

John Paris Bickell lived an extraordinary and purposeful life. Born September 26, 1884 in Molesworth, Ontario to parents Rev. David Bickell and Annie Paris, Jack (as he was known) was the second of four children. Raised in Toronto, Jack attended St. Andrews College and was among the prestigious school's first one hundred graduates.

To the people of Schumacher, J.P. Bickell is as much a part of our history as Sandy McIntyre and Frederick Schumacher. In the hockey world, Mr. Bickell is regarded as a cornerstone of the Toronto Maple Leafs. Although his influence stretched from centre ice at Maple Leaf Gardens to the depths of the McIntyre Mine and beyond, Jack Bickell preferred to operate out of the spotlight.

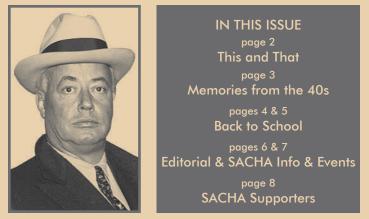
As a result, the incredible contributions of one of Canada's most important industrialists and philanthropists are not widely known. Seeking to set the record straight, authors Jason Wilson, Kevin Shea and Graham MacLachlan (a first cousin of Jack's) collaboratively wrote *J.P. Bickell: The Life, the Leafs, and the Legacy* to present the definitive story of this great man. Read on for some of the highlights.

At age 23, Jack started J.P. Bickell & Co., a brokerage firm. He was a millionaire by age 30, which was no small feat in the early 1900s. He sold his firm in 1919 to concentrate on other interests. He did return to the brokerage industry and by 1926 was a senior partner in the New York firm of Thomson McKinnon. (He left that firm in late 1939 to take on his World War II responsibilities.)

Surprising as it may seem, Mr. Bickell was a key player in the development of the Canadian movie industry. He served as president or vice president of various theatre companies. In fact, Famous Players Canadian Corporation Limited was founded in FALL 2017 Bickell's office in 1920. Jack served as the new corporation's first Vice President. He ultimately sold out his interests in the movie industry in 1930 and focused instead on his mining claims.

Bickell's initial involvement in mining was in Cobalt in the early 1900s. By 1911, he had turned his attention to Schumacher, adding land staked by Sandy McIntyre to nearby ground he himself had obtained. The initial assays were lean, but Bickell kept the faith, and the company afloat, through those tough times. Later, as grades improved, he obtained additional ground. The result was the McIntyre Porcupine Mine Limited, which has earned a place in Canadian mining history as one of our nation's most important mines. Jack became president and, later, chairman of the mine, a position he held until his death on August 22, 1951. Mr. Bickell's work in mining earned him a place in the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame.

Bickell's association with the Toronto Maple Leafs began in 1924 (when they were still the Toronto St. Patricks) and continued until his death in 1951. During that time he served as owner, president, chairman, and director. (Continued on page 2.)





(Continued from page 1.) He helped keep the Leafs in Toronto in 1927 (by purchasing a majority ownership of the team and hiring Conn Smythe as managing director) and financed Maple Leaf Gardens in 1931. Inaugurated in 1953, the J.P. Bickell Memorial Award recognizes outstanding service to the Maple Leafs organization. Recipients include Dave Keon (cousin of Paddy and Fred Dwyer) in 1962 and 1963, Timmins' Allan Stanley in 1966, Cochrane's Tim Horton in 1969, and (most recently) Pat Quinn in 2003. Mr. Bickell was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1978.

In spite of political misgivings, Jack's sense of duty to the nation prevailed during the Second World War. His commitment to the war effort on both sides of the Atlantic was unassailable. He served on the British Airplane Supply Board and even donated both of his Grumman Goose aircraft to the RCAF. As one of the "4 Busy B's", Jack headed up wartime industry and special projects. In 1942, Bickell returned from overseas to become the president and chairman of Victory Aircraft. He was tasked with increasing the Avro Lancaster bomber production rate; an effort credited for ultimately influencing the outcome of the war. During his life, J.P. Bickell gave generously. In 1938, he spearheaded the construction of the McIntyre Community Building. In 1939, he loaned Roy Thomson funds to rebuild after a fire in Timmins. In 1945, he provided the loan Jack Kent Cooke needed to buy Toronto radio station CKEY. In 1949, he provided \$5000 to permanently secure the land on Chapman Lake that, to this day, houses Camp Bickell (a non-profit summer camp).

Upon his death, John Paris Bickell willed \$13 million of his \$14.6 million estate to the creation of the J.P. Bickell Foundation. The Foundation donates half of its interest income each year to: Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children (50%); medical research bursaries (10%); mining scholarships (5%); and general charities in Ontario (35%). The Foundation contributed \$160 million to charity from 1953 to 2017. Mr. Bickell also bequeathed a multi-million dollar collection of original art and artifacts to the Art Gallery of Ontario (of which he was a founder).

