



Photo by Carla Antonio

**Alia Hogben, executive director of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women, answers audience questions during her presentation at Capers restaurant on Oct. 30. The event highlighted common misconceptions of the Muslim faith and the perception of Muslims in Canada.**

## Speaker offers Muslim perspective

**By Carla Antonio**

In a time of extreme need, the Muslim community of Canada can rest assured that they have a strong and resilient voice speaking on their behalf.

It was a full house at Capers restaurant last Thursday night as Alia Hogben, a Kingston Whig-Standard columnist and executive director of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women, spoke on behalf of Canadian Muslims as part of the Bay of Quinte Federal Liberal Association speakers' series.

It was a timely presentation following the tragic shooting and killing of Corporal Nathan Cirillo on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Oct. 22.

The appearance included a speech from Hogben followed by a lengthy question-

and-answer session. She opened with the topic of the devastation in Ottawa, and highlighted the effects on Canadians and specifically, Muslim Canadians.

"It is almost surrealistic that this has happened in Canada," she said.

"There's ongoing surmise and assumptions as we try to understand the reasons for such killings."

She discussed the mother of the shooter's beliefs that her son's actions were a result of mental instability while others assume it was strictly an act of terrorism.

"As Canadian Muslims, we are fearful. We share with all of you the fear of violence amongst us."

"And in addition, we are fearful of what is being proposed by legislation to combat homegrown terrorism or as (Prime Minister) Stephen Harper calls

it, self-rationalized individuals and its focus on Muslims." She explained how recent media reports say that the federal government is moving quickly to pass legislation giving the state "extraordinary powers" in the detention of people that they believe might be involved in terrorist efforts.

Hogben said she recognizes how difficult it is to talk about whom our Canadian Muslims are without raising the issue of the Ottawa shooting perpetrator as well as the incident in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Que. in which an Islamic man purposely attacked a group of Canadian military with a vehicle.

"Although we can say their actions are beyond Islam, we can't deny that they believe in the religion," she said.

"After all, they said they were Muslims,"

she said.

Hogben moved on to discuss a basis of Muslim beliefs in order to give the audience a better understanding of their often misunderstood faith. Beginning with the historical background of Muslims in Canada. She talked about the first Muslim family that came to Canada in 1867, who emigrated from Scotland.

"Can you believe it? I love telling this story," she said with a laugh.

She went on to explain the fundamentals of the Muslim faith, highlighting the similarities to Judaism and Christianity, such as teachings from the biblical stories of the prophets.

"I know the perception of Islam is that it is violent and intolerant," she said.

"But in fact, what the Qur'an asks is that Muslims be people of the middle

way and to stay away from extremes." However, although there are many similarities to be found, Hogben stressed that it is the differences in the religions that causes so much friction as well as the constant negative media attention that is received.

She said that she understands what she is saying must sound much different from what we are hearing in the media. She talked about the media's role and how they are often only interested in spreading stories that are negative despite the much more positive Muslim stories that need to be spread in a time of such prejudice.

"I say to them 'why you don't do a good story.' We just celebrated five Muslim women who are remarkable in their area of work. Would you want to do some stories on them?" she said.

## Sharing the experience of volunteer work

**By Tristan Urry**

When you think of volunteer work, you most likely don't picture someone with a disability doing it.

"People in this general sector of society have been viewed as people who tend to only take from society. Everyone needs to be desensitized to people with disabilities and they need to realize that there is a real person in there and they have a lot to say and a lot to contribute," says support worker Robert Moreton.

Moreton has been a support worker for Community Living in Belleville and Area for the last 25 years and during that time, he has worked with many individuals and formed unique bonds with every single one of them.

But the longest-lasting bond would be with Julie Henderson. Henderson was born blind and a quadriplegic and she has been with Community Living since she was 21. Henderson's parents thought it would be best if Julie could live her own life and get out of the house like most normal adults that age do. Moreton has been her main support worker for the past 10 years.

Henderson and Moreton have volunteered at local thrift shops together two days a week for the past decade.

"Volunteerism really gives us a sense

of self-esteem because it means that you are part of something and it's your way of giving back. Julie definitely values that role," says Moreton. It all falls under the agency's '21 outcomes.'

Community Living is an accredited, non-profit organization that has provided a wide range of services and support to adults and children for over 60 years.

"To become an accredited agency, they needed to follow the 21 personal outcome measures," says Moreton.

Those 21 are then put into three categories such as: My Self: Who I am as a result of my unique heredity, life experiences and decisions, My World: Where I work, live, socialize, belong or connect, and My Dreams: How I want my life to be.

Moreton says he believes that all 21 outcomes are important to help make sure each individual lives a normal life.

Part of this normal life is having friends. Community Living tries to introduce people with similar interests who they think would enjoy spending time together.

Henderson recently made a new friend from Tweed thanks to that effort.

years ago.

One of the main outcomes, says Moreton, is providing opportunities that mean something to the individual.

