

THE

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# BEECHWOOD WAY

MAGAZINE

# 150 Years Ans 1873-2023 BEECHWOOD

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 **BEECHWOOD**



## Letter from the editor

**ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS** is a milestone for any institution — here at Beechwood, we have been looking forward to 2023 for several years now. In 1873, Beechwood was founded by prominent people from the city of Ottawa. From very early on, Beechwood focused on serving our community, providing services to the citizens of Ottawa.

As we have been undertaking research, we have found and continue to find many prominent Canadians who have chosen Beechwood as their final resting place. We have noticed that communities have come and established themselves within our grounds and in turn given so much back to the city, province and country.

Over the next year, we will be celebrating the many communities and people, taking time to share their stories and honouring their contributions. Beechwood regularly publishes expanded biographies of different people on our blog. We take the time to explore each individual and how they had an impact on their specific fields. Please do take the time and visit the website to read these new biographies. (The blog can be found at the bottom of the Beechwood Cemetery Homepage).

As we look forward, we also take a moment to look back. In this issue, we share our thoughts on the loss of our Chair Emeritus Marguerite “Grete” Hale and share her love of Beechwood Cemetery. Mrs. Hale was a great Canadian, who had a passion for helping others and giving back, and had an overall joy for life. She was an inspiration to all of us who knew her.

The Beechwood team will miss seeing her, sharing special moments with her and most importantly will miss her friendship and caring spirit. Mrs. Hale is truly missed.

As always, we hope you enjoy this issue and take part in the many activities in the coming year.

Stay up to date with Beechwood by following us on social media.

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Thank you,

**Nicolas McCarthy**  
*Director of Marketing,  
Communications and Community Outreach*

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Visit us online to learn more about Beechwood, the National Cemetery of Canada and read back issues at: [www.beechwoodottawa.ca](http://www.beechwoodottawa.ca).

### **We want your feedback on how we are doing!**

**Contact:** Erika Wagner at [foundation@beechwoodottawa.ca](mailto:foundation@beechwoodottawa.ca)

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## Celebrating 150 years of Beechwood

by Nicolas McCarthy,  
*Director of Marketing, Communications  
and Community Outreach*

AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, the planning and development of the program for Beechwood's 150th anniversary has been years in the making. We have been building partnerships, connecting with communities, and collecting stories. We continue to do what we do best, which is to focus on the stories that have made Beechwood who we are.

Every month, Beechwood will focus on different historical themes and share new and exciting stories of the people of our city. We will focus on showing the contributions of their lives and how their lives helped make Canada what it is today. We will also take note of the more community-based stories and celebrate the leaders who, outside of their own communities, are relatively unknown. The contribution of the people of Beechwood is outstanding.

A notable example would be The Honourable Bertha Wilson, who will receive a Great Canadians Profile Plaque in May 2023:



**BORN IN SCOTLAND, WILSON BECAME THE FIRST WOMAN APPOINTED TO THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA ON MARCH 4, 1982. WILSON RULED IN FAVOUR OF OVERTURNING THE CRIMINAL CODE'S RESTRICTIONS ON ABORTION FOR VIOLATING A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO THE "SECURITY OF PERSON." WILSON ALSO AUTHORED MANY DECISIONS INCLUDING THE LEGAL DEFENSE OF BATTERED WIFE SYNDROME AND EQUITY IN THE DIVISION OF MATRIMONIAL PROPERTY. WILSON WAS APPOINTED A COMMISSIONER OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES AND MADE A COMPANION OF THE ORDER OF CANADA.**

Each month, we will be hosting signature events that focus on a certain period of Beechwood history. In February, we will have our first large ice sculpture with our new 150 logo for all to see. In March, we will be focusing on the history of the women at Beechwood. In April, we will share in a visual art installation comprising 150 iconic photos of Beechwood where people can see the visual history of our cemetery and the different milestones achieved. In May, we will celebrate the history and legacy of Beechwood's Chinese community section with a large ceremony and historical celebration. In June, we will release a new scavenger hunt asking people to participate in search of some of the unique features of the cemetery.

In June, we will also be planting two cedar trees alongside our Indigenous Community Partners near Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce's family plot. We will look to continue our journey in reconciliation. In late June, July and August, we are finalizing a few larger events.

In September, we will be releasing our 150th Anniversary book, filled with the history of Beechwood and the stories of the people who have made us who we are. We will also be asking the City of Ottawa to make a declaration of our contribution to our city as well as raising a Beechwood flag at City Hall. We will continue to host our annual historical walking tour with a bit of a twist this year. More details will come in future issues.

