

In and Around
Burnt River



A Pictorial History

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This book has been produced by the Burnt River 2000 Committee to mark the millennium year. It has been prepared with the financial assistance of the Women's Institute of Burnt River, the Township of Somerville, and the Millennium Bureau of Canada (although any opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the official view of the Government of Canada).

The following sources are gratefully acknowledged: The Victoria Centennial History by Watson Kirkconnell, History of Kinmount by Guy Scott, The Canadian Heritage Centre, Toronto, Memories of Somerville 1984 published by the Somerville Township Bicentennial Committee, Roses and Thorns by Gladys Suggitt, the many residents of Burnt River village and area, who have generously provided information and photographs

Throughout the book the source of the photographs has been acknowledged in brackets, except for those taken by the Committee, itself.



THE HISTORY OF

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The history of the United States of America is a story of a young nation that grew from a small group of colonies on the eastern coast of North America to a powerful superpower that spans across two continents. The story begins with the first European settlers in the early 17th century, who established colonies in Virginia, Massachusetts, and other parts of the eastern seaboard. These colonies were founded by people seeking religious freedom, economic opportunity, and a better life. Over time, the colonies developed their own distinct identities and cultures, and they began to assert their independence from British rule. The American Revolution, which began in 1775, was a pivotal moment in the nation's history, as the colonies fought for and won their independence from Great Britain. The new nation was founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, and the rule of law, and it has since become a model for other nations around the world. The history of the United States is a story of progress, innovation, and the pursuit of the American dream. It is a story of a nation that has overcome many challenges and setbacks, but has always emerged stronger and more united. The United States has played a leading role in the world, and its influence is felt in every corner of the globe. The history of the United States is a testament to the power of the human spirit and the ability of a nation to overcome adversity and achieve greatness.

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Contents

Part I - Burnt River - A Millennium Reflection

Part II - "The Way We Were"

A-The Main Street-Its changing face

B-The River

C-The Ways To Make a Living

D-The Churches

E-The Social Organizations

F-Recreation

G-Transportation

H-The Schools

S.S.#8 Somerville

S.S.#13 Somerville

I-People

J-Hunting Season

K-The Lake

L-World War I and II

Part III - Historic Homes/Buildings

~ And The People Who Lived In Them

Final Report

Introduction

Part I - Introduction to the Project

1.1 - Project Overview

A. The main purpose of this project is to...

B. The project will be completed by...

C. The project is expected to last for...

D. The project is being funded by...

E. The project is being managed by...

F. The project is being supported by...

G. The project is being reviewed by...

H. The project is being evaluated by...

I. The project is being monitored by...

J. The project is being reported by...

K. The project is being documented by...

L. The project is being archived by...

M. The project is being disseminated by...

Part II - Detailed Description of the Project

A. The project is being implemented in...

FIFTY MILLION YEARS AGO when the world contained only three great land masses each very different from today's continents, the waves of a vast southern ocean lapped at the rocks of the area we now know as Burnt River. The ocean retreated and Burnt River lost its Pacific shoreline long before the advent of mankind...

A MILLION YEARS AGO, Burnt River was encased in a creeping glacier a mile deep which covered the continent to the north and as far south as present-day Ohio. The ice receded and returned several times in successive ice ages, the last ending about 18,000 years ago.

TODAY, experts studying global warming predict that within 100 years the weather in the area of Burnt River will be as temperate as it is now in Kentucky.

BURNT RIVER: A MILLENIUM REFLECTION

This chronology, prepared for the celebration of the year 2000, traces the known history of people and events in Burnt River:

1650 Victoria County was the domain of the Huron Indians. To the north lived wandering bands of Algonquins. In the 1650s there was a war in the Kawartha Lakes area between the Iroquois from New York State and the local Hurons. The Iroquois were victorious and the Algonquins were pushed further north. In the 1740s the Iroquois were dislodged by the Mississauga tribe.

1819 Burnt River was part of the area covered by a treaty with the Chippewa Indians on 5 November, 1819. This was Treaty No. 20 in a series (from 1781) under which the Mississauga, Chippewa and Pottawatomies ceded most of the land that is now Ontario to the British Crown. The three bands were members of the Three Fires Confederacy, a branch of the Ojibway nation.

1835 A survey was made of what was to become Somerville Township (which includes Burnt River). The survey covered 70,000 acres. The surveyor, John Smith, named the area after Julia Somerville, wife of the Lt. Governor of Canada, Sir Francis Bond Head. But Smith declared the land unsuitable for settlement.

1850 The area remained Crown land. It was described as being desolate, wild and rough with few areas of desirable farming land. Some Indians, mainly Ojibway, roamed here. A few trappers had come to the area, to trade in furs with the Indians and had built rough shelters in which to stay. These shacks were to be used by some of the first settlers until they could build a more solid log home.

1855 Smith's view of the unsuitability of the land for settlement was ignored and a new Colonization road from Bobcaygeon reached Union Creek (and later continued on to Kinmount, Minden and Dorset). In fact the land near Union Creek was found to be less rocky and more suitable for farming than expected. The present County Roads 49 and 121 between Bobcaygeon and Kinmount follow the original route of the Colonization road.

The road brought settlers from Ireland, Scotland and Germany as well as some descendants of Empire Loyalists who had moved from the United States to the north shore of Lake Ontario in about 1784 after the American Revolution. But many were discharged servicemen who had served 21 years in the British Army and were qualified to receive 100 acres provided they settled. Most of the allotments of land were made in Galway, in the Crystal Lake (then Swamp Lake) areas. The land was impossibly rocky and wet and some of the settlers moved across the road to Union Creek, north of what is now Burnt River village. One settler who moved was Ralph Byrne, a former sergeant in the British Army, who arrived in Galway in 1858 and five years later resettled himself on the Ninth Line which became known, as his family developed and acquired more land, as the Byrne Line.

The first aim of a pioneer was to clear a small part of his land so that he could plant wheat to make flour for the following winter. The trees were felled and those that were not used to build a shelter, were pulled into piles and burned. It was some time before the development of a market for the logs and meanwhile, much good timber was destroyed. Before planting could begin, the land had to be cleared of stones. Evidence of the effort that went into this particular task is seen in the piles of rock and quartz that remain in the fields in many parts of the area.

Life for the early settlers was harsh. The winter was difficult to endure in their primitive shanties and from spring to fall they were plagued by successive waves of bugs. Wolves and bears were numerous. Travel was restricted by the appalling condition of the tracks (it was better in the winter when the surface was frozen and snow filled the pot holes). Every man was required to spend a certain number of days each year working to turn the tracks into roads.

1856 As far as is known, the first land owner in the area of Burnt River was Abraham Farewell who in 1856 speculated by purchasing a number of lots. Within ten years or so he had sold most of his property. The first to buy from him were Margaret and Alexander Rettie, originally from Aberdeen, Scotland. They bought the northern half of Lot 14 on Concession 5 in 1864 and built a new home and log buildings using timber from the farm. One of their sons, James, was a blacksmith and the other, Alexander, operated a saw mill and built bridges. A little settlement grew around them, known as Rettie's Bridge. The homestead is still owned by the Rettie family. Among other early settlers in the area were George Sheehy (1864), the Sired family (1865), the Matchett (Moffatt) family (1868), Andrew English (1874), James Nichols (1874), William Dodd (1874), William Shuttleworth (1875) Joseph Handley (1877), James Cain (1877) and Henry Stainton (1872).

1860 By this time, companies were being formed to harvest the lumber. They offered the earliest means of livelihood in the area. In winter, logs were cut and hauled to the banks of the Burnt River. In the spring the logs were floated down the river to the lakes and then to saw-mills. Soon local sawmills were built. The main prize in the early days was white pine and most of it had been harvested by 1880.

1861 A census recorded that 16 families (74 people) were living in Somerville. It did not show how many of these were in Burnt River. In the area generally, 41 percent of the settlers were Irish; 33 percent English; 10 percent Scots; seven percent German and seven percent American.

1862 A log building was erected on Lot 1, Concession 8, Somerville Township in the Union Creek area to serve as a school for the Galway and Somerville areas. A larger school was built across the road in 1882. For many years it served as a centre for all social and public functions. The school closed in 1966.

1863 The residents of Somerville elected their first municipal council. For years before this, Somerville and the other townships north of Fenelon Falls had been known as the "back townships." The area had been administered by Squire John Fell.

1865 A wooden bridge, known as Rettie's Bridge, was built across the Burnt River to the south of the village on Concession 5. A second wooden bridge was erected on the same site by Alexander Rettie in 1888. A third, steel and concrete, bridge was built by the Department of Public Works in 1908. A fourth bridge was built by the County of Victoria and opened in 1962.

1870 The first recorded meeting of the trustees of the Burnt River School. The trustees, Mr. Umphrey, Mr. Sired and Sam Suddaby met in the school house, a small log building in a field across from the cemetery. At first it was called Rettie's School. A new structure on the same site was built in 1885 and another, in stone, at the north end of the village, in 1901. At that time, 108 children were enrolled in eight grades and all were taught by one teacher. The last school was built in 1964 and closed in June 1991 when a larger school for North Victoria was built at Coboconk. The school bell was preserved and in July 2000 was placed on permanent display outside the Post Office (the site of the last school) as part of the millennium celebrations.

1873 Simon Moore opened a Post Office in Burnt River. He wanted to call it Burnt River Post Office but at that time, the village that is now Kinmount was called the Burnt River Crossing (a reference to the point where the Colonization road from Bobcaygeon crossed the river). This caused great confusion. It ended when Scottish settlers around the crossing decided to call their village Kinmount leaving the village of Burnt River with a clear title to the address. Mr. Moore remained as Postmaster until 1887 and his wife continued for three years after that. Mr. Edward Wood took over until 1896. During that time there was a fire in the building housing the Burnt River Post Office and all the mail and birth records awaiting despatch to Toronto were destroyed. Then Mr. Sam Suddaby took the Post Office into his store for a time and remained Postmaster until 1921. Mr. Elsie Sheehey took over for four years and was followed in 1926 by his sister, Alma Oddris Sheehey (later Mrs. David Wood) who ran the the Post Office from Mr. Sheeheys home adjacent to the railway for a time and then, on her marriage to Mr. Wood, moved to the former Wilson home across the street. In 1948 she built a new home on the site of the former general store and moved the Post Office there. It remained there until 1970. Mrs. Violet Sheehey was Postmistress from 1956-62. Mrs. Alma Rettie succeeded her until she retired in March 1970. Mrs. June Hunter then became Postmaster on April 1, 1970, renting space that was formerly a snack bar and gas station adjacent to the Burnt River General Store. The Post Office was moved in July 1994 into the former school building.

1874 A returning resident of the Burnt River area at about this time was Mrs. Mary Powell whose former husband, Christopher Hodgson, had died in 1872 in the United States. Mrs. Powell remarried in the U.S. and brought her family back to Burnt River where she became prominent in the life of the area. As a young girl in Britain, she had been a maid to Queen Victoria. She had eloped with her first husband to be married in the blacksmith's shop at Gretna Green and on the Queen's insistence, re-married in Windsor Castle. An energetic and ambitious young grandson of Mrs. Powell, Thomas Hodgson, made a considerable purchase of land along the entire east side of the main street in Burnt River (Lot 12, Concession 6).

1876 The Lindsay - Fenelon Falls - Haliburton railway, called the Victoria Railway, reached Burnt River. The first station in the village was on the Rettie lot and called Rettie's Station. A large wood-yard was established beside the tracks. A fire destroyed the station and a number of other buildings and the new railway station was built a mile to the north. Gradually, the village moved towards the station and the residents petitioned the railway company, asking them to change the name of the station to coincide with the name of the post office and village. In 1896, Rettie's Station became Burnt River Station.

The Victoria Railway was started in 1874 and finished in 1878. According to the History of Canadian National Railways by G.R.S. Evans, the line did not originate in civic pride but in a rather ingenious colonization scheme. It afforded the first recorded instance of assisted passages: immigrants would work out

the cost of their transportation by labouring on the construction of the railway; thereafter they would be granted land along its route that bore merchantable timber ... It was a thoroughly logical and quite impracticable project. The only immigrants who showed any interest in the scheme were a group of Icelanders for whom the outcome was tragic. The Icelanders (365 in 1874) settled near Kinmount. More than a hundred died of dysentery. By the fall of 1875 those remaining had left for Manitoba.

The railway company built a bridge across the Burnt River at Concession 4 in 1875. The bridge was replaced by the Canadian National Railway in 1952. The new structure, of steel with an overhead truss, was a section of a bridge destined for Kowloon (Hong Kong). The Second World War intervened and at the end of the war, the bridge became war surplus and was allotted to Burnt River.

The railway at Burnt River vied with the river route as a means of moving lumber. In this way the railway was a great boost to the local economy. It also provided local farmers with a new means of transporting their produce and made travel easier for the people living along the tracks. It brought new settlers and it facilitated the departure of some who tired of the deprivations of pioneer life and the difficulty of making a living.

1879 Church services were first held at Burnt River by the Hebron and Methodist Church, in the little log school house (lot 13, con 5) by the Rev. Tapscott of the Baptist Church, Fenelon Falls.

1880 Alexander Rettie purchased five acres of land and opened a stone quarry which was bought by Samuel Suddaby and became one of the biggest industries in the village. It employed 40 - 50 men, some brought from Britain. The quarry was between Rettie's Station and the Burnt River Station. The top layer of stone was blue limestone. The next was red and was cut into blocks. The main Post Office building in Toronto was built from Burnt River limestone, as was the jail in Lindsay. At one time, 14 carloads of crushed stone was sent to Toronto every day. In 1914 the quarry was bought by a Hagersville crush stone company and closed.

1885 Jim Nicholls built a saw mill at Nicholls Bridge (East Line Bridge). The mill was destroyed by fire in about 1890. Other mills have operated in Burnt River at various times.

1888 The site for a new Hebron and Methodist Church (and that of the Orange Lodge and sufficient adjoining land on which to hold a fair) was donated by Mrs. Nancy McIntyre (widow of John McIntyre) and funds were advanced by members of the church. Everybody in the community helped to complete the building which is now one of the oldest in the village. The windows, pulpit and seats were purchased from a church in Salem, Mariposa. In 1893 a "Christian Endeavours" group was formed for young people and they raised funds to buy the organ for the church. By 1925 the church had become part of the United Church of Canada.

1894 A wooden truss structure, Hodgson Bridge, was built across the Burnt River to the east of the village on Concession 6/7. It replaced a floating bridge. In 1931 a used steel bridge was brought in by rail to replace the wooden structure, damaged by floods. This, in turn, was replaced by a steel and concrete bridge in 1967.

1896 The work of the Church of England (as it was then known) began in Burnt River with a Sunday School in the home of Mr. Roland Maconachie. Mr. Maconachie came to Canada with the intention of farming. He bought several hundred acres of land north of the village but the land proved unsuitable and the Government took it over in 1928 for reforestation. Mr. Maconachie also held services in the Orange Hall and through his efforts, the Anglican Church (St. Luke's) was built in 1903. A "bee" was organised to quarry the stone.

1900 By this time most of the prime hardwood had been harvested and there was an exodus of families to the West. Lumbering had been the mainstay of the economy giving employment to many in the forests and the mills and providing farmers with a ready market for their produce. The decline of lumbering and the decrease in population hurt the railway.

1900 In the early 1900s a general store was being operated in Burnt River by Dave Chalmers and his family who came to Burnt River from the Kinmount area. Around 1910 the store was sold to George Wright who operated it, together with his wife Sarah, son Roddy and Roddy's wife, Eva. Roddy also operated a garage and gas pumps on the property adjacent to the store and in 1947 built a small snack bar onto the garage. Roddy sold the store in the late 1950s and it passed through a number of hands until 1994 when it was sold to the Belshaw brothers. During the August weekend of 1995 it was destroyed by fire.

1902 Joseph Handley Sr. built a private 200 ft wooden bridge across the Burnt River on his farm at Lot 14, Concession 5. The bridge, which replaced a floating structure, has now fallen into disrepair.

1905 William and John Wilson erected a foot bridge across the Burnt River at Concession 3 to allow their children to reach the schoolhouse on the eastern side of the river. It consisted of wire fencing stretched tight. Lumber was used as a floor with fencing on the sides. It was said to wobble, but served the purpose.

1907 The Burnt River Telephone Company was formed, with its head office in Burnt River. The following year lines were established to Fenelon Falls and Kinmount. In 1911 there were communications with Baddow and Coboconk. By 1942 there were 83 telephones; thirty years later, there were more than 500. In 1967 the Burnt River Telephone Company sold the system to Bell who took it over in 1970.

1907 A wooden bridge was built over the Burnt River on the the Ninth Line (the Byrnes Line) at Concessions 8 and 9. It was called Byrnes Bridge. A flood swept it away in 1928 and it was rebuilt the following year. It has since been abandoned and only the piling remains.

1908 The Burnt River Women's Institute was formed. The Institute has played an important part in the life of the village. It has supported and raised funds for many projects within Burnt River and further afield.

1908 The Union Creek Post Office was opened at the home of Mr. Frank Maguire who lived beside the school. The Post Office was finally closed in 1952.

1914 A considerable number of men from Burnt River volunteered to fight in the First World War. There is a memorial to five who did not return: J.J. Budd, Robert Groves, Robert Carew, Ernest Umphrey and Wesley Hughes.

1921 Doherty's Bridge, of wood and steel, was built across the Burnt River at Lot 4, Concession 10. A new bridge was built by the County Council and opened on 15 June 1962 by the Warden, John Alton.

1928 A reforestation project was started to the immediate north of the village of Burnt River. Before the establishment of a market for wood, early arrivals had been wasteful of their trees and forest fires had been a major problem. Reforestation was an attempt by the government to regenerate the wastelands. Meanwhile, Joe Handley Jr. had set up a saw mill in Burnt River to deal with logs, posts and pulpwood which provided much-needed employment during the depression.

1929 At about the time of the depression, land owners with lake-front property converted barns and other buildings into cottages for rental. Summer residents began to arrive.

1930s Electric power became available in Burnt River.

1930s. By this time it was realised that the area was not suitable for extensive and mechanised farming. The sandy soil lost its productivity when the forest humus was depleted and the rocky conditions meant that farming by mechanical means was not profitable. Many farmers departed for the West. The farms became ranches for cattle and sheep; the sheep were driven out by an increase in the wolf and bear population.

1932 The railway at Burnt River handled the lead and silver ore extracted from the Somerville Lead Mines at Galena Hill, near the junction of County Roads 121 and 49. The mine closed in 1935.

1938 Frank Gunn, a fisherman from Nova Scotia and Mary Ashford, bought property on the Burnt River at the 11th line and built cabins for visitors. They called them the Kozy Kabins. After the end of World War II, the government sent veterans to the Kozy Kabins to recuperate. The cabins were closed in the early 60s.

1939 A summer hotel, Holliday's Hideaway, opened on Four Mile Lake.

1944 A fire which started in Ralph Sheehey's Shell station in the main street early in the afternoon of October 19 spread to homes owned by Bill Hulbert, Sam Suddaby and Stan Dancey and to John Handley's store. It burned out of control until late afternoon when the train arrived and water from the boiler was used to extinguish the flames.

1946 The number of summer residents increased considerably from this point and began to represent an important part of the economy of the area.

1946 Chester and Marion Godwin opened a small "grocery" in their home on the main street, from which they sold and delivered supplies to both the local and lake-side residents. After 50 years they are still in operation.

1950 A gasoline driven fire-pump (towed behind a vehicle) was purchased. In 1958 a new pump was acquired. A fire station was established in 1976 and a 1939 La France pumper was based in the township workshop until a permanent firehall was added to the old schoolhouse in 1994. Further pumps were acquired and the La France was declared a heritage truck in 1981.

1960 The regular passenger service on the Lindsay - Haliburton railway was withdrawn on 3 September. The freight service continued until 1980 when the bridge over McLarens Creek, south of Fenelon Falls burned to the water line. The cost of replacing the bridge sealed the fate of the railway, which had been affected by the decline in lumbering and by improved roads and trucks, and it was abandoned. The metal rails were sold to a contractor who finished removing them in 1984.

1961 Victoria County celebrated its centenary and it was noted that Burnt River had a population of 121.

1967 Centennial Park, providing easy access to the Burnt River, was opened. The land, alongside the northernmost bridge leading to Burnt River from Highway 121, was donated by Charles Hodgson, then Reeve of Somerville. The Park commemorates the centenary of Canadian Federation.

1969 The Dancey Mill at Burnt River, rebuilt after a fire in 1951, was closed due to declining supplies of lumber and a drop in market demand.

1970 One of Canada's foremost environmentalists, Dr. Douglas Pimlott, purchased 150 acres on the Ninth Line from Ralph Byrne and used the property extensively until his death in 1978. Dr. Pimlott was internationally renowned as a forester, zoologist, teacher, conservation activist and wildlife expert. He had a special interest in wolves and pursued his research in Algonquin Park, the Arctic and in Europe. The property on the Ninth Line remains within the family.

1972 The Burnt River and District Recreation Association was formed to work towards the establishment of a community centre. The Association purchased the site of the Dancey Mill. Students worked through several summers to beautify the park which was used for sports and amusement. With help from the Somerville Township, the Wintario lottery organisation and many others, the present Burnt River-Somerville Centre was built. It was opened in 1983.

1973 On 15 February, Mrs. Janet Nowakowski, the County Librarian, officially opened a branch of the County Library in the building housing the Post Office and appointed Mrs. June Hunter as Branch Librarian. Before this, a number of books had been left on rotation in the home of Mrs. Robert Handley. In time, the small back room became a children's room and the other books took over a greater part of the front room. When the Post Office was moved to the former school on 1 July, 1994, the Library was also moved there. It has continued to grow. It has a computer linked to the internet and the local Library Committee has purchased a printer and a fax machine, making the Library a modern communications centre for the village.

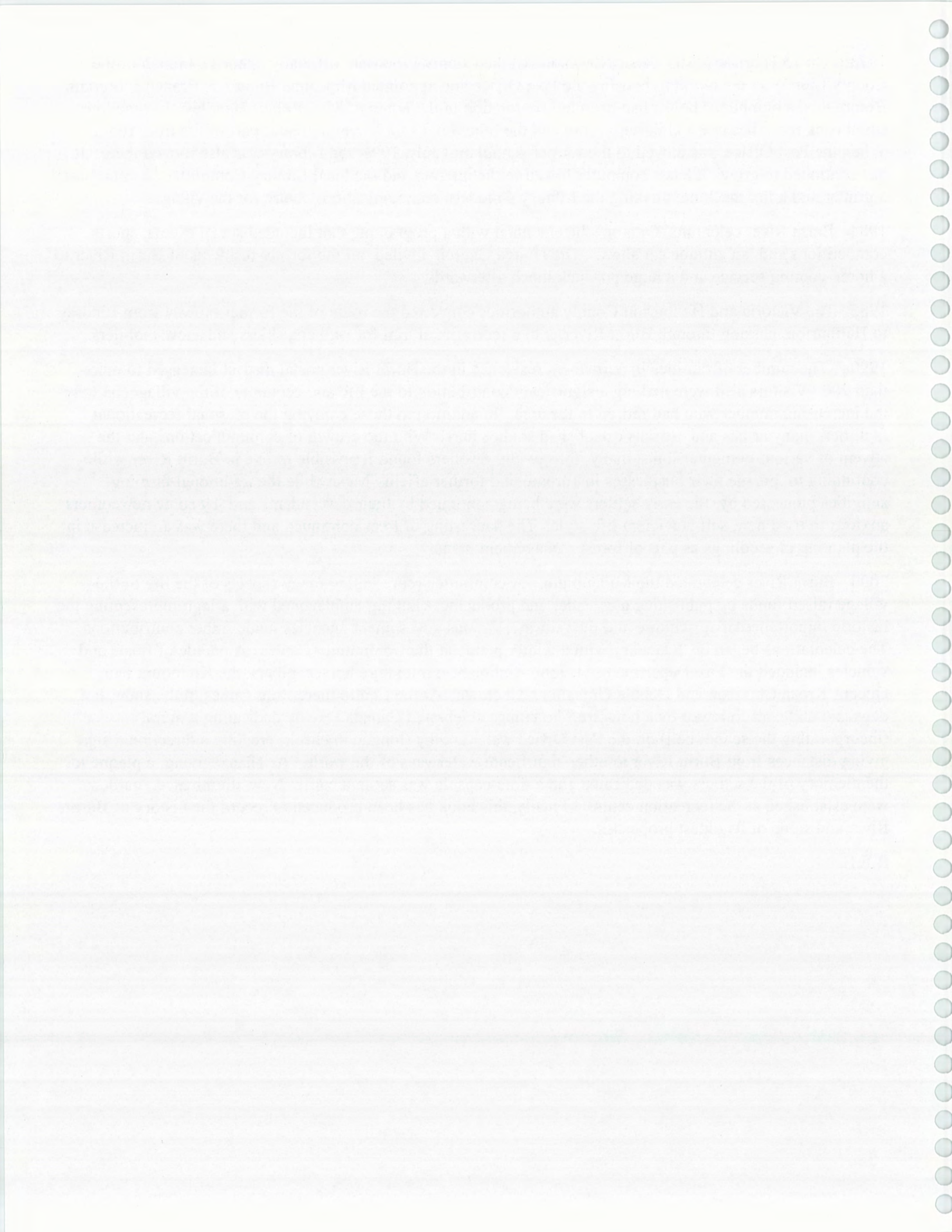
1984 Burnt River celebrated Ontario's bicentennial with a programme that included social events, sports competitions and an antique car show. The United Church invited all the former residents of Burnt River to a home-coming service and a huge pot-luck lunch afterwards.

1985 The Victoria and Haliburton County authorities converted the route of the former railway from Lindsay to Haliburton, passing through Burnt River, into a recreational trail for walkers, skiers and snow-mobilers.

1990s The number of families in permanent residence in the Burnt River postal district increased to more than 200. Visitors also were making a significant contribution to the life and economy of the village, as were the increasing number who had retired to the area. In addition to those enjoying the seasonal recreational facilities, many artists and artisans established studios here. With the growth of communications and the advent of various computer links, many former city dwellers found it possible to live in Burnt River while continuing to pursue their businesses in Toronto and further afield. Meanwhile the traditional farming activities pioneered by the early settlers were being continued by their descendants and by some newcomers anxious to try a new, self-sufficient life-style. The harvesting of trees continued and there was an increase in the planting of seedlings as part of forest management plans.

2000 Burnt River celebrated the Millennium. A committee representing many aspects of the life of the village raised funds by publishing a calendar and producing clothing emblazoned with a logo representing the historic importance of agriculture and the railway. Various government agencies made further contributions. The celebrations began on 1 January with a winter picnic at the Community Centre. A parade of floats and vehicles included the Fire Department, St. John Ambulance, miniature horses, pipers, the Kinmount Fair Queens Krista Chiasson and Debbie Graham and a clown. At the Centre there were games in the snow, hot dogs and chile, all followed by a bon-fire. The village celebrated Canada Day by dedicating a mural (incorporating the school bell) on the Post Office wall, and by (tongue in cheek) erecting a directional sign giving distances from Burnt River to other significant waterways of the world. At Thanksgiving, a plaque to the memory of the settlers was dedicated and a time-capsule was set in a cairn. New, illuminated, gardens were established at the recreation centre. Finally, this book has been produced to record the history of Burnt River and some of its oldest properties.-

R.E.H.



Part II - "The Way We Were"

A-The Main Street-Its changing face

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L-World War I and II

The first part of the document is a list of items.

1. The first item is a book.

2. The second item is a pen.

3. The third item is a pencil.

4. The fourth item is a ruler.

5. The fifth item is a notebook.

6. The sixth item is a calculator.

7. The seventh item is a stapler.

8. The eighth item is a hole punch.

9. The ninth item is a paper shredder.

10. The tenth item is a printer.

11. The eleventh item is a scanner.

12. The twelfth item is a fax machine.

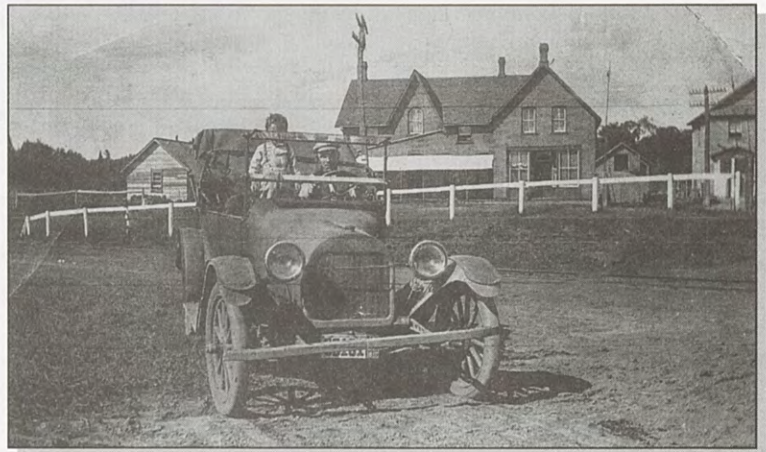




The main street of Burnt River, looking south, around 1908
[Ada Handley]

The Main Street

~ its changing faces



Looking at the main street from the station yard, early 1920's [Wayne Wood]



The main street of Burnt River, looking south, at the railway tracks, 1914 [Ada Handley]





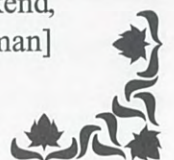
The Burnt River General Store in the 1930's
[Rhoda Walker]



The Burnt River General Store in the early summer of 1995, Lou Luno's granddaughter in the foreground [Lou Luno]



The Burnt River General Store after the fire on Civic Holiday weekend, 1995 [Goldie Dudman]





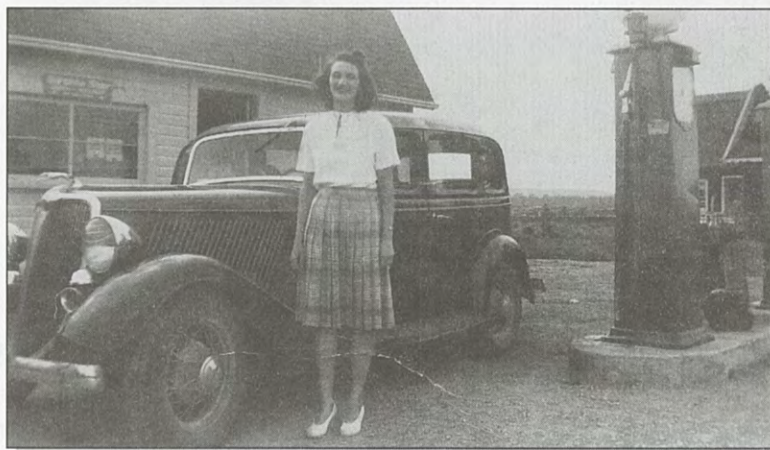
The upper half of the main street of Burnt River burning, October 19, 1944 [June Handley]



There was not sufficient water to put out the fire until the train pulled in and provided water from its boiler tender [June Handley]



The scene the day after, taken from behind the Dancey house and the store [Margaret Sheehey]



Margaret Sheehey serving gas at the pumps, August, 1947 [Margaret Sheehey]



Godwin's Store, 1958
[Chester Godwin]

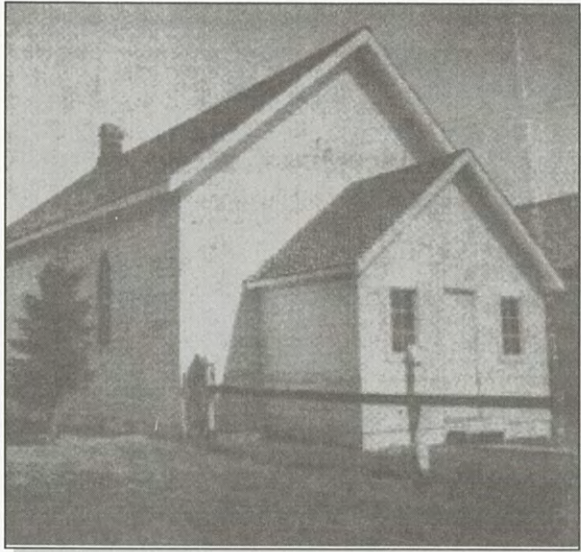


The Orange Lodge catching
the train from the Burnt
River Station, to go to the
12th of July celebrations,
1960 [Margaret Sheehey]



Scott Hodgson (5 years
old) walking the track by
the station, January 1965
[Bernice Hodgson]

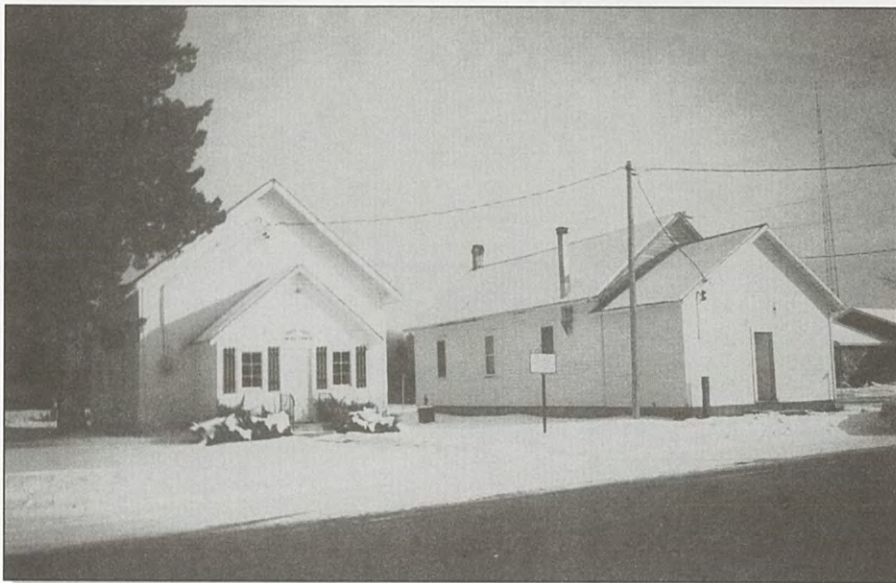




The Burnt River United Church,
May 1954 [Lindsay Post newspaper]



St. Luke's Anglican Church, from the
side entry, October, 1961



The Burnt River United
Church and Hall, 2000





Mrs. Alma Wood, then Postmistress, and her son, Wayne, standing in front of the Post Office entrance, at the Wilson-Godwin House, 1948 [Wayne Wood]



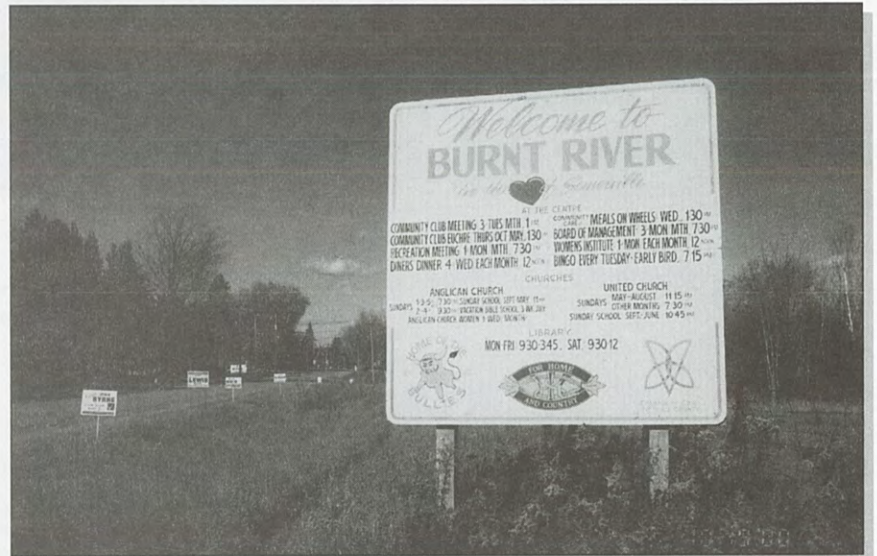
From April 1, 1970, until July 1, 1993, the Burnt River Post Office, and with its commencement in February 1973, the Burnt River Library, were housed in this small building beside the General Store, which was owned by Roddie and Eva Wright. Both were operated in this period by Mrs. June Hunter, as Postmaster and Branch Librarian. [June Hunter]



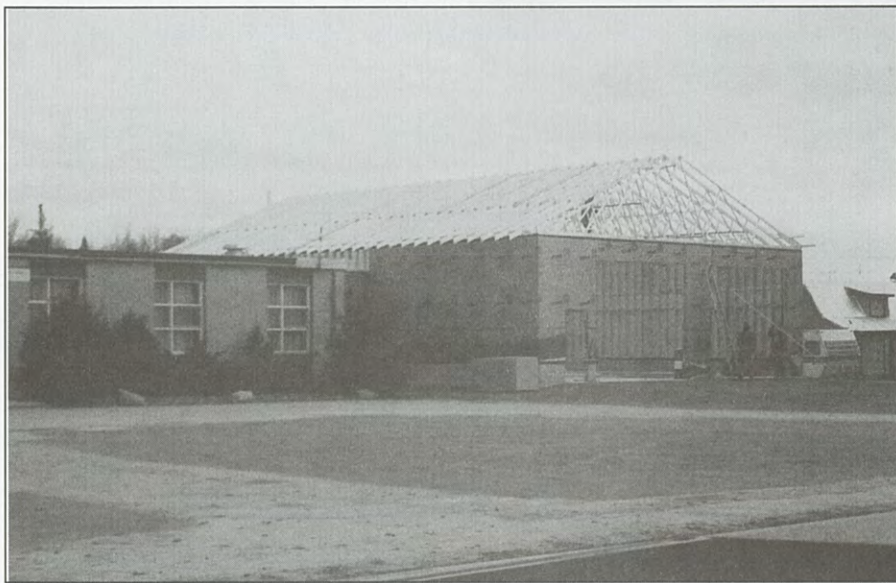
June Hunter, the present Postmaster, raising the Canadian flag, a daily task, at the present Post Office and Library site, in the former Burnt River Public School, now a municipal building, March, 2000 [June Hunter]



The Burnt River Village sign, taken in October, 1981, with Shannon Seniuk standing below it [Dianne Seniuk]



The Burnt River sign, taken in the summer of 2000



The new Burnt River Fire Hall being built, October, 1995 [Sandra Blackmore]





The dedication of the new mural on the Burnt River Library wall, and the remounting of the old school bell, July 1st, 2000





Our new direction post in Burnt River, at the corner of the entrance to the Post Office, Library and Fire Hall, giving distances from here to other significant waterways of the world



The main street of Burnt River, looking south from the Post Office and Fire Hall, the first day of January, 2000





The River



Jean and Jessie Young, swimming in the river, above the bridge at Concession 11, in the 1930's [Valerie Garland]



The Long Rapids, on the Burnt River, north of the village [Roger Hodgson]





The village swimming area at Centennial Park, set aside in the summer of 1967 for recreation



The swimming beach on the river at Centennial Park, looking south, 2000





The flooding of the Burnt River, in 1928, when the Kinmount Dam went out, taken from Joe Rettie's farm house, looking south-east [Joe Rettie]

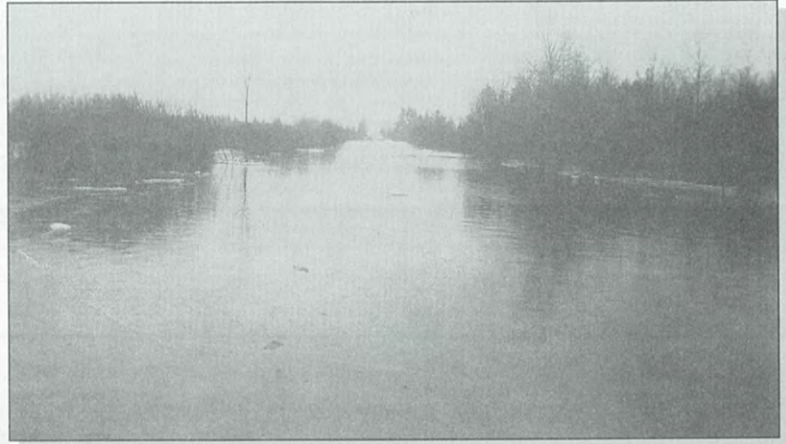


The 1945 flooding of the road into the village, looking south, from Ike Reed's farm, toward the cemetery [Lorna Sheehey]





The 1946 spring flood, looking south-west along the railway tracks, behind Wright's Store in Burnt River [Lorna Sheehey]



Looking west, along Highway 121, during the spring flood in 1946, by Wrex Handley's Road [Lorna Sheehey]



The homes and cottages flooded out below the south entry bridge to Burnt River, in the 1991 flood.





The roadway and bridge to the Armstrong farm, completely cut off during the flood of 1991 [Bernice Hodgson]

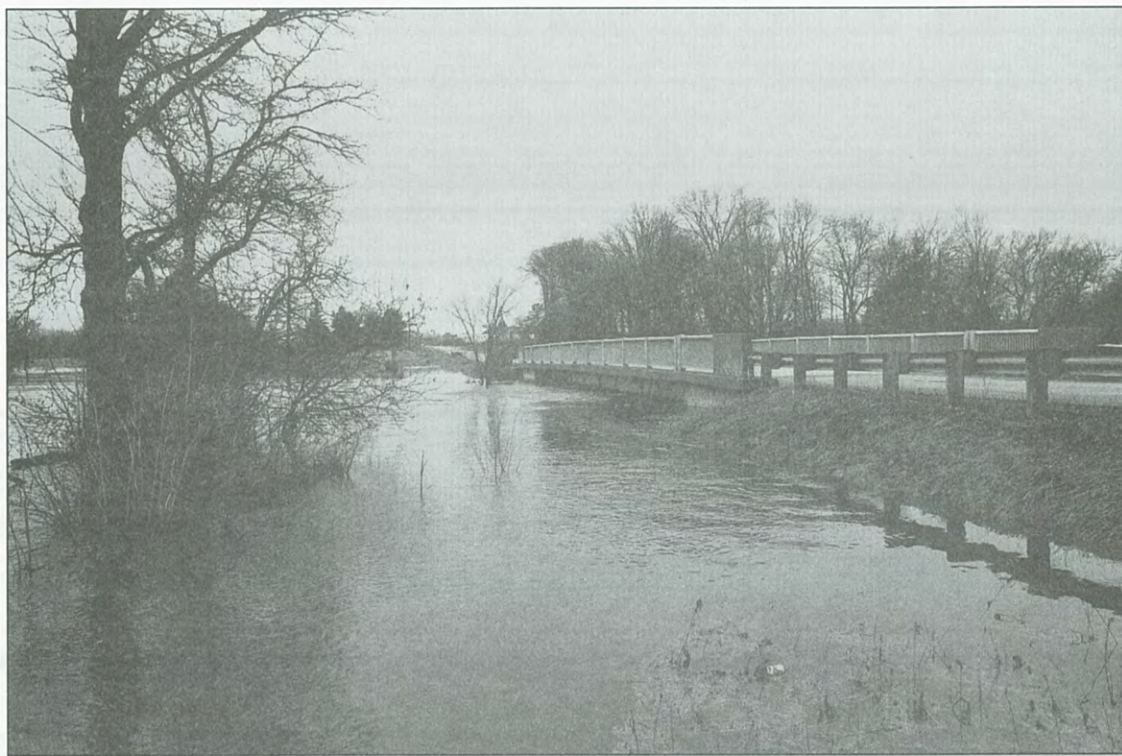


The Centennial Park grounds completely covered in the 1991 flood [Bernice Hodgson]





Gene and Sheran Watson's house completely surrounded with water, on the Coboconk Road, 1991 [Ada Handley]



The water flooding under the north entry bridge in the spring flood of 1998 [John Ueberer]





The spring flooding of 1998, brought on by a tremendous fall of snow in the last week of March, followed by a very warm two days, with heavy rains [John Ueberer]

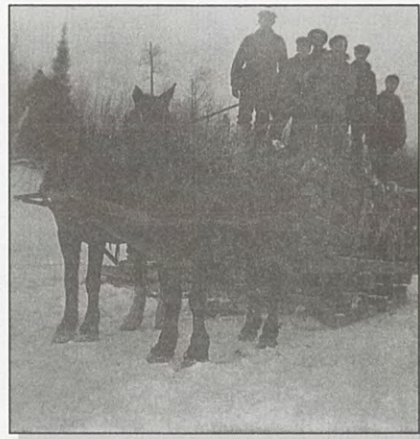




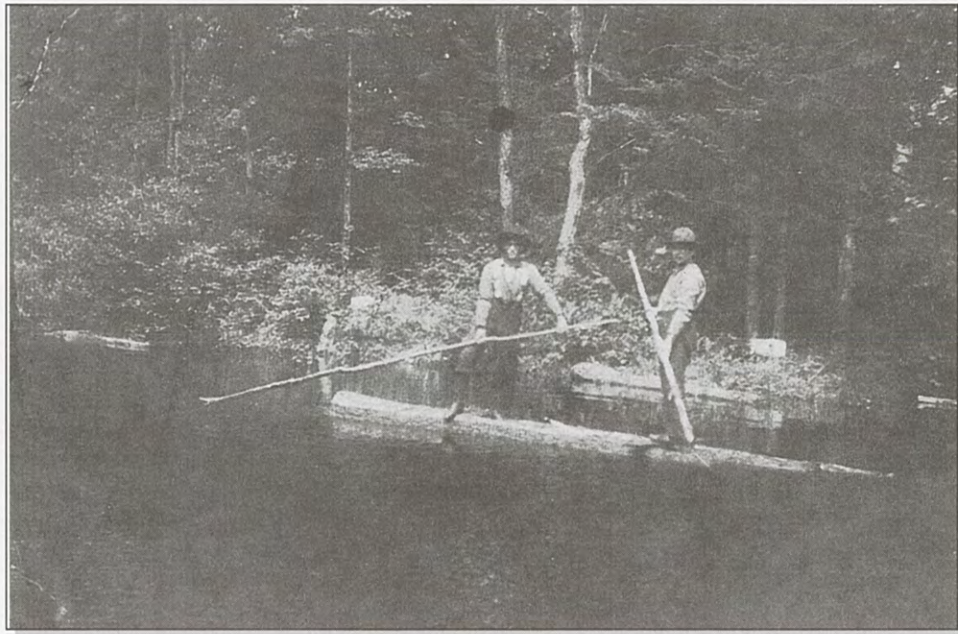
A large tree root, caught at the upper bridge, on the north entry into the village, during the flood of 1998 [Karen Beenan]



The Ways To Make a Living



A teamster and his friends,
hauling a load of logs to
the mill, early 1900's
[Gordon Hunter Collection]



Handling logs in the river drive, early 1900's [Gordon Hunter Collection]



Time out on the log drive, which had reached Cameron Lake, in the early 1900's
[Gordon Hunter Collection]



The cook on the drive, and some of his customers [Gordon Hunter Collection]

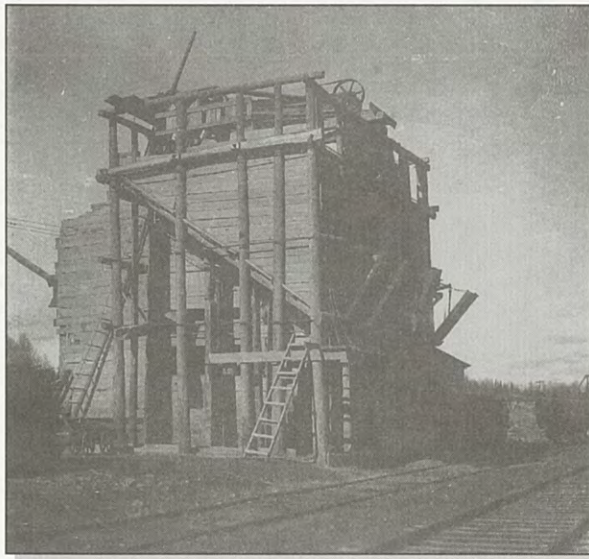




Will Rettie drawing the drilling machine used to make the holes for dynamite, from the road into the quarry [Joe Rettie]

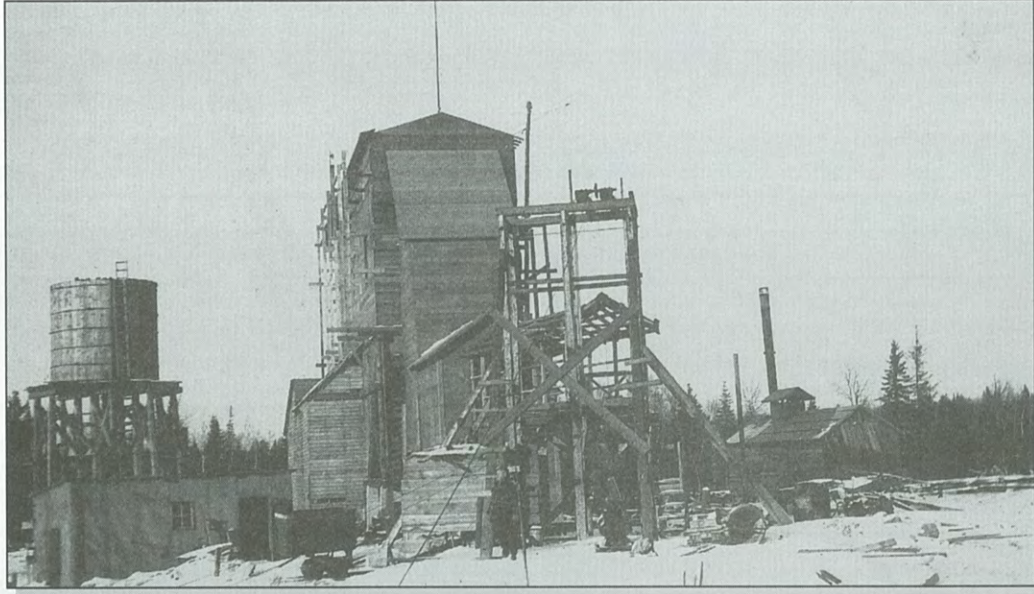


The Burnt River Quarry, located to the south of the village, along the railway track. In the early 1900's it was the main employer in the area. It was first owned by Alexander Rettie, in partnership with Sam Suddaby, then Sam Suddaby on his own, and after this was sold to Britnell and Company, who ran it until 1924. It was then sold to a Hagersville crushed stone company, who closed it to support a monopoly in the industry. Stone from this quarry was used to build the jail in Lindsay and the main Post Office in Toronto

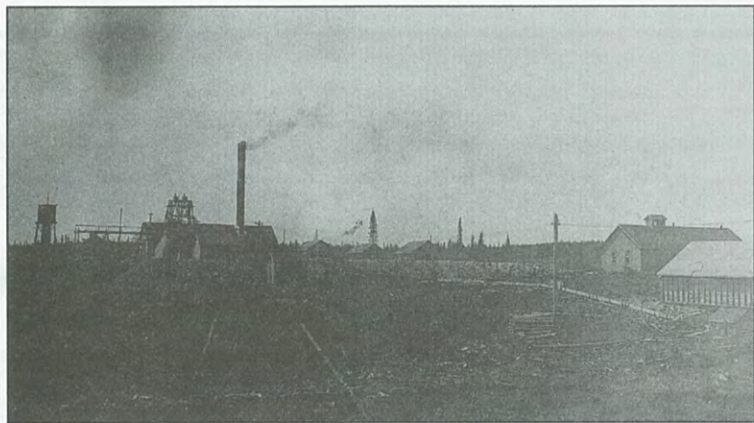


The wooden crib used to load crushed stone into box cars for shipment [Photos from Margaret Allen]



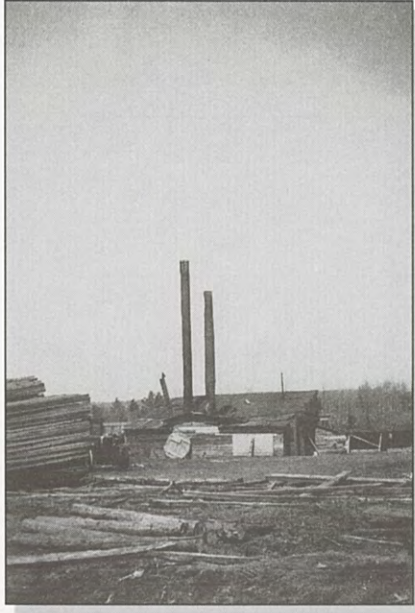


The Somerville Lead Mine, situated south of Road 121, about a mile from where Road 49 cuts in. It operated in the early 1900's, until 1918, and employed up to 50 people at times. [Valerie Garland and Lorna Sheehey]

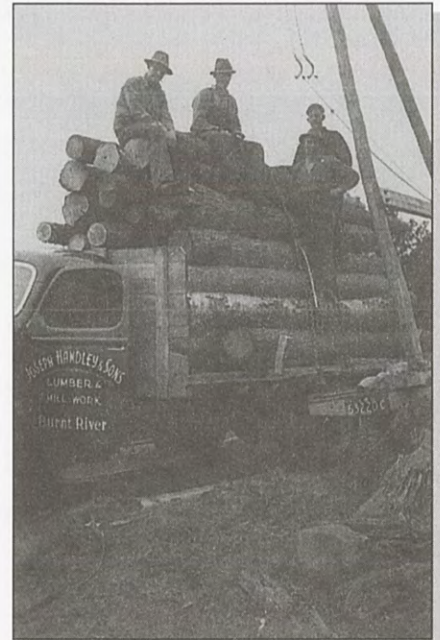


Galena Lead Mine, situated on the east side of Road 121, just beyond where it meets Road 49. It was in operation in the early 1900's [Valerie Garland]





