



THE COBALT LODGE

Newsletter of the Cobalt Historical Society

Box 309, Cobalt, ON P0J 1C0 cobalthistoricalsociety.ca

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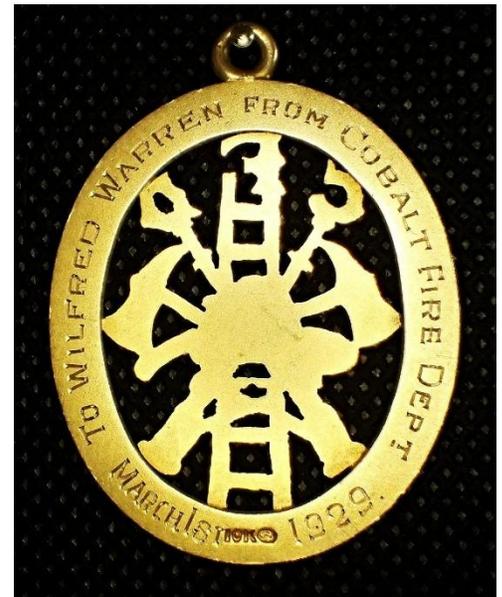


A “Jewel” of a Gift from the Warren Estate

We recently acquired this very special item that once belonged to Cobalt fireman Wilfred James Warren. The gold “jewel” was presented to him on March 1, 1929. The donor, Warren’s grandson, wondered if we had any information about the medallion.

Here’s what we learned. Around 1905, ten-year-old Wilf came to the Temiskaming region with his family: father William James, mother Mary, and his siblings. They settled in Bucke Township. As a young man, Wilf found work as a clerk at F.C. Shaw’s store, then R. Devlin’s Drug Store. As best as we can tell, he worked in a retail setting most of his working life.

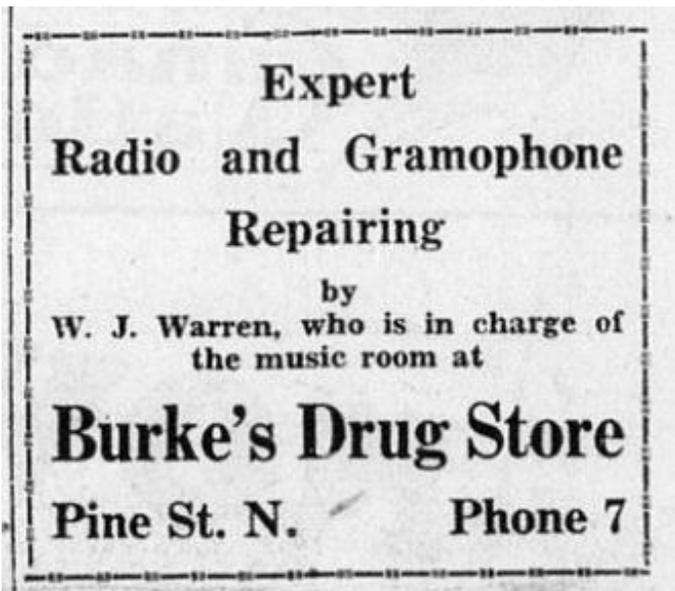
Wilf was a member of the IOOF, and we believe a member of the King George Club.



In 1918, Wilf married Sturgeon Falls native Eveyln Ida Zealand. She lived with her family in Cobalt at the time and worked as a telephone operator. The newlyweds lived in Cobalt. In 1922, their address was 54 ½ Cobalt Street. Over the next decade, they had four children: Doris, Jean, and Donald were born in Cobalt, and the last boy, Gordon, was born in Timmins in 1930.

Why the move to Timmins? As you likely know, at the end of the First World War, silver mining and, therefore, the local economy had been in decline for nearly a decade. By the late 1920s and early 30's, most of the smaller mining operations and ceased production. Many people moved to find employment in Kirkland Lake or Timmins.

