

Dear Students,

As we continue the year of the quadmester it is important to underscore that my primary concern is that you are both mentally and physically OK. In a few weeks is the Winter Solstice (December 21<sup>st</sup>), a period which sees the least amount of daylight - it will fall to us to keep an eye on each other and ensure that we are checking in, getting outside whenever possible, as well as enjoying our learning together. Please know that throughout all of this it is OK to have bad days.

One thing is for certain this semester: Flexibility will be key to our success. You have a lot of people supporting you at WDHS from the school administration, caretakers, office staff, teachers and peers. Let's make sure we take care of each other as we make our way through the 2021-2022 school year.

- Last May the discovery of the remains of children at the site of Kamloops Residential School underscored what Indigenous People already knew: the Canadian state established a residential school system to remove children from their families in an effort to violently assimilate them into colonial society. In many cases children died due to these efforts. As I write this, more remains are being discovered in sites across the country.
- Waterdown has been inhabited by Indigenous People for millennia, including the Neutral Nation who were the first to make contact with the French in the 17th and 18th centuries. Currently, we are located within the Treaty Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. As well, this land is used and inhabited by the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. What responsibilities do we have as Treaty partners? – and this very much includes responsibilities to the land. [Waterdown's Souharissen Natural Area](#) reminds us of some of these responsibilities, but also challenges us to learn more.



- Learning about our local history is a great way to understand the history of Canada and the wider world – our country has been shaped by events and concepts like the Reformation, Colonialism, Industrial Revolution, Private-Property Ownership, etc. During this quadmester we will preview the next edition of *The Extraordinary History of Flamborough* and analyse the links between Flamborough/Waterdown and the outside world. How does our local history reflect the larger national stories of Canada? Is local history important?
- 2022 will mark the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II (70 years on the throne). 2022 marks the Platinum Jubilee (70 years on the throne) of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, an event without parallel in the Commonwealth. Moments such as these naturally ask people to reflect on their history and the stories that are told in an effort to capture it. This is a healthy exercise that highlights the reflective nature inherent in the study of history – addressing its tensions, injustices and lessons move us closer toward a definition for a place like Canada.

I am very excited that we are going to be experiencing this all together.

It has been said that studying history is like playing a huge game of telephone - sifting through various stories, exaggerations and factual evidence. This course will present you with all kinds of information that affects you as a Canadian.

Some resources to keep in mind:

**This class has its own website that can be accessed at:**  
[www.tidridge.com](http://www.tidridge.com)

This website is as important as your textbook – check here for assignment checklists, class news, links to sites of interest, and other important information.



*This 1966 portrait of Queen Elizabeth II once hung in the Council Chambers of the Town of Flamborough. It now presides over our classroom :)*



**This class will also make use of “The Hub” – please make sure you have your account up-to-date.**

Wishing you success,

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