October will be special, as we will be holding a Founding ceremony that will be reflective of the original consecration ceremony that took place 150 years earlier. On Saturday, October 28, 2023, 150 years to the day, at Captain James Forsyth's Monument in Section 29, we will celebrate that original consecration with a ceremony.

In November, we will honour our military history and legacy with a few special activities focused on commemoration and remembrance, culminating in our Remembrance Day Ceremony. And finally, as the year ends, we will hold another Candle Ceremony within the military cemetery.

Among these new activities, we will be continuing our historical tours and yearly events, always looking for ways to connect to the communities that we have served.

We are proud to be the National Cemetery of Canada, the National Military Cemetery, the RCMP and CSIS National Memorial Cemeteries and the Ottawa Police Service Memorial Cemetery.

Beechwood's 150th Anniversary is truly a celebration of the people and communities that we have been able to serve. We are so fortunate to be the home of so many different cultural and religious communities, each provided with a unique section of our grounds.

Most importantly, Beechwood's 150th will be a thank you to each and every person who chose Beechwood as their final resting place. Beechwood is a reflection of you and our city, province and Canada.



# The Ottawa Hunt & Golf Club at Beechwood Cemetery: A Century of Golfers Laid to Rest

by Bruce A. McDonald,  
*Club Historian of the  
Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club*

**IN 1873**, the year Beechwood Cemetery was established in the Township of Gloucester, Ontario, an English engineer by the name of William Upton was farming land 14 kilometres south of the new cemetery. Upton's farm, on the road to Bowesville, the current site of the Ottawa MacDonald-Cartier International airport, was named Grove Land. It is on this land that the Ottawa Hunt Club, now the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club, was founded in 1908. The Club purchased the Upton farm from William Upton's son in 1907 and formally established a fox hunting club the following year. With the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the Club's Directors took the decision to close the Club, as the activities of a hunting club were incompatible with the interests of a country at war.



**Grove Land during the late 1800s**

The Hunt Club reopened in 1919 and amalgamated with the Ottawa Motor Club to form the Ottawa Hunt and Motor Club. As the sport of golf was becoming more and more popular during this era, a rough nine-hole course was built the same year. In 1920, Willie Park Jr., the famous Scottish golf course architect, was hired to design an 18-hole championship course, which was largely completed by 1922. In 1924, the Club's name was officially changed to the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club. Since then, the Club has hosted ten Canadian Men's and Women's golf championships. The curling facility was added in 1959. Seven national curling championships have been held at the Hunt Club, including the first Canadian women's curling championship in 1961.

In the early 1900s, the Club remained a popular venue for the elite of Ottawa to gather. Influential historical figures, including leaders of the business community, important politicians and military officers, were founding members of the Ottawa Hunt Club. Many of these original founders are buried at Beechwood Cemetery. For example, Sir Robert Borden, Sir George Halsey Perley, Thomas Birkett, Thomas Ahearn and Sir Arthur Percy Sherwood were all founding members. Thomas Ahearn, Prime Minister Borden, Perley and Birkett are recognized at Beechwood by plaques near their gravesites. The Hunt Club's first President and founding father, Lt. Colonel James Woods (1863-1930), is interred in the Beechwood Mausoleum. Woods was Commanding Officer, Governor General's Foot Guards from 1911-1917. A plaque recognizing his accomplishments and his connection to the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club stands in front of the Mausoleum.

At the start of the Great War (1914-1918), membership at the Ottawa Hunt Club consisted of a significant number of retired and serving military officers, many of whom had served in the Boer War (1899-1902). Several of these officers went on to distinguish themselves in both World Wars. Beechwood Cemetery has been the resting place for many of these important military figures. They are recognized either by plaques scattered throughout the cemetery or described in Beechwood's online Historical

Portrait Book. Notable military founding members of the Hunt Club buried at Beechwood include Colonel Cameron MacPherson Edwards DSO (1881-1959), Lt. Colonel Thomas F. Elmitt DSO (1871-1938) and Colonel Adam Tozeland Shillington MD (1870-1946). Other more familiar military members recognizable to the citizens of Ottawa, include the following:



*Morrison in golf attire circa 1920*

### **Lt. Colonel William George Hurdman DSO, (1858-1922) Section 50, Beechwood**

Lt. Colonel William George Hurdman was an original member of the Ottawa Hunt Club. He had a 40-year military career, starting as a young soldier in the Governor General's Foot Guards. Hurdman volunteered for the Boer War, commanding an artillery battalion as a Major and distinguishing himself while in South Africa. Despite being beyond an age to volunteer for World War I, Hurdman organized and led an ammunition regiment in France. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) for his service. His family name endures in Ottawa with the Hurdman Bridge, Hurdman Road and the Hurdman Light Rapid Transit station.