The Handley Lumber Company in operation, 1930's
[June Handley, Peggy Rettie, Berta Hickey]





Having a short rest from piling logs, from the left, Bill Henderson, Dave Kaye, Earl Young(Jake) and Bill Barry, in the 1930's [Valerie Garland]

In 1998, this tree, which had been the second tallest, original growth, white pine known in Ontario, according to Dave Pridham, Land and Stewardship Co-ordinator for the Ministry of Natural Resources (Victoria County Area), became a wind fall. It was located on the Hodgson farm at Burnt River, and Roger is showing the measure on the log butt. It was 129' in length, and produced 2000 bd. ft. of lumber. [Roger Hodgson]





Barn raising at Robert Handley Sr.'s farm, in early 1900's. [Joe Rettie]

Builders of the stone wall for one of the new barns. From the left, Tom Burton, Mr. Suggitt, Bill Shuttleworth, and others [Joe Rettie]



Lee Rettie, with a three-horse hitch on the binder, late 1930's [Morley Rettie]

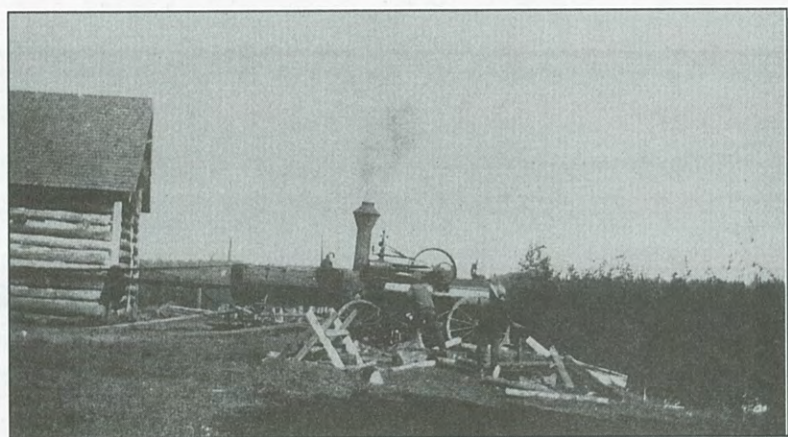




The Henry Dudman family and neighbours at their threshing, in the early 1900's. The two boys are Allan and Gordon. [Gordon Hunter Collection]



Gordon Hunter and Joe Jones, threshing at local farms, early 1900's [Gordon Hunter Collection]





Owen Rettie, with a new colt,
early 1900's [Joe Rettie]



Will Rettie, with his team, rolling the
land after seeding [Joe Rettie]



Chris Hodgson driving a three-horse
team on the binder, with Edith and the
boys, 1920's [Morley Rettie]

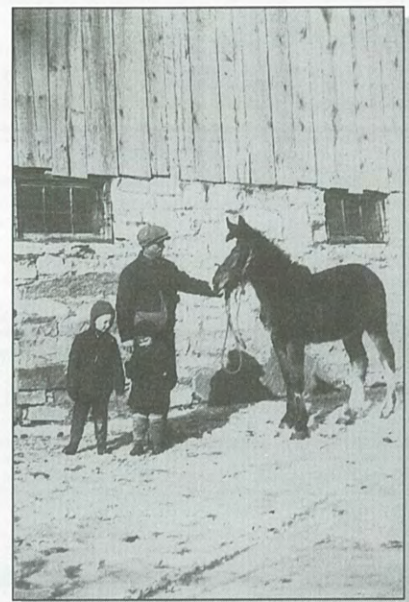




A stumping machine in operation at the Hodgson farm, early 1900's [Roger Hodgson]

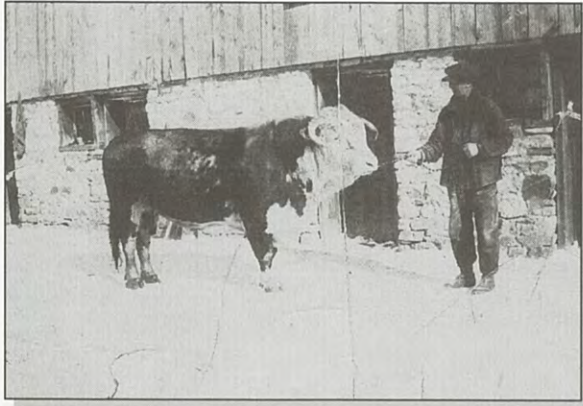


Harry Hughes with his horses, 1930's [Valerie Garland]

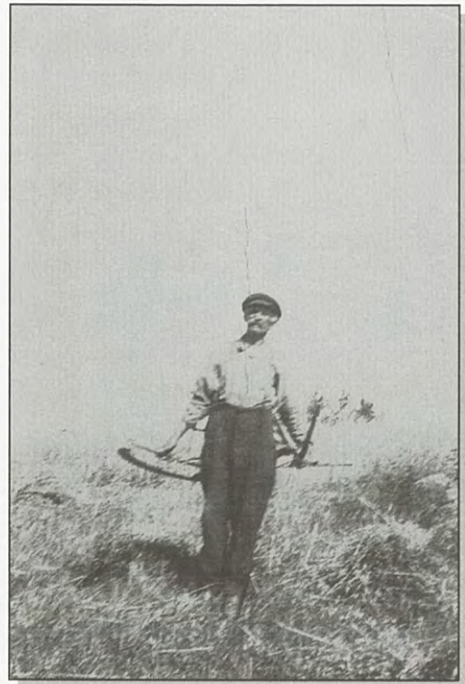


Allan Dudman, with his sons, Jack and Elmer, and a young horse, 1938 [Audrey Dudman]





Thomas Handley Sr., and his prize bull,
1930's [Audrey Dudman]



Henry Dudman with his grain
cradle, early 1900's
[Audrey Dudman]



A field of grain on the Will Rettie farm in the 1930's. The
little white dog belonged to his daughter, Owna (Bae)
[Joe Rettie]



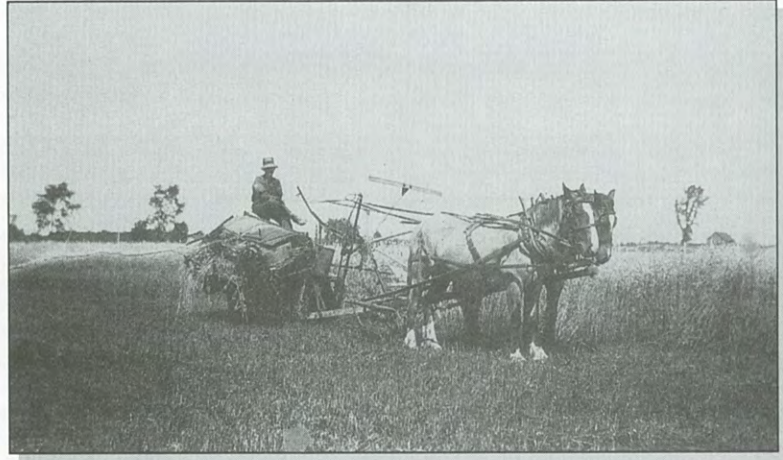
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Godwin,
with the family livestock,
1930's [Chester Godwin]



Sheep on the Art Young Farm, 1930's [Valerie Garland]



Reg Hodgson, bringing in the first load of hay for the year (1941), with horses "Prince" and "Duke" [Roger Hodgson]



Allan Dudman, with horses and binder, 1926 [Audrey Dudman]



Ike Reeds, with one of his teams of horses, in the 1940's [Linda McGann]

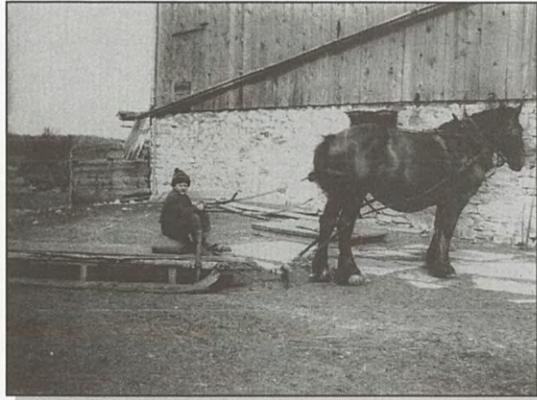


One of first tractors used for threshing in area, 1930's [Morley Rettie]

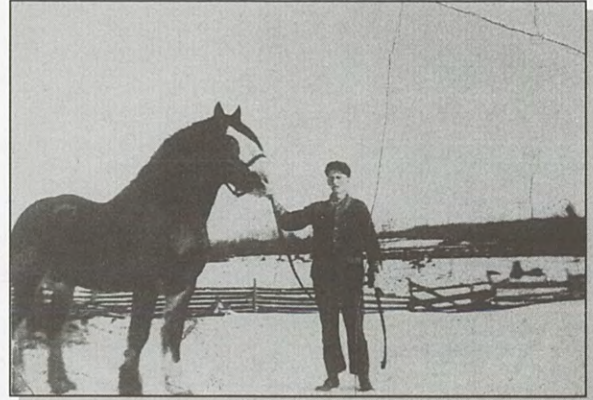


Alf Hodgson trying to "bull dog" a cow, 1930's [Roger Hodgson]





Max Handley on the sleighs, at the Handley farm, 1930's [Margaret Kylie]



Chris Hodgson, with one of his horses, early 1900's [Roger Hodgson]



Thomas Handley Sr., with his yoke of oxen, 1935 [Margaret Kylie]



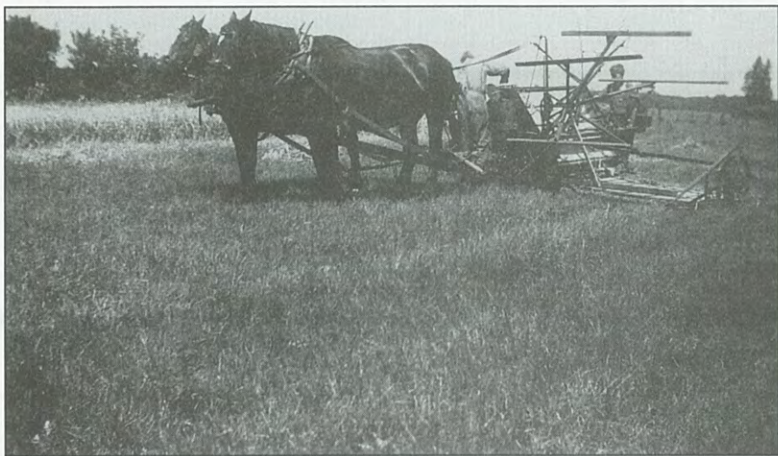
Three-horse hitch on the cultivator at Will Rettie's, 1920's [Joe Rettie]



Joe Handley Sr., with his twin grandsons, Wrex and Max, on the stoneboat at the village house [Margaret Kylie]



Freda Chalmers (now Brown) with her cow and calf, around 1936 [Linda McGann]



Harvesting the grain with a binder on the Carew farm in the 1930's [Grant Carew]



Ellen Rettie's ducks, 1920's [Joe Rettie]



Dean Carew driving the family team, late 1930's [G. Carew]



Laura Wright(nee Dunbar) with her chickens, 1930's [Valerie Garland]



Kathleen Taylor, with "Mac", and Stewart Pocock, Warren Taylor holding Dwight in background, maple sugaring, 1946 [Goldie Dudman]

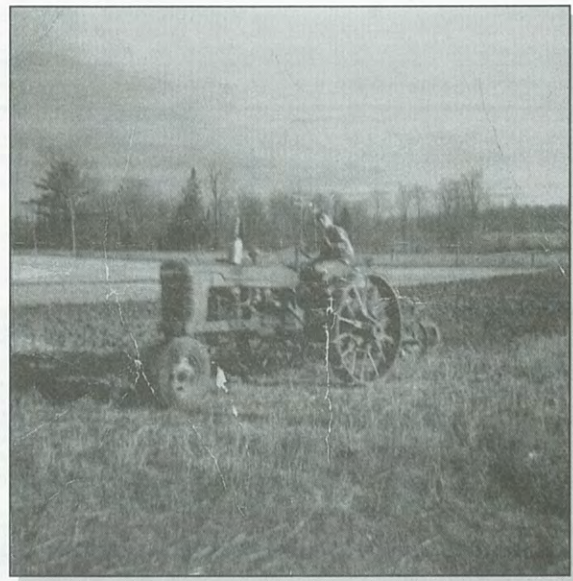




Henry Carew working on planting a windbreak of trees at farm, late 1940's
[Grant Carew]



Eliza Handley (Mrs. Robert) hoeing in her garden at the farm, August, 1962
[Linda McGann]

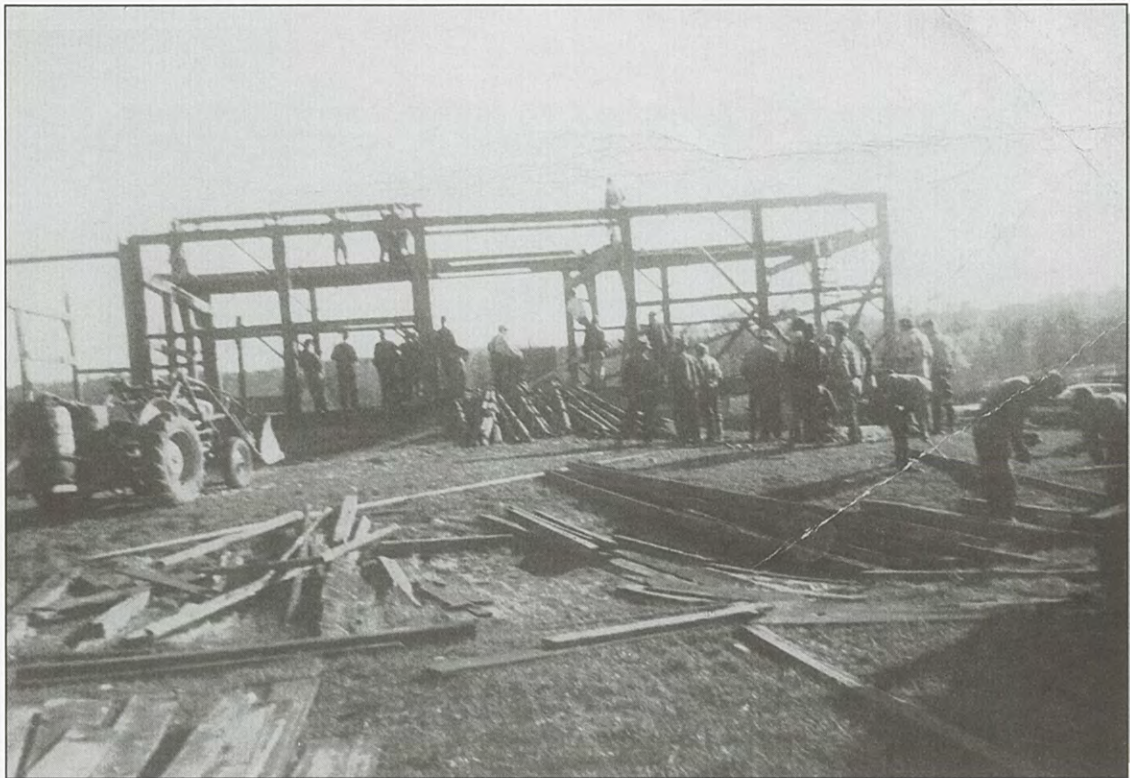


A used tractor purchased by Marsh Dudman in 1957. It had metal wheels with lugs on them. [Goldie Dudman]



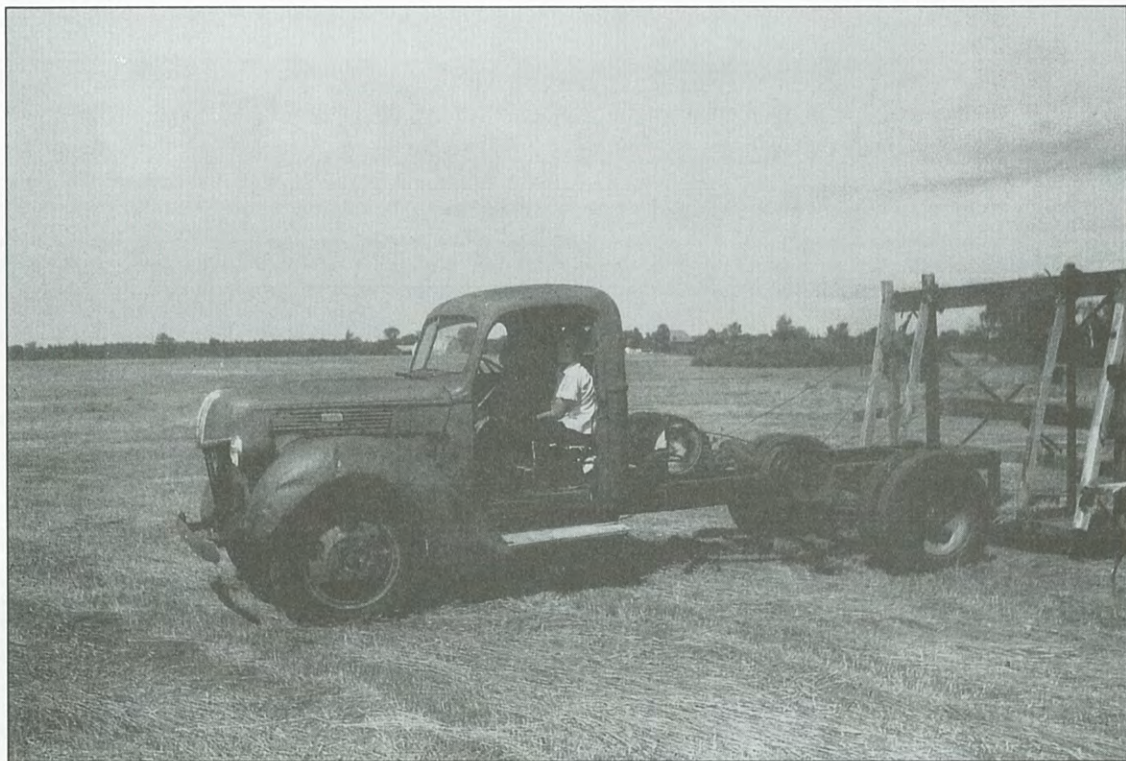


Marsh Dudman, with family buck rake, made from an older truck and used to bring in hay in a quicker manner than loading it on wagons, 1947 [Goldie Dudman]



Marsh Dudman's barn raising, 1961, after first barn had burned [Goldie Dudman]



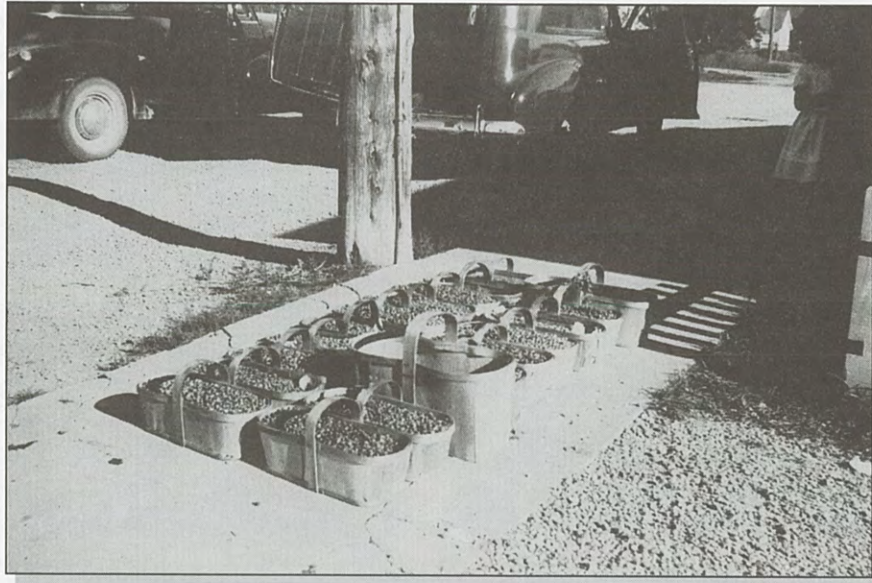


Roger Hodgson using buck rake on farm, 1966 [Roger Hodgson]

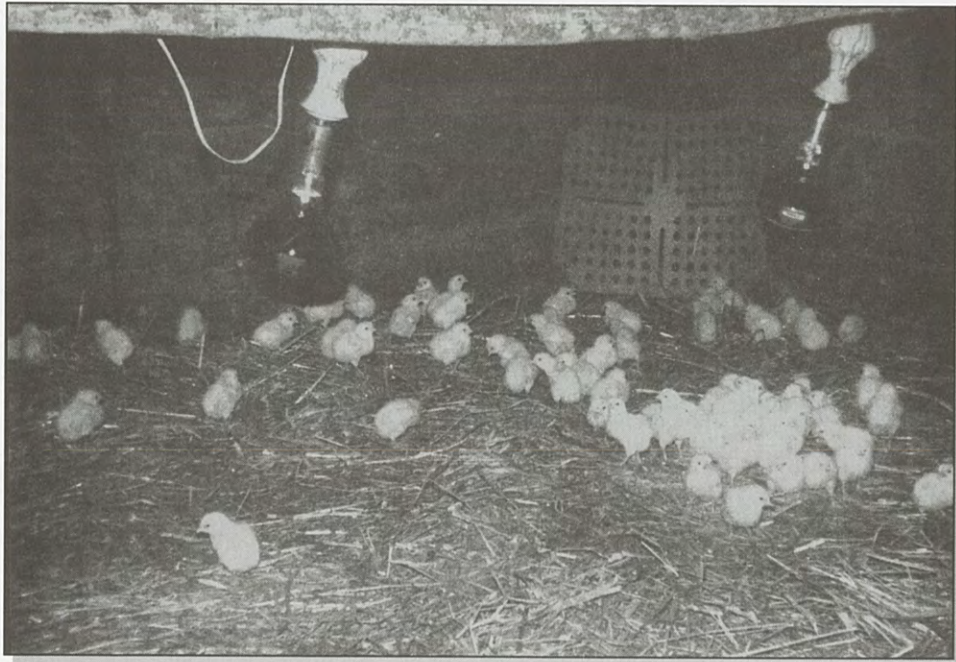


Ray Handley's cattle (Concession 2, Lot 7, by Gordon Hopkin's farm),
1970's [Hazel Cavanaugh]



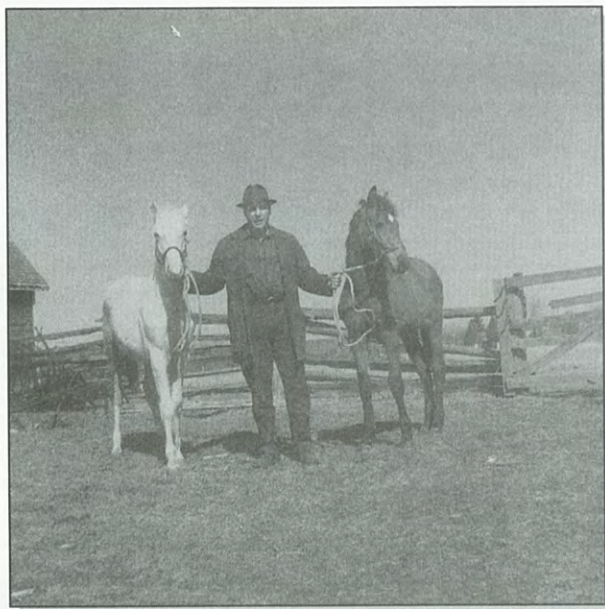


A great picking of huckleberries, 18 6-qt. baskets, 1940's
[Chester Godwin]

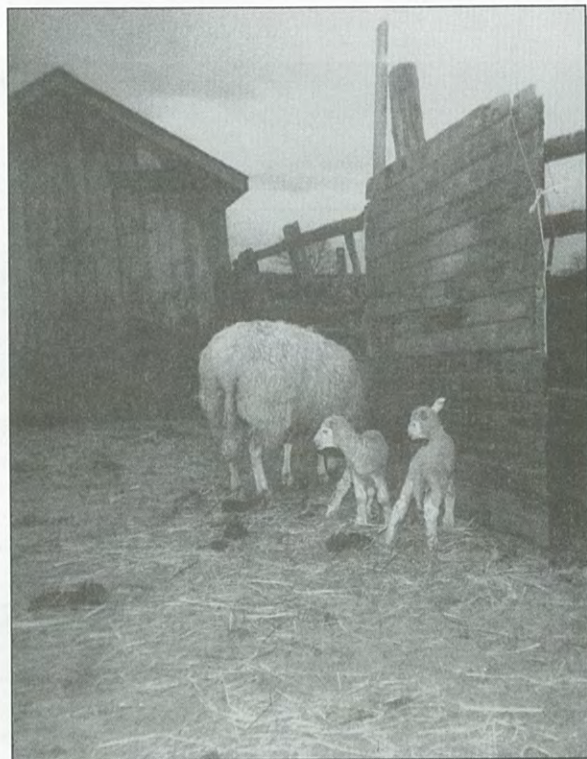


Bill Dudman's new chicks, 1980's [Bill Dudman]

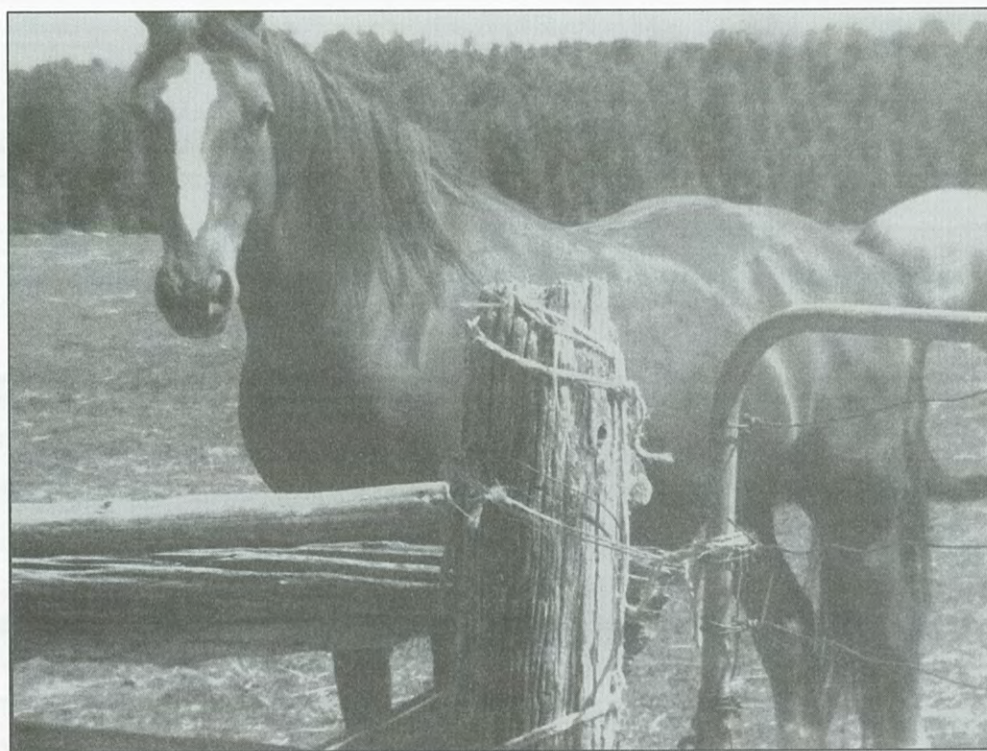




Alec Swinson, with two of the family's riding horses, 1970's [June MacKay]

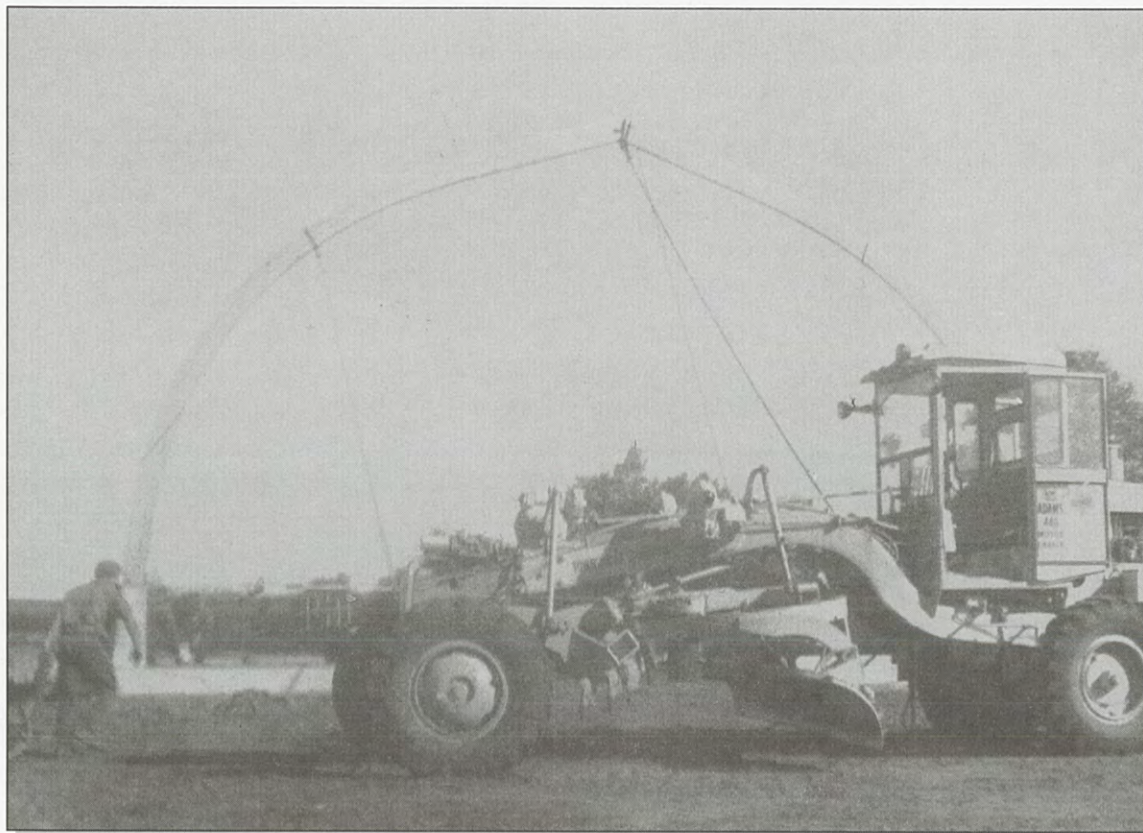


Twin lambs at Jim Handley's farm, 1980's [Ada Handley]



"Joe", one of the horses born at Grant Carew's farm in the 1970's [Grant Carew]





The new Township of Somerville Work Centre, opened April 4, 1967, at Burnt River
[Margaret Sheehey]





M. M. Dudman Construction Co., which Marshall Dudman began in the 1970's
[Marshall Dudman]

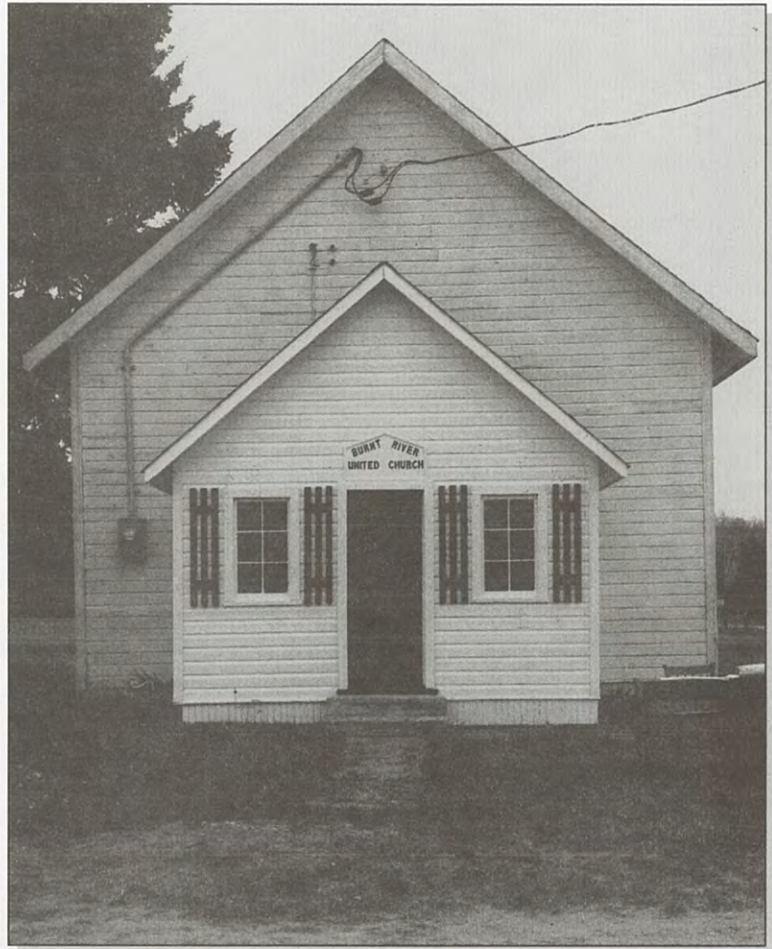




The opening of the Burnt River Quarries Inc. operation in 1989 , on the south side of County Road 121, just west of the Jones farm [Marshall Dudman]



The Churches



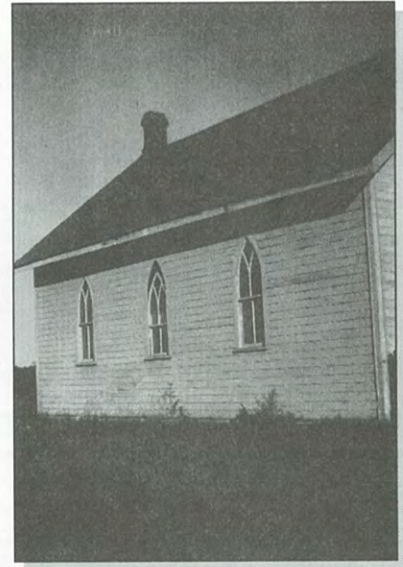
Burnt River United Church on
Homecoming Sunday of Ontario's
bicentennial year, May, 1984
[BR United Church]



St. Luke's Anglican Church, October, 2000



Margaret and Ralph Sheehey, outside Burnt River United Church, on the day of their daughter's wedding (Marie), April 1958
[Margaret Sheehey]



A view of Burnt River United Church from the north side, 1950's
[Wayne Wood]



Burnt River United Church Sunday School, 1955:
Back row, from left: Mae Dudman, Marg Dudman, Mrs. Violet Sheehey, Supt., Mrs. Alma Wood, Asst. Supt. Third row, from left: Verna Wood, Robin Rettie, Muriel Sheehey, Ross Wood, Shirley Wood, Gloria Sheehey Second Row, from left: Phyllis Wood, Marion Wood, Audrey Dudman, Greg Sheehey, Ron Sheehey Front row, from left: Michael Wood, Barbara Wood, Brenda Hodgson, Eric Sheehey, Bob Sheehey, Bill Dudman, David Hodgson
[Verna Humphries]



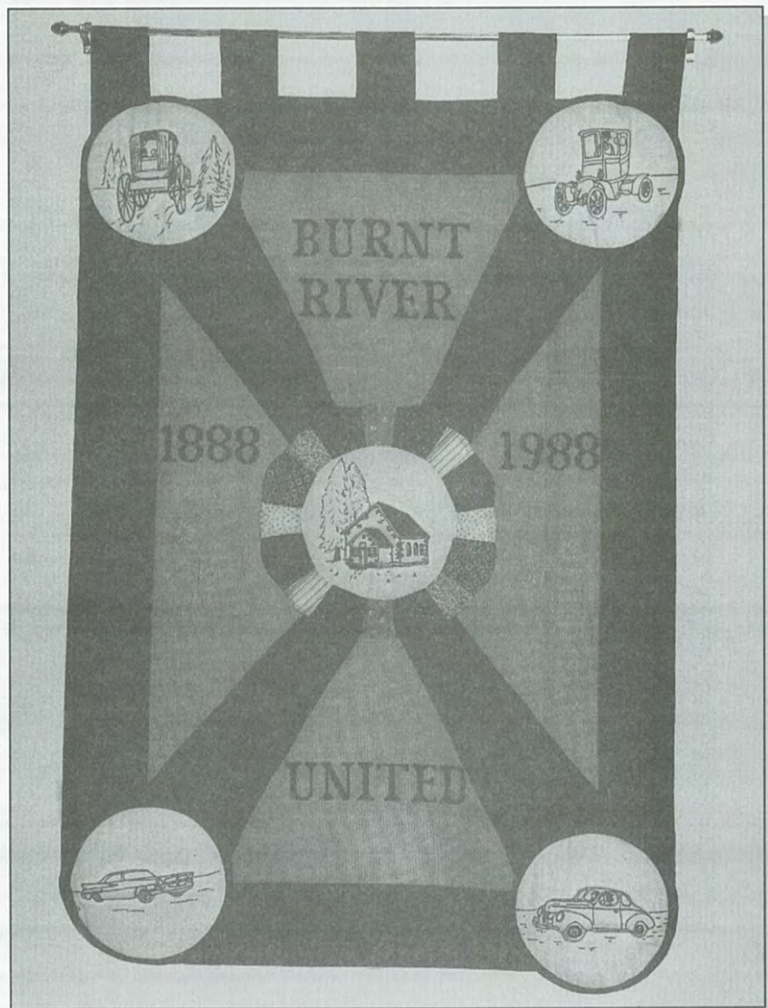
Burnt River United's minister, congregation and guests, celebrating Homecoming Sunday, 1984 [BR United]



Burnt River United's 100th anniversary cake, June, 1988



Burnt River United's 100th anniversary cake being cut by Viola Rettie, the oldest member of the congregation, and Jack Lively, the oldest guest, with Eileen Morrish, Dr. Elgie Joblin and June Hunter looking on, June, 1988 [BR United]



The banner made by the Burnt River UCW for the anniversary celebrations, depicting 100 years of travel to the church. The small pieces of print surrounding the church in the centre were each donated by different church families. [BR United]



One of the annual quilts made by the Burnt River UCW, being shown by the lucky winner [BR United]



Burnt River United Church Sunday School Picnic at the Centennial Park out by the river, with everyone trying the sack race, 1995 [BR United]





The laying of the foundation for St. Luke's Anglican Church at Burnt River in 1903 [Peggy Rettie]





St. Luke's Anglican Church
Sunday School, early 1950's

Children: Front Row:
Charla McGann, David
McGann, Lyn Godwin,
Paul Godwin Back Row:
Gary Godwin, Erick
Watson, Barry McGann,
Beth Hilyer, Sheila
McGann, Judy Godwin,
Dianne Godwin, Susan
Hilyer, Paul Hilyer.
[Ada Handley]



St. Luke's Anglican Church 75-year
celebrations, with the Bishop attending, 1978
[Chester Godwin]



The Bishop, attending clergy, and altar boys
and girls, at the 75-year celebrations
[Chester Godwin]





Junior Anglicans [J.A.] in May, 1967 [6 girls] with leader, Ada Handley [Ada Handley]

St. Luke's Anglican Church ladies on an outing at the Stone Hedge Restaurant, 1970's. Front row, from the left: Ada Handley, Isa Hilyer, Mabel Lamb, Verlie Chalmers, Mrs. Wilkinson, Ila Armstrong, Dorothy (Doll) Blackmore Back row, from the left: Joyce Godwin, Grace Carew, Greata Reeds, Ivy Handley, Sandy Blackmore, Robinette Harding [Linda McGann]



A group of Anglican Church ladies in June, 1973 From the left, Ila Armstrong, Verlie Chalmers, Mabel Lamb, Sandy Blackmore, Robinette Harding, Mona Handley [Joyce Townsend]





The arrival of the
Susquecentennial Cross at St.
Luke's Anglican Church in
Burnt River, August 13, 1989
[Ada Handley]



The remounting of the bell and
tower on St. Luke's Anglican
Church, June 2000 [Chester
Godwin]

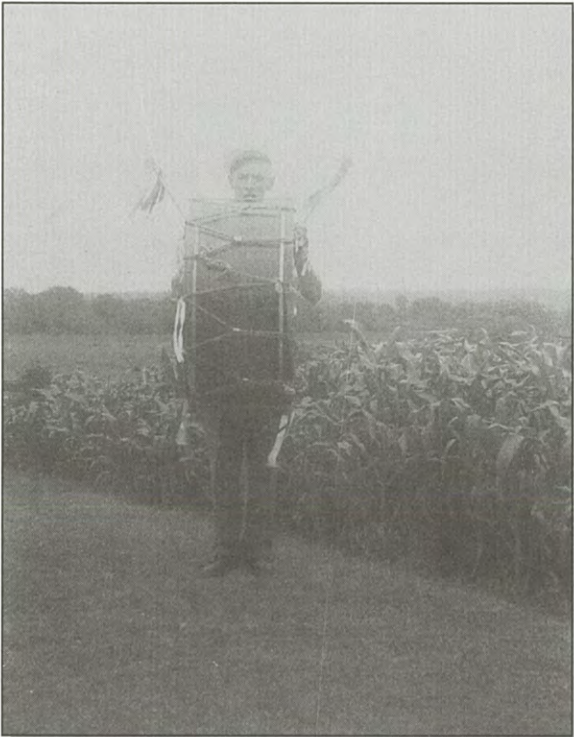


The Orange Ladies on parade in Kinmount on July 12th, Alma Wood leading in the foreground [Wayne Wood]



Marching on the 12th of July at Burnt River, 1916 [Roger Hodgson]

The Social Organizations



Hughie Sheehey, with the base drum, ready to march in the Orange Parade in Burnt River, July 12, 1954 [Lorna Sheehey]



The Orange parade into the Kinmount Fair grounds, 1940's [Morley Rettie]





The Burnt River Women's Institute's 50-year celebration at the parish hall of the Anglican church Oct. 7, 1958. From the left, Minnie Godwin, Ellen Rettie, Dora Dudman, Ada Handley, Geraldine Doherty, Ileen Windover, Bertha Palmer, Alma Rettie, Verlie Chalmers, Greata Reeds, Eliza Handley [Linda McGann]



Ellen Rettie with the blue and gold quilt she made, to be raffled at the Institute's 50th anniversary. It was won by Margaret Dudman (now Kylie). [Linda McGann]





The Women's Institute ladies on an outing in the 1970's. From the left: Lorna Sheehey, Dora Dudman, Bertha Palmer, Ileen Windover, Audrey Thrasher, Edith Hughes, Verlie Chalmers, Greata Reeds, Viola Rettie, Shirley Handley, Sandy Blackmore, Ada Handley [Linda McGann]



The ladies of the Women's Institute on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Burnt River Branch in 1983. Front row, from the left: Ada Handley, Alma Rettie, Grace Frise, Greata Reeds, Shirley Handley Middle row, from the left: Ileen Windover, Audrey Thrasher, Lorna Sheehey, Sandra Blackmore, Back row, from the left: Maxine Huke, Noni Campbell, Sue Douglas [Peggy Rettie]





The 4-H Club Project "A 4-H Girl Entertains", 1954: Leaders were Mattie Handley and Greata Reeds The girls invited their mothers and grandmothers to a special meal as part of the club project. Front Row, from left: Mrs. Minnie Godwin, Mrs. Ellen Rettie, Mrs. Mattie Handley, Mrs. Dora Dudman, Mrs. May Armstrong, Mrs. Marion Godwin, Mrs. Jessie Stewart, Mrs. Annie Handley Second row, from left: Mrs. Iva Wood, Mrs. Ila Armstrong, Mrs. Gladys Watson, Mrs. Violet Sheehey, June Armstrong, Marg Dudman, Faye Stewart, Gloria Sheehey, Shirley Wood, Sharon Watson, Muriel Sheehey Back row, from left: Ma rie Sheehey, Mae Dudman, Verna Wood, Greata Reeds, Marion Godwin, Robin Rettie [Verna Humphries]

A Burnt River 4-H group in the late 1980's on "Outdoor Living Skills"

Back Row, from left: Angela Fleming, Michael Godwin, Shelley Trethewey, Shane Watson, Middle Row, from left: Lyne Trethewey (Leader), June Hunter (Leader), Jamie Trethewey, Darlene Smith (Leader), Elizabeth Hunter, Front Row, from left: Denise Tait, Pauline (Blackmore) Campbell, Lori Burrows, Teresa Tait [Pauline Campbell]





The New Horizon Club of Burnt River staging their Christmas Bazaar in the Orange Hall in the early 1970's [Community Club Photo Album]



The New Horizon Club (the original Burnt River Seniors) ran a food booth at all the local fairs in the late 1970's thru early 1980's. Mrs. Edith Hughes and Mr. Carmon Wood were always in attendance, as was Mrs. Audrey Thrasher, with Mrs. Iva Wood accompanying them [Verna Humphries]





The annual Seniors' picnic at the
Rec Centre, usually in June
[Community Club Photo Album]



One of the first quilts made by the
Seniors of Burnt River [Community
Club Photo Album]





Audrey Thrasher and Ada Handley at the Kinmount Fair in 1998. They, along with Eleanor (Switzer) Carew, were there to publicize the services provided by Community Care throughout the County [Ada Handley]



Bill St. Thomas cooking for Diners' Dinner at the Rec Centre, a monthly event sponsored by Community Care of Somerville. The Somerville Executive, Eleanor Switzer, Audrey Thrasher and Ada Handley, are with him , 1992 [Community Care Photo Album]

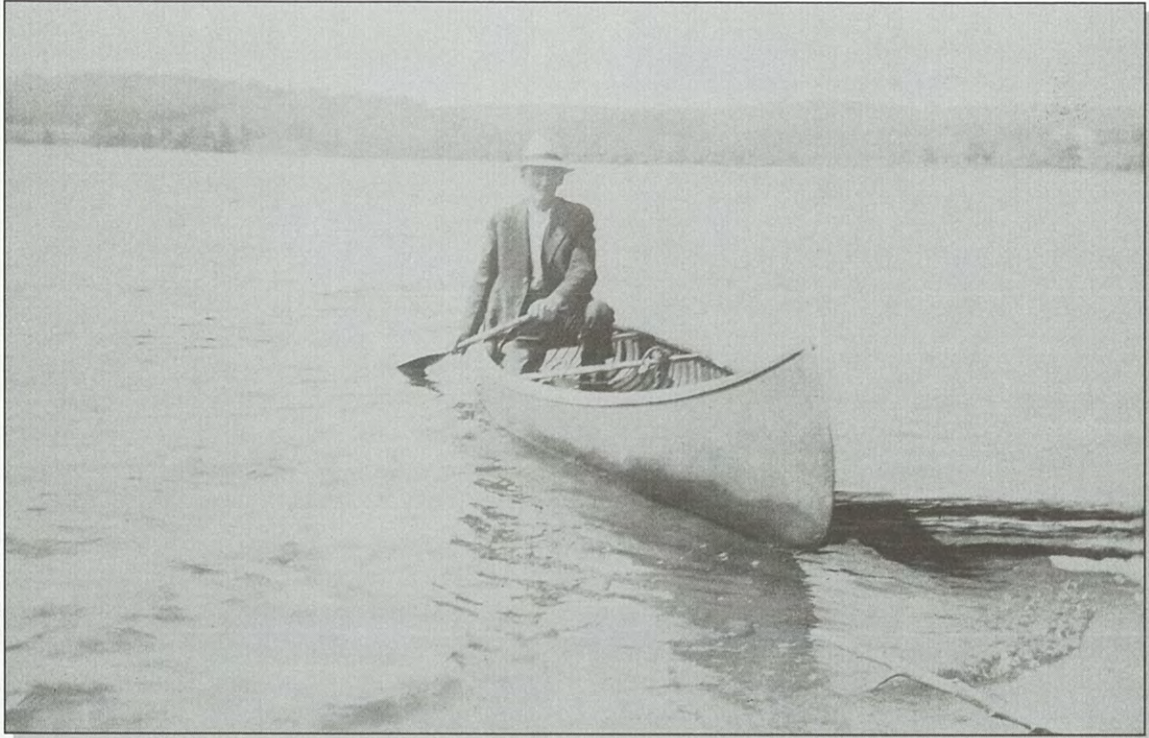




Burnt River's Volunteer Fire Dept. in 1996 at the opening of the new fire hall in Burnt River [Fire dept. Album] Back Row, from left: Walt Verleysen, Bob MacKenzie, Sam Plume, Jerry Dudman, Chief Morace Jones, Barry Wood, Sandra Blackmore, Jason Campbell, Deputy Chief John Blackmore. Front Row, from left: Bruce Douglas, Bill Handley, Cory Campbell, Paul Godwin, April Blackmore

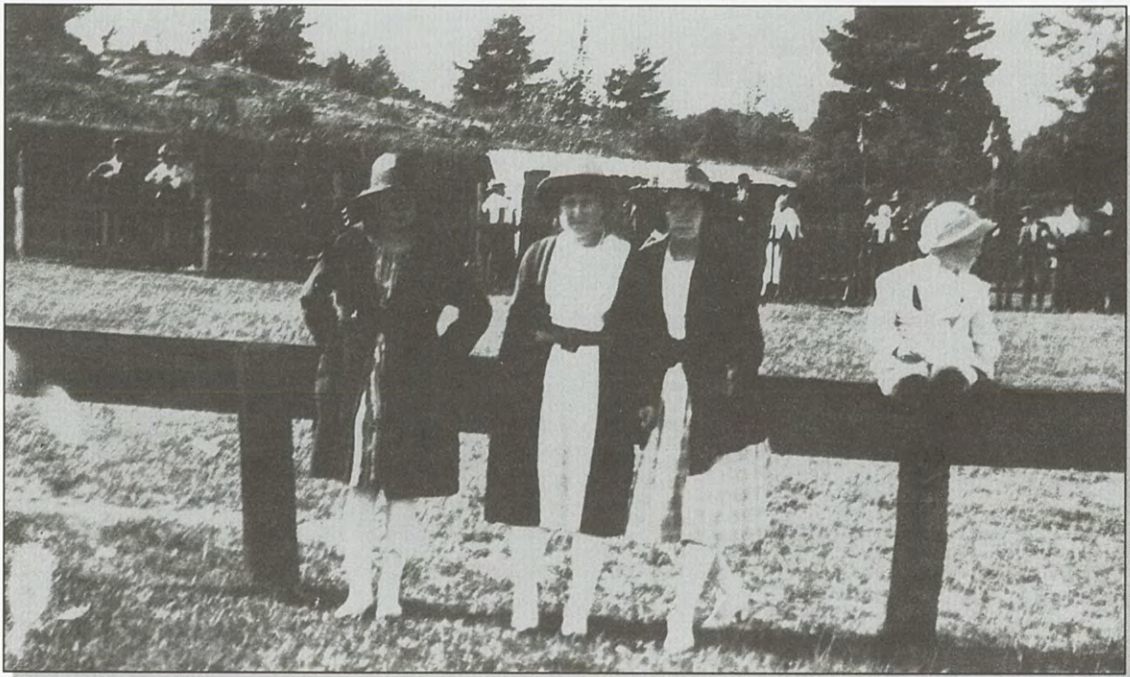


The Burnt River Bullies' Ball Club taking part in the parade at the Rec Centre opening in 1983 [Rec Centre Album]



Will Rettie, on Four Mile Lake, in a canoe, early 1900's [Joe Rettie]

Recreation



At the Kinmount Fair, early 1930's [Joe Rettie]





A cyclist, early 1900's
[Gordon Hunter Collection]



Art Young, ready for a sulky race, with
his horse, "Black Molly", 1940's
[Valerie Garland]



The boys of the Burnt River football (soccer)
team, early 1900's. Ike Reeds and the
Hodgson boys(senior) are amongst this group.
[Roger Hodgson]



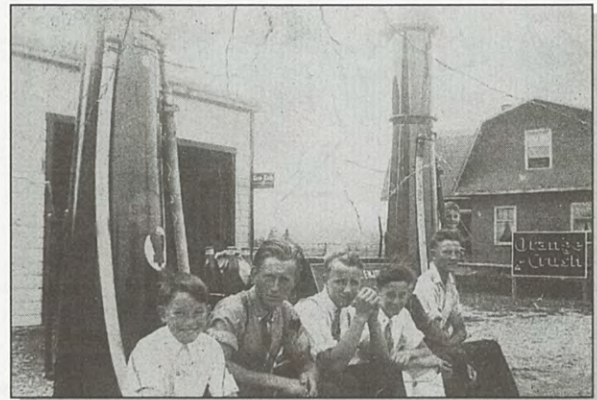
A summer picnic, early 1900's [Gordon
Hunter Collection]



The Watson family from the siding area north of the
village, and friends, tobogganing in the early 1900's.
Luella is second from left, Arnold fifth from
right.[Bernice (Chalmers) Powell]