To learn more about the remarkable accomplishments of this great Canadian who helped shape our community, be sure to pick up a copy of *J.P. Bickell: The Life, the Leafs, and the Legacy*. It's available now from Dundurn Press.



# THIS AND THAT

Stop by the Great Book Box on Laham's Hill. This Porcupine Book Club initiative is supported by the Timmins Public Library and was made possible through the efforts of TH&VS, the Porcupine Art Club, the Timmins Native Friendship Centre, Feldman Timber, Timmins Building Supply, Home Depot and the City of Timmins. Unique book boxes can also be found at Pinecrest Public School, Gillies Lake, and Bannerman Park.





2017 Timmins Sports Heritage Hall of Fame Inductees Spike Pintar, Jeff Brown, and Alan "Red" MacDonald display their awards on June 10th. (Photo courtesy of Paulina Pintar.)



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# EADER SUBMISSION



My Schumacher memories were recently stirred by an artist friend, Donna Spears Lauzon, who currently lives in Timmins. I researched my hometown online and came across an article about how Schumacher came into being as a gold mining area. That got me thinking about my dad, Bill Sutton, who worked as a heavy duty vehicle mechanic at the McIntyre Mine.

During winter holidays, Dad would drop me off at the lake beside the mine and I would play hockey with a bunch of other young boys, including Frank Mahovlich. We used to chop holes in the ice, then use a bucket to flood the surface so the frozen lake was nice and smooth. Of all those boys, Frank has remained fresh in my memories, as he became a famous hockey player and the first million dollar contract in the NHL.

My family lived on Third Avenue in a rental home owned by the Kwach (phonetic) family, next door to Setacci's Italian grocery store and, if I recall, about a block away from a family named Toddhunter. Winters back in those days were, to my way of thinking, quite normal. The roads were hard packed with snowbanks 8 to 10 feet high. I remember walking to school bundled up in Long Johns, breaches, a woolen shirt, a sweater, a parka, a toque, woolen gloves inside a pair of leather mittens, and felt pack shoes inside galoshes. The cold didn't bother me then; however, I shudder as I reflect on those bitter mornings of -50F below.

Speaking about school, I recall the janitor setting up wooden boards around an area of the yard and flooding the dirt to make a skating surface for us young people. Another great memory is of receiving Christmas gifts from Mr. Schumacher. We used to get a choice of several items, and I recall selecting a small wooden sleigh at least two years in a row. Another young boy and I used our sleighs as bobsleds on the icy roads.

Schumacher had the best arena north of Toronto. I remember my dad taking my older brother Don FALL 2017 and me there to watch wrestling matches and hockey games. During one game, when I was 9 or 10, a frozen puck flew into the bleachers and knocked me out cold. Most details of that incident have long faded into clouded memories.

I recall walking to the movie theatre in Timmins with Don on Saturday mornings. We watched cowboy movies and the newsreels for a dime! As I recall, Timmins had the only swimming pool. Some of us young guys also used to swim at a gravel pit. On the topic of water, I recall watching huge fish (sturgeon perhaps) from a bridge over part of Nighthawk Lake or River. They looked like logs, and seemed to be at least 8 feet long.

Summer meant spending time at a cabin on Watabeag Lake during my dad's holidays. The cabins were rustic; no running water, no electricity, no bathroom (just an outhouse), a pump in the kitchen that had to be primed with lake water, and a Coleman lantern for light at night. I have so many memories from there: canoeing and making root beer to name a few. We would dedicate one whole day to fishing and picking berries for my mom to can. I recall the heads and tails of the large Northern Pike would flop off the table and the wild blueberries were huge and juicy with a great taste.

In 1950, when I was 12 years old, we moved to Stayner, which is located about 90 miles north of Toronto. Dad had been offered a position as the head mechanic at a GM dealership there. I often wonder how life would have turned out, had we stayed in Schumacher. I doubt that I would have become a police officer with both the RCMP and Vancouver Police Department or that, later in life, I would have become a commercial flower grower. Today I spend my time as an artist and enjoy life with my thoughts of yesteryear, away from the cold and snow, living in California.

> Robert Sutton, SOS Contributor



# EATURE ARTICLE

# **BACK TO SCHOOL**

Schumacher Public School will mark a significant milestone during the 2017-2018 school year: the start of its one hundredth year as an institute of learning! Construction on the familiar building located between Third (now Croatia) and Fourth Avenues began in 1917, but the history surrounding the actual start of classes at SPS is a little bit murky. Based on old newspaper articles, it appears that the new school was ready to accept students in the fall of 1918. The opening was apparently delayed, however, due to the Spanish Flu Epidemic. Some schools, including Schumacher Public, became temporary hospitals during the outbreak. All schools were closed to help prevent the spread of the disease and most did not reopen until the new year. (When this issue went to print, plans to commemorate the centennial were in preliminary stages at the school level. Stay tuned!)

