lovely. His writing was perfect," explained Alice.

Within a year and a half of meeting, the twosome married on Jan. 17, 1942, in England without delay.

"We made arrangements to get married and the night before, the church windows blew out from a bomb raid. There were no windows in the church," said Alice.

Unlike typical marriages, the Cook's beginning was a challenge but not even the



Gordon and Alice Cook recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. The couple married in England on Jan. 17, 1942 during Second World War after exchanging letters for one year.

Photo by Michelle Cochrane

war discouraged them from making their relationship survive.

"We knew it had to be possible, when you stayed alive with the bombing that went on," said Alice. As strong as they were, she still struggled with the thought of her future with her husband. "It was on a daily basis, you didn't know whether he was going to be alive or not."

"1943 was the last time I saw him before he went overseas in June 1944 for D-Day,

so we didn't see each other for two years," said Alice.

After the war, Gordon returned back to Belleville and Alice followed one month later by boat in 1945.

Approximately 48,000 women from Europe met and married Canadian servicemen during the war. These women, for the love of their husbands, followed their veterans back to Canada.

The couple continued to live life in the

military as Gordon later joined the air force to be a military policeman.

Their whirlwind romance covered the world. Moving to places such as England, Germany and France but they always returned back to Trenton.

"At the time it was quite exciting, going overseas and not knowing where you were going to live."

The pair finally settled in Trenton in 1967 and Gordon was required to retire

from the air force at age 50 in 1971.

Returning home and facing retirement was an adjustment but they had new, exciting adventures ahead with grandchildren on the way.

Celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary this year, Gordon and Alice Cook say they wouldn't have had things any other way.

Their letters have not survived all these years, but their love still carries on.

Bar license suspended following fatal car accident

By Sean Macey

The woman driving a car in the wrong lane of the 401 on Monday, resulting in a double-fatality, had spent 16 hours at a local bar before driving, says a spokesperson for the Ontario Alcohol and Gaming Commission.

Ab Campion said Korin Howes, 23, arrived at The Angry Beaver Bar and Grill in Belleville on Wallbridge-Loyalist Road around 5:30 p.m. on Sunday for a Super Bowl party, and didn't leave until 9:30 the

next morning.

The crash occurred Monday morning when Howes was driving westbound in the eastbound lanes of the 401 and collided with another vehicle between Aikins and Glen Miller roads.

Howes and Shaina Harrison, who was driving the other vehicle, were both killed in the crash.

"There was a young lady, a patron, in this facility who apparently was drunk and basically got in a car and I believe led to that accident," said Campion.

Howes graduated from the culinary program at Loyalist College with honours in 2009.

"Simply one of the most sincere, honest people I have ever had the honour of teaching. She was a natural in the kitchen a real chef in the making," said Loyalist professor and chef John Schneeberger in an e-mail. "Korin will be missed by all of us."

Harrison, 23, from Oshawa was a first-year practical nursing student at Loyalist.

"She was one of those people who you could take a room full of strangers and

make a complete family out of them," said classmate Jennafer Bulley. "She always had a smile on her face, she was always happy."

"Her biggest dream was to become a fantastic nurse, which she would have become as well," said Bulley.

She said Harrison travelled from Oshawa every day and her friends often reminded her to be careful.

The Angry Beaver had its liquor license suspended yesterday afternoon because of Liquor License Act violations.

The bar had five violations in total: sell-

ing or serving outside prescribed hours, failure to remove evidence of service, offering liquor free of charge, promoting immoderate consumption and permitting drunkenness.

It is currently an interim suspension with a notice of proposal to revoke the license permanently. The owners of the bar can appeal the alcohol commission's decision to the Ontario License Appeal Tribunal.

Napanee OPP Cst. Tammy Coleman declined to comment.

Cuts for Cancer looking for hair and money to help those who've lost locks to cancer

Hair-cutting event planned in Belleville for grassroots organization

By Melissa Di Nardo

Erica Hollman, founder of Cuts for Cancer, saw a photograph of a bald young girl undergoing chemotherapy, drawing hair on her reflection in the mirror and was moved into action.

"It all started with a picture," said Hollman. "Every time I see this photo it makes me sad to think that I have hair and many little girls want to have hair do not."

Originally the image flooded the Internet in Nov. 2011 by HeyltsRemi, a girl on twitter who is now followed by 11,325 people on the social network site. The picture was accompanied by a twitter post, or tweet, that said, "If you look at this picture and not retweet you are heartless."

After viewing the image Hollman made a promise to herself.

"I promised myself that before I die I want to give my hair to a little girl that does not have hair," said Hollman.

"I can always grow my hair back. Many people like this little girl don't have that luxury."

Cuts for Cancer is a grassroots organization looking to collect hair and monetary donations from the community. A haircutting event will be held at John's Hair Quarters, located at 56 Bridge St. E., on June 6, 2012, in Belleville.

Hollman then created Cuts for Cancer on Feb. 1, 2012 with the help of her friend Hailey Lindsay, who is also the coordinator of the organization. Both girls are looking to get as many people as possible to come out and help support young children who can't afford to have



Hailey Lindsay (left) and Erica Hollman hold up the image that had sparked the idea for the new grassroots organization Cuts For Cancer.

Photo by Melissa DiNardo

a wig made.

Hollman, who is still in high school, is looking to gain support from everyone.

"Have you ever wanted something so badly but could not get it?" said Hollman.

"Our goal is (to raise) \$1,700 for cancer research and to raise these donations from our school and the community."

The main goal is to get hair donations for Can Donate Hair, a Quebec company that provides free wigs to children under the age of 16 suffering from cancer. According to www.DonEspoirCancer.ca this is the only company in Quebec authorized to accept hair donations.

The wigs made from the donations of the haircutting event in Belleville will be

accompanied by letter from the donor to the patient, so that the patient knows where their new hair came from.

"Don't worry little girls, you will have hair soon," promises Hollman.

For any inquiries visit <http://cuts-for-cancer.webs.com/> or their Facebook page Cuts for Cancer to get involved.

Competition...

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"It was extremely hard. I didn't expect the outcome that I got but it was a lot of fun," said Cook. "There's lots of good people involved with these competitions, and I'd definitely recommend it to my friends."

The 2002 world champion, Greg Boyes, turned up for the event and was pleasantly surprised with the level of competition he saw.

"The competition has certainly improved over the years," said Boyes. "Some of the competitors are getting much stronger and filling up many of the heavyweight classes."

Just like every other sport, there are some rules. Competitors must always have their elbows on the pads, always have their non-wrestling hands holding securely onto a peg, and have an eye on their wrestling hands to prevent slippage and injury.

Just before the round starts, the referees will make sure the grip looks good and square the wrestlers' shoulders to the table. Matches last as long as needed, and the first person to win three rounds takes the cake.

"It was a great event," said Bilal Kreidieh, a spectator at the event. "I'm definitely not going to miss another one."

Everyone is extremely sportsmanlike and polite in the world of arm wrestling. Giving tips and helping each other out during a tournament this size is the name of the game, explained Joe Gould, tournament director and national left-handed champion. "Although some people do tend to get a little rattled up when it's for all the marbles."

"There's obviously a lot of weight training involved," said Gould, "but most of the training is done in clubs on a good old [arm wrestling] table."

Allen Ford walked away with 23 wins at the end of the night, capturing the "most wins" award. This was Allen's fifth time winning the award.