"People need to have meaningful days and what's meaningful to me isn't necessarily what's meaningful to you or what's meaningful for Julie. It could be as simple as bowling in a non-segregated area with other non-handicapped members from the community," says Moreton.

It is very important to give each individual a variety of choices so he or she can decide for themselves what they want, he adds.

"There are never two choices, because that isn't a choice, it's a dilemma as to which one, so it's at least three to four choices."

Each person has control of his or her own life. They can choose where they want to shop and go each day because the support worker is there to support them, not to control them.

"The most important thing of what we do here is that we don't just look at people as someone we are just going to look after but we look at them as our friends," says Moreton.

"Yes, we may be paid staff, but Julie is a friend and, much more than that, she is family... and the highest honour is to be considered as family by those people as well."



Photo by Tristan Urry

**Julie Henderson and Robert Moreton have been pricing books as volunteers at the Belleville Salvation Army Thriftshop every Monday and Thursday for nearly a decade now.**





Photo by Dillan Cools

The cast of the St. Thomas' Anglican Church 2014 Graveyard Tour from left to right: Bernadette Hymus, Josh Beale, Sandra Kennerley, Caroll Hennessy, Mike Hall, Evelyn Hennessy, John Mark Robertson, Ken Hennessy, Phil Allison, Ruth Blamire, Mike Blamire, Linda Matchim and David Smith.

# St. Thomas' graveyard tour kicks off church's bicentennial

**By Dillan Cools**

Members of the St. Thomas' Anglican Church in downtown Belleville, alongside people from the community with a curiosity for history, came out for the church's first-ever Graveyard Tour on Sunday, Oct. 26.

Despite the brisk weather, a group of 60 congregated in the church's parking lot at 2:30 p.m. in anticipation of the tour. The large, all-ages crowd stepped through the yard visiting the graves of the prominent people who once called Belleville home.

"It's a chance to get acquainted with some of the founding members of St. Thomas' Church," said Evelyn Hennessey, treasurer of the church and organizer of the event.

Hennessey, along with 12 other members of the church who had dressed up in dated attire appropriate for their roles, were stationed throughout the yard. As the crowd arrived, the cast gave informative presentations detailing the lives of the deceased and re-enacting old stories.

Hennessey came up with the idea after taking part in a similar event organized by Gary Foster at the Glenwood Cemetery in Picton.

"I thought, 'Well, we've got all these ancient people, stones and everything here. Why not do our own graveyard tour?'" she added.

The graveyard tour was well timed as it kick starts the church's initiative to celebrate and raise awareness for the upcoming bicentennial in 2018.

"That seems like a long way away, but we've started doing some things to let people know," said David Smith, who sits on the bicentennial committee.

Smith became involved with the church shortly after moving to Belleville in the 1970s and became interested in the significance of the cemetery during the building of the Parish Centre that opened in 1990. "It was a fascinating thing to watch that process and then they had the dig...to remove the bones and you know, there were all kinds of relics, belt buckles, buttons, all of that kind of stuff. There is a lot of history because it is really the first cemetery in Belleville," said Smith.

"I heard about this (graveyard tour) and I thought that maybe they needed somebody that could move people from station to station, so I volunteered," said Smith.

Fitting with the familiarized duties of a tour guide, Smith played the

role of George Tickle, an affluent funeral home director who operated on North Front Street and was responsible for overseeing the graveyard. "It was purely volunteer," said Hennessey. "What I did was write up the basic scripts and then people did research and added to it." Hennessey, who is interested in genealogy and history, is no stranger to research as she previously worked as title searcher for the land registry's office.

"They did all their own costumes," said Hennessey, while dressed as Catherine Covert, widow of John Covert. John Covert (1792-1846) was a hard-working property owner in Belleville who lived a prosperous and comfortable life with his wife Catherine and four children, John, Rachel, Catherine and Henry.

Hennessey also doubled up as an Irish man named William Stinson (1824-1871) who fell into some tough luck while running a lumber mill on the Moira River. Stinson was fined a considerable amount of money for dumping sawdust into the river but having just been robbed by a group of thugs the month before, he struggled to come up with the money. The stress became too much for Stinson and he died on May 31, 1871, leaving be-

hind a wife and three children.

John Mark Robertson also gave an impressive performance as he eloquently recited the story of James Hunter Samson, Belleville's first lawyer and an accomplished politician. The youngest cast member, 11-year-old Josh Beale, told the story of William Henry Alford, who drowned at the age of 15.

"I was really surprised by a particular number that had been pulled out of the historical information," said Smith.

"Twenty-three per cent (of the deceased in the original graves) had drowned, and mostly because they were fishing," he added.

Among the visitors were Belleville residents Joe Fee and his son Caleb, who attends the Junior Choir and St. Thomas' Church.

"My son is very interested in history and so am I, so I thought it would be a good idea to come and check it out," said Fee. "We've lived here about 10 years now ... It's nice to get to know a bit of the history of Belleville and the area we live in," added Fee.

