

## ST. JOSEPH'S LIFECARE CENTRE BRANTFORD

## RESIDENT FAMILY NEWSLETTER



## Honouring veterans and welcoming the season of giving

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Chief Operating Officer, St. Joseph's Villa & St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre*



***"The act of remembrance is one of the most important ways to honour and thank veterans for their sacrifices."***

**— Royal Canadian Legion, 2025**

This month, we take time to reflect and give thanks to those who served our country. Remembrance Day, observed on Nov. 11, marks the end of the First World War and has become a time to honour all Canadian veterans and military families. At St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre, we're proud to support veterans, and we're thankful that through the Ministry of Long-Term Care and Veterans Affairs Canada, residents are offered priority placement to long-term care and can be eligible for financial assistance for care needs.

The poppy, worn over the heart, remains a powerful reminder of the courage and sacrifice of those who served. If a resident in your family is a veteran, please let our team know so we can recognize their service and share our appreciation.

A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who supported the Family Council's first clothing drive. The event was a great success, thanks to Family Council volunteers and our staff who carefully labelled and returned clothing to residents. The response was so positive that another drive is being considered for spring. The event brought smiles, dignity and joy to residents who enjoyed choosing their own new items.

As colder weather settles in, we ask families to help ensure residents stay comfortable and warm. Please check that seasonal clothing is appropriate for the cooler temperatures, and that items fit well and are easy to layer. It's also a good time to swap lighter summer wear for cozy sweaters. Please make sure any new clothing is labelled before it's placed in resident closets.

This month, we look forward to celebrating together at several upcoming Lifecare events. Please join us at our annual Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, Nov. 15, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the Ground Floor and Level 1, featuring crafts and gifts from residents, Family Council members and local vendors.

We're also pleased to share the return of the Grant a Wish program, led by St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation. Throughout November, the Foundation will collect personal care items to support residents in need and ensure everyone receives a special gift during the holidays. Items can be placed in the collection bin in the lobby.

Our mission of *Unstoppable Compassion* guides us to care with respect and dignity and helps create a place where residents and families feel at home. As we look forward to the joy of the holiday season, we thank you for being part of our St. Joe's family.



## resident spotlight series

# Muriel Stephenson A life led with faith

For many, 102 years is a lifetime of quiet chapters. For Muriel Stephenson it has been a story filled with music, faith and service. One lived with a violin in hand and a Bible close by.



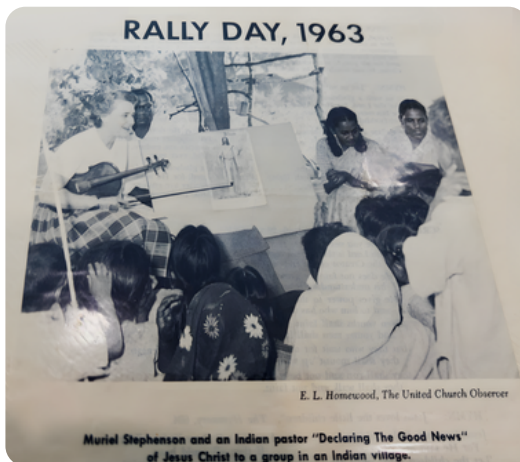
Muriel moved into St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre in August bringing with her a legacy shaped by more than three decades of missionary work in India. From 1952 until 1987 she dedicated her life to children and education, often traveling alone across the country by train to reach new communities. She ran a girls' school in Ratlam, taught

music and helped lead worship services, always guided by her faith. "I live as the Lord leads me," she says.

### A life in India

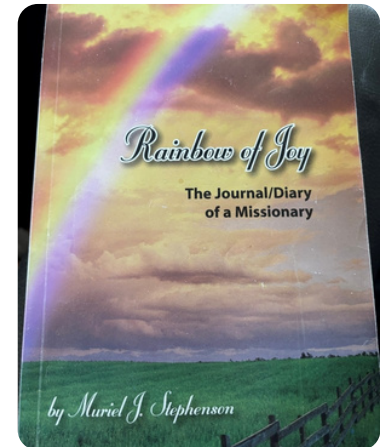
Muriel's time overseas brought no shortage of stories, some harrowing and some joyful. She recalls once coming home to find a poisonous snake in her house and dispatching it with the heel of her shoe. On another occasion she sought refuge under a seat on an overcrowded overnight train, finding rest wherever she could.

