

Better crime prevention through rehabilitation

There is a move by the Conservatives in government to build bigger and better prisons.

The position has met with some criticism, since there has not been an increase in crime in recent years. In fact, statistics indicate a slight decrease in violent crime, and a greater decrease in non-violent crime.

The money intended for prison expansion might be better used in crime prevention programs and for effective rehabilitation for those who are serving time in prison.

That being said, I am concerned some are being paroled too early without actual rehabilitation.

A Hants County man, 56-year-old Arnold Messervey, is being released into a halfway house in spite of some serious concerns he is not rehabilitated. His case management team wants him to stay behind bars because he lacks progress in rehabilitating himself and they are concerned he "will commit an offence causing death or serious harm to another person."

A psychological assessment in March notes his risk for violence in a relationship remains high, and it is also noted he has not had counselling related to family violence.

While he is at moderate risk for violence, he is considered high risk for family related violence.

The parole board decided to release Messervey because even though he has used violence on numerous occasions, the violence has not met the standard for "serious harm," nor caused death.

Messervey admitted he hit his wife in the face, and has used a rifle butt, an aluminum bat, and a board to strike his wife. He would lock her in their bedroom nightly because he thought she was cheating on him.

In 1997, Messervey was sentenced to four years in prison after being found guilty of setting fire to the home of his estranged girlfriend and her dying father. The parole board believes Messervey has not met the standard for serious harm because he has not killed anyone.

Another victim of crime in B.C., Darcie Clarke, might find herself looking over her shoulder soon.

Her former husband murdered her three children in her home in 2008. He was judged mentally ill, and recently a B.C. Review Board has stated its intention to give Allan Schoenborn day passes.

They are now taking a second look at their decision because Schoenborn would be released into the same city where his ex-wife lives.

It is noted his aggression has declined, and his delusional disorder is in remission.

Delusional disorders require ongoing treatment to stay in remission.

So, there are two men who have acted violently, and who just might be out in their communities in the near future. In both instances the women who have been in their lives have safety concerns.

Making sure the i's are dotted, and the t's are crossed in regard to the full rehabilitation of these men is essential.

We don't need more prisons. What we do need is to be absolutely certain rehabilitation has occurred, and only then should those who have acted violently be allowed into the community.

Victims' safety must be a priority.

Shirley Hallee's column appears every other week in the Amherst Daily News.



Perspectives
Shirley Hallee

Looking back at a dark chapter of history

Amherst part of Canada's internment past

By DARRELL COLE
AMHERST DAILY NEWS

AMHERST – Amherst is part of a dark chapter of Canadian history and a Manitoba-based organization is working to raise awareness so it never happens again.

The Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund exists to support projects that commemorate and recognize the experiences of all the ethno-cultural communities affected by Canada's first national internment operations of 1914-1920.

"During the First World War, the Canadian government interned those who were carrying Austro-Hungarian passports in 24 internment camps across Canada and one of those camps was in Amherst," program coordinator Andrea Malysh said.

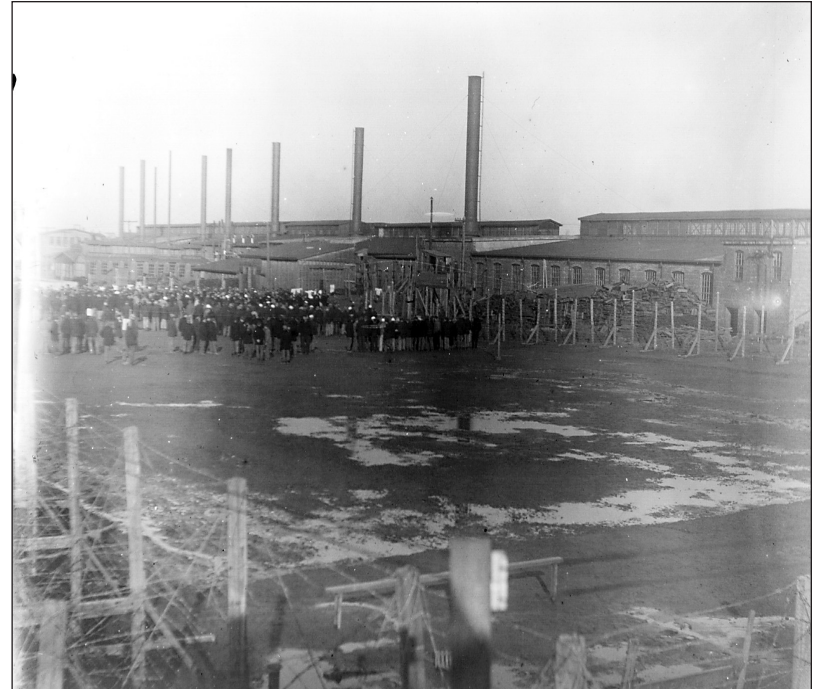
She said more than 8,000 people were placed into these camps, of which about 3,000 were German prisoners of war along with people of German descent. Others were not Austrians, but carried Austrian passports. More than 80 per cent were Ukrainian, but there were a number of other foreign nationals from Eastern Europe.