Since this edition happens to coincide with Back to School across North America, we've gathered some photos and artifacts featuring some of our SACHA supporters and SOS readers during their time at Schumacher Public School and Schumacher High School. Hopefully they inspire fond memories and nostalgic trips down memory lane. If they happen to spark a special memory or story that you would like to share with the Spirit of Schumacher community, please contact us!





The 1947-48 SPS third graders enjoy a warm June day in



#### Schumacher High School Staff Members 1934-1968 1958 - 1962

Ackerman, Miss M. Ackert, Miss S. M. Allmond, Miss B. Argue, Mr. D. Armstrong, Miss Z. J. Barnby, Mr. J. S. 1948 - 1951 1952 - 1968 Barrette, Mrs. G. Barron, Miss P. A. Bevage, Mrs. M. Blair, Miss J. Blake, Mr. W. S. Boa, Miss M. J. Bocconelli, Miss M. P. Bowes, Miss M. Brown, Mr. G. H. Cain, Mrs. A. Caldbick, Miss N. Clarke, Miss P. F. Doucet, Mr. A.P. 1954 - 1955 1964 - 1965 Dougal, Miss J. Doyle, Miss E. A. Foulis, Miss F. Furse, Mrs. H. Gabriel, Mrs. E. Gazzola, Mr. P. A. George, Miss M. A. Gervais, Mr. W Gilmour, Miss M. A. Gray, Mr. R. Green, Mrs. R. Hinchliffe, Miss W. Hingst, Miss P. M. Johnson, Miss A. Jury, Mrs. E. Kincaid, Mr. D. W. Lacey, Mr. M. E. La Forest, Miss A. M. Laidlaw, Miss J. Latulippe, Mr. L. J. Lillie, Mr. J. M. Lloyd, Miss M. I. Lorimer, Miss E. A. MacDonald, Mr. D. Malnerich, J. P. Mazzuca, Mr. E. F. Mitchell, Mrs. H. Moffat, Miss M. I.

1947 - 1951 Mogan, Mrs. E. A. 1954 - 1955 Murphy, Mr. G. Murray, Mr. T. P. Nilsen, Mr. K. 1957 - 1958 1938 - 1945 1952 - 1953 O'Grady, Mrs. I Orlando, Mr. E.  $1965 \cdot 1966$ Peavoy, Mr. R. W. 1954 - 1956 Perger, Mrs. J. 1953 - 1954 Petersen, Mr. E. 1939 - 1943 Pickering, Mr. J. B.  $1934\cdot1942$ Prystayko, Mrs. Irene 1951 - 1952 Ramsell, Mrs. W. 1956 - 1957Reid Mrs. N. 1957 - 1958 Rintoul, Mrs. C. P. 1935 - 1937 Robinson, Mr. R. 1964 - 1965 Rodway, Mr. E.C. 1942-1943 1945 - 1951 Rodway, Mrs. E. C. Rose, Mrs. J. L. 1953 - 19541947 - 1949 Routliffe, Miss D. Roy, Mr. F. D. Scott, Mr. R. H.  $1950 \cdot 1951$ 1944 - 1947 Scully, Miss E. M. 1942 - 1943 Shepherd, Miss L. B. 1948 - 1953 1943 - 1946 Shouldice, Mr. G. M. Sparks, Mr. W. B. Stafford, Miss P. 1959 - 1966 1958 - 1959 1963 - 1966 Taylor, Miss N. 1952 - 1954 Teal, Mr. J. M. Theodore, Mr. C. R. Thiboult, Mr. J. C. 1966 - 19681961 - 1965 1959 - 1964 Thompson, Mr. G. B. 1956 - 1957 Toye, Miss B. A. J. Unger, Miss M. Vlastic, Miss E. 1938 - 1942 1959 - 1966 Waddell, Miss B. 1955 - 1957 Washer, Mr. T. 1955 - 1960 Wildwood, Mrs. M. M. 1934 - 19391945 - 1947 Wochesen, Miss P. A. 1958 - 1968 Woods, Mr. F.  $1950 \cdot 1955$ Wright, Mr. G. A. Young, Miss R. I. 1942 - 1943 1943 - 1944 1962 - 1963 PRINCIPALS 1966 - 1968 Blake, Mr. W. S. 1953 - 1960 Argue, Mr. D. Rodway, Mr. E. C. 1961 1965  $1947 \cdot 1943$ Sparks, Mr. W. B.