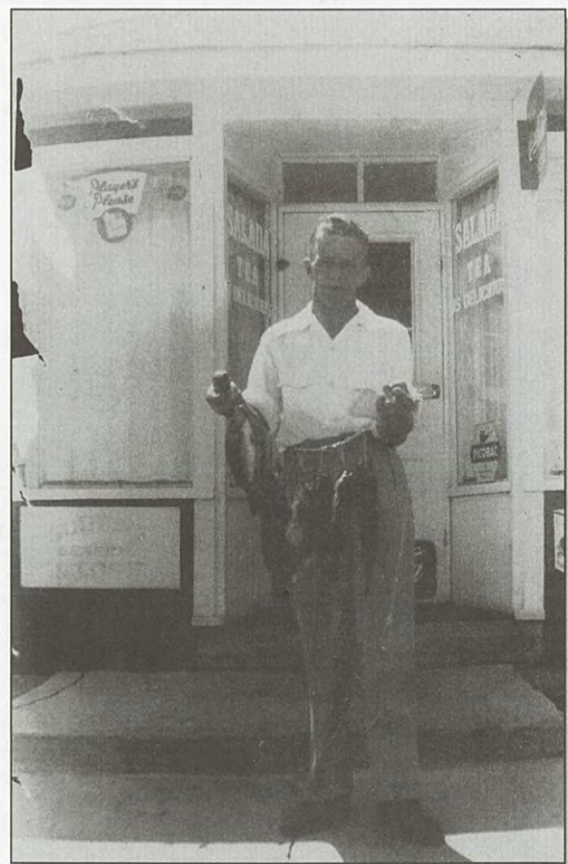
Jack Rettie on snow shoes in
1920's [Joe Rettie]



In front of Ralph Sheehey's old garage on the
main street, in late 1930's. From the left:
Blair Hanthorn, Wrex Handley, Earl Godwin,
Doug Godwin, Max Handley, Wayne Wood
(behind pump) [Reg Hodgson]



A fisherman showing off his muskie
catch, in front of Godwin's store, looking
north on the main street, 1960's
[Chester Godwin]



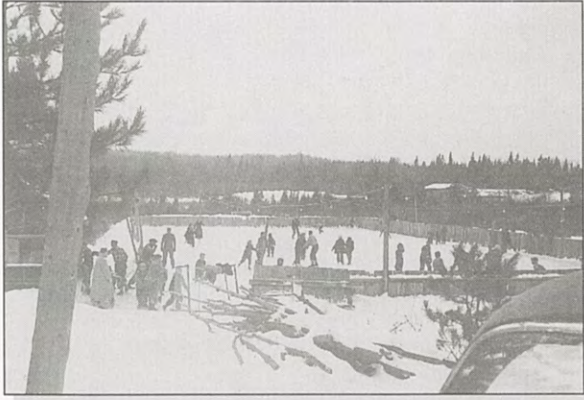
Chester Godwin and his fish catch, 1950's
[Chester Godwin]



The Burnt River Hockey Team in 1948-49. They played on an outdoor rink they built for the village in the hollow, just north of Ralph Sheehey's house, on the main street. Back Row, from left: Ralph McGann, Wrex Handley, Earl Godwin, Bob Handley, Terry Dancey, Bill Brokenshire, George Undra Front Row, from left: Wilfred Craig, Glen Lamb, Morgan Switzer, Douglas Godwin, Gordon Everett, Lorne Robinson. General Manager: Roddy Wright (in background) [Eleanor Switzer]



Burnt River's junior hockey team, which played at the indoor rink in Fenelon Falls, in 1958. Back Row, from left: Dave Hodgson, Herb Blackmore (Asst. Coach), John Blackmore, Ralph McGann (coach) Middle Row, from left: Eric Sheehey, Joe McGann, Bob Sheehey, Joe Handley, Bill Doherty Front Row, from left: Brian Godwin, Gene Cameron, Dave McGann [Margaret Sheehey]



The rink, in the winter of 1949. The whole village turned out to skate, or watch the hockey games. The hydro for lights, and water for flooding, came from Ralph Sheehey's. [Margaret Sheehey]



Building the rink, 1948 [Earl Godwin]





Mrs. Ella Hunter, surrounded by her nephews and sons, playing the fiddle at the Schell Family Reunion at Hunter's farm, 1973 [June Hunter]



Bob Cameron, with his horse and buggy, on the main street by Sheehey's gas pumps, 1960 [Margaret Sheehey]



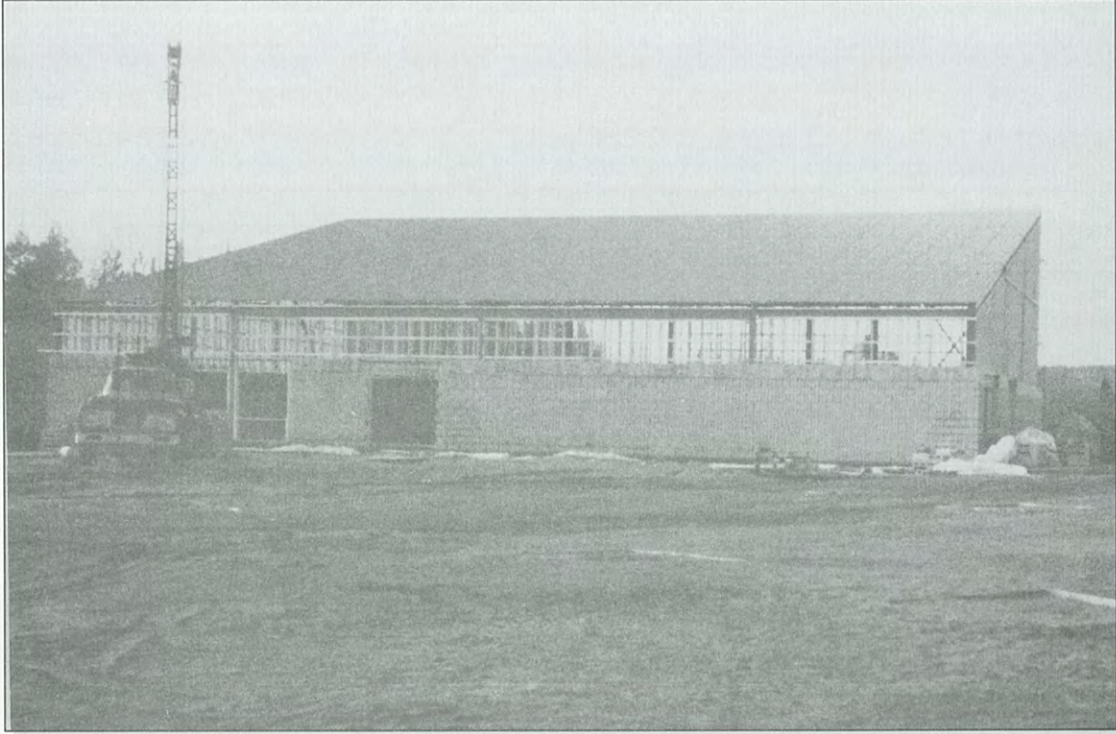


Levelling and rolling the ball diamond at the new recreation park, 1981
[Margaret Sheehey]



Laying the blocks for the new Rec Centre building, 1982 [Rec Centre Album]





The Rec Centre building going up, 1982 [Rec Centre Album]

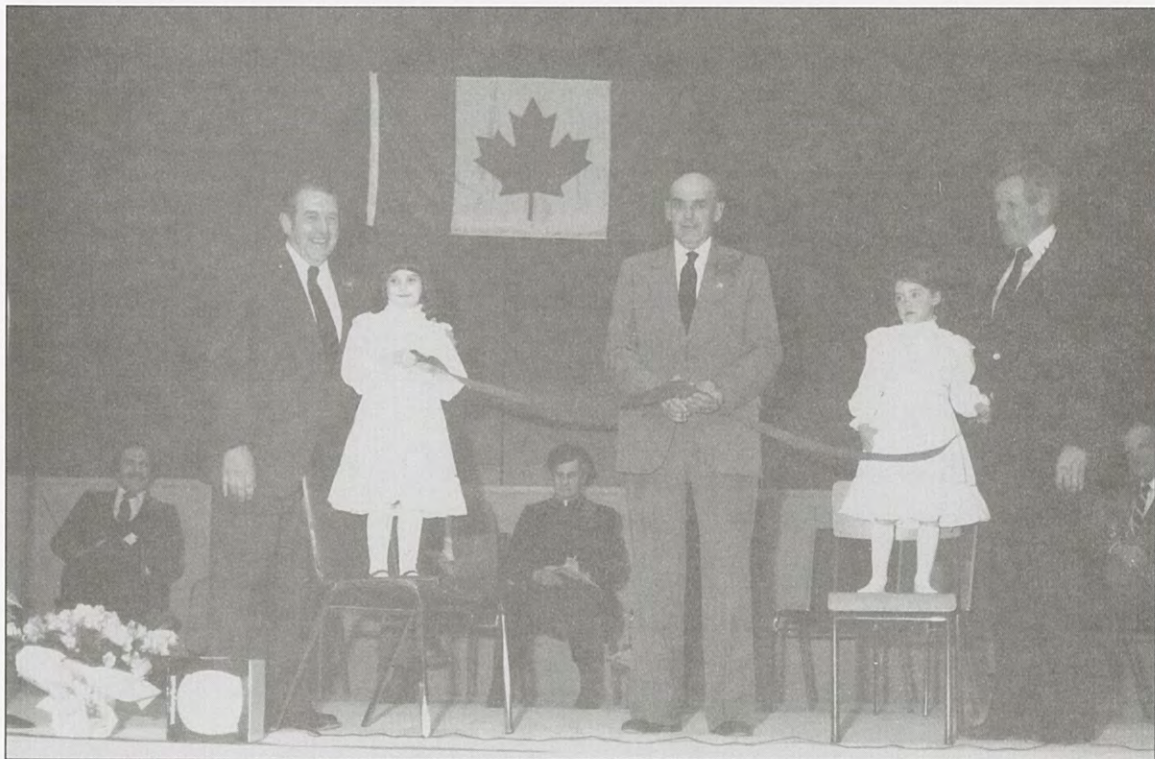


The newly completed Burnt River and District Recreation Centre, May, 1983
[Rec Centre Album]





The opening ceremonies for the Rec Centre, May 28, 1983.
From the left: Bill Scott, MP, Allison Watson, Maurice Watson, then Reeve,
Amanda Watson, John Aikens, MPP [Rec Centre Album]





1984 Lob Ball Tournament, in which Burnt River Bullies won the championship [June Handley]



The winning Lob Ball Team, 1984 [June Handley]





Flooding the rink at the Rec Centre, late 1980's [Rec Centre Album]



Wintario comes to the Rec Centre, 1986 [Verna Humphries]





The Ontario Bicentennial celebration parade, May, 1984, Eric Watson and Sue Douglas riding in the buggy [Barbara Wallwork]



Marion Godwin (Mrs. Earl),
at the Homecoming Sunday
of the Ontario Bicentennial,
May, 1984
[Chester Godwin]





Elizabeth Hunter, cross-country skiing at Hunter farm, 1986 [June Hunter]



Lyndsay and Elizabeth Hunter, snowmobiling down the lane, 1980 [June Hunter]





Burnt River United Church Sunday School at summer picnic, swimming in river at Centennial Park, 1995 [Bev Freeman]



Bingo at the Rec Centre, Tuesday evenings, 1998 [Bev Freeman]





The Millennium Winter Picnic parade advancing up the main street of Burnt River, January 1, 2000 [Paul Godwin]

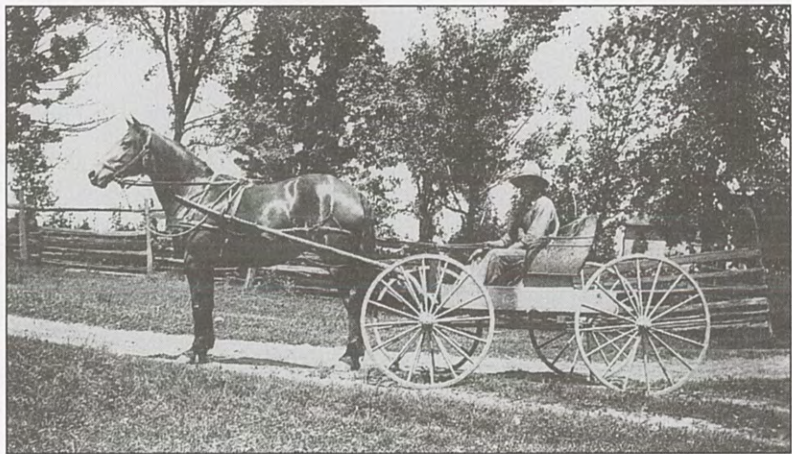


The Millennium Winter Picnic parade, entering the Rec Centre Park, January 1, 2000, the girls leading with the millennium banner

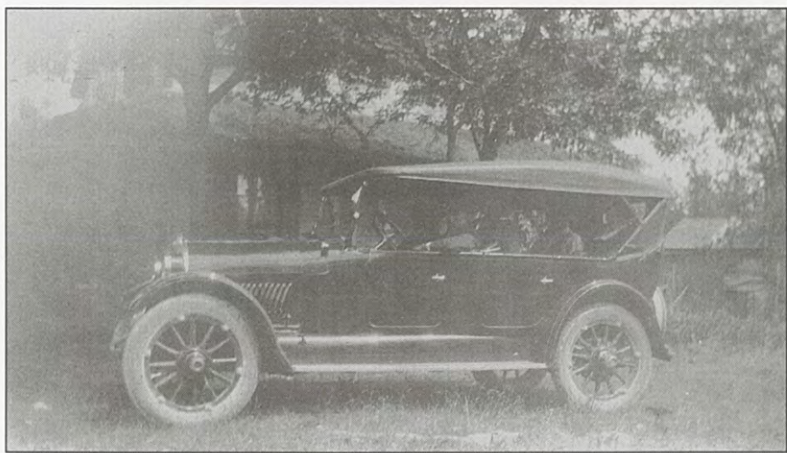




Transportation



Moss Handley and his horse, in the farm lane way, 1935
[Linda McGann]



Joe and Mattie Handley, with their family, off to Rochester
to visit, late 1920's [Peggy Rettie]

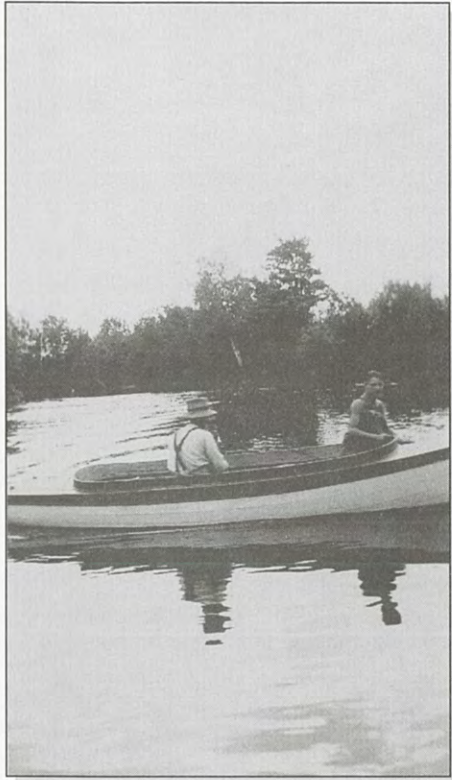




The Watson family in the early 1920's, with one of the earliest cars in the area. From the left, James Chalmers, Arnold Watson, Lloyd Watson, Zeta Chalmers (on knee), Luella (Watson) Chalmers, Bernice Chalmers, Sarah Watson, Verna Watson [Bernice (Chalmers) Powell]



County Road 121, known as the "East Line", early spring, 1930's [Morley Rettie]



On the river, 1930's [Joe Rettie]



Harold Townsend taking his boat in to Four Mile Lake, 1916 [Margaret Allen]



Out buggy riding, early 1900's [Margaret Allen]



Irene Hodgson and Evelyn Handley, taking the horse and buggy out, 1920's [Roger Hodgson]

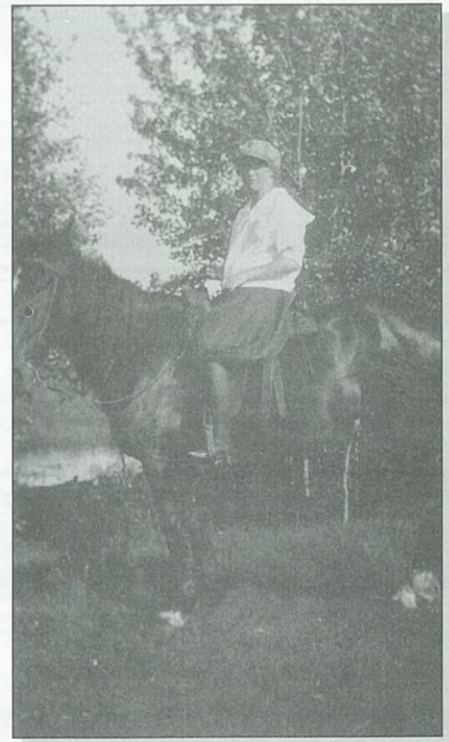




Mrs. Joe Handley Sr., with grandchildren, Grace and Ethel Handley, ready for a cutter ride, 1920's [Margaret Kylie]

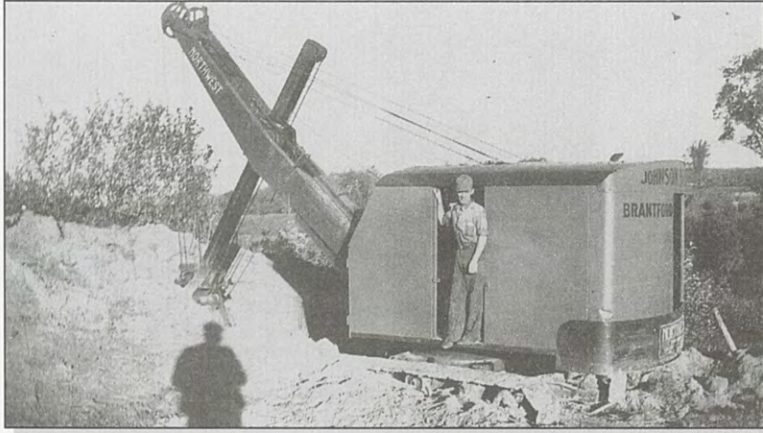


Twins, Nora and Dora Handley, ready to travel, with the horse and cutter, early 1930's [Margaret Kylie]



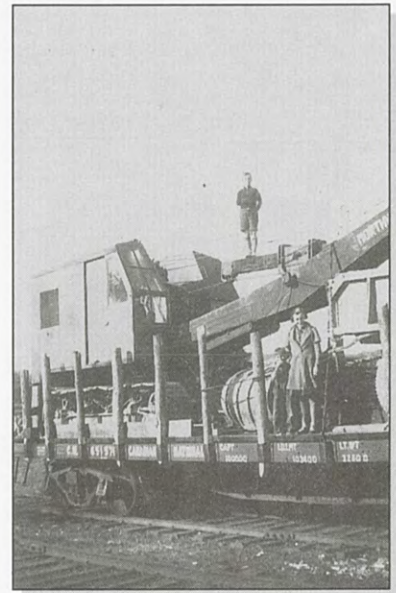
Anna (Handley) Holliday, with her horse, early 1900's [Margaret Allen]





Hughie Sheehey, working the shovel in Jack Lambert's pit, in 1938, when the bi-pass of Burnt River on 121 was built [Lorna Sheehey]

A shovel, truck and dragline, from the road construction on the bi-pass, being loaded at the Burnt River Station in 1938, for shipping to next construction site at Lake Nipigon [Lorna Sheehey]



Nora Sheehey, with Maurice Watson, riding on the grader, 1938 [Lorna Sheehey]



Township of Somerville's old
army truck, converted to
a snow plough, 1948
[Margaret Sheehey]

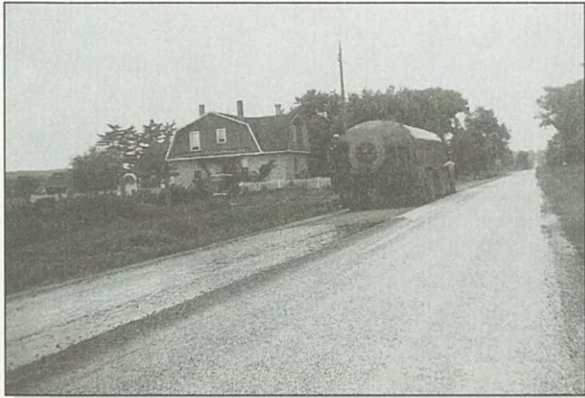


Charles O. Hodgson, standing on the old
East Line bridge over the river, 1952
[Bernice Hodgson]



Road Supt. Ralph Sheehey, with his sons, Reg and Ron, ready to plough
snow, with the second truck owned by the Township, 1950
[Margaret Sheehey]





Repaving Burnt River's main street, 1948 [June Handley]



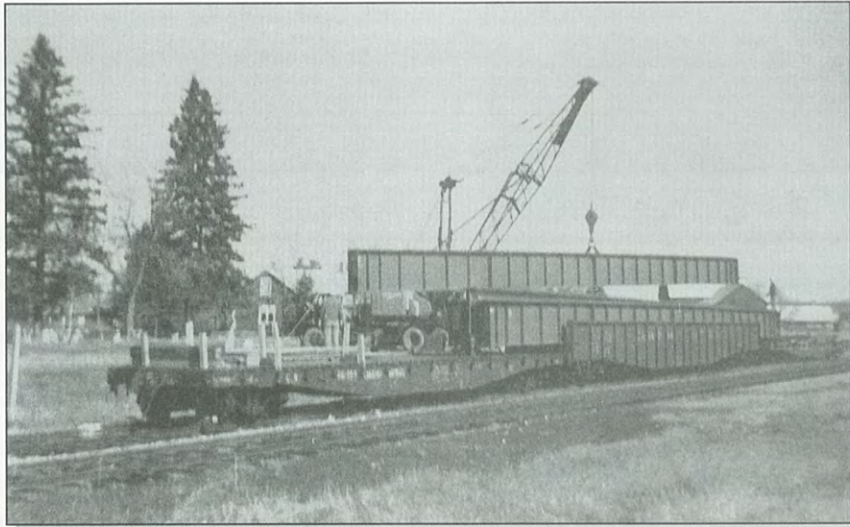
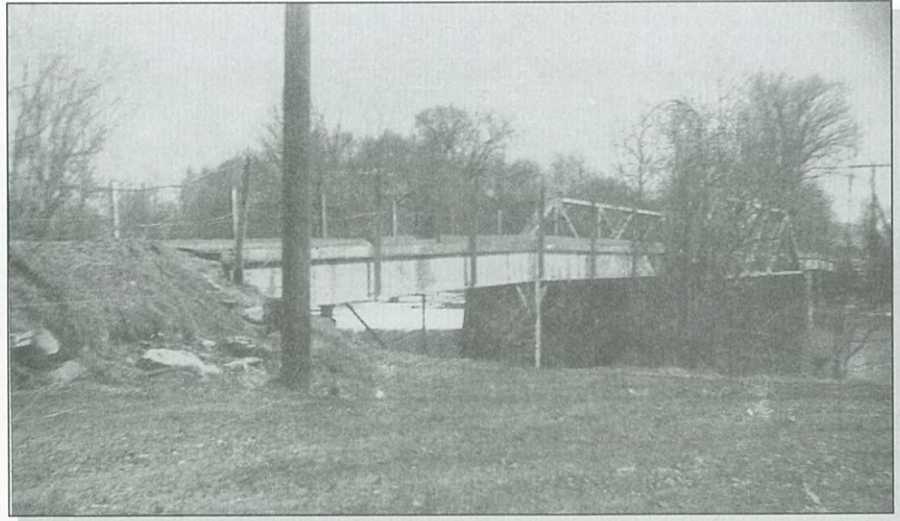
New bridge over the river, on the south entrance to the village, being opened by the County Council, June 15, 1962. The school children all marched down to attend the ceremonies. [Aileen Hodgson]

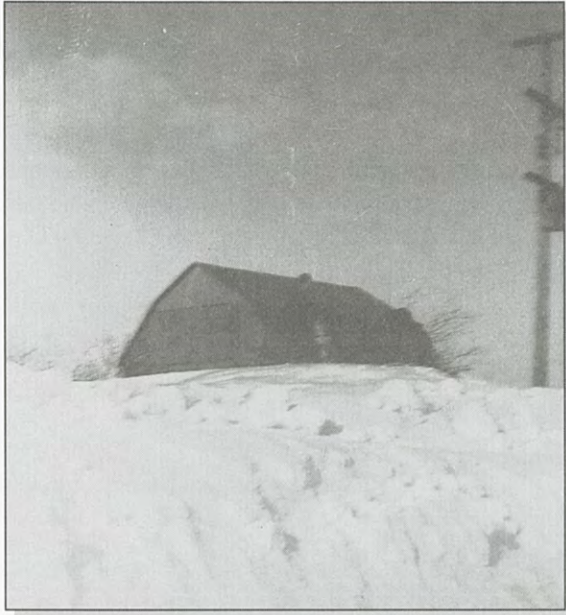


Ralph Sheehey with a load of culverts for the Coboconk Road, 1958 [Margaret Sheehey]

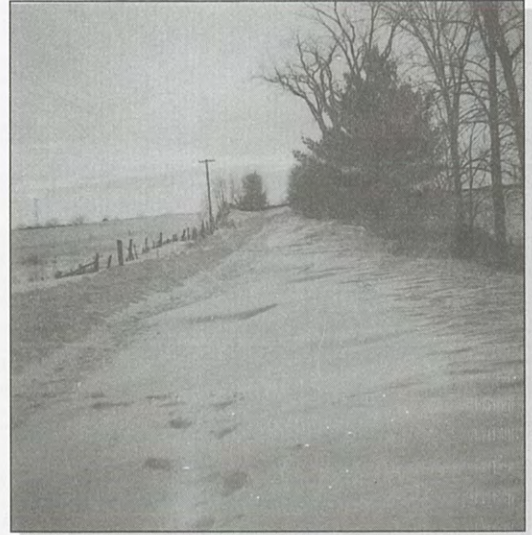


Building the new "East Line" bridge over the river, 1967 [Aileen Hodgson]

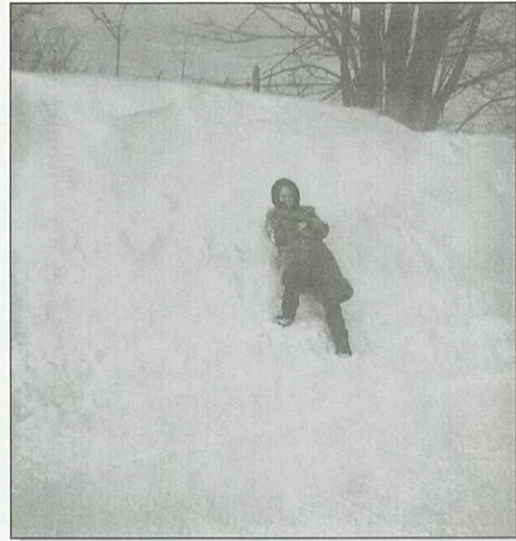




A snow bank out the "East Line" by Lee Rettie's gate, 1940's [Morley Rettie]

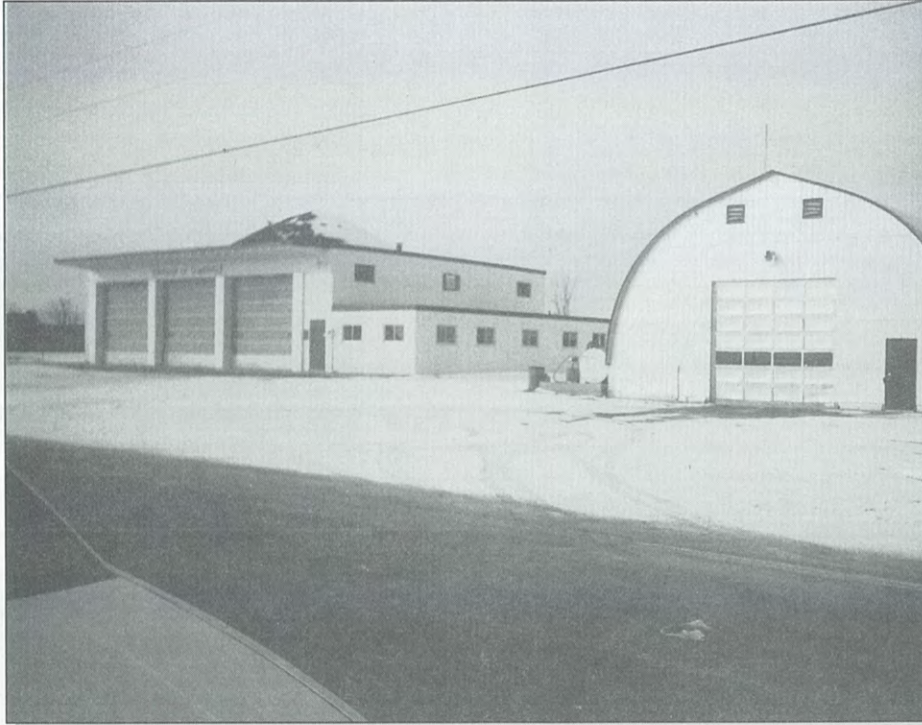


Snow drifts level across Wrex Road, April 4, 1975 [Wilbert Rettie]



The monster snow storm of April 4, 1975, when the Township work staff had just removed all the ploughs from the trucks. Edith Rettie leaning against the bank [Wilbert Rettie]



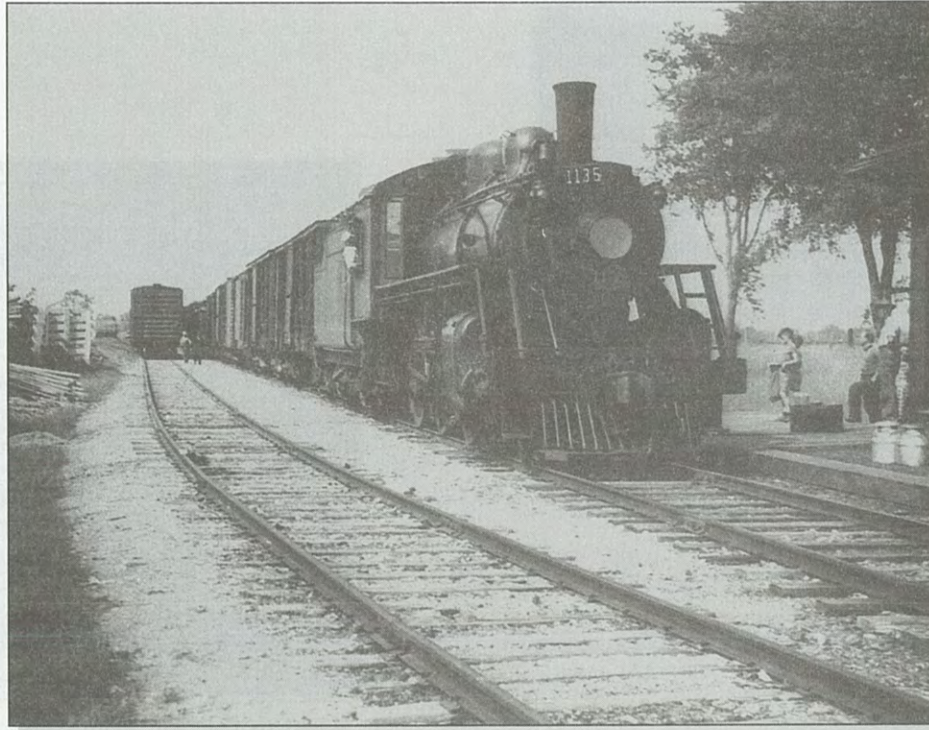


The Township of Somerville work centre, on County Rd. 44, just outside the village, November, 2000



Wilbert Rettie, Road Supt., with the Township's new grader, 1992
[Wilbert Rettie]



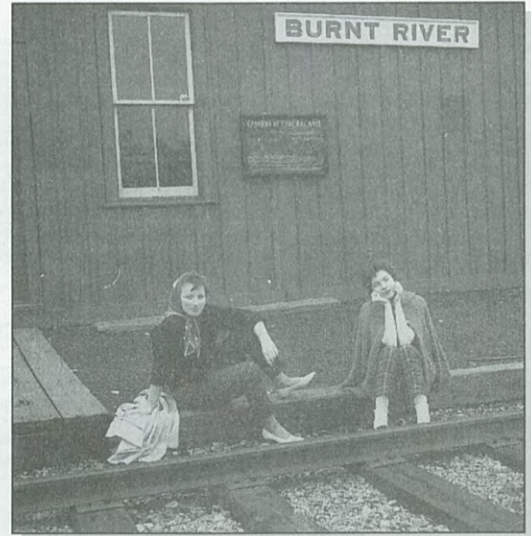


The train coming into the Burnt River Station in the 1930's. Bill Barkwell's car is waiting to take the mail across to the Post Office for sorting. [Beulah Robson]

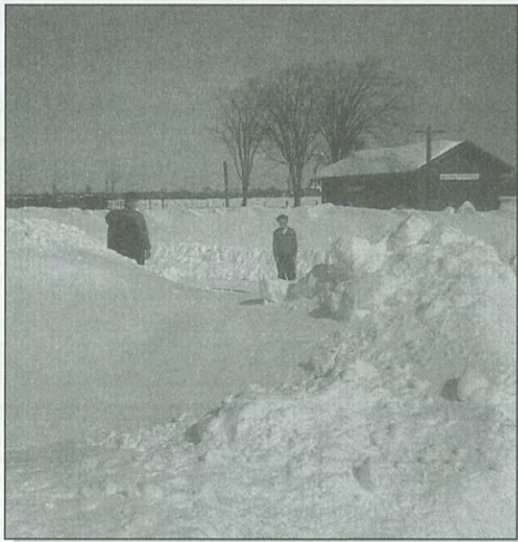




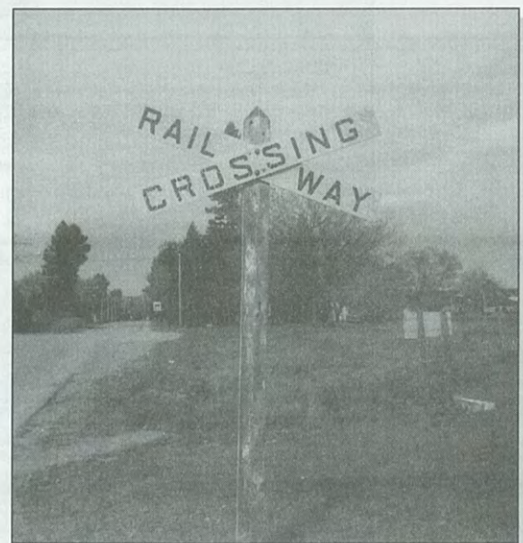
Waiting for the train at the Burnt River Station, early 1900's [Margaret Allen]



Waiting for the train at the Burnt River Station, 1960's [Alex McLeod]

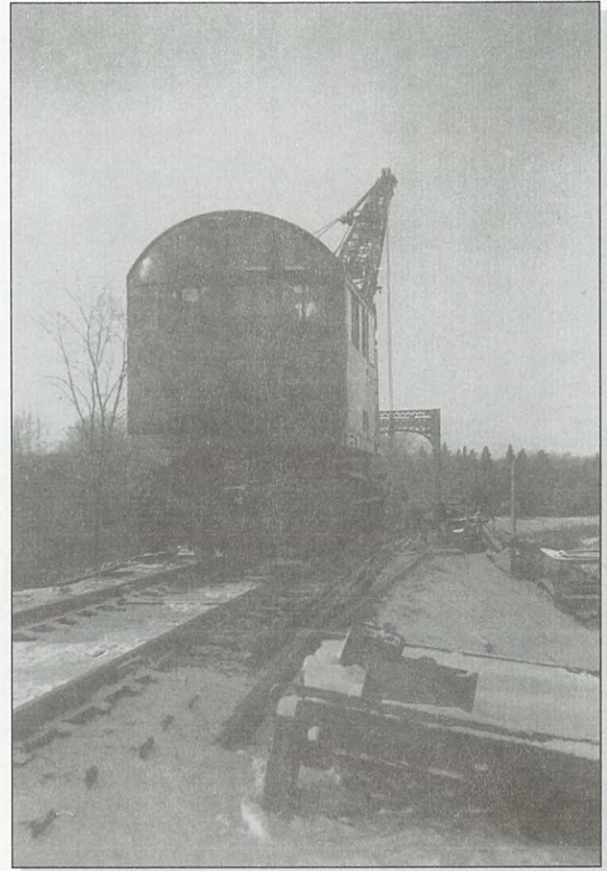


Snow on the main street in Burnt River in 1959, Eldon Windover and Eric Sheehey standing on the banks [Lorna Sheehey]

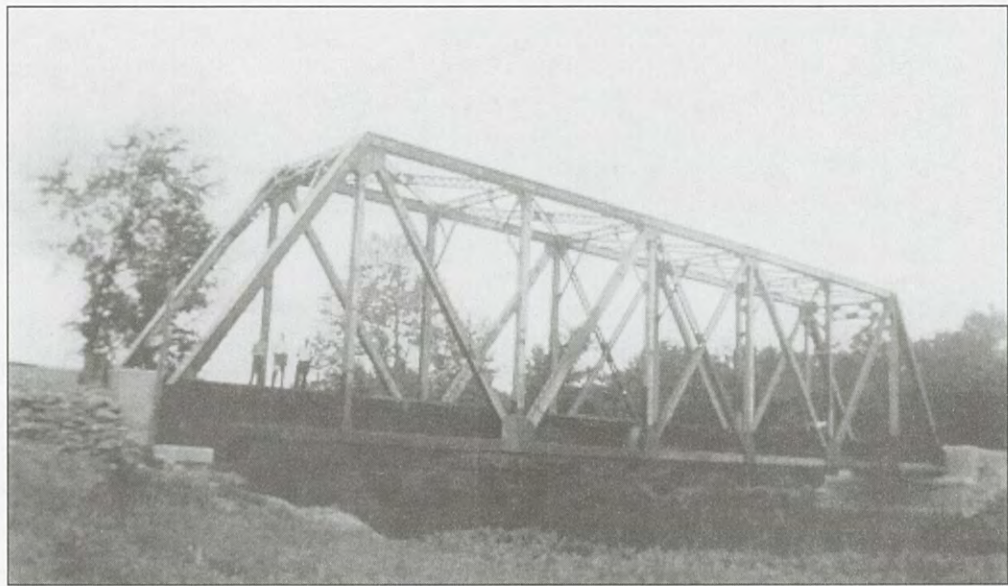


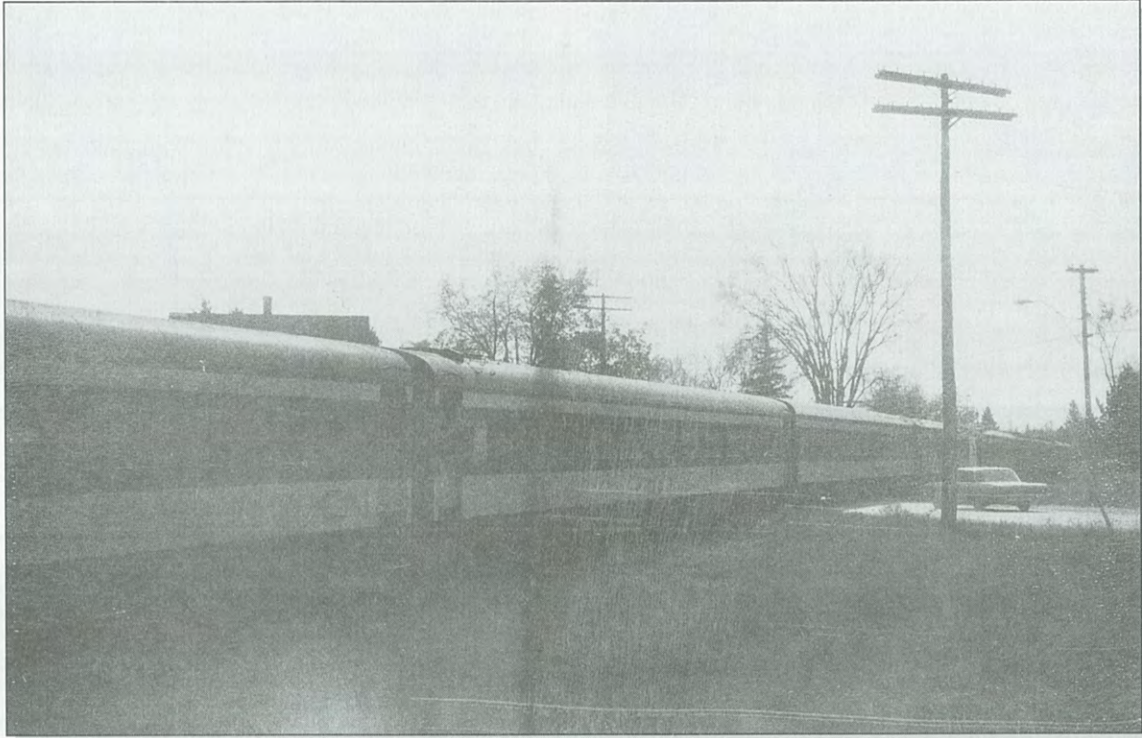
The railway crossing sign on the main street, 1950's [Chester Godwin]





Building the new railway bridge, to the south of the village, 1953
[Lorna Sheehey and Verna Humphries]

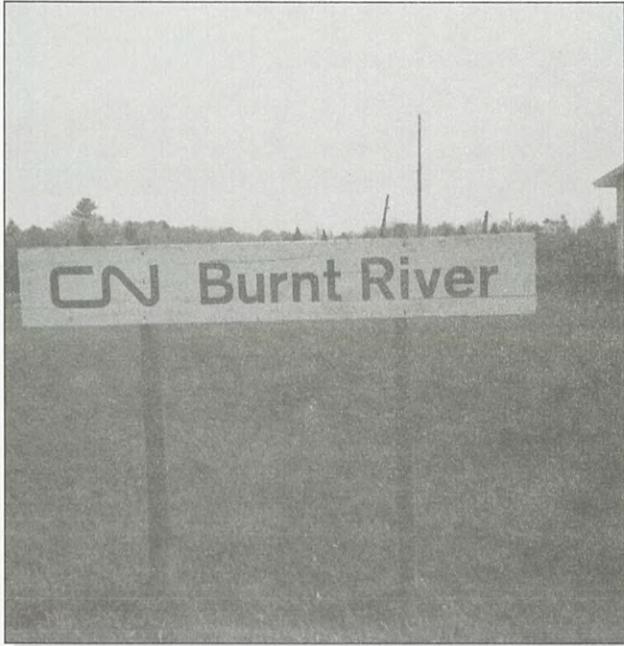




The train passing through Burnt River in the 1950's [Aileen Hodgson]



The last passenger train passing through Burnt River, September 4, 1960. The senior classes from the school took the train north to Haliburton and return on this run [Chester Godwin]



Pulling up the steel and ties on the railway through Burnt River, 1984
[Chester Godwin]



The Schools



Burnt River School, 1905 Teacher: Miss Annie Nye This postcard was sent to Miss Mattie
Brisbin while in Rochester, N.Y., from a friend in Lindsay, on September 20th, 1908
[Berta Hickey]



Burnt River School 1906(approx.) Teacher: Miss Annie Nye Back row, from the left: Ethel Rettie, Roxie Rettie, Anna Handley, Ethel Townsend, Carrie Shuttleworth, Hazel Armstrong, Edna Rettie, Sherman Rettie, Ike Reeds, Carry Jones, Alvery Cain, Bill Laking, Charlie Hodgson, Jack Levely Middle row, from the left: Gladys Aikester, Vieloi Umphrey, Clayton Hodgson, Charlie Sinclair, Sired, Victoria Hunter, Joe Magee, Myrtle McCall, Beatrice Jones, Ethel Umphrey, Jennie Wood, Bertha Finney, Lena Sinclair, George Smith, Bill Sinclair, Roy Umphrey, Frank Adkins Front row, from the left: Everett Osbourne, Melville Rettie, Ella Sired, Alice Hopkins, Clara Levely, Alma Handley, Agnes Osbourne, Eva Smith, Clark Smith or Bill Shatraw, Jack Rettie [Morley Rettie]





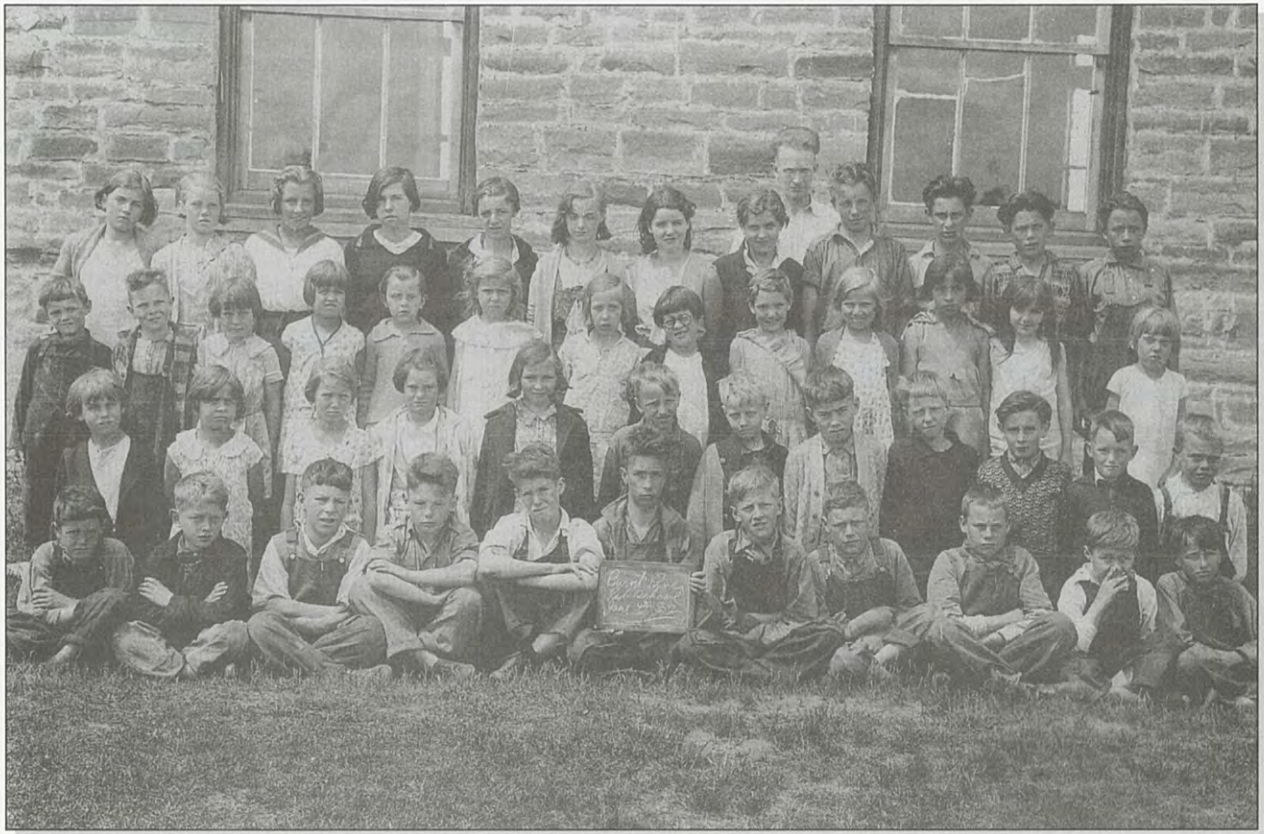
Burnt River School 1908(approx.) Back row, from the left: Dave Wood, Wallace Chalmers, Charles Sinclair, Archie Braden, Clayton Hodgson, Russell Townsend, Vera Germyn, Lena Sinclair, Myrtle Hunter, Clayt Germyn, Tom Shuttleworth, Miss Bellingham (Teacher) Middle row, from the left: Edith Shatraw, Dora Lively, Myrtle Reeds, Alice Hopkins, Irene Hodgson, Bill Sinclair, Annie Jones, Lydia Plevin, Dick Booth, Alma Handley, Maggie Braden Front row, from the left, Jesse Chalmers, Nellie Reeds, Mildred Braden, Alma Hodgson, Harold Townsend(behind), Audrey or Loris Lamb, Florence Lively, Marg Shuttleworth, Verlie Handley, Moss Handley, Charlie Fell [Berta Hickey]





Burnt River School 1928 Back row, from the left: Pearl Pocock, Robinette Handley, Bertha Armstrong, Elva Campbell, Daisy Lambert, Olive Taylor, Claude Hopkins, Chester Godwin, Jack Lambert Second row, from the left: Muriel Hodgson, Peggy Handley, Doreen Handley, Max Lambert, Doug Godwin, Arthur Hulland, Claude Poulson, Fred Henderson, Meredith Wood, Freddie McGee, Earl Godwin, Bob Handley, Cyril Sheehey Third row, from the left: Mona Campbell, Millie Taylor, Mary Poulson, Helen Lambert, Dorothy Pocock, Annie Pocock, Aileen Hodgson, Ruby Henderson, Florence Dagg Front row, from the left: Wrex Handley, Max Handley, Horace Jones, Tom Hodgson, Ray Handley, Leonard Godwin, Charlie Johnson, Phillip Johnson [Margaret Kylie]





Burnt River School 1932 Teacher: James Wood Back row, from the left: Bernice Sheldon, Aileen Hodgson, Mary Poulson, Ruby Henderson, Dorothy Pocock, Annie Pocock, Mona Campbell, Millie Taylor, Chester Godwin, Ted Sheehey, Charlie Johnson, Len Godwin
 Second row, from the left: Ray Cain, Morace Jones, Phyllis Hodgson, Bernice Hunter, Beatrice Sheehey, Berta Handley, Goldie Taylor, Geraldine Brown, Beulah Hanthorn, Peggy Handley, Doreen Pocock, Peggy Cain, Greata Sheldon Third row, from the left: Viola Sheldon, Shirley Hunter, Doreen Handley, Muriel Hodgson, Ella Taylor, Earl Godwin, Charlie Taylor, Fred Henderson, Freddie McGee, Cyril Sheehey, Blair Hanthorn, Joe Sheldon Front row, from the left: Bonar Hodgson, Bob Handley, Meredith Wood, Claude Poulson, Tom Hodgson, Horace Jones, Max Handley, Art Hulland, Jim Sheldon, Raymond Hunter, Doug Godwin
 (Absent that day: Wrex Handley, Phyllis Wood) [Phyllis (Wood) Cook]





Burnt River School 1935 Back row, from the left: Bill Shosenberg, Audrice Dancey, Doreen Pocock, Doreen Handley, Mona Campbell, Aileen Hodgson, Ella Taylor, Freda Chalmers, Muriel Hodgson, Shirley Hunter, Viola Sheldon, Geraldine Brown Second row, from the left: Miss Fell, Bob Handley, Beulah Hanthorn, Cyril Sheehey, Earl Godwin, Freddie McGee, Doug Godwin, Peggy Handley, Peggy Cain, Raymond Hunter, Charlie Taylor, Roy Brooks, Greata Sheldon, Miss Clark Third row, from the left: June Baughman, Phyllis Hodgson, Bessie Sheldon, Beatrice Sheehey, Lorna Hanthorn, Jean Cain, Joan Baughman, Shirley Chalmers, Agnes Pocock, Grace Sheldon, Goldie Taylor, Bernice Hunter Velma Howie, Berta Handley, Front row, from the left: Joe Sheldon, Bonar Hodgson, Morace Jones, Blair Hanthorn, Ralph Hunter, Blake Dancey, Reg Hodgson, Ray Cain, James Taylor, Merle Jones [Reg Hodgson]





Burnt River Senior Room 1938 Back row, from the left: Berta Handley, Doreen Handley, Blair Hanthorn, Morace Jones, Beulah Hanthorn, Doug Godwin, Freda Chalmers, Peggy Cain Second row, from the left: June Baughman, Goldie Taylor, Shirley Hunter, Ray Cain, Janet Anstey Front row, from the left: Joan Baughman, Phyllis Hodgson, Beatrice Sheehey, Bernice Hunter

May Day celebration on May 30, 1941, at Burnt River School. Participants, from the left: Elmer Dudman, holding train, Wendell Wood, Phyllis Hodgson, Rhoda Wright, Leona Rettie (behind) and Nila Anderson holding train [Valerie Garland]



The May pole celebration at Burnt River School, early 1940's [Morley Rettie]





S.S.#13, Stoney Lonesome School This small country school was built in 1902 at the south-west corner of Concession 3 of Somerville, and County Road 121. Some of the families in the area using the school were the Armstrongs (Bill and Joe's families), the Hughes, the Carews, Fells, Tiplings, Wilsons, Lambs and Shanklands. There was a wood and rope suspension bridge across the river at the Third Concession, and some of the children came across it daily to school. The name of the school was taken from the surrounding fields, which were quite stoney. It was closed in June of 1939.

