

This giant size teddy bear brought a lot of joy to people passing along Hwy#2 in Masstown. Vandals Burn Giant Teddy Bear-Someone lit Blake's Pumpkin Jungle's giant bear on fire in Masstown overnight on October 24th. (Harrington Photos)



Blake Jennings was very disappointed someone would want to burn down a teddy bear meant to give joy to people in the community. Above, he points to the fire trail, which he expects was where someone dumped fuel leading to the bear.

Teddy Bear Destroyed by Fire

By Linda Harrington

Blake Jennings couldn't believe his eyes...all that remains of the giant teddy bear at Blake's Pumpkin Jungle is a pile of burning hay.

Blake's day started as every other day, in the barn at 6AM at his family's Bayview Poultry Farms. As he was working, he thought he smelt smoke but it wasn't until he got a text on his cell at 7AM that he realized where it was coming from.

Blake has been running a roadside squash and pumpkin stand for 14 years. Every season he puts up a roadside sign and iconic giant teddy bear along Hwy 2 in Masstown. When he arrived at location this morning his sign was still there but the teddy bear was nothing but a pile of burning hay.

Blake couldn't believe someone would do this and expressed his feeling on social media, which immediately got the attention and support of the community. "I've been in business for 14 years now and I've never had something so

terrible happen, last night some useless person had the nerve to come in on a four wheeler and burn my beloved bear to the ground, please let me know if you see anything or heard anything about who did it, I apologize to all the family's that didn't get to take their picture in front of it this year but I will not be rebuilding it until next year."

It appears someone poured fuel on the bear and lit it on fire. There are suspicious four wheeler tracks in the field, Blake says look like they came from a narrow machine, perhaps an older model. He estimates the incident must have taken place between midnight and 2AM, based on what was left of the bear.

Blake says he used to take the bear down before Halloween because he feared something might happen. He left it up for a few years, and the bear wasn't vandalized, so he started decorating it for Christmas and the community seemed to enjoy seeing the bear with its bright red rib-

Colchester to the Rescue

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didn't get here for almost three days and meanwhile it was local folks who rushed to deal with horrific conditions and needs.

In fact the first trainload of doctors and nurses and firemen from outside the city was sent from Truro within an hour of hearing the news.

And by mid afternoon a train full of wounded and homeless people came here to a place with no public hospital, but with just that much warning three emergency "hospitals" had been created in the courthouse, the fire hall and the Academy.

The following is an excerpt from the first page of "COLCHESTERTO THE RESCUE";

Communication with the outside world was cut off for many hours and 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.

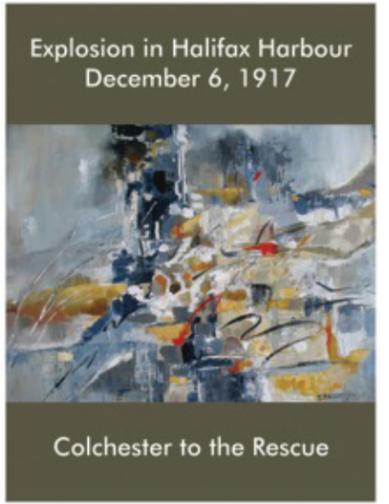
Local doctors, nurses and medical students carried an incredible load before help arrived from outside the stricken city.

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 local medical personnel and the citizens who survived the explosion, 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.

It was a wonderful surprise to discover that the Colchester Historeum contains the records of the only Relief Committee formed outside of Halifax,



and that amazing stories of the swift response and ongoing generous care given by the people of our town and the surrounding counties have survived here.

It's time in this hundredth anniversary year to celebrate their kindness and efficiency, as the Halifax Herald did at the time.

Its headline on December 10, 1917 praised "THE SPLENDID SPIRIT SHOWN BY THE TOWNS OF THE PROVINCE AND THE ASSISTANCE SO PROMPTLY GIVEN."

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