



The Historical Society of St. Boniface & Maryhill Community

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Winter 2018

Editor: Susan Motz

Presidents Report—Winter 2018

By George Isley

As we approach the winter months and another year passing by, it is an opportune time to offer a thank you or two. 2018 was highlighted by some significant events – a wonderful Canada Day celebration – another great Heritage Day in September – and concluding the year with a very good Annual General Meeting, with an excellent speaker and presentation. We were blessed with good weather for all events.

Thanks to all who contributed to the success of these events and to all those who attended. To all Board and committee members and so many volunteers, thank you. Your efforts ensured the success of each meeting and event.

Thank you to the Township of Woolwich, their elected representatives

and our provincial and federal elected members for their presence at events and continued commitment to our community. Finally, thank you to our members – your feedback, comments and suggestions are vital to our success and are sincerely appreciated. As in many organizations, our membership continues to age. It is critical that we recruit youth into our group. Please take the time to sit down and talk to the next generation in your own family and encourage them to explore their heritage.

It may surprise you to know that for the small community of Maryhill, we are one of the more vibrant and stronger Historical Societies in the area and indeed in our province. This can only be possible by your

continued support. I am excited for what 2019 brings for us! We have 3 new board members. Welcome Frank Rider, Susan Motz and Ron Schmuck. With the new members and the returning Board members, I am confident that your Society is in good hands and we shall continue to work in your best interests.

May your Christmas be filled with peace, good cheer, and gratitude for friends, family and the memories of the ones who have gone before us. Take some time to reflect on one or two Christmas Eve or Christmas Day memories.

May 2019 be a healthy and happy year for all!

George

2019 Historical Society Board of Directors

Left to Right: Frank Rider—Vice President, Ron Schmuck, George Isley—President, Susie Motz, Linda Kennedy, Carol Neumann, Frances Vegh—Treasurer, Diane Beitz, Ken Hanson—Secretary, Tom Schell—Past President, Doug Keller
Absent from photo: Diane Strickler, Mary Ann Stroh



We asked our members

As a child—What do you remember about Christmas ?

- My brothers would go out to the forest and cut an evergreen tree and we'd set it up in the parlour and adorn it with homemade popcorn strings, decorations and strands of tinsel icicles
- Christmas was a happy time. My siblings would all come home and we would play the accordion and sing
- The highlight of the school year was the annual Christmas Play in a one-room school house
- There would be a few wrapped gifts under the tree but when my older sisters were working they would see to it that we had a few more gifts. They were very generous.
- One Christmas Santa brought me a Doctor's Set that I had dreamed of. It was from the Eaton's catalogue. I also got some candies and nuts.
- Mom would make a traditional Christmas cake—4 to 6 weeks before Christmas and we would eat it for dessert on Christmas day
- We usually had 2 roosters or a goose for Christmas supper
- I remember one happy Christmas when my brother Clarence came home from the war – he had been away for 3.5 years
- On Christmas morning we would put on our Sunday best and Pop would drive us to mass in the Studebaker.
- We always went to Midnight mass on Christmas Eve at St. Boniface.
- We put our names in a hat at school and purchased gifts for each other with a limit of 50 cents. Then we exchanged gifts at the School Christmas concert.
- We listened to Santa Claus on the radio every day. He would read letters from children and promise to bring us a toy if we were good.
- We used to go with dad to cut our Christmas tree. It was always fun trying to pick the perfect tree. And when we got home we would get hot chocolate while we decorated it. As a point of interest the tree came from a section of wood lot that he owned in the bush off Shantz station road. The section was originally owned by the church and they had to distribute it to parishioners in order to build the "new" church and dad's farm got a lot as did many farms around. The problem is unless your section was along the road, the lot was land locked (as ours was).
- Coming in from doing chores and eating supper doing dishes and excited about Santa coming. We were not allowed into the living room. The door was closed and we didn't dare go in. Going to bed and being woke up to go to Midnight Mass. When we got home went straight to bed because we couldn't wait till the morning to see what Santa had brought. That was the first time that we also saw the Christmas tree.
- Christmas Eve at my parents house. all the siblings would gather there (in later years, after we had families of our own) and my mother always had a feast of her special "pig tails" (with that brown sugar recipe). Then, after gifts were opened, off to Midnight Mass at St Boniface.
- During Advent, our mother kept track of our good deeds and each evening before bedtime, we received a piece of straw to put in Baby Jesus' manger. On Christmas morning, there was a Baby Jesus doll laying in the manger on the bed of straw we had provided.



Article From The Past: Fudge or Candy Molds

By Fran Vegh

Many families in the area made home made candy or fudge—especially at Christmas. These little molds were used to help make the candy look as good as it tasted. Made of heavy cast iron, they would be used to form candy or fudge (most likely maple flavoured) into pretty maple leaves. The one pictured here is a Centennial Souvenir from Quarry Souvenirs of Guelph.



The History of The Village of Bloomingdale

By Susie Motz

The village of Bloomingdale has a history of a prosperous little community, long before 'Strawberry Socials' put the village on the map!

