

## DCMA to present Music of WWI as fundraiser on Nov. 6



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Donations as admission for Music of World War One, a presentation and concert at the Dufferin County Museum and Archives (DCMA) on Sunday, November 6, will go to Wounded Warriors Canada, a charity that provides services to veterans and their families dealing with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), who were part of the army in any capacity.

"This program stems from what we have here at the DCMA - a lot of sheet music from the time," Julie McNevin, Education Programmer for the Museum, said in a telephone interview. "Our researchers have been going through them, composers, stories behind the music - how we tell the story through the music."

It was the first war in which the Dominion of Canada participated. Patriotism was inflated; it was "drilled into people and the cost to Dufferin County in lives lost and the effect that had on everyone."

Not, of course, considering only the emotional burden people bore but also the practicalities of so many young men dying in a rural community.

There were covers of sheet music around the walls in the Corbetton church and pictures of the band.

Pulling this concert together has been much more work than one might imagine. As Ms. McNevin explained, "Many of these songs sold millions of copies. Local people had them in their piano benches and donated them.

"The process of picking out titles and trying them on the piano - there were many songs that should have stayed in the benches," she joked, while meaning it.

"Around Remembrance Day, we keep the celebration going. The thing is to understand why we commemorate. A lot of the songs that we've selected for this concert are very Canadian - we went in as a British colony and we came out as a nation.

"This is the 100th anniversary of the battle at Vimy Ridge in 1917."

At the time, there was fierce debate in this country - with the boys going to war, it had a great impact on this country.

The theme of this event is not really to look at the war with a "sad lens" but through music, which is "very emotional but does not drag you down," is the aim. "The celebration of those coming home as well as noting those who didn't."

The music memory is the longest and no matter the age of these songs, many of us will remember them and will join in the sing-along during the event.

In regard to the Wounded Warriors, Ms. McNevin said, "We wanted to bring this into today and that's what it does. In our files, we have names of veterans from 1912."

The make-up of the program is old recordings of a few of the songs and live performances of many others, with Gord Laird on the harmonica and Gladys Meek playing the piano. These two are both "volunteers and long time supporters of the DCMA.

Ms. McNevin is singing and narrating this truly interesting event - another reason why we have all supported and admired the DCMA all this time.