



Dave Ritcey, MLA shown with representatives from The Mira and Parkview Estates during the announcement to existing facilities will be replaced with new long-term care facilities comprising 173 rooms to be completed in 2031 & 2032. (CNS Photo)

"Timber Queens" Conference: Celebrating and Empowering Women in Forestry

By Heather Boyd

The inaugural "Timber Queens" forestry conference, dedicated to women and womxn in the industry, concluded with an overwhelming display of empowerment and a commitment to shaping a more inclusive future for forestry. Held on November 1, 2023, in Truro, Nova Scotia, this groundbreaking event brought together women from diverse forestry backgrounds to connect, empower, and inspire.

"Timber Queens" set a powerful precedent as an inclusive and progressive gathering, emphasizing networking, relationship building, and starting conversations. Attendees forged vital connections and discussed the importance of mentorship and confidence building, with particular focus on the essential roles that women and womxn play in the industry.

The conference was designed to be a haven for networking, supporting one another, and professional development tailored to women. It provided a brave space for attendees to forge connections, share experiences, and build vital professional relationships.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion took center stage at the conference, highlighting worldviews, positionality, and privilege, and the work being done to dismantle

stereotypes and foster diversity in the industry. Presenter Elizabeth Jessome with the Mi'kmaw Forestry Initiative said "Like forest ecosystems, human systems—social, political, economic, knowledge—are diverse, reflecting the worldviews and values of the communities and power dynamics that created them. In forestry, creating a resilient, inclusive industry requires us to reflect on our varied privileges, positionalties, and worldviews, preparing us to engage in difficult conversations with the aim of learning and growing together as a sector. It was inspiring to gather with a group of women to discuss opportunities and challenges related to our collective work in the Wabanaki forest!"

The event also featured presentations on the growth and goals of existing mentorship programs, and continuing conversations. The Building Confidence workshop led into breakout sessions, showcasing key components of confidence, goal setting, and embracing progress, and fostered enthusiastic engagement among attendees.

Participants did not hesitate to convey their enthusiasm. Julia McMillan with MacMillan Forest Inc. said "After 39 years of work in this sector, this was a first! An em-

powering day to inspire, engage and to form mentorships for women who share similar challenges and goals." Debbie Reeves of Murray A. Reeves Forestry Limited said "It was the best day I spent in a long time. The young women in the room were intelligent, warm, and friendly and many need the support those of us who have been through the challenges working in this male-dominated sector. Together we have the determination, vision, and knowledge to move the sector forward to a bright future and be proud of progress." Organizer Heather Boyd, Executive Director of the Forestry Sector Council, expressed her excitement, saying, "Timber Queens has surpassed our expectations. It's not just a conference; it's a movement. We are dedicated to empowering women and womxn in forestry, championing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. It was exciting to see everyone walk away feeling empowered after the day."

The "Timber Queens" forestry conference marked a significant step towards reshaping the industry, empowering participants, forging a more inclusive and sustainable path forward, and driving positive change in the field of forestry. When women come together, incredible things really do



Franze Miller Wins Quilt Submitted by Annette Sharpe

It is November 15, the air is cool and a light dusting of snow outside, Remembrance Day is past and the Debert Military History Society completed the 2023 Quilt Raffle with the drawing taking place in the Museum.

Attending the raffle draw November 11 was Paul Kenrick, President, Annette Sharpe, Secretary and Paul's grandson who did the drawing. First place winner of the Quilt created by Wanda Frizzell is Franze Miller of Great Village. The second prize winner of the Wreath created by Deb Howell was won by Marley MacDonald of Halifax.

The Debert Military Museum will use the funds raised with the Quilt raffle for the maintenance and upkeep of the Museum at its location at 35 Acadia Ave in Debert.

The Museum would like to thank the supporters, Kent Building Supplies, Masstown Pro Hardware, Atlantic Superstore and Lowland Gardens and others for their contributions to the Debert Military Museum in 2023. Also at this time we would like to give Thanks to all those who partici-

Open
Tuesday to
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pated and donated this year as well, not only of funds but of time working for the Museum's sake. The H hut has now been shut down for winter and closed to visitors for the season but the late spring comes soon.

The first room of the Museum is dedicated to the history of the men and women who travelled through Debert, either in service to the base or personnel of the Canadian Forces. Group albums, photos, badges, uniforms, maps of the Base as it was and service history. The first room also has the book containing the signature of visitors for the last 25 years, since the day the Museum opened and it will take signatures of visitors for the future as well. Another small part of history.

Many visitors tend to think this room is the only room of the

Museum and get lost in history pondering over the maps, having questions as the reality of the life of the time sinks in. Troops from the far and wide are represented in the first room and the proud legacy they left the area of Debert and the legacy they fulfilled for Canada is evident.

Eyes of visitors widen as they learn that up to another 14 rooms are to be discovered in the H hut.

A Hall of Flags, a room of tele-com, a room of living in "the time", a room dedicated to Women in service, logging and lumber tools from McCully and Soy and much more is yet to be explored as we will welcome you in the late spring.

Keeping in touch, Debert Military History Society. debertmuseum@outlook.com for information on the Debert Military Museum also for membership information @ \$10 annually. Admission to the Museum is free in season and visitors are welcome.



Colchester
be centred here.

Presentation Meeting
Tuesday, December 5 @ 6pm

Council Committee Meeting
Thursday, December 14 @ 6pm

Municipality of Colchester, 1 Church Street, Truro
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