

Kids can find 'A Bad Penny' on their library shelves

Tom Skinner donates copies of new children's book to all public, Catholic elementary schools

Photo and story
by Bill England

Tom Skinner was so moved by Glen Mitchell's heartwarming tale that he wanted to give local children the opportunity to experience it too.

Skinner recently purchased and donated copies of Mitchell's new book, "A Bad Penny Always Comes Back" to every public and Catholic elementary school in Windsor and Essex County.

The children's picture book, which features illustrations by Kristen Gallerneaux, is based on the true story of the Allies' initiative to feed the starving Dutch in Nazi-occupied Holland.

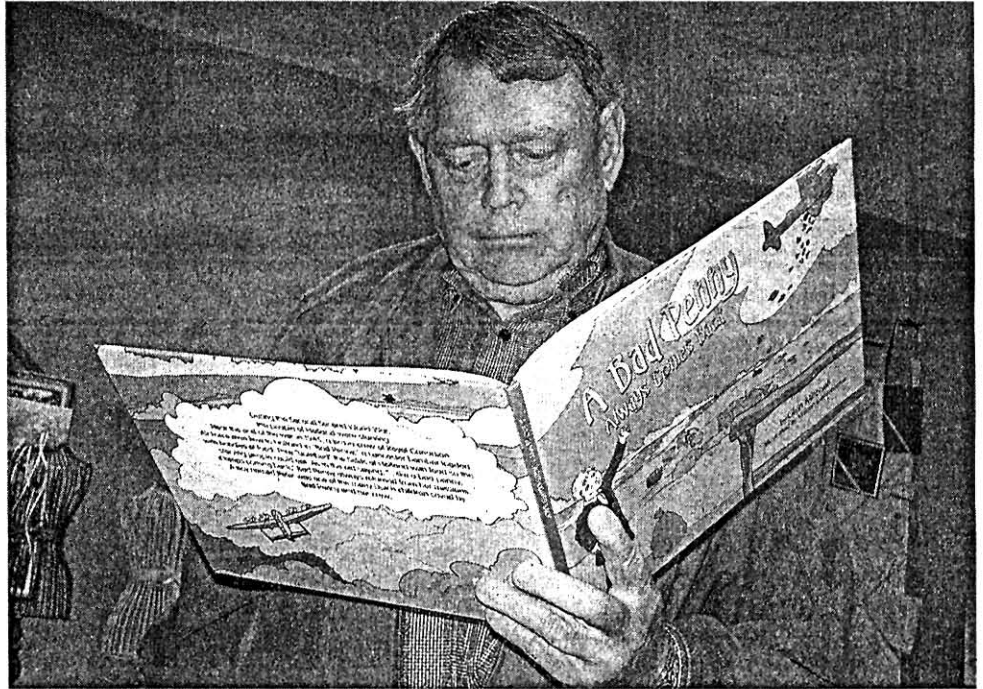
"It's an important story and it's a nice story," says Skinner.

"And there aren't a lot of 'nice' stories about World War II."

Operation Manna

Known as "Operation Manna" (a Biblical reference to 'miracle food'), the Allies' plan was to drop food bundles over Holland.

Windsor-born pilot Captain Robert F. Upcott ("Pilot Bob" in the book) flew "Bad Penny", the



Tom Skinner, pictured reading "A Bad Penny Always Comes Back", has donated copies of the children's picture book to every public and Catholic elementary school in Windsor-Essex County.

first Lancaster sent in to see if the plan would work.

There was no guarantee that Upcott and his crew would not be shot down by the Nazis.

On April 29, 1945, however, Bad Penny managed to drop its cargo and return safely.

Shortly thereafter, thousands of pounds of food were dropped over a 10-day period, saving the Dutch people from further starvation.

In addition to Upcott and Bad Penny, Mitchell's book also follows a

young Dutch boy named "Peter", based on Peter Buttenaar, a teen who learns of the Allies' plan to feed his family and others in dire need of food.

When Buttenaar heard two bomber planes coming, he thought it was an attack, but then saw them drop the food bundles.

The planes were so low that he even saw Upcott's fellow crew member, Bill Gray, waving to him from Bad Penny's nose.

"To this day, (the Dutch) always send tulips to Ottawa each

year to show their appreciation," Skinner explains.

Want to buy it?

For more information about the book and the story behind it, visit www.badpennybook.com