

# Innisfil Notes



Innisfil Historical Society

P.O. Box 7176, Innisfil, ON L9S 1A9

[www.innisfilhistorical.ca](http://www.innisfilhistorical.ca)

*Meeting Place:* Knock School Heritage Site  
#7756 10 Sideroad at 9<sup>th</sup> Line, Innisfil



**Next Meeting:  
"On The Buses"  
June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

If you are just now deciding to come along, there were a couple of tickets left at time of printing this letter. Call Merv at 705-436-2578!!  
Time of departure: 9 a.m.

**June Highlights:**

**Father's Day – June 18th**

Sonora Louise Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington, is considered the first to have advocated a day for honoring fathers. Her own father, William Smart, was a Civil War veteran whose wife died in childbirth, and he successfully brought up his daughter and five sons on the family farm. In 1909 she proposed the holiday to her minister, and it became an official holiday in many countries.  
To all fathers a happy day with their family.

**D-DAY NORMANDY– June 6th**

In 1944, at dawn, five separate groups landed between ST.Marcouf and the River Orne: at 'Utah', 'Omaha', 'Gold', 'Juno' and 'Sword', a series of Allied landings on the beaches of Normandy, France, in World War II.

Other upcoming events and more news  
**JUST BECAUSE GIFTS,**  
21 Queen Street, Cookstown  
In the town of INNISFIL  
has offered to sell our books. We are happy to report that Lynn Dollin will provide space for the

INNISFIL Historical Society by approximately mid June 2011.  
We thank you, Lynn.

*INNISFIL WELCOMES YOU*

**SUMMER FEST**  
Week-end beginning  
June 10th to 12th  
INNISFIL Beach Park

Days of midway rides, games, craft shows, fireworks, and a whole lot of family fun!

**FAMILY FUN DAY**  
At Innisfil Recreation Centre  
Saturday June 25<sup>th</sup>/11  
An outdoor event of an old-fashioned get together for families and friends, and to meet with neighbours. Hot dogs, popcorn and lemonade will be provided by the Mayor. There will be no vendors – no entry fee. In case of rain, provisions have been made. It is proposed that this will become an annual community-family oriented event.  
The INNISFIL HISTORICAL SOCIETY will be present this day, displaying our books and other material .

And this from the Mayor's Office:  
Effective July 1, 2011  
Mr. SCOTT GRIFFITH, FIRE CHIEF, has elected to retire. The Chief has been with the Town full-time for over 24 years. He joined the INNISFIL Fire and Rescue Service on April 17, 1977 at our Stroud Station as a Volunteer Firefighter. As of September 30, 1987 he was full-time Firefighter, and through dedication and hard work became Captain/Training Officer July 1994. He was selected for the role of Fire Chief in February 2000.

**Chief Griffith was instrumental in developing the Town's Fire and Rescue Service.**

**The Chief's accomplishments include:**

- **the Fire Fleet replacement to more progressive & modern standards**
- **the development of Station 3 in Stroud, including negotiations with the County to include 24 hr Ambulance Service to INNISFIL residents**
- **providing growth and leadership to our dedicated full-time Fire Service, incl. the Deputy Chief, Fire Fighters and Fire Prevention Officers.**
- **Responsible for recruitment and development of our valuable Volunteer Fire Fighters.**

**The celebration for Chief Griffith's retirement will be announced in due course.**

**The members of the INNISFIL HISTORICAL SOCIETY express their best wishes for his retirement. Now is the time to pursue all your hobbies!**

**GEORGIAN STEAM SHOW  
July 29 – August 1, 2011  
Cookstown**

*LAKE SIMCOE DAY*  
**August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011  
Innisfil Beach Park  
To celebrate the ecology and history of the Lake Simcoe.**

**May we remind you of the BETHESDA SCHOOL REUNION September 17<sup>th</sup>/11 in Ivy at 5p.m. with dinner. Bring along your photos and memories. Register with Ernie at 705-424-5854.**