King George Club October 1914, Cobalt – thanks to Dorothy Black Nicholls for sending us this photo in the Black family collection. Her father, Tom Black, of Black’s hardware on Lang Street is 5th from the right. The last name of the man in the centre, to the right of the clubhouse staff member is “Warren”.



Porcupine Advance March 27, 1930

Wilf was also a member of the Cobalt Fire Department. In 1928, he was a candidate for Fire Chief, but Thomas Belanger was appointed to the role. Otherwise, it's possible that the Warren family would have stayed in Cobalt. But with a family to support, Wilf moved them to Timmins, where, at the end of October 1929, he took a job at Burke's Drug Store.

We cannot find an article in the Cobalt papers that announces the awarding of the medallion to Warren, but there's a good chance it was a goodbye gift from his friends at the Cobalt Fire Department. Two other veteran volunteers, H "Doc" Fildes and RP Graham, both received "service jewels" on the occasion of their departure from the brigade in August 1931.

We spoke to several collectors of Cobalt memorabilia and none had seen a similar golden "jewel". We are very grateful for the generous donation. It is a rare and very special gift, indeed.



Evelyn Ida Zealand Warren left, and Wilfred James Warren right – undated family photos from the Warren estate. We are uncertain about the location, but there's a Cobalt vibe to the photos.

Heritage Silver Trail Update

We have some news to share regarding two sites on the Heritage Silver Trail.

The Nipissing Lookout - Site 7

In June, Agnico Eagle's engineering consultant determined that the stairs leading to the viewing platform were unsafe. These have been removed.

We plan to install a ground-level concrete pad to the east of the mill foundation. The scene from the new

location is not quite a full panorama of the town, but it is a view that can be enjoyed more easily, without a climb.

With the approval from the Coleman Township Council, we plan to relocate the viewing binoculars and railings that were installed next to the La Rose bridge during the recent reconstruction.



The view from the Larose Bridge location is not ideal - too many trees interfere with the sightlines.

Willet Green Miller Memorial Park - Site 16

For some years now, we have been unable to use the offices in the Pan Silver Headframe. The stiff legs are too badly deteriorated, creating a safety hazard. The property is owned by the Town of Cobalt, and they are exploring options regarding the building. At the July meeting, councillors accepted a staff report that was presented for their information.

Bruce Lonsdale Memorial Park



The Bruce Lonsdale Memorial Park at the former Cobalt Train Station.

You may have heard about Cobalt's newly renovated train station. What a beautiful transformation. The owners have hosted several open houses that have been very well-attended, and people come away dazzled.

With the additional traffic to the train station, several concerned citizens have approached us about the state of the signs at the Bruce Lonsdale Memorial Park located immediately adjacent to the site.

From this distance, you may not realize that the plaque on



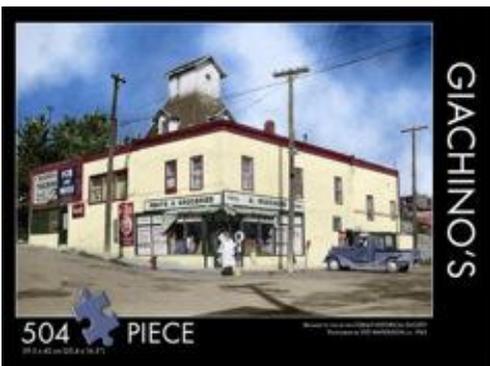
Bruce Lonsdale. Mayor of Cobalt during the 1977 Fire.

the left is missing Bruce's picture. Also, the blue and white sign is very badly weathered, cracked, and faded.

Now, this memorial park was established by Cobalt citizens who wished to honour the former Mayor. And since it is not on the Heritage Silver Trail, the Cobalt Historical Society is not responsible for the upkeep. That said, we appreciate the concerns of those who approached us.

We've already repaired the memorial plaque, with thanks to Rose Belanger of Lakeview Signs. For the larger sign, we asked the Town of Cobalt to contribute to the expense, and we await the Council's decision.

Souvenir Puzzle Update



Many of you already own one, or two, or ALL of our puzzles, and we are so very grateful for your support!

