

A Community Newsletter to Connect the
Past, Present and Future

CELEBRATING 103 YEARS

MARCH 1, 1912 TO 2015

SCHUMACHER, ONTARIO

THE BELLS OF ALPHONSUS

A few years ago, Rob Knox, a musician who grew up in Schumacher, wrote and recorded *The Bells of Alphonsus* to capture the spirit of Christmas in Schumacher.

The song is featured in *Christmas in Schumacher*, a video created in partnership with the Schumacher Arts Culture & Heritage Association. The video can be viewed online at: <http://spiritofschumacher.ca/historical-photo-video/>.

The video will surely get you in a festive mood and eager to celebrate 100 years of Mr. Schumacher's gift-giving legacy on December 15, 2015.

What a time of year to be thankful for such things:
A tree to trim, and the good will He shall bring;
A family meal, a fire, and the carols we will sing;
The crowded church, and the message of a King.

Think back to those classroom days, sitting in a row,
Receiving toys from firemen, well, how were we to know
Of the good deeds done by men like him around the world?
A thought on every Christmas Eve, for every boy and girl.

Mr. Schumacher, is my name upon your list,
One of the children to receive your special gift?
Tonight I'll walk the streets like when I was just a boy,
Feel the snow upon my face, and hear the bells of joy:
The Bells of Alphonsus.

The warmth of homes to share,
The charity of souls,
Benevolence laid bare,
For everyone to know.

HAPPY Holidays!

Please join us for a holiday meal to celebrate our community and the 100th time gifts are given to the children of Schumacher by the Mr. F.W. Schumacher Foundation.

Tuesday, December 15, 2015 ~ Meal Starts at 5:30pm

The McIntyre Arena Ballroom (upstairs from the Coffee Shop)
85 McIntyre Road, Schumacher, ON

This is a free meal offered to the first 300 people who register.

Registration can be done by visiting the following link before December 8th, 2015

<https://schumacherfd.wufoo.com/forms/mrschumacher/>



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A LEGACY IN MUSIC

People from far and wide know about Schumacher's many hockey heroes; from Frank Mahovolich to Eric Vail, the list goes on and on. What many people may not know, however, is that a wealth of musical talent (including singers, songwriters, guitarists, drummers, pianists, accordionists, trumpeters, and even tamburitzaists) also has Schumacher roots!

Many aspects of life in Schumacher have influenced the community's musicians. Exposure to the music of various cultural groups likely plays a part. At one time, the church choirs at St. Alphonsus and Trinity United may have been an inspiration. Through at least the 1990s, the vocal and instrumental music programs at Schumacher Public School may have sparked an interest. As you will soon discover, living on Fourth Avenue also seems to have a distinct connection! Whatever the reason, Schumacher has quite a musical legacy.

Don and Dave Carroll, better known as the Sons Of Maxwell, grew up on Fourth Avenue in Schumacher. Before heading out East after university, they got their start playing at Casey's Bar & Grill on the Schumacher Highway. They have been nominated for five East Coast Music awards and took home awards in 2002 and 2006. Their annual Timmins Christmas concerts, which will come to an end in 2015, sell out each year.

Mark "Myshko" MacGregor, another Fourth Avenue resident, was the musical director for Costa Cruise Lines International at one time. He performed with the Harry James Orchestra, Vic Damone and Diahann Carroll.

Jason Sadites, another Fourth Avenue native, is a well known guitar teacher and solo recording artist. He has recorded music with Peter Gabriel and other world class musicians. He has also lent his talent to provide accompaniment in a number of O'Gorman High School musical productions.



A group of Croatians (from left to right: Nick Krcel, Joe Stimac, Chuck Krcel, and an unknown man) provide tamburitza entertainment at the picnic grounds near "Candy Mountain" in the 1940s. (Photo courtesy of Gloria (Stimac) Zagrodnik.)



The "Croatian Beatles" (left to right): Bronco Vicevic, George Maletich, Frank Sebalj, and Frank Vicevic entertain at the picnic grounds in the 1960s. (Photo courtesy of Mark Chenier.)



Soul Doctor featuring Rob Knox and Mark Chenier in 1994. (Photo courtesy of Mark Chenier.)





