



# STAYNER HERITAGE SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER

[www.staynerheritagesociety.com](http://www.staynerheritagesociety.com)

Incorporated, 1998.

Fall, 2012.

## AN UNFORTUNATE OCCURRENCE

It was with great reluctance and regret that the Executive of Stayner Heritage Society decided to cancel the 16th Annual Heritage Day. This is the first time that rain has caused this action. However, the rainstorm started about 6:00 am and continued unrelentingly until 10:00 am. At about 8:30, we knew the conditions were not suitable for a parade and outdoor concert.

We know that many people were disappointed, as were we. However, plans are already in place for next year when we will try to duplicate the great things planned for 2012 and we will celebrate the 140th AND 141st birthdays of the Founding of the Town of Stayner!

## STAYNER HERITAGE SOCIETY RAFFLE

We are now conducting our Spring Raffle with 3 valuable prizes.



*Clothes Shelf depicting Stayner Railway Station - one of three prizes available in our raffle.*

There will be THREE tickets drawn - the first to be drawn will get a choice of the three prizes.

The prizes are:

- A replica of the Bell Tower fashioned from bell tower shingles by Al Matchett of Collingwood;
- An end table with a shingle inlaid into the top, made by "Billy Hill Pine" of Stayner;
- A clothes shelf picturing Stayner Railway Station and donated by the Fisher Girls!

The draw will take place during Heritage Day 2013. Tickets are \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00

## AN EXCITING COMING EVENT!

On Saturday, November 3rd, Stayner Heritage Society is holding a special Remembrance Day Event at Jubilee Presbyterian Church on Main St, Stayner, at 9:30 am.

A continental breakfast will welcome the guests.

The \$5.00 tickets will be sold in advance. Call Catherine Walker 705-428-2719, Myrna Johnson 705-428-2540 or purchase from a member of SHS.

## ANOTHER COMING EVENT

To celebrate "Black History Month", we are planning a special event for February 13, 2013. Janie Cooper-Wilson will tell us about her new book "Echoes In The Hills." Details to follow.

## In This Issue

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- The Story of Stayner's War Bride
- Black History Event

## THE SHINGLE PROJECT!

A committee, consisting of Barb Stransky and Ferne Allen has been researching the possibilities of using the saved aluminum shingles from the Bell Tower.

So far, they have several projects in the works.

A finished product or two will be included in our raffle, being started on Nov. 3rd during the Remembrance Day event.

The readers will be pleased to hear about the end table, bell tower replica, window boxes and other creative items.

Thanks Barb & Ferne for seeing value in something which might have been considered useless!



*Bell Tower Replica by Al Matchett - one of three prizes available to be won in our raffle!*

## SHS BURSARY

Each year, Stayner Heritage Society awards a \$1,000 bursary to a student from Stayner Collegiate who plans to go on to study a history-related subject.

This year's winner is Caleigh McKenzie. Congratulations to her.

## ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL TREE SALE

Again, in conjunction with Stayner Garden Club, SHS held the Annual Tree Sale in Station Park on May 26th. Sales were brisk and thanks to the Leimgardt boys, who bought the remainder of the trees, we sold out!

In celebration, the workers met at "Friends Pub" for lunch, honouring Volunteer Week.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On May 30th, a good crowd met at Centennial United Church in Stayner to welcome Peter Coates and Melissa Shaw from Collingwood Museum.

They gave an interesting photo/story presentation of the two local railway lines - the Ontario, Huron, Simcoe through Stayner and the Beeton-Collingwood line through Duntroon. Many of the photos had not been seen in public before and the audience very much appreciated the information which Peter and Melissa found.

The business segment of the evening consisted of the presentation of the Slate of Officers for 2013 by Barb Stransky and some announcements.

For refreshments, June Holroyd presented a great cake commemorating another successful year!

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: 2012-2013

Chairperson - Jeff Parton  
Past Chair - Kevin Jerry  
Secretary - Myrna Johnson  
Treasurer - Carol Marsden  
Publicity - Dorothy-Anne Millsap  
Membership - Barb Stransky  
Program - Catherine Walker, Ferne Allen, June Holroyd, Susan Brockwell  
Clearview Council Rep - Robert Walker  
Chamber of Commerce Rep - Manfred Leimgardt  
Lions Club Rep - Pete Jerry  
Eastern Star Rep - Richard Marsden  
Masonic Order Rep - John Hindle  
Horticultural Garden Club Rep - Pam Townsend  
Clearview Theatre Rep - Pam Townsend  
Stayner Collegiate Rep - Emily Walker  
Community Reps - Shirley Parton, Judy Cox, Phyllis Perry  
Emeritus - Helen Hanna, Mary Burkholder  
History - Jim Paul  
Nominating Committee - Pam Townsend, Barb Stransky  
Technical Advisor - Jack Craig  
Auditor - Sandra Squire  
Directors - Bob Charlton (1yr) Manfred Leimgardt (2 yr)  
Lorne Stewart (1yr) Pete Jerry (2 yr)

## NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Dorothy-Anne Millsap

Myrna Johnson

Peter Millsap

*Here is another story centring around a Stayner family, Allister & Vi MacDonald, provided by daughter, Kay Broadhurst, and suitable for this November Remembrance season. This story takes the form of a letter written by Vi to her family.*

## STAYNER'S WAR BRIDE

by Kay Broadhurst

Dear Family,

This letter is in response to a request to talk about my experience as a War Bride. I was one of those Scottish city girls who married a Canadian country boy and moved to Canada.

I remember the day war was declared. I knew that my life was about to change. All the men were called up and women were expected to help keep the country going.

I had to give up my apprenticeship and my dream of becoming a tailor was put on hold. I joined the Land Army. Cathy (my friend) didn't get accepted. Apparently she was too short! Dad, who was a Regimental Sergeant Major, spoke up for her, so Cathy was allowed to join. Really, when you think about it, how tall do you have to be to milk a cow?

The next few years were very different. It seemed so unreal! My mom did her part and was a cook at the fire station, and my dad was stationed on the east coast of England. They hardly saw one another. I worked on a chicken farm in Merryville, just outside of Edinburgh. For someone who had never left the city, chicken farming was disgusting. I was pecked and scratched. I had to feed the birds, scrape chicken poop and get them ready for market. But at least every night I got to go home to my own bed back in the city. The Canadian Air Force was stationed down the road and someone was always coming for eggs. We couldn't fraternize with the soldiers but I can remember being jealous that they got eggs. Eggs were rationed and always in short supply. However there were plenty of powdered eggs.

I left the chicken farm because I was sickened that I accidentally killed a chick. I went to work on another farm outside Dalkeith. We picked stones, spread manure, milked the cows and any other job to keep the place going. A city girl milking a cow! The other farm workers thought that was pretty funny! We won't even talk about Daisy and the dilapidated cart!

I needed to stay at Dalkeith, as it was too far to travel back to Edinburgh. We were billeted at Borthwick Castle. The old castle was cold and drafty. I remember that we had plenty of sardines! Sardines for breakfast, lunch and dinner! It struck us as odd that our menu was so limited. We all wondered what was happening to our rations.

After we complained to the owner of the castle things changed. The inspectors came to see what was going on and were served a great meal. There was a tablecloth and roast beef, Yorkshire pudding and butter. After enjoying the meal the inspectors could not understand our complaint. After a long discussion in the sitting room our housekeeper was fired. Things improved and we never saw another sardine.

Unfortunately the housekeeper's family was not so fortunate. She had been giving our rations to her family and we were doing without. Even the Italian prisoners of war, who were at the castle, were fed better than we were.

One day two Canadian soldiers who had lost their way while sightseeing stopped my friend and me. This was easy to understand as all the street signs had been destroyed. We lead them back to the "theatre district" by way of narrow alleys. I remember we wore our land army dress uniforms, which included wearing pants. During the walk we became acquainted and agreed to meet the following night at the Palisades Dance Hall. The Women's Institute would host socials, at the dance hall, to help the allied forces cope and enjoy their leave time.

The next evening when I got to the dance hall your father walked past me twice! He didn't recognize me wearing a dress!

Your dad started spending all of his leave time in Edinburgh. My family loved him! Your grandpa would wait to hear him whistling as he came up the stairs when he was visiting. Grandpa would grab his hat and coat and off they would go to the pub.

We were married June 28, 1945 at the Masonic Hall. I wore a navy blue suit and your father his uniform. Your father had to make an application to the Canadian Royal Air Force for permission to marry a British subject. Dr. Beckles put me through a rigorous physical exam. We had our bands read three times. Your dad likes to joke that he doesn't remember being in a church that often. I didn't need a passport to come to Canada and the deal was that I would become a Canadian citizen as soon as we married. It was quite the celebration. Your Nana cooked the meal with ingredients that she had been buying along with bottles of alcohol, as things were still being rationed. Due to the gas shortage taxis were a luxury. We had to share a taxi with my sister and her husband, but that worked out because that is where we spent the first night. Your dad's Canadian friends couldn't get over that!



