

The Massie Messenger

A Biannual Newsletter

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Moving Moments

by Marilyn Bergman



Early settlers in Holland Township quickly learned how to relocate structures. There are many references to buildings being moved – sometimes a considerable distance – in the Holland history books (*The Paths that Led to Holland – A History of Holland Township, Volumes 1 [1983] and 2 [1991]* published by Stan Brown Printers Ltd.).

In Massie proper, Robert Ceasar, an early storekeeper, had the former Temperance Hall moved from its site at the front of Fred Marshall's farm, down the hill and across the bridge to the northwest corner of his property. He then converted the Hall to a general store; it survives today as a duplex dwelling.

Certainly moving a building was a practical and thrifty undertaking – why

build a new house when there was one to be had, usually only a short distance away? And, in some instances, one did not have to pack up and unpack any household effects. Leonard T. Weeden, in his book titled *Pickin' Stones – Memories of a Grey County Kid* (2011, Riverside Graphics) describes how his grandfather moved the farmhouse with his grandmother – who was firmly opposed to the move – still inside knitting in her rocking chair.

The books only hint at how it was done: “a small frame barn was moved from the Jackson property on rollers by Will Fee's team of Percheron horses...” (*The Paths that Led to Holland*, p. 36, Vol. 1). Here's a more fulsome description of the move, in 1948, of St. Mark's Anglican Church to its present site in Holland Centre: “Rev. R.O.D. Salmon made all the arrangements to move the church. It was brought to Holland Centre on a thirty-two wheeled float, with Rev. Salmon atop the church with a forked stick lifting wires and branches.” (p.63, Vol.1). The good reverend must have placed a great deal of faith in divine providence – the church was not an insubstantial building and the move was of some distance!

As to the actual mechanics of mov-



ing, the first step was to obtain the necessary permissions although in early years, this may not have been necessary. The second step was to disconnect the services such as water, septic, hydro, telephone. Again, maybe not necessary in the early days.

Next, wooden (or later, steel) beams were placed under the ground floor of the building and the entire structure was slowly and evenly raised out of its foundation by jacks, with the elevated building supported by cribbing. Then the building was eased onto a platform; in early days, a series of rollers, and in later years, a wheeled float or platform. Locomotion was provided by horses at first. Later, horses were replaced by tractors or bulldozers or big trucks.





Upon arrival at the new site, they reversed the process lowering the building onto its new foundation by means of cribbing and jacks.

Not all moves went smoothly. A neighbour in Massie reported seeing a house being moved in one direction only to see it going the other way somewhat later. Apparently there was a problem negotiating a corner. By what route the house finally reached its destination is lost in the mists of time.

Building relocation is still taking place in Holland Township. Only last year, a house was moved to one of the new lots created on the farm formerly owned by Ivan and Iris Hill on Concession 3A, just north of County Road 40.

Moving buildings was more common when there were fewer physical and regulatory obstacles to deal with; also, it would seem that more value was placed on the work and materials invested in a building. It was the epitome of the maxim “reuse and recycle”.



Massie Recycles

We want to do the right thing for the environment so we recycle. But are we doing it correctly? Are we putting old lawn chairs, broken glass or hazardous waste products in our blue boxes or bags? Those definitely **don't** belong along with most of the stuff we cleaned out of her house when grandma sadly passed away.

What can we recycle? A surprising number of things, according to Heather Stirling from the township office: old tin and aluminum cans, tin foil, glass bottles and jars (but not drinking glasses), empty paint cans with lids removed, Tetrapaks (added to the program this year), any paper product (including newspapers, magazines, old books, corrugated cardboard, boxboard and fine paper) and many plastics (coded 1 to 7) including five-gallon plastic pails and hanging baskets from annuals or perennials.

The exception – and this is important – is Styrofoam or polystyrene. For residents buying large items of furniture or computers that are cushioned in Styrofoam, Heather suggests taking the foam back to the store or to the Miller Waste facility at 2085 20th Avenue East in Owen Sound.

With corrugated cardboard you can flatten several boxes and stuff them into another cardboard box – as long as the box is no larger than a regular blue box. The trucks are limited as to what they can compact. Note that shopping

bags should be returned to Zehrs (they have a collection bin that looks like a garbage container just inside the doors.)

Metal scrap can be taken free to the landfill sites. They also allow free electronics drop-off at the landfill sites and the ReStore. Household hazardous waste days occur once a year in July at the township office.

Waste Management, the company that does the collection has several requests. Please place your blue box or clear/blue recycling bag on the mailbox side of the road. Collection begins at 6AM so you must have your recycling out by then to ensure pickup. Sometimes residents who missed the pickup will call in and ask the truck to return. The trucks are equipped with GPS so Waste Management can verify when/if they were by. In some cases, they may still be in the area and can swing by a particular residence.

