

December 2024

*Welcome, December.
Let the magic
begin!*

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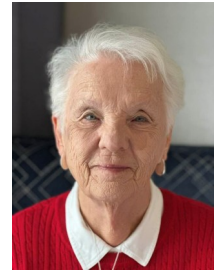


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Resident of the Month: Rita Munro

Written by: Elizabeth Turner

Born in Lanark County on November 4, 1940, Rita Munro carries with her a “map memories”. After a morning spent with Rita in her bright and spacious Orchard View townhome, I realized just how intertwined Rita’s life is with the land and people of the Ottawa Valley. Rita smiles when I point out the obvious---she is a walking and talking local history book!---and confirms that she is fond of comparing notes with Ron, another Orchard View resident with 95 years of living the County under his belt!



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Rita’s parents, Matt and Peggie Larkin, worked hard to provide for their seven children. Rita was the eldest of their “first family” of 5 girls and so she was expected to pitch in to care for her younger sisters from an early age. (The “second family” —the Larkins’ only son and last daughter arrived long after Rita had left home.). The Larkins moved where Mr. Larkin could get work---for example, to Carleton Place for work at Findlay’s Foundry (maker of cast iron pots, cook & box stoves) on High Street or to Cumming’s Saw Mill for a stint as a truckdriver. To make ends meet, Peggie also worked outside the home alongside her husband cutting logs in the bush or on her own at the Glenayr Kitten Mill in Lanark.

Eventually the Larkins found their way to Guthries’ Farm (now the site of Tatlock Marble Mine). In exchange for farming and working in the bush, the Larkins lived in a large family home on the property. Happily for Rita, her maternal Grandma and Grandpa lived nearby. She recalls how much she enjoyed milking cows---“I loved it because I used to help my grandmother”. While her parents worked, Rita spent a lot of time with her grandmother, learning various skills and basking in her Grandma’s love and attention. “I still miss her”, Rita says as she reminisces about those bygone days. Her Grandpa also added to Rita’s repertoire of skills, teaching her how to cut hay with a scythe in one big swooping motion.

Rita spent Grade 1 through 8 in one-room schoolhouses- first in Hopetown (now a community centre) and then in the White School on the 511 (now a hunt-camp). Rita remembers a 2 mile walk to the White School, home-made soup cooked on the school’s box stove, and square dances on the porch at lunchtime. Entering high school, Rita and her sister Anne made the one hour trek into Almonte together, beginning with a pony and buggy ride to the Barrs’. Then Jean Barr drove them to Clayton where they boarded a bus for Almonte. The pony “had a mind of its own” so Anne had to hop off the buggy and lead him by the halter to remind him who was boss!

When not working, the Larkin family delighted in dancing. Peggie taught her children to dance around the kitchen table to the fiddle tunes of Don Messer and the Islanders broadcast over the radio on Saturday night. Rita’s love of the waltz came in handy when she met Floyd Dennie, who was to become her first husband, at a Clayton country dance. Rita was 17 when they married and it was not long before they had 3 girls together (Valerie, Rhonda, Kathie), all of whom were born at the old Almonte Hospital.

Tragedy struck in 1960. While putting up an antenna, Floyd was electrocuted, leaving Rita a widow at the tender age of 19 with three young daughters to support and raise. Money was very tight. There was some holiday pay and some insurance money but not enough to last very long. How Rita responded to this crushing blow is a testament to her strength and resilience. Somehow she pushed through her grief and went to work. While her mother looked after the girls, just like her parents before her, Rita took work where she could find it. Still mourning the loss of Floyd, Rita began work at No. 1 Mill (now the Textile Museum) and the Almonte nursing home. Woolen mill work was tough --- immersed in heat (it could reach 120 degrees Fahrenheit), smells of machinery oil and wool, and covered with wool pilling, the opportunity for Rita to work at the Bells Corners' CDC assembly line was a welcome change.

But, it was Rita's next career move to Leigh Instruments in Carleton Place that provided her with the greatest job satisfaction—"I really liked working at Leigh(between 1965 and 1981) and still keep in touch with some of my co-workers". Leigh Instruments produced beacons—a location device used when planes go down—and altimeters- a recording device located in cockpits. Working on the assembly line proved a difficult task for a young woman with small hands so she was assigned to a job more suitable to her. Rita oversaw "drawing control". In less technical terms, Rita ran a machine for blueprints needed by engineers, draftsman, and production floor manufacturing. Later on she was promoted to print room supervisor. Rita also thoroughly enjoyed her time on Leigh's fast ball team and Tournament team, even managing to win Most Valuable Player at one point. After many happy years with Leigh, in 1981 Rita decided to join some Leigh co-workers at Canadian Marconi where she stayed until 1993.

