

Seeley's Bay Newsletter

Connecting the community...

Seeley's Bay & Area Residents' Association

Issue #8, Dec 2010

...and check out events calendar and local resources at www.seeleysbay.ca

Noteworthy Neighbours

Helen Sweet was born a Stone and raised in Forfar. Her dad, Talmage Stone, was honoured as one of 100 Canadians who made the most significant contributions to agriculture in the last century. He introduced artificial insemination to the dairy industry, and he managed Forfar Cheese Factory as a co-op for years.



Helen left Forfar to attend Normal School in Ottawa and was there for the early years of the war. Her first teaching job was in Lyndhurst where she met Ralph Sweet. When Ralph enlisted they were married and Helen went on to teach in Glen Buell while Ralph was stationed in Cornwallis. After the war they bought the store in Seeley's Bay, and Helen continued to teach for two more years, at Ellisville; her teaching income of \$750.00 per year kept the store afloat in the early years. Helen describes the years living above the store and raising her three girls, Pam, Peggy and Louise, as the happiest time of her life. She says she enjoyed going downstairs to help to stock shelves and to visit with people when she could, but mostly it was Ralph who ran the store, while she got more and more involved in community life.

Helen recalls a lively Main Street before Highway #15 bypassed the village in the 1960's. There were at least three garages in the village, Hewitt's Hotel, two barbers, several tourist homes, hardware, mill, and 3 busy churches. On Saturday nights the line ups were so long that Ralph and Helen had to work as gate-keepers to manage the number of customers in the store at the same time. And in the early years people from about 300 different families came and went as they accessed their food lockers (before home freezers) at the store. Helen remembers dancing to live music at the Masonic Hall, teaching Sunday school at the United Church, being active in the Women's Institute and then later being a charter member of the Order of the Eastern Star. During these years Helen helped to create two newspapers, the Leeds Echo and the Leeds Lantern. And when space became available, Helen created a library in the store; even though she was no longer teaching she was always interested in encouraging opportunities for learning. Eventually when the space

(Continued from left) was needed for the store, Helen encouraged Ralph to buy a property further down Main Street where they constructed a brand new building to house a community library, which was then donated to the Township. Later they bought a parcel of land on the shore of the bay to build their first family home outside of the store – the house that now sits on the southwest side of the harbour. Once the house was completed Helen and Ralph turned the balance of the lot into Centennial Park which was transferred to the Township. And eventually Helen moved to her current home just northeast of the public docks, where to this day she receives a constant stream of guests who enjoy her company and who admire Helen's huge legacy of contributions to the Seeley's Bay area.

Seeley's Bay Story Fest

Over 125 people turned out to help raise money for Seeley's Bay Steps Up and to hear James Raffan deliver the first session of the Story Fest. The second event is **Sunday, Dec. 12, 2:00 pm - Take the Northwest Passage:** See icebergs, polar bears, walruses, bowhead whales and thick-billed murre – which are near flightless birds that are even cooler than penguins. And then on **Tuesday, Jan. 18, 7:00 pm - Penguins I Have Known:** Come experience Antarctica - a land of rock and ice, whales, exotic birds, and, of course, penguins – the 'Frostfest' mascot, in their natural habitat. On **Sunday, Feb. 20, 2:00 - Coppermine – Dream Journey!** It's a story of adventure, murder, hope and redemption set in one of the most spectacular tundra river valleys in the world. See grizzly bears, Inuit games, caribou, and arctic char that are jumping into the boats! All events are fundraisers for SBARA at take place at the **Seeley's Bay Community Hall**, above the fire hall. Pay at the Door; **\$5 adult, \$3 youth, \$10 family.** Help to **promote the event** by asking us for an electronic poster at dale819@kingston.net

Sandy Gray, long time operator of the Gray-Mart died on Nov. 27; our thoughts go out to the family.



Season's Greetings One and All

What's happening:

Dec 4 – Seniors Christmas meal & song @ Legion; 1:00
Dec 11 – Turkey Bingo @ Legion; 1:00
Dec 12 – Story Fest; Community Hall, 2:00; \$3, \$5, \$10
Dec 24 – Xmas Eve; Seeley's Bay United Church; 7:30
Dec 31 – New Year's dinner/dance @ Legion, 6:00, \$20
Jan 15 – Karaoke @ Legion, 8:00, price TBA
Jan 18 – Story Fest; Community Hall, 2:00, \$3, \$5, \$10
Feb 4-6 – details at www.seeleysbayfrostfest.com
Feb 20 – Story Fest; Community Hall, 2:00, \$3, \$5, \$10

There is a lunch time seniors diners club in the Seeley's Bay Community Hall every 2nd Wednesday of the month

Message from local Township Councillor

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your support. I look forward to representing you these next four years; I know this will not be an easy task. I would also like to thank Charlie Kellington for his hard work and the dedication he gave to our Township. An important aspect to me is that we look at the Township as a whole; the Ward I represent and every part of it are equally as important. Something residents may not know about me is that I lived in Seeley's Bay from 1991-96. I had a hair styling business that I operated from my home on Helen Street until I started my family. I've always found Seeley's Bay a beautiful little town with friendly people. I'm excited to be a part of its future! Seasons Greetings!

Brigitte Lesage Tye

Thank God for Danny - On November 21st the United Church raised over \$10K towards the much-needed repair work for the historic steeple at a special event honouring 50 years with choir leader Danny Roantree. As Danny said, "we have really always just been a group of friends who can sing a bit, and who like to get together on Friday nights". Listen to them on Dec. 24th.



This newsletter is published every few months, and now goes to over 145 households. To sign-up to receive it by e-mail, and/or to publicize community-oriented events, please write to the editor at newsletter@seeleysbay.com Feel free to print and post a copy on your public bulletin board and/or share copies with neighbours.



Celebrate the light – photo by G. Simmons



Seeley's Bay Steps Up!

The Seeley's Bay & Area Residents' Association (SBARA) is pleased to announce that Ron Rudd is leading the Spruce Up team, Joe Hamilton is leading the Marketing team, and Greg McCarthy is leading the Infrastructure team. The water quality and business projects will start up in the new year. SBARA Directors are meeting with officials from Parks Canada, the Township and OMAFRA to learn more about funding possibilities for the various Steps Up projects.



...volunteers hang donated baskets from the Nest Egg

If you want to get involved and help, or if you want more information, contact: Peggy Sweet McCumber (Chair of SBARA) at sbara@seeleysbay.com