Note that residents no longer have to sort materials and recycling bags do not need to be tagged. There is no limit to the number of recyclables that can be placed curbside. However, if the recycling crews see something in the blue box or bag that doesn't belong they may refuse pickup altogether.

One last note: If you're using blue boxes, remember to place heavy items (glass bottles) on top of the lighter stuff to prevent recyclables from blowing away and littering our charming hamlet.

Growing up in Massie



Mrs. Reid's 1960 class

Firstly, I need to clarify for the readers of The Massie Messenger who I am. I mean ... who I really am. I moved back to Owen Sound (and the Massie community) recently in order to be close to my Mom, Dona Norton, at her new home, Central Place Retirement Community. This has challenged everyone all over again to try to remember the new name I gave myself after leaving Massie those many years ago. Howard Allen Norton became Stephen Howard Norton officially in 1978, when I was 30 years old, although I had started to use Stephen casually as early as 1972. I have been away from the area for – ummm – let's just say “several years”. Oh... alright...the truth...45 years! In 1968 I left the area to attend university in Toronto. How time flies.

I was born in the summer of 1948. I have learned since then that the electricity service only came to the Massie area in 1948, the year of

my birth. That means Mom was taking care of two bouncing little boys (brother Bill, born November 1944 and brother Jim, born May 1947) without the convenience of electric power. No lights at the flick of a switch (you had to light coal oil lanterns instead), no refrigerator or freezer (use ice box when possible), and no washing machine (heat water on stove and wash clothes by hand). And to think...my dear mother is still miraculously with us, bless her heart, enjoying life at the ripe old age of 94! Thanks, Mom! They don't make 'em like you anymore. Depression-era moms were “built tough”, like Ford trucks!

I attended the one-room stone school house known as Massie Public School. Dates would be 1954-1962. Grades 1-8. No Kindergarten and no Junior Kindergarten in those good old? bad old? days. Back then it seems six years of age was considered soon enough to be placed into

the school system.

Before elementary school I don't remember much except having to face the tin tub for weekly baths, in the backyard beside the lilac bush in summer, and beside the wood stove in the middle of the kitchen in winter. I can't remember which order I came in for the tub but I strongly suspect it wasn't first.

I could run directly to school from my kitchen at the Norton home which was conveniently located on the same property as the school. Talk about luck. I could go home for a nice warm lunch. After lunch, Mom would tell me half a dozen times to get going or I'd be late. I'd always wait until the school bell started ringing (we could hear the bell up at our house). Then I would run fast out of the house, fly down the hill on the path through the field, and walk nonchalantly into class with the others, having hardly increased my breathing rate. Wish I could run like that now.

*Note for younger readers of The Massie Messenger: The school bell, on top of the school (now gone), was pulled by the teacher every school day, several times a day to signal start of school, end of recess, and end of lunch.

Back in those days we played Softball. *Second note for younger readers: “Softball” means a larger ball is used for the game and the pitcher has to throw underhand. Now, if you are imagining the ball is actually soft and the pitches must come slowly because the pitcher throws underhand, think again. With a windmill style windup, the ball could arrive in the catcher's mitt without the batter having seen it going by! We played the game competi-

tively in a local league composed of Massie, Walter's Falls, and Bognor. An excellent pitcher back in the day (much to Massie's dismay) was one Bill Murdoch, from the arch enemy team of Bognor.

I have fond memories of developing my skills for baseball by hanging around after school hours and hitting out grounders and fly balls with John Nuttall, my best buddy in those years. My other solid male-bonded "partner in crime" was John McKessock. We called ourselves The Three Musketeers! The three of us went through the eight grades together and were for a number of years the only students of the grade we occupied each year. Then, about grade 4 or 5, Hilda Caesar joined our grade. We had a GIRL in our class! This definitely ruined our image as The Three Musketeers.

For grades 6, 7, and 8 I had Mrs. Mary Reid as my teacher. Those were the days. Mrs. Reid had her hands full partly because of groups like the aforementioned Musketeers. Let's just say we were a little headstrong and undisciplined. Discipline was only one of the challenges Mrs. Reid had to deal with back in the days of eight grades in one room. If you have been to the Community Centre, otherwise known as Massie Hall, you know the modest space of which I speak. I was 6' 1" and a strong strapping farm boy with a deep loud voice by the time I finished grade 8. Poor Mrs. Reid!