One of the last classes is shown above, that of 1933. Back row, from the left: Ralph Carew, Randy Armstrong, Miss Olive Day (teacher), Maxine Hughes, Ethel Chalmers Front row, from the left: Elsie Cundy, Merle and Charlie Hughes, Dean Carew [Grant Carew]





Burnt River School 1947 Teacher: Mrs. Morrison Back row, from the left: Keith Stewart, Jean Dudman, Marina Barr, Jim Wood, Wendell Wood Third row, from the left: Adele Hunter, Mae Dudman, Margaret Dudman, Joe Rettie, June Armstrong, Ken Wood Second row, from the left: Marie Sheehey, Sharon Watson, Marion Ann Godwin, Shirley Wood, Barbara Brock, Verna Wood Front row, from the left: Glen Lamb, Gloria Sheehey, Robin Rettie, Reg Sheehey, Gene Watson, Muriel Sheehey [Gloria (Sheehey) Hutchison]





Burnt River School 1948 Teacher: Mrs. Morrison Back row, from the left: Keith Stewart, Margaret Dudman, Blanche Vanaman, Adele Hunter, June Armstrong, Jean Dudman, Marina Barr, Etta Vanaman, Jim Wood, Wendell Wood Middle row, from the left: Marie Sheehey, Mae Dudman, Rose Vanaman, Shirley Wood, Verna Wood, Sharon Watson, Earl Vanaman, Joe Rettie Front row, from the left: Robin Rettie, Gloria Sheehey, Gene Watson, Glen Lamb, Fay Stewart, Muriel Sheehey, Marion Ann Godwin, Eldon Windover, Darlene Watson, Doug McDuff, Ross Wood, Reg Sheehey [Gloria (Sheehey) Hutchison]





Burnt River Public School, 1950 [Ada Handley]



Burnt River Public School 1949-50 Teacher: Anna May Lyle Back row, from the left: Keith Stewart, Earl Vanaman, Joe Rettie, Mae Dudman, June Armstrong, Marg Dudman, Merna Stewart, Blanche Vanaman, Rose Vanaman Middle row, from the left: Muriel Sheehey, Glen Lamb, Sharon Watson, Fay Stewart, Marion Ann Godwin, Gene Watson, Verna Wood, Marie Sheehey, Reg Sheehey, Shirley Wood Front row, from the left: Ross Wood, Larry Dahm, Ken Hunter, Gloria Sheehey, Darlene Watson, Beverley Lamb, Doug McDuff, Ron Sheehey, Sheran Handley, Robin Rettie [Anna (Lyle) Gordon]



Burnt River School, Grades 5, 6, 7 and 8, visited the County Council Chambers, 1960.
Warden C. O. Hodgson standing at the back of the group,
School Trustee Tom Hodgson standing to the left [Roger Hodgson]





Grade 7 students from Burnt River taking one of the last passenger train trips to Haliburton, with their teacher, Miss Kellar, 1960 [Lorna Sheehey]



Building the new school at Burnt River, 1964 [Roger Hodgson]





Burnt River School (Junior Room) 1961-62 Teacher: Mrs. Gladys Robinson Back row, from the left: Glenn Waylett, Joan Schell, Ruth Handley, Bonnie Hughes, Lynn Godwin, Barbara Carr, Brad Armstrong Middle row, from the left: Eric Watson, Tom Evans, Bill Handley, Paul Godwin, Vaughn Taylor, Phillip Hodgson, Murry McGann, Bill Cameron Front row, from the left: Christine Duvall, Janice Telford, Penny Dudman, Marg Rettie, Beth Handley, Marlene Sheehey, Bonnie Rettie [Linda McGann]





Burnt River School (Senior Class) 1961-62 Teacher: Mr. Brown Back row, from the left: Joe McGann, Steven Duvall, Phillip Taylor, David McGann, Boyd Handley, Brian Godwin, Tom Handley, Roger Hodgson, Jim Pogue, Mike Duvall, Barry McGann, Gordon Cameron Middle row, from the left: Martin Telford, Darlene Evans, Margaret Pogue, Robinette Hulland, Brenda Hodgson, Beth Hilyer, Carol Watson Front row, from the left: Anne Armstrong, Susan Hilyer, Dianne Godwin, Muriel Daigel, Sheila McGann, Judy Godwin, Gary Godwin Seated on floor: Paul Hilyer, Glenn Cameron [Linda McGann]





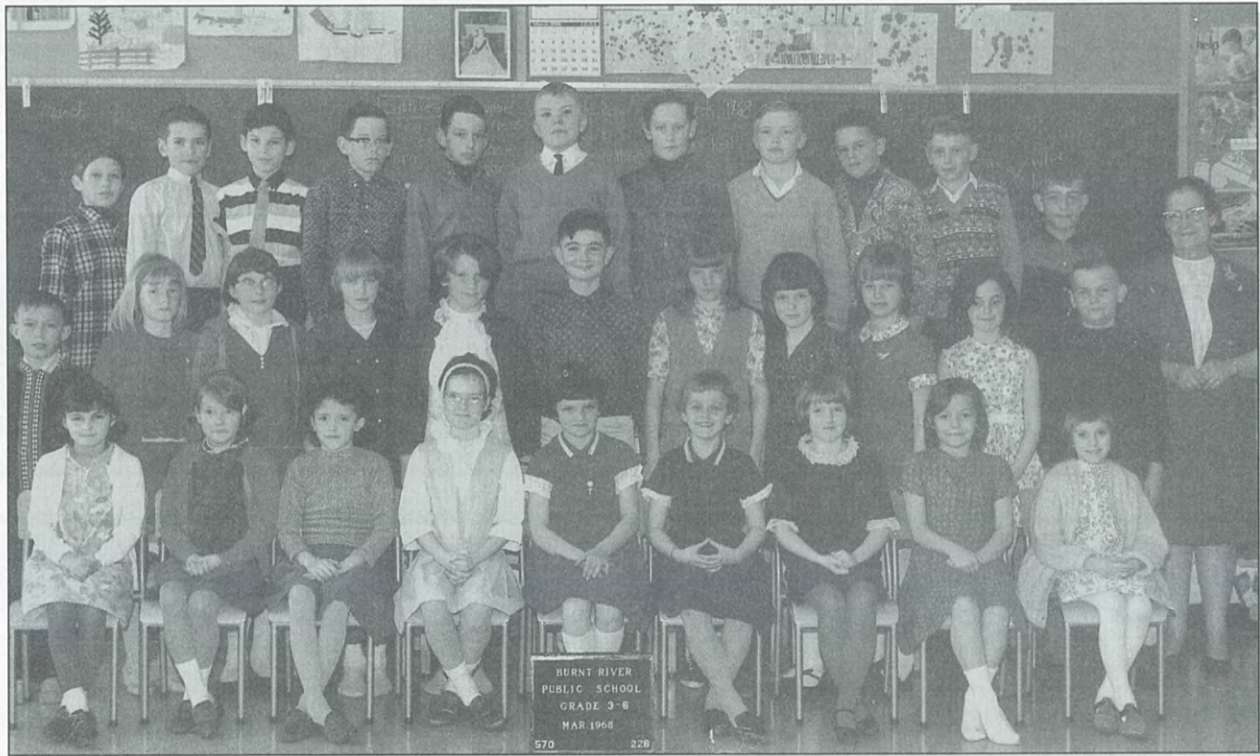
Burnt River School(Junior Class) 1963-64 Back row, from the left: Mrs. Gladys Robinson (teacher), Vaughn Taylor, Glenn Jones, Mike Jones, Terry Blackmore, Ricky Harrison, Chris Hodgson, Richard Roeske, Brent Handley, Paul Godwin Middle row, from the left: Bonnie Hughes, Janice Telford, Penny Dudman, Murray McGann, Bill Handley, Rodney Blackmore, Elva Storc, Leeanna Storc Front row, from the left: Marlene Sheehey, Bonnie Rettie, Marg Rettie, Charleen Taylor, Cheryl Rettie, Nancy Robinson, Kim McGann, Charla McGann, Beth Handley [Linda McGann]





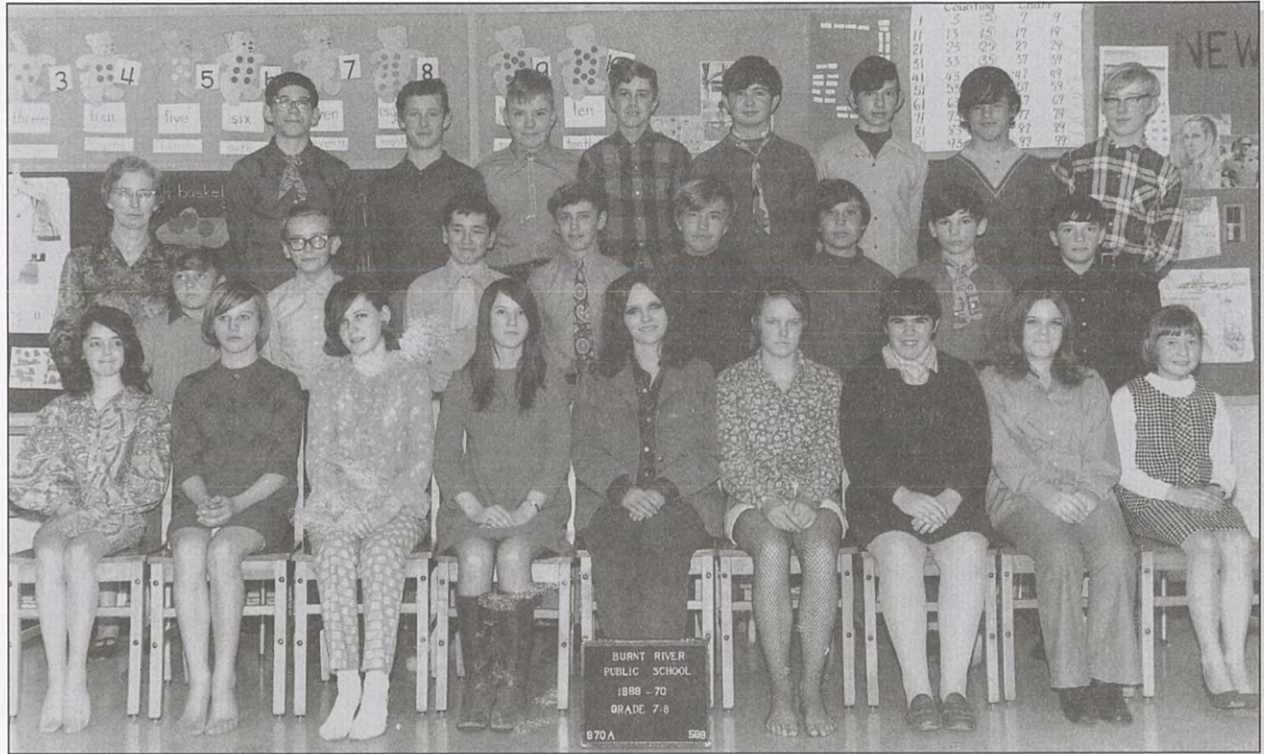
Burnt River School, Grades 5 to 8, 1965-66 Back row, from the left: Rocca McIlmoyl, Paul Godwin, Vaughn Taylor, Bob Jones, Brad Armstrong, Eric Watson, Bill Cameron, Bill Handley, Glenn Jones Middle row, from the left: Phillip Hodgson, Ruth Anne Handley, Denise Whyte, Sheila McGann, Darwin Whyte, Joan Schell, Jill James, Lynn Godwin, Murray McGann, Mrs. Lois Chiasson (teacher) Front row from the left: Marg Rettie, Marlene Sheehey, Evelyn McIlmoyl, Christine Duvall, Bonnie Hughes, Bonnie Rettie, Janice Telford, Penny Dudman, Beth Handley [Linda McGann]





Burnt River School, Grades 3 to 6, 1967-68 Back row, from the left: Frank Wilkinson, Kirk Norris, Paul Earl, Brent Handley, Stuart Nichols, David Wells, Robert Dewar, Larry Wilson, Danny Wallwork, Terry Wilson, Rodney Blackmore Middle row, from the left: Randy Welburn, Francis Friend, Stephanie Schell, Elizabeth Dewar, Sandra Godwin, Michael Jones, Shirley Friend, Kim McGann, Valerie Tait, Cheryl Rettie, Richard Roeske., Mrs. Mamie Halliday (teacher) Front row, from the left: Nicky Peters, Wendy Suggitt, Sheila Carr, Colleen Gordanier, Susan Wallwork, Peggy Wallwork, Rosemary Hilyer, Bonnie Suggitt, Colleen Wilkinson [Dianne Seniuk]





Burnt River School, Grades 7 and 8, 1969-70 Teacher: Mrs. Margaret Carr Back row, from the left: Brent Handley, Robert Dewar, David Wells, Vaughn Taylor, Mike Jones, Stuart Nichols, Danny Wallwork, John Butler Middle row, from the left: Greg Watson, Richard Roeske, Kirk Norris, Terry Wilson, Terry Blackmore, Frank Wilkinson, Paul Earl, Chris Hodgson Front row, from the left: Cheryl Rettie, Valerie Tait, Kim McGann, Charla McGann, Ann Fitch, Elizabeth Dewar, Carol Watson, Karen Wood, Wendy Suggitt [Linda McGann]





Burnt River School, Grades 7 and 8, 1975-76 Back row, from the left: David Mason, Allan Preston, Scott Wilson, Norman Dewar, Tom Schierholtz, Brian Buchan, John Schell, Kent Horsfield, David Watson Middle row, from the left: Mrs. Donna Townley (teacher) Cora Lee Cooper, Karl Soikkanen, Peter Jones, Garth Woolfrey, Stephen Carr, Bryce Fountain, Sheldon Bacon, Casey Wallwork, Danny Wilkinson, Mr. Hugh Armstrong (principal) Front row, from the left: Sharon Cox Elizabeth Suggitt, Evelyn Butler, Susan Jack, Cheryl Wood, Shelly Switzer, Karen Bacon, Kathy Dudman Karen Hopkins, Pam Wilcox [Hugh Armstrong]





Burnt River School, Grades 5 and 6 1980-81 Back row, from the left: Tony McGann, Barbi Jo Wallwork, Rob Saxon, Jenny Blackmore, Susan Mitchell, David Perrault, Mrs. Lynda Leader (teacher) Middle row, from the left: Eric McLean, Mike Taylor, Audra Boldt, Andrea Smith, Jeff McKay, Jennifer Thrasher Front row, from the left: Charlene Deschamps, Andy Gerrard, Jamie Weir, Crystall Schell, Mark Orr, Dwayne Hopkins, Tracy Evans [Linda McGann]





Burnt River School, Grades 7 and 8, 1981-81 Back row, from the left: Dan Jo Kennedy, Jeff McKay, Tom Jarvis, Tony McGann, David Perrault, Eric McLean, Mark Orr Middle row, from the left: Teachers: Hugh Armstrong and Donna Townley, Jodi Evans, Steven Handley, Roy Graham, Neil Galazka, Marty Sheehey, Barbi Jo Wallwork, Jim Emsly Front row, from the left: Jennifer Thrasher, Shannon Evans, Laurie Cundy, Debbie Blackmore, Barbara Westcott, Jenny Blackmore, Susan Mitchell [Linda McGann]





Burnt River School, Kindergarten 1981-82 Back row, from the left: Mrs. Marion MacKenzie(teacher), Sean Norris, Adrian, Matthew Lowell,, Jamie Trethewey, Brian Norris, Devan Maschke Middle row, from the left: Cory Barkwell, Elizabeth Hunter, Melanie McBride, Colin Watson, Bodie Junkin, Jeremy McGee, Derek Carr Front row, from the left: Inga Franzen, Melinda Doughty, Alisha Bartlett, Lisa Lawson, Carrie Dymond, Krista Chiasson, Kimberly Newman, Amanda Bartlett [Elizabeth Hunter]



Burnt River School, Grades 7 and 8, 1984-85 Back row, from the left:
Gord Goddard(Principal), Lyndsay Hunter, Sarah Barkwell, Linda Potter, Becky Cunday,
Tammy King, Carrie Ann Marshall, Kim Chambers, Dale Dymond, Middle row, from the left:
Mrs. Bonnie Featherstone(teacher), Kevin Chambers, Duffy Kennedy, Colin Hawks, Joli Little,
Dave Therien, Lorraine Godwin Front row, from the left: Ginny Bacon, Erin Hawks, Paula
Prentice, Heather Trethewey, Denise Tait, Keri Watson, Pauline Blackmore [Lyndsay Hunter]





Burnt River School, Grades 7 and 8, 1989-90 Back row, from the left: Mr. Thompson(teacher), Cathy Graham, Jamie Trethewey, Elizabeth Hunter, Bodie Junkin, Kelly Fleming, Colleen Giffin
Middle row, from the left: Mr. Karajhe(teacher), Matthew Lowell, Bobby Wilson, Krista Chiasson, April Blackmore, Carrie Dymond, Corrie Stender, Mr. H. Rainbow(teacher)
Front row, from the left: Keith Potter, Adam Campbell, Carolyn Goff, Gary Vickerson, Sherry Gaida, Benjamin Weir, Devan Maschke [Elizabeth Hunter]





Celebrating Canada's Centennial in 1967 at the new school [Dianne Seniuk]



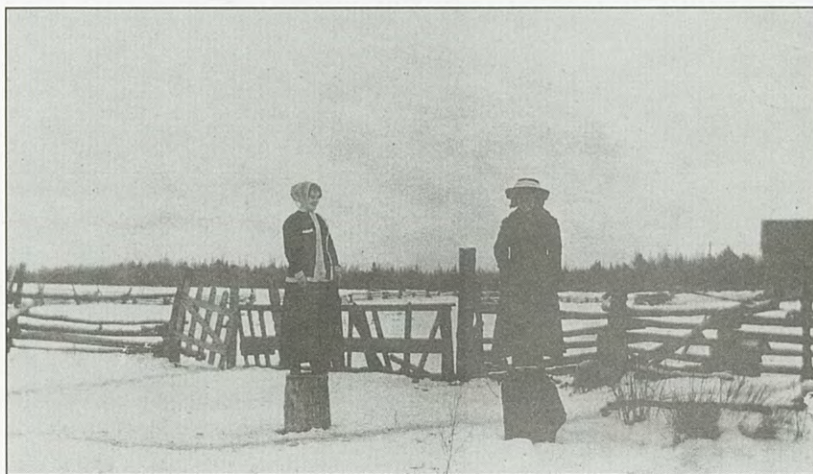
Clapping out the senior class in June, 1990, with Elizabeth Hunter, the class valedictorian, leading the way. This was the second-last class to graduate from the Burnt River School. [June Hunter]



People



Robert and Jenny Moffat (nee Hughes) on their wedding day, 1903 [Grace Marcus]



The Hunter girls, Victoria(Viccie) and Myrtle, standing high on two tree stumps, in the yard at the homestead on County Rd. 121, early 1900's [The Gordon Hunter Collection]





Irene, seated, and Alma Hodgson, Chris and Edith Hodgson's daughters, in the 1920's [Morley Rettie]



Anna Handley and Ethel Townsend, around 1916 [Margaret Allen]



Mabel Armstrong, on her wedding day, May 2, 1928, when she married James Lamb [Joyce Townsend]



Bert Rettie and Irene Hodgson, on their wedding day, 1920's, with her sister, Alma, as bridesmaid, and his brother Lee, as best man. [Roger Hodgson]





Cousins: Mary Stainton, Jane Stainton (Mary's mother), and Essie Handley, taken in early 1900's [Margaret Allen]



Tom Handley Sr., and his pet dog [Berta Hickey]

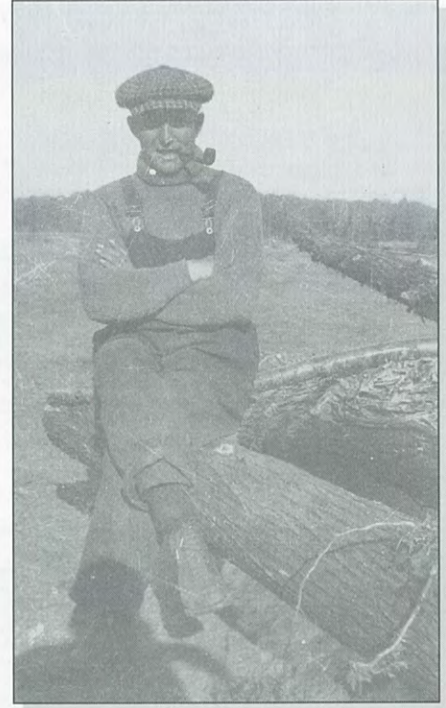


Thomas Handley Sr.'s family, from the left, Jim, Mrs. Annie Handley, holding baby Bob, Dora, Nora and Margaret, with Grace, twins Max and Wrex, and Ethel standing in front, 1920's [Ada Handley]





Twins, Nora and Dora Handley, with their twin brothers, Max and Wrex, in 1920's [Freda Brown]



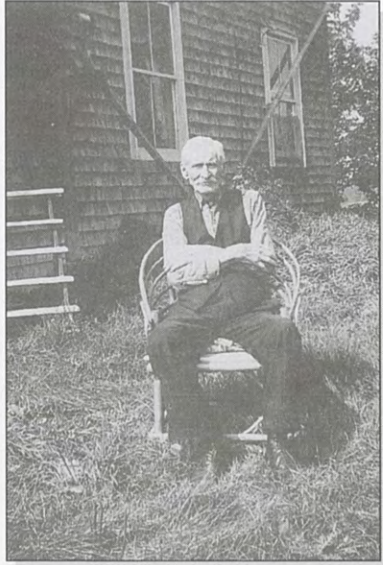
Art Young, taking a break from work, 1920's [Valene Garland]



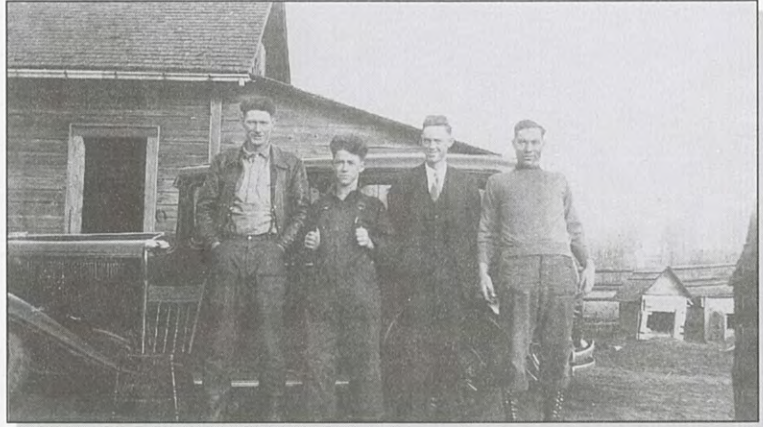
Dora Handley, dressed for a party, in the late 1920's [Audrey Dudman]



Young men in the 1930's, from the left, Jack Rettie, Chester Godwin and Jim Handley [Ada Handley]



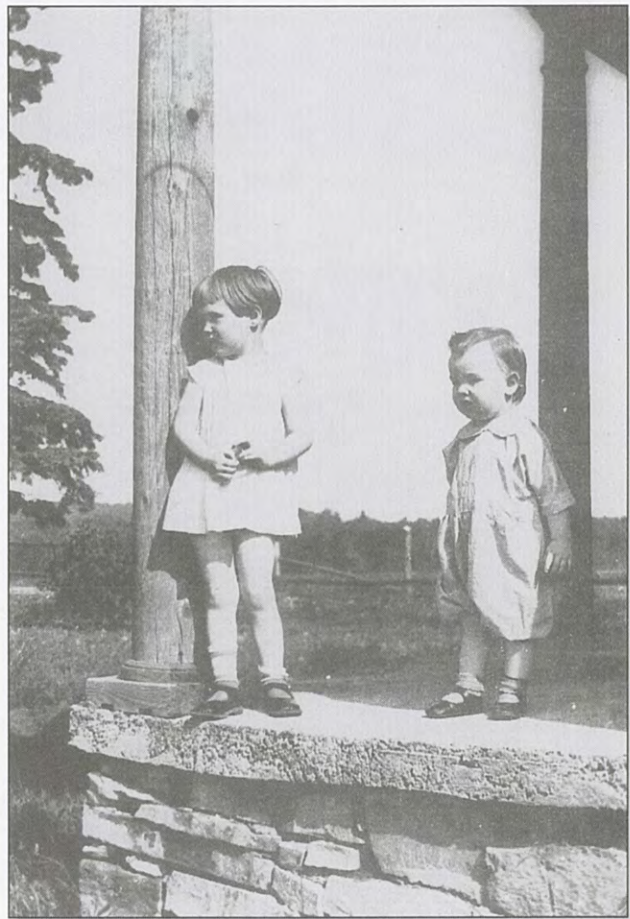
George Sheehey, taken at Burnt River home, in late 1930's [Wayne Wood]



Young men in the 1930's, from the left, Nelson Barr, Roy Brooks, Dave Steel and Don Young [Rhoda Walker]



Blair Hanthorn with his dog, 1930's [Beulah Robson]



Leona and Morley Rettie, standing on the veranda at the Townsend farm, 1934 [Morley Rettie]



Tom and Alf Hodgson, 1941 [Roger Hodgson]

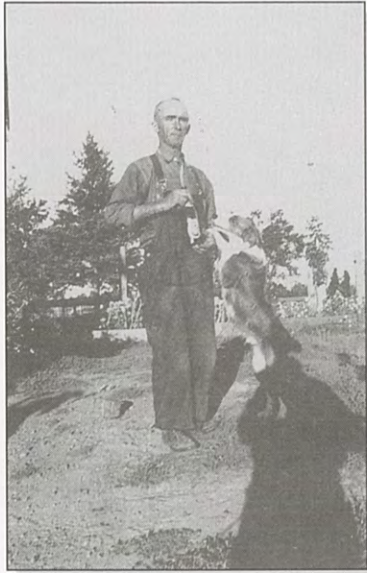


Muriel Hodgson, with her niece, Brenda, 1950's [Roger Hodgson]

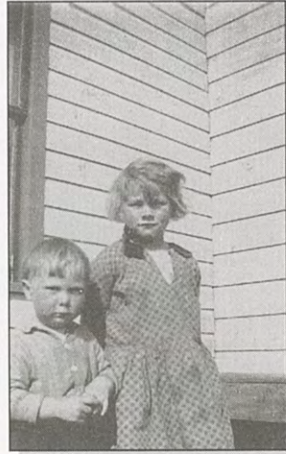


Aileen Hodgson, with her nephew, Dave, 1950's [Roger Hodgson]

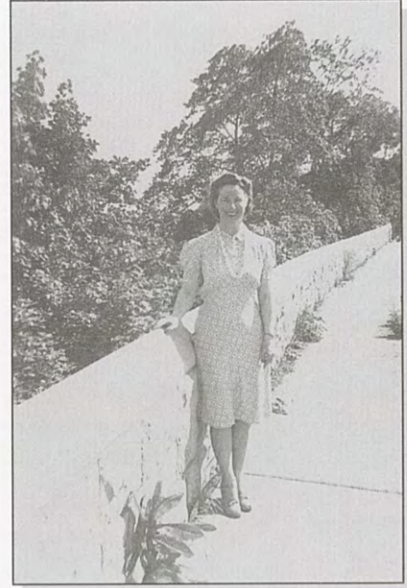




Johnny Morgan, in the late 1930's [Mona Handley]



Ronnie and Joyce Lamb in 1936 [Joyce Townsend]



Grace Campbell, in 1940's [Grace Marcus]



Ada and Jim Handley out on the town in 1940 [Ada Handley]



George and John Carew, taken at the Carew farm in late 1940's [Grant Carew]





Beatrice and Ted Sheehey,
with young Wayne Wood,
Alma Rettie and Wayne's
mother, Alma Wood, standing
in front of the Post Office at
Burnt River, early 1940's
[Wayne Wood]



George Wood (on the left) and Frank Miller, taken
at Fenelon Falls, 1950's [Phyllis Cook]



Mrs. John Carew, in her later
years [Grant Carew]



Four generations, Chris Hodgson, Irene
Rettie, Alec Rettie, with young Douglas,
late 1940's [Morley Rettie]



Eleanor Rettie, on farm lawn, in late 1940's [Alex McLeod]



Alma Wood and Alma Rettie, with their respective families, and Wilbert Rettie, on an outing in 1940's [Wayne Wood]





Grandchildren at a Sheehey Reunion in the 1940's
[Wayne Wood]



Playmates Brenda Hodgson and Kathy Sherman, 1950's
[Roger Hodgson]



Kathleen and Charles Taylor, with young Dwight, late 1940's
[Wayne Taylor]





Darlene Watson, Robin Rettie and Shirley Wood, one Sunday, late 1950's [Verna Humphries]



Ellen Rettie and Annie Handley (sisters-in-law), attending a village event, 1960's [Morley Rettie]



Chris and Edith Hodgson, with their son, Alf, 1960's [Morley Rettie]



Mrs. Alma Wood, with her niece, Beatrice Sheehey, standing in front of the new Post Office, in the early 1960's [Wayne Wood]



Hughie Sheehey, and his children, Greg, Gloria and Eric (at back), Sam and Glen (sitting), on his 72nd birthday [Lorna Sheehey]

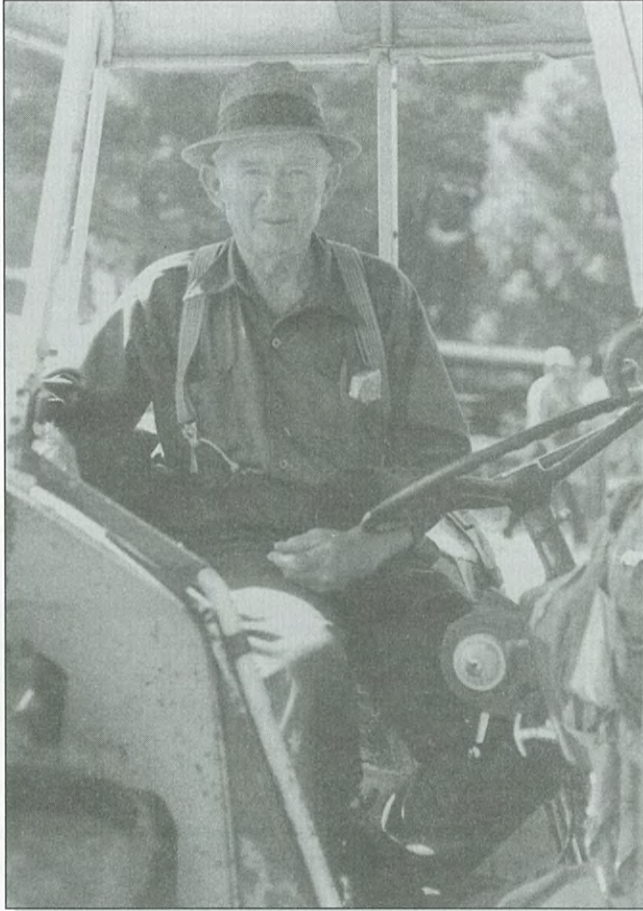


Ada Handley cutting cake to celebrate 25 years of teaching in St. Luke's Anglican Church Sunday School, 1970 [Ada Handley]



Ike Reeds and his team of oxen, which he trained at Burnt River, to show at special occasions such as Kinmount Fair. Russell Robertson is standing beside team, early 1970's [Linda McGann]





Owen Rettie, on his tractor, helping at the Kinmount Fair, in the 1970's [Robin Pearson]



Ila and Henry Armstrong on the occasion of their granddaughter's wedding, 1984 [Hugh Armstrong]



James Lamb on his 80th birthday, 1983 [Joyce Townsend]





Ontario Bicentennial cake being cut by Eva Wright and Viola Rettie, the two oldest United Church members present at the home-coming service, with June Hunter looking on, May, 1984
[United Church Album]



Ada Handley showing the Burnt River Citizen-of-the-Year plaque, which had just been awarded to her in 1983 [Ada Handley]





Tom and Dorothy Hodgson, with three of their sons, Phillip, Dave and Roger, in 1998
[Roger Hodgson]



Wendy Bacon (nee Carew), surrounded by her family, after completing her Home Care
Nursing Course in 1998 [Grant Carew]





Hunting



A hunting group in front of a logging camp bunkhouse, early 1900's [Gordon Hunter Collection]





The Hodgson family hunting camp at Pencil Lake, south of Gooderham, in the early 1900's [Roger Hodgson]



From the left, Will, Chris and Joe Hodgson, at the Pencil Lake hunting camp, 1916 [Roger Hodgson]



A hunting group in the early 1900's [Gordon Hunter Collection]



Will Rettie's hunting group landing at Wolf Lake to begin the annual hunt, 1920's [Joe Rettie]





Mac McCullum, hunting with Gordon Hunter in the late 1920's, displaying the group's kill [Gordon Hunter Collecton]



Dare Young and Bill Wright, in the 1930's, lugging home their deer [Valerie Garland]



Art Young and his hunting dogs, 1930's [Valerie Garland]





Jim Armstrong showing the bear he shot to his neighbours, Allan Dudman, and his sons, Elmer and John, Russell Armstrong, Charlie and Warren Taylor, late 1930's [Wayne Taylor]



Wade Rettie with the moose he shot while hunting with Mervyn Hunter's group, in the Forestry north of the village, in 1991 [June Hunter]





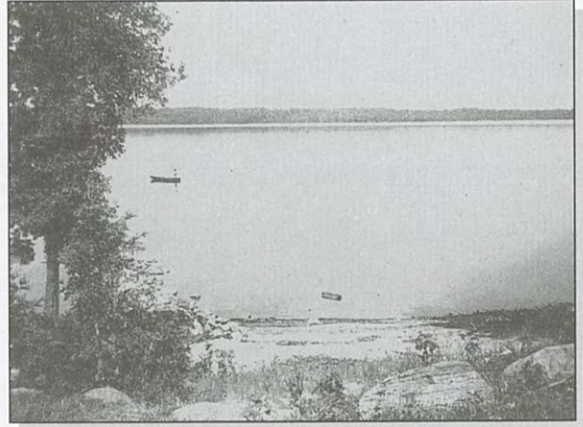
The Hodgson hunting group, with their kill, in 1973
[Roger Hodgson]



Mervyn Hunter and his hunting group, with their kill, in the early 1980's [June Hunter]



The Lake



Four Mile Lake postcard, 1930's
[Grace Marcus]



Margaret Holliday and Blake Dancey, out
canoeing, at the head of the lake, early
1940's [Margaret Allen]

The narrows, between the island
and the mainland, at the head of
the lake, looking south-west. It
was a good spot for fishing
[Margaret Allen]





Tenting at Four Mile Lake in the early 1900's with Anna Handley and her friends, and family
[Margaret Allen]





Local postcards extolling the good times to be had at Four Mile Lake in the early 1930's [Alex McLeod]

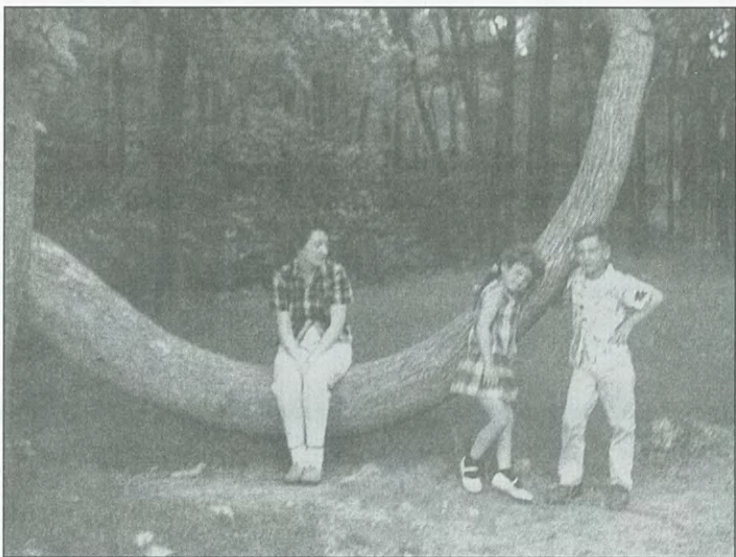




Mr. and Mrs. Charles Shosenberg at their home, "Sharno Villa", on Four Mile Lake, in the 1940's [Joan Hann]



Rhoda Wright and her catch from Four Mile Lake, in the late 1930's [Alex McLeod]



Doris Wilks, seated on the famous "crooked tree", with her children, in the 1960's [Vic Wilks]





Mr. and Mrs. Alex McLeod Sr., drawing water from the lake on a winter visit in the 1940's [Alex McLeod]



Alex McLeod Sr. preparing to cut down a large tree on their property in the 1950's [Alex McLeod]



Tim Hann, a future oarsman, looking down the lake in 1958 [Joan Hann]





“Holliday’s Hideaway” Resort on Four Mile Lake, 1940’s.
[Marg Allen]



One of the housekeeping cottages attached to the resort.
[Marg Allen]





The float plane owned by the proprietor of the resort "Chateau Wembly" at the head of Four Mile Lake.
[Lorna Sheehey]

The Schierholtz family enjoying swimming at Four Mile Lake, 1970's [Russell Schierholtz]



Russell Schierholtz and friend at Four Mile Lake. 1970's [Russell Schierholtz]





In France, during the First World War. Bert Rettie is standing first in the back row, Charles Chalmers is third. [Linda McGann]

World Wars 1 & 2

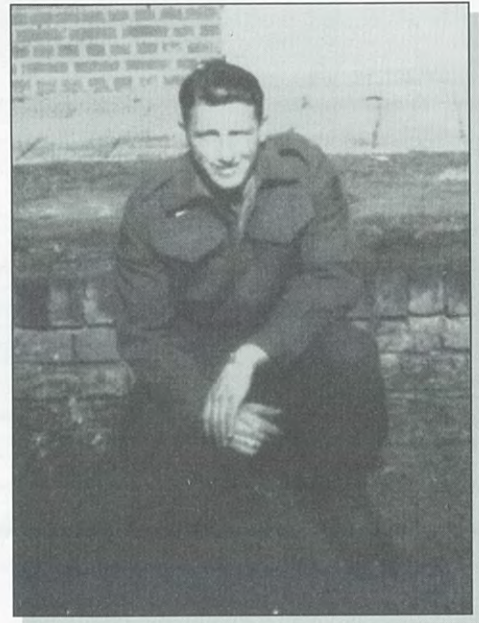


Gordon Hunter's regiment in England during the First World War
[Gordon Hunter Collection]





Herb Blackmore, with friends, in training at Cedar Springs Rifle Range, Ontario, in 1941 [Herb Blackmore]



Doug Godwin home on leave, 1940's [Beulah Robson]



Grant Carew in air force training out west, in the early 1940's [Grant Carew]



Horace(Ivan) Jones, with his family, home on leave, 1940's [Lorna Sheehey]





Gordon Hunter's platoon, taken in England, during the First World War, prior to shipping out to France [Gordon Hunter Collection]



Gordon Hunter seated on the left, with Tommy Armstrong, also seated, and a friend, World War I [Gordon Hunter Collection]





Dare and Bryce Young, home on leave in the 1940's, with their parents, Art and Elizabeth [Valerie Garland]



Shirley Hunter, with friends, in Montreal, in 1943 [Mervyn Hunter]

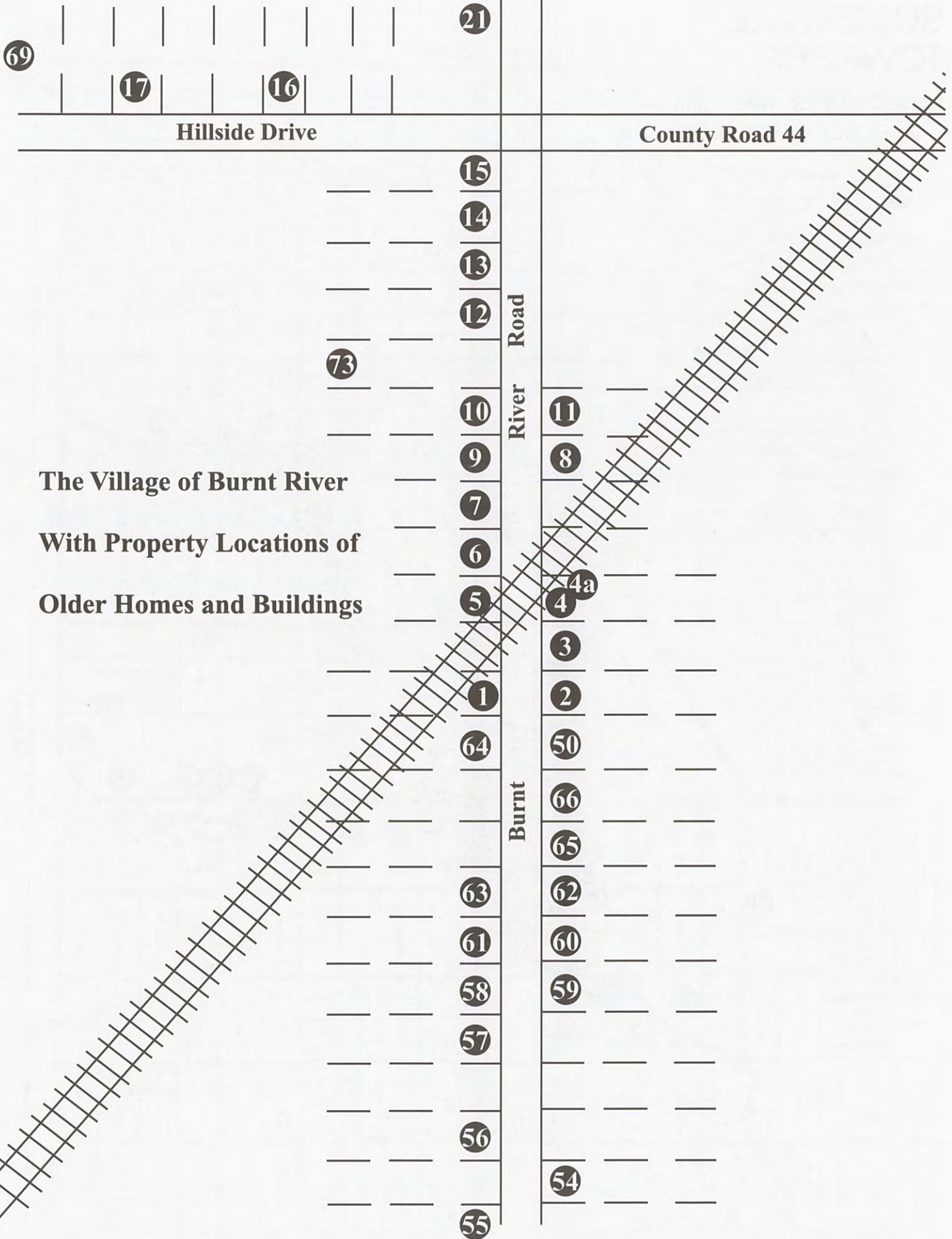


Part III - Historic Homes/Buildings

~ And The People Who Lived In Them

The Order in which these homes are presented is based on the mail route for Burnt River

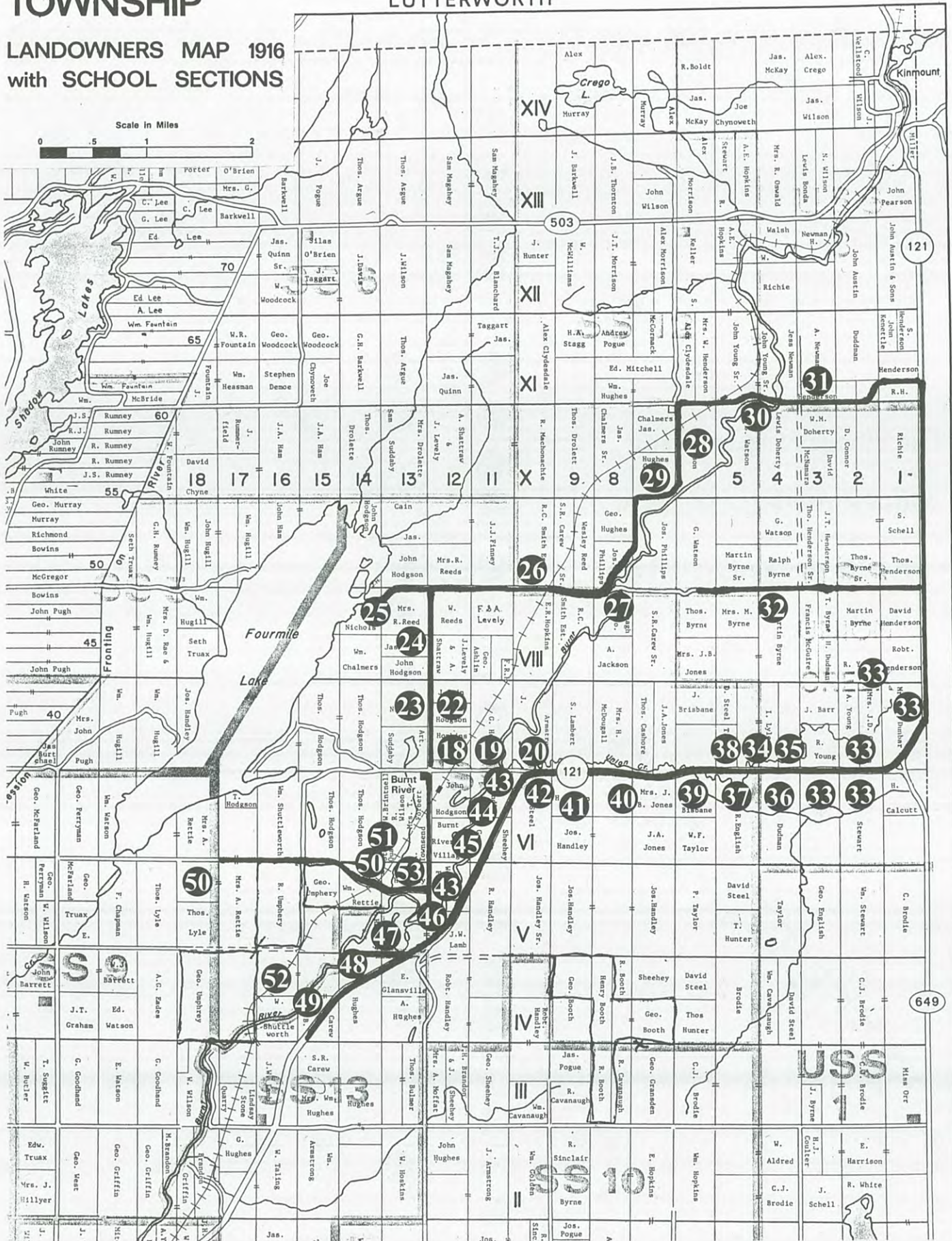
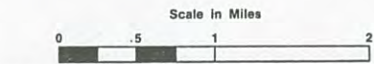
1. The General Store
2. The Burnt River Orange Lodge
3. The Burnt River United Church
4. The Wilson-Godwin House
- 4A The Burnt River Station
5. The Elsie Sheehey House
6. The Suddaby-J. Handley Store
7. The Godwin Store
8. The Hodgson-Lamb House
9. The Morgan House
10. The Groves-Henderson House
11. The Hodgson Family Home
12. The Joe Handley Jr. Home
13. The Brisbin House
14. The Angus Campbell House
15. The Moffat House
16. The Godwin Property
17. The Ned Hopkins Property
18. The Hopkins-Palmer Farm
19. The Howie-Hodgson-Rettie Farm
20. The James Armstrong Jr.
21. The Thomas Suddaby House
22. The Hunter Family Home
23. The Nichols Homestead
24. The Cain Homestead
25. Holliday's Hideaway
26. The Victoria Cty. Forest Home
27. The Geo. Cavanaugh Homestead
28. The Watson Homestead
29. The Hughes Homesteads
30. Kozy Kabins
31. The Henderson-MacKay Farm
32. The Byrne Homestead
33. The Young Homesteads
34. The Stewart Homestead
35. The Herbert Barr Homestead
36. The Dudman Homestead
37. The Thomas English Homestead
38. The Thomas Hunter Homestead
(now Marshall Dudman Farm)
39. The Taylor Homestead
40. The Jones Homestead
41. The Thomas Nelson Homestead
42. The Dave Steel Homestead
43. The Switzer Service Station
44. The Robert Handley Farm
45. The Sheehey-Dudman Farm
46. The Wilson Lamb Farm
47. The Jos. Handley Sr. Homestead
48. The Joe Armstrong Farm
49. The Carew Homestead
50. The Rettie Homesteads and
Village House
51. The Quarry House and Plan
52. The Stainton Farm
53. The Jim Handley Property
54. The Ike Reeds Property
55. The Townsend-Wood Farm
56. The Herb Armstrong House
57. The Brieau-Pogue Property
58. The Rol Young House
59. The Hughie Sheehey House
60. The Jos. Handley Sr. Home
61. The Thomas Handley Sr. House
62. The Hanthorn-Handley House
63. The Shuttleworth-Chalmer Hse.
64. The Sarah Reeds House
65. St. Luke's Anglican Church
66. The Wood-Jas Handley Home
67. Memories of Four Mile Lake
68. Dudman Const.(1980) Ltd. and
Burnt River Quarries Inc.
69. Joseph Handley and Sons
70. Somerville Station #2 Fire Hall
71. Burnt River New Horizon Club
72. Burnt River Community Club
73. Burnt River & Dist. Rec. Assoc.
74. Burnt River Library
75. Burnt River Telephone Co.
76. Burnt River Women's Institute
77. Community Care Somerville
78. Burnt River 2000 Committee



SOMERVILLE TOWNSHIP

LANDOWNERS MAP 1916
with SCHOOL SECTIONS

LUTTERWORTH



GALWAY



THE GENERAL STORE 193 Burnt River Road

1

The general store on the main street was a popular gathering place for 96 years until it was destroyed by fire during the Civic Holiday weekend in August, 1995.

The store was opened in 1900 by Dave Chalmers Sr. and his family, who came to Burnt River from the Kinmount area. In 1910 it was purchased by George and Sarah Wright from Bobcaygeon, and thus began a family association with the building that would last over half a century. From the beginning, the Wrights sold groceries, meat, candy, over-the-counter drugs, cigarettes and tobacco, dry goods, work clothes and boots, nails, paint and coal oil. It was a struggle to keep the store going, especially during the years of the Depression. The building was large and included the Wright's living quarters. There were eight bedrooms, and some were given over to boarders. Quarrymen were fed for a dollar a meal.

George Wright died in 1941 while delivering groceries on foot to a remote home on Four Mile Lake. Sarah continued with the business, with the help of her son, Roddy, and his family, until ill health caused her to retire. She then turned it over to Roddy and his wife, Eva, who was a member of the local Barr family. They expanded the business by building and operating a gas station next door, along with a small snack bar called the "Chatterbox", where their daughter, Rhoda, worked after school and at weekends, and also during the summer. The snack bar became a popular place with the young people.

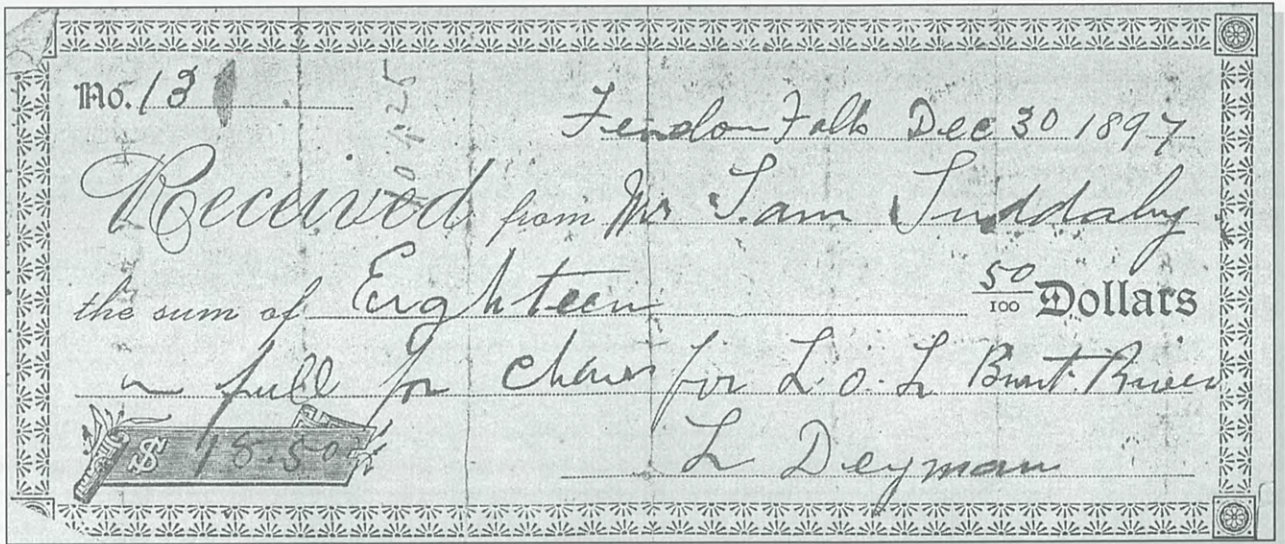
Sarah Wright died in May of 1966. Later the same year Roddy and Eva sold the business and retired to Lindsay. The "Wright General Store" became the Burnt River General Store. It was purchased by Joe Doherty, and then Mrs. Helen Lowry, and it passed through a number of hands from 1973 to 1994, when it was sold to Wayne Belshaw. He ran it, with his brother, until the disastrous fire the following year.

Rhoda Wright (now Mrs. Murray Walker) continues to live in Lindsay. She laments the destruction of the store, and treasures the many memories that remain. Her son, Rick Harrison, a great grandson of George and Sarah, also lives in Lindsay, and he and his wife, Joan, and their small daughter, Kelsey, continue to maintain the family cottage on Four Mile Lake.

R.E.H.



