



Preserving, promoting, and developing Wellington North's unique cultural resources to build a vibrant community and a prosperous economy.

CULTURAL MOMENT FOR DECEMBER 19TH CELEBRATES JOHN WALSH

John Walsh, who was laid to rest on December 3rd, 2022, exemplified the finest values of his community.

Through the years John has been a vital figure in Arthur village life and farther afield. His naval service in World War II on the minesweeper HMCS Wallaceburg and his profession as a pharmacist greatly influenced his commitment to community service. His faith and his love for his family sustained him throughout his life. His wife, Mary Teresa, was by his side through the decades.

Walsh's Pharmacy, established in 1952, remains essential to the health of local citizens.

John Walsh was "Coach" to many Arthur hockey teams over 21 years and will always hold that title for those he guided in the game and in life.

John's contributions to Arthur village's life are too many to describe fully here. However, his part in the founding of the Arthur and Area Historical Society is one of his greatest community legacies. Along with several enthusiastic local history lovers, John initiated the plan to gather documents, objects, and any other artifacts illuminating community life. Everyone was urged to contribute. If someone was closing a business, clearing a house, or simply eager to preserve treasured items their contributions were welcomed. Not only did John take on the role of collector, but he also catalogued each donation, identifying its use, the donor, and its location in the Rooms.



In 2003, John saw the opening of the Historical Society Rooms in the old Post Office and Township building. In the years following, donations filled the designated rooms. It's pretty certain that, in typical John Walsh fashion, he's the one who convinced the powers that be to oust the OPP from their office in favour of Historical's need to expand. Good luck trying to keep him from promoting his community.

Naturally, John's particular love was for the military history illustrating why Arthur was designated as "Canada's Most Patriotic Village" by the Toronto Star in 1942. The "Military Room" is filled with photos, medals, uniforms, and various items reflecting the village's response to the call to duty.

As part of his outreach as historian and veteran, John was key to the community's move to restore the cenotaph, established by the women of Arthur in 1923 to commemorate World War I veterans. As later names have been added, it and the park around it are the heart of the village.

The Historical Society was a vital partner in the creation of the historical murals round Arthur. And John's figure saluting Ottawa War Memorial veterans and the Canadian flag is a fitting tribute to him.

John himself cannot be seen anymore at home, at church, at Historical, or all the other places in Arthur that were invigorated by his knowledge, his humour, and his love of community. Now, to see the legacy of John Walsh, just stand in any spot in Arthur, and look around.

Submitted by Gail Donald Wellington North Cultural Roundtable