Mrs. Reid also had to be very resourceful back in the early '60s in rural Ontario. Modern educational reforms were coming along fast and these old country schools would soon be closed down. "Central schools", serving an entire district,

would soon replace the patchwork of one-room schoolhouses. But they weren't closed yet. So Mrs. Reid carried on valiantly trying to deliver relevant new curriculum to eight different grade levels – all in the same physical space! Being resourceful, as well as a darn good teacher, Mrs. Reid would ask me to take the little ones (for example grade 2's) outside in the spring, to sit in a row on the south side of the woodshed in the sunshine, and read out loud in turn from their readers. I liked this arrangement very much when I was in grades 7 and 8. It got me away from having to do my own boring schoolwork and I got to go outdoors! I can still recall how I naturally picked up the skills of teaching by simply observing Mrs. Reid, and then, in turn, getting the little ones to read, asking them questions, listening to their questions and comments, checking for comprehension, correcting errors. It was here, at Massie School back in the early 1960's that I picked

up the teaching bug. I retired from a 30-year career as a high school English, Drama and Media Studies teacher in 2005.

I attended the Massie Reunion in 1995. I got to play a little baseball with the old team wearing the gold Massie jersey. And I was able to thank Mary Reid for turning me onto teaching some 45+ years ago.

Recently, at the Massie Reunion of 2010 I had a chat with Doug Smith, who was my teacher in Grades 1 and 2. He said the students he taught in his two years at Massie were the most impressive overall group of students he taught over his entire 34 years of teaching! I heard this as not only a compliment to the students he taught. It was, more importantly, a compliment to the Massie parents. Thanks to the commitment and dedication of these moms and dads, the love and support they gave to all the children in the community, the Massie kids really impressed Doug Smith, a fine teacher in his own



Massie Hall Presents 2013 Coffeehouse Series

Pete Miller and Massie Hall are pleased to introduce our 2013 Live @ Massie Hall Coffeehouse Concert Series. This year marks the sixth season of intimate concerts featuring the finest Canadian musicians across a spectrum of musical genres in the charming hamlet of Massie.

Ritchie-Parrish-Ritchie

Saturday August 25th, 8 pm

Doors open at 7:30 pm

\$16 (all ages) includes coffee/tea/goodies



Join us in welcoming three former members of Canadian folk supergroup Tanglefoot to Massie Hall for a rollicking good evening of booming vocals, heavenly harmonies, original songs and the best traditional power folk you'll ever hear.

Mark Reeves

Saturday September 22, 8 pm

Doors open at 7:30 pm

\$16 (all ages) includes coffee/tea/goodies

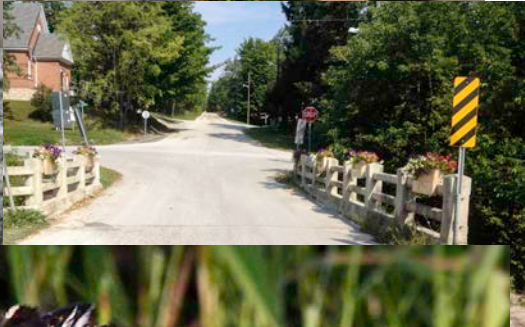


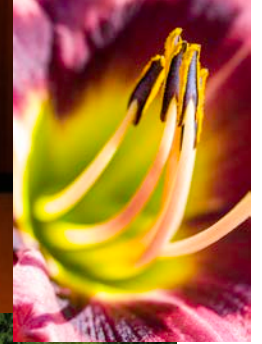
Manitoba-based acoustic blues guitar phenom will leave your jaw dropped and your heart wanting more. A rare opportunity to hear one of Canada's finest, most highly energized, blues singer-songwriters..

For tickets contact Peter Miller at petemkit@xplornet.com or call 519-794-3652

Highlights of 2012

Photographs by Ralph Bergman, Connie Miller, Carol Mair, Carlie Currie and others







Massie 2013 Events

Photograph by Connie Miller

- April 27** **Massie Clean-up Bee** - 9:00 a.m.
- May 6** **Massie Hall Coffeehouse - singer / songwriter Wendell Ferguson**
 - doors open at 7:30pm, concert starts at 8p.m. - contact Pete Miller
 519-794-3652 or petemkit@explornet.com for tickets
- May 11** **Massie Church Geranium Tea** - 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
 Plant Orders: Marg Campbell - 794-2085
 Pat Campbell - 794-2397 (pp_campbell@sympatico.ca)
 Connie Neelands - 794-0618 (cwsconn@gmail.com)
- May 17** **Shoreline Chorus at Massie Church** - 7:30pm
- July 28** **Massie Hall Fish Fry** - Music 3:00 a.m. Dinner 5:00-7:00 p.m.
 contact Ed Neelands for tickets, 794-2503 (ed_neelands@hotmail.com)
- October 14** **Massie United Church Anniversary Service at 11:00 a.m.**
 144th Anniversary of Earliest Recorded Massie Bible Class in 1868

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