**If you want to spend a day on the shores of Lake Ontario:**

**ONTARIO PLACE is offering free admission. They opened in May, with a renovated Cinespere, new water slides, featuring late night events, new restaurant and pub – a place to enjoy a summer day or evening.**

**I remember watching water-skiing in conjunction with the CNE, and then an evening in the Forum, listening to Count Basie and his band! (1980's?)**

**CHECK THIS OUT!  
(from Donna Wice )**

**Our website:**

**[www.inisfilhistorical.ca](http://www.inisfilhistorical.ca)**

**has allowed our document centre photos and information to be spread world-wide. A recent e-mail inquiry reminded me of how far INNISFIL HISTORICAL has advanced in the world of technology. Ms. Clare from County Wexford, Ireland contacted us through the info@innisfilhistorical email address, searching for any details we had about MATHEW COOPER. Both our Historical Reviews and our photo collection allowed her access to much of the missing information required. A thank you note from Clare was received.**

*CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR  
ANNIVERSARY*  
**SIXTY YEARS OF MARRIAGE**

**Society members Bill and Doris Gibbons are celebrating 60 years together this June.**

**They met at a Young Peoples event at St. James United Church in Stroud and it was here they got married on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1951.**

**Doris was born and raised on an 11<sup>th</sup> Concession farm, east of Highway 11. Bill was born in**

Assiniboine, Saskatchewan. He came east with his parents in 1945. Doris and Bill together farmed in three locations in INNISFIL. Firstly on a Painswick site (now the Terrace Seniors Apartments), then onto an 11th Line and 20<sup>th</sup> Sideroad farm; next, unto a 4<sup>th</sup> Line farm, which they sold in 1985. They then moved to a home in Stroud; and more recently, to an apartment in Barrie.

What is their secret to a long and happy union?

-Doris is known to have been Bill's 'right-hand man' during the farming days, working beside him in the fields and with their dairy herd.

-Bill was very involved in local politics, serving as Councilor, Deputy-Reeve, Reeve of INNISFIL, and Warden of Simcoe County.

In the early days, they admit, there was a lot of 'give and take' when money was scarce. But together, they made it through. The INNISFIL HISTORICAL SOCIETY wishes Doris and Bill many more years of health and happiness. This is indeed a cause to celebrate!

On April 30<sup>th</sup>/11, Hank Abspoel and I attended *JUNK AND JEWELS* at the Grange in Lefroy. We had several of our books on display, and sold a few. There were a lot of familiar faces – many stopped to chat. People came, holding their treasures, bundled in towels, boxes and even in suitcases! Such was the case with a couple who opened their two large suitcases beside our table, then proceeded to buy a handful of tickets at \$5.- per item, to be appraised. Everything out of mother-in-laws house, into which they had recently moved. And they were happy with each result –

cuddling a very large Ginger Jar, holding three history books- one about Hiawatha, the dishes, the old clock, etc. Another person brought a mechanical toy bank with slight imperfections, in working condition – perhaps the highest priced item of the day. And the young lad with his collection of photos of Hockey players, neatly glued within a notebook, a page for each of our teams! But not everybody was happy with the result.

My family was fascinated by a collection of 'Whatzits' displayed by David Chambers, trying to guess the names of old tools and kitchen gadgets.

JUNK AND JEWELS had such a good turn-out. People came in at the last minute! There must be a repeat of this event!

Hank and I were also presented with a treasure for our Document Centre at this event. Barry Toal of Deb's Automotive Equipment Repair Ltd., was beaming when he handed us four photos of 1350 Killarney Beach Road, Lefroy, saying " I think, you will like this....". The photos came with a handwritten note, dated 17-17-06, signed by S.....Thomson. They were taken between 1920 and 1938, with a different group of people in front of the home. Mr. Toal then also said that he has the stone with the house number in the car – would we be interested. All that was our treasure, which we could take back to our Society. In the future, we shall find a suitable place to display the stone marker, and perhaps, even identify some of the persons within the pictures. And we will let Mr. Toal know about the outcome. In the meantime, Hank did a little research and found Albert Kirkpatrick, a store-keeper to be

the original owner, who donated land for the Lloyd George Park. At this point, we would like to thank Mr. Toal for parting with these items for our Document Centre. He is the present owner of 1350 Killarney Beach Road.