### **Sir Edward Whipple Bancroft Morrison DSO, (1867-1925) Section 29, Beechwood**

Maj.-Gen. Sir Edward Whipple Bancroft "Dinky" Morrison, KCMG, CB, DSO, was a founding member of the Ottawa Hunt Club (1908). While it is unclear if Morrison was a member following the end of the First World War, descendants of Morrison are current members of our club. In 1919, he was knighted by King George V for his military service. (See Beechwood Historical Portrait Book and Beechwood Blog "A Journalist and Soldier – Sir Edward Whipple Bancroft Morrison," November 2022).



*Captain Thomas Franklin Ahearn (1886-1962)*

### **Captain Thomas Franklin Ahearn (1886-1962) Section 50, Beechwood**

Thomas Franklin Ahearn served in World War I as a Captain in the Canadian Expeditionary Force from 1914 until 1916, at which time he was injured and returned home. He was a member of the Governor General's Foot Guards (GGFG), a regiment with which the Hunt Club has had a long history. Ahearn was a businessman and politician and best known as an owner of the original Ottawa Senators National Hockey League (NHL) club, which won three Stanley Cups in four years between 1920 and 1923. He was elected to the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1962 as a "builder."

The following two military veterans interred at Beechwood have close connections to the Hunt Club but may not be familiar to most Canadians. The names "Scottie" Miller, a long-time employee, and Desmond (Des) Clair, a club historian, are very well-known figures in our history. Both gentlemen were dedicated to the Hunt Club and made many contributions that continue to impact the Club.



*Corporal Gavin Weir "Scottie" Miller (1884-1958)*

### **Corporal Gavin Weir "Scottie" Miller (1884-1958) Section 19, Beechwood**

"Scottie" Miller was born in Scotland and emigrated to Canada in the early 1900s. After the outbreak of WWI, Miller enlisted (1915) and was sent overseas. Miller had a remarkable war record managing to survive almost 18 months at the front. This included a gas attack at Vimy Ridge, a gunshot wound to his arm in November 1916 during the Battle of the Somme and a separate wound to his leg received at Vimy Ridge on April 9, 1917. When he returned to Ottawa, Miller became the first greens superintendent and worked with Willie Park Jr. to develop the championship 18 holes of the Hunt. Scottie remained at the Hunt Club for 36 years, retiring in 1956. He was recognized for his WWI service and his dedication to the Club with a plaque on a stone cairn, recently erected near the clubhouse.

### **Squadron Leader Desmond C. Clair (1918-1997) Section 30, Beechwood**

Desmond Clair was a World War II veteran who served overseas as an air navigator, flying with the Royal Canadian Air Force out of India and Burma. Returning to Ottawa after the war, he joined the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club. Air Force assignments took him to Peace River, AB, where he was Commander of the RCAF station and to various other locations in Canada and abroad. He retired in 1968 as a Squadron Leader. Clair was a Director of the Hunt Club from 1983-85, Club Captain from 1981-82 and Club Historian from 1985 until his passing in 1997. Much of the early history of the Hunt Club was unearthed by Clair.



## Hockey Hall of Fame Members at the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club



*C. Bruce Stuart*

### **Charles Bruce Stuart (1889-1961) Section 26, Beechwood**

Bruce Stuart was a Hockey Hall of Fame member who played golf at the Hunt Club. An Ottawa boy, Bruce Stuart, along with his brother William (Hud) Stuart, were inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1961 and 1945, respectively. Bruce Stuart captured the Stanley Cup as a member of the Montreal Wanderers, and the next year won it again as the captain of his hometown Ottawa Senators team. The Stuarts are recognized at Beechwood by this plaque near Section 26 where they are interred in the Stuart plot.

