

SPONSORED CONTENT

EXPERT COLUMN



ELBOWS UP: OWEN SOUND'S LEGACY OF NATION-MAKING AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

From the desk of Mayor Ian Boddy



Our community is facing another period of economic disruption, coming too soon after the effects of COVID-19. We don't yet know the impacts of the tariffs on our city, or how long this latest crisis may last. What we do know is that our community has a strong track record of resilience when facing challenges.

When I reflect on the history of Owen Sound, I see a community that stands together through thick and thin. We've seen the boom times in our shipping and manufacturing eras, we've weathered the storms of recessions and pandemics. We did it all together—as we now work with our partners to advance our 'clean economy' era.

Aside from the bigger economic forces at play, I want to highlight a few specific examples that illustrate the spirit of our community.

In the winter of 2015, we had neighborhoods with frozen water pipes for weeks. Citizens helped each other deal with drinking water, laundry, and shared meals, and we got through it.

In August of the same year, senseless arsons left 25 families homeless, and once again our community came together to help each other. Household goods and clothing were donated, and thousands of dollars were raised within days for the victims.

We have an amazing history of digging into our pockets to raise funds to build arenas and rec centers, park and playground amenities, a hospital, and also to buy major medical equipment, demonstrating what can be achieved when our community comes together.

On the national level, Owen Sounders have also played a historically significant role in shaping the Canadian identity—Agnes MacPhail and Norman Bethune went to high school here, and we are home to both Billy Bishop and Tom Thomson, legends in their respective domains.

Billy Bishop, Canada's first flying ace, inspired awe and admiration as our country began to distinguish itself from its colonial origins. Canadians are sensibly reluctant to go to war, but never back down from a fight.

When we fight, we win. But we also need to remember what we're fighting for.

Tom Thomson is renowned for capturing the natural beauty of our country with his breathtaking artwork. According to the National Gallery of Canada, "his art both reflected and reinforced developing Canadian nationalism". We are fortunate to have many examples of this valuable work on display at the TOM, right here in Owen Sound.

In fact, we collaborated with our neighbours to make all of this history and culture available to residents of Owen Sound and beyond through the OPEN Card, providing free access to the Library, the TOM, the Billy Bishop Museum, and the Marine and Rail Waterfront Museum.

Come for a visit and be sure to support the incredible local businesses of our River District.

We work together, because we're in this together. When any of us need help, we always look after each other. That is the way we have always done it.

Let's do it again.

Elbows up!

—Mayor Ian Boddy

art
culture
resources

the library
Owen Sound & North Grey
Union Public Library

Billy
Bishop
Museum



TOM

TOM THOMSON
ART GALLERY



opencard.ca