



An overhead view of the crowd attending the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade's Annual Fall Harvest auction. The two day auction generated over \$27,000 in revenue. (Submitted)

Did Boston Save Halifax? COLCHESTER TO THE RESCUE!

On December 6th, 1917, the massive explosion in Halifax Harbour cut off communication with the outside world for many hours. The immediate challenge of rescuing those trapped in burning houses, then transporting the wounded to swiftly-overcrowded hospitals and emergency clinics, was met by every fireman and railway worker who had survived the blast, as well as soldiers from the Halifax Garrison and visiting sailors from Britain and the US. Halifax and Dartmouth doctors, nurses and medical students carried an incredible load before help arrived from outside the stricken city.

Over the years, Nova Scotians have given praise and thanks to the city of Boston for coming to the aid of Halifax, but that story has overshadowed the amazing work of

medical personnel and ordinary citizens, as well as the surrounding communities who sent help as soon as they learned what had happened.

These heroes have remained unrecognized for a century. It comes as quite a surprise for many people to learn that in fact Truro sent the first relief train from outside the city, within an hour of hearing about the disaster. It carried volunteer doctors, nurses and firemen, and picked up others from Kentville on the way. Before that day ended other trains had come from New Glasgow, Sydney and Saint John, a full two days before the contingent from Massachusetts arrived with welcome reinforcements and supplies. By mid-afternoon a train loaded with injured and homeless survivors (including

sailors from ships sunk in the harbour) arrived in Truro where three emergency hospitals had been created with two hour's warning.

The Colchester Historeum contains the records of the only Relief Committee formed outside of Halifax, and amazing stories of the swift response and ongoing generous care have survived there. It's time in this hundredth anniversary year to celebrate their kindness and efficiency, as the Halifax Herald did: its headline on December 10, 1917 praised "The Splendid Spirit shown by the towns of the province and the assistance so promptly given."

The above data is contained on the Maritime Museum's website. Here's the link to the online story: <https://maritimemuseum.novascotia.ca/event/did-boston-save-halifax-colchester-rescue>

VON Staff Made 220,111 Home Visits

By Maurice Rees

An annual update about VON activities in Colchester was provided to council at a presentation meeting on November 6th by Wendy Robichaud. VON delivers a variety of programs which include: Community Care; Community Support Services; Adult Day Program; Volunteer Transportation; Vial of Life and Food Care Clinics.

Foot care clinics are held in Truro, Bass River and Tatamagouche with 700 clients receiving care. The clinics provide assessment, care and advice for clients of all ages, including those who suffer from chronic disease - diabetes, arthritis and circulation.

Over 239 drives ensuring people in the area could attend essential medical appointments under the volunteer transportation program. Drives are available Monday to Friday, 8:30 - 4:30 by a number of volunteer drivers providing safe, reliable and affordable door-through-door assistance to medical appointments.

The Adult Day program is provided in three locations: Truro at Johnson Manor on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays; Hills of Annand, Tatamagouche on Tuesday and St Catherine's Church, Indian Brook on Thursdays. Last year the program provided 2,287 respite hours to clients and families of Colchester-East Hants.

The program provides a safe and comfortable environment for seniors and adults with intellectual disabilities, who may be living with

chronic illness, social isolation or dementias. The Vial of Life program stores vital health information including physician, pharmacist contact, allergies and other medical information in a vial in the refrigerator. Paramedics and other emergency personnel will look for the Vial of Life symbol and be able to obtain important medical facts during a crisis.

In the Colchester- East Hants areas serviced by the VON, care and service was provided to 3,226 clients in

the various community support programs. Nursing staff provide over 81,071 home visits, while home support staff provided personal care, meal preparation, light housekeeping and caregiver respite through 220,111 visits.

Robichaud's presentation was not to ask for special funding, but to update council on VON activities. Council includes a contribution to VON in its budget in an ongoing basis.

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