With the Maple Syrup Festivals behind us, we salute Spring with wild leeks and fiddleheads.

**PACIFIC SALMON and FIDDLEHEAD  
STIR – FRY**

1-2 lbs fresh Pacific salmon  
3 cloves minced garlic  
1 tsp. minced gingerroot  
Salt and pepper to taste  
2 tbsp vegetable oil  
1 ½ lb fiddleheads  
2 tbsp white wine  
½ cup teriyaki sauce  
1 tsp cornstarch

Cut salmon into bite-size pieces. Toss with garlic, ginger, salt and pepper  
Over high heat, heat oil in a wok or large skillet to smoking point. Add salmon; stir-fry until lightly browned. Add fiddleheads, stir-fry for another minute or two. Add wine and cook until wine reduced to half. Stir in teriyaki. Blend cornstarch in small bowl with 3 tsp of water and add to wok, and stir until thickened

Serve over a bed of wild rice or steamed rice. Serves 4

**A Life Well Lived**

The INNISFIL Historical Society was saddened to hear of the passing of May Reive, (January 13, 1911 – May 16, 2011). Remarkable in so many ways, May and family hosted a grand occasion in January honouring her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. In April, she and her son

Garry and daughter Nancy were unable to be our scheduled speakers as May's health had significantly declined. However, an honorary membership certificate to our Society was quietly delivered and presented to May in her room at Lakeside Retirement. She leaves behind a wonderful legacy of giving and sharing. Sincere sympathy is extended to her family.

And now to the two pictures on the cover of this newsletter – taken in April 1989 – at the initial widening of the Eighth Line, as it was then called. The IGA, seen from the former Drugstore parking lot, also removed. Formerly known as VIC'S MARKET, and thereafter, WILSON'S RED AND WHITE.

We do remember!

The ALCONA BAKERY, formerly known as ROLLING PIN BAKERY at the corner of Eight Line and St.Johns Road. Also, at that time, destined to be removed. And here are Dorian's memories: '---I remember the awesome smell when you walked in and waited to be served.... it was so good, you didn't mind waiting your turn while checking out what was in the counter....hoping the person in front of you didn't say - "I'll take the last six chocolate donuts and the last six Danish"!! ---leaving you with hot-cross buns with those tutti-frutti things in them.'

And these were double Danish, with two different toppings! On the weekends, they brought in bagels from Kensington Market!

I am sure, you have your own memories!

**GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT  
Andrew Cowan**

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Our May meeting featured a presentation on the collection of photographs in our files from local amateur photographer John Thompson, circa 1900. Donna Wice and Ross Wallace, along with Mildred Kellough (the Great Niece of Thompson) provided an interesting overview of this work. (please see accompanying summary by Ross Wallace for more details).

We extend congratulations to Bill and Doris Gibbins as they celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary in June.

Also, our sympathies are extended to the family of May Reive, an honorary member of our Society, who passed away in the 101<sup>st</sup> year, on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

The June meeting will take the form of a mystery bus tour guided by Brian Baker. Tickets for this event are nearly sold out; but call Mervin Wice 436-2578 to be put on the waiting list, in case of any last minute cancellations.

We are still looking for a member of our Society to step forward and volunteer to sit on the Heritage Committee. An interesting post! Enjoy a safe, happy Summer, and join us September 17<sup>th</sup> for our first Fall meeting, when the topic will be 'A Look at History of Schools and Education'.