“The Chatterbox”
Snack Bar
[Rhoda Walker]



The United
Church and Hall
(the former
Orange Hall),
2000

THE BURNT RIVER ORANGE LODGE

LOL #541

2

In 1888, at the time the land was given for the construction of a Methodist Church in Burnt River, land was also given by Mrs. Nancy McIntyre, adjacent to same and immediately to the south, for the construction of an Orange Hall. This was duly accomplished and the first indication we have of its completion is a receipt from L. Deyman, who ran a furniture store in Fenelon Falls, for the payment of the sum of \$18.50 for chairs for same by Mr. Sam Suddaby, on Dec. 30, 1897.

The Burnt River Orange Lodge was in existence as far back of 1883, however, as there is correspondence on file from a gentleman named Robert Petch to Mr. Sam Suddaby apologizing for being unable to attend a meeting due to the instability of the ice on Four Mile Lake. (Apparently this gentleman lived on the west side of the lake and came across in the winter on the ice.)

Throughout the years this building has been used as a community centre for Council meetings, wedding dances, school Christmas concerts, school gymnastics, and every event of larger note than could be accommodated in an ordinary house. The lodge members were always very obliging in this, and many residents, and former residents, have fond memories associated with this building.

It was maintained over the years by both a ladies and men's Lodge. The ladies lodge of Burnt River always looked "quite smart" in their white dresses and parasols when on parade at the different locations on the 12th of July.

With the building of a new community centre in 1982 this building was not used as much, and with the changing times it was becoming more difficult to recruit new members. It was decided to disband Lodge #541 in 1988, and the building was sold to the Burnt River United Church. It is used today as a meeting hall for the various church committees and groups, including the Sunday School, and there is an aerobics session for the community ladies every Tuesday evening from September through June held there. It has a lovely hard wood floor, which has recently been refinished, the outside has been repainted, and the church is in the process of redoing the electrical wiring and installing an oil furnace for heating. Thus the building lives on as a vital part of the community, and is well appreciated by all its users.

JH



The Orange ladies on parade on July 12th, 1954, in Burnt River, just passing the Orange Hall and the Township shed [Dave Mowatt]



THE BURNT RIVER UNITED CHURCH
196 Burnt River Road

3

This small white, frame church was 112 years old in the year 2000, being one of the first buildings to be erected in the small hamlet of Burnt River. It was originally a Methodist church, but with joining of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches in Canada, in 1925, became part of the United Church of Canada. For certain, it has existed all these years because of the love and labour lavished on it by its congregations, both past and present.

Church services were first held in Burnt River in 1879, at a little, log school house, and were conducted by Rev. Tabscott of the Baptist Church of Fenelon Falls. At that time there was no regular minister, and services were given whenever possible. By 1888, after a new frame school had been built, services were taken over by the Kinmount circuit, with Rev. Oakes conducting.

On Nov. 13th of 1888 a land site, valued at \$200, was donated by Mrs. Nancy McIntyre, a member of the Dodd family. Then on Nov. 16th six trustees, Messrs. James Suddaby, William Dodd, William Nichols, James Cain, Robert Umphrey and Joseph Eyres, advanced funds for the building of a church, of the Methodist denomination.

The church was soon completed, with the help of the congregation, and Rev. Oakes brought in windows, sashes, the pulpit and seats from a church in Mariposa Township that had closed. There was much interest and their debts were quickly paid off. Grace Marcus, one of our older members, recalls when her uncle, Robert Moffat, used to drive the minister, who had at that time come from Fenelon Falls, to Kinmount, after services in Burnt River, drive him back, and then the minister would return to Fenelon Falls, all in one day.

In 1893, a Young People's Society called "The Christian Endeavours" was started, and through their efforts an organ was purchased. This instrument is still in the church today, although it has been replaced in use by a modern electric organ. The Burnt River Church's first organist was Minnie Nichols and the first Sunday School Superintendent was George Wright.

About 25 years ago, when Dr. Elgie Joblin was minister, word came that the Burnt River Church was to be

closed down. However, Dr. Joblin had just received a request from three young families for permission to start a Sunday School for their children. After some soul searching, he agreed, and soon a small Sunday School was started, with June Hunter Superintendent, and Joyce Dudman and Dorothy Duvall helping.

From this small nucleus the congregation went on to refurbish and maintain their church. By 1988, when the church celebrated its 100th anniversary, the building had been completely redecorated and rewired electrically, and the outside was freshly painted. For that 100th anniversary service, Dr. Joblin returned to preach, and to celebrate the church's triumph over the past adversity.

Since then, the Burnt River United Church has purchased the local Orange Lodge building, which was located next door. They have found it very convenient as a meeting area, a place to hold Sunday School, and their annual Easter morning and Christmas Service pot-luck suppers. Each summer the Burnt River United hosts two large public suppers, a strawberry dinner in June, and a summer smorgasbord in mid-August, as well as an annual bake and garage sale on the Saturday of Civic Holiday weekend. Also, the church's United Church Women's group produces a beautiful quilt, made completely from scratch, each year.

Church services are now held every Sunday morning, at 9 a.m., with Sunday School, and the church is currently about 22 family members strong, with a large group of adherents helping out at events when they can. The church continues to grow and prosper with the help of all.



The Wilson-Godwin House, 2000

THE WILSON-GODWIN HOUSE

198 Burnt River Road

4

The original builder of this house is not known, but it is one of the older homes in the village, and it is estimated it was built in the 1890's. It was the home of Robert James [Bob] Wilson, who married Margaret[Maggie] Ellen Cain in the early 1900's, and they had one child, Helen. Apparently a blacksmith shop was operated from the garage behind the house at some time, as, when gardening in that area, a later owner, Doug Godwin, was always coming across old nails, and the odd horseshoe, and other items like such. Also, it is known that Maggie operated an ice cream parlour from her home for some years, in the summer months. It was a favourite pastime of Mr. Britnell, who owned the Burnt River Quarry operation in its final years, to walk up the track for a dish of ice cream on a hot summer afternoon.

Bob Wilson worked for the Burnt River Quarries during his lifetime, and in 1921 there was an dynamite explosion in the blacksmith shop at the quarry, and he was killed outright. Mrs. Wilson and Helen remained in the village for several years after that, but eventually moved to Toronto. After a time, Helen married Harold Tonkin, and they bought a cottage on the bottom end of Four Mile Lake spending every summer there. The Wilson family were staunch supporters of the Methodist Church[now United] and the communion service presently in use there was donated by Mrs. Wilson prior to her leaving.

In 1926, Alma and Dave Wood were married, and moved into the Wilson house, from where Alma ran the local Post Office . As the mail came in on the train, being next door to the station was a very good location. Her two sons, Wayne and Wendell, were born there, and she rented the house until 1948, when she built a new home across the street, on the foundation of the former general store, which had been owned by John Handley

Mrs. Wilson sold the house in 1948 to Doug and Joyce Godwin, and their five children, Brian, Dianne, Lynn, Paul and Sandra, grew up there. For several years they rented part of the house to Nora and Charlie Shanklin, and the children considered them like a favourite aunt and uncle. It was a special treat to go and visit Charlie and Nora, in the other side of the house. Doug was an avid gardener, and took great pride in his vegetables and flowers. When the station was demolished he purchased part of the lot that had been the station yard next to his property, thus enlarging his area greatly. At this time he and Joyce also added an additional room to the downstairs living area, out to the north, and made a new deck across the front of the house. Joyce took up quilting as a hobby when she retired from working, and her last quilt, made just before her death, in 1995, was donated for a raffle to raise funds to send a local rifle sharpshooter, Linda Szulga, to the Pan American Games held in Vancouver that year.

In 1997 Doug passed away, and the house was purchased by Dianne Seniuk, his daughter, as she decided to move back to Burnt River at that time. Her son, Andrew, has come with her, but her daughter, Shannon, works away.

J.H.

The Wilson-Godwin House Mrs. Alma Wood, Postmistress at Burnt River, standing in front of house, mid-1940's [Wayne Wood]





THE BURNT RIVER STATION
Part of 198 Burnt River Road

4a

The first railway station in this area was a small flag station, located on the line of the Victoria Railway at the point where the railway intersected the present road to Coboconk (now Concession 5 Road), and it was called Rettie's Station after the people whose land was adjacent. It was established in 1876, and for a number of years a large wood yard flourished there and served the area for the shipping of timber and posts to the south. The section foreman lived on the west side of the tracks, about a mile north of the present village, and the freight sheds and office were located there. Unfortunately, some years after, a fire, set by pioneer Dave Nichols to clear his land on Lot 13, Concession 7, got out of control, with the wind coming from the west, and burned all in its path, including the foreman's house, office and freight sheds.

In 1888, the buildings at Rettie's Station and 600 cords of pulp wood piled in the yard were destroyed by fire, and the railway, after some consideration, decided to move the station and freight yard to a point along the line about midway between these two previous locations. Alexander Rettie Sr. was incensed that they would make such a change, but despite his protests, the decision stood. The station at this time was still not known as Burnt River, and this did not occur until 1896, when the village of Kinmount officially adopted its name, and the name Burnt River, which Kinmount had previously used, was then free to be used at Burnt River. In the meantime a small collection of houses had grown up around the station, and the hamlet, itself, became known as the village of Burnt River.

The Victoria Railway became part of the Canadian National Railways system in the early part of the 20th century. The station at Burnt River was a shipping point for most of the local produce, livestock and wood products for many years, as well as a vital transportation link to the south. During the war years, when gasoline was rationed, it was the cheapest way for vacationers to access this area, and there was always a Friday night special run during the summer season to bring these people to this area, and then again, on Sunday night to return them to the city. They were met by local people, who drove them to their cottages, or the resort at the head of the lake.

Over the years station masters came to Burnt River, with their families, and took a prominent part in the community. One of these was Stan Dancey. He arrived in the village with his family about 1935, and for a time rented the Rol Young house in the south end. Eventually he purchased Samuel Suddaby's house beside the general store, and directly across the street from the station and yard. His family remained living there until October of 1944, when the house was burned in the fire that took most of the buildings on that side of the street from Ralph Sheehey's garage, south to the railway tracks. The Dancey family moved to Fenelon Falls at that time, but they still maintained an interest in Burnt River, as Stan had started the Bow Lake Lumber Company on property just to the west of the main street, where the present Recreation Centre is located. Bert Rettie had previously run a saw mill at this location and Stan and his son, Blake, took over this business, and ran it until 1970, at which time it was discontinued. Charles Hodgson worked as a conductor for the system, and a number of his family obtained work with the Canadian National Railways, including his sons, Reg, Tom and Bonnar, and his grandson, Roger.

The railroad provided work for many of the local people, as a number of them became section workers, and railway section foremen brought their families to Burnt River to reside during their assignment to this area. Section Foreman Bob Hanthorn and his family are fondly remembered by the Burnt River people, as they took an active part in the Burnt River United Church and around the community from the time of their arrival in 1926, until their departure to Fenelon Falls in 1942 when he was reassigned in his work. They purchased a house just to the south of the Anglican Church and raised their five children here. Carmen Wood brought his family to Burnt River when he took over as Section Foreman from Bob Hanthorn, and purchased the Townsend farm to the south of the village. He retired from his railway job to the farm. Fred Godwin also worked for many years as a Section Hand, as well as Hughie Sheehey and many other local people, and Jack Rettie was employed by the railway as a maintenance mechanic in the Round House at Lindsay for the latter part of his working life.

As the business along the rail line became less and less due to the switch in transportation practices to trucking, it was inevitable that the line would be closed. The last passenger train along the line went in September of 1960, and the line was finally closed in the late 1970s, with the track being lifted some years later. The station building, itself, was sold to Carmen Wood, and he dismantled it and used the material for buildings around his farm. The land where it had stood was purchased by Doug Godwin to add to his adjacent property. All good things come to an end, but in its passing, a whole era ended. The track right-of-way is now owned by the City of the Kawartha Lakes and is used as a snowmobile and hiking trail, which one can traverse right from Lindsay through to Haliburton.

J.H.



The Elsie Sheehey House, 2000



THE ELSIE SHEEHEY HOUSE
203 Burnt River Road

5

Elsie Sheehey was the second-oldest son of George and Melinda Sheehey, and on his marriage to Beatrice Jones in 1914, whose family lived out on the “east line”, the young couple settled in the small frame house adjacent to the railroad crossing, on the west side of the main street of Burnt River. Four children were born to them, Ralph, Edward[Ted], Cyril and the last, Beatrice. Mrs. Sheehey died in childbirth when Beatrice was born, and Elsie’s mother, Melinda, and his sister, Alma, then only seventeen years old, moved out to stay with them for a time, his mother helping to look after the family, and his sister looking after the Post Office, which was located in Elsie’s home for the period 1921 through 1925., and which his wife had been managing.

Things were difficult for the family for a time, as Elsie took his wife’s death very hard, and eventually the younger children went back with his mother, to George Sheehey’s farm across the river, on what is now County Road 121. The Post Office remained under the care of Alma, and when she married Dave Wood they took up residence in the Wilson house across the street from Elsie’s, establishing the Post Office there. The boys eventually returned to live with their father in the village, but Beatrice remained with her grandparents.

Ralph, the oldest son, married Margaret Pearce of Coboconk, and they settled in the village, opening a garage and gas station up the street from Elsie’s home. Their family of six, Marie, Reg, Ron, Muriel, Robert[Bob] and Marlene, were all born at Burnt River. Cyril was in the Second World War and on his return married Joyce Lamb of Fenelon Falls. Ted married a local girl, Ruth Ruth Pocock, and they settled in Wilberforce. Beatrice married much later than the boys, to Ted Parliament, and makes her home in Cannington.

Elsie lived there until his death in 1955. He farmed his 200 acres of land on the 3rd Concession of Somerville, up over the ledge, as well as his father’s property, which was adjacent. He almost lost the village house to the fire of October, 1944, but saved it by wetting down the roof with water. The water from the train then helped to put out the fire before it progressed to his small house. In the United Church in Burnt River there is a painting done by Fred Warren of Fenelon Falls that depicts Jesus, the Good Shepherd, saving the small lamb. It was Elsie who was instrumental in organizing sufficient funds to commission this, and his name and those of the people who contributed are on the back of the picture.

With Elsie’s death in 1955 the property was willed to his son, Ted, who sold it to Elsie’s grandson, Reg Sheehey, and his wife, Darlene. They had just recently married, and proceeded to move the initial building around to face the street, and then add onto same to make it into the very modern home it is today. Reg and Darlene raised their family of three children, Wayne, Pam and Marty. here, and Darlene resides there still today.

J,H.



The Benjamin Miller family in front of store, Mr. Miller in door way, 1907

THE SUDDABY-JOHN HANDLEY STORE

205 Burnt River Road

6

It is believed that this large brick building was built by Joseph Evers in 1884, upon acquiring the property from Alexander Rettie, who previously had purchased it from John Fell in 1882. Squire Fell had held title to this parcel of land from 1864, but there is no mention of his having built anything there. Joseph Evers was one of the trustees who initially established the Methodist Church in Burnt River in 1888.

Peter E. Fitzpatrick inherited it from Joseph Evers in 1891 and sold it to Daniel D. Duggan in the same year. In 1892 James Rettie obtained title, but he is not known to have run it. Mary Ann Robinson bought it in 1901 and held it until, Benjamin Miller, a retired soldier from Fort Henry at Kingston, came to Burnt River, and bought this store. Mr. Miller only stayed one year, and then moved on to Haliburton with his family, and established a second store, there, which was a fixture on their main street for years.

In 1907, Robert S. Frost took over the running of the store, and was there for a considerable time, before Thomas J. Suddaby bought it in 1920. The Suddabys, Thomas and his wife, Annie, ran the store until 1935, when they sold it to Charles F. McNeil. This man was a bachelor, and after several years, title was returned to the Suddabys, as he was unable to make a success of the business. In 1942 the Suddabys again sold the business, this time to John Handley, and his wife, June. "B-B Bats" were a special stick candy at that time, rather like molasses taffy, and one resident can remember being a constant customer for this item.

On October 19, 1944, the store was burned in the Burnt River Fire. It was the last building to go, of those that were all in a row at that point on the main street. The train had come in by that time, from Lindsay, and the water from the boiler was used to put out the fire. Prior to that people had been carrying water from the swampy area up the street, in buckets, to try to cope. Elsie Sheehy, whose small house was next, to the south, saved it by damping down the roof shingles with buckets of water.

This property, without a building, was bought in 1948 by Charles O. Hodgson, who then sold it to Alma Wood. Mrs. Wood built a small bungalow on the store's old foundation, and used another part of it behind to make an

enclosed perennial garden. The Post Office was then moved from across the street to here, and remained at this location until 1970. During that time Mrs. Violet Sheehey succeeded Mrs. Wood, who died in 1956, and upon her death in 1962, Mrs. Alma Rettie became Postmistress, until her retirement on March 31, 1970.

With Mrs. Alma [Wood] Hodgson's death, in 1956, the title to the property had passed to Wayne and Wendell Wood. They sold their interest to Charles O.Hodgson, who had married Alma Wood prior to her death. Upon his death in 1977, the property passed to his two daughters, Aileen and Muriel, and they are presently its owners, both having retired from careers in Toronto, to return to live in the village.

J.H.



Snow piled high in front of the Post Office, March, 1959 [Lorna Sheehey]



The John Handley General Store burning, October 19, 1944 [June Handley]



Chester and Marion Godwin being presented with a 50-year wedding anniversary certificate from the federal government by MP William Scott [C.Godwin]

THE GODWIN STORE 207 Burnt River Road

7

Two of the most familiar faces in Burnt River are those of Marion and Chester Godwin, who opened a small store in their new home on the main street in 1946. Fifty-four years later they continue to supply groceries and essential supplies to the village and summer residents.

They built their home after Chester was released from the Army, on the site of one of the houses burned in the 1944 fire. Chester bought the site from Tom Suddaby and cleared the fallen bricks from the basement. He purchased three unfinished buildings from Mrs. Joe Handley, located on a mining site at Tory Hill, and used the lumber to build his house. There were no new nails available in this post-war period, and he had the nails from the old buildings straightened for use in the new house.

Marion and Chester had been married in 1940 before Chester left for Army service. She was from Coboconk, her mother and father being Dora Ellis and Herb Otto. Her grandparents (Joseph Ellis and Ann) were originally from England, and had settled a farm at Miners Bay. When they first arrived as prospective settlers, they were deposited at Peterborough, and walked to Miners Bay to take possession of the land they had been granted.

Chester was born in Burnt River in 1917. His mother, Minerva May Dodd, was a daughter of William Dodd, a pioneer farmer, and Hannah Suddaby. Chester's father, Frederick Godwin, was from England, and named his son after the city of Chester. Frederick was an immigrant who was recruited with a number of other men, to work in Sam Suddaby's quarry at Burnt River. Frederick died in 1946, and Minerva in 1971. She celebrated her 91st birthday by taking a snowmobile ride with her grandson.

Marion and Chester met at a local dance. They recall that 60 years ago the level of social activity was much greater than today. There was a dance every week in most of the villages, and young people travelled to them from considerable distances. Chester has fond memories of one of the first radios in Burnt River. It was owned by Jack Rettie, who lived with his mother in the house next to the present fire hall, and the young men of the village would gather there on Saturday evenings to listen to the hockey games.

They also recall the harsher winters of half a century ago. They remember heavy and constant snowfalls that buried most of the fences for the winter. The coldest temperature they can remember was minus 54.

When they opened the store Chester was working for the Handley Lumber Company in Fenelon Falls. He was with them from 1934 until 1985, except for the war years. While he was at work Marion looked after the store. On summer evenings he made deliveries of groceries, often with the assistance of their daughter, Marion Ann(now married to Allen Lee and living locally near Coboconk).

At the beginning of July each year, Chester would meet the special train that brought summer residents to Burnt River, and he would drive them to their cottages; at the end of the season he would help them return to the station to catch the train home. During the summer months he delivered blocks of ice to the lake side residents that had been cut from Four Mile Lake in February and preserved in an ice house he had built himself. In the winter he also shovelled snow off the cottage roofs.

He also drove the high school children of the area to school in Fenelon Falls for many years, combining this with his job at Handley's Lumber Company. Life was fairly busy, he says modestly.

R.E.H.



THE HODGSON-LAMB HOUSE
210 Burnt River Road

8

When their son, Charles, married, John Yeates Hodgson, he and his wife, Isabella, moved to a small log house they had built at 210 Burnt River Road, and Charles took over the home farm. Isabella continued to take an interest in the community and the Methodist Church, continuing her midwifery journeys, and extending hospitality to all. Her husband, John Yeats, died in 1919, and when Charles' wife, Grace, died in childbirth, in 1929, Isabella moved back to the farm to help with Charles' large family. She died in 1938, and her small house remained vacant for some years. It was occupied on a rental basis very briefly by the Alvie Cain family, and when they moved to Lindsay, it was purchased by Chris and Edith Hodgson on or about 1941, as a retirement home. They were moving from the farm to make way for their daughter, Alma, and her husband, Lee Rettie, to farm at Lot 11, Concession 7.

Chris and Edith made this small house their home for over twenty years. Chris was a great man for hunting, and looked enthusiastically forward every year to the two weeks in November when he could make use of the hound dogs he raised in the deer hunt. He hunted with his sons, and sons-in-law, and at times joined forces with his old neighbours, Fred Palmer, Gordon Hunter, Wally Jones, and their group to cover the oak ridge and the properties to the north of the farm..

With their deaths, in the early 1960's, the house was sold, contents included, to Jim and Mabel Lamb, who were retiring from their farm just south of Burnt River on County Road 121. Chris and Edith's grandson, Morley Rettie, tells of being promised by his grandfather that he could have his good, single-pump shotgun when he died. When the house was sold, with all its contents, he was very disappointed. After some thought, he decided to visit the Lambs and explain about his grandfather's promise. They had no use for such a gun, but had not as yet seen it, and advised him that if he knew where it was, then he was welcome to it. He said Chris had always kept it under the mattress, in the spare bedroom upstairs, and when he went up to look, there it was, sure enough, waiting for him to claim it.

The Lambs had bought the house in 1965, and Jim remained there until 1980, when he sold and moved to Lindsay to be with his daughter, Joyce. Mabel had died in 1974. It was purchased by Dave and Isobel Prentice, who were related to Barbara Wallwork's family, who were occupying the Suddaby House at the north end of the

village. [Dave was Barbara's brother.] The Prentices remained there with their daughter, Paula, until late 1985, when it was sold to Vern Therien. He was raising two small children from his first marriage, and when Anne Wilkinson came to make her home with him, they had two additional children, to make a family of four. They remained in Burnt River until 1997, when they moved to a new house on the Burnt River, off what is known as the back road to Fenelon Falls.

John Brass, a single father, bought the house in 1997, and has made some very nice landscaping changes on the grounds. He has a lovely perennial garden growing down the north slope, beyond the house, just where Jim Lamb used to have his vegetable garden. The Prentices had done extensive renovations to the kitchen, and had reorganized the upstairs sleeping area. John has continued with remodelling in the kitchen, and is very happy with his new home. His young daughter comes from Vancouver every summer to spend her school holidays with him, and his work in the Olympia Restaurant in Lindsay keeps him very busy. He is an avid gardener and his efforts have enhanced the property greatly.

J.H.



Chris and Edith Hodgson, with their daughter, Irene, and her husband, Bert Rettie [Roger Hodgson]



Chris Hodgson with his hounds, late 1940's [Roger Hodgson]



THE MORGAN HOUSE 211 Burnt River Road

9

Mrs. Susan (Wood) Morgan came to the Burnt River area in 1906, with her second husband, John [Johnnie], and her grown family, George, David(Dave), Jenny and Mabel Wood. They resided at Boulter's Crossing (the first railway crossing on Pinery Road just beyond the Forestry House) for a time, and then moved down to the village of Burnt River, buying a house which had been run as a tavern, on the west side of the main street, with accompanying property. This included a large tract that ran to the north, along the back of the houses butting onto the street, through to the road going into Four Mile Lake. Johnnie worked as a section hand for a time, and then at the Burnt River Quarry, and in some of the local saw mills.

As well as running a boarding house in her home for the quarry and mill workers, Susan set up a small general store in the front of her home, which was four houses north of the large brick general store, on the same side. She was known to be fair in her dealings with others, and was affectionately called "Gran" by all the local children in her later years.

Her family all married locally, George to Maude English, Dave to Alma Sheehey, Jenny to Alvie Cain, and Mabel to Joe Hodgson. With the burning of her house in the late 1930s, she and Johnnie built a new home immediately to the north of where the first home had been located, and that is the house we talk of today.

Her flock of ducks were renown, as they were partially bred with a wild one that she had nursed well when its wing was broken. It then decided to stay, and become part of her duck family. In later years she was well known, as well, amongst the children of the village, for her bottomless cookie tin, and her grandchildren came to visit her on a regular basis.

Johnnie Morgan died in 1941, and Susan in 1942. Upon her death, her home was purchased by Ralph and Margaret Sheehey. They had not as yet moved their family into it when the terrible fire occurred on Oct. 19, 1944, taking the five houses immediately located to the south of Mrs.Morgan's new house, including John Handley's brick general store. The fire had begun in Ralph's garage next door, and spread south, and it did bake the shingles on the roof, and blister the paint on the eaves and siding of the Morgan home, which was to the north.

Ralph and Margaret repaired the Morgan house, and moved their family in there within a month of the fire. At that time they had four children, Marie, Reg, Muriel and Ron. They later had two more children, Robert[Bob] and Marlene. They rebuilt, making a small one-room shed in which to store oil, etc., and had their gas pumps reinstated, but they never did put up another garage.

In the late 1950's Ralph ceased to operate the gas pumps, and later sold the property to his son, Reg, who added to the shed, making it into a small, brick bungalow, which he, in turn, sold to his brother, Bob, in the 1980's. Ralph died in 1994, but Margaret still resides in the Morgan house, next door to Bob's home.

J.H.



Mrs. Susan Morgan and her ducks. She nursed a wild duck which had a broken wing, and it stayed with her flock. Consequently, all her ducks showed this strain in their breeding after
[Mona Handley]



The Morgan House the day after the Burnt River Village fire, 1944 [Marg Sheehy]



Susan and Johnny Morgan's first home in Burnt River, which had previously been run as a tavern. It burned down some time after.
[Roger Hodgson]



THE GROVES-HENDERSON HOUSE

3 Recreation Centre Road

10

This small bungalow is situated on the main street, directly across from the Tom Hodgson farm, on the south side of the entrance to the Burnt River Recreation Centre. It was built by Robert Groves, on or about 1913, before he enlisted in the armed forces, in the First World War. Robert had come to Burnt River in the early 1900's, from England, and was thought to have been recruited as skilled labour by Sam Suddaby to work in the quarry. He was killed in the war, and his wife, the former Mary Shuttleworth, and small son, Wrexford, remained in Burnt River for a time. In 1919, Mary contacted the influenza that was so wide spread, and died, leaving her small son to the care of her mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Shuttleworth Sr. The ownership of the home was held in trust by the Shuttleworths until Wrexford was of age, and was rented out for different periods.

The original house at this location was log, and burned down in 1896. At the time it was being used as a residence and the local Post Office by Edward Woods. The birth certificates of a number of people were lost in this fire, and as a consequence, their birth was never registered with the provincial government. This presented problems at the time they became eligible for pensions many years later.

During the 1920's and '30's, this small house was rented by Alvery Cain and his wife, Jenny (Wood), and their children, Margaret[Peggy], Ray, Jean, Audrey, Geraldine and Glen. Alvery worked for the Can. National Railways until he was laid off in the early 1930's. In 1939, when the family left Burnt River, moving to Lindsay, Alvery was re-employed by the railroad.

Jenny is remembered by the Hodgson girls as having a loving and cheerful disposition, no matter what happened. She kept Black Minorca chickens, and a milking cow, which she enthusiastically attended to while singing at the top of her voice. She always had time to listen to the girls, making room in her home for all the children in the immediate area to gather.

In 1937 the property was sold to Bill and Roy Henderson, two bachelors, who had retired from Galway, having sold their property there. (The Cain family had moved across the road to the small house of Mrs. Thomas Hodgson.) The Hendersons had bought a new 1939 Ford car after their arrival in the village, and it was

considered a very “spiffy” automobile by all who beheld it. Bill died several years after they were here, and Roy, after a very serious accident with his automobile, was hospitalized in Whitby. The ownership of the property still remained with Roy for a long time after, however

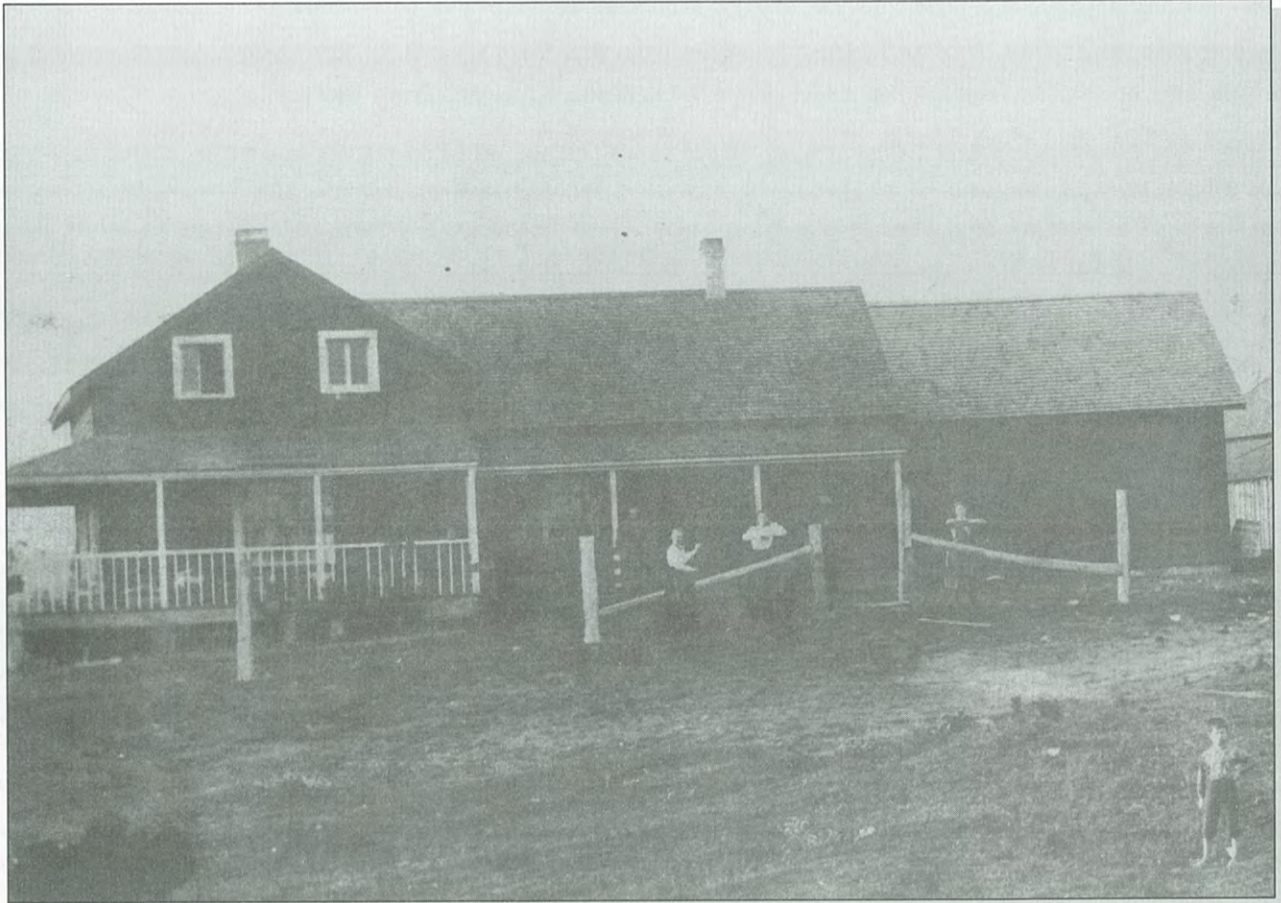
With their marriage in 1942, Ray and Mona Handley rented it for a time until they purchased the house of Mona’s aunt and uncle, the Moffats, in 1945. Their first child, Ken, was born there.

In the 1950’s the house passed to a descendent of the Hendersons, and her family used it as a summer vacation home for a long while. John and Elora Augimeri inherited this home from her mother. The building became rundown during this period, and when it was bought by Alvin Warman as a retirement home in 1998, he was faced with the need for major repairs to make it habitable. He has been slowly progressing with these. It now has new wiring, plumbing, and dry wall, as well as insulation and siding. He is a retired housing contractor, and is enjoying the challenge of refurbishing this small home.

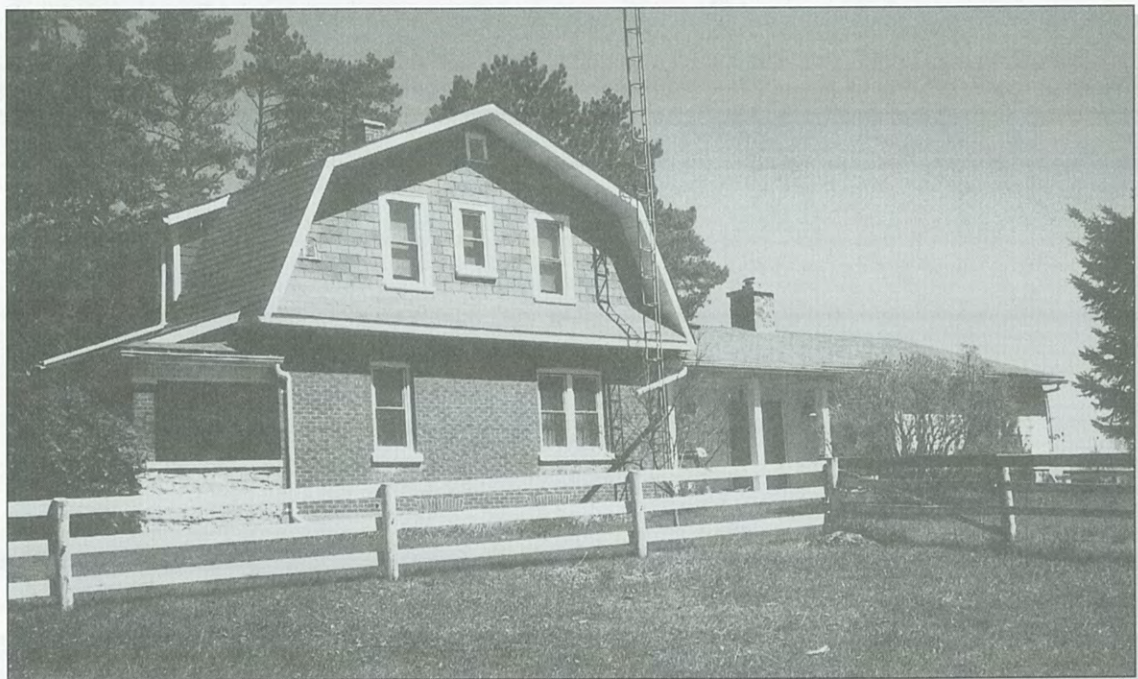
J.H.



The Groves House photographed the winter of 1916, from Mrs.Hodgson’s home across the road [Roger Hodgson]



The first Hodgson family home in Burnt River [Roger Hodgson]



The present Hodgson family home in Burnt River in 2000
[Roger Hodgson]



THE HODGSON FAMILY HOME

224 Burnt River Road

11

This modest, two-story, brick farm home, situated in the middle of the village of Burnt River, has been the home of the Charles Hodgson family since it was built in 1928, to replace the original homestead home of the Hodgson family. In fact, it was built towards the road, and the older home was attached to the back, as was the custom in those days, to serve as a back woodshed and storage facility. This back area has since been rebuilt by the current Hodgson family to form a large family room, with a stone fireplace, and garage attached behind.

Christopher Hodgson and his wife, Mary Yeates, came to Canada in 1842, and settled in the Whitby area, where several of Christopher's brothers were living. They later moved to Scugog Island for a time, but after the American Civil War Christopher and Mary went to Arkansas, near the Missouri border. There were Hodgsons from the Cumberland area settled in this area. He never returned to Canada, dying there in 1872. His widow later returned to Canada to be with her family, and died at Burnt River in 1903.

The eldest son, John Yeates Hodgson, had not, however, gone south with his mother and father, but stayed in the Brooklin area, and married Isabella West at Cannington in April of 1871. They stayed in Woodville for a time, renting quarters there, and John worked in the local construction business, as times were prosperous for farmers, and many of the large homes southern Ontario is renown for, were being built in towns, and on the farms. They moved from Woodville to some poor land on the north shore of Sturgeon Lake, near Cambray (the present site of Royal Paving) within a year of their marriage, and there Thomas[1872], William[1874] and Margaret[1876] were born.

Around 1880 they again moved, purchasing a poor, rocky farm, on the south-east corner of Concession 5 and the back road to Fenelon, adjacent to Four Mile Lake, and there surviving children, Christoher[1881], Mary[1883], Joseph[1887] and Watson Simon[1889] were born. John Yeates was not overly ambitious, but was a man who liked to hunt and fish, and the country around Four Mile Lake was good for this, although it did not keep his large family very well. His eldest son, Thomas, however, was of a more practical bent, and he and his brothers cut wood and drew it to the Burnt River Station, where it was shipped to chemical plants that made wood alcohol, charcoal, etc.

As their business expanded they began buying other peoples' wood, cedar posts and telegraph poles, and in 1890 young Thomas saw an opportunity to buy land at Burnt River that was for sale from a widow, Nancy McIntyre. The railroad ran diagonally through the property, and the school, Methodist church, and store were right adjacent. He was only 18 at the time, but he promised to stay at home and work for his board until the mortgage was paid, and his father finally, reluctantly agreed. This is the property that today is still the home of the present Burnt River Hodgson family. Two more children were born to John Yeats and Isabella, Charles[1894] and Clayton[1897], at the Burnt River homestead. Isabella was a very strong, community-minded person, and a staunch supporter of the local Methodist church, where she taught Sunday School for over forty years. Her family tell the story of her baking and selling pies to earn sufficient money for the church to make a cement step at the entrance, (this is covered by the present porch on the front of the church, which is now the Burnt River United), and there are six press-back chairs in the church today with a note on the bottom that they are a donation of Mrs. John Hodgson. You could never pass her door when travelling from a distance that she wouldn't invite you in to a meal with the family. In a community with no doctor, she became the local mid-wife, and often ministered to the needs of the sick in the area, hitching up her buggy and going where there was illness. Thomas, with his marriage to Cora Gardner, purchased property to the south of the Burnt

River hamlet (what was the Ike Reeds farm), and the other members of the family dispersed to marry and work, one or two locally, but most elsewhere. The most well-known, was Clayton, who, going north to Haliburton, went into business in the lumbering industry there, eventually becoming Member of Parliament for the Victoria-Haliburton area, for six terms of office.

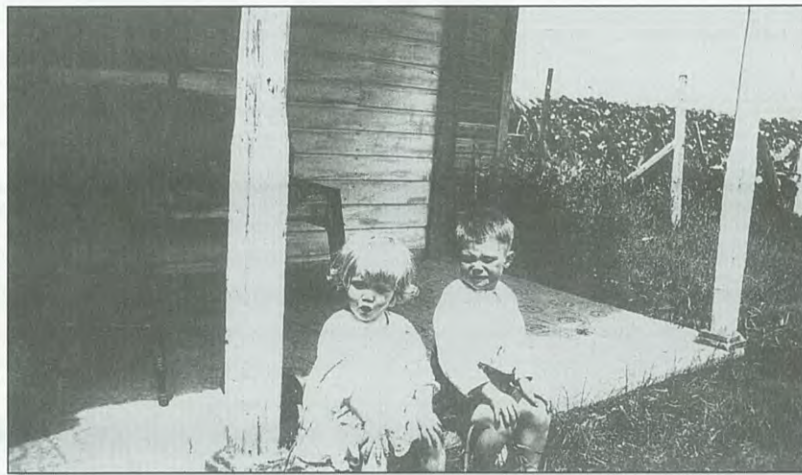
John Sr. and his wife Isabella retired to a small, log home on the farm property, just south of the farm house, on the village main street, and Charles and his wife, Grace, took over the homestead farm. They raised their family there, Tom, Aileen, Muriel, Bonnar, Phyllis, Reg and Grace. After Mrs. Hodgson's death, when Grace was born, Isabella moved back in with the family, as her husband, John Sr. had died, some years before[1919], and helped Charles raise his family.

Charles was the Township Clerk for Somerville during the 1930's, and employed George Wood to help him run the farm, on a part-time basis. He had an opportunity to secure work as a brakeman with the railroad in the early 1940's and worked his way up to be a secondary conductor with the Canadian National Railways system prior to his retirement. His boys ran the farm, under his direction, until their departure to work elsewhere in the 1940's(mostly all in the railway system). He eventually turned it over to his oldest son, Tom, and his wife, Dorothy, maintaining a room as residence in the house.

Upon his retirement from the railway system, Charles successfully ran for Reeve of Somerville Township, and held this office for ten to fifteen years. He also was a director of the Burnt River Telephone Co.

One of the family traits most common amongst the children was the ginger-red hair, and their high spirits and ability to talk at great length about any subject. Their home was always a centre for the village children to play, and Muriel recalls a favourite game of "bally-over" going a bit astray, and the ball smashing through one of the house windows, whereupon her dad came "roaring" out, but there was nary a child in sight. .

Tom and Dorothy, in turn, raised their family on the homestead farm, although Tom worked throughout his career, also as a Canadian National Railways employee, and their children, David, Brenda, Roger, Phillip and Chris, again went forth to find work elsewhere, after completing their secondary school. Phillip and Chris now live in the area, although their work is elsewhere, and all the boys, Roger in particular, have an interest in the farm and have acquired additional properties locally to support this enterprise. Interestingly, one of these is the Ike Reeds property that Thomas Sr. once owned.



Tom and Aileen, as children, sitting on the porch of the old house [Roger Hodgson]



The Hodgson brothers, from the left, Watson, Charles, Clayton, William, Thomas, Joseph, Christopher [Roger Hodgson]

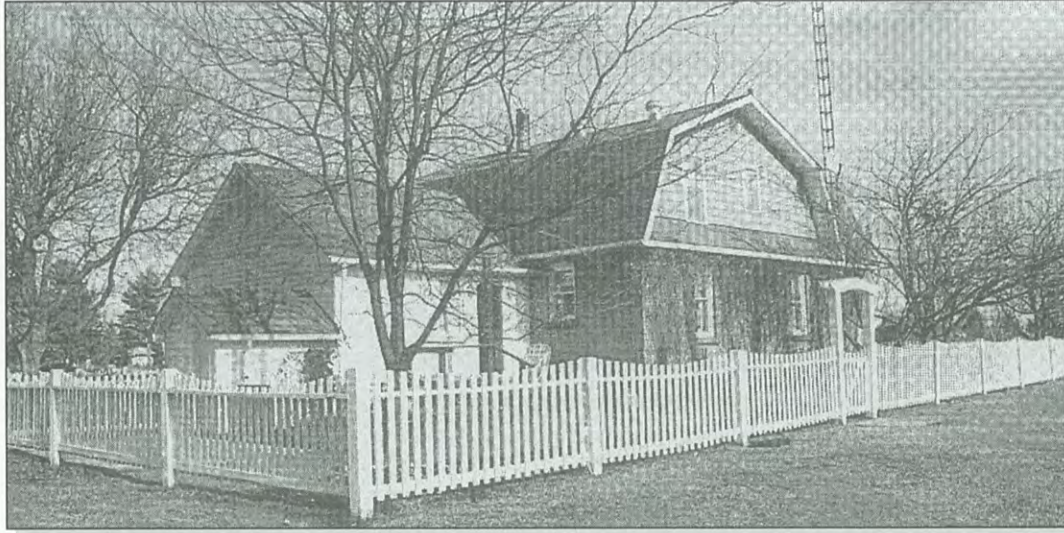


Grace and Charles Hodgson, photographed some time in the 1920's. Grace died in 1929. [Roger Hodgson]



The present Hodgson family home, taken in the 1950's [Bernice Hodgson]





THE JOE HANDLEY-HICKEY HOUSE
229 Burnt River Road

12

Joseph Handley Jr. (Josie) married Martha Matilda Brisbin (Mattie) and bought this village lot in 1910. At that time it had a frame house on it near the fence at the southwest corner. A few years later they turned the house into a garage and built a two-storey, brick house similar to Robert Handley's farm home, complete with an outside door in the upper storey.

In 1924 this house burned. The Lindsay Daily Post reported in its January 19th edition, "A bad fire broke out in Mr. Jos. Handley's residence, Thursday, January 18th, about 7:30 a.m. The house was a large, white brick with a frame kitchen and woodshed attached. A spark from the furnace ignited the kindling nearby, which were the "snipes" from the shingle mill. The House was completely destroyed." To quote Peggy (Handley) Rettie, "I, myself, was too young to realize the importance of this tragedy, but do remember being taken to my grandmother and grandfather Brisbin's place, next door, with my sister, Doreen, by our older sister, Marion. This, in itself, was an adventure because, as I recall, the snow was very deep and very white. We walked on the crust over the top of the fence. Once inside our grandparents' home, we sat at the window and watched the fire destroy the building and its contents that we used to call home." "Mr. Handley was away at the time of the fire," reported the Lindsay Post. He was, in fact, transporting machinery for a saw mill, to Burnt River, and when the team of horses broke over the ledge hill to the south, visible in the distance were clouds of smoke billowing from the house fire. All that was saved were the stove, desk and a rifle. In fact, Joe saved the rifle himself by using a pike pole to lift it off its hangers near the back door. He could just reach in to get it. The house was rebuilt of hemlock lumber and bricks, most of them from the original house. The exterior of the new house has a unique and interesting appearance due to this.

Josie and Mattie raised their children in this new house—John (married to June Butts), Marion, a nurse (to Gerald Austin), Ray (to Mona Campbell), Doreen (to Bill Shosenberg), Mildred (called Peggy), a teacher, (to Alec Rettie), and Berta (to Frank Hickey). Josie died in 1945 of pneumonia, and Mattie was killed instantly on March 14, 1959, when the car in which she was riding was hit by the train at Rettie's crossing, south of the village.

Berta and Frank Hickey bought the house and lot in 1964, moving out from their farm in Galway, and are still living there. They have one daughter, Margaret Anne (married to David Billings), a grandson, David, and a great-grandson, Taylor Jacob Billings. There have been few structural changes to the house since then. A new picket fence was built by Frank to replace the old one, and an oil furnace has replaced the wood-burning unit, but other than that, things are much the same.

M.A.



Standing in front of the side door of the Anglican Church in Burnt River, from the left: Mrs. Edna Hanthorn, Joe Brisbin, Mrs. Annie Handley, Mrs. Harriet Rettie, Mrs. Alma Rettie, Mrs. Irene Rettie, Lee Rettie, Mrs. Mattie Handley, Bert Rettie

THE BRISBIN HOUSE
237 Burnt River Road

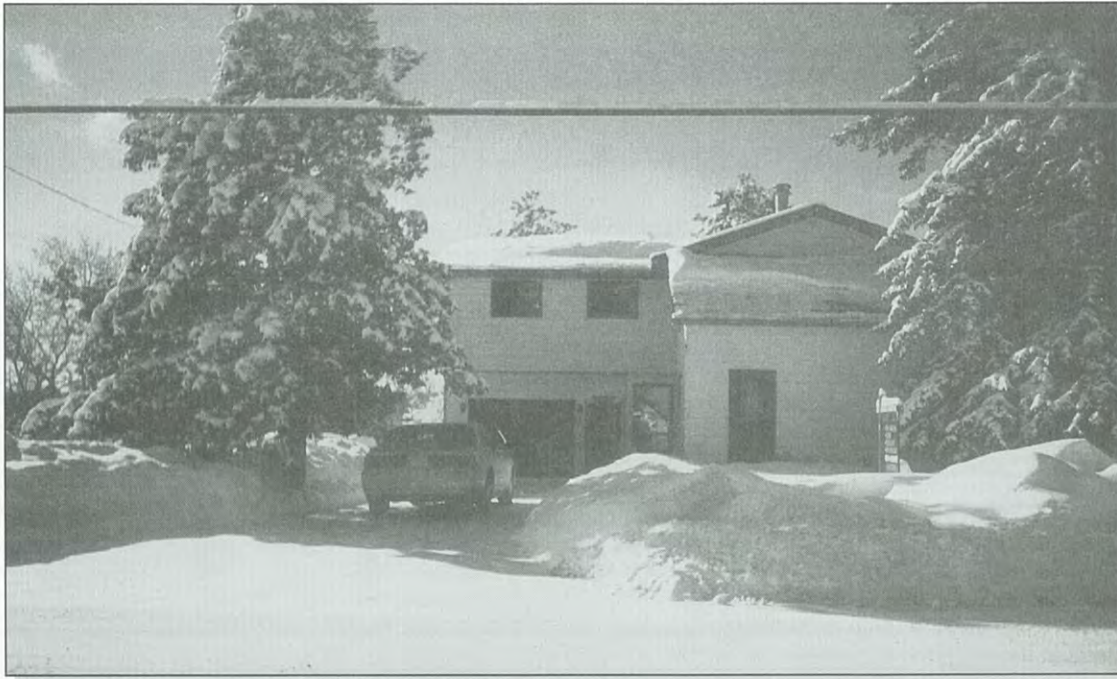
13

Joseph Brisbin built this house, which is gone now, immediately north of Joe Handley's first house, for his wife, Sara Jane Harper, in 1890. They had come to Burnt River from the Oakville area. Turner Brisbin, who was the first Brisbin brother to come to Burnt River, helped Joe to build canoes. Turner lived in a little, white house just north of Wright's Store, which also is gone now.

Joe and Sara had two children. The girl, Martha Matilda (Mattie), married Joseph Handley Jr. (Josie) and lived just south of her parents. Her brother, Mossom, moved out west. Joe Brisbin built wooden bridges, in particular, the one for Joseph Handley Sr. on his farm, as well as others, made canoes and ax handles, and was a general carpenter. He liked a fast horse and buggy, and could be seen racing along the roads of the era before cars.

Sara was a sister of Martha Matilda Harper, who had previously moved to Rochester in the United States, and started a line of Harper Method beauty parlours, in both the U.S.A. and Canada. Sara died in Burnt River in 1942 at the age of 85, and Joe died in 1947, in his 100th year. Both are buried in the Burnt River Cemetery.

M.A.



THE ANGUS CAMPBELL HOUSE
239 Burnt River Road

14

Angus Campbell was known for many years as the village carpenter in Burnt River, and nearly every building project in the span of his working days that was built in the area was a product of some share of his work. His family were originally settled on the Cedar Tree Road of Verulam, opposite the Fairfield farm, and when he married Catherine (Kate) Hughes, whose family had settled to the south of the village on Concession 3, along the river, they commenced their married life there, where all three of their children were born, Grace (1914), Elva (1916), and Mona (1918). They then moved to the “Walker Line” (Concession 6) of Verulam for a time.

In 1925 they moved to a lot in the village of Burnt River that Angus had bought from his brother-in-law, Robert Moffat, who was married to Kate’s sister, Jenny. There was a small house on the lot that had been the home of Mrs. Sired, Harriet Rettie’s mother, and in which Harriet’s sister and her husband, Charles Armstrong, had been living.

Kate was not well much of her life time, and to ease the burden of raising three energetic children, Grace spent most of her childhood with Robert and Jenny Moffat next door, as they had no children and were delighted to make room. Her Aunt Jenny often acted as mid-wife, and worked with Dr. Johnston from Fenelon Falls whenever there was a local birthing. As a consequence he became acquainted with young Grace, and encouraged her to pursue a career in nursing after she completed her high school. Grace had gone to Fenelon Falls on the train, along with other teenagers, who were picked up at various stops along the way, to attend the high school there. She left Burnt River to take training as a nurse, and worked for many years in Toronto, then married a doctor there. They eventually made their home in Florida, where she lived until very recently. She has now returned to be with her family.

Elva went to Toronto to stay with Grace for a time, and then met and married Robert (Bob) Sherman. They returned to Burnt River in 1947, when Kate died, and stayed with Angus for a number of years. That year the local young men had made an outdoor skating rink for the village, and organized a hockey team. Bob Sherman was one of their well known members, and was noted for his ability to hand out body checks. There was great rivalry between the Kinmount and Burnt River teams, and they too had some very efficient skaters and body checkers, one in particular in Garland Barkwell. On one night in particular, Bob was not taking sufficient note

of the near presence of Garland and came a “cropper”, much to his chagrin. The incident was remembered for some time. In the early 1950’s Bob’s work took him to Quebec, and his family went with him. They settled in the Thousand Island area on their return.

Mona married Ray Handley in 1942, and for a time they lived in the Groves-Henderson house, just down the road, but in 1945 they purchased the Moffat house next door to Angus from Mona’s aunt and uncle. Robert and Jenny were not well and went to live with Grace in Toronto at that time. Mona recalls the incident of the kitchen cupboards. Apparently there was a need to expand on what her aunt and uncle had had, and she asked her father to come over and make her an additional set. Angus agreed, and came along, starting to do such, but Ray, upon arriving home in the evening, thought he was going about it wrong, and proceeded to change some of the work. The next day Angus came back and did not agree with Ray’s changes, so he ripped the work out and continued to do things his way. This went on for some days, until they finally agreed on just how the cupboards should be built.

