



Bass River Elementary students (l to r) Blake LeBlanc, Brendan Patriquin, Gabriel Tremblay, Renae Cutler, Brooke-Lynn Adams, Brieanna Young and Blade Turner were busy making paper crafts during Craft Club recently. They meet each Thursday after school with Miss Lawrence and Mrs. Patriquin. (Harrington Photo)



Ashley Irving (right) joins PJ Day first place winners Alex Gallant (left) and Brooke Weatherbee in a photo. Winter Carnival Activities were held the week of March 7th to the 11th at Central Colchester Junior High School. (Harrington Photo)



Mrs. Smith races to the finish line in the teachers versus students Cottonball Race held in the gymnasium during Winter Carnival Week at CCJHS. (Harrington Photo)



CCJHS Grade 9-1 student Lucas Dustan keeps the cotton ball from falling off his nose as he races to cross the finish line. This was just one of many crazy activities. (Harrington Photo)



Mariah Irving, Jean-Eva Gas and Tristan Clark (l to r) were showing school spirit by taking part in PJ Day during Winter Carnival at Central Colchester Junior High School. (Harrington Photo)

The Holocaust by Bullets in Novaya Ushytza

A Holocaust Remembrance Day service will be held on May 1st, 2011 commencing at 7:15 pm at Veterans Memorial Park, Bass River. Everyone is invited to join in the event to remember the millions killed under Nazi tyranny. The story of the Shoah will be told and the Kaddish for the dead recited. Hundreds of candles will be lit for the children killed at Auschwitz. A plaque will be dedicated, commemorating the Holocaust by Bullets in the Ukraine. Fellowship will follow at the Bass River Firehall. *(Editor's note: To provide more background about the Holocaust Service, we contacted Elizabeth Shein, Truro, who initiated development of two plaques, one of which will be dedicated at the service in Bass River on May 1st. She offered to submit, some background information. It was so well written, we are printing it in its entirety).*

Novaya Ushitsa, Ukraine

By Elizabeth Shein
My father came from a Russian Jewish family that lived in the small village of Novaya Ushitsa, Ukraine. Jews from Russia had been forced to live in an area called "The Pale" in very poor conditions in the territory of present-day Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Belorussia. Stories about the Holocaust have haunted me since I was a teenager and saw a film about Auschwitz in my Grade 10 history class. However, until quite recently, I was unaware of how many Jews had been killed during WWII in mass murders of a different sort - a Holocaust by bullets. Nor did I know that I had a personal connection to this history. Germans entered Novaya Ushitsa on July 14, 1941. In September a closed ghetto was formed in the village. In the spring of 1942, Jews from the surrounding area were taken from their homes and herded into the ghetto. On August 20, 1942, most of the Jews were forced by the Einsatzgruppen (German mobile killing squads) to walk 4 km from the village to an opening in the forest. There they were made to strip off all their clothes and stand in front of one of four large pits. They were shot at close range, one human being killing another - babies, children, parents and grandparents - all in the presence of local residents, their non-Jewish neighbours, schoolmates and friends. 3,222 Jews were murdered in the forest that day. Another group was taken to a nearby labour camp and died there. Those remaining in the town ghetto were killed on October 16, 1942. A few managed to survive but effectively, after this Holocaust the Jewish community ceased to exist. Novaya Ushitsa is but one example of this type of genocide. Villages, towns and cities throughout the Pale and the former USSR lost most of their Jewish citizens through this Holocaust by bullets.

I had always hoped to visit Ukraine and see where my father's family was from. I became even more determined to go once I learned about the history of the Jewish population. I was also very inspired by the work of Father Patrick Desbois, Director of Yahad in Unum, in Paris. This Catholic - Jewish organization's mission is to locate and record all the mass graves in Eastern Europe as well as record the memories of remaining witnesses. Father Desbois' life mission is to ensure that the victims are respectfully honoured. Luckily my father and most of his family left before WWII but the genocide was still a part of my family history and inheritance. This past summer, my daughter Mariah and I travelled to Novaya Ushitsa. We had a wonderful Jewish guide and translator, who was from the same area and knew the history of the Jewish people. She introduced us to Mr. Isaac Itken who is the only surviving Jew from Novaya Ushitsa. He is now 85 years old. He was one of four survivors of the NU genocide. The other three were later captured and killed. Mr. Itken was 16 at the time and he witnessed the murder of his entire family in the forest. He survived by escaping into the woods and hiding. After the war, he returned to NU and was determined to keep the memory of his family, friends and neighbours alive through a memorial that was built on the site of the 4 mass graves. Mr. Itken took us to the memorial site in the forest and described, in unforgettable detail, the atrocities that took place on August 20, 1942. Just before visiting the site, we discovered in the local museum in "The Book of Sorrows" that three members of my extended family had died on this day as well, making the memorial even more personally meaningful. As a descendent, I wanted to do something to honour the Jews who had died in Novaya Ushitsa, to show that other people in the world would not forget what had happened. Wanda

Bennett of Parsborro had approached Dr. Karen Ewing and offered to do something for the Veterans Memorial Park in Bass River. The Park's creator, Dr. Karen Ewing and the Park committee had begun to honour Holocaust Remembrance Day several years ago. Dr. Ewing and I asked Wanda to use her stone carving skills to make two small plaques - one for Novaya Ushitsa and the other for the Memorial Park. Mariah and I brought Wanda's beautiful plaque with us to Novaya Ushitsa and presented it to Mr. Itken at the memorial site in the forest. We told him that a "sister" plaque had been made for the Memorial Park in Bass River, NS and that the plaque would be laid during the next Holocaust Remembrance Day in Bass River. Mr. Itken was very moved by this and the fact that people he didn't even know cared about what had happened in his village. There is a Hebrew word carved into the plaques that means, "For the World to Remember". Remembering those who have suffered is a simple but very powerful act. My wish in uniting Bass River and Novaya Ushitsa in this way is twofold: to make a human connection so that Mr. Itken will feel supported in knowing others will continue to remember when he is gone; and to serve as a reminder that genocides continue to happen throughout the world and we cannot be silent.



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