The final stop on the tour took the crowd to the grave of Diana Hennessey where her two great-great-grandchildren Caroll and Ken Hennessey re-enacted the bizarre moments that lead to her death.

One night Diana noticed that her husband, James Hennessey, was butchering a pig without cleaning it and let him know how she felt about it.

James, who had been drinking a bit at the time, spun around and accidentally slashed her abdomen. He realized what he had done but despite calling for help right away, she died two days later of a stomach infection.

"The fact that the two of them are the descendents of the couple that was involved in the story made it all the more interesting," said Elizabeth Mitchell, who is also on the bi-centennial committee.

As the final performance commenced, the cast gathered for a bow and invited the audience inside for some warm apple cider.

"It happened to work out that it was time for another roast beef supper so we rolled it all into one," said Hennessey.

The large group, which had doubled in size, sat in the warm church eating their classic roast beef supper while the surprising finale resonated through their conversations.

"So far everybody's been happy," said Hennessey. "We've been requested to do it again in the summer on a warm evening...So I expect we probably will...Just come again and look for us in August."

# Parents connect and tots have fun at Momstown

**By Sarra Lalonde**

"Like most mothers, I needed to keep my toddler busy while I kept the new baby busy. I also wanted to connect more with other mothers," said Leanne Ballard.

Ballard was a registered veterinarian tech before she decided to open her own business. When she was maternity leave, she said the opportunity join the organization. She started Momstown

in Guelph before moving to Belleville where she opened a new outlet here.

"I was not sure if I wanted to return to work full-time and place my kids in day-care, so I decided instead to



Leanne Ballard

start my own business."

She has been running Momstown in Belleville for seven years. The national program operates mostly in Alberta and Ontario, but they are expanding to the east coast in the next couple weeks and British Columbia just opened an outlet.

Momstown offers over 30 programs for children and their caregivers. They offer daytime and evening programs, from Tales for Tots to Little Chefs. Fees

are \$85 yearly per family. There are at least two programs a day that tots and parents can participate in.

Momstown programs are based off the eight pillars: art, music, literacy, nutrition, science and discovery, fitness and adventure, play and social and prenatal. A Momstown program pass offers unlimited usage throughout the year for adventures with your child or children as well as a chance to connect with other parents in the community.

Momstown is not just for moms. Dads, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and any other caregivers are more than welcome to come to the adventures Momstown offers.

Momstown is a also business advertised program. Local businesses advertise for the organization. For more information on the programs and activities, you can reach Ballard by email or phone, 519-827-5643, or Leanne.ballard@momstown.ca.

# Honouring a Prince Edward County militiaman

**By David Fransky**

Residents of Quinte West paid their respects to a soldier of the Prince Edward Militia on Sunday.

The militiaman's name was John Johnson and he was a soldier from the Prince Edward County Flank Company who served in the War of 1812.

In recognition of the War of 1812, some men dressed up in the uniform used by Johnson. One was the descendent Peter Johnson and another one was Clinton McGinnis. To show that it was a Canadian uniform, there was yellow on the collar and sleeves.

Peter spoke about the fact that his ancestor did not receive the Victoria Cross. "He did not receive the Victoria Cross...He was just a regular citizen who did his duty for his country."

Attending the event were dignitaries MPP Lou Rinaldi, MP Rick Norlock, the new mayor of Quinte West, Jim Harrison, president of the Trenton Historical Society, Shawn Ellis, and Rev. Norman Long.

"It is important, as you all know, to remember our past," said Norlock, who said he attended to show respect and to be a representative for the people of the area.

"I was invited to come and celebrate some of the important aspects of the War of 1812. We were able to keep our country a country. Otherwise we would be the United States of America."

Rinaldi said, "This is history today. Thank you to the federal government for



Photo by David Fransky

Peter Johnson (right), descendant of War of 1812 militiaman John Johnson, and Shawn Ellis, president of the Trenton Historical Society, were among the attendees Sunday in recognition of Johnson's war efforts.

this form of recognition so that we remember."

Harrison said his grandfather was in the First World War, who was wounded during the war. The mayor said he was also there to show support for the Trenton Historical Society for all that they have done.

"I just want to say that I live in the best city in the best province in the best country. Thanks to John for his efforts, Peter, and the historical society...and to remember our past," Harrison said.

"We all go back to our roots, also to support the Trenton Historical Society."

"This is phenomenal. It takes time to preserve our history," said Ellis.

The president of the historical society also noted that he was there to give flowers to the fallen to show respect to Johnson and Johnson's relatives.

The final person to speak was Rev. Long who said he was there at a friend's request.

"I am here to do the dedication at the cemetery. Peter and Angela requested this for their ancestor because they are into that."

This was the first plaque in the Quinte West area to be dedicated to the War of 1812 for a soldier from the area.

Looking around to all of the people there, it is apparent that there were many ages who came out to represent the people in the Quinte West area that showed their respect for a fallen soldier from our past.