



PORT COLBORNE

# CITYHALLNEWS

A newsletter written by Staff for the Residents of Port Colborne

FEBRUARY 2021

66 Charlotte Street, Port Colborne, ON L3K 3C8 | 905-835-2900 | portcolborne.ca | newsletter@portcolborne.ca

 @cityofportcolborne  @portcolborne  @cityofportcolborne  @cityofportcolborne  @cityofportcolborne



## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Now, more than ever, it's important we work together to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus. As numbers remain high, we are urging Port Colborne residents to follow the new provincial stay-at-home orders.

It's been almost a year since COVID-19 impacted our lives. With numbers still high, now more than ever we need to do our part to keep our community safe. The situation is serious, and the new stay-at-home order which came into effect January 14, 2021 is in place to keep our families, friends, frontline and essential workers, healthy. We know this is frustrating, but we need to keep our community safe. As we've mentioned before, not following Public Health's directives may result in significant fines. Our By-law Enforcement Team has been instructed to start issuing fines to businesses and residents not following the rules. By not following the rules, you could be issued a fine up to \$1,000. If you are unsure of Public Health's guidelines and directives, please visit [NiagaraRegion.ca/COVID19](https://NiagaraRegion.ca/COVID19). Or, you are more than welcome to reach out to us at the City of Port Colborne and we would be happy to provide clarification. With vaccinations now in Niagara, Public Health is quickly moving through the first phase, completing all vaccinations at Long Term Care Homes as of Friday, January 22, 2021. This is great news! A phased approach to vaccinating all of Niagara is currently being planned and we will share more information once it becomes available.

To those in our community who have been, and are continuing to navigate Port Colborne through the COVID-19 pandemic, THANK YOU. Over the last year we have seen frontline and essential workers in our community continue to keep our city running amid a global pandemic. To all frontline healthcare workers; those working in essential services including pharmacies, grocery stores, schools, and local businesses; City staff for continuing to serve our residents; and Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services for keeping us safe, THANK YOU for steering this community into recovery. We owe you our deepest gratitude.

On behalf of City Council and Staff, please stay home, limit the number of people you're in close contact with, wear a mask and wash your hands. We are all in this together.

### City Facility Updates

The City of Port Colborne is committed to ensuring the health and safety of residents and staff, while continuing to provide customer service to the community. City services will experience the following changes:

- **City Hall:** will continue to serve residents by appointment. In-person appointments will be scheduled for essential and time sensitive services. Where possible, services will be provided through remote means. To access City services, please call our customer service representative team at [905-835-2900](tel:905-835-2900).
- **Vale Health & Wellness Centre:** Closed to the public
- **The Port Colborne Historic and Marine Museum:** Closed to the public
- **The Port Colborne Library:** Curbside pickup only, available Monday - Saturday, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- **Essential City services:** including but not limited to, road maintenance, snow removal and water and wastewater operations will continue.

For more information, please visit [www.portcolborne.ca](http://www.portcolborne.ca).



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## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN PORT COLBORNE

### Railway Crossing Improvements

The City of Port Colborne moves full steam ahead with railway crossing improvements in collaboration with GIO Rail, as a continued commitment to improving infrastructure across the City. Working in conjunction with GIO Rail, the goal is to improve the quality and safety of railway crossings. Both parties play an important role; the City is responsible for road surfaces; and GIO Rail is responsible for the railway tracks. By forming this partnership and working together, it ensures roads, sidewalks and railway tracks are sustainably built and functional, with the needs of both residents and train operators in mind.



### Reminder: Community Grant Program

2021 Applications Due February 1, 2021

The City of Port Colborne welcomes non-profit organizations and service clubs serving the needs of the residents of Port Colborne to apply for a discretionary grant based on the provisions included in the Grant Policy.

Applications are due February 1, 2021. For more information and how to apply, please visit: <http://www.portcolborne.ca/communitygrants>.

### Coming Soon!

The annual Polar Plunge in support of the Special Olympics is going to take a virtual approach this year. More information will be available February 1, 2021! But we hope to see you #FreezinForAReason!



