

Diamond jubilee project takes root

<http://www.flamboroughreview.com/community/diamond-jubilee-project-takes-root/>

June 20, 2012

Friday, January, 13, 2012 - 11:11:06 AM

Submitted photo

ROYAL FOLIAGE: Waterdown District High School Active History students Elizabeth Kondrat, Kevin Bauer, Ashlen Boyd, Conner MacRae, Emma McKenzie, Matt Felton, Spencer Daye and Jesse Popper recently discovered the Queen's tree – a large oak planted to celebrate the silver jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 1977



Diamond jubilee project takes root

By Nathan Tidridge, SPECIAL TO THE REVIEW

Canadians have a big year ahead of them in 2012, and the Active History students at Waterdown District High School are already hard at work.

With the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II and the 200th Anniversary of the beginning of the War of 1812, Canadian society and history will be front and centre during events planned across the country. Since September, WDHS Active History students have been working hard to ensure that they are a part of these national celebrations.

It all started with a walk at the beginning of the school year to visit the Dundas Street Municipal Building (the former Flamborough Town Hall) before it was demolished to make way for the new library. While visiting the site, students noticed a mature oak tree with a large plaque standing behind the building. The tree was planted by then-mayor of Flamborough Kenneth Harper and his wife, Mae, to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 1977. A second tree was planted at the Harper home in Harper's Corners; that tree has not survived, although the mounted plaque is still on display.

While the city of Hamilton missed planting a Flamborough tree in honour of the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002, the student wanted to continue the local tradition by launching a campaign to have a commemorative tree planted to honour the Queen's 60 years on the throne, as well as the 200th anniversary of the beginning of the War of 1812 (this was added after the students learned that Waterdown's first settler, Alexander Brown, was a Colonel during the war).

Letters have been written and partnerships forged, including a regular correspondence with Kevin MacLeod, Canadian Secretary to the Queen. Responding to one of the student's letters, MacLeod wrote: "I am absolutely confident that Her Majesty will be delighted to hear of your project and be honoured to know that you are all so engaged in the better understanding of civics and, of course, the important role of the Crown in the daily life of our country." According to MacLeod, senior members of the Queen's Household at Buckingham Palace have been informed of the project.

Councillor Judi Partridge was instrumental in securing Memorial Park as the location for the planting and having a Canadian Red Maple donated by the City of Hamilton. Councillor Robert Pasuta and HGH Granite have contributed time and effort to the project. An application has also been made to the

federal government's Diamond Jubilee Celebration fund to offset costs involved in creating the plaque.

In the end, a wonderful Flamborough tradition will be continued in 2012 as the region joins the rest of the country in celebrating two key events in Canadian history. Community members can follow the students' work at www.tidridge.com/commemorative-tree-assignment-2011-12.html.