Angus’ grandson, Ronnie, came north to stay for a time in the 1950’s, after making his home with Grace for a number of years in Florida. He decided to remain in Canada at this time, and Angus was quite pleased. With Angus’ death in 1961 the house passed to Ronnie, and he married a local girl, Noni Byrne. They have made it their home since 1966, raising three children there, Ron Jr., Francie, and Adam. They expanded their home in 1977, with an upper addition needed to accommodate their growing family, plus a garage and new entry. All three children have left home to make careers on their own now. Ronnie worked as a grader operator for the Township of Somerville since the 1960’s, and has just recently retired from that occupation. Noni has always been interested in local politics, and was instrumental in organizing the Burnt River Recreation Association. She served on the Victoria County School Board for a time in the 1980’s, and is now running a small herbalist business from her home.

J.H.



The Campbell children, Francie and Adam,
with Paul Handley, standing in front of the new
addition to their home, July, 1983
[Noni Campbell]



THE MOFFAT-RAY HANDLEY HOUSE

149 Hillside Drive

15

This brick-built home on the corner of Burnt River Road and Hillside Drive, the home of Mona and the late Ray Handley since 1945, was built in about 1912 by Jenny and Robert Moffat. It is still known by many as the Moffat House. It is on land originally owned by the Sired family.

Jenny Moffat helped in the community as a mid-wife, and Robert worked at the Burnt River Quarry. They had moved from a farm at the corner of Highway 121 and Wrex Road (which they had sold to Lizzie and Joe Armstrong). Robert had been born at Moffat Hill on the Ledge Hill Road (Lot 2, Concession 3, Somerville), which was purchased and settled by his father in 1868. His father was Thomas Matchett, and he came from County Cork. He later changed his name from the Gaelic Matchett to Moffat. (Some cousins changed their's to Mitchell.) Before locating in the Burnt River area, where they were among the earliest settlers, Thomas and his wife had tried previously to work a property in Emily Township. The house they built on Ledge Hill Road, and in which Thomas died, has long gone, and only the foundation remains. Mention of the Moffat family always conjures up an awful event that overwhelmed them in 1870, only two years after they arrived. Three of their sons were drowned in the Burnt River. It was an appalling tragedy, but despite the grief, the family continued with their already harsh life, settling the new property.

Robert, the eldest surviving son, married Jenny Hughes in 1903. She was a member of the Hughes family who lived south of Burnt River, on the 3rd Concession, beside the river and the railway track. Her sister, Kate, married Angus Campbell of Verulam (among whose children was Mona Handley), and another sister, Lizzie, married Joe Armstrong. Jenny's oldest brother, Dick, had wanderlust and left the village to prospect for gold in the Klondike. He also spent some years in the United States, working for Henry Ford. There is an intriguing story of how Jenny Moffat looked out of a window of the Moffat House one day and saw a vaguely familiar figure walking down the road. It was Dick, whom she had not seen for twenty years. Apparently he had not made a fortune from gold, but he had earned enough money to buy a property in Burnt River, where he retired and died, still a bachelor.

Robert and Jenny's niece, Mona Campbell, married Ray Handley, the son of Joe and Mattie, and they purchased the Moffat House a year or so after their marriage. Joe Handley had started saw mills at Burnt River and Galway in the late 1920's, and he added to his business in the 1930's by purchasing a planing mill at Fenelon Falls. Ray later developed this into the present retail business there. Mona and Ray had four boys (Ken, Joe, Bill and David), and there are now twelve grandchildren and three great grandchildren, all living within a few miles of the family home. The house was considerably enlarged in 1996 by the addition of the single-storey extension to the southwest of the original structure.

R.E.H.





THE GODWIN PROPERTY
158 Hillside Drive

16

Fred Godwin was born in 1884, in Hurstbourne, Hampshire, England, and emigrated to Canada, arriving in Toronto about 1905. At that time the owner of the Burnt River Quarries, William Britnell, was looking for extra labourers, and advertised in a Toronto paper for workers. Four men answered the add, Fred, Bill Hobson, Bill Hulbert and Fred Johnston, and they were instructed to take the train to Burnt River, where they were met at the station by Mr. Britnell. He took them over to Chalmers' Store to arrange for room and board, and then settled them into jobs at the quarry.

Minerva May was the daughter of William and Hannah (Suddaby) Dodd, and was one of seven children, born locally in 1879. The Dodds farmed land across the river to the east of the village, adjacent to the Suddaby farm, and were staunch supporters of the Methodist Church in Burnt River. William Dodd was one of the founding trustees, and Minerva (Minnie) served as organist in the church for a number of years.

It is presumed Fred met Minnie at local functions in the community, and they were married in Lindsay on June 17, 1914. They lived for a time in the Hughie Sheehey House in the south end of the village, until they permanently settled in a home in the north end, on what is now known as Hillside Drive. They raised a family of five children, one daughter, Gladys, who married Ralph Watson of Kinmount, and who in turn raised a family of six children, Leonard, who married Joan Tufts of Coboconk, and settled in British Columbia with their large family, Chester, who married Marion Otto of Coboconk, and have one daughter, Doug, who married Joyce Wood of Burnt River, and had a family of five children, and Earl, who married Marion Eakins of Lindsay, and had a family of two children.

For many years Minnie was the school caretaker at the stone school in the upper part of the village, in addition to looking after their growing family, and Fred raised chinchilla rabbits as a hobby. Fred worked for the Burnt River Quarries until its closing in 1924, whereupon he obtained work as a section hand with the railroad, helping look after the area of track running from Fenelon Falls Station to Watson's Siding. He worked for the railway until his death in February of 1946.

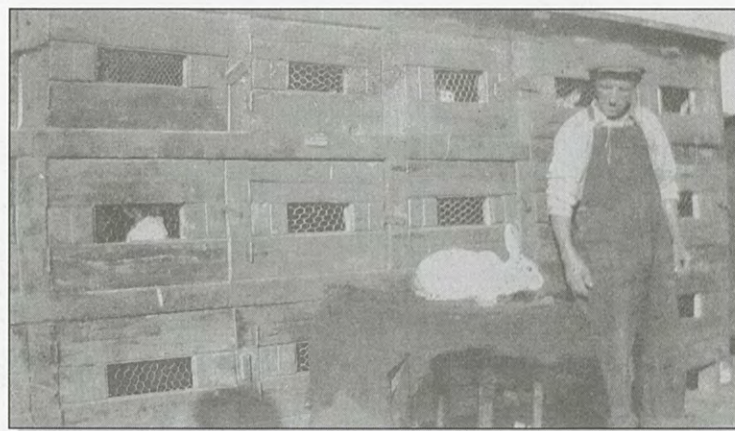
All four sons worked for a time for the Handley Lumber Company before enlisting in the armed forces during World War II, and Chester and Marion, upon his return, built a small grocery store in the village, which they still operate today. Chester continued working for Ray Handley in this lumber operation in Fenelon Falls, while driving the local bus to the high school every day. Gladys taught school locally for many years, and Earl worked in construction in the Toronto area, while Doug worked in local construction companies in this area.

Minnie was 92 years old when she died in 1971, and she lived to see many of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren settled in the Burnt River area. Her son, Chester, says he can never remember his mother complaining about anything. The frame home where the family was raised has been torn down, and replaced by a modern, brick bungalow, where Earl and wife retired to some years back.

J.H.



Minnie and Fred Godwin,
standing in the front door of their
home, 1920 [Chester Godwin]



Fred Godwin tending his chinchilla rabbit hutches
[Erick Watson]



Margie Rettie sitting in front of her family home on Hillside Drive, early 1980's
[Wilbert Rettie]



THE NED HOPKINS PROPERTY

164 Hillside Drive

17

After farming for forty years on their property just outside the village of Burnt River (Con 7, S Lot 12), beside the railway track, Ned and Lizzie (Moffat) Hopkins sold their property to Fred and Bertha Palmer in 1919, and moved to a new two-story, frame house Ned had built new, just west of the four corners in the village, on the lake road. He was a very accomplished carpenter, as was his brother, Ben, as well as being an excellent blacksmith. Besides the new house, he built a large barn and shop at the back of the village property, and no doubt, continued to carry on his "smithy" business from there. Their daughter, Alice, had previously died in 1919, and he and his wife lived alone here until her death in 1941, at which time his brother, Ben, retired from his farm in Baddow, and joined Ned at Burnt River. Ned died in 1945 at the age of 80. Ben and his sister, Mrs. Ireton, lived there for some time after Ned's death, but the records are unclear as to whether anyone resided in the home after they were deceased.

In 1960, Wilbert Rettie and his wife, Edith, bought the property, and moved there with their family of four girls, Bonnie, Margaret, Leah and Cheryl. Wilbert had just been appointed to the job of Work Foreman for the Township of Somerville, and this move enabled him to reside closer to his work station, which was just along the road, beyond the Palmer's farm. Shortly after their move to Burnt River they had a fifth child, a boy they named Wade. The family resided there until 1980, when, the girls having married and moved away, Wilbert and Edith built a smaller, new home, several lots to the west, towards the lake.

They sold their former home to Ruth Ann Deschamps' family, and she and her two daughters came to reside in Burnt River. The girls were in school at the time and Ruth Ann obtained employment with one of the local banks, working there until the girls had left home after finishing their education. At that time she met Dave Reid, who is a painter by trade, as well as a skilled furniture restorer, and he has joined her in this large home. He is making good use of the barn at the back of the property, having set this up as a work shop, and together they have made extensive improvements to the house, both inside and out. Ruth Ann became interested in water gardens some time ago, and has worked very hard to create one in her back yard, with interesting fish of all types, and different aquatic plants. She now works with Dave in his business and they both have become enthusiastic Burnt River residents.

J.H.

THE HOPKINS-PALMER FARM

120 County Road 44

18

In the mid 1880's Edward (Ned) Hopkins married Elizabeth (Lizzie) Moffat, and they took up residence on the south half of Lot 12, Concession 7, just off the north-east corner of the village of Burnt River. Ned was an excellent carpenter, both for framing and finishing a home, as well as a very good blacksmith, and he augmented their income with his work in this field. It is thought that he built the fine old, two-story farm house that is presently situated on the property. They remained at this location until after the First World War, when they built a new, two-story, frame house in the village of Burnt River, on the road leading in to Four Mile Lake, just west from the four corners in the village. Their one daughter, Alice, died when she was eighteen, in 1919, just at the time they left the farm.

At that time they sold their farm property to Fred and Bertha Palmer. Fred had grown up in Burnt River with the Hoskins family, and had just returned from service in World War I. He had recently married Bertha Finney, whose family were at that time farming on the Pinery Road, on property that was later incorporated into the Victoria County Forest.

Fred and Bertha became a mainstay of the community of Burnt River. The stone schoolhouse was on the Palmers' property, and they quite often boarded the school teacher, as they had extra bedrooms, and no family of their own. They were both elders of the Burnt River United Church, and Bertha was a staunch member of the Women's Institute for years. Every day of good weather she would walk in to the village to pick up their mail at the Post Office, and would often barter a basket of her eggs for groceries with Mrs. Sarah Wright at the store, as well as catch up on the latest news.

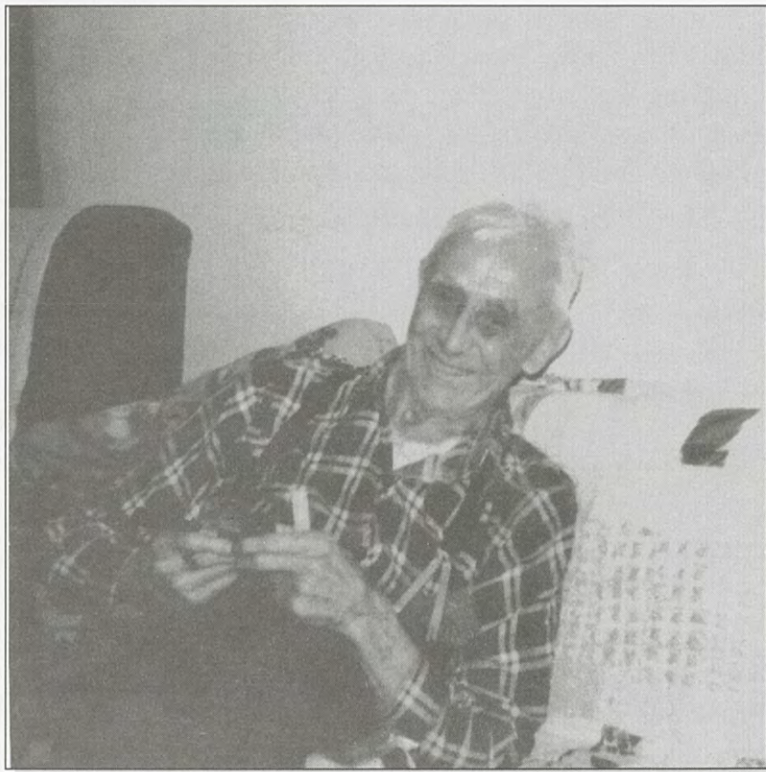
Fred became Forestry Officer in the 1930's, after the start of the Victoria Count Forest, a position from which he retired in 1947. They were both members of the Orange Lodge locally, and supported with enthusiasm everything that promoted Burnt River, especially anything involving young people. In 1963 they sold their farm to John Handley and his son, Bryce, and built a new home on a corner lot reserved from their property, which was at the four corners of the village.

No one lived in the house until Ivan Jones and his family moved there in 1969, renting from the Handleys. John and his son, Bryce, farmed the land for a time, and then sold the property to their cousin, Boyd Handley, in 1972. The Jones family had moved out of the house in the mid 1970's, and no one inhabited it for some time. Boyd and his wife, Christina, have gradually refurbished and modernized the home, recently moving from the Handley homestead farm on Wrex Road, and now make it their home.

J. H.

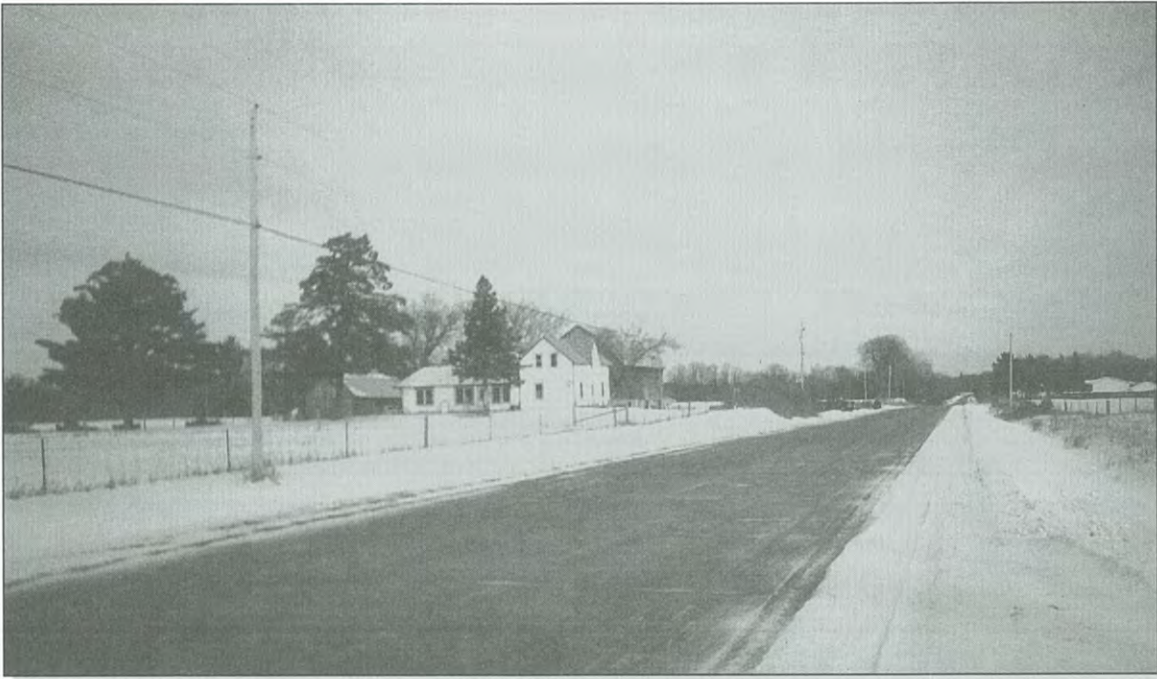
Fred and Bertha Palmer celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary, 1969, in the Parish Hall at Burnt River [Mrs. Geo. Finney]





Fred Palmer, taken in 1977 [Mrs. Geo. Finney]





THE HOWIE-HODGSON-RETTIE FARM

70 County Road 44

19

This 100-acre property on the west side of the Burnt River (Lot 11, Concession 7) is bounded on the south by the now County Road 44, and stretches out to the north. A small corner of the land is on the east side of the river, where the north bridge out of the village crosses, on what is known as the “east Line”, and the Union Creek enters the river there. It was homesteaded in the latter years of the 1800’s by James Howie, who had married Dorothy Fell of Squire Fell’s family from the Burys Green settlement in north Verulam. Both he and his wife retired to that area, leaving the farm to their daughter, Margaret Edith, and her husband, Christopher (Chris) Hodgson. Edith’s two brothers, Jack and Tom, who both never married, stayed with Chris and Edith on the farm. Upon her husband’s death, Mrs. Howie returned to stay with her daughter’s family. Edith’s niece, Muriel Hodgson, remembers her as a very small lady, always knitting and sewing.

Edith and Chris’ family of five, Irene, Alma, John, Alfred (Alf) and Ray, grew up on the farm. None of the boys were interested in farming, however, and pursued careers elsewhere. Irene married Bert Rettie, after his return from the First World War, and Alma married his younger brother, Lee. Bert went into the lumber business locally, establishing saw mills at different places as his business dictated, finally settling in Fenelon Falls. Lee, after some years of working at different locations around Ontario, returned to the Burnt River area in the early 1940’s with Alma, and bought the farm from Chris and Edith when they retired to the village of Burnt River in 1944.

Lee and Alma raised their daughter, Leona, and son, Morley, there, until each left home to work elsewhere. Lee was an ardent farmer, and raised Black Angus cattle, one of the few farmers in this area involved with the breed. He maintained that, for this poorer land, they were one of the best beef-producing breeds. Alma was very involved with the United Church, playing the organ there for many years, and was an active member of the UCW and the Women’s Institute. In 1962 she assumed the duties of Postmistress for Burnt River, on the death of Mrs. Violet Sheehy, and worked in this position until her retirement in the spring of 1970. She was always a very energetic and outgoing person, involved in the daily life of the community. With their deaths, in the mid-1980’s, the farm passed to Morley.

The farm was rented from the spring of 1987 to Darlene and Dale Smith, who came there with their son, Troy, at that time, and remained living there and working the land until the summer of 1997, when they bought property north of the village on the Burnt River Road. Morley had previously sold the back thirty acres of the farm to Marshall Dudman to operate as a sand and gravel quarry, and in 1996 he sold the remainder of the farm property to Bruce Douglas, a local neighbour, whose family had been residing on Four Mile Lake.

In 1998 Bruce went into partnership with his brother, Stephen, in Strathbrae Farms, introducing long-horned, highland cattle to the area as a breed. They have started small, but are gradually expanding their operation, some of their livestock placing well in recent showings at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto. Sue and Briar Douglas, their parents, sold their property on Four Mile Lake and renovated the farm house here, completely refurbishing the inside, and building a wrap-around, enclosed verandah onto the back kitchen section, to make a very spacious and lovely downstairs room. Briar died just as this was all completed, but the family have carried out their plans, and are very happy in their new farming operation.

J.H.



Lee Rettie bringing a load of hay across Union Creek from the field on the other side of the river
[Morley Rettie]



Lee and Alma Rettie, taken on the wedding day of her sister to Lee's brother
[Morley Rettie]



Chris Hodgson, standing with his two daughters, Irene and Alma, early 1930's [Roger Hodgson]

THE JAMES ARMSTRONG JR. HOMESTEAD

8 County Road 44

(Lot 10, Conc. 7, Somerville)

20

James Armstrong Sr., and his family moved from Ireland to Scotland at the time of the potato famine in Ireland. James, himself, subsequently emigrated to Canada, and first settled on Scugog Island, where he met the Schell family. He came north with them to the 2nd Concession of Somerville, where they each established adjacent homesteads. James married Elizabeth Ann Schell, and they raised their family on this homestead. For several generations this remained in the Armstrong family, owned by his descendants, in that location, through his son, Herb, then through Herb's son, Don, and then, finally through Don's son, Brian, who recently sold the property.

There were six sons in the family, Herbert (Herb), James Jr. (Jim), William (Bill), John, Joseph (Joe), and George. As well, there were four surviving daughters, Melinda, Hanna, May, and Letitia. Dorothy, a fifth daughter, died young. The children married as follows, and most settled in the Burnt River-Fenelon Falls area:

Herb married May Tipling, and settled on the original homestead on the 2nd Concession.

Jim married Phoebe Smith, daughter of a Verulam family, and settled at Burnt River on the 200-acre property we are discussing.

John married Elizabeth (Libbie) Walker, daughter of a Verulam family, and settled on 200 acres on the 6th Concession of Verulam.

Bill married Maude Brooks and settled on 200 acres on the 3rd Concession of Somerville

Melinda married George Sheehey and originally settled on the 3rd Concession of Somerville, from where they moved to the farm presently owned by Pam and Jerry Dudman along the river to the east of the village of Burnt River.

Hanna married George Elliott of the Fenelon Falls area.

May married Henry Hall and they settled in Coboconk and ran a restaurant there.

Letitia married George Gransden and they settled on Concession 1 of Somerville.

Joe married Elizabeth Hughes of the Hughes family who owned land along the Burnt River, on the road to Fenelon Falls, and they settled south of Burnt River, along the river, adjacent to the Joe Handley Sr. farm.

George married Alice Campbell, a daughter of the Verulam Campbell family, and moved to Fenelon Falls, starting a garage there.

James Sr., upon their marriage, provided each son with land or capital to establish themselves. The Armstrong property at Burnt River was purchased in 1893, just after the logging speculators had clear-cut the area. James and Phoebe commenced their life together in a small, log house on the high knoll overlooking Union Creek, where it enters the Burnt River. The west boundary of their 200 acres was the Burnt River, except for a small parcel of land on the south-west corner, which they had to cross the river to access. Their original barn was also a log structure, located directly to the north of the house and still standing today, beside the new frame barn built in 1906. The log house is gone, however. In 1911 the present cement-block house was built slightly to the west of the original home location. One of the interesting aspects of this property is that, for a week or so, each spring, the Union Creed floods the lane way as a result of back up flooding from the Burnt River, and the Armstrongs have to leave and come home by boat. In the days when a high-wheeled wagon or buggy and horses were used, this may not have been such a problem, but today modern vehicles do not negotiate water as easily.



Sucker fish hung out to dry, in the old traditional way [Hugh Armstrong]



James and Phoebe raised a family of five children here, Mabel, who married James Lamb and settled locally, Russell, who married Bertha Poulson from Fenelon Township, Henry, who married Ila Herron from Powles Corners, Bertha, who married Howard Poulson (Bertha's brother), and Myrtle, who married Ray McGill from Nestleton, and then upon his death, Irwin White from Sturgeon Point. Initially, Russell and Bertha resided on the farm with James, and Henry and Ila lived in Fenelon Falls, where he worked as a blacksmith at Dick Bulmer's. However, on or about 1948, the two families decided to switch places, and Henry and Ila took up residence at the farm with Jim. Phoebe had died much earlier. It had always been a wish of Henry's to live there, and Russell's wife, Bertha, was unwell, and needed the closer care of a physician. Henry's family were quite young at the time, a daughter, June, and a son, Hugh, in elementary school, and a younger daughter, Mary Ellen.

The farm was prosperous, and James Jr. had augmented his income framing barns and stumping his neighbours' properties in the area, wherever needed. He had constructed a machine for this task, and never lacked for work in the early days of the settlement. The machine is still there, and his grandson, Hugh, is exploring the possibility of restoring it to working order for future display at Kinmount Fair. Both Russell and Henry were excellent blacksmiths, and used this skill in earlier days to bring in extra income, besides farming, as there were always horses to shoe, and in later years Henry made shoes for the heavier show horses, including the Carlsberg teams.

Both Henry, and his father, Jim, before him loved the spring flooding of the Union Creed. Perhaps Henry came by it honestly, as he was born on March 30, 1913, in the midst of one of the highest floods ever, and the doctor had to be brought in by boat to attend the birthing. The family called him the "high-water baby". The water could be dangerous, of course, and when Myrtle was only five years old, and on her way to Sunday School with the family at Easter, she inadvertently fell off the bridge when climbing over the gate that was there. Clutching her prayer book with one hand she managed to grab a branch of nearby willows until the family could pull her out. The family still have the prayer book with the note she wrote herself in later years. "This is the prayer book I had the day I fell off the Bridge. I was 5 years old."

It has always been a tradition in the family to dry the local fish of the creeks called "suckers", which are caught in the spring, and use them as snack food. It is thought that Elizabeth Schell originally taught her family how to do this, and Hugh and his family still carry it on, and enjoy it as a treat.

Henry and Ila remained on the farm until their deaths, when it passed to Hugh in 1995. He has retired from a teaching career throughout Victoria County, and he and his wife, Ruth, have, after extensive modelling and expanding of the house, taken up residence in 1999. Henry and Ila had built a new woodshed and side porch on the original home in 1977, and Hugh and Ruth have expanded this with a front room, and open air porch added to the front, in 1998. Timber sawn from logs taken from trees on the property was used in this recent construction, and a fireplace was built from recycled brick of the farm home of Howard Poulson and Bertha, which had burned the previous year. This renovation project was completed by Henry's grandson-in-law, Ken Strong of Kinmount. The view is outstanding from the knoll on which the house sits, and you can understand why the family have such a great love of the place, and a willingness to care for it.

J.H.



The house as it was in Henry and Ila's day
[Hugh Armstrong]



The house with the new addition on the front [Hugh Armstrong]





THE THOMAS SUDDABY HOUSE
251 Burnt River Road

21

The Suddabys first came to the Burnt River area in the late 1850's. James and Samuel settled in two hundred-acre lots across the Burnt River, along what is now County Road 121, on or about 1859, with the river bordering the west side of the properties (now occupied by Ken and Catherine Warner, and Pam and Jerry Dudman). The family of Samuel prospered and he became involved in the limestone quarry operation of Alexander Rettie on Lot 13, Concession 6, and developed it into one of the larger industries of the area. He married Mary Jane McIntyre, a daughter of John McIntyre (whose family were well off), and they had nine children, Thomas James, Samuel Augustus, Reuben Arthur (Artie), Maggie, Ethel Wilhelmina, Mary Lillian, Eva, Nettie and William.

Samuel was Postmaster in Burnt River from 1896 to 1921, and the Post Office was located in his home, next door to the general store. Both buildings were burned in the Burnt River fire on October 19, 1944. He was also Township Clerk for 23 years, and a Justice of the Peace.

His son, Thomas, married Anna (Annie) Billet from north Verulam, and they operated the general store next door, which they bought in 1920, until 1942 (except for three years when it was owned by Charles F. McNeil). Thomas and Annie has no children, but were very involved in the Methodist (now United) Church, Thomas as an Elder, and Annie as Sunday School Superintendent, from the early 1940's through to the 1950's. She would start out from her house, walking always, on a Sunday morning, and collect children as she came down the street, just like the "pied piper".

Thomas and Annie built a new home on the property at 251 Burnt River Road, on the village end of what was a 100-acre plot of land, stretching north along the Burnt River Road, from the four corners of the village. About one-third of this property was taken up with the beaver pond in that vicinity, but, as they were not farmers, this did not particularly worry them. Thomas' brother, Artie, lived with them in later years.

The Mowatt family from Toronto used to visit with them quite often, as they were interested in church services, as were the Suddabys, and their son, David, talks of his mother and father admonishing him and his sister to be very careful of the furnishings, as they were all very tastefully Victorian, of an excellent quality. The Suddabys also had a large field stone fireplace built in the parlour of the house, something that was not common in this area.

With Thomas' death, Annie maintained her residence for a short time, but then closed the house and went to live with her sister, Mrs. Wes Reeds, in Verulam, and died there in the late 1950's. The house was then sold to Gratton and Irene Hughes upon their retirement from their farm to the north of the village, in 1959. They remained there until 1966, when they decided to move to Lindsay to be closer to medical facilities.

At that time Barbara Wallwork and her family were looking for a home in the area. Barbara had recently been widowed, her husband having been killed in a construction accident. In August of 1966 she and her children, Susan, Peggy, Danny and Casey, moved into the Suddaby house, where there was lots of room for a large family. Barbara renovated the kitchen area of the house, and generally refurbished it to suit modern living.

Barbara remarried in 1983, to Gordon Carr, and her son, Casey, and his wife, Elizabeth, took over the family home. They bought it outright in 1988, and have done some renovations in the back area, making a family room out of the woodshed area, and building a large garage on the property. At the time of this sale, Barbara had the property split, and sold the north half to her other son, Danny, who has built a modern home there. The old barn of the Suddabys is still on this section. Prior to Barbara buying this property, the Suddabys had sold off a great deal of the part that was useable to other villagers, so these section were the only part left

J.H..



THE HUNTER FAMILY HOME
330 Burnt River Road

22

This weathered, brown two-story farm house has been home to the Hunter family since the year 1935, when Gordon and Ella Hunter (nee Schell) settled there with five of their seven children, Raymond, Shirley, Bernice, Ralph and Mervyn, on the 50-acre plot of Lot 12, Concession 7. They had purchased it from Johnny Wicks' family, with the help of Gordon's father, Thomas, who at that time resided on the farm he had originally homesteaded out on the "east Line" (County Road 121), now the property of Marshall and Goldie Dudman.

The house had been built new in 1910 by builders from Fenelon Falls, (as discovered marked on the underboarding of the back door frame by June and Mervyn Hunter when renovating in the early 1970's). It was sold to John Wicks when the Hoskins family moved back to north Verulam in later years. Ella Hunter advised that as a young girl she remembered attending the house-warming party put on by the Hoskins family to mark their occupancy of the new home. Her family, all well-known musicians in the community, had been invited to help supply the music for the occasion.

Gordon and Ella struggled to maintain their small farm, and Gordon supplemented his family's income by working at taking out logs from various stands of timber locally. They prospered selling produce they took into the town of Fenelon Falls on Saturday in the summer, in their 1927 Whippet, but this was mid-Depression, and times became universally tough for all families, with barter mostly taking the place of money. Gordon worked for the local timber companies as a steam engineer, having his 3rd Class Stationary Engineer Certificate, and in later years he found work in the same field with a construction company. It was seasonal, and he could work his farm in the off season, although after the departure of his older children he discontinued working the land, and sold his livestock.

Two more children, Adele and Kenneth, were born to Gordon and Ella, here, and then the older children began to disperse as World War II came, seeking work elsewhere, marrying and raising their own families. Gordon remained living on the farm until the late 1960's when his health started to deteriorate due to an old injury from having his foot frozen in the trenches in France in World War I. Ella had much earlier moved to Lindsay

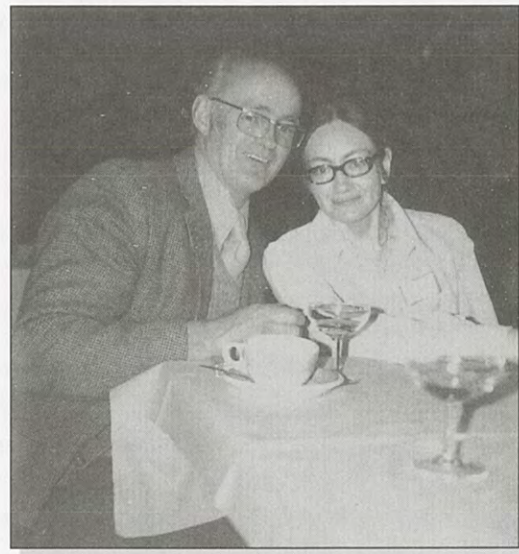
to be closer to her family and work as a practical nurse, but Gordon, not wishing to make such a change, stayed on the farm. His son, Mervyn, and his wife, June (a daughter from the local Owen Rettie family) returned to the farm at that time, to settle, and with Gordon's death in 1971, the property passed to them.

Having worked throughout Ontario for fifteen years previously in the construction field, Mervyn started his own small building contracting business, working amongst the local lake people who were building and renovating properties on Four Mile Lake and surrounding area. June obtained work as the local Postmaster and Librarian in Burnt River. They have raised their family, a boy, Lyndsay Gordon, and a girl, Elizabeth Anne, and they have since left the area for work elsewhere, after completion of their schooling. Mervyn has since retired from business, after a serious illness in 1992; June, however, still remains as the local Postmaster and Librarian for the village.

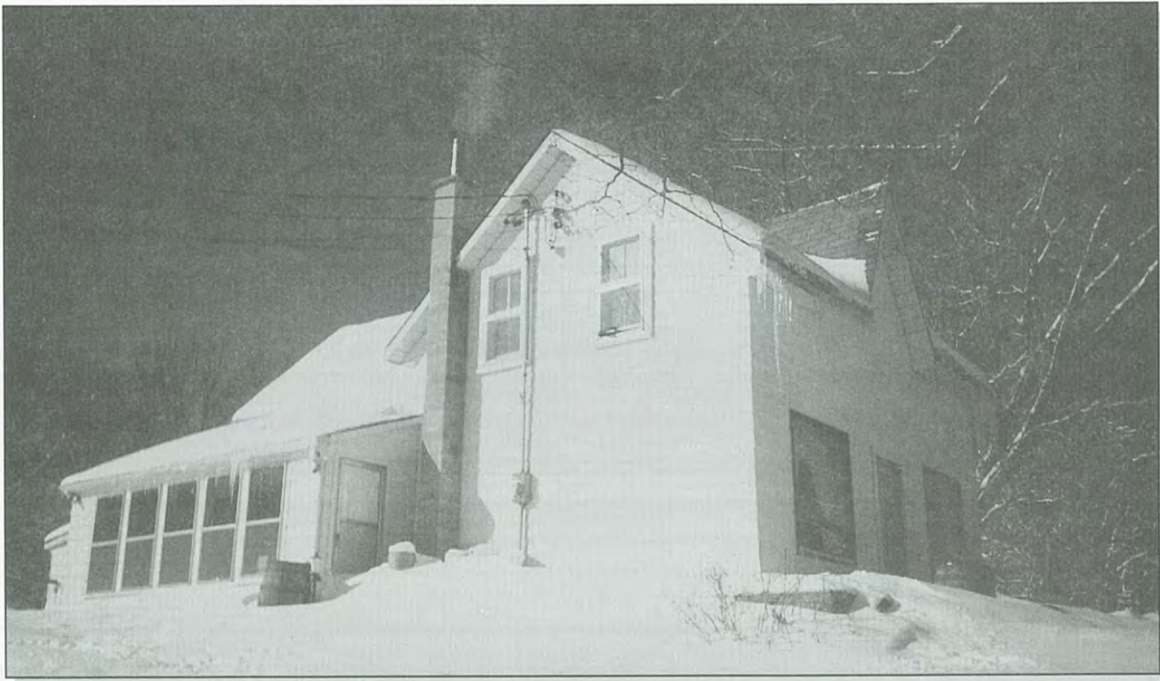
J.H.



The Gordon Hunter family, from the left (standing): Ralph, Ken, Raymond, Gordon, Mervyn, (seated) Adele, Ella, Bernice, Shirley, 1960 [Adele Hadden]



June and Mervyn Hunter, 1970
[Sandra Blackmore]



THE NICHOLS HOMESTEAD

381 Burnt River Road

23

In the late 1800's this 100-acre property, which is the north half of Lot 13, Concession 7, Somerville, was settled by the Jim Nichols family. The lower part of the property consisted of cleared fields, and the house and barn were on the upper end, which rises slightly, as it is the beginning of the limestone ridge on the north side of the Burnt River valley. The house was initially much smaller than it is now. A back kitchen and upper story above were added when their son, Dave, and his family took residence.

They were clearing land on the south part of the property in the late 1800's, when a brush fire they started went out of control in a strong west wind and jumped the road. It burned across the 50-acre section belonging to John Hodgson, crossed the railway tracks, burning the home and freight office of the section foreman, and continued across the 100 acres of the Howie-Hodgson farm, straight down to the river's edge. It then jumped the river and burned on beyond that. It was certainly a quick way to clear the land, but it is certain their neighbours did not appreciate such action.

Jim Nichols ran a saw mill at the river by the "east Line" bridge in 1885, and this was probably his main source of revenue, as farming often did not yield a satisfactory living. The farmers from the "east line" were bringing their logs down Union Creek in the spring to this point, and this would supply a ready source of raw material for a milling operation. The mill burned down in the early 1890's, and there is no record of it being rebuilt.

Mr. and Mrs. Dave Nichols ceased farming some time in the 1920's and moved to Toronto at that time. He had obtained steady employment as a stationary engineer in that area, and the farmhouse here was rented out to various people. His neighbour, Fred Palmer, rented the land for farming purposes. In the 1930's the Nichols would often return for their holidays in the summer, with a small cabin trailer, parking it on the 100-acre lot they owned towards the end of Four Mile Lake. In those days the fishing was very good, and their wooden boat was kept regularly caulked by their neighbour, Gordon Hunter, so that everything was always in readiness. In 1939 they sold this property to Anna and Fred Holliday, and they started a lodge for tourists called Holliday's Hideaway.

With their passing, their son, Gary, managed the property, and just after the close of the Second World War, in 1945, he sold the property to Bill Cameron, a returning veteran. Bill's father, Ted, had been renting it to lodge his family, for some time, so this was a natural progression of events. The Cameron family held the property until 1969, when they bought a small home in the south end of Burnt River village, and the land was sold to Willard (Nick) Nicholson, and his wife, Pat. Nick had just retired from the Air Force and was looking for a property on which he might run a few cattle, and could rehabilitate cheaply. The house was in need of major repairs to modernize it at that time, and the barn had collapsed inwards. A lot of the field area on the bottom of the lot had grown up with tag alders, also, and part of it had been sold for two building lots.

The Nicholsons gutted the inside of the house completely, and rebuilt the rooms downstairs to provide a more spacious area. They also completely rewired it, as he was an electrician by trade, having learned it in the forces. White siding was put on the outside to give it a fresher and neater appearance. Pat went to work for a local bank, and then transferred to work at the local Superior Propane outlet just south on the highway to Fenelon Falls, while Nick found work with an electrical contractor there. When they arrived, their daughter, Anne, was in training for a nurse, and their son, Gary, was still in high school. They lived there until the early 1980's, but Nick had been let go in his work at Fenelon Falls, so they decided to relocate to Alberta. Their family were not living at home any longer, and he was originally from that province. Pat arranged to get a transfer in her work to Taber, in the southern section of that province, where they grow a lot of sugar beets, and use propane agriculturally in a large way. The farm house was rented for a year or so, and then the property was sold to Art Hulland and his wife, Joan. Art had recently retired from work at General Motors in Oshawa, and thought he would like to have a small farm. He had been raised at Burnt River before the Second World War by Ike and Greata Reeds, so this was like coming home. They came with their small granddaughter, Lee Anne.

The Hullands held the property until 1990, when Art died. It was then sold by the family to Lorne Morrish and his wife, Eileen, who had moved to this area from farther south when they bought the General Store at Burnt River several years before. Lorne had farmed prior to coming to the area, and was anxious to keep his hand in at this occupation, although on a much smaller scale than before. In 1996 Lorne sold the store and moved completely to the farm, but shortly after this he became unwell and the farm was put up for sale. It was purchased in 1998 by a neighbour, Ken Waylett, whose mother owns a small home on the Burnt River Road just south of the farm. Ken does not live there, however, as he works in Toronto, but rents the house out. The farm is not presently being worked.

J.H.



Jenny and Alvery
Cain, seated on
the crooked tree
at Four Mile
Lake, 1930's
[Margaret Allen]

THE CAIN HOMESTEAD

Part of Lot 13, 8th Concession, Somerville

24

The Cain family, which originated in Germany, came to Canada from the United States and settled near Marmora about 1842. James Crawford Cain came to Burnt River with his mother, three sisters and three brothers, after his father, Barnabus, died near Marmora in 1869. James married Ellen Rettie, a daughter of Alexander Rettie Sr., in 1871, and in 1876 they bought 50 acres, part of Lot 13, on the 8th Concession of Somerville from the Crown, and built a two-story, log house in the bush. It had three rooms downstairs and two upstairs, with a verandah along the front.

In the meantime the rest of the Cain family returned to the United States, leaving James and Ellen in Burnt River. James and Ellen had seven children, as follows:

James Judson Cain married Helen Smith of Kinmount

Margaret Ellen married Robert Wilson and they resided in Burnt River until his death.

John Alexander married Mary E. Reeds of Burnt River

Barnabus(Barney) married Violet Puley of Fenelon Falls

Frederick married Mary Kirkpatrick of Lindsay

George Wesley married Nellie Latcham of Stouffville

Alvery Lee married Jennie May Wood of Burnt River

James was one of the founders of the Methodist Church in Burnt River, and his family were staunch supporters of this small country charge. Two of his first cousins, George and William McConnell, became Methodist ministers, and George, while minister at Kinmount (1899-1902) officiated for the marriage of James' daughter, Margaret Ellen, to Robert Wilson.

All of the Cain brothers moved to Toronto where they were mostly involved in some type of carpentry work, except Alvery, who remained in Burnt River. He worked as a trainman and conductor for the Canadian National Railways, and for a time he and Jenny lived in the log house on the homestead. In 1923 they and their children moved from there to the Groves-Henderson house in the village, and lived there until 1937, when they move for a short time to the Hodgson-Lamb house across the road. Alverly was laid off from the railway during the Depression years, but with the coming of World War II in 1939 he was rehired, and the family left Burnt River to take up residence in Lindsay. At that time Jenny and Alvery had six children, Margaret(Peggy), Ray, Jean, Audrey, Geraldine and Glen.

George took over the family property in the late 1930's, and had the log home torn down and used some of the material from it to frame a new house in the same location, with the intention of returning to Burnt River upon his retirement. He became ill, however, and never did finish the project. The frame of the house has fallen into disrepair at present, and the property has been sold.

M.A.

HOLLIDAY'S HIDEAWAY

5 Wembley Drive

25

“Follow the blue jay,
To Holliday's Hideaway,
Where the fish bite
Night and Day,
And you'll enjoy your stay
At Holliday Lodge.”



This was the verse used by Anna(Handley) Holliday to advertise Holliday's Hideaway, their tourist resort on Four Mile Lake. It was the North half of Lot 14, Concession 8, which Anna and Fred Holliday bought from David Nichols in 1938 for \$1,300. The Hollidays had three children, Margaret(married to Clarence Allen), Bill(married to Betty Duggan) and Michael (married to June Martin). The lodge was built on a hill overlooking the lake. It had a verandah full length across the front, then a living and dining room combined, with a large stone fireplace, and behind this, a kitchen, bedroom and bathroom.

Upstairs, there were seven bedrooms and a bathroom. They also had a cabin and workshop near the Lodge, a huge garden, and another cottage on the hill. Two other cottages were built across the bay on points of land, and a large cottage was built right on the water, which they sold to Canadian Line Materials (C.L.M.) Company for the use of their executives for vacation weeks. (Each spring they had an opening weekend, and a closing weekend in the fall, with men coming to do the work, and a banquet was prepared at the Lodge for such.) While all the cottages were housekeeping, many of the occupants preferred to take their meals at the Lodge. The dining room held a large table, which could seat twelve. Anna did all the cooking, with a helper, and her daughter, Margaret waited on tables. The meals were very reasonably priced by today's standards—75 cents for a Sunday chicken dinner.

The Hollidays operated the lodge from the summer of 1939 until the fall of 1945, when they sold it to Arthur J. Child, who operated it as Chateau Wembley. It was later sold to Douglas Merritt in the 1960's for a private residence. There was quite a lot of undeveloped shoreline with the lot to the north of the lodge, and Doug immediately subdivided this into cottage lots, and sold them with the option to build a cottage for the buyer, calling the area Avalon Park. The small island in the lake adjacent to the shoreline was also developed.

The lodge now belongs to Clayton and Rosemary Connell, who have made it their home after a few years of using it as a cottage. They have completely renovated the inside, replacing rotted floor joists and removing the fire place. They have done their remodelling in stages, to all the rooms. While Fred Holliday was building the lodge he was part owner of a sawmill at Irondale, and he used hemlock for the studding, fir lumber on the living and dining room floor, while the upstairs ones were tongue and groove pine. When the Connells were working on the living room ceiling they found some fire-charred ceiling joists. This happened when the ceiling caught fire one day and Anna, the only one home at the time along with her young son, Billy, put it out. She tore the donnaconna off the ceiling and used small dippers of water from her only quick source, a pan on the stove, to put it out. The Connells' next project is the exterior of the lodge, and then it will be completely new, but still old.

M.A.



THE VICTORIA COUNTY FOREST HOME
95 Pinery Road

26

In 1928 a reforestation project was started in the northern part of Somerville Township and some other smaller area of the County, whereby 1,650 areas of waste or abandoned land were planted by the Ontario Department of Agriculture, in conjunction with the County of Victoria. Eighty per cent of the plantings were red pine, the remainder white, scotch and jack pine, with some white spruce. Some 2,765,000 trees were planted originally. It was a pioneer conservation project, unique of its kind for this area at the time, from which the local people obtained work, and the first Forestry Officer was Chris Hodgson of Burnt River. On or about 1938 Mr. Hodgson was succeeded by Fred Palmer, also of Burnt River, as Forestry Officer.

After the project had ten or so years of growth, the Government held an annual day, usually in late May or June, where the local school children of the area and the general public were invited to come and see its progress. The children were driven around in the back of the forestry truck, "Betsy", through fire roads that were interspersed throughout, and then there were races and free pop, with speeches being made by the politicians of the day. This custom continued for almost twenty years, and is fondly remembered by many local people.

The Forestry House, as it was referred to, was formerly part of the estate of Mr. Roland Maconachie, who had come to this area from England in the late 1890's, and with family backing, had settled on 200 acres of land on the Pinery Road (Concession 9, Lot 10). It was Mr. Maconachie's hope to establish an estate at this location, but the land was almost worthless for agricultural use, and this never evolved. He did, however, build a large home, with several other outbuildings, on the property. Mr. Maconachie was instrumental in having the Anglican church built in Burnt River, in 1903. After his death, however, the property was abandoned until the County decided to reforest the area. The Ministry utilized the barn on the holding for storage of supplies.

In 1947, when Roderick (Roddy) Cameron, a returned Second World War veteran, was appointed the successor to Fred Palmer as Forestry Officer, he and his wife, Phyllis, assumed occupancy, with their small family, a daughter, Janet (born in England in 1944), and a son, Gene (1946). Three more children were born to Roddy

and Phyllis, Gordon (1948), Glen (1950), and William (1952). Phyllis was the first war bride to come to the Burnt River area, and the day she and her small daughter arrived on the train, she was met at the Burnt River station, not only by the Cameron family, but also by most of the village school children, who had come out to make her welcome. Janet recalls growing up at the Forestry home with great fondness. She and her brothers used the area around the home as a giant playground, inhabited with secret hiding places and animal friends.

The Forestry Officer played a major part in the community. Many of the local men obtained seasonal work planting trees, and maintaining fire roads and water sources. Fire permits were issued from the house, and the only fire-fighting equipment locally was situated there. In the 1950's the Fenelon Falls High School Forestry Club came several times a year to plant trees, and, in later years, in the summer months, university students were employed to mark trees for winter cutting and general maintenance. The forest has been harvested to some extent with regard to pulp and fire wood, and poles.

Roddy Cameron retired in 1977, and purchased the 2 1/2 acres of land on which the house and original barn, garage and cistern were located, as the Ministry of Natural Resources was no longer planning to maintain the Forest, but turning it back to the control of the County of Victoria. With the death of his wife, Phyllis, in 1978, he remained there for a time, but then remarried and moved into Fenelon Falls, Ontario, selling the home to his son, Bill. Bill lived there for a short time, and then sold it to Cecil and Lynne Johnston in 1986, the year Roddy died. There was a fire in January of 1989 and the house burned completely, thus marking the end of an era.

Roddy is well remembered in the area for his jovial personality and willingness to always extend a welcome to all, and help if he could. The work the Forestry provided to the area was shared fairly, and he was an excellent ambassador for the Ministry of Natural Resources.

J. H.



Roddy Cameron, with Phyllis, on the evening of his retirement "roast", 1977
[Janet]



THE GEORGE CAVANAUGH JR. HOMESTEAD

Across from 245 Pinery Road

27

George Cavanaugh Jr. was a son of George Cavanaugh, who had settled on the 3rd Concession of Somerville Township in 1841. He married Maggie Hughes from Gooderham in the early 1900's, and they settled on 200 acres of land beside the Burnt River, on the 9th Concessiion road, where it crosses the river. There was a bridge across the river at this point then. The land was very sandy, and not good for agricultural crops here, but nevertheless the family persevered in trying to make a living from the farm. Six children were born to George and Maggie here, Florence, who died when young, Ruby, the only one who married, (to Bert Hopkins), and who settled in Omemee, John (Jack), who went to work in Toronto, Edith, who also went to work in the city, in the Toronto General Hospital, Clarence, who stayed with George at home on the farm, and the youngest, Gordon, who worked for many years at the veneer factory in Wilberforce, and then retired to live in Coboconk. Mrs. Cavanaugh left the farm some time in the 1930's, going to work in Toronto, and dying there.

With George's death, only Clarence was left on the home farm. He worked as a handyman around Four Mile Lake for many years, and for many local people also. He never did learn to drive a car, but walked or hitchhiked wherever he wished to go. He was well known locally, so had no trouble finding rides. Clarence was a well-remembered character locally, with his pipe, and his forecasts of the weather (the Burnt River almanac, so to speak). He would talk to everyone he ran across about his findings in nature and the surrounding area, and was sorely missed when he died.

The property passed to his cousin, Francis, then living in Coboconk, and she has since sold it. The house, itself, was vandalized several times, and declared unsafe just recently. The local volunteer firemen had permission from the present owner to destroy it this past fall of 2000, as it was becoming a hazard.

J.H.



THE WATSON HOMESTEAD
at Watson's Siding. Concession II, Somerville

28

The Watson family homesteaded 200 acres of land along the Burnt River, to the east of what is now known as Pinery Road, at Concession II of Somerville, in the late 1800's. The railroad cut across the north-west corner of their property on its way north to Kinmount, and there was a siding just to the west, which became known as Watson's Siding, after the family. Logs and cord wood were shipped from this point, and the railway used it as a layby for their work cabooses during the summer season when major repairs were being made to the line. You could also catch the passenger trains either north or south by using a signal system to halt them.

George was a son of this family and married Francis McBride of the Kinmount area. For a time they lived in Oshawa, but returned with their family of five children to the farm shortly after 1910. The children were educated at White's School, just to the north towards Highway 503. There were two boys in the family, Lloyd and Arnold, and three girls, Luella, Verna and Mildred. Luella married James Chalmers, of the local Chalmers family, Verna married a member of the Morrison family from just west of Kinmount, and Mildred married Donald Alexander. The farm house, itself, was a large frame building, built in two wings, with ample room for a large family.

Lloyd and Arnold remained on the farm after their parents died. Lloyd died in 1955, and in the mid-1960's Arnold married a local lady, Ella (Handley) Switzer. They remained on the farm until Arnold's death in 1969, at which time Ella sold the farm equipment and returned to live with her mother, Mrs. Robert Handley, in Burnt River. Unfortunately, shortly after that the farm house burned down.

Several years later a development group bought the property from Ella and developed it into a sub-division of two-acre "garden" lots. It has been slow to grow, but now there are some twelve homes in this small area, and it offers quiet country living, with neighbours within easy distance.

J.H.



Wallace Chalmers, a soldier in World War I, with his father, two young brothers, and friends, 1916 [Bernice Chalmers]



Ross Phillips of Kinmount, and Arnold Watson, 1920's [Bernice Chalmers]



From left to right, Aunt Gertie Fountain, Verna Watson, Grandfather McBride, Grandmother Watson (seated), Margaret Watson (baby), Mildred Watson, and Mrs. Bernice Chalmers, 1920's [Bernice Chalmers]



Back row, from the left: Gladys Fountain, Mildred Watson, Verna Watson, Luella Chalmers Front row, from the left: Mel Fountain, Bernice and Zeta Chalmers, 1925 [Bernice Chalmers]



THE HUGHES HOMESTEADS

(at Watson's Siding)

29

503 Pinery Road

607 Pinery Road

William Hughes came to Canada in the 1830's from England, and settled in Emily Township, marrying Eliza Sheehy from the Lake Scugog area. Her father worked on the ferries that went between the island and the mainland for a time. George, one of their sons, married Annie Chamber from the Cambray area, and they moved to the east shore of Cameron Lake, just north of Fenelon Falls when they were first married. He worked as a "dynamite man", and was quite versatile in this field; thus his services were in demand over a wide territory to blow stubborn stumps and rock in an area that was being freshly settled. In 1910 he brought his family north to settle 400 acres of land, which had been just cleared by the lumbering firms. It lay between the 11th and 10th Concessions of Somerville, and was bounded on the east side by what is now known as Pinery Road.

There was a railway siding in the area named after the local Watson family, who had previously settled along the river, to the east. It was used to send out logs (cut into pile and post lengths), which had been cut locally, as a shipping point for cords of hard wood to the Standard Chemical plant in Lindsay (brought across the draw road on the 11th Concession, in winter, from the Rumney Settlement above Coboconk), and to bring in supplies. The track, itself, cut across this lot, heading in a north-east direction towards Kinmount. (It was never officially a station, but rather a train stop, should there be freight or passengers to on- or off-load.)

