

# The Maguire Story

During the 30's and 40's the Maguire Family was very well known in Stayner.



Frederic Theodore Maguire was born October 15, 1900 in Simcoe County, Ontario. He and his brother, Wilbert, had an apiary business in Minesing. In 1929, Fred married Shirley Weir of Creemore and moved to Stayner. Wilbert carried on the honey business and Fred began a transport business.

*Inset Photo: Bill Maguire stands in front of a familiar truck. Click images to enlarge.*

Once Fred and Shirley had settled in Stayner, they became involved in local affairs. Fred ran for Council and was elected. He headed the Roads and Bridges Committee. Stayner had an outside staff of one man, who swept the streets, so being head of the "Roads & Bridges" meant taking "his" men and "his" truck and going out and filling the potholes. After seven years on Council, pressures of family and business caused him to withdraw.

In 1931, Public Commercial Vehicle licence classes A, C, D, and H were bought and "Maguire's Transport" was launched. A colour scheme of silver trucks with black and red lettering was adopted and soon became familiar in the district. It really seemed quite a dream to see this as a viable business when roads weren't plowed in winter and Highway 26 was the only road into Stayner and it was paved on only one side as far as Barrie.

"Maguires" started a daily, first class freight service from Toronto to Barrie, Minesing, Stayner, Collingwood, Wasaga Beach and Elmvale. The class H licence was a household moving licence and one unique feature on the moving van was a large round map of the area served. This map attracted attention every time the truck went to a new community.



## Fred and Shirley Maguire

In 1939, Fred Maguire bought "Melville Transport" of Creemore and with the onset of WW11 and a fleet of 24 trucks, became one of the main haulers into Camp Borden. Camp Borden had suddenly become a mushrooming city of temporary buildings. Locating the various messes and canteens was a major headache.

The war-weary workers and military personnel discovered Wasaga Beach as a vacation spot and soon freight to Wasaga tripled. The variety of beaches - Brock's, Springhurst, Oakview, Wasaga, , New Wasaga and Woodland with no uniform street markings made delivery there difficult and if you were careless, the soft sand was always ready to bury your wheels to the axle.

The onset of the war also changed Collingwood. The shipyards were suddenly needed to build Corvettes. Maguires, and Parks & Northern Transport of Owen Sound hauled steel non-stop, to provide materials for this. The Clyde Aircraft was also in full production needing material.

Smarts Canning Plant was also a main industry needing peaches from Niagara in the harvest season for processing and also needing the processed foods to be delivered to the local stores and wholesalers.

This increased freight traffic was combined with a great shortage of drivers. All the able-bodied men were

in the services and though the work was classed “essential service” it was difficult to find help. The shortage of some goods also made thefts and hi-jacking a constant threat.

When the war was over, the freight slowed down and a trend to larger transport companies became evident. In 1954, after twenty-five years of service, Maguires Transport was purchased by “Simmons” of Midland. The licences are now part of Dominion Freight Ways.

Fred, as a young man, became interested in reforestation. The Maguire brothers bought 17 acres of land north of the Anglican Church in Stayner. This had formerly been the Stayner Fairgrounds. They planted trees to improve the soil and planned to build a honeyhouse. When the need for building lots became evident after the war, Fred sub-divided the land and now this area is a pleasant treed subdivision.

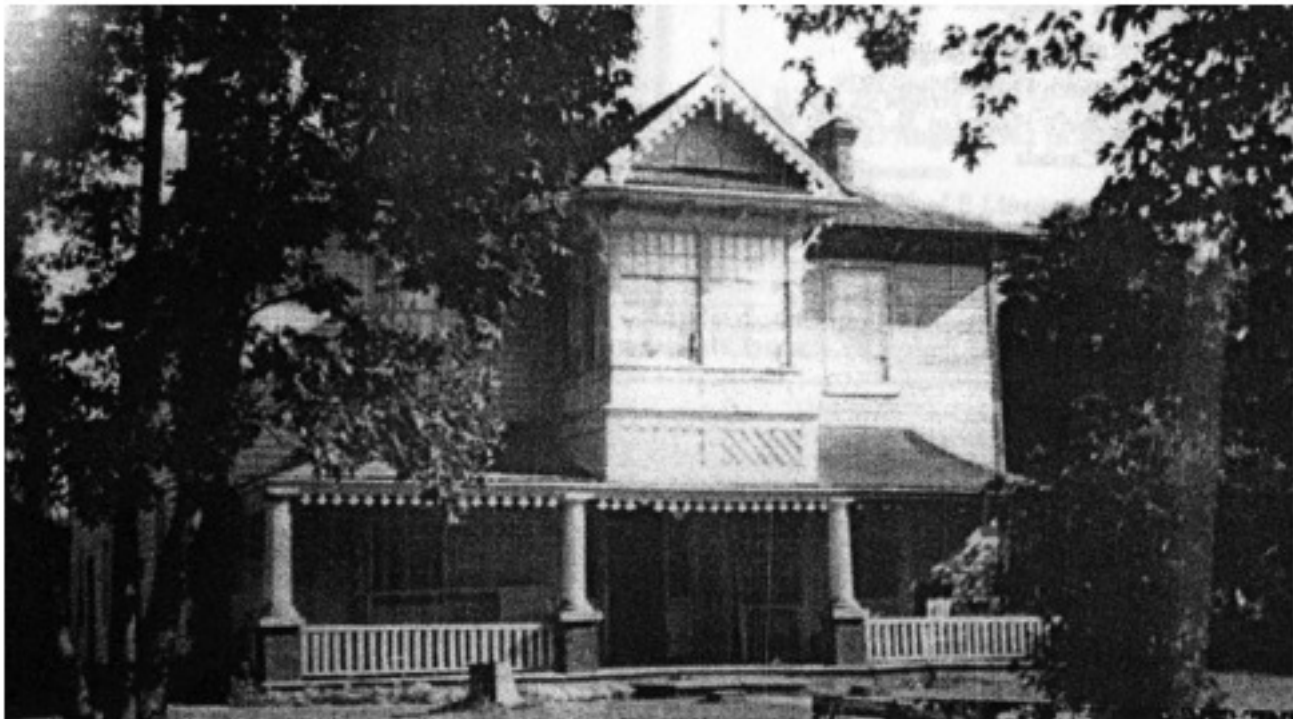
Although Fred had little formal education he was a voracious reader and had a great mechanical curiosity. Soon after the war when mechanics had to be employed to work on commercial vehicles, he became a licensed mechanic. He also bought one of the first chain saws in Stayner. Fred went down with this saw, a heavy two-man machine, to help clear the right of way for Highway 400 near Maple, Ontario.

After the transport was sold, Fred had a career change and went to work at Reinhart Vinegars. He often drove two trips to Montreal a week, no mean feat for a man over sixty. Fred had a heart attack and died in June 1987.

Fred was also Past Master and life member of Northern Light Masonic Lodge and a member of the Scottish Rite.

Shirley, (born in November 1902 and died in March 1988) lived and went to school in Banda. After Normal School in 1932 her first teaching position was at “Brick Diamond School” in Mulmur. While she was teaching, she boarded with the Leightons. There she met Fred and following a five-year engagement, they were married.

Shirley, in addition to raising a family of four children, Ruth, Anna, Jean and Bill, and looking after the big house on the corner of Main Street and the Second Line, was also involved in her church and the community.



The Maguire House - where Tim Horton's now stands.

Any local resident, when turning at the "second line" corner, remembers the stately Georgian "Maguire" house on the corner.

*(This story first appeared in the Spring 2011 issue of our newsletter.)*