



STAYNER HERITAGE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Incorporated, 1998.

Fall 2022

Visit Us At www.staynerheritagesociety.com

News & Information **From Your Heritage Team**

Canada Day & Stayner's 150th Birthday

Canada Day festivities were started on a hesitant note, due to the threat of rain showers. However, the committee decided to proceed with the event and, at the end of a perfect day, it was the correct decision. Following the morning parade, opening ceremonies were held at Centennial Park, a new venue for this occasion. The Dusty Roads Band provided the entertainment for the day. Our Heritage Booth memorabilia, fun activities for both young and those young at heart, and of course, refreshments, all contributed to the day's success. The day also provided the Heritage Society with the opportunity to introduce our Historical Homes Tours project.

A special thank you to Laura and Rick Perry who volunteered with our successful 50/50 draw. Also a special thank you to all our volunteers and especially the firemen for making Canada Day a huge success.

Museum On Market Night

The SHS Museum was open every Thursday evening this past summer celebrating Stayner's 150th anniversary. Complimentary refreshments were offered to both young and old as they enjoyed our displays and pictures. Our Stayner Sun collection was a major attraction as the clippings provided insight to local family history.

The Byng corner was of special interest to former students.

Our weekly 50/50 draws were very successful thanks to our dedicated "salespeople". Because of this activity's success a donation was made to the Clearview Food Bank in the amount of \$500.00. It was fun to chat with folks, both newcomers and old timers, about our Community.

Simcoe County Historical Society

The aforementioned Historical Society held its first Conference at the Simcoe County Museum on September 10th. The theme was "Where History Lives Again". The keynote speaker was Dan Needles who gave an interesting talk on the History of Simcoe County. The days activities included a tour of the County's archives facility (most impressive) and a tour of the museum from an origin's perspective. Several lightning/ video presentations were presented, including that of the Stayner Heritage Society. Our presentation called "A Place to Call Home – Stayner Then & Now" was well received.

A Special Stayner Gathering

A group of folks got together in early October to reminisce about growing up in Stayner during the 40s and 50s. the BOS (Boys of Stayner) have been getting together for over 50 years and this year they invited the GOS (Girls of Stayner) to join them. Lots of fun and great friendships were renewed.

Historical Homes Tour

The Heritage Society's first Historical Tour debuted on July 1st, Canada Day, with a full-colour brochure that has been a popular item for Stayner citizens.

A new batch will be printed to keep up with demand and can be picked up during business hours at the Clearview Public Library on North Street or Barbs Clothes Closet, now that Market Thursdays have finished for the season. Brick homes that were not included in the first brochure are now being considered for a second Historical Homes Tour. If you are a homeowner and would be interested in participating in a second brochure, please contact Roger Fry at rfry4325@gmail.com

If you own an historical home that is not brick but would like your home to be researched by the Society, please contact Roger at the above email address, and we will endeavour to keep up with demand.

Remembrance Day Banner Project

The Remembrance Banner project was conceived by the Heritage Society three years ago. Since then 48 banners now grace our Main Street from mid-October through to Remembrance Day. These banners show local veteran heroes from all walks of life. This year we are pleased to announce that four new banners will be added to our Main Street collection: namely, Francis (Frank) Bezaire (WW2), Arnold Atkinson (WW2), Bryce C. Anderson (WW1) and N. Bruce Thomas (WW2).

These new Banners will be dedicated at the upcoming November 11th Remembrance Day Service hosted by Stayner Legion Branch 459.

The service will take place at the Cenotaph at the Administration Office in Stayner with a luncheon to follow at the Legion.

SHS Video "We Remember"

The Remembrance Day Video "We Remember" which acknowledges many of our areas Veteran Heroes was updated in 2022 and will be shown at the Clearview Community Centre at 2pm on November 11th. Please join us for this special presentation.

Our Feature Story

The Changing Times In Obituaries

In the matter of just a few hours on Sept.8, 2022, with the immediacy of the world wide web, the entire planet was notified of the death of Queen Elizabeth II. And for 11 days people were transfixed with every detail of the carefully orchestrated arrangements.

In contrast, funerals and notifications have perhaps not been so detailed and elaborate in Stayner. Here the notice board outside the funeral home, word-of-mouth and local newspaper accounts were the leading "social media". But they have been of no less importance to our little town through the generations.

Sometimes these announcements were made with directness, sometimes a short note, sometimes with poetry and occasionally with a view to summing up a life.

In a sparsely populated turn-of-the-20th- Century Stayner, the death of a prominent citizen would not just be a notification, but front-page news. The fire death of Dr. C.E. Jakeway has related in grim detail in 1906 by the Collingwood Bulletin:

The circumstances of his death are peculiarly sad...half an hour later his body was found in the loft near a small doorway on the west side, through which hay and straw was received into the building. He had evidently discovered the fire and attempted to escape through the doorway but was overcome by the dense smoke which filled the building. His face and one hand were badly burned but otherwise the body was not injured, which goes to confirm the opinion that he first attempted to leave the building by the ladder leading from the loft but was forced back by the fury of the flames.

The death the same year of another well-known physician, Dr. John Honsburger led to a detailed accounting of his passing after a heart failure. So esteemed was he that fraternal organizations, the medical professionals and community formed a parade to pay tribute to the man for his funeral.