It's been great fun creating these, knowing the joy they bring. However, we have decided to stop at twelve, an even dozen.

We notified our friends at The Occurrence, the puzzle manufacturer, who told us, "We feel incredibly honoured to have had this opportunity to work with you and to see images from Cobalt and its history come to life. Thank you so much for bringing us along with you and for giving us the opportunity to say 'we helped'. Giachino's will always be one of our favorite puzzles!"

If you have a gap to fill in your puzzle collection, now is the time to contact White Mountain Publications before we are all sold out. Thanks, once again!

Cobalt Silver Camp Historical Trivia

Test your knowledge of the history of the Cobalt Silver Camp.
Answers can be found on the back page of the newsletter.

1. What letters are inlaid in the tile flooring at the entrance to the Cobalt Municipal Office?
a) Y.M.C.A b) Town of Cobalt c) T of C d) There are no letters
2. The middle initial of Willet G. Miller is what name?
a) George b) Graham c) Green d) Gabriel
3. What breed was 'Cobalt', the famous local dog?
a) German Shepherd b) Labrador Retriever c) Bulldog d) Great Dane
4. What year did Parks Canada officially designate the Cobalt Mining District as a National Historic Site?
a) 2000 b) 2002 c) 2004 d) 2006
5. Finish the line in this famous local song. "But it's hob nailed boots and a ??????????"
a) stick of dynamite b) bottle of whiskey c) large pickaxe d) flannel shirt

Don't Forget to Check out our Website at
cobalthistoricalsociety.ca

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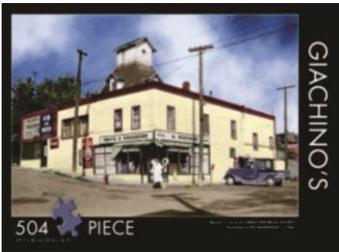
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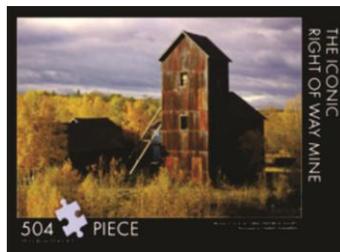
The 2025 Board of the Cobalt Historical Society

Maggie Wilson - Chair
 Sarah Johnston - Secretary and Research
 Reg Holdsworth - Treasurer and Trail
 Reiner Mielke - Trail Manager
 Brian Dobbs - Newsletter editor and webmaster
 Dwight Brydges - Restoration
 Deborah Ranchuk - Member
Municipal Liaisons
 Pat Anderson for the Town of Cobalt
 Marilyn Lubbock for Coleman Township

Help Support our Fundraising Efforts - Cobalt Puzzles



Giachino's Coniagas Shaft House #4 circa 1945 as a grocery store.



The Iconic Right of Way Mine Photo by Charles Dumaresq.



Right of Way Mine Reflections Photo by Sue Nielsen.



Oblin's Cash and Carry Circa 1945 on Lang Street



Ontario Northland Railway Station Cobalt 1945.



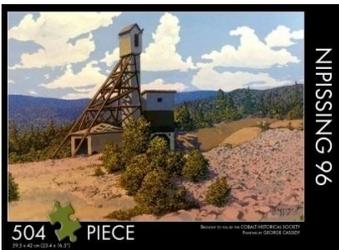
Cobalt Public School Photo circa 1955.



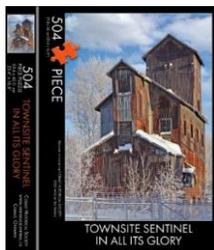
Silver Miller Mine Photograph circa 1950



Buffalo Mine & Water Tower George Cassidy Print



Nipissing 96 George Cassidy Print



Townsite Mine



Cobalt Map by Ruth Bernache



Hometown Hootenay

All Puzzles \$30. Contact White Mountain Publications at 705-679-5555 or their website at www.wmpub.ca for further details.

Answers to Cobalt Silver Camp Trivia Questions

1. a) Y.M.C.A 2. c) Green 3. c) Bulldog 4. b) 2002 5. d) flannel shirt