### **E.H. (Harvey) Pulford (1875-1940), Section 39, Beechwood**

Pulford was an outstanding athlete, excelling at multiple sports well into his thirties. He was recognized early when he was named Ottawa Model Schools' best athlete at 13 years of age. Pulford was a member of the Ottawa Hockey Club in 1893 and was in the first ever Stanley Cup competition against the Montreal Wanderers. Pulford played for the Ottawa Football Club in the same era and when the team was renamed the Rough Riders, he captained them to the national championships in 1898, 1899, 1900 and 1902. He played for the Ottawa Senators hockey team for 14 years, retiring in 1908. Pulford was also an outstanding lacrosse player and a rower, winning the prestigious Henley Regatta in 1911. He was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1945.

Pulford was President of the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club in 1933. He is recognized in Beechwood's Historical Portrait Book.



*E.H. (Harvey) Pulford*

### **The Visionaries**

Throughout the 114-year history of the Hunt Club, many members dedicated their lives to creating an institution of which Ottawa would be proud. In addition to our founding father, Lt. Colonel James Woods, the following three golfers, buried at Beechwood, were very influential in the early days of the Club. These members were considered visionaries who made immense and everlasting contributions to the Hunt Club. They are:

### **Dr. Edgar Spinney Archibald (1885-1968), CC, OBE, Section 37, Beechwood**

One of the most influential and visionary Presidents of the Club was Dr. Edgar Spinney Archibald. From 1919 to 1950, Dr. Archibald, while Director of the Central Experimental Farm Service, guided the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club through its tree planting program in which over 60,000 trees were planted on the course. While numerous trees have succumbed to windstorms, natural attrition and more current agronomy requirements, many remain on the course, continuing to shape the fairways and greens of our Willie Park Jr. designed course. Archibald was a member of the Hunt Club for over 45 years and was President in 1923-24.

In 1967, in recognition of his outstanding work in agricultural research, Dr. Archibald was made a Companion of the Order of Canada (CC).

Mount Archibald in the Yukon is named after him.

### **William Young Denison (1878-1961) Section 40, Beechwood**

William Y. Denison was a founding member of the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club and played a large part in its early success. Denison was a prominent businessperson who founded his own chartered accounting firm in 1909. Denison was an Ottawa council member and for ten years he was a prime mover in the Suburban Roads Commission. Press reports described the pivotal role played by Denison in the removal of toll gates that were situated on every road leading into the city. Journalists at the time noted that "... The abolition of these relics of pre-Victoria era precipitated the start of a good roads movement in the Capital."

Mr. Denison was an avid athlete who owned steeplechasers that competed in races at the Hunt Club. In the Club's 100th anniversary book, Denison is noted to have "... (managed) his growing accounting business, ... while also closely attending the affairs of the new Hunt Club." As there was no general manager, Mr. Denison took up the task of managing the club and was honorary secretary treasurer for 28 years. He was a club member for over 50 years and President in 1936-37. Denison was also the first Club historian. In 1958, on the Club's fiftieth anniversary, Denison's last official duty was during the visit of US President Dwight D. Eisenhower to the Hunt Club. He presented Eisenhower with an honorary life membership. Club members owe a great deal of gratitude to Mr. Denison for his contributions to the Hunt Club and to the City of Ottawa.



William Ross "Bill"  
Sandison (1889-1969)

### William Ross "Bill" Sandison (1889-1969) Section 24, Beechwood

Over our 114-year history, William Ross "Bill" Sandison stands out as one of our most prominent members. He was instrumental in the post WWII years in revitalizing golf in the capital and establishing the Ottawa & District Golf Association (ODGA), now the Ottawa Valley Golf Association.

Mr. Sandison was a member of the Club for over 30 years. He was a Life Member, on the Board of Directors from 1941-1945 and Club President from 1946-1955. In 1941, when he became a member of the Board, he somehow found the time to devote to the Club, in addition to fulfilling his position as President of the Northern Electric Company. These were the war years when the Club was hit hard by decreasing membership, decreasing finances and labour shortages. Bill dedicated himself to keeping the Club in some semblance of an operating state.

In 1949, he became aware of the availability of 20 acres of land on the northern extremity of the Club property and, with a view to future expansion, urged the Board to consider its purchase. The Board demurred given the Club's financial position and set aside any consideration of expansion until a stronger financial situation was secured. Bill bought the property himself and paid the taxes for 10 years, with the thought of donating it to the Club when expansion became a reality. That property, of course, now forms part of the North Course. Bill did get paid, however the Board refused to accept his kind offer to transfer the land at no cost to the Club. The terms of re-payment were most lenient — \$1000.00 down and the balance to be paid at 3%, anytime.