---following, the introduction to our May presentation:

**JOHN THOMPSON**, born in England in 1854, came to Canada with his parents when he was three, lived on the 4<sup>th</sup> Line of INNISFIL until he was 21 (1875), when he moved with his family to the farm on the 8<sup>th</sup> Line (Lot 19, N 1/2 /Con.7). There he lived much of his adult life. He spent sometime in Western

Canada – we are not sure where that was. Died in 1923 – almost 90 years ago—hardly anyone in INNISIL now who remembers him. When the Census taker came around, as he did every ten years (still does), John Thompson always said he was a farmer – and he was – but he was more than a farmer – a very special kind of farmer.

His obituary in the Barrie Examiner described him as 'quite a genius in his own way, turning his hand cleverly to various things outside regular farm work'.

Though he had no training as a brick layer, he constructed an addition to his house. He was a very successful amateur photographer and had a small gallery for a time. He developed and printed his own photographs. The hobby in which he took the greatest pleasure and of which he made the greatest success, was his peony growing. His peony plot contained hundreds of the choicest varieties. We understand, he cross-bred peonies to develop new varieties. In blooming season, flower lovers came for miles to see his peonies. For the last 17 years of his life – for most of his 50' and 60's, he paid a great deal of attention to the culture of peonies and other varieties of sweet peas, and developed new varieties.

There were apparent reports in the Barrie newspapers about these activities, but we have not been able to locate them. He planted a grove of walnut trees on his farm, some of which are still there.

John Thompson was quite mechanically inclined and had a natural ability for working on motors and machines. He was also a skilled worker with wood. We see some examples of this work within the photos and in the examples here today.

ROSS WALLACE

The following is taken from a Report in The Globe and Mail by A.Reinhart

**CLAUDE STANLEY CHOULES**, the last man standing among the First World War combat veterans, died at age 110, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011, in Australia. Born in Britain, he signed up at age 14, and witnessed history through 41 years of duty for Britain and his adopted Australia. He served on the battleship HMS Revenge, and in the Second World War as chief demolition officer for the Royal Australian Navy.

John Babcock, Canada's last veteran of the same war, died in February 2010.

With the passing of these veterans, we may have lost the opportunity to ask questions about these momentous world events.

Now, this is **HISTORY**;

Now this is something firmly in the past.

Veterans Affairs Canada has the following information – March 2010:

- 87 - average age of the 143,700 Second World War veterans alive
- 78 - average age of 12,000 Korean War veterans
- 54 - average age of all remaining Canadian Forces veterans , of which there are 593,700

Please look at the last page of this letter, or the past three issues, and help us identify our veterans.

Donna Wice and her volunteers have made tremendous progress, and often through your calls and with information provided by our members and readers.

*AFTERNOON TEA at the  
CHIMNEY COPSE*

In the afternoon of May 29<sup>th</sup>, the Steeles were hosting 'Afternoon Tea for Heritage House Owners'. My brother and I were invited; NANTYR SCHOOL being Meinhard's home. The owners of CHERRY CREEK SCHOOL were also there, as well as, many other familiar people. We were able to view some of the rooms, decorated with furniture befitting the period of the home; one room with a beautiful old wall-paper, and many other artifacts and collections. Also befitting the time period, were the tea-cups, and serving dishes used, with pin-wheel sandwiches, and sweets – and wine.

It was a great afternoon, with good conversation, and hearing personal experiences of growing up in *INNISFIL*.

At this point, I would like to thank: Jean Warrington, our previous writer, who took a lot of time to explain the set-up of the news-letter.

Ross Wallace, our historian, for providing more details for some of our speakers to get our members interested in coming. Donna Wice and Margaret Baker for providing some excellent photos for the covers.

Bill Warnica for history on the first settlers.

Dorothy Boyd for her kind words & compliments on the 'print' within the letter.

My family, Norbert, Ron and Dorian for their support.

Thank you!

A beautiful, safe summer to all!

~Anita