On the morning referred to, he left his residence on Sunnidale Street about 8 o'clock to go down to his

*drugstore, little thinking that the unmeasurable gulf
of eternity yawned at his feet.*

There appears to be no literary attribution to this eight-word euphemism “unmeasured gulf of eternity yawned at his feet” so it may be possible that this is an original, the work of some effusive wordsmith at the Collingwood Bulletin.

Another Honsberger, Frank, lost his life at 17 years of age in a shooting accident near Banda. Details of his death were reported to the readers of the Collingwood Bulletin as a cautionary tale.

This Honsberger and a “young Englishman”, William Clasper were target shooting.

*It is not known exactly how the accident occurred as
the Englishman is too much overcome to give a
clear account of it. But it is presumed that Frank,
who was acting as marker, accidentally stepped in
front of the target...*

Poetic license was not left just to the leading citizens. The passing of Maud Summerfeldt in 1897 is an example of note. Her age is not mentioned but from census data we can conclude that she was 16 or perhaps 17 years of age.

*Death at any time is sad. Infinitely more so is it
when the subject of the grim visitation is cut down
in the very flour of youthful vigor and beauty. At
midnight on Sunday, after one week's illness, full of
terrible pain and suffering, Maud, youngest daughter
of A.H. Summerfeldt and his wife Georgina, sank
peacefully and painlessly into that merciful sleep
which knows no waking. She was a beautiful girl –
The flower of the flock, and as sweet and amiable as
she was lovely. A week or so ago, the heartiest,
healthiest, merriest girl in the town; and she now
lies in her quiet grave. What a sermon!*

*About 9 o'clock in the morning she expressed the
desire to bid goodbye to her family and friends who
were anxiously awaiting the result of the operation.*

*She was too close to the borderland to speak, but
she looked the sad and touching farewells while her
tongue could not utter, and shortly afterwards fell
asleep. After life's fitful fever, she sleeps well.*

It took only a few decades in the growing Community when death notices were not just a source of news but also a source of revenue in local newspapers as families tried to spread the word. And to some extent, despite the rise of new social media channels, this remains the case. The grieving families had to pay by the word and word economy became the order of the day, except for the very rich.

There's little room for poetry in these notices, nevertheless rich lives lived.

From the Stayner Sun, here is an example:

*HEBDEN – At the G & M Hospital, Collingwood,
on Saturday, July 29, 1972, Leonard Hebden in his
71st year. Beloved husband of Lilly (Baulk) Hebden,
and dear brother of Wilber of Hamilton, Harold and
Cecil of Guelph. The funeral was held from Mathers
Funeral Home, Stayner, on Tuesday, August 1st at
2p.m. Interment Stayner Cemetery.*

From the 1980s to the end of the 20th Century, save for the most newsworthy fatalities, newspapers returned to the roots of storytelling to create longer features that might convey a great deal more about the life of an individual. These feature pieces aimed to sum up the lifetime of people to provide a more balanced and complete picture of their work lives and place in the community.

Stayner Sun reporter Michael Gennings, a skilled interviewer and raconteur, compiled a 600 word summation of the life of Lorne Stewart a number of months after his passing in 2014. The regular feature, called “Lives Lived”, focused on the Community impact of featured residents. There are no euphemisms or poetry, just straight storytelling. Lorne Stewart, a former president of the Stayner Heritage Society, was a Collingwood Shipyards worker, and then worked at an auto dealership in Stayner, purchased the Texaco garage and gas station on Main Street, sold cars in Stayner and Collingwood and worked in carpentry. The story is told chronologically from his birth in 1932. And from the piece comes this excerpt:

*...Times were tough for the family in those days.
The Great Depression was relentless. When little*

Lorne was just six years old, the farm was fore-closed. The family eventually settled on a smaller farm near Batteaux...

...On a summer night in June 1952, Lorne's life would change forever. That's when he met his future wife, Helen Evans, walking along Main Street in Stayner. She was 15 and he was 20. The two started chatting and over time began to date...

News items, notices, obituaries, and stories over 150 years have underscored the transience, grief and hardship of life in our small town. Before us all, lies the unmeasurable gulf of eternity.

Acknowledgements: Stayner, the Missing Years, Jerry Prager (Ed.1, 1994); Simcoe County Archives, Stayner Heritage Society collections, Canada Census data.

The contributor, Larry Culham, is a member of the Stayner Heritage Society and a former reporter, editor and managing editor for the Stayner Sun and The Wasaga Sun.

We Remember

A Fond Farewell to Shirlie Millsap

The community was saddened to learn of the death of Shirlie Millsap in August of this year. Shirlie was a founding member of our Heritage Society, with a tenacious personality! She actively took on the role of catering and arranging many of our activities.

Our condolences to her family.

Stayner Heritage Society Membership

Your membership and special donation support is important to making our projects possible as we strive to maintain the heritage of our community. Please renew your membership by returning the enclosed form as soon as possible.

**Please note our address is now
P.O. Box 1595, Stayner, Ontario
L0M 1S0**

*On November 11th
Remember The Men & Women Who Have
Served & Continue To Serve Our
Great Nation*



“In Flanders Fields”

Newsletter Committee

*Barbara Stransky, Myrna Johnson, Tom Scholte,
Larry Culham*