The Schneider Family

In 1806, Jacob (Yoch) Schneider, his wife Mary and 9 children arrived from Franklin County, Pennsylvania in Conestoga wagons and settled on the land near the Grand River. Jacob and his family were the very early settlers in the area, and as such not only had to clear the land, he had to make his own shoes and harnesses. Mary was not only a housekeeper but she had to spin wool, weave cloth, and make her own clothing. At that time, Preston was the nearest settlement, but because of the rough terrain and early roads, it took days to travel there. Jacob and Mary had 16 children, enough to help with all the chores, land clearing and building a cabin. The



Schneider family owned 3000 acres most bordering on the Grand River. The area was referred to as 'Schneider's Corner'. Note that 3rd generation descendants changed the spelling of their surname to Snider or Snyder.



Bloomingdale was a bustling village with sawmills, a woolen factory and a furniture factory. A post office was established in 1861. By 1913, the population shrunk to only 75 with the abandonment of most of the small industries.

The community was named in 1861, likely by a settler from Pennsylvania after Bloomingdale in Luzerne County, PA.

Year	Population
1878	150
1881	200
1890	300
1913	75
2016	230

When reading the advertisement above, found in the "Armstrong & Cos County of Waterloo Gazetteer & Directory for 1878" I have a number of questions:

What are Staves and Heading?

What is a 'Patent Coiled Hoop Factory'? *Hula Hoops? Old fashioned dress hoops?*

What is a Cooper?

After a little research I learned that Bloomingdale Steam Saw Mills made parts for barrel makers.

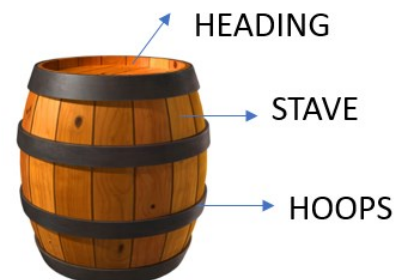
Staves – The curved boards on a barrel

Heading – The boards on the top of a barrel

Patent Coiled Hoops: Thin bands wrapped around a barrel used to hold the wood together.

Hoop Factory – Manufacturers of the above barrel parts

Cooper – An occupation - a barrel maker



Dear Diane:

Why do the births, deaths, and marriages listed in the calendar contain the names of three priests: Rev. H Eitel, Rev Stephen Foerster and Rev. W Becker? Are the archives only from St. Boniface and if so - were there 3 practicing priests there in 1919 or are the records from multiple parishes?

**Dear Readers:**

The Halter House contains transcribed records from St. Boniface starting from 1847. In 1919, there were 2 practicing priests: Father Foerster was the parish priest and Father Eitel was an assistant. In 1919 we see an entry in the records from Father W. Becker. He most likely filled in for the priests while on holidays or illness. Back then, the priests were not as meticulous with their records as they are today. While they were sure to record the facts, they were not always careful to record the correct spelling of many of the German names. The Halter House does not have the original church records - they are locked away securely offsite. Along with them are also the original records from parishes in Elmira, Elora, Salem and Hespeler as they were missions of St. Boniface.

Annual General Meeting Speaker Karen Wagner By Ken Hanson

Karen Wagner, Archivist [karenw@wellington.ca] at Wellington County Museum and Archives was the guest speaker at our 2018 AGM. Karen covered a wide range of ways to discover your family history at the Wellington County archives. Since Maryhill is located near the boundary of Waterloo and Wellington Counties there was much interest in this topic. Many early St Boniface families lived in Guelph, Pilkington or Nichol Townships. Karen suggested you inform the archivist on duty what names you are researching so you will be able to learn about recent and unique sources. Finding sources at an archives is quite different than in a library. One example are the typed transcripts of articles relating to history of Wellington County pioneers which were written by W. F. MacKenzie in 1906 and 1907, and printed in the Guelph Evening Mercury. MacKenzie travelled through the county interviewing and collecting the stories. This is an example of just one set of records only available at the WCMA. If you wish to have a copy of Karen's handout: **Genealogical Websites** please e-mail Ken Hanson maryhillroots@gmail.com -

Thank You to 2018 Heritage Day Donations!

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The Last Word Longevity!

The fertile land around Maryhill is known to promote longevity. In fact, a priest who did missionary work from New Germany during 1848-1852, Father Holzer, claimed he had only one funeral in the first 9 months of his residence there. And that funeral was for an 84 year old man! Pictured here are three Hummel brothers who were well known in New Germany for their longevity. Thomas, Joseph and Martin Hummel lived to be 99, 94 and 84 respectively. Born in 1813, 1819, 1821, these three men were farmers in the area. All are buried in the Old Walled Cemetery.

The photograph reads:**A Pioneer Trio**

Jos. Hummel Thos. Hummel Martin Hummel

Of New Germany. The combined age of this venerable trio of brothers is 274 years, averaging over 91 years. Their ages are 89, 94 and 90 years respectively



(GREEN, PHOTO, BERLIN.)

A Pioneer Trio.

JOS. HUMMEL, THOS. HUMMEL, MARTIN HUMMEL
Of New Germany. The combined ages of this venerable trio of brothers are 274 years, averaging over 91 years. Their ages are 89, 94 and 90 years, respectively.

This column will feature stories from years ago—often handed down by word of mouth.