Music was constant. Born into a musical family in Ontario that included her older sister Norma and twin sister Isobel who were both music teachers, and brother Ken, Muriel grew up playing violin often joining in hymn-singing around the piano. In India she carried her instrument everywhere, accompanying services, forming choirs and encouraging others to find strength in song. Even today her favourite pastimes are singing hymns and reading scripture.



### Poet of faith

When Muriel returned to Canada she continued serving in her own way. She wrote several books of poetry, including an autobiography titled *Rainbow of Joy*. For years she shared daily poems that set Bible verses to verse form, mailing and later emailing them to friends and family across the world. This quiet ministry became her way of nurturing community and faith in her retirement. Her nephew George and nieces Shirley and Mary remember how faithfully she kept at it. "It was inspiring to see her faith," George said. "She lives it day to day."



### Strength, independence and grace

Muriel never married, preferring to chart her own path. She is remembered as independent, outspoken and kind, a woman who led by example rather than by preaching. At George's wedding she came out of violin retirement just long enough to play *Amazing Grace* and *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*, making the small ceremony during COVID restrictions all the more meaningful.

She is also remembered for her motto: "**Life goes on and we go with it.**"

Today, though she no longer walks as freely as she once did, Muriel still brightens every visit with a smile and a warm welcome. Her Bible is always close at hand and her joy comes from her faith, her family and her many friends both near and far.

## Stay informed and get involved

Family Council brings families and caregivers together to share ideas and stay connected. The group is committed to promoting and enhancing the health, welfare and quality of life of all residents at St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre.

Meetings often feature guest speakers and cover topics chosen by members. The council also helps inform families, advocate for residents and raise funds for meaningful extras and recreational programs.

Families are always welcome to join. It's a great way to be involved in life at St. Joseph's and support residents and their caregivers.

For questions, suggestions, or to get involved, please email [sjlcfamilycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcfamilycouncil@gmail.com) or contact:

- Michelle MacInnis, Chair: 519-802-2951
- Sally Summerhays, Treasurer: 519-771-6093
- Linda Fess, Secretary: 519-756-4504

Elections for executive officers take place at the November meeting. If you're interested in a position on the council or would like to nominate someone, please email [sjlcfamilycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcfamilycouncil@gmail.com)



*Celebrating 68 years of marriage: Gene and Hubie Clark (left), with Gene's sister visiting from Nova Scotia, and Peter and Pat Kuyper (right) were honoured at the Family-Resident social.*



## Reminder

When visiting the home, check the Family Information Board on the ground floor near the elevator for Council updates and notices. You can also find current information on the TV screens on each floor.



Huge thanks to everyone who donated new and nearly new clothing to the first Family Council Resident New to You event. Your generosity helped residents refresh their wardrobes and made the day a success.



*Residents and families enjoying games.*

## Upcoming Council Activities

Saturday, Nov. 15,  
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Ground Floor & Level 1

**Annual Christmas Bazaar** - All families and caregivers are invited to the bazaar. Bring your loved ones to enjoy the day. Donations of raffle prizes or gift cards are welcome. Funds raised support Family Council programs and activities. To donate, contact Michelle at 519-802-2951 or email [sjlcfamilycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:sjlcfamilycouncil@gmail.com)

Monday, Nov. 17, 1 p.m.  
Boardroom (Level 4)  
(Enter elevator code 9900\*,  
then press 4).

**Family Council Meeting** - All family members are welcome! Families are encouraged to attend and share their ideas. The 2026 Family Council elections will take place during this meeting. Speakers include Sandra Mallett, SJLC BSO Therapeutic Advisor, who will present "Meaningful Engagement for Families Visiting," and Cindy Perrodou, SJLC Administrator, who will share updates and information important to residents and families.

Sunday, Dec. 7, 1:30 p.m.  
McMillen Hall (Level 1)

**Resident and Family Christmas Social** - Celebrate the season with residents, families, and staff. Details and a special guest to be announced soon.

## Clothing drive brings comfort and dignity to residents

What started as a single thoughtful comment turned into a heartwarming initiative. The Family Council at St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre organized a clothing drive to support residents who might need a few extra items.