George and Annie raised seven children at this location, Henry (Harry), who married Mina Henderson from a local family, Elizabeth, who married Art Young, Georgina, who married Noble Young, both from the same local family, Maude, who married Oscar Harling, Mossom, who died while a teenager, Gratton, who married Irene Sholer, and Garnet, who married Violet Scriver from Kinmount. Garnet was killed in 1952, in an automobile accident, after his return from serving in World War II. The children went to school in a small schoolhouse on what is now Highway 503, but the building has long since disappeared.

Harry and Mina, upon their marriage, bought the 100-acre lot to the north of the homestead, from James and Luella Chalmers in 1922, but the land was not as good there as on the original homestead, and Harry augmented his earnings by working as a part-time section hand for the Can. National Railways, on the run from Harcourt in the north, south to Fenelon Falls. In the winter he cut timber for posts and piles, and in later years Christmas trees, in season, to ship to Toronto. The railway used the siding as a place to park their bunk house when they were working on major rail repairs in the area, and Mina sold baking (pies, tarts, bread) to the crews. In the fall, during the local hunting season, which was usually two weeks in November, Harry ran a hunting camp at his farm, from 1938 until his death in 1959. Most of the participants were from Toronto, as his children working there referred their acquaintances. He also, in his later years, after the opportunity to work for the railway ceased, worked for the local Forestry Officer, Roddy Cameron, maintaining the Victoria County Forestry lands.

Harry and Mina had six children, Verna, Robinette, Frank (who died at age 12), Brock, Ralph and Joan. They farmed the land, but it was poor, and eventually the children left to make careers elsewhere. After Harry's death in 1959, Mina remained for two years, but then sold the land to the Penney family of Lindsay as a vacation retreat. Robin, their daughter, remembers, as children, taking the train, which came by about 12:30 p.m., north to Kinmount, for twenty-five cents, return, and spending several hours there, then returning home to their farm.

The family shopped during this time and bought their groceries. You could only do this every other day, though, when the train went only as far north as Howland Junction. If it went to Haliburton, you had to arrange to stay overnight and return the next day. Robin still lives locally, having married a World War II veteran, Doug Waylett, in the late 1940's, and establishing a small vacation home at 305 Burnt River Road, which she later converted into a permanent residence.

Mina occasionally came to stay with Robin for a weekend after Harry's death, and it was on one such time that June Hunter, who is their neighbour to the north, encountered her, on a Monday morning, on her way to work at the local Post Office. Robin and her husband had returned to Toronto, and Mrs. Hughes had apparently made arrangements to meet with someone at the local General Store in Burnt River to catch a ride back to Lindsay. She was very short in stature, but extremely energetic, and was walking down the road at a very fast pace, in her white pumps, hat, purse and gloves, in a lovely summer frock (as though she were going to church). June stopped and asked her if she would like a ride, and she accepted with alacrity. She talked about her visit with Robin and her plans for returning to Lindsay. The encounter was well remembered by June, as she marvelled at the energy and spirit of Mrs. Hughes to even tackle this mile walk at her age, on a gravel road, and in heeled shoes, on a hot summer morning.

Gratton had slightly better land, as he inherited the original homestead from his parents, and he and Irene remained in the area until 1959, farming and working for the Forestry. They had no family, and decided to retire to Burnt River at that time, buying the Thomas Suddaby house. They sold their land to a German couple, Boris and Kay Roeske. Boris established a small foundry there and supported his family selling his products to firms in Toronto. He and Kay had two children who finished growing up in the area and left, after their education was complete. Kay was very active in various churches locally and had trained as a nurse in Germany during the Second World War. She did not practice here but was very interested in all the local doings. Boris served for a time as head of the local Advisory Committee for the Burnt River Library. Both were astute commentators on the political life of the area. With Kay's death after a long illness in the early 1990's, Boris sold the property and went to Brampton to live with his son, Richard. The property is now rented out, being owned as an investment by a non-resident.

J.H.



George and Annie Hughes [Valerie Garland]



Mina (Henderson) Hughes, about age 18
[Valerie Garland]



Gratton and Irene Hughes, early 1960's, at the
Suddaby House [Barbara Wallwork]



KOZY KABINS

30

“On the Beautiful Burnt River”

243 Concession 11 of Somerville

Around about 1938 Frank Gunn and Mary Ashford came to the Burnt River area from Nova Scotia looking for a suitable property they could operate as a tourist business. Their choice was a 2-acre property that fronted on the back road that crossed the Burnt River at Concession 11, and led out to Highway 121. The property was immediately adjacent to the bridge, and backed onto the river, itself, which, from there, wended its way on south.

The two acres were, for their purposes, quite suitable. The river had a nice sandy beach along the property, the fishing was very good there, and there was adequate land to build a small frame lodge, with spacious grounds, and cabins down along the river edge that had sufficient privacy, but were part of the whole.

The land was cleared, and they built a two-story, frame building in which they lived year-round. The bottom floor was divided in such a way that there was a large kitchen, with four separate, small rooms used as dining areas, and outside, along the river, they built six separate sleeping cabins, and one outside cooking area if people wished to do their own food. There was no hydro, all lighting being done with coal oil lamps, and the plumbing was outdoors. There were picnic tables down by the river, and the guests could enjoy croquet and a game of horse shoes, or swimming, and there were four punts furnished for fishing.

Mrs. Ashford was very insistent that the dining facilities be of hotel standard. All the tables in dining areas had white cloths, and meals were served on fine bone china. She was an excellent cook, and the small resort flourished through recommendations of those who had come and enjoyed the service, and the unsophisticated, country atmosphere.

Besides the tourists in the summer, they also catered to hunting groups in November, and Mrs. Ashford became a staunch member of the local community, being very active in the Kinmount United Church, quilting with the local ladies, and working at the local fair. Right after World War II the lodge was used by the government for a short time, in the seasonal months, as a recuperation centre for shell-shocked soldiers, as the quiet, restful atmosphere was beneficial to them.

Mrs. Ashford passed away in the mid-1950's, and Mr. Gunn was unable to maintain the business at the standards it had been run. He operated a small store in the front area, but that did not flourish, and in 1959 part of the land along the road by the bridge was sold to George and Vi MacMillan, who had been regular customers of the lodge. They built a small, brick home on their piece of land, but the remainder of the lodge area was allowed to deteriorate by Mr. Gunn, as he lost interest in the business. He passed away around that time, and the property was sold. The present owners use it as a weekend retreat.

J.H.



Frank Gunn, displaying his catch, 1940's
[Georgina Turnbull]



The rental cabins along the river,
early 1940's [Georgina Turnbull]



A view of the old bridge, and
the river, at the 11th
Concession, adjacent to the
Gunn property [Georgina
Turnbull]





(1968)

THE HENDERSON-MACKAY PROPERTY 168–11th Concession of Somerville

31

In the late 1800's, Joel Henderson and his wife, Sara (nee Knettle), homesteaded 200 acres of land on the 11th Concession of Somerville, to the east and south of Watson's Siding, across the Burnt River. The large, white pine trees on the property were cut down and burned, as there was apparently no market for such at the time, or getting the logs to a market was not a viable, economic alternative. Almost all of the land was completely cleared. It did not prove, however, to be a good quality land, being very sandy, and it was hard to make a living on it from agriculture. They had one daughter, Mina, who married Harry Hughes from a local family, and one adopted son, Charlie, to whom the land was left upon their deaths. In the late 1950's Charlie married Violet Hughes, the widow of Garnet Hughes, who had one daughter, Dianne, at the time. Violet and Charlie had a son born to them, Tim, who now resides in the village of Kinmount.

In 1967 Charlie Henderson sold his farm to a young couple, June and Garry MacKay, who had been living in Toronto prior to this. They had two young girls, Tammy and Terri-Lee, and as Garry was from the Kinmount area, had decided to settle here to raise their family. The house at that time was in need of a lot of repairs, but they moved in after some minor changes, in 1968. Their son, Jeff, was born in 1969, and Garry worked out in the area amongst local construction companies for a time. In the mid-1970's, however, he obtained work outside this area, and commutes back and forth.

The MacKays have worked steadily at improving their home and land, putting a basement under the back part in 1978, and remodelling the kitchen and upstairs over it completely, shortly after. In 1983 they did a large remodelling of the roof, adding dormer windows to the south on the upstairs, plus a side porch, new siding, and a new entry on the front, as well as a two-car, attached garage on the back. Since that time they have continued to remodel on the inside, and now have a lovely, modern farm home. Their family has grown up now, and all three live close by in the area.

J.H.



June MacKay with Tammy and Terri-Lee, 1968

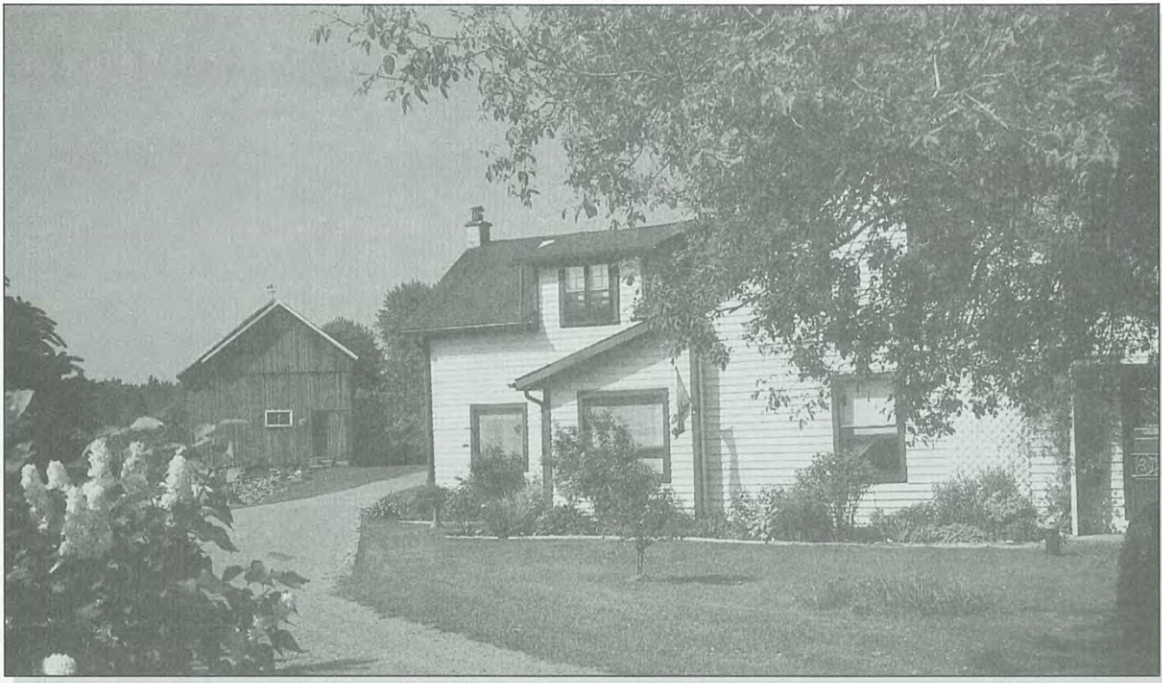


Garry MacKay with one of his protesting livestock, 1968

Photos courtesy of June MacKay



(2000)



THE BYRNE HOMESTEAD

129 The Byrnes Line

32

This enlarged and restored home (now known as Harmony Farm) dates from 1889. It was built by Thomas Byrne, and he and his wife, Bridget (Maguire), raised eight children in the house. Thomas was the youngest surviving son of Ralph (or Raphael) Byrne, from whom he acquired the property in 1884.

Ralph was born in Wicklow, Ireland in 1808 and served for 21 years in the British Army (the 69th Regiment of Foot) in Ireland, the West Indies, Canada and Britain. He retired as a Sergeant in 1847 and four years later returned to Canada to live in Toronto. He and his wife, Catherine (Cassidy) brought with them their young sons, Martin and Michael, and three more children were born to them in Toronto: Thomas, John and Mary. In 1868 Ralph took a settlement grant of 100 acres of land in Galway (north of Silver Lake). He was 50, and his wife 37, and the children ranged from ten to two years of age.

Life was hard. Most of the land was too wet and rocky to farm, and according to the 1861 census, Ralph had managed to plant on only five of the hundred acres. (He had spring wheat on two acres, potatoes on two more, and turnips on one.) The family also had a cow that produced milk and butter. Ralph persevered, and after working for five years to establish title, he moved to what is now Harmony Farm in Somerville. He built a log cabin and the family established itself on the new property. The property was transferred to his son, Thomas, in 1884, and Thomas and Bridget built the main part of the present house five years later. They raised eight children there. In time, all of Ralph's children (except John, who died at the age of 19) bought and settled acreage on the 9th Line. After Thomas died in 1931, the property was occupied by his son, Joseph, and his wife, Gertrude (Allen), who raised six children there. The ownership was vested in Joe Junior and he and his wife, Florence, later lived in the house. They had four children, none of whom settled in the area.

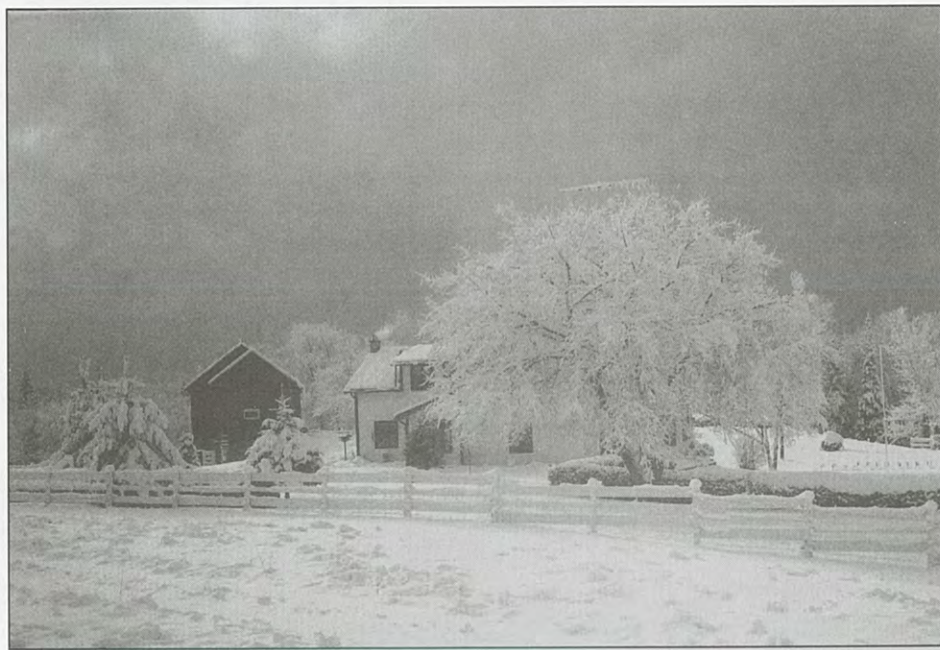
The property passed out of the family in 1993 when it became the home of Anna and Reg Holloway, new Canadians, originally from Britain. They created perennial gardens around the house, and after seven years experimenting with various commercial crops, decided to return much of the rest of the land to forest, principally oaks. Reg comments, "We feel badly that after the settlers worked so hard to remove the original

trees (and the rocks) to clear the way for crops, we are replanting trees. But the surveyor who, before the settlement of Somerville, pronounced that the land here was unfit for crops, was correct. It is best suited for trees, and it sustains them very well.”

Because for many years most of the land on the 9th Line was owned by Brynes, (by 1911 eight members of the family had farms there) it became known as the Brynes Line and when a bridge (now abandoned) was built across the Burnt River at the end of the line in 1907, it was known as the Brynes Bridge. Over the years many members of the family moved elsewhere in Ontario and Western Canada, or to Detroit and other places in the United States. Some still return to visit Harmony Farm and recall stories of life there. None has yet been able to offer a solution to the mystery of two pairs of initials scratched into a porch window and dated 1898. Both initials appear to be the same—“TB”.

The last members of the Byrne family to live on the 9th Line were Ralph and his wife, Pearl. Ralph was the grandson of the original Ralph Byrne’s son, Martin. Ralph and Pearl lived on the property next to Harmony Farm, that Martin purchased in 1871, and they brought up eleven children. They then moved to a new house farther down the line, which they had built for themselves. Ralph died in January, 2000, and Pearl, after selling the new home, now lives in Lindsay with her daughter, Mary Anne.

R.E.H.



Harmony Farm in Winter



Art and Did Young's small brick farm house at 3060 County Rd. 121

Jessie Young on horseback in front of John and Catherine's small log cabin home, which was located in the lane way of 3060 County Rd. 121.



Photos courtesy of Valerie Garland

The original barn at 3060 County Rd. 121, built in 1870.



THE YOUNG HOMESTEADS

33

3195 County Rd. 121

3058 County Rd. 121

3060 County Rd. 121

3011 County Rd. 121

3003 County Rd. 121

William young and his wife, Charlotte (Nee Read), came to Canada from Wiltshire, England, with their family of five sons, William Jr., George, Robert, Richard and John, and two daughters, Eliza and Elizabeth. Two more daughters, Margaret and Mary, were born here in Canada. At that time, in 1851, it appears William Sr. had just retired from military service, and such men were being given the opportunity of taking up free land grants along the Bobcaygeon Road, going north from Bobcaygeon to Kinmount.

At the time of his coming, there was only one 200-acre plot of land left that he considered acceptable for settlement, and that was the property just north of where County Road 49 meets County Road 121 today, on the west side. He and his sons quickly cleared the property, and when the opportunity came to homestead more plots of land along Concessions 6, 7 and 8 of Somerville to the west, which was just opening up in the 1870's, his sons acquired their own land.

The Young children all married locally. William Jr. married Agnes Taylor, in 1858, and settled on Lot 3, Concession 6. Theirs was the first recorded Methodist wedding in Verulam Township. George married Susanna Graham, and settled on Lot 2, Concession 7, and Richard married Annie Keyes, settling on Lot 3, Concession 7.

John married a local neighbour's daughter, Catherine Lambert, and they settled on Lot 2, Concession 6 in 1875, building a small log cabin for a home on the west side of the present lane way. Catherine's family, the Lamberts, had previously settled just south on the Bobcaygeon Road, beside the limestone hill. Seven children were born to John and Catherine, two daughters dying young, but five others surviving. Isobel married into the local Lyle family, and lived for a time on the Stewart farm to the west, Catherine married Frank Crowe of Bobcaygeon, Arthur (Art) married Elizabeth (Did) Hughes from another local family, John (Jack) married Elizabeth Tipling, and Roland married Mary Alice (Mina) Steel, also from a local family, who lived farther west along County Rd. 121.

Robert homesteaded 200 acres of property to the northwest of the original land grant, on Concession 8 of Somerville, with entry by a side road to the west of Union Creek, and this passed to his son, Noble, upon his death. Noble married Georgina Hughes, Did's sister, and they raised three children there, Robert, Glenda and Grace. The property was later sold to the Woolfrey family, who raised their family there, and have since moved from this area. It is now the property of Ruth Thorne.

The youngest daughter, Mary, married William Young Sr.'s neighbour, Bill Dunbar, who had for years been a logging crew foreman for the Boyd Lumber Co. of Bobcaygeon, but had retired from that occupation to run a temperance hotel, on the Bobcaygeon Road, right across from their property. Dunbar, at this time, closed his hotel there, as the road was being rerouted, and moved the building across the road, attaching it behind the original Young homestead. In those days you did not waste such buildings, just relocated them for other uses. He and Mary lived there with her parents, and he built a second hotel, the Victoria House, in Kinmount. Bill

Dunbar was drowned in the winter of 1894, returning from horse races in the Peterborough area, when his horse and cutter went through the ice at Gannon's Narrows on Chemong Lake. There is a local song about this sad event. Bill and Mary had one daughter, Laura, who married Frank Wright, and they stayed on at the farm.

With Catherine (Lambert) Young's death in 1894, the title to Lots 2 and 3 on Concession 6 passed to William Stewart, although John Young continued to live there and manage the property. The original barns, built in 1870, are still in existence, and used today. John and Catherine's log cabin has been torn down, however. A small brick residence was built on the property in 1898 by William Stewart, and he lived there for a few years. In 1926 Art and Did bought this property back into the family, and moved into the small brick home. They added a front and side porch to give more room. On the farm they raised white-faced Herford cattle, and were well known in the local community for their support of local events, such as the Kinmount Fair.

Roland, Art's brother, took over Lot 3, Concession 7, across Road 121 to the north, and the frame house that is there today was built by John, Robert, Art and Roland, upon his marriage to Mary Alice (Minnie) Steel. Later Roland and Minnie moved into the village of Burnt River, selling the family property to Art. It was sold at a later date to his daughter, Jean, and her husband, Don Soper, who severed the one and a half acres where the house is, and sold the remainder to her brother, Bryce. In 1991 this house was sold to Grenville and Wendy Bacon, who now reside there.

Upon their marriage Art and Did purchased Lot 3, Concession 6, just west of John and Catherine's lot, and four children, Jean, Dare, John(Jack) and Bryce, were born there, in the small log home on the property that had been built by William Young Jr. Their fifth child, Jessie, was born at Lot 2, Concession 6, which Art and Did had bought back in 1926. All their children pursued careers, and married outside the area. Bryce, however, retired to this area in the late 1970's and built a new home on this lot. He and his wife, Velma, remained there until 1999 when he sold to Arnold and Susan Levy, a retired couple. During this time here Bryce was successful in his bid as Deputy Reeve for the Township of Somerville, and then by acclamation for a three-year term as Reeve. He also served two terms as County Warden for Victoria County.

George and Susanna's son, Albert Young, married Catherine Hughes of the Hughes family living south, on the road to Fenelon Falls. Their family of five was George, Moss, Bill, Ada and Matilda(Teeny). George married Verlie Young, and they moved to the Galway area, just to the north. Ada married Warren Taylor, and settled on the Taylor homestead on the "east line". Teeny married Warren's brother, Percy, and they moved south to Verulam and settled there. Moss and Bill lived on Lot 2, Concession 7, across from Art and Did, until their death. Neither of them ever married and the property was then sold.

John (Jack) Young Jr., a brother to Art and Roland, settled on Lot 5 of Concession 11, Somerville, beside the rapids on the Burnt River, and just north of the upper bridge on the back road. His property has now been sold, also. Art and Did's property passed to their eldest son, Dare, and his daughter, Valerie purchased it in 1994, and resides there today. Valerie has many fond memories of spending summer vacations with her grandparents. She has refurbished the interior of the old house, reclaiming the original decor wherever possible, to make a charming, country home. Valerie is a teacher with the local elementary school system.

The original land grant to the Young family at 3195 County Road 121 remained in the Young family for over one hundred years. It is now the home of Tom and Laurie Georgiadis, and their two children. The Georgiadis ran the local Northwood Restaurant, north on Road 121, for a time, but have now sold it. They intend to remain in this area for the present, and are both working locally.

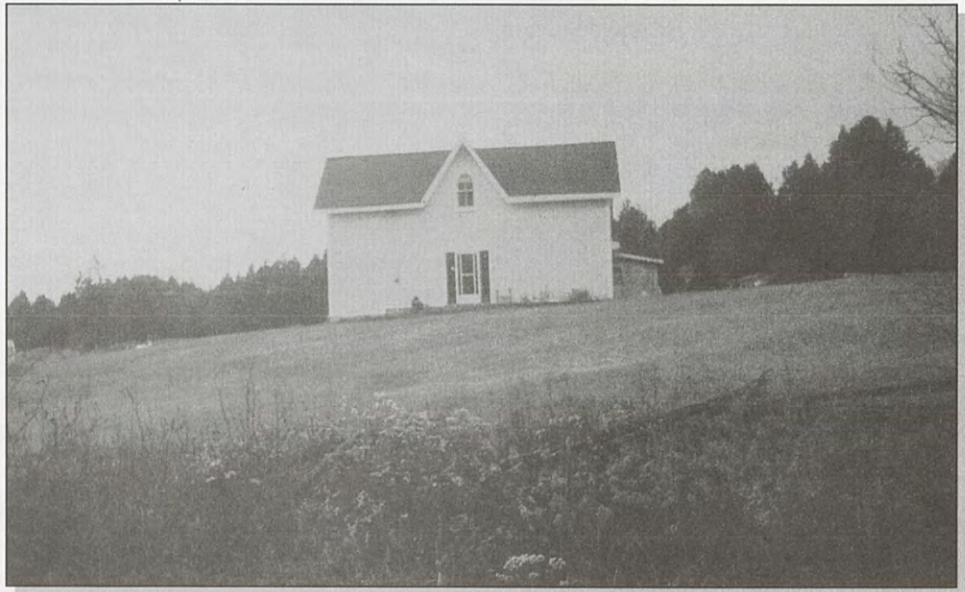
There was a Post Office at Union Creek until the late 1940's, and it is noted that the birth certificates of all Young family members born in the area are registered as having been born at Union Creek.

J. H.



The house at 3195
County Rd. 121 in the
days of Bill Dunbar.

Photos Courtesy of
Valerie Garland



The house today,
with the Georgiadis
family in residence,
2000.



The original barn at 3195
County Rd. 121.



Left to right: In back, Norman Young, Mary (Young) Dunbar, Georgina Young, Noble Young, Joe Young In front, Leon Wright, Glenda Young (the baby), and Laura (Dunbar) Wright



The house built for Rol and Minnie Young at 3003 County Rd. 121.



From left to right: (taken in mid-1920's at Art and Did's first home at 3058)
Standing, Frank Wright, Art Young, Mina Young, Elizabeth (Did) Young, Catherine(Young) Crowe,
Frank Crowe, Robert Young Children standing: Leon Wright, Dare Young Children Seated: Two Crowe
children, Bryce Young, another Crowe child, Jean Young, Jack Young [Valerie Garland]





**THE DUDMAN HOMESTEAD
A TYPICAL PIONEER HOUSE
across from 2927 County Rd.121**

34

This typical pioneer house, a familiar and picturesque sight to travellers on the 121 between Burnt River and Union Creek, was built in the late 1800's and was home to several generations of the Dudman family.

The first member of the Dudman family to arrive in the Somerville area was John Frederick, one of a number of settlers who came from Germany in 1858. They cleared land on what became known as the Dutch (Deutsch) Line. It is said that John Frederick's surname was originally Dettman, which he changed to Dutman (later Dudman) to avoid confusion with the Dettman family in Kinmount.

One of John's sons, Henry (1858–1942), moved from the Dutch Line in 1883 to the farm along County Road 121. Records show that three more members of the family, John, Charles and William, had properties to the north, between Union Creek and Kinmount. Dudmans were involved in the formation of the Kinmount Agricultural Society in 1872, and the organization of the first Kinmount Fair.

Henry's new property was 200 acres, partly cleared by the original owners, Henry and Jane Booth, who first settled the land in 1876. The Booths built and lived in a sturdy log house (second picture), which became home to Henry, and (a year later, in 1884), his wife, Agnes Molyneaux (1864–98). Henry and Agnes had four daughters. Sometime between 1892 and 1898 they built the new house and the original log structure became an animal pen. It remains in a solid condition 124 years after it was built by the original pioneers. Not far away, and still in use, is a single-storey, log barn of the same age.

Two years after Agnes died (in 1898), Henry married Annie Nelson, a neighbour's daughter, and there were three more children born to the family, Allan, Gordon and Maude. Allan, the oldest son, took over the farm upon the death of his parents; Gordon married Goldie Silvers of Kinmount and took over an adjacent property, and Maude studied to become a nurse, going to Toronto to work and live there.

Allan (1903–1975) and his wife, Dora Handley (1908–1980), had six children, John (Jack), Elmer, Margaret, Mae, Audrey and Bill. The youngest, Bill, with his wife, Joyce (Telford), is the present owner of the farm. Bill was born in 1946, the year the family moved from the 1800's house to another home at Lot 11, Concession 6, farther south on County Road 121. This home is now occupied by Bill and Joyce's son, Jerry, and his wife, Pamela, and their four children. The 1800's house was last used as a residence by a local bachelor in the 1970's. It now remains unused and a typical example of a traditional, pioneer home.

R.E.H.



The original log house (later an animal pen), 124 years old.

THE HERBERT BARR HOMESTEAD

2927 County Road 121

35

In the early 1900's one hundred acres of land on the north side of the "east line"(County Road 121), just opposite the Henry Dudman homestead, was owned by Dave Steel Sr. The Union Creek flowed through it, providing a valuable source of water, and speckled, brown trout. With the marriage of his daughter, Martha Jane (Jenny) to Herbert Barr Sr., he arranged that they have this property, and a large, two-story, frame house was built, as well as a barn for fodder and livestock. Herb worked at clearing the property, and eventually had approximately 40 acres of land under cultivation. Marina Switzer, their granddaughter, can remember her grandmother, Jenny, telling her that the outside house walls had five layers of wood, with a layer of tar paper between each, to help insulate it.

Herb Sr. and Jenny raised three daughters, Eva, who married Roddy Wright and helped run the family general store in the village of Burnt River, and Wilhelmina (Willie) and Laura, who both went to work in Toronto, and married there. Their one son, Nelson, married Marjorie Horsley of Haliburton, in 1934, and the young couple came to live with Herb Sr., and Jenny on the farm. Nelson worked out mostly, for the local lumber companies of that era, and his dad did the farming.

Jenny was a very capable and independent woman, and after her children were grown, worked at many types of work around the community. Most particularly, she did mid-wifery and practical nursing, and then for several summers in the early 1940's, ran a local gas bar and small restaurant just down the road, on Highway 121, which her son-in-law, Roddy Wright, owned.

Nelson and Marjorie had four children, all raised at the homestead, Marina (1935), Marilyn (1945), Herbert Jr. (1950) and Leonard (1951). Marina married Milton Switzer, whose family had moved to Burnt River in the mid-1940's, and Marilyn and Leonard both married and moved away. In the late 1940's the farm house was burned, and for a time the family relocated to the Stewart farm house up the road, until a new, small bungalow was completed on the farm. With Nelson's death in 1976, the land was divided, and the home left to Herb Jr. Marjorie moved to Lindsay then, as her younger daughter, Marilyn, had settled there.

Herb Jr. and Art Hullah's daughter, Heather, decided to come and make their home there at that time. They have a daughter, Bobbi Jo, who is presently attending university, and a young son, Herbert, in high school at Fenelon Falls. Herb Jr. works for one of the local construction firms, and Heather is a Registered Nursing Assistant at the Pinecrest Home in Bobcaygeon. They have put a large addition on the front of the home, along with a garage to the side, and are continuing the tradition of Barrs at this location.

J.H.



The original barn built on the Barr property is still standing.



Martha Jane Barr.

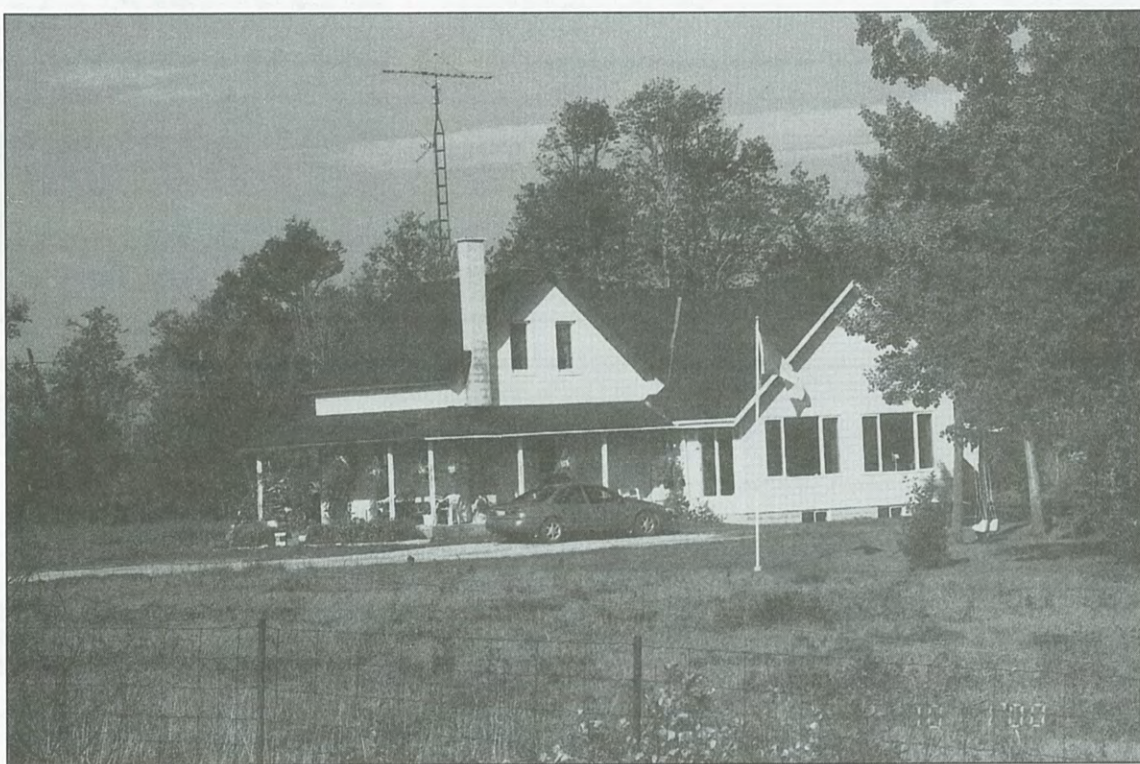
Photos Courtesy of Marina Switzer



Marina and Grandad Herb Bar, around 1938.



Four Generations—Grandma Mary Alice Steel. Her daughter, Martha Jane Barr, Martha Jane's son, Nelson, and Nelson's daughter, Marina October 31, 1937



The Stewart Homestead, 2000



THE STEWART HOMESTEAD

2879 County Road 121

36

This house (on the eastern half of Lot 5, Concession 7) is still known as the Stewart homestead, after the original owner, Charles Daker Stewart. Mr. Stewart received the property from the Crown in 1869, and the house he built on it was a traditional log home. He sold the property in 1909 to Isaac David Lyle, and it returned to the Stewart family in 1925, when Phoebe and William Stewart lived there.

On their deaths the farm was rented out to others for a time, by William Stewart Jr., their nephew, who lived and worked at the stone quarry in Kirkfield. In the mid-1940's his brother, Gordon, who had been badly injured in a car accident, moved onto the property, from Burnt River, with his wife, Jessie, and their family. They had been living nearby the Handley mill, where Gordon had worked in Burnt River. They remained there until the early 1950's, with their five children, Audrey, Reg, Merna, Keith and Fay.

Merna, who now lives in Lindsay, recalls happy days at the farm house, and the fun of exploring the trunks in the attic, sorting through Aunt Phoebe's dated clothes. She also remembers walking six miles a day to and from school in the village, and then, later, when her father bought a horse and cutter, the exhilarating ride through the snow. Sometimes three cutters would set out for the school, one from the Stewart farm, and two from the nearby Dudman homes. She well remembers an exciting cutter race between her brother, Reg, and John Dudman, in which all the passengers were pleased and somewhat surprised to survive.

The school at times had up to 40 pupils, with a junior and senior room. Merna remembers three of her teachers, in particular, Mrs. Edith Hughes, Mrs. Morrison, and Mr. Urquhart. She especially remembers Mr. Urquhart because he gave her the strap for washing the face of one of the junior boys in the snow. She also remembers attending the 4-H Club at the home of Greata Reeds, and making her first dress there. Social life included dances at the Orange Hall, with whole families attending (there were no babysitters then). Roddy Wright played the fiddle and his daughter, Rhoda, the piano, and Merna's father called for the square dancing. Merna's dad, Gordon, began work at the Kirkfield quarry about that time. The family moved out to the village, to a small home next to the Chalmers house for a short time in the early 1950's, and then the whole family moved to Milton, Ontario, when Gordon's work was transferred there.

The new owners of the farm in 1952 were Allan and Dora Dudman, whose son, Bill, and his wife, Joyce, have lived there from 1965 to the present. Before Dora died in 1978 she transferred titled of the property to Bill and Joyce, who have enlarged, remodelled and modernized the house to suit their needs, as the years went by. They have a son, Jerry, who lives on Allan and Dora's old farm down the road, with his wife, Pam, and four children, and a daughter, Kathy, who lives just north on Road 121, with her husband, Tony Crego, and their three daughters. Bill farms the 99 acres, along with the other Dudman properties that belonged to his dad, Allan, in the vicinity.

R.E.H.



Taken about 1916, on the doorstep of the original log home,
From the left, Forence English, Maude English, Grandmother English (Nellie Cavanaugh, with her dust cap on), Robert English, Mrs. Thomas English (Christina), and the family dog. [Phyllis Cook]





THE THOMAS ENGLISH HOMESTEAD
2876 County Road 121

37

Thomas English came to homestead a 400-acre tract on the “east line” road out of Burnt River (now County Road 121) in 1876. His property ran from Concession 7 south to Concession 5. He had originally come to this area with Ernest Dunsford, as his bookkeeper, and then worked on the 1841 census for the Sturgeon Lake and Verulam area, before settling in the north part of Emily Township and marrying Jane White. His brother, Robert, also settled there.

Thomas had heard of the development of land in the Burnt River area, and when the opportunity occurred, he traded his much smaller piece of property in Emily for the 400 acres in Somerville and came north. He built a log house and barn on the property, which is on the south side of County Road 121, about half way between the hamlet of Burnt River and the then Galway Road (now County Road 49), well back from the road, on a rise of the land. In the early winter he and his brother, Robert, drove his livestock up from Emily, followed the next day by his wife, Jane, walking, and pulling her young child on a sled. Jane and the child made the trip (over 40 miles) in one day.

Robert returned to his home in Emily and Thomas and Jane settled on the Burnt River property. They raised 11 children, who all married in the local area, and upon Thomas’ death, Robert purchased the property from his mother, who settled in a small house farther north on County Road 121. His brother, Henry, (known locally as Hank), settled on the back 200 acres of the 400, farming for a time there, and then went west with the local Akister family.

Robert had married Nellie Cavanaugh, the daughter of Irish settlers, who owned land to the south and east of his 400 acres, on Concession 3 of Somerville. They raised five children at this home, Tom (who joined the police force in Toronto), Crawford, Gordon, Florence and Maude. Both Florence and Crawford married into the local Wright family, Crawford marrying Emma Wright, and Florence marrying George Wright. Maude married George Wood of Burnt River. The Wood family remained in Burnt River for a time, and George worked for Charles Hodgson

Maude and George had two children, Phyllis and Meredith (Merd), but George developed rheumatoid arthritis and they then moved farther south to be handier to medical care.

In 1919 Robert English sold the north 200 acres to Henry (Harry) Dudman, buying for his son, Gordon, and the south 200 acres was sold to his friend and neighbour, David Steel. He moved south to Concession 1 of Somerville for a short time, then west to Woodville in 1920, and farmed there until his retirement to Lindsay.

Phyllis remembers her mother, Maude, telling about walking to school in the warm weather, to Burnt River, and then going to live with her grandmother English in the winter months, and going to Union Creek School. She has fond memories of her grandmother, Nellie. She was a very industrious lady, but always, when working, wore a dust cap on her head to protect her hair, which she had to put in curlers nightly, At the end of the working session her hair was then combed out and neatly set.

Gordon Dudman married Goldie Silvers of the Kinmount area, and they settled on the English homestead, raising a family of four, Myron, Marshall (Marsh), Jean and Carol The original farm house was log, but in the spring of 1941 it burned, while the children were absent in school. Marsh commented on how devastating it was to return to nothing but a pile of ashes. Myron went to stay with Ike and Greata Reeds at Burnt River, and the rest of the family stayed with local family members until the house was rebuilt that summer. Myron, Jean and Carol have all married and left the area, although Jean and her husband, Randy Welburn, returned with their family for a short time in the 1960's. Marsh and his wife, also named Goldie, have the property across County Road 121 from the farm.

Gordon and Goldie have since died, and although Marsh farms the land, the house remains vacant at present. The title of the land passed to Marsh and Goldie Dudman in 1979.

J.H.



(Photo taken in 1969)

**THE THOMAS HUNTER HOMESTEAD
(NOW MARSHALL DUDMAN FARM)
2809 County Road 121**

38

This property listed Joe Maples and C. Wood as owners in 1871, and as it was originally homesteaded by Thomas Hunter Jr. and his wife, Eliza Lyle, in 1889 it is assumed those were land speculators of the times. Mr. Hunter purchased the 200 acres of Lot 6, Concession 7, Somerville, for the sum of \$200, after selling the 100-acre plot of land he owned on the Upper Swamp Lake Line, in Galway. He had become interested in settling on what later became known as the "east line" when he previously purchased 200 acres of timbered land off Concession 5, up on the ledge, which runs east and west along the edge of the Burnt River Valley at this point.

It was the practice of the landowners in this area to cut logs from their tracts of land on the ledge, and move them by sleigh and horses to the bank of Union Creek, where they were branded and dumped, to await spring run off when they could be moved down the creek and held at Armstrong's above the first bridge, to await the log drive.

Thomas Hunter worked hard and cleared almost all of his 200 acres, ditching it where necessary to make tillable fields. The Union Creek flows around this 200 acres in a loop, going to the south on the eastside, crossing Road 121, and then looping back and recrossing 121 on the west side of the lot before going on westward to the river. Thomas built a new frame home, and a barn to the north of the house. His son, Gordon, (born in 1888), was just a baby at the time the family took up residence on this plot of land, and three daughters, Hazel, Victoria and Myrtle, were born to him and Eliza after that time.

Thomas is reported to have been a very industrious and shrewd man of his time, respected in his community for these traits. The farmers of the day marketed their cattle to the jobbers and drovers who passed in the late fall, taking cattle north to the hunting camps of Haliburton, or south to Bobcaygeon for the same purpose. His wife, Eliza, died quite early in life, and his youngest daughter, Myrtle, remained at home with him. Gordon had enlisted in the armed forces for World War I. Both Victoria and Hazel had married, with the latter living in

Toronto, and the former farming with her husband, George Pogue, on land in Ops Township, near Lindsay. Thomas had initially helped the Pogues get established financially, and when Gordon came home after the war, and married Ella Schell of North Verulam, he did the same for them, on land north of the village of Burnt River.

Tommy Armstrong, also a First World War veteran, married Myrtle, and they remained with Thomas on the homestead, farming the land. With Thomas Hunter's death, on September 14, 1938, the title of the land passed to Myrtle and Tommy Armstrong. In 1944 Tommy Armstrong died quite suddenly of a gangrenous, bowel infection, leaving Myrtle widowed and alone, as they had had no children. As she could not afford to remain living on the farm without working it, she sold the farm equipment, and came to a purchase agreement with her nearest neighbour, Gordon Dudman, from across the road, regarding the land. She then went out to work as a housekeeper and practical nurse, wherever required in the community, and continued to do so for the remainder of her life.

It was a natural progression that, with the marriage of his youngest son, Marshall, to Goldie Billings in 1954, Gordon should offer the land to them for their use. They worked very hard, and were able to complete the purchase from Mrs. Armstrong in 1957. They installed hydro and a water system, as well as siding, as initial improvements, and when their family expanded to four children, Penny, Malcolm, Eddie and Brenda, they added a family room, sunroom, porch and wrap-around deck and gazebo.

Marshall worked for a time as road superintendent for the Township of Somerville, and then decided to branch into this field on his own. In the summer of 1961, however, when they were just starting their own construction business, their barn burned. Faced with this immediate emergency, they bought a barn on a property of Goldie's grandfather in Gooderham, tore it down and rebuilt it as a replacement, with the help of their neighbours and family.

They have expanded their construction business over the years to include a stone quarry, gravel pit and garage, and have indeed prospered in the Burnt River area.

J.H.



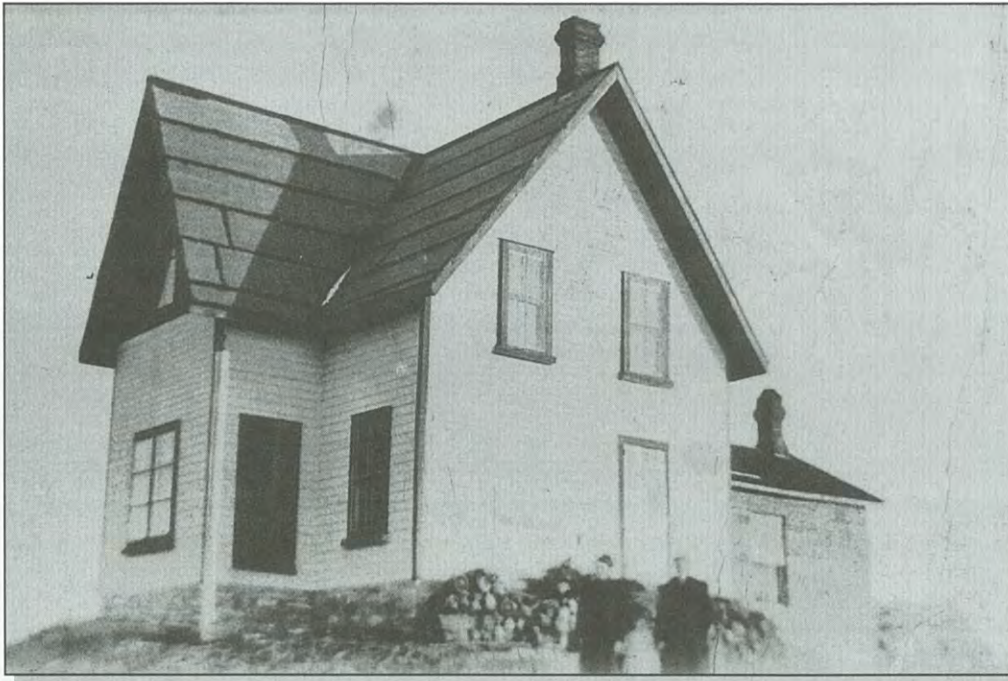
Jack Young, who worked for Tommy Armstrong in the years before World War II, standing with Myrtle and his favourite team of horses.

[Valerie Garland]



The Marshall Dudman home in 2000.





THE TAYLOR HOMESTEAD
2776 County Road 121

39

The Taylor land is situated on the south fork of the Union Creek, and the 200 acres here were settled in 1898 by the Rev. Francis Edwin Taylor with his wife, Annie Pocock, and his grown family. They had previously settled around Woodstock, Ontario, and then moved to Toronto for a time, where Rev. Taylor accepted a preaching appointment. As they wished their family to have a more settled life, they left Toronto and moved their family to property at Dundalk, Ontario. Unfortunately, the lands they took there had a lien against them about which they had been unaware, and they were lost. Some of Mrs. Taylor's family had previously come to this area, and so they decided to come also, and purchased land here.

With them came their family, Frederick, Ella May, Warren, Percy, Robert (Bob), and Earl, the youngest, who died shortly after they arrived, at six years of age. A small daughter, Annie, had previously died while they were in Woodstock. They were very competent builders, and quite industrious. Within the first ten years of being here, they had, after building a small, log home, constructed a straw barn, and then a larger barn, as well as a tall, two-storey house. They also built a very sound, cribbed bridge across what everyone locally called the "back creek", fifteen feet wide, and high enough to not be flooded in the spring. This is the south fork of the Union Creek, which rises in Stewart Lake, crosses the road which runs along the north boundary of their property, and flows on into Union Creek proper. They had a number of fertile fields on the east side of the creek, which made such a bridge a necessity. The public road at that time did not, apparently, have a very sturdy bridge that would carry heavy equipment such as a threshing machine, so the Taylor bridge was used by a lot of the local people for such purposes.

One aspect of this property was that this "back creek" was used by the settlers holding land on the ledge to the south to float their cut logs down to the log drives on the Burnt River. The Taylors built a dam on their property above their bridge, to hold back the water, and the logs were dumped in the creek below the dam, and held there until a group had been collected. The water was then let out of the dam in sufficient quantities to let the logs float down the creek to join the Union Creek flow, then on down to the Burnt River. There was apparently a second dam at the High Falls on the Union Creek, where the water was held in sufficient quantities that it could be released to float the logs over the falls and on down.



Catherine (Hughes) Young, with her daughters, standing From the left, Ada (Mrs. Warren Taylor) and Teeny (Mrs. Percy Taylor), and her granddaughters, Ada's children, Olive, and Millie Taylor (on Catherine's lap).
[Valerie Garland]



Three generations of Taylors, Warren, and Charlie holding baby, Dwight, 1945.
[Wayne Taylor]



The Taylor children married and settled in the area. Frederick enlisted in the World War I forces, and returned to marry Jane Hopkins. They settled in Fenelon Falls, where he pursued the trade of a carpenter, which his dad had taught to him. Ella May married Jack Lambert of the local Lambert family, and they lived in Bobcaygeon until his death. About 1943 she returned to live in the small Hanthorn-Handley house at Burnt River, beside the Anglican Church, until around 1947. Ella May was a very accomplished musician, and taught music to the children at the Silver Lake School during her time at home, as well as hosting family musical gatherings. Percy married Matilda (Teeny) Young, one of Albert Young's family, and they moved to the 4th Concession in Verulam, where they farmed for their lifetime. They had one son, Norman, who was quite prominent in the local real estate business. Bob married Emma Silvers of Kinmount, who was a sister to Mrs. Gordon Dudman, and they moved to the Kinmount area. After a time Bob and his family returned to the Burnt River area, and rented the Charles Fell property, across the road from the Dave Steel farm. They raised three girls, Ella, Goldie and Robinette, and two boys, Lorne and Jim, all of whom went to the Burnt River School. In the early 1940's their family moved on, and settled in Bobcaygeon.

Warren was very industrious as a young man, and travelled to the prairies during the summers for several years on the harvest excursions prior to his marriage to Ada Mary Young, Teeny's sister, in 1912. It was an opportunity given to young men in Eastern Canada for many years, endorsed by the Canadian Government, and their help was greatly appreciated by the western farmers on the prairies, who had a very short time to harvest enormous crops. His brother, Percy, also worked the harvest excursions several times.

For the first year of their married life Warren and Ada lived on the MacDougall place, directly across the road from the Jones homestead, where the High Falls is located, but with his father's death in 1914 Warren inherited the farm and they moved back to the home place. Mrs. Taylor Sr. had died much earlier in 1904, about the time they were building the new house. They remained there for the remainder of their lives, farming the land. Their family were Olive, Mildred (Millie) and Charles (Charlie). As children they used to swim across the road in a deeper spot on the Union Creek, on the Thomas Hunter property. For many years a set of cedar, home-made "water wings", used by Millie, hung in a tree by the swimming hole as a reminder of this summer past time.

Olive married Bruce Junkin of Bobcaygeon, and Millie married Delbert Bowhey of Norland. In 1944, Charlie, much younger than his two sisters, married Kathleen Junkin of the Red Rock area, and they came to live with Warren on the home farm (Mrs. Ada Taylor had died in 1943). They had five children, Dwight, Phillip, Vaughn, Charleen and Wayne. The first three boys are living in western Canada, but Charleen and Wayne have remained here. Charleen lives in Fenelon Falls, and Wayne has stayed on the farm with his father. Kathleen died just recently, in December of 2000. Vaughn was the only boy who married, and he has two daughters, Sarah and Kathleen.

The original house and barns have burned, and the Taylors have built a new, small bungalow just slightly to the west of where the original house stood. They continue working the land.

J.H.



THE JONES HOMESTEAD
2650 County Road 121

40

In 1865 this 300 acres of Crown land was held by the land speculator, B. Fairbanks, and it then passed as a speculative investment to Wm. Marsh (1866) and then to Julius Fell (1868). It was held by the Fell family (presumably Squire Fell's family from Concession 1 of Somerville) for a time, passing to John Fell (1889), and then to Edward Hopkins in 1893. The Hopkins family were settled just outside the hamlet of Burnt River, on the now County Road 44 (on what is known as the Hopkins-Palmer farm).

In 1906 Elizabeth (Eliza Minnie) and John Jones purchased this 300 acres bordering the County Road 121 (Lot 8, Concession 6 of Somerville, north half), and Joe Jones, their son, purchased the east 200 acres of the same lot in 1910. Joe and his family lived there for a short time, and he and Gordon Hunter, a neighbour to the east, bought a threshing machine as a joint venture, and toured the local farms in the harvest season for a number of years, performing this service for their neighbours. Joe eventually took his profits from this venture and bought farming land in north Verulam, to the south, moving his family there.

Eliza and John and their family remained on the 100 acres to the west, and during their tenure a new brick farm house was built, to replace a log house that had burned, and a very modern barn to the rear. The farm house was never finished inside, however, until it was purchased in 1998 by its present owner, Brenda Dudman. Eliza Minnie and Joe retained joint ownership of the 300 acres until 1959, when it officially passed to Wally, a son of Eliza and John, and his wife, Teeny, a daughter of George Sheehy of Burnt River. Wally and Teeny had, of course, been living there with their family for a long time prior, but only then officially transferred the title. Their family held title of the land until 1969 when they sold the 300 acres to John and Margaret Sokol as an investment farming property.

The family did not live there, however, after 1946. Wally Jones secured a job with Silverwood Dairy that served throughout the Lindsay area, and moved his family down there at that time. He and Teeny had four children, Horace (Ivan), Merle, Morace, and Betty-Jean. Horace served overseas in World War II, and married an English girl, Irene, bringing her to Canada as a war bride. He and his large family lived in the house for some years during the 1960's before John and Margaret Sokol bought the 300 acres in 1969.

The barn on the Jones property was torn down in the 1970's, and after a number of years Mr. Sokol decided that he would retire from farming, and the property was then sold to Marshall Dudman in 1988, for surface quarrying.