### Thinking of updating your backyard or property?

**Before building or planting anything, make sure you're aware of encroachments.**

An encroachment means any fence, tree, shrub, hedge, landscape berm, vegetative planting, building, structure or other object placed on municipal property. Unauthorized encroachments may be a safety hazard for both pedestrians and drivers by way of trip hazards or reduced visibility. There is the potential to block or reduce access to underground utilities or interfere with snow removal. So, before building or planting anything, be sure to complete these three things:

1. Know your boundary lines to ensure you build/plant on your own property
2. Call before you dig – using the **Ontario One # 1-800-400-2255**
3. Check with your municipality to ensure you are adhering to all rules and regulations
  - Zoning – location compliance and other yard provisions
  - Building - permits, fees and inspections
  - By-law -site alterations, encroachments, fences, pools, and tree By-laws

For more information visit:

[www.portcolborne.ca/bylaws](http://www.portcolborne.ca/bylaws)

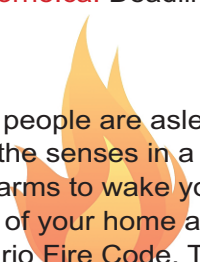


### Build a Fire Truck Craft Contest

To celebrate Family Day, Fire & Emergency Services is inviting children up to grade 8 to #PORTicipate in a Fire Truck Craft Contest. The rules are easy; build a fire truck using anything you can find around the house: egg carton, milk carton, tissue box, construction paper, shoe box, etc. Once complete, snap a photo and send it to [fpo@portcolborne.ca](mailto:fpo@portcolborne.ca). Deadline to submit is February 22, 2021 at 5 p.m.

### Fire Safety Message

Did you know? Most fatal fires occur at night, while people are asleep. Poisonous gases and smoke from a fire can numb the senses in a very short time. That's why every home needs smoke alarms to wake you up in time to escape. A smoke alarm on every level of your home and outside sleeping areas is a requirement of the Ontario Fire Code. Test your smoke alarms regularly to make sure they work and change the batteries every six (6) months. Remember: only a working smoke alarm can save your life.





**PORT COLBORNE**  
• PUBLIC LIBRARY •

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310 King Street, Port Colborne, ON L3K 4H1 | 905-834-6512 | [www.portcolbornelibrary.org](http://www.portcolbornelibrary.org)

@PortColbornePublicLibrary @PortColborneLib @PortColborneLib PortColbornePublicLibrary

## Temporary Hours

Monday - Saturday | 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Library staff are onsite to answer your phone calls and to schedule curbside pickup.

## Holiday Hours

The library will be closed for Family Day, on Monday, February 15, 2021.

## Please note the following:

- The book drop is open 24/7 to return your books and library materials
- All fines will be waived on items due during the closure
- If you don't have a library card, visit our website to register online
- There are currently no in-person programs or meetings
- If you need help, please call or email us and we will respond to your questions as soon as possible. Stay safe! We will see you soon.

Curbside pickup is available Monday to Saturday, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. For more information visit, [www.portcolbornelibrary.org](http://www.portcolbornelibrary.org).

## Take & Make Family Craft

Every week, your family can order a free kit to make an amazing craft.

All craft kits have been quarantined for four days and were packed by staff wearing gloves. Call to book your kit: 905-834-6512. Available while supplies last!

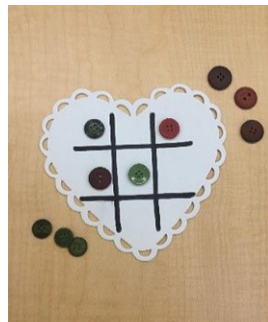
Jan. 29 - Penguin Puppets (Ages 4 – 8)

Feb. 5 - Paper Quill Hearts (Ages 9 and up)

Feb. 12 - Valentine Tic Tac Toe (Ages 4 – 8)

Feb. 19 - Upcycled Magazine Beads (Ages 9 and up)

Feb. 26 – Love Hedgehog (Ages 4 – 8)



## I Read Canadian Day Wednesday, February 17, 2021

We challenge your family to "Read Canadian" for 15 minutes on February 17 and to share your experience with us on social media. Tag us in your post and use the hashtag #IReadCanadian Watch for other fun, Canadian-themed activities on our social media accounts throughout the month.

## \*New\* Book Recommendations by Kids



Read any good books lately? We are looking for book recommendations written for kids by kids!