Bill Sandison died in 1969. To honour him, in 1972 a flagstaff and plaque were erected adjacent to the 18th green near the clubhouse.

### The Hardcore Golfers

#### Ethel May Ferguson nee Neal (1908-1985) Section 24, Beechwood

Ethel Ferguson is one of the most well-known women to have been a member of the Hunt Club. Ferguson poured herself into the life of the Hunt Club as well as the Ottawa Valley ladies golfing community when she joined the club in the 1930s. She was an active volunteer and competitor, throwing the first rock when the Hunt Club curling rink opened in 1959. For her contributions to curling, the Ethel Ferguson Trophy has been awarded within the ladies program every year since 1961. Ethel was also much involved in the organization of golf events at the Hunt Club and for the then Canadian Ladies Golf Union in the Ottawa District. She held numerous positions on that Executive between the years 1954 to 1964. Of special note, in 1956, Ethel was instrumental in organizing the successful inaugural team event known as the "Inter-Club Competition," which is still on the annual schedule of four Ottawa golf clubs, including the Hunt Club.

Ferguson was elected President of the Canadian Ladies Golf Union (OVGA) in 1965 and 1966 and thereafter continued to hold numerous positions. It was in 1976 that she was elected Union historian. For the last 60 years, the OVGA has hosted a district tournament named after Ethel Ferguson. In 1979, a Hunt Club golf trophy was established in her name to be awarded to the winners of the Ladies Four-Ball Best Ball Net Competition. The women still compete for this trophy. In recognition of her significant contribution to the Hunt Club, the Board of Directors, in 1961, awarded Ethel with the first "Ladies Life Membership."



Ethel May Ferguson nee Neal  
(1908-1985)

#### Wendell Osgood Williams (1910-2015) Section 51, Beechwood

Wendell O. Williams was a member of the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club for over 70 years. When he passed away at 105 years of age in 2015, Williams was believed to be the longest serving member of the Hunt Club at that time. Williams is remembered in the Hunt Club's 100th anniversary book where he recalled that his first golf game was on the day the war was declared in September 1939. A well-respected businessman who ran a successful insurance company, Williams had many friends at the Club. He showed up regularly for lunch or breakfast even after he reluctantly gave up the game of golf that he so thoroughly enjoyed. He served as Club Captain in 1946-1947 and was on the Board of Directors in 1963-1964. While never a club champion, Williams had a single digit handicap and two holes-in-one. Williams is still remembered by many members of the Club.

It is an honour to be able to share stories of Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club members who, over a period of more than 100 years, have been laid to rest at Beechwood Cemetery.







## The story of Marguerite 'Grete' Ann Hale

by Erika Wagner,  
Fundraising and Program Coordinator

**MARGUERITE 'GRETE' HALE WAS BORN ON MAY 11, 1929**, in Ottawa. Daughter of Margaret Cotter and Cecil Morrison. Grete graduated in Journalism from Carleton University in 1954. She joined her father's business, Morrison Lamothe, where in 1967 she was responsible for the 20-foot cake at Canada's 100th birthday party on Parliament Hill, which was cut by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Grete served as President of Morrison Lamothe from 1978 to 1989 and Board Chair from 1989 to 2005. She served on dozens of corporate and community boards. A respected businesswoman who famously kept an on-time agenda, she was also an active and dedicated volunteer who never hesitated to wade in.

Among the many organizations she served, Grete was President of Beechwood Cemetery and Foundation, where she fought for its very existence for all Canadians; founder of the Friends of the National Library of Canada, and Honourary Life Member of the boards of CANHAVE Children's Centre and the Community Foundation of Ottawa. She was the recipient of many awards, including the Order of Canada, wearing her pin with great pride. Grete served as the first-ever female Honourary Colonel of the Governor General's Foot Guards from 2011 to 2013.

Grete Hale is known for her love of storytelling. Since her passing on October 28, at the age of 93, the Beechwood staff have been retelling her stories to each other: how she got the grand piano in the Sacred Space, the multiple times she met the Queen and about how she loved to attend Beechwood Foundation events to meet the people. In 2015, Grete Hale celebrated 20 years of volunteer work with Beechwood and wrote an article about her top memories. Below are highlights from that issue:

I go back to 1873 to that group of local men who had the inspiration and foresight to create Beechwood Cemetery. We owe them our eternal gratitude for their actions. I have hundreds of memories of my days at Beechwood. I have picked just a dozen of them to share with you:

The first is the unexpected phone call at my home one Saturday afternoon from Dr. J. David Roger asking for help to solve a problem at Beechwood Cemetery that had to do with cemetery land. He was on the board at that time. He had first asked my sister, Jean Pigott, who at the time was head of the National Capital Commission, but because the problem had to do with land, she told David she couldn't touch it, and suggested that he ask me to get involved. And hence the telephone call that changed my life.

