

Veterans honoured, bridge littered with poppies



Knittervention members took to the Constable Thomas Kehoe Memorial Bridge to yarn-bomb it with poppies in honour of Remembrance Day. / SUBMITTED

Bancroft has been yarn bombed ? again.

The town's Constable Thomas Kehoe Memorial Bridge is now covered with more than 2,000 hand-crafted poppies thanks to a small group of women who wanted to share a message of peace and love with their community.

Created by the Hospice North Hastings group, Knittervention, this latest yarn bomb is meant to inspire the community and get people thinking about what we can each do, to participate in peace.

The Knittervention group started meeting a year ago at the Village Playhouse thanks to a grant from New Horizons for Seniors. The group's first project was to craft and create pieces to cover the front of the Playhouse last May to welcome the summer season, cottagers, visitors and seasonal residents. The yarn bomb was really well received and the women didn't want to stop meeting so they started planning their next 'bombing.' With all the celebrations happening for Canada 150, a Remembrance Day theme was bounced around and the crafters got to work.

'The poppy is such an important symbol to us as Canadians,' says Hospice co-ordinator Heather Brough. 'It reminds us of the sacrifices made so that we can have freedoms that others don't, so that we can have hope for our future and so that we can know peace. Each poppy was created with personal reflections and personal meaning put into each and every stitch.'

A small group of volunteers created the poppies and Brough says the Riverstone Retirement Residence and the Métis Nation also participated in the project. The diversity of those involved is reflected in the different styles, sizes and materials used to create these symbolic flowers that will stay on the bridge until Nov. 13.

The Knittervention volunteers wanted the poppies to be on display for the week before Remembrance Day so that everyone had a chance to be reminded of the sacrifice of our veterans and the group also hopes to inspire each member of our community to take some time to reflect on the quality of life we enjoy because of this sacrifice, so it was fitting that the small group gathered to install the yarn bomb during a cold November rain.

It was easy for the volunteers to reflect on the horrible conditions that our veterans faced while they attached each poppy in the driving rain as cars raced by. The soaked and cold volunteers were grateful that after a few hours they could return to their homes and families for warmth and comfort ? something those who fought went without.

The yarn bomb volunteers hope this art installation will provide a chance to reflect on the meaning of peace in our own community. Having the use of the bridge close to the Royal Legion Branch 181 was also really important for the group as it allowed the Knittervention volunteers to offer a nod of thanks to those who keep our Legion and its message alive.

'This is a time for us to really reflect on what's happening in the world and in our community,' Brough says. 'We hope that people find this art installation as inspiring as we do.'

The bridge was bombed on Sunday, in the cold, pouring rain and the volunteers who helped with the installation say the weather was

just one more reminder of what our veterans had to endure.

Brough and the Knittervention volunteers want to extend their thanks to the Town of Bancroft, the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 181, Legion Padre Rev. Lynn Watson and all those who donated poppies, yarn and support for this project. The Knittervention group continues to meet each Thursday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Vintage on Hastings and everyone is welcome at this weekly gathering.

Submitted