

occasional lottery player. at the store checking my
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Middlemiss street to be renamed

by JoAnn Galbraith

Recently I was approached by the Municipality of Southwest Middlesex requesting some assistance in renaming a street within the hamlet of Middlemiss, what is currently called Mill St. With the name Mill St. being used quite frequently in Middlesex County, Emergency and Fire Services requested a name change.

In the 1878 Middlesex County Atlas, it shows two mills, a grist mill and a lumber mill situated where they had access to the huge pond which provided the water system for the mills. The pond still exists in 2022. In 1885, the mills caught fire due to sparks from a freight train travelling on the rail line and were never rebuilt.

In 2008 a house was built on the site of the old mills, on Mill St. The lot on the corner of Middlemiss Ave. and Mill St. which presently is vacant for years exited on and off the main street. The property between the corner lot line and the existing lot line at the end of the street has recently been severed into two lots which will exit in or out on Mill St., thus the reason for renaming of the street.

The municipality's first suggestion was to name it after a service veteran that lived in Middlemiss with those who served in the Boer War, WWI, WWII, Korean and Vietnam. To choose just one name from a number of those who served would be difficult as some of the family names exist already throughout the County. I suggested that it would be easier to use a first name or given name instead of a family name. The main street is called Middlemiss Ave., honouring the founder of the hamlet. The

other three streets that exist from the original site plan are Julia, Catherine, Oliver, as well as the current Mill St. The County and Municipality accepted my suggestion but requested I submit first names. There were not only males, but females who served in the wars.

Going back to the County and municipality's original suggestion, I gave them four male names and three female names who served in the wars. As I found out, there is more than one meaning for the word "veteran." One meaning is one who possesses experience due to age, and one who has grown old in service or the second meaning I found is a soldier of any age who has seen act of service in the war. Going with the first meaning of a veteran I added my name as a joke.

Upon receiving approval from the County, at the Municipality of Southwest Middlesex council meeting on July 27, the motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the name change of Mill St. in Middlemiss Ontario to JoAnn St. Perhaps council made their decision due to the first meaning and what I have contributed in my volunteering and historical knowledge of the area passed down from generation to the next and how, over the years, I have been recognized for my contributions. Folks have been able to read my tidbits of Middlemiss and Melbourne in a weekly and bi-weekly area newspapers for 46 years, this being my 44th year of volunteering as a charter and life member of the Glencoe and District Historical Society of which in 2018 I received a 40-year volunteer service award from the Ontario Ministry of Culture Citizenship and

Recreation for my 40 years of volunteering with the Society. In 2001, I was awarded by the Township of Ekfrid and Ontario Heritage and Community a recognition certificate and pin. In 2004, I was honoured by the Melbourne Lions Club as Melbourne Citizen of the Year following the publication of a history book of Melbourne. In 2007, Middlemiss Mike the groundhog made his first appearance establishing Ground Hog Day Celebration in Melbourne. In 2010 I was nominated by the Municipality of Southwest Middlesex with the Lieutenant Governor's Heritage Award for lifetime achievement. I am a charter member of the Ekfrid Museum with 33 years on the executive. I am the author of two history books on Middlemiss and on the history of Melbourne with my knowledge of area genealogy I have contributed to numerous family lineages not only in Canada but in the USA and Europe. To now have a street named in my honour in an area I have resided in my entire 85 years is like, the old saying, the icing on top of the cake.



**Street in Southwest Middlesex name changed
And renamed after JoAnn Galbraith
recognizing her contributions to the community**