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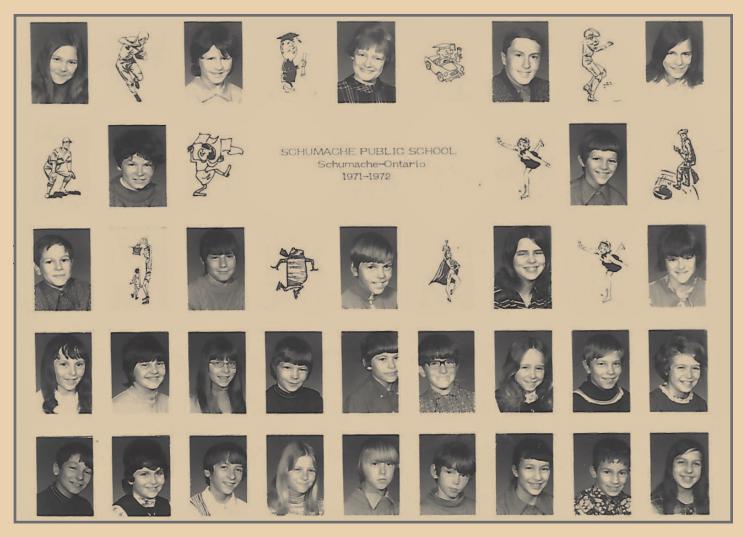
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Left to right: Brian Wherry, Pat Doran, Brian Stoddart, Shirley Mullen, Ken Lessard, Betty Ann Christianson, John Rauh, Elaine (or Eileen) Skwarok, and Ron Gasparetto OPPOSITE PAGE: Top Right: Schumacher Public School post card from the late 1930s courtesy of Bill Wallace. Bottom Right: Schumacher High School Staff from its opening in 1934 through its closure in 1968. (Reproduced from the 1968 SHS Reunion program courtesy of Vera (Pupich) Romanowski.)

THIS PAGE: Top: 1971-72 SPS Grade 5/6 class composite courtesy of Rob Knox. Top Row: Shelley Millions, Wendy Costello, Miss Helen MacFarlane, Rick Uren, Laura Langois. 2nd Row: Gerry Dundas, Paul Kotab. 3rd Row: Graham Reid, Tim Gagain, Rob Knox, Lori Videto, Bonnie Spence. 4th Row: Patricia Hicks, Kelly Butler, Kim McLaughlin, Berny Stansa, Lloyd Salomone, John Delost, Pam Rogers, Esa Saarela, Terrol McFarlane. 5th Row: Duilio DePaul, Kathy Vukobratic, Malcolm Sheldon, Debbie Perry, Larry Hazelwood, Paul White, Cathy-Anne O'Leary, John Gvozdanovic, Mira Pintar. Left: A Schumacher High School Student Council from the 1950s courtesy of Gloria (Stimac) Zagrodnik.





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September has brought cooler weather, plenty of crabapples on our neighbour's tree, and a return to school routines. I hope the Back to School feature brought back fond memories of your own school days. I'll be sure to keep readers informed of any Schumacher Public School centennial celebrations.

For those who live locally (and for those who may be planning a visit home), the fall season offers a multitude of activities to enjoy. Be sure to check out the official book launch of J.P. Bickell: The Life, the Leafs, and the Legacy at the Timmins Museum on September 29th. Make plans to attend one or more of the Cultural Days events on September 30th and October 1st. And be sure to join us for the 2nd Annual Schumacher Social on November 3rd.

Until next time, Lisa Romanowski, SOS Editor



Ben, Joseph and Jacob Dunkely harvest the crabapples hanging over the fence into Mimi and Grampa Romanowski's backyard. The crop was plentiful this year! (Photo by Lisa Romanowski.)

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> General SACHA Inquiries: info@spiritofschumacher.ca

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## **SOS NEWSLETTER**

The not-for-profit Schumacher Arts, Culture & Heritage Association publishes the SOS newsletter quarterly in Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter.

The print edition is distributed to all Schumacher post boxes. For PDF versions email: info@spiritofschumacher.ca

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.



### Friday, November 3rd 8:00 PM - Midnight Croatian Hall

Door Prizes 50/50 Draw Cash Bar

\$10.00 Cover (Age of Majority Required)

Live Entertainment by

The Darlings featuring Lee Hannigan, Paul Sebalj, Joe Polowy Kevin Irvine, Brian Jones, Cameron Grant Jason Dagg and Rob Knox

Advance Tickets Available From Tim Hortons (across from Bon Air Motel) BMO (Kathy Vukobratic) SACHA (Rob Knox, Brian Conley, Vera Romanowski)

Tickets also available at the door.

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