The next memory is of the five volunteer Beechwood Cemetery directors and the general manager at the time sitting around our board room table for countless hours and days, month after month, year after year, struggling to find ways and means to solve the myriad of problems in front of us.

I recall General Hillier, at that time head of National Defence, handing us a very substantial cheque towards the building of our Beechwood National Memorial Centre. He said, "The Canadian military are grateful we now have a place where we can bury our dead, but we don't have a meeting place where after the burial our families can be together to hug each other, have a cup of coffee or a beer, here is a cheque to get you started building that large gathering place, not just for the military but for all Canadians." And so, it came to pass.

After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, our Beechwood staff decided to take the initiative to honour the 26 Canadians killed that day and found the way and the means to do it at Beechwood. Today, near the Veterans section of the National Military Cemetery, the large memorial plaque affixed to a large stone stands in silent, meaningful tribute to those men and women.

I am so very fond of our annual Christmas memorial service, attended





outside by hundreds on the first Sunday in December. It is a bilingual, multi-cultural gathering when everyone is given a lighted candle to remember loved ones who have passed on. It is a lovely moment to sing carols together in French and English.

I treasure the happenings at Macoun Marsh, that wonderful piece of original wetland that Beechwood has set aside to teach young students the wonders and blessings of what is found in that tiny piece of land on our property. I always take guests to marvel at that silent, meaningful project.

I always look forward to our gathering every September with the Chinese community who honour their dead at the beautiful pagoda they have built through donations.

A happy occasion for me has always been the various motorcycle clubs who on a Sunday afternoon in June come on their motorcycles through the cemetery to honour our Canadian veterans in a simple bilingual, multi-cultural service. It is always an honour to be asked to ride with them on a 3-wheeler bike through the cemetery.

I remember the first funeral held in our Sacred Space for a Canadian soldier killed in Afghanistan — it was for 25-year-old Captain Jonathan Sutherland Snyder. He was killed in a night patrol when he fell down a well. I did not know the lad but wanted to be there for him. I stood at the back of the hall. His father came up to me and put his arm on mine saying with tears rolling down his face and said, “I am so grateful to Beechwood to have my son’s funeral in this beautiful place. It has helped heal my hurt.”

A moment I will always treasure was the blessing ceremony of our Sacred Space. We invited a representative from each of the 29 religions in Ottawa to be present in their various robes. As we are on Algonquin land, we invited a representative from the Kitigan Zibi Reserve near Maniwaki, QC, to perform a smudging ceremony around the great Rock in the centre of the room as we all walked around it. I said to myself at that moment, wow, here we are representing all the world’s religions, clothed in our various garments, but we all worship the same God. What a moment to savour and to be grateful for.

The Ottawa Franco-Ontarian community raised \$163,000 to have a statue built honouring Mere Élizabéth Bruyère who founded Ottawa’s first hospital, the first bilingual school in the early 1800s, and the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa. It was a memorable moment when this beautiful monument was unveiled at Beechwood, with many of the Sisters present. They never stopped smiling during the event, realizing what it meant that their foundress was being so recognized and honoured.

The events of the decades that happened at Beechwood cemetery crowd in on me. There are so many to record. I will finish this account with a very heart-warming story. A small group from the University Women’s Club were touring Beechwood and came across an old burial stone that was titled ‘The Home for Friendless Women.’ Weather conditions over the years made the letters almost unreadable. They immediately took up a collection among the group, many of whom were diplomatic wives, and gave us enough money to have the monument, along with its sister monuments (marking the plots for the Protestant Orphans Home and the Protestant Home for the Aged) re-lettered and much legible again. Another friend later said to me, “Grete, who are these homeless women, is there a way one can find their names?” Our staff was able to go through the old records and recorded the names for all those people buried in the three plots, and a friend gave us the money to have a beautiful plaque made with 87 names on it. The women are now no longer nameless.

There are dozens more stories to tell about Beechwood’s history, heritage and the people who have helped make Beechwood all it is today, but they are for future telling. I cherish all that has been and look forward to all that will be.

Our Chair Emeritus, Grete Hale, will be missed.