

Pitching in for a friend in need

By RANDI MACKINNON
The Compass

There was a time when a community always rallied to assist a neighbour in need.

While these gestures sometimes seem a distant memory, there are still people who are willing to extend a helping hand.

On Jan. 24, the Bay Roberts Volunteer Fire Department built a wheelchair ramp for Leah Chipman, 63, after hearing about the situation from local resident Daphne Earle.

Bay Roberts fire Chief Newman Parsons said the effort took about six hours.

In addition, The Bay Roberts Lions Club has offered to donate \$200 to the Fire Department to help defray the costs of building the ramp.

Leah Chipman suffers from a debilitating disease which has forced her into a wheelchair. She said she's noticed quite a difference already with the ramp. The impact of the kind gesture moved her to tears. She didn't quite know how to verbalize her gratitude.

"I didn't think I had a friend like that in the world," she told The Compass last week.

Bernard, Leah's husband, used to work for the town as a heavy equipment operator and was a volunteer firefighter for 30 years.

Meanwhile, Earle - the woman who got the ball rolling - is also the Bay Roberts town clerk. However, she noted her request for help for the Chipmans was made as a private citizen, and not on behalf of the



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A WORLD OF GOOD - Leah Chipman and her husband Bernard are pleased with Daphne Earle's thoughtfulness, which led to the construction of a wheelchair ramp at their home. The Bay Roberts Volunteer Fire Department spent Saturday, Jan. 24 building the ramp. In addition, the Bay Roberts Lions Club has offered to contribute \$200 to the cost of the ramp.

town.

Earle remembers stories her grandmother used to tell her about people getting involved

and helping one another at the drop of a hat.

It's a tradition she wishes was more prevalent today.

"Today we're too busy to think about anyone else but ourselves," she said. "It seems wrong!"