

2020 YEAR IN REVIEW: Jan & Feb

Attention Readers!

For our first edition of the Shelburne Free Press in 2021, we will be taking you through all of the highs and lows over the last 12 months. Our 2020 Year in Review will share some of the most significant stories impacting our readers from Jan. 9 to Dec. 23.

Now, without any further adieu, here's a look at the year that was!

January

? Five Shelburne area residents are playing big roles in the upcoming production of Mamma Mia! opening this week at the Orangeville Opera House.

Produced by Orangeville Music Theatre (OMT,) the juke-box musical and romantic comedy, presenting the popular music of ABBA, features Shelburne theatre buffs - both on stage and behind the scenes.

? Six months on from the unanimous vote that, seemingly, put the community's divisive policing issue to bed once and for all and Shelburne Council has this week voted in favour of reopening pandora's box - officially requesting a new costing proposal from the OPP.

A special council meeting called for Monday evening (Jan. 20) revealed the true extent of complications brought on by Orangeville Council's decision to shut down its own municipal police force in favour of entering into a contract with the OPP.

Shelburne CAO Denyse Morrissey estimated on Monday the Town would need to stump up approximately \$925,000 to plug the service gap that will be left behind once OPS is disbanded. This would be an annual expense, rather than a one-time cost, and would bring Shelburne's yearly police budget up to around \$3.8 million.

As a result of these new revelations, a motion was put forth by Coun. Shane Hall and seconded by Coun. Walter Benotto, to instruct staff to immediately request a new OPP costing.

? Shelburne council declares February to be Black History Month. Alethia O'Hara Stephenson gave a presentation to council pertained to declaring February Black History Month in Shelburne.

Her presentation recognized many of the early black settlers in the County, including, George Hannahson, William and Mary Ghant and Richard Pierpoint, who settled in East Garafraxa, after a distinguished career as a soldier in the British army.

Council accepted the presentation and proclaimed February as Black History Month in Shelburne. They also authorized the raising of the Pan African Flag, for the month, with the raising ceremony to be held Feb. 3 at 9:00 a.m.

? The Shelburne Free Press reports first story on coronavirus after 53-year old man travelling from Wuhan presented mild symptoms of coronavirus in Toronto.

The virus was first discovered in late December when the World Health Organization (WHO) was alerted to a new virus that had affected several pneumonia cases in Wuhan City.

February

? Retired Centre Dufferin District High School teacher Neil Orford, who now leads the heritage education organization Defining

Moments Canada, shared two exciting announcements with the Free Press this week.

First, Defining Moments Canada will partner with the Ministry of Canadian Heritage over the next two years to lead the national digital commemoration celebrating the 100th anniversary of the discovery of insulin.

The digital project is called 'Insulin2021.' Neil Orford says, the project will honour 'the four major milestones in the discovery of insulin - Canada's 'gift to the world' - commencing April 2020 and running through to December 2022.'

Mr. Orford's second announcement involves the 2020 national commemorative project to share the stories of Canadians' contributions to the Liberation of Holland and Victory in Europe (VE Day). The federal government made the announcement in a press release last month.

Neil Orford told the Free Press that Defining Moments Canada 'will be sharing nine incredible Canadian stories from the 'Road to Liberation' in 1944/45, where the contributions of Canadians to freeing the occupied Dutch and winning the Second World War are often neglected.'

'Kinesiologist, nutritionist, and mental health ambassador Claire Knight of Melancthon, will make an 800 km solo hike across the Camino de Santiago trail this spring to raise funds and 'hope' for mental health in Dufferin County.

Commencing April 17, the challenge, which means leaving family, friends and work behind, is expected to take Claire five weeks to complete.

Ms. Knight started her non-profit campaign 'Claire's Hike 4 Hope' in 2019, with 100 percent of donations going back to Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and Community Mental Health in Wellington-Dufferin. She says the campaign was her response to 'the high suicide rates within Wellington-Dufferin County,' and 'lack of support services for individuals and families.'

'Canadian Hip-hop artist Wes Williams, aka 'Maestro Fresh Wes,' will take part in a Black History Month panel discussion at the Museum of Dufferin on Feb. 23.

According to legendary artists such as Toronto's Drake, Wes Williams is 'considered to be the godfather of Canadian Hip-hop.'