The band Fourth Avenue performing live at Fionn MacCools in 2003. (Photo courtesy of Mark Chenier.)



Jason Sadites rehearses for O'Gorman High School's production of Jesus Christ Superstar in 2013. Providing musical accompaniment for the local high school is just one of the many musical endeavours of the well-known guitarist. (Photo by Lisa Romanowski.)



Elmer Thudd circa 1984 (from top): Mark Chenier, Kevin McMahon, Darrell Pitt, and Mike Chabot were a fixture at the Peal Lake Hotel. (Photo courtesy of Mark Chenier.)

James "Jimmy" Reid, a guitarist, has toured with many famous Canadian bands including Soul Decision, Ellen Reid (Crash Test Dummies), Amanda Marshall, Thine Eyes Bleed and the Matthew Good Band.

Schumacher music is synonymous with the Sebalj family. Frank (bass) and Dennis (trumpet) performed for many years with Henry Kelneck and George Nikoruk orchestras. With Paul (on drums, guitar, and keyboard), they performed with Grammy winner Walter Ostanek, the Polka King. Paul's talent as a musician was evident at a very young age. (A certain SOS editor fondly recalls four-year old Paul expertly leading his Junior Kindergarten class in a sing-along one day when she was supply teaching.)

SACHA's own Rob Knox has recorded three original CD's with his band Compass Rose. Rob's song writing talent is featured on page one.

Mark Chenier and Norm Thibeault's band "Fourth Avenue" played at numerous weddings, dances, and parties throughout the Timmins area. Mark was also a partner in the bands Elmer Thudd, Soul Doctor, and the Voltage Brothers.

Gord Cameron, yet another Fourth Avenue resident, is an avid member of the Timmins Symphony Orchestra and the All Star Big Band.

For the record, there are some successful Schumacher musicians that didn't live on Fourth Avenue. Ray Kopko who grew up on Fifth Avenue (now Templeton) currently lives in Toronto. He's a guitarist and guitar teacher who at one time travelled the world to appraise guitars for Tony Melman. (Tony's guitar collection was appraised at \$1,000,000!)

Gil Boissenault, who grew up on Second Avenue (now Dwyer) played in many notable local Timmins bands (Paragon, Kashmir, Outriders) during the 70s and 80s. He is currently the bass player for a local band, The Shaftmen.

An article on Schumacher music would be incomplete without mentioning Randy Delguidice (infamous for his flaming drumstick solos during performances with local bands in the 70s), Jerry Cameron (a drummer who later became a successful booking agent in Toronto), Leslie Ann Dupuis of JJ's Ranch, and Boyd's Confectionery owners Pat and Hubert Boyd who entertained locally for many years.

(Written with information provided by Mark Chenier.)





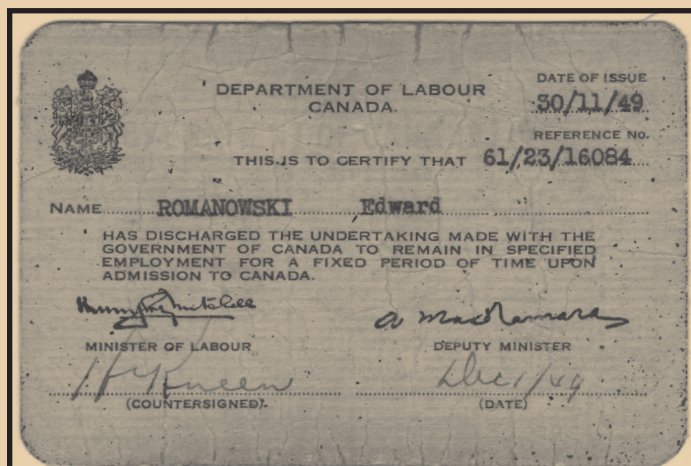
READER SUBMISSION

THE REAL GOLD IN THE MINE

During World War II, the Nazis abducted huge numbers of foreigners to be used as forced labourers in Germany. Two-thirds of these people came from Eastern Europe. When the war ended, the forced labourers were all freed, but many could no longer return to their native lands. Large numbers of these "displaced persons" were temporarily housed in refugee camps. In 1948, a group of Polish men from one of these camps was sponsored by the McIntyre Mine; the men would immigrate to Canada and work in the gold mine in Schumacher, Ontario.