In the meantime, Rita found love again. Several years after losing Floyd, Rita met Eldon Munro, a Clayton lad, at the Almonte Fair. They married in 1968 and had 2 children together—Roxanne and Mark. Eldon and Rita were married for 54 years. When not working, running businesses, or raising their family, Eldon and Rita enjoyed skidooing from the Munro Farm to White Lake, socializing with fellow Masons, fundraising on behalf of the Shriners, and travelling down South. Rita has especially fond memories of a cross-country train trip which she took with Eldon, Eldon's sister, and brother-in-law. It had been on their "bucket list" for a long time and it did not disappoint! Highlights were Jasper, Banff, and Vancouver Island. Rita also cherished her 16 plus volunteer years at Almonte General Hospital. She served as the hospital's Chair of Volunteer Services Committee until Eldon's own health concerns took precedence.

In 1993, with Eldon's support, Rita became an entrepreneur in her own right---opening "Just Casual", a woman's clothing store in the heart of Almonte. When Rita closed up shop in 1998 she began to work more closely with Eldon as the Office Manager for Eldon Munro Construction. And, in that same year Eldon built their home on Martin Street where they lived out the rest of their married life until his passing in June 2022.

Rita has lived in Almonte since 1954 and can't imagine living anywhere else. She moved from her Martin St. home to Orchard vView in 2023. She enjoys getting together for dinner with other ladies who, like her, live in Orchard View townhomes and values her friend and neighbour Heather. However, if you want to know more about her greatest pride and joy, just ask her to show you the "chart" aka family tree listing her 10 grand-children and 17 great-grand-children. And, if you want to get her hearty agreement, just tell her like I did, "Rita, after so many years of hard work, you have earned a well-deserved rest!"





Employee of the Month: Clare Cloutier

Thank you Clare for being your bubbly, compassionate and engaging self. You bring a wonderful energy to the room and the residents love you for it. Thank you for covering off during Kaitland's holidays, you did a bang up job! We appreciate all the extra effort you put towards the activities department to ensure that everyone continued to get moving, be social and keep their minds sharp!



Laugh Out Loud Moments



What did one
Christmas tree say
to another?
Lighten up!

Testimonial ~ Dave Scott

In the two years I have been living in Orchard View, it has been a pleasure interacting with many interesting and friendly residents and staff. Excellent care and services are provided. I enjoy my time in the bistro with friends, my freedom to continue the things I love, the variety of entertainment including musicians and special occasion celebration.

Thank you for making it feel like home.

Amenities & Services

- 24-Hour Nursing Staff
- Theatre & Chapel Services
- Wellness Centre—Physio
- Multi-purpose room for games & gatherings
- Library, Tuck Shop
- Outdoor Raised Flower Gardens
- Duck Pond & Atrium Pond
- Gazebo and outdoor activities
- Emergency Response System
- Full Service Dining Room & Snack and Beverage Bistro
- House Physician, Foot Care Nurse, Hearing Aid Clinic, Hair Salon, Esthetician, Dental Hygienist
- Wheelchair Accessible Bus
- Weekly Bus Shopping/Lunch Trips
- Weekly live entertainment
- Full recreation programming
- Weight & Blood pressure clinics

Open Activities

- Bistro • Puzzle Tables • Joe on Piano
- Wellness Centre Bike and Walking Bars
- Adult Colouring • Reading • Quiz booklets • Pool & Shuffleboard Table • Massage chairs (Wellness Centre / 2nd Floor Lounge / 3rd Floor Lounge)

MERRY CHRISTMAS

<p>1</p> <p>Muppets Christmas Special with John Denver</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Coffee & Baileys - Share Your Photos from Previous Years</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Christmas Baking</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Breakfast with Santa</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Group Gift Wrapping</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Christmas Baking Served at Happy Hour</p>	<p>7</p> <p>The Nutcracker in the Theatre</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Almonte Parade Bus Trip</p>
<p>9</p> <p>Hot Chocolate Social</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Card Making Craft</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Winter Olympics Featuring: Snowball Toss, Curling & Hockey</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Snowman Craft</p>
<p>13</p> <p>Eggnog served at Happy Hour</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Christmas Family Feud Trivia</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Christmas Music Singalong With Judi</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Christmas Tea & Cake</p>
<p>17</p> <p>Gingerbread House and Gingerbread Men Decorating</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Suite & Tree Tour</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Christmas Jeopardy In Theatre</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Wheelchair & Walker Parade</p>
<p>21</p> <p>Curling Game</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Johnny Cash Christmas Special</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Magic Of Lights at Wesley Clover Park</p>	<p>24</p> <p>'Twas The Night before Christmas Caroling and Social</p>

HOLIDAY EVENTS CALENDAR

WALL OF HONOUR



HONOURING OUR VETERANS

We proudly unveiled our Wall of Honour to our residents—a heartfelt tribute to the veterans within our community. This wall, adorned with photos of these remarkable individuals, serves as a powerful reminder of their service, dedication and sacrifice. We are grateful for the opportunity to celebrate and honour each one of them. Thank you to all who contributed to bringing this project to life and for making this moment truly memorable for our heroes.