

# The Mathers Family

In the spring of 1865, John Mathers and his wife, Christina Bannerman, along with their infant son, David, moved from Bond Head to Stayner. The trip took two days by horse and wagon.

John bought a piece of property on the north side of Main Street that ran from Elm Street to what is now the Pearson Block. There, he ran a business which included a cabinet shop, a wood-working shop, a carriage shop and a harness and blacksmith shop. David learned the cabinet work from his father, and made coffins when required. When David bought the block where the funeral home is now, he opened a furniture store and funeral business.

A few years later, his brother, William John, opened a carriage shop next to David's property. When William John died, the Noisy River Telephone bought the property, put up a new building and moved their office from Creemore to Stayner.

David Mathers and his wife, Rebecca Ausman, had two sons, Jack and David. In the early 1900's, (1910 or so), David was suffering with arthritis and finding it hard to carry on with the funeral business. By 1916, he encouraged his son, Jack, to resign from the Toronto Bank in Pretoria, Ontario, and return home to take over the business.

Arterial embalming was done extensively in Toronto, but not in small towns, so Jack went to Toronto and worked for the W. J. Stone Funeral Home to learn this new procedure. When he returned home, he married Pearl Hewson. They had two sons: Russel David and George Harold (Harry). Russel obtained his funeral director's license in 1939. That same year, he joined the air force as a flying instructor. Harry obtained his funeral director's license in 1943, and was married to Bernice Kindree on May 5th the same year, just two months before Russel lost his life in a plane crash in Western Canada.

Harry and Bee had five children: Russel, Alan, Anne, Marion, and Susan. Both sons became funeral directors, though only one remained in the business. The Mathers Funeral Home was sold in the fall of 1974.