The journey from Germany had its awkward moments for these men who were emerging from the deprivation and suffering caused by the war. One such moment is illustrated by a story shared by our father. During the crossing of the Atlantic, some of the men learned that oranges were being sold on the ship. They went in search of the fruit and, when they found it, the oranges looked so beautiful and luscious that they decided they just had to have some. But they had no money. So one of the men, who had a spare pair of shoes, agreed to sell them. Soon, the men were greedily wolfing down the fruit. Unfortunately, their stomachs were not able to digest such rich food after the long years of malnutrition. The partially digested oranges were soon being surrendered to the ocean.

Upon arriving in Northern Ontario, a number of the men jointly rented two apartments in a complex at 8 Lakeshore Drive, Schumacher. Their first priority was to work and save sufficient money to bring their wives and children from the camp in Germany. All the men were employed underground in the mine. Fortunately two men who were fluent in both English and Polish; Father Francis Sowinski, the local parish priest; and a foreman from the mine, Mr. Cybulski, were able to assist them in those first trying months.



In 1948 the McIntyre Mine sponsored a group of Polish men recently freed from forced labour camps in Germany. The men were guaranteed employment in the mine and so would be permitted entry upon their immigration to Canada. Each man was issued paperwork from the Department of Labour acknowledging that employment had been secured. (Photo provided by Lisa Romanowski.)



When they arrived in Schumacher, some of the men decided to live together in the hope of saving enough money to send for their families as soon as possible. These men are pictured outside their first Canadian home on Lakeshore Drive in Schumacher. From left to right: (front row) Unknown, Joe Szewczyk, (middle row) Tadeusz (Ted) Stawarek, Marian Marcinkiewicz, Mr. Szewczyk, Mr. Baran, Unknown, (back row) Edward (Ed) Romanowski, Unknown, Aleksander (Alek) Skarzynski. (Photo courtesy of George Skarzynski.)





Some (possibly all) of the Polish miners and their families, including the Skarzynskis and Romanowskis, stayed in the Altenstadt refugee camp in Germany before making their way to Canada. (Photo courtesy of George Skarzynski.)



The wives and children of the Polish miners eventually made their way from the German refugee camp across the Atlantic to Canada aboard the Cunard White Line steamship Samaria. (Scan of a postcard courtesy of George Skarzynski.)



Celebrating 25 years of service at the McIntyre Mine in 1973 (from left to right) Joe Szewczyk, Aleksander Skarzynski, Dysma Klymczak, Marian Marcinkiewicz, and Edward Romanowski. (Photo courtesy of George Skarzynski.)

Coming from the Polish culture, the men were not particularly familiar with the intricacies of housekeeping. While they didn't seem funny at the time, the men shared numerous amusing incidents once they were reunited with their wives. One such incident occurred when the men decided to boil up some rice for dinner. "How much to put in the pot?", they wondered. Given that there were many men to cook for, they reasoned that they surely couldn't go wrong by using the entire package. To their dismay, soon rice was gushing out of the top of the pot. Outside went the pot, and the menu was quickly changed to potatoes. Even they could figure out that a few per man was safe and reasonable. Happily, their wives and children were able to leave Germany for Canada the following year. The relieved and joyful miners hurried to find separate homes for their families.

Over time, the families moved into better homes. In a number of cases, men found employment in other communities and moved from the Schumacher area. Most, however, stayed and continued to work in the mine. Our family is one that stayed in Schumacher and our father, Aleksander Skarzynski, celebrated his twenty-fifth anniversary with the McIntyre Mine in 1973. At that time, he was presented with an engraved commemorative watch; a keepsake he always treasured. Our father's watch came to his son George after his death, and will next go to George's own son, Alexander. Like the other men who arrived with Aleksander to work in the McIntyre Mine, our father survived many horrors during the Second World War, as did their wives. These men and women represent a generation of strong, brave, and resolute people who have added much to the Canadian story.

