



Preserving, promoting and developing Wellington North's unique cultural resources to build a vibrant community and a prosperous economy.

Our Cultural Moment for Remembrance Day 2020, Remembers Nursing Sister Alice Cook



Alice Cook of Mount Forest was the only female from Wellington County to die while serving in World War I.

She was born in 1893, the daughter of JJ and Annie Cook, prominent businesspeople in the town.

On deciding to enter nursing, Alice trained at Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto. She was called on almost immediately to serve her country when war was declared in 1914. As the fighting advanced, many injured soldiers returned home to Canada for treatment in such institutions as the Hospital for Invalid Soldiers on Isabella Street in downtown Toronto.

Alice Cook volunteered for service at this hospital where her compassion and skills as a nurse eased the suffering of the severely wounded soldiers. Unhappily, as the influenza pandemic grew in the winter of 1918, Alice contracted it in the hospital and developed pneumonia. A week later, on New Year's Eve, two days after her 25th birthday, she died.

For her heroic work, Nursing Sister Alice Cook was awarded a medal by Mount Forest citizens. It reads: "Presented to N.S. A. Cook by the citizens of Mt. Forest for gallant services, Great War 1914-1918." Her nephew, Bill Cockburn, gathered information about her in later years and located the medal which, with a photo of Alice, he donated to Mount Forest Legion Branch 134. Copies hang in Mount Forest Archives and the Wellington County Museum and Archives.

Submitted by Gail Donald; Wellington North Cultural Roundtable with special thanks to Campbell Cork. The information and some of the wording for this Cultural Moment were taken from his article on Alice Cook in Homer XVIII, 2011