



The *Fultz House Museum* blacksmith shop is modeled after *A.J. Smeltzer's*. Many of his tools were donated to the Fultz House to be put on display.

A.J. SMELTZER

Mr. Smeltzer earned his living by being a blacksmith on Sackville Drive. It is believed that Smeltzer learned his trade from an older artisan most likely the second generation blacksmith, John Robert Ellis (1843-1916).

Smeltzer's shop was centrally located in the community. It became a popular gathering place for both young and old alike. They watched Smeltzer work the forge and strike the red hot metal with his hammer. Smeltzer was known for his decorative ironwork. In addition, the shop was a place where community news and topics of the day were discussed.

It has often been said that Smeltzer made the perfect horseshoe, which is interesting considering he never actually shod a horse, as the story goes.

Smeltzer became a school trustee when he was only twenty-one. He was also a founding member of the Sackville Chamber of Commerce and the Sackville Volunteer Fire Department. Smeltzer was elected to three terms as a county councillor.

Blacksmiths like *A.J. Smeltzer* employed three basic elements in their work: air from the bellows, fire from the forge, and water for tempering the hot metal. The local blacksmith was known throughout the community as a man who could make or repair anything. Mr. Smeltzer was seen as such a man.



Albert (Bert) Smeltzer, a well-known local blacksmith (on left), stands in front of the old blacksmith shop.



A school was named in *A.J. Smeltzer's* (pictured above) honour as a reminder of the good work and contributions he made to the community.



A group of children outside Smeltzer's blacksmith shop circa 1930.

Leslie Thomas & A.J. Smeltzer



Wireless Air Gunner, Sergeant Leslie E. Thomas, R.C.A.F. pictured in his uniform.

FULTZ HOUSE MUSEUM

LESLIE THOMAS

1921-1943

SACKVILLE, NOVA SCOTIA

Leslie Thomas was the type of man who lived his life for his community. He was the proud son of Edwin Thomas and Violet Fader.

Thomas, always a well-known and enthusiastic face on Sackville streets, busily took to his studies attending Lower Sackville School in his formative years. It was located at the foot of the Sackville Cross Road on the Old Sackville Road. He enjoyed life to the fullest, and had a fondness for skiing.

The whole of Sackville banded together to boost his spirits when he was just sixteen. Thomas spent the better part of a year in a body cast to correct a curvature in his spine. His classmates thought so highly of him that they took up a collection and bought him a radio to help pass the time. That's just the type of man Leslie Thomas was - a caring community minded citizen, who

The Leslie Thomas' funeral and tributes were the longest ever seen by Sackville residents at the time of his death. His cortege was reportedly near a mile long. The service was held at the St. John Anglican Church and at the home of his parents.

not only loved growing up in Sackville, but a person a community could not help but love.

Deciding what to do with his life, Thomas chose to become a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1941. Thomas ended up moving away to St. Thomas, Ontario to study and eventually ended up in Jarvis, a small Ontario community. He was eventually stationed back in Nova Scotia.

Leslie E. Thomas spent the last six months of his short life in Yarmouth. Out on a training mission, he along with four other soldiers perished in a plane crash. The plane crashed on landing January 8, 1943. Thomas died when he was just twenty-one, six months shy of his twenty-second birthday.

The grave stones (pictured opposite) of Leslie Thomas and his parents, Mr. And Mrs. E.N. Thomas are pictured below. The Thomas family are buried in the St. John's the Evangelist Church Cemetery.



In 1975, a fitting tribute was paid to Thomas. A school bearing his name was opened on Metropolitan Avenue. The below picture is located in Leslie Thomas Junior High School.



Facts are sketchy, but the plane carrying Sergeant Leslie E. Thomas, was on a training mission, and apparently developed engine trouble. The plane struggled back to base, but crashed on landing. Sergeant Thomas along with Flight Sergeant B.L. Hudson (Yarmouth), Flight Sergeant J.T. Managan (North Bay, Ontario) and Sergeant H.E. White of Ontario died in a fiery crash on January 8th.