George and Barbara Skarzynski,
SOS Contributors

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EDITORIAL & SACHA INFORMATION

Growing up, neither my paternal nor my maternal grandparents talked much about the circumstances that brought them Canada. I knew only that they had come here in search of a better life and that they loved this country. Eventually, I learned that my paternal grandparents had spent time in German work camps and that my dad was the only one of four children born in Canada. Even then, details were few and far between. I am grateful that George and Barbara Skarzynski chose to share their father's story with the SOS community. Their article filled in pieces of my own family history; my Grandpa Romanowski was one of those Polish miners and a good friend of Aleksander.

Schumacher was built from the contributions of various ethnic groups (Croatian, Polish, Italian and Finnish to name a few). I would like to think that our diverse backgrounds have helped to shape and inspire the many talented artists with connections to our community. To that end, if you can help identify any of the unknown photo subjects in this issue, please contact me!

Best Wishes and Merry Christmas to all!

Until next time,
Lisa Romanowski,
SOS Editor

Great Christmas Present!



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CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Readers are invited to submit articles and photos for publication consideration. Items should celebrate Schumacher's past, present, or future. Please include the creator's full name and the full names of photo subjects.

SOS NEWSLETTER

The not-for-profit Schumacher Arts, Culture & Heritage Association publishes the SOS newsletter quarterly in February, May, August, and November.

The print edition is distributed freely to all Schumacher post boxes.

To receive a free PDF versions, email: subscribe@spiritofschumacher.ca

Interested in volunteering with SACHA?

Contact Lloyd Salomone
info@spiritofschumacher.ca

We'll work with you to find a role that suits your skills and interests.

Best wishes to former SACHA Board members Chris Hubbs & Kylie Laughren as they venture west to Calgary.

ADVERTISING

Businesses can purchase ads for \$25/issue or \$90/year. It is estimated that 5000 people read each edition. Contact us for more information.

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A TASTE OF SCHUMACHER

Turnip Casserole

Contributed by Lisa Romanowski

I brought this recipe home from Nipissing University in 1996. It received my Babi's seal of approval and has become a turkey dinner staple.

Step 1: Clean and cube one medium yellow turnip.

Step 2: Boil in a large pot until tender.

Step 3: Mash the turnip with 2 tablespoons butter.
(This should yield about 3 cups.)

Step 4: In a separate bowl, beat 2 eggs

Then add and mix together:

3 teaspoons of flour

1 tablespoon of brown sugar

1 teaspoon of baking powder

¼ teaspoon of salt

¼ teaspoon of pepper

Step 5: Mix egg mixture into mashed turnip.

Step 6: Place mixture into a greased casserole dish.
Sprinkle with crushed crackers and paprika.

Step 7: Bake at 375F for about 30 minutes.

Thanks to Joan (Fox) Halloran for the "SOS Recipe Corner" idea. This feature will continue as long as readers submit their recipes. Please send your recipes by email to schumachergirl@gmail.com or by post to PO Box 13, Schumacher, ON P0N 1G0.



Linda and Rob Knox
Timmins, Ontario



UPCOMING EVENTS

December 11, 2015

Timmins Square Midnight Magic

9:00 PM to 12:00 AM

1500 Riverside Drive, Timmins

December 12, 2015

Timmins Winter Fun Day

1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Timmins Public Library, Timmins Museum & HGS

For more information: 705-360-2623 ext. 8531

December 12, 2015

Spruce Hill Lodge Bake & Yard Sale

1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

200 Bruce Avenue West, South Porcupine

For more information: 705-235-8200

December 15, 2015

100 Years of Mr. Schumacher Gifts

McIntyre Ballroom, 85 McIntyre Rd, Schumacher

See ad on front page for more information.

January 20-24, 2015

NOCA Scotties Tournament of Hearts

McIntyre Curling Club

85 McIntyre Rd, Schumacher

For more information: 705-360-1770

January 30, 2016

Third Annual Timmins Got Talent

6:00 PM – 1:00 AM

Porcupine Dante Club, 162 Cedar South, Timmins

Dinner and Show Ticket \$55

705-465-2068 for more info.



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