In 2008, the Canadian government settled with the Ukrainian community with a \$20-million endowment fund from which grants can be provided to any Canadian who wants to write or educate about this part of history.

"It's a very unknown part of our history. People equate internment to what happened in World War Two without realizing it happened first in World War One," she said.

Malysh said her organization is also asking people to check their attics and family trunks for old photos, papers and diaries of those who were imprisoned and those who may have served as guards.

"The last known survivor has passed away and, because it's not a well known part of our history, people are finding records in their family trunks or archives that relate to members of their families who were interned," she said. "They're asking 'what is this?' Part of our endowment fund allows us to acquire artifacts and



The Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund supports projects commemorating and recognizing the experiences of those impacted by Canada's first national internment operations during the First World War. One of those camps was located in Amherst. FILE PHOTO

donate them to the local museums."

Malysh said her organization believes the Japanese internment of the Second World War never would have occurred had the First World War internment not happened. She's also hoping Canadians will learn from their history.

"We no longer have the War Measures Act, but we have the Emergency Act and it's quite scary what has happened in our past and what could happen in the future should we as a nation find ourselves in a similar situation," she said.

The Amherst camp was located on Park Street in what was the Malleable Iron Foundry and is now home to Casey Concrete.

The building was a quarter of a mile long and 100-feet wide. The south end was comprised of officers quarters, the camp hospital and medical inspection room. The north end housed the soldiers barracks, washroom, mess hall and recreation room.

Barbed wire entanglements surrounded the compound grounds.

The Amherst camp was one of the largest in the country and could house up to 853 men with 265 guards needed, most of which were from the Amherst area.

Its most well-known resident was Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky. His stay was only a short one.

While in Amherst, the prisoners worked on local projects such as clearing forest at the Nappan experimental farm, maintaining the railway and building Dickey Park.

Thirteen prisoners died at the camp – four from escape attempts, four from influenza, three from normal causes as well as one from alcohol poisoning and typhoid fever.

The Amherst camp shut down in September 1919.

For further information, go to www.internmentcanada.ca.

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Community Happenings

April 20

Classic Movie Night

Springhill Miners Memorial Library. Come and watch with us the 1934 suspense comedy, *The Thin Man*, starring Myrna Loy and William Powell. 7-9 p.m. No charge

After School Movie

Springhill Miners Memorial Library is playing *Open Season 2*. 3-4:30 p.m. The movie is rated G. Please call 597-2211 to register. No charge.

Luncheon

Soup and chili luncheon at the Bridge Workshop, Station Street Amherst. 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Take-out available call 667-8433 for information.

April 21

Meeting

The Amherst 50+ Club, 52 Croft St.,

will hold its monthly meeting starting at 7 p.m. All members welcome. To become a club member call 667-1058.

Uploading Photos

Learn how to upload your digital photos and email them to friends or post them on Facebook. 1:30-3 p.m. at Four Fathers Library, free of charge, registration required. Call 667-2549 to sign up.

General Meeting

Amherst Legion Branch #10 at 7:30pm

April 22

Pancake Brunch

Annual Good Friday pancake brunch, 10am to 1pm, Leicester fire hall. Menu: pancakes, eggs, bacon, sausages, toast, beverages, muffins, biscuits and maple products.

April 23

Supper

A ham, scallop and bean supper from 4 to 6 p.m., at the Oxford Fire Hall. Proceeds for a new fire hall.

Breakfast

Breakfast from 8 to 11 a.m., at the Knights of Columbus Community Hall 5 Robie St., Amherst.

The Community Happenings are a free service to non-profit organizations. 30-word maximum. Written submissions to: Community Happenings, P.O. Box 280, 147 South Albion St., Amherst Town Square Mall, Amherst, N.S., B4H 2X2. Fax: 667-0419, email bworks@amherstdaily.com. Notices will not be taken over the phone. Current events open to the public only. Notices of yard sales and dances will not be published. NOTE: There is no guarantee of publication: to ensure publication consider a paid advertisement by contacting our sales department at 667-5102.

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THURSDAY

BEAT THE CLOCK WINGS 5:30-1:00.
(eat-in with purchase of beverage. NO TAKE-OUT)
DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY WITH DJ MIKE'S VIDEO SHOW. 10-2

FRIDAY

KARAOKE WITH LARRY & BEER \$3.50. ALSO, 1 OZ RUSSIAN
PRINCE VODKA FOR \$2.75. 10-2

SATURDAY

LIVE ON STAGE – THE MORGAN KEITH BANK.
10-2. NO COVER

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