Since that time the Dudmans have severed off one and a half acres of the land that the house is standing on, for their daughter, Brenda. She has refurbished it completely with the help of the family, since moving in, in 1998, and she and her three children presently reside there. It has made a lovely, country home.

J.H.

THE THOMAS NELSON FARM

2616 County Road 121

41

This property was originally settled by Richard Stewart in 1868, and then title passed to Thomas Nelson and his wife in 1904. Mr. and Mrs. Nelson's daughter, Annie Matilda, married Henry Dudman in 1900. This was Henry's second marriage, as his previous wife, Agnes, had died several years before. They took up residence on Henry's farm, to the east of the Nelson property across from 2927 County Road 121, and three children, Allan, Gordon and Maude, were born to the couple.

Thomas Nelson and his wife were quite active in the Methodist (now United) Church at Burnt River, and Mr. Nelson taught Sunday School there for some time. With their passing the land became the property of Henry and Annie Dudman, and then was willed to Allan, Gordon and Maude, each having a share. (Maude had title to the house, Gordon the east half of the land, and Allan the west half.)

The house on the property was inhabited by Henry and Annie upon the marriage of Allan to Dora Handley, and then in later years rented out to various families. The one best remembered is the Pocock family, who were there for ten or fifteen years in the 1930's and '40s. They had four children, all girls. Agnes married into the Ferry family of Haliburton, and Ruth, the youngest, married Ted Sheehey, one of Elsie Sheehey's sons.

In 1959 the house portion of the property only was sold by Maude to her niece, Jean, and her husband, Randy Welburn. Randy built and operated a garage there until 1972, when the family moved from the area. The house was rented out for a time, and then that section was sold in 1987 to Ralph Mills. He ran a scrap metal business from the garage for some years, until he left in 1996. Since then the house and garage have been vacant.

With Gordon and Allan deaths, the land parcel of this property was officially split, and Marshall Dudman (Gordon's son) inherited the east 50 acres, while Bill Dudman (Allan's youngest son) inherited the west 50 acres. In 1988 Marshall obtained planning permission to commence a stone quarrying operation on his 50 acres, and this is now the Burnt River Quarry Inc. Bill Dudman has continued to use his 30 acres as pasture land.

J.H.



THE DAVE STEEL HOMESTEAD
2562 County Road 121

42

Dave Steel Sr. was from a military background and homesteaded this 200-acre plot of land in 1875, stretching south from Concession 7 of Somerville, with two-thirds of the tillable fields on top of the limestone ledge. The family had originally had land on the 3rd Concession of Somerville, adjacent to the Moffat family, but made this move when the land on the “east line” opened up for homesteading.

It was very good land, with a small creek running down off the ledge, through a short gully, and draining across the road on the north boundary of the property into Union Creek. The Steel family became good friends with the English family, who had homesteaded farther to the east along County Road 121.

His son, Dave Steel Jr., took over the farm upon the death of his parents, and married locally to Mary Alice English. They had one son, Dave, and three daughters, Martha Jane (Jenny), Mary Alice (Minnie) and Margaret (Maggie). Jenny married Herb Barr Sr., and they settled on land along County Road 121 to the east. She worked in the community as a practical nurse in later years, and her daughter, Eva, married Roddy Wright, the son of George Wright, who owned the General Store in Burnt River for many years. Both Jenny and Eva were well known members of the community of Burnt River. Minnie married Roland Young, one of William Young’s sons, and for a time they lived on one of the Young properties along the “east Line”, but later sold it and moved into the village of Burnt River. Maggie married Ernest Wright, and they settled to the south in Verulam. The Steel family were not ostentatious in their spending on their homes, but apparently, when all the girls married, they had lovely trousseaus, of a quality not seen very often locally.

The last Dave Steel (Davie) to reside on this property was an only son, and, most of his life, a bachelor. His sister, Maggie, upon being widowed, returned to keep house for him, and the local boys often helped him with his harvest, at his request, as he had no family of his own. Upon his death the property passed to Maggie’s son, Gordon, and he and his wife, Ella, moved in around 1968, from their farming in Verulam, leaving it for their son. Ella had a wonderful rhubarb patch, just alongside the road by the drive, and used to donate this to the United Church, to make pies for their dinner concession at Kinmount Fair in the 1980’s.

In 1986 Gordon and Ella retired to Bobcaygeon, and the property was sold to John and Astrid Giffin, who did not farm it, but rented out the land to some of the local farmers, as they both worked outside the community. After they took over the farm, John and Astrid did extensive remodelling of the downstairs floor and the woodshed area, making a family room and utility room, and completely updating the kitchen. They also added upstairs rooms as well, over this section. The entire house was refurbished, with new siding on the outside and new windows throughout.

In 1998 the Giffins sold the property to Dave Love and Gay MacNeal, who have worked diligently to make renovations to the barns, and the outside landscaping. Gay has a lovely, perennial flower garden where most of the front lawn was, and they keep hens, selling the eggs, make maple syrup in the spring, and sell their garden produce. Gay is an artists, as well as being an enthusiastic gardener, and has a young son in the local elementary school at Coboconk. They are happily settled here for a time.

J.H.



From the left:
Grandpa(Dave Sr.) and
Grandmother (Mary)
Alice) Steel, with Dave Jr.,
1937.

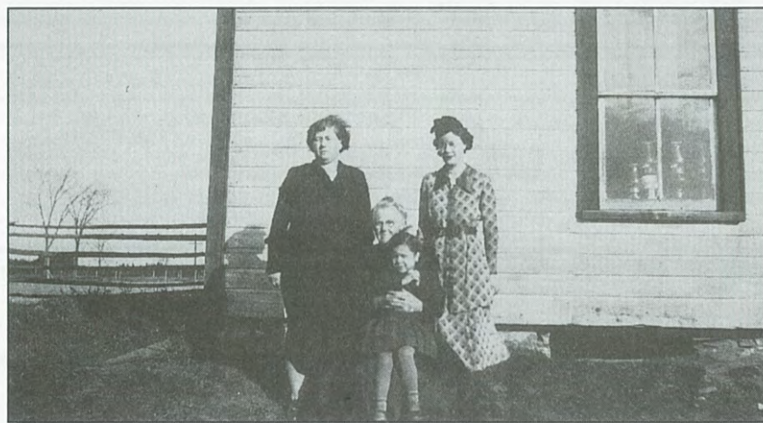


Three little girls, Marina Barr,
Doreen Switzer, and Rhoda Wright.



Jenny, Dave Jr., Maggie and Minnie, with their mother,
Mary Alice, October 31, 1937

Photos Courtesy of Rhoda Walker



Four generations, Jenny Barr, her daughter, Eva
Wright, with Mary Alice Steel, and Eva's daughter,
Rhoda Wright.



THE SWITZER SERVICE STATIONS

2533 County Road 121

6 Burnt River Road

43

In the late 1930's Roddy Wright, whose family owned the general store in Burnt River, acquired the property at the corner of Highway 121 and what is now County Road 44, from Dave Steel, his wife's uncle. He built a small house there, with a front section that could be used as a snack bar, and established gas pumps (name brand "White Rose"), as well as building some small overnight cabins on the property. He hired help to run it as a seasonal business, and his mother-in-law, Jenny Barr, did do this for him for several seasons in 1941 and 1942.

On or about 1943, however, he decided that this was too much to handle with the general store business as well, and he sold the property to Wesley Switzer and his wife, Cora, who had just moved back to Burnt River from St. Catharines. They had one daughter, Velma, married to Ab MacDuff, and two grown sons, Morgan and Milton, who found work locally at Handley's lumber mill. Velma and Ab lived locally and she helped her mother with the business. In the early 1950's Wesley and Cora passed the business over to Velma and moved to a new house they had built by the bridge on the south road off Highway 121 going into the village. Velma ran the business for several years, until there was a fire in 1952 and the small house burned.

As Wesley still owned the property, he decided to rebuild the house, and once it was completed he sold the business to Wilbur Duvall and his wife. They had a large family, and carried on for a time, but eventually decided not to continue, although they remained living there. Wilbur decided to leave the area in the late 1960's, and their son, Bob, and his wife, Dorothy, bought the home from them. She was a member of the local Lamb family from Verulam. It was difficult to find steady work here, however, and when Bob obtained a position with the Atomic Energy Corporation at one of their plants in the early 1970's, they left the area, selling the property to Donna and Peter Sabovitch, who were just newly married. Donna and her son, Scott, still reside there today, and, after taking training in social work, she has found a position locally

In 1964, Milton Switzer, who had married Marina Barr, decided to move back to Burnt River. He had not been well due to a previous back injury. They bought a lot on the corner of the Burnt River Road, just at the south entrance to the village, and built a small house there. Both had been working in Lindsay up to that time, but, after some thought, felt that they could run a small service station and convenience store at this location. They opened their business that year, and ran it successfully until 1986, when Milton's health deteriorated drastically, and he was permanently hospitalized.

Marina closed the business, and sold the property to Randy and Teija Thurston, who have made it into a private home. With this closing went the last gas station in the Burnt River area. Randy and Teija have a family of three boys, presently all attending school, and Teija works at the Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay.

J.H.



Wes and Cora Switzer's Service Station, 1944.



Wesley playing the bag pipes.

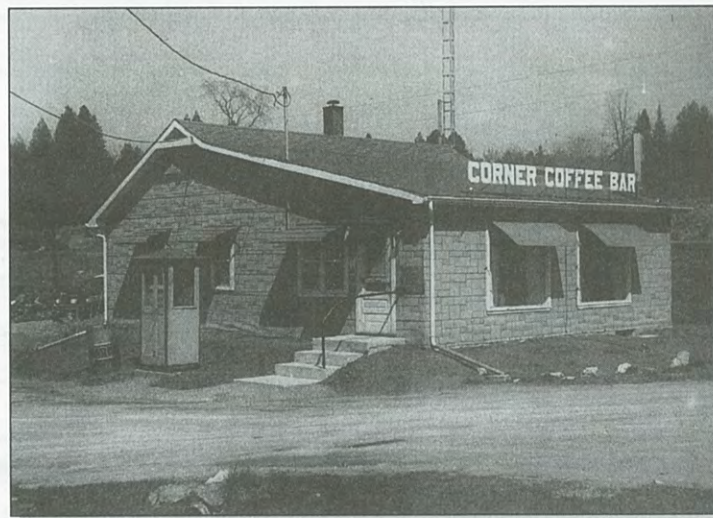
Photos Courtesy of Marina Switzer



Milton and Marina Switzer in 1950.



A view of the corner and gas pumps, 1944.



Milt and Marina's Corner Coffee Bar, 1964.



THE ROBERT HANDLEY FARM
2461 County Road 121

44

Robert Handley and his wife, Eliza Ann (Liza) Cruikshank, whose family had settled in Haliburton County, bought this farm from James W. Suddaby in 1899. At that time a small log house and a log barn were the only buildings on it. It was necessary to go to the next farm south to get spring water.

Gradually the land was cleared, the stumps were pulled out and burned, and the farm became productive. In 1910 a brick house was built, and the walls inside were plastered, as was the custom of the day. Their daughter, Evelyn, recounted a small, but significant detail about the painting of the rooms of the new house. Apparently Robert had bought quite a large quantity of pink-coloured paint, and this was to be used for all of the rooms. In order to make it stretch to complete the job, however, it was necessary to add extra white paint, and so the rooms in the house were shaded from pink to pale, pale pink throughout. This initial painting lasted for more years than Evelyn cared to remember.

Robert and Liza had six children, five girls and one boy:

Alma married Arthur Boldt of Kinmount, and they settled in Michigan, U. S.A.

Verlie married Charles Chalmers of Burnt River, and they settled in the village.

Mossom(Moss) married Shirley Armstrong of Burnt River, and they remained on the farm.

Evelyn married Orville Sluggitt, and they resided in Lindsay.

Robinette married Bill Harding of Kinmount, and they lived in various places around Ontario where his work took him, the last being the Cornwall area.

Ella married George Switzer(deceased) of Burnt River, and then Arnold Watson of Watson's Siding, north of the village.

For 35 years Verlie was the telephone operator in Burnt River for the Burnt River Telephone Company, and Moss farmed on the family property after Robert and Liza moved into the village in 1947. Evelyn, the last of the children to be born in the original log house on the farm, learned to be a hairdresser in Lindsay, and worked in that profession for many years.

After Moss died, Shirley and their daughter, Norma Jean, sold the farm to Kenneth and Catherine Warner in the mid-1990's, and they live in retirement there now. The Warner family did extensive renovations to the inside of the house, in the way of modernization, and no doubt the pink paint has long disappeared.

J.H.



THE SUDDABY-SHEEHEY-DUDMAN FARM

2433 County Road 121

45

It is said that the first child born to a pioneer family in the Burnt River area was born on this property (the South half of Lot 11, Concession 6, Somerville), the present home of Pamela and Jerry Dudman. The child, a son, was born to Samuel Suddaby and his wife, Mary Jane (nee McIntyre), in 1868. (In 1870 Samuel was one of three settlers who formed the board of trustees of the first Burnt River school.)

Samuel had bought the full lot of 200 acres from a speculator, and in 1876 sold the north half to his brother, James. Over the years parts of the north half changed hands several times, eventually being bought by Robert Handley, and in 1900 Samuel sold the south half to John Akister, who farmed it until 1914, when he left to farm in the west.

It was bought at that time by George Sheehey and his wife, Melinda (formerly Armstrong). They had been farming for a number of years on Concession 3 of Somerville, and had decided to move closer to the village area. Their large family were mostly grown at this time, and a number of them played prominent roles in village life in the years to come. They were as follows: Elsie, Archie, Vida (Mrs. Walter Briault), Ethel, Alma (Mrs. Dave Wood), Teeny (Mrs Wallie Jones), Hugh and Nora.

Upon George Sheehey's death in 1946, the farm was purchased by Allan Dudman and his wife, Dora (formerly Handley), and they moved there from the original Dudman homestead farther north on County Road 121. Their family of John, Elmer, Margaret, Mae, Audrey and Bill grew up there, all going their various ways as they matured, with Bill staying to farm in the area and assist his father in managing the property. Allan predeceased Dora, and with her death in 1981 the property was inherited by Bill and his wife, Joyce. The ownership of the property is now shared with Jerry, their son, and his wife, Pamela.

Since 1990 Pamela and Jerry have enlarged and remodelled the house. The original logs are, however, still preserved beneath the new siding. The next generations of Dudmans to live here are Pam and Jerry's family of four, and no doubt some of them will carry on the farming tradition.

R.E.H.



The George Sheehey family, on or about 1938. Back row: Hughie, Teeny (Mrs. Wally Jones), Elsie, Vida (Mrs Walter Briault), Ethel, Alma (Mrs. Dave Wood), Archie Front row: Melinda (nee Armstrong), George, and May Kimberley (a sister to George)
Nora is missing from this picture [Lorna Sheehey]



THE WILSON LAMB FARM
2247 County Road 121

46

This farm was originally homesteaded by the Beech family, but they remained only for one generation, and then sold and moved on. Some of their family are buried in the Kinmount Cemetery.

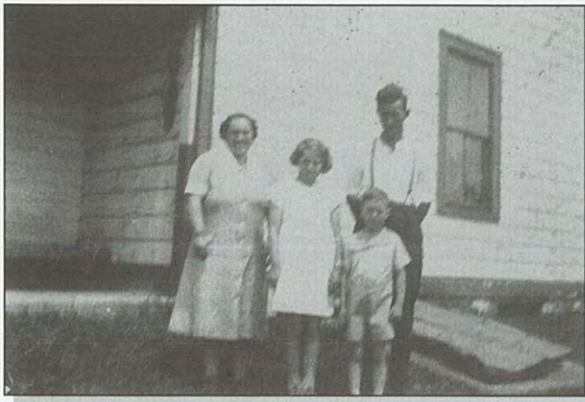
Wilson Lamb was a member of the Lamb family from north Verulam. They had originally come from England, and taken up land in the Bury's Green settlement of Squire Fell. Upon his marriage to Janet Walker, Wilson purchased this 100-acre lot along the present County Road 121, through which the Burnt River passes. His farm was just to the east of the farm of Joseph Handley Sr. Janet died shortly after this, and he married a second time, to her sister, Louisa Walker, and they had three children, James (Jimmie), who married Mabel Armstrong, Mary, who married Harold Devitt of Bobcaygeon, and Margaret, who married Charles Brohm of Coboconk.

Upon Jimmie and Mabel's marriage in 1928, Wilson and his daughter, Margaret, who was still living at home, retired to the house he owned in the village of Burnt River (the Rol Young house). Jimmie and Mabel had four children, Joyce, Ronald (Ronnie), Glen and Beverley. There was ten years age difference between Ronnie and Glen, and it was almost like having two separate families. With their children all grown and gone in 1965, Mabel and Jim sold what acreage remained of the farm (they had previously sold the river fields on the north side for development as cottage lots), to Bob and Anne Mason. They then retired to the village of Burnt River, to the Chris Hodgson house.

Bob and Anne, and their three children, Richard(Rick), David and Heather, lived on the farm as a family while the children were growing up. Bob farmed for ten years or so, but then became interested in selling real estate. He has been granted a quarrying licence for the south-east corner of his property, across Road 121 from the house, and has had this severed from the remainder of the land. Their children are all grown now and making their way in the world, and just recently the property, except for the small quarry, has been sold to Paul Carvalho, whose family are weekenders at present.

The Masons did extensive renovations to the house when they arrived, both on the inside and on the outside as well. It looks like an “Anne of Green Gables” house now, with new dormers added over the kitchen, and new white siding and green shutters. By way of note, this was one of the last farms to have hydro come to it, as it was just too far south of the village to make bringing the line down economical until the cottages were developed along the river in the late 1950’s.

J.H.

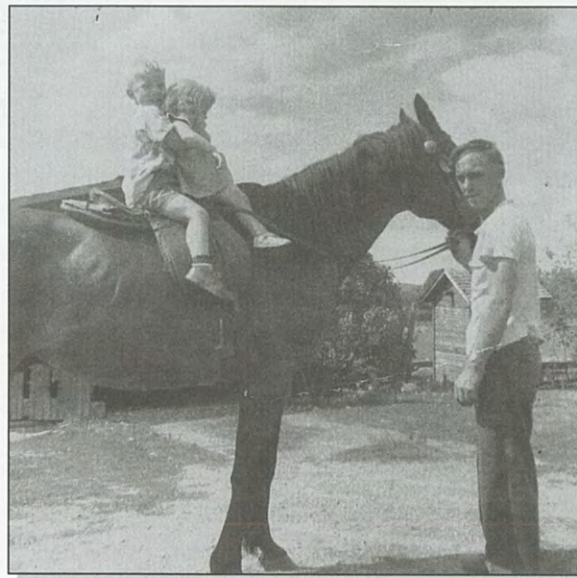


Mabel, Joyce, Jimmie and Ronnie, 1939



The Lamb family , Glen, Beverley, Ron (standing), Joyce, Mabel and Jimmie (seated)

Photos Courtesy of
Joyce Townsend



Ron, with his horse, “Trigger”, and his nephew, David, and niece, Dale Ann, 1959.



“Mr. And Mrs. Joseph Handley Sr., with their daughters, Ellen on the left, and Essie on the right, and to her right, their daughter-in-law, Mattie (Brisbin) Handley, and various children “. (Photo taken at Handley homestead on the river). [Berta Hickey]





THE JOS. HANDLEY SR. HOMESTEAD

43 Wrex Road

47

Joseph Handley from Sedbergh, Yorkshire, England, and his wife, Margaret Ann Shuttleworth, from Low Bentham, Lancashire, England, left home for Canada on September 20, 1873. After staying with his brother, William, at Glencoe near London, Ontario, for four years, they came to the Burnt River area in 1877. Joseph Handley's cousin, Henry Stainton, had come out from Yorkshire with "Squire" John Fell, and after working for some time for this gentleman, had taken up land on the South half of Lot 14, Concession 5. The Handleys, with their son, Robert, came by train to Coboconk, and then walked to Henry Stainton's home along the wagon trail between Coboconk and the Burnt River settlement.

They lived on the Austin Cavanaugh farm up over the ledge to the south, on the 3rd Concession of Somerville, until 1883, when they borrowed money from "Squire" Fell and bought the South half of Lot 14 on Concession 5 of Somerville from John Newby, who was going west. The lot was situated along the Burnt River, with parts of it on both sides of the river, and there was a log house and stable, with about 25 acres cleared. The remainder of the land was slash, all timber of any value gone.

The log house had two bedrooms downstairs, with a large all-purpose room, while upstairs was a hall running the full length, with a bedroom on each side of it. In the 1890's a carpenter was hired and the log building was lathed and plastered on the inside and ship-lapped on the outside. A big kitchen, with an upstairs was added, which gave two more bedrooms, with the stairs between the old and new parts. There was also a pantry, and there was a large woodshed on the back of the house, which could be entered from the kitchen. A verandah was built on the front of the kitchen, and the well, with a hand pump, was right in front. Closer to the lane another well was dug, and a building built over it. At one end were two big vats that held milk, at the other end ice from Four Mile Lake, packed in sawdust. By this time, a barn and other outbuildings had also been built.

Joseph Handley always had to have a peacock and a three-coloured cat on the premises. As the years passed they enlarged the original clearing by chopping down the trees and burning them. The smaller stumps were dug around, and then pulled out, but the oxen had to work around the larger ones until they could afford to rent a stumping machine. As the Burnt River divided this lot, they built a floating foot bridge which could be opened in the spring for the log drives to go through. Later a wooden bridge was built for them by Joseph Brisbin, which survived into the 1940's. This was used to move animals and machinery back and forth.

The Joseph Handley Sr. family consisted of Robert, born 1873, named for Joseph's father; Nancy, born 1877, named for Joseph's mother, Nancy Tebay; Thomas, born 1879, named for Margaret's grandfather; Eleanor (Ellen or Nell), born 1881, named for Joseph's sister; Margaret (Maggie), born 1883, name for Margaret's grandmother; Joseph Jr., born 1885, named for his father; Agnes Ethel (Essie), born 1889, Anna May, born 1891, named for William Shuttleworth's wife, Anna Hilyer.

By 1904, when Joseph Sr. and Margaret moved into the village of Burnt River, Robert had married Eliza Cruikshand and moved to his own farm (N half Lot 11, Conc. 6), Nancy had died, possibly of tuberculosis, Thomas had married Annie Rettie and was on the home farm, Ellen had married William Rettie (twin of Annie), Maggie has died, possibly of a brain tumor, Joseph Jr. had married Martha Matilda (Mattie) Brisbin, and was involved in ranching and lumbering, Essie was training to be a nurse in Toronto, and Anna was still at home going to school. Anna became a teacher and taught in Saskatchewan as well as locally. She married Frederick Holliday from Coboconk in 1925. Essie went overseas with the nursing corp in World War I and afterwards married a member of the medical corp she met there, Dr. Charles McNeil, settling in Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

Thomas Handley and his wife, Annie Rettie, continued to farm on the home place, living in the same house as when he was a child. During their tenure there was very little change to the home and outbuildings, other than the usual upkeep. However, one great improvement was when water was put into the barn and the house. The Thomas Handley family consisted of Dora and Nora, twins born in 1908, the former marrying Allan Dudman, the latter marrying Seward Crego of Kinmount; Margaret, born 1909 (a teacher), marrying Basil Carr of north Verulam, Thomas James, born 1911, marrying Ada Routley of Coboconk, Anne Grace, born 1914, marrying Harry Leary; and her twin, Ethel Marie, marrying James Wood of Lindsay; Gordon Edward born 1916, died 1919; Wrexford and Maxford, another set of twins, born 1920, the former marrying Ivy Graham of Irondale, the latter marrying Alma Bryant of Norland, and Robert, born 1923, marrying Helen Halligan of Fenelon Falls.

Thomas and Annie built a new brick house in Burnt River, across the road from the Jos. Handley Sr. house, and moved from the farm in 1940. Their son, Wrex, and his wife Ivy, took over the farm and continued the tradition of farming. They had a family of one girl, Helen, and two boys, Thomas Jr., and Boyd. With the death of Wrex and Ivy in the 1990's, Boyd and his wife, Christina, purchased the farm from the estate, and operate it along with the Hopkins-Palmer farm on the north end of the village. This is one of the Burnt River properties which has been handed down from father to son since 1883, when Joseph Handley Sr. bought it.

M.A.



(1979)

THE JOE ARMSTRONG FARM HOUSE

**15 Wrex Road
(Lot 14, Concession 4)**

48

This spacious, two-story farm home was built at the turn of the century by Robert Moffat, and he and his wife, Jenny, lived there for a time. He had, however, the opportunity to buy two lots in the village of Burnt River from the Sired family, and in 1912 he did so, and built a home on one, leaving this farm house and property vacant. About that time his wife's sister, Elizabeth (Lizzie), of the Hughes family from south along the river, and her husband, Joe Armstrong, one of James Armstrong Sr.'s sons, returned to Burnt River from South River, Ontario, where he had been working in the logging industry. They bought the property from Robert Moffat and settled with their two children, Ross and Gladys. Six more children were born to them on the farm, Murray, Leola, Jean, Muriel, Douglas and Randolph (Randy). Muriel died when very young, but the remainder of their family grew up and married as follows:

Ross married Emma Purdy from Fenelon Falls

Gladys married Alf Hodgson from Burnt River

Murray married Joy Wilson from Baddow

Leola married a Wakelin from Lindsay

Jean married Ron Claxton from Lindsay

Douglas married overseas and brought a British girl home as a war bride

Randy married Doreen Cameron

The Armstrongs sold the farm in 1953, as their children had settled elsewhere and were not particularly interested in farming. It was purchased by Norman and Isabel Cox from Toronto. Mrs. Cox, a member of the Owens family, had been brought up to the north of the village of Burnt River.

After a time, however, they developed inherited property on the river, to the north, and sold this to Richard (Dick) and Isabel (Isa) Hilyer in 1956. Dick worked seasonally for the Ontario Hydro, as well as farmed, and Isa was his Scottish war bride, returning to Canada with him after World War II. They had been farming to the north of Kinmount, prior to moving to the Burnt River area. Their three children, Elizabeth (Beth), Susan and Paul were attending school at the time, and a fourth child, Rose Mary, was born on the farm here. Isa was quite active in the Anglican Church at Burnt River, working hard to help with their fund-raising suppers, and other events.

In 1979 the Hilyers sold the farm, reserving a lot of 15 acres or so off one corner, on which they built a new home. The new owners were John and Helen Thiel, and, although they held title for a time, they never did live there, but rented it out. In 1986 Peter Blackwell purchased the property, and held it only for a short time. He sold to the present owners, Greg and Karen Barrington, who took up residence in 1987. They have a son, Michael, and operate a gas service station on Highway 35, just beyond Powles Corners, on the way to Lindsay. Greg has also become involved recently in working with horses that have adjustment problems, and has become known as the "Horse Whisperer", both locally and farther afield.

The Barringtons have completely refurbished the house, as it had become very rundown prior to their purchase. This home had a lovely, hardwood floor in the living room area, which had been laid at the time the house was built. The kitchen and side porch areas have been extended, and new siding has been put on the house, also. It is once again a proud and lovely home.

J.H.



2000



THE CAREW HOMESTEAD
2011 County Road 121

49

The Carew family came to Canada about 1825, settling in the Townships of Ennismore and Emily, near Peterborough. The family became involved in the lumbering business of the time, and John, the elder, established the John Carew Lumber Company of Lindsay. Sam, a brother of John, and his wife, Jane Eliza Wilson, came north to this area in 1880's, as it facilitated Sam's work as a lumber scaler and jobber for his brother's company. Jane's brother, Bob Wilson, found work in the stone quarry at Burnt River, so this also may have been a reason for choosing to homestead property here. They bought 445 acres along the river, through which the local road to Fenelon Falls ran, with the western boundary of the property being the river.

Sam and Jane first built a log house on the east side of the road, close to where it turns and climbs up the edge of the rock ledge bounding the Burnt River Valley. However, they were burned out at this location, and the next place they chose to build on their land was close to the river, on the west side of the road, towards the northwest corner of the property. Sam was heavily involved with his work in the lumber trade, and travelled the northern area of Victoria County in his Democrat, in all weathers, leaving his family alone a great deal of the time. In winter he wore a long, fur coat and hat to keep warm, and these became a famous trademark in the area. The family seemed to have little luck with their dwellings, as they were again burned out at this location in the summer of 1888. About the only thing they managed to salvage at this time was Sam's fur coat. They again built a third log home, about the middle of the property, on the west side, where the creek comes down from the ledge and crosses the road. At this location they also raised a barn.

One of their sons, John (Johnny) had married Pearl Ellis, and decided to remain locally and assist his father in farming the property. He built a house across the road, slightly to the north of his father's location. It may have been a luckier location as far as fire was concerned, but apparently the road travel was not overly appreciated by Pearl on wash days, as the prevailing wind was from the north-west, and the dust was a great problem. Pearl and Johnny raised a family of five boys, Henry (1916), Oscar (1918), Grant (1920), Ralph (1924) and Dean (1928), and one girl, Violet (1912). Both parents were active in the local Burnt River United

Church (formerly Methodist), and Mrs Carew played the organ there for a long period. Henry married a local girl, Adelia Switzer, and then the war came and he was “called up”. Grant also enlisted in the Service, in the Air Force, in 1941.

The grandparents, Sam and Jane, were burned out once more, and the homestead location was left for a time, until in the late 1930’s Johnny decided to move their home to that part of the farm, as there was a ready source of water with the creek nearby. It was done with a steam engine owned by Garfield Nichols, and two teams of horses supplied by Ike Reeds and Bill Armstrong. At this time he also built a new barn, the same one that is there today. The house was moved in two parts, and joined together to make one building. It was quite a feat for the day and time, and the division is noticeable when pointed out on the inside.

With the family dispersed, Johnny and Pearl decided to move to Lindsay and use the farm as a weekend property only, and in 1945 he obtained work with Silverwoods Dairy, where he remained until his retirement Grant came home from the war about that time, and for several months he and Grace lived at the homestead. He was seriously thinking of staying; however his older brother, Henry, and his wife, “Delia”, were also interested in this possibility, so Grant decided to take a second term of employment with the Air Force, and Henry and Delia came to the farm for several years. Delia had a wonderful singing voice and used to come to the United Church and take part in the choir. She was a tall, graceful brunette, and wore beautiful, large picture hats, which looked very fashionable to the younger girls. Church in those days was on a Sunday afternoon.

Grant and his first wife, Grace, raised their family while he was in the Service, working at different locations throughout Canada. He retired as a Master Sergeant in 1967, and at that time they returned to Burnt River, purchasing the farm from the family. Their family was one boy, John, who followed Grant in a career in the Service, and two girls, Wendy and Margaret. Both Wendy (Mrs. Grenville Bacon) and Margaret (Mrs. Norbert Huer) live locally. Grace died at Burnt River in 1991, and Grant has since married a local lady, herself widowed, Eleanor Switzer. Eleanor is a daughter of the Owen Rettie family and quite a talented musician. She is church organist at both Burnt River United Church and Knox United in Coboconk. She and Grant are settled at Grant’s home on the farm.

J.H.



The Carew family in 1935,
from the left, Grant, Pearl
(Mrs Carew), Violet, Henry,
Oscar, and in front, Dean and Ralph.

THE RETTIE HOMESTEADS AND VILLAGE HOUSE

50

**493 County Road 43
Lot 18, Concession 5
184 Burnt River Road**

Margaret and Alexander Rettie, with their four children, Alexander Jr (born 1847), Margaret (1849), Ellen (1850) and James (1853), came to Canada in 1863 from Aberdeen, Scotland, accompanied by Alexander's brother, and they were for a time in the Whitby area, where they encountered Abraham J. Farewell, who was a land speculator. He offered for sale 200 acres, (the North half of Lot 14, Concession 5), adjacent to the Burnt River, in Somerville Township, although the lot, itself, was not on the river. Alexander's brother decided to pursue an offer of land around Fergus, Ontario, and the two parted ways. There has been very little contact between the two families since.

Alexander and his friend, John Griffin, came north to have a look at the property, and it is not known how they travelled, but it is assumed they may have come to Coboconk and taken the wagon trail across the bottom of Four Mile Lake. This whole area was being developed at the time. The decision was made to buy, and on July 15, 1864, the deed was signed, and they proceeded to their new property.

They first established themselves in a home on the river flats, in the south field adjacent to the now Coboconk Road, and built a log barn on the small rise to the west of this. They were the first settlers in the area. The two brothers, Jim and Alexander, pursued different interests in making a living. Jim was involved in farming with his father, and Alexander Jr. was more interested in making a living through the local lumbering industry.

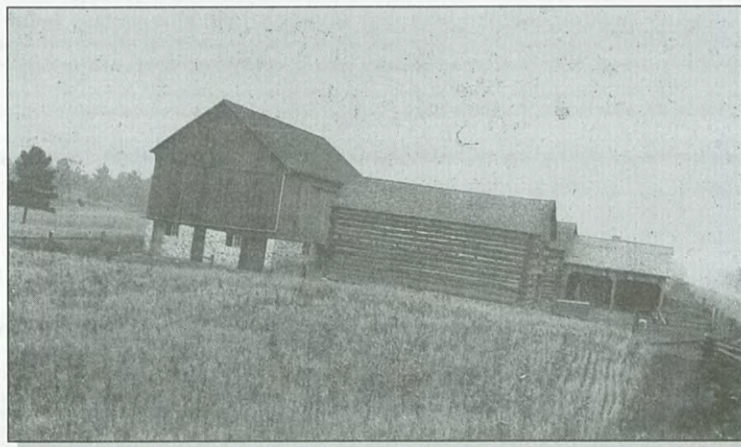
Alexander Jr. married a local Burnt River girl, Harriet Sired, and became involved in building a wooden bridge across the river, along with the Schell family of north Verulam. Will Rettie, one of his sons, was only ten years old, and drove a team of oxen to help in the work. This was completed in 1888, at which time he decided to pack up his family (Helen, Millie, William, Annie, Joe and Nelson) and go to British Columbia. It is thought he kept some of his profit from the bridge venture, and the sale of his quarry lot and village property (on which the Suddaby-Handley store was later built), and invested it in land farther along the Coboconk Road (300 acres on the south side, and 200 acres on the north side, from the Corbin's Creek bridge east). He used the remainder to finance his move west. The family did not stay in British Columbia for very long, but returned to Ontario after two or three years. Throughout the remainder of his lifetime Will Rettie would never consent to eat fish, no matter what kind, as apparently the family's diet in British Columbia had in large part consisted of that item.

In the meantime Jim had married his wife, Elizabeth, and their family of Roxie, Sherman, Melville, Lorne and Carol were growing up at Burnt River, on the farm. The railway line had been built north through part of their property, with a wood yard and outbuildings located adjacent to the farm buildings, on the south side of the road. The Burnt River quarry was in operation just to the north of this along the track. Jim and his wife had been married for ten years or more, and he had built a wooden, frame house on the property across the road from the log barn, on a slight rise. He was proceeding with his plans to build a large barn adjacent to the house, in June of 1907, but in blasting rock for the barn foundation he was gravely injured, and died the next day on the way by train to Lindsay for medical attention. After a time Elizabeth decided to marry a gentleman name Aubert, and to sell her interest in the property. The property, itself, appears to have been owned jointly by Margaret and her two sons, or their descendants. Since Jim died without a will, his wife and children would

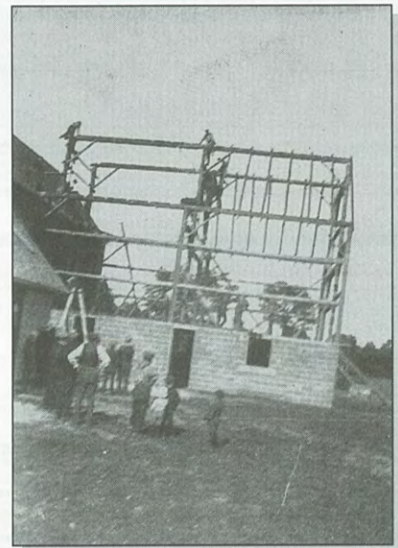


The Rettie homestead on the Coboconk Road.

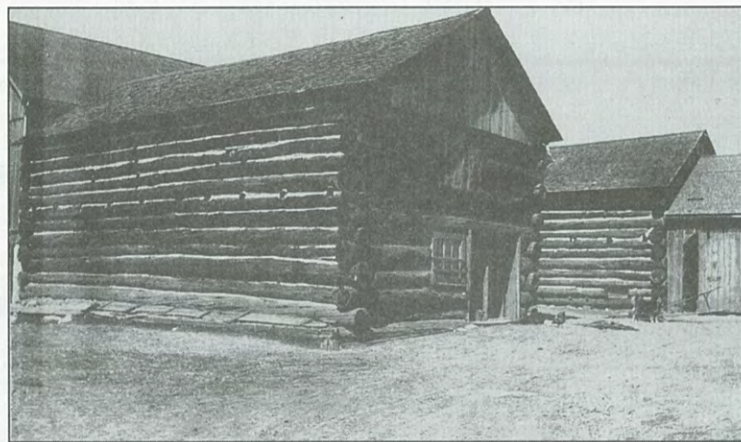
Photos Courtesy of
Morley and Peggy Rettie



The barns on the north side of the Coboconk Road
at the Rettie homestead.



The straw barn raising at
Will Rettie's farm on
July 2, 1925.





The farm house built by Will and Ellen Rettie, 2000. [Joe Rettie]



Building the village house, 1930's.
[Morley Rettie]



Leona and Morley (Lee's children) at the village house, 1940's. [Morley Rettie]



Mrs. Harriet Rettie in her later years, standing in the doorway of the village house, 1940's.



jointly share. In a court settlement the property was bought by a neighbour, Joe Handley Sr., in 1912, and he in turn offered it to his daughter, Ellen, and her husband, Will Rettie, taking a mortgage in the sum of \$1200 for same. Elizabeth and her young family moved west with Mr. Aubert at this time.

The girls in Alexander Sr.'s, family married locally, Ellen to James Cain, and they settled to the north of the village of Burnt River, on the Burnt River Road, at the very top of the high hill there, and Margaret to Thomas Forbert.

When Alexander and his wife, Harriet, returned to Burnt River around 1891, they homesteaded on the parcel of land (Lot 18, Conc. 5) to the west, on the Coboconk Road, that they had previously purchased. Five more children were born to them while they lived at this location, Edna, Ethel, Bert, Jack and Lee. The older members of the family all went their various ways, with William and Annie marrying Ellen and Tom Handley (1906), respectively, from the local Handley family. In the younger family, Edna went to work in Toronto and married there, Ethel married a local member of the McCall family and went west, Bert enlisted in the First World War, and this left only Jack and Lee to manage the farm, as their father had died in 1909. They put a great number of improvements on the barn, only to have it struck by lightning and burn to the ground. This was a hard blow. They rented other properties but their farming aspirations gradually dwindled. The lands around the lake that were easily accessible were sold off for cottages

Bert came home from the war and started up a sawmill business, marrying Chris Hodgson's oldest daughter, Irene. Lee, in turn, married Irene's sister, Alma, and they went out on their own, moving around Ontario to different points, wherever he could find work. He and Alma eventually returned to Burnt River, however, and bought the Christopher Hodgson farm on County Road 44 from Alma's father.

Jack stayed with his mother, looking after her for the remainder of her life. She was 96 when she died in 1953. He worked for Bert for a time, as well as doing farming on the side, and at this time purchased a threshing machine, touring the southern farming area of Victoria County for several autumns. In the late 1930's Jack purchased property in the village of Burton River, on the east side of the main street, opposite and a little south of Wright's General Store (184 Burnt River Road). He built a modern home there and he and his mother, Harriet, moved to that location, where they lived for the rest of their lives. He had obtained steady employment at this time with the Canadian National Railways, in their round house in Lindsay, helping maintain the steam engines that were used on their runs. The local younger men used to congregate on Saturday nights in the winter at his home to listen to the hockey games and play cards. Jack was in charge of the Burnt River Cemetery for a long period during these later years, and his careful attention to use of the land and recording of the graves has proved a great help to future generations.

On Jack's death in 1972, the house was willed to his brother, Lee, and his wife, Alma. They did not live in it, but upon their deaths it was left to their daughter, Leona, and her husband, Adam Storck. Leona and Adam moved to Burnt River, adding a family room to the back of the house and modernizing the inside. One of the interesting additions was a stork figure placed on the top of the chimney of the family room, at roof level. This apparently is a Danish tradition of Adam's family. In 1996 they sold the property to Helen and Barry Boldt, who have provided it for the use of their daughter, Audra, and her family. Audra is a great-great-granddaughter of Alexander and Harriet, through their daughter, Annie.

The property on the Coboconk Road had been split on the death of Harriet, with Jack having received the south parcel, and Lee the north acres. On Jack's death, it went to Alec Rettie, Bert's son, who has since sold it. Lee's family have since sold the north acres, as well. Will and Ellen Rettie moved onto the Rettie farm in 1912, and in 1913 built a new barn, while still retaining the use of the old log one across the road to store implements and house a blacksmith forge. Will was an excellent blacksmith and carpenter. They had two children, Owen (1906) and Owna (1907). Owna was always called "Bae" by the entire community, and no one seems to know where the name originated.



The Retties' saw mill operation, April, 1971, Owen measuring lumber on left, Joe standing at far right.

Photos Courtesy of Joe Rettie



Joe Rettie, standing with the two trucks he operates, hauling sawdust as livestock bedding, 2000.



In the 1920's they built a two-story, cement-block house, making the blocks themselves, from a mold. Owen worked for a time for the Burnt River Telephone Company, then later for the Peterborough Lumber Company as a millwright during World War II, returning in the late forties to help his father run the farm. He married Viola Wilson of Baddow in 1932, and they had four children, Eleanor, June, Joe and Robin.

Viola and Owen lived in the village of Burnt River, in the Handley Sr. house, (left to Ellen by her father), moving there from the "quarry house" on his father's property, in 1941. In 1958 they switched homes with Ellen and Will, moving to the farm. The girls all eventually left home to work and marry, Eleanor to Morgan Switzer of Burnt River, June to Mervyn Hunter of Burnt River, and Robin to Phillip Pearson of the Kinmount family. With Owen's death in 1983, the farm passed to Joe. Viola and Owen had previously moved back to the village house in 1982. Joe married shortly thereafter, and resides there today, with his wife, Gail. He runs a livestock bedding business, as well as a small sawmill, in addition to farming.. As his mother used to say, "The Retties have always been sawmill men."

There is an interesting side light on the name Rettie. The family was originally from Germany, and emigrated to Scotland at the time of the Protestant Reformation. The name "von Ret" was changed to Rettie at that time, apparently, according to the Fergus branch of the family.

J.H.



THE QUARRY HOUSE
North half of Lot 14, Concession 5

51

This house was built at the time the Burnt River quarry was in operation, and is located south of the quarry, beside the former railway tracks (now the Victoria Snowmobile/Hiking Trail), with entry from the Coboconk Road, through the property of Joe Rettie.

It housed the quarry superintendent, and when the land on which the quarry operated was sold to William Rettie, Joe's grandfather, the house came with it. The quarry operated from the late 1800's through to 1924, when it was bought by a crushed stone company from Hagersville, and closed to support a monopoly in the limestone industry.

Owen and Viola Rettie lived in it for a time in the late 1930's, and both their son, Joe, and their daughter, June, were born there. Prior to that it had been rented by various families in the area, but as the lane way was extremely long and hard to maintain in winter, it was not the most desirable of locations unless you had access to the proper snow clearing equipment. There was a fresh water spring located beside the track, just to the north of the house, with stone steps down the bank to it. The children can remember going to get water there with their mother, dipping the pail in and hauling it up, clear and cold, and so good to drink.

When Owen's family moved to the village of Burnt River in 1941, the house was used for storage and allowed to fall into decay. When last checked the land around the spring had caved in, and all that remained were the stone steps.

J.H.

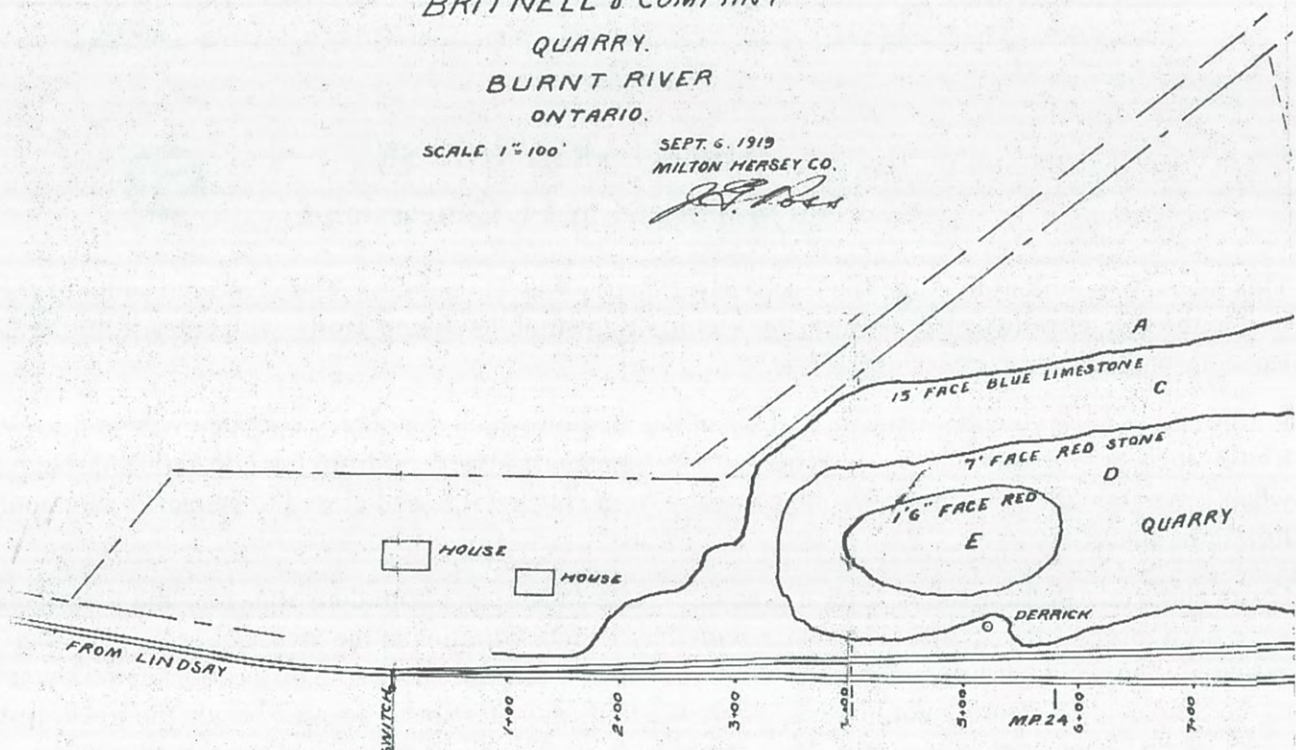


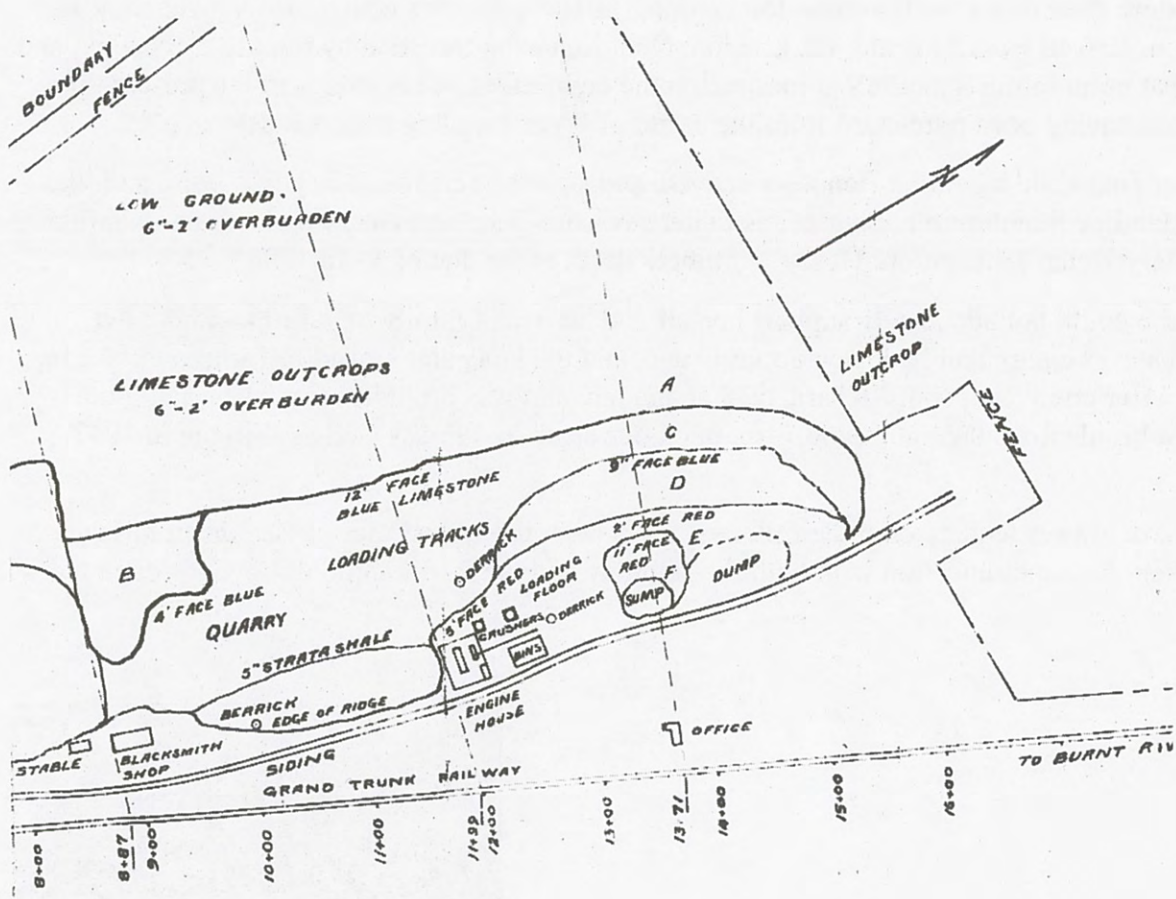
PLAN OF
BRITNELL & COMPANY
QUARRY.
BURNT RIVER
ONTARIO.

SCALE 1" = 100'

SEPT. 6, 1919
MILTON HERSEY CO.

[Handwritten signature]





THE STAINTON HOMESTEAD

South half of Lot 15, Concession 5

52

Henry Stainton came to Canada from Yorkshire with Squire John Fell's family, which had settled in north Verulam, and in the Census records of 1871 is listed as an employee of the family. From there he moved to homestead a 100-acre lot, south of the Coboconk Road, adjacent to the railway tracks, on the west side. He married locally, to Jane Halliday, of the Halliday family from the Baddow-Rosedale area, and they built a small house, and a barn to store their crops, with a stone foundation. In 1877, Henry's cousin, Joseph Handley, and his wife and young son, arrived from England, via London, Ontario having travelled by train to Coboconk, and walked across from that point to the Stainton's homestead, some eight miles. This land is at the present time owned by Bill Dudman, having been purchased from the estate of Wrex Handley upon his death.

Jane was expecting her first child when the Handleys arrived, and shortly thereafter a boy was born, and they named him William Handley Stainton in honour of his father's cousin. Jane and Henry had two more children, Richard Henry and Mary Helen Jane, before Henry's untimely death at the age of 34 in 1883.

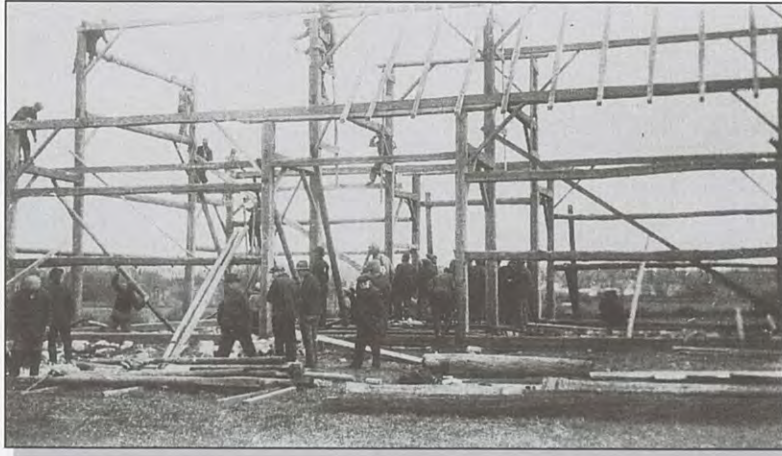
Acknowledging that she could not adequately support herself and her small family on a farm without her husband, Jane sold whatever equipment had been accumulated, and the land, and moved to Toronto to take up work as a seamstress. Her one young son, Richard, died at age ten, and was brought back for burial in the Burnt River Cemetery, beside his father, and Jane, also, upon her death in 1939, as well as William in 1947, and Mary in 1960.

The Stainton family have always remembered their pioneer roots here, through stories passed down through the family, and have kept in communication with both the Handley and the Rettie families down through the generations.

J.H.



William Stainton, with his mother, Jane, in Toronto in the late 1930's.



Jim Handley's barn being framed in the late 1930's.
[Peggy Rettie]

THE JIM HANDLEY PROPERTY

83 and 99 Burnt River Road

53