1. Check out a library book
2. Read & enjoy!
3. Write down your name, age, the title of the book, the reason why you liked it, and how many stars you would give this book out of five. You can include a drawing or photograph!
4. Email us your book recommendations here:

[library@portcolborne.ca](mailto:library@portcolborne.ca)

Program is available for kids 12 and younger.

Submissions will be featured on our website, social media accounts and newsletter.

## Freedom to Read Week

February 21 to 27, 2021

Freedom to Read Week is an annual event that encourages Canadians to think about and reaffirm their commitment to intellectual freedom, guaranteed under The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Celebrate your freedom to read by enjoying a frequently challenged or banned book! Order a banned book through our curbside pickup:

905-834-6512 or read an e-book using the Overdrive or Libby App!





**PORT COLBORNE**  
- HISTORICAL & MARINE MUSEUM -

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280 King Street, Port Colborne, ON L3K 5X8 | 905-834-7604 | <http://portcolborne.ca/page/museum>

@PortColborneHistoricalMarineMuseum @PortMuseum @portcolbornemuseum

## Hello from the Archivist!



**Michelle Vosburgh, our Museum Archivist extraordinaire, is here to tell you what they've been up to at L.R. Wilson Archives.**

"Our role is to preserve and share the documentary heritage of Port Colborne and Wainfleet. The pandemic has meant some changes in our operations, but we have been busy. We were able, before the lockdown, to accommodate researchers by appointment, by applying the protocols and procedures in our B.A.S.S. (Book a Safe Service) initiative. Our doors may be closed once again, but research requests and questions about Port Colborne's history never stop! In fact, with people spending so much time at home, the

interest in family and local history has grown tremendously, which is where we come in. We've helped people from all over North America, from simple requests for a scan of an obituary, property searches, questions about the Underground Railroad, to more complex requests for family history from the 1700s!

Unable to have our urban history and cemetery walking tours, we started our "Then and Now" series on Facebook. Every week, I have posted a #pcthenandnow set of images. This means looking through thousands of photos in our collection, and then going to the location today to try to match the perspective of the original photo as closely as we can. If you've seen someone out with a camera comparing shots with a copy of an old photo, it might've been me! Each post includes a lengthy description, which often involves considerable research to make sure our information is accurate!

Next up, we're hoping to start offering an online version of our Speakers Series, which will be advertised on our Facebook page, so be sure to like our page [@WilsonArchives!](#) Stay Safe and Happy Researching!"

## Heritage Week February 15-21, 2021



### How did Port Colborne get its name?

Sir John Colborne, 1st Baron Seaton, served as Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada from 1828 until 1836. Colborne was an avid supporter of the new development of the Welland Canal. The new village created at Gravelly Bay, the southern terminus of the canal, was named Port Colborne in 1833 in his honour. Sir John Colborne's coat of arms includes a British infantry soldier and First Nation warrior flanking a shield mounted by a stag's head. The motto Sperat Infestis means "Hope in Adversity."

**Image to the left:** This Coat of Arms of Sir John Colborne, Baron Seaton, on display in the "A Village by the Canal" exhibit was donated by Graeme Ott.

## Black Heritage Month

They were hidden in plain sight on the ships coming into the guard lock at Port Colborne. Helpers had guided those seeking freedom and escaping their enslaved conditions along the Underground Railroad, directing them to ports like Erie and Sandusky along the American shore of Lake Erie. Among the owners and captains of the vessels on the lakes were some abolitionists. Determined to help those Black freedom seekers, sometimes the abolitionists hid them onboard, but a less suspicious method was simply to add them to the ship's crew list, using fake names. They could board the ship openly, and just had to act their part as crew members as the ships left American shores heading toward Canada. Recent research has focused on the schooner, Home, and its abolitionist captain, James Nugent, who assisted many to freedom in Canada. Nugent brought the Home into the Welland Canal on many trips and here in Port Colborne, at the guard lock of the Second Welland Canal, a few got off the ship, finding freedom, while others stayed on board until the ship reached St. Catharines. Although their lives here were not easy, with racism and prejudice still formidable barriers, they were free.



This photo is one of the earliest we have of Port Colborne, taken in 1866, with the guard lock of the Second Welland Canal, where some of those people who sought their freedom got off the ships, and stepped into the next chapter of their lives. PCHMM 986.82.173