



# SVHS loses a good friend: John Dempster dead at 89

With the passing of John Dempster on May 1, the St. Vital Historical Society lost a valuable link with St. Vital's past.

At the 2013 AGM, John was voted as a life-long member of the board of directors.

John, 89, was a descendant of the Hulton family who settled in St. Vital in 1894.

Frederick purchased 50 acres of land between St. Vital Road and Norberry Drive.

The Resident Historian of the SVHS, John's wisdom and insight will be

missed at directors' meetings.

"John was on his way back to Main Street to catch the bus after taking our income tax forms (to Revenue Canada). He collapsed in front of the Wawanesa building. All efforts to revive him were in vain. He was pronounced dead at St. Boniface Hospital," said wife Barbara.

A Memorial Service will be announced.

The

## HISTORIAN

Newsletter of the St. Vital Historical Society

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May 2015 Volume 19 Issue 91



### Drilling for piles in basement

*The first of many holes for piles was drilled in the basement floor on Friday, May 15 under the spot where the 1939 Fargo was parked. Construction is expected to run*

*until the early part of September. Dust is the order of the day. The photo was taken by Bob Holliday through a wall opening on the stairs leading to the basement.*



**Lending a helping hand**

*City Councillor Brian Mayes (St. Vital) joined MLA Nancy Allan and Gord Steeves to start the demolition of walls in preparation for the demolition of the floors in the 101-year old St. Vital*

*Fire Hall. Steeves began the process while a city councillor while Mayes and Allan made the announcement of the \$500,000 reconstruction last May. (Bob Holliday photo)*

**Many thanks to the  
St. Vital Historical Society  
for preserving our history.**

*From your St. Vital team!*

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## Watch that first step

*Another view of the hole in the floor where the Society's 1939 Fargo pumper truck is usually parked. The floor will be done in sections by Marrbeck Construction. Notice the rear of the photo where several storage cases and artifacts are stored. Construction is set to end in September. (Bob Holliday photo)*



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## Fargo returned for short visit after six-month exile

*Following a six-month exile, the Fargo pumper truck returned to its spot in the museum riding on a flatbed truck from Tartan Towing.*

*The truck was moved last September when city bureaucrats said construction on the floor was "imminent."*

*The truck was moved to a Weston-area former fire hall, which curtailed restoration of the 1939 vehicle by Leon St. Onge and Dave Reimer.*

*To compound the difficulty in gaining entry to the building, the facility is attached to a day care centre which meant the truck's motor could not be started due to exhaust fumes leaking through the walls.*

*In short, due to St. Onge and Reimer having other summer commitments, restoration of the truck has been set back a year.*

*Despite objections from bureaucrats, the truck was moved back to the museum April 13 following complaints from visitors, many who came to see the 1939 Fargo.*

*It was felt that the truck could be moved quicker than the start of "imminent" construction.*

*The truck is scheduled to return in mid September when construction is supposed to be completed.*



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# SHELLY GLOVER



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# Frustration and finances top agenda

**BOB HOLLIDAY**

**President**

One of the casualties of the delayed construction is the annual pancake breakfast usually held on the last Saturday of May. In the past, the paramedics could be counted on to let us use the bays in case of inclement weather. Next year, we won't have to worry since the entire main floor will be ours to use unless, of course, the city has a change of heart and yanks our "temporary" lease on the space.

The loss of a fundraiser is always hard, but more so this year as your SVHS has been forced to spend almost \$1,200 in unexpected expenses, so we are asking those who can afford to make a donation to please do so. A charitable tax receipt will be issued for all donations of \$10 or more.

Two students have been hired through Young Canada Works, which pays 75% of their salaries, with the SVHS paying the balance so you can see what the loss of \$1,200 does to the budget. Laura Garinger and Joel Trono-Doerksen begin their duties on Tuesday, May 26 so the museum will be open 10-4, Tuesday through Saturday.

To say the least, construction has been a nightmare. Bureaucrats we met with several times don't seem to really listen to our wants, needs and concerns.

We have been told half-truths about what is occurring to the 101-year-old fire hall or told nothing until the last minute.

In a pair of meetings, we were told we would have a lease for the full main floor, but when the letter arrived, we were informed that the lease was only temporary.

We were told the former paramedic living quarters was ours to use, so the area was cleaned, painted and turned into the new boardroom. Upon completion, we were informed the room had been promised to the contractor as a site office. In the spirit of co-operation, we are sharing the room with Marrbeck Construction's site boss, Dan Tremblay, who grew up on Thorndale Avenue.

There have been times when the frustration with the city was so great, that the board was ready to call it quits, and at times threatened to return artifacts to donors and wind up business or turn over operation to the city. Minds were changed by the continued support of Cllr. Brain Mayes who has also expressed frustration with the situation.

Some recipients of the Historian have also received a letter reminder that their membership has lapsed. If you wish to continue to receive the Historian and be part of preserving St. Vital history, membership is only \$15 annually. Your fee goes a long way to offset expenses.

**Bob may be reached at [svhsholliday@icloud.com](mailto:svhsholliday@icloud.com)**

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## Fargo startled a few motorists



*On April 7, Leon St. Onge and Dave Reimer fired up the 1939 Fargo and headed south along St. Mary's Road, startling several motorists along the way.*

*The truck was moved once the SVHS received word that construction to replace the floors in the bays was finally going to proceed following a six month delay.*

*The truck is safely stored on Hindley Avenue, protected from the elements by a tarp.*

*The truck will move once again in August as part of the SVHS display Aug, 12-13 at the 106th annual St. Vital Agricultural Society's annual fair at the St. Vital Arena.*

*Hopefully the truck will be back in the museum in early September.*

*(Bob Holliday photos)*



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*In late 2014, the SVHS purchased a number of display cases from the Winnipeg Police Museum, and were given several other cases, which have been stored in the former St. Vital City Hall at 604 St. Mary's Road.*

*On May 9, directors had a work party to move the*

*cases into the area formerly used as a board room. There will be several other changes as the year progresses and volunteers are able to access the storage room in the basement. As well, the stand at the far end of the photo will allow the display of large photos, posters, etc.*

*(Bob Holliday photo)*

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