Council members began by cleaning out their own closets, soon joined by other families, staff and even a local church that was approached by one of the council members to contribute donations. A simple act of kindness became a cheerful shopping day where residents could browse, try on and choose clothing at no cost.

"It felt like a real shopping event," said Michelle, chair of the family council. "One resident gave me a hug and said, 'Thank you so much.'"

Linda, another council member, shared a touching moment from the day. "One resident tried on a sweater, took my hand and said, 'Thank you for thinking of me and for being so kind.'"

Those gestures left a lasting impression on everyone involved. "It really warms your heart to see the smiles," the council shared. "This simple activity gave residents a sense of dignity and choice."



The council also expressed gratitude to everyone who helped, from the laundry staff who handled labeling to the nursing and recreation therapy teams who ensured residents could attend and enjoy the event.

With so much positive feedback, plans are already underway to hold another clothing drive in the spring and summer.

## Share your voice, shape our strategy

Whether you have a loved one living at St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre, have been touched by the care at Stedman Community Hospice, or rely on St. Joe's for community care, we are all impacted by local healthcare throughout every stage of our life.

St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre and Stedman Community Hospice are creating a new strategic plan that will guide our decisions on programs and services through the next five years. It will allow us to continue our mission to provide high-quality, compassionate care as the needs of our community evolve.

To ensure our plan is reflective of what our community needs the most, we are seeking your input. Lending your voice to the strategic planning process can directly shape the future of local healthcare and create a system that better serves residents, patients, clients, families and the community.

**[Click here to complete the anonymous five-minute survey.](#)**

St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre and Stedman Community Hospice are proud members of St. Joseph's Health System, one of the most unique health systems in Ontario delivering innovative, exceptional and compassionate care across the lifespan, whether it is in an acute setting, long-term care, hospice, palliative care or in the community.



**[Click here to complete the survey](#)**

*If you have any questions about the strategic planning process, please reach out to [stratplan@stjoes.ca](mailto:stratplan@stjoes.ca).*

# Residents take the lead on Halloween fun

McMillen Hall came to life on Halloween as residents and staff carved pumpkins, shared stories and admired each other's creations. Residents later judged the staff costume contest and pumpkin display, adding their own sense of humour to the event. The day reflected the creativity and connection that made it enjoyable for everyone.





## Grant a Wish to a Long-Term Care Resident

During the month of November, St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation will be collecting personal care items from the community to assist residents of lesser means. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Items can be placed in the bin in the lobby.



### Residents' Wish List

Please include this checklist when dropping off donated items. Check the appropriate boxes to indicate the items you have donated. Check multiple boxes when delivering multiples of the same item.

**Note:** due to allergies among our resident population, we kindly ask that you ensure donated items are coconut-free.

- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Shampoo
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Conditioner
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Ladies' deodorant
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Men's deodorant
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Poligrip
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Body lotion
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Body wash
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Denture brushes
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Finger nail brushes
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Hair brushes
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Kleenex
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Alcohol-free mouthwash
- ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Shaving cream

Donated by: \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your donation!*

## Star of the Month

Congratulations to  
**BRIAN PURSLEY**  
Handyperson



Nominated by Candice Lawrence,  
Housekeeping & Facilities IPAC Supervisor

She shared:

*"Brian is an excellent example of a staff member who takes pride in his work. His strong sense of accountability shines through everything he does, reflecting his dedication to both his role and the organization. Known across the campus — from staff to children at the campus daycare — he always takes the time to stop and say hello."*

Thank you, Brian, for demonstrating St. Joe's values and being a great example for others.

### RESIDENT FAMILIES:

You, too, can nominate a deserving individual for Star of the Month.

[Click here to download the nomination form.](#)

**STAY ENGAGED AND INFORMED!  
FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA  
CHANNELS!**



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[@stjoesbrantford](https://www.instagram.com/stjoesbrantford)



### OVER 20 VENDORS!

SOAPS ~ CANDLES ~ TOYS ~ JEWELRY ~ CLOTHING ~ CRAFTS  
OTHER UNIQUE GIFTS ~ BAKED GOODS ~ RAFFLES AND MUCH MORE!