*Allister and Vi's engagement picture.*

When the soldiers went on leave it was essential that they leave an address where they would be residing. In the event that they were "recalled" they would be easy to find. I am not sure of what happened but when your father returned to his base he was put under house arrest. Apparently he had been recalled and not found, so he was put on report. He had to report to the warrant officer, and was shocked to find that the warrant officer was his barber from Barrie, Ontario. Our honeymoon was postponed but we did get to spend a weekend in Lemingbar, England.

The war ended and the troops were going home. All troops needed to be returned to North America before the war brides were allowed to leave Britain. The American troops were shipped home first, and in October 1945 my husband was shipped home to Canada. He was one of the lucky ones. He disembarked with the first group of Canadian soldiers on the "Queen Elizabeth." I anxiously waited my turn. My trip to Canada was postponed twice, then I got notice it was time to go. My father took me to Waverly Station where we said goodbye. I remember Mum giving me money for my passage home "just in case." I had said goodbye to my mum and parting was very hard. At the last minute I saw Mum running toward me waving a booklet. I had forgotten the guidebook for war brides. The advice that your Nana gave me really shouldn't be repeated. At South Hampton, England I boarded the "Aquitainia". There were hundreds of war brides and children on the ship. I remember the crossing and the crowded conditions. We shared sleeping quarters that were still set up for the troops.

After five days I was very anxious to get off the ship. We eventually landed at Pier 3 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. I then boarded a train and arrived at Union Station in Toronto on July 1, 1946. My new husband was waiting for me with his uncle's new car. He carried a bouquet of flowers. They were very unique and wrapped in newspaper! I later found out that he had planned on buying some but did not plan on everything being closed. The flowers were from his sister's garden.

It was a very emotional time for me. I remember that I wore a beautiful red linen dress. I planned to change once we were settled but my luggage got lost. It was over 80 degrees and humid. The weather was very different from what I knew.

When we arrived at my new home in Edenvale, Ontario, I realized that my father had not been exaggerating. I thought when he told me I would have to use an outhouse, and there would be a stovepipe going through the ceiling, he was trying to get me to stay in Edinburgh. He was not kidding. We spent the first summer and fall on my mother-in-law's farm, but moved to Stayner at the beginning of winter. Your father needed to be closer to work at his Uncle Bill Dickey's garage. Your Dad was no stranger to Stayner. Grandma Mary MacDonald (nee Dickey) had many family members in Stayner, who offered us help and support. Uncle Bob Dickey was involved in the local Feed Mill and Aunt Kate was the local telephone operator. The first winter we boarded with Mrs. Armstrong the town librarian. At that time the library had living quarters and Mrs. Armstrong wanted someone reliable to spend the winter with her. Mr. Armstrong was recently deceased. I remember the evening that we came home from a WearEver party and I decided to pick up Mrs. Armstrong's black and

white cat. Unfortunately for us it was a skunk. That is when we met Mr. J. Mathers, the local funeral director, who gave us formaldehyde to get rid of the smell. We eventually bought our first home on John St. and then moved to our current home.

I missed my family back home and as time passed my mum and sisters came to visit.

I never saw my father again. Mac, as I called your father, sponsored my oldest sister and her family to immigrate to Canada.

There were many adjustments during my first years in Canada. I never really did get used to how big the country was but I did like the wide-open spaces. I kept wondering where everyone was. I was used to the crowded conditions of the city. The change in seasons was one of my favourite things. The Canadian winter was a test, especially the first one. One of my fondest memories is going shopping for the first time. It was such a pleasure to be able to buy anything without showing ration coupons, and it took me a long time to realize I could buy as much of anything as I wanted, as long as I had enough money. I was used to pound sterling but the local shopkeepers were very kind and would count out the required monies for me.

I met many wonderful people over the years and became involved in many organizations; Brownies, Royal Canadian Legion, Ladies Auxiliary, and the Adult Skating Club. This was very interesting, as I knew nothing about "ice skating." I even sang in the Presbyterian Church Choir and was secretary for the Sunday school. Your father was Mayor for several years and I became the "First Lady".

I am happy that we moved to Stayner The Town of Friendly People. I have had a fulfilling life in Canada. I took a chance at love and I have been rewarded a thousand times over. I have a loving family and many, many happy memories.

Your loving mother,  
Vi

### **A PROJECT WAITING FOR YOUR HELP!**

Stayner Heritage Society member Tom Scholte, who brought to us the popular Video/DVD "Memoires of Our Town," is now planning to make another one.

Along with the many pictures he has found in Roger Watson's collection, he is asking for you, the reader, to send any good quality pre-1950 picture(s) you would like to have included.

The picture must be clearly identified (time, place etc.) and people must be named.

He would like to have the pics by January 1st.

Please sent any entries to:

Stayner Heritage Society,  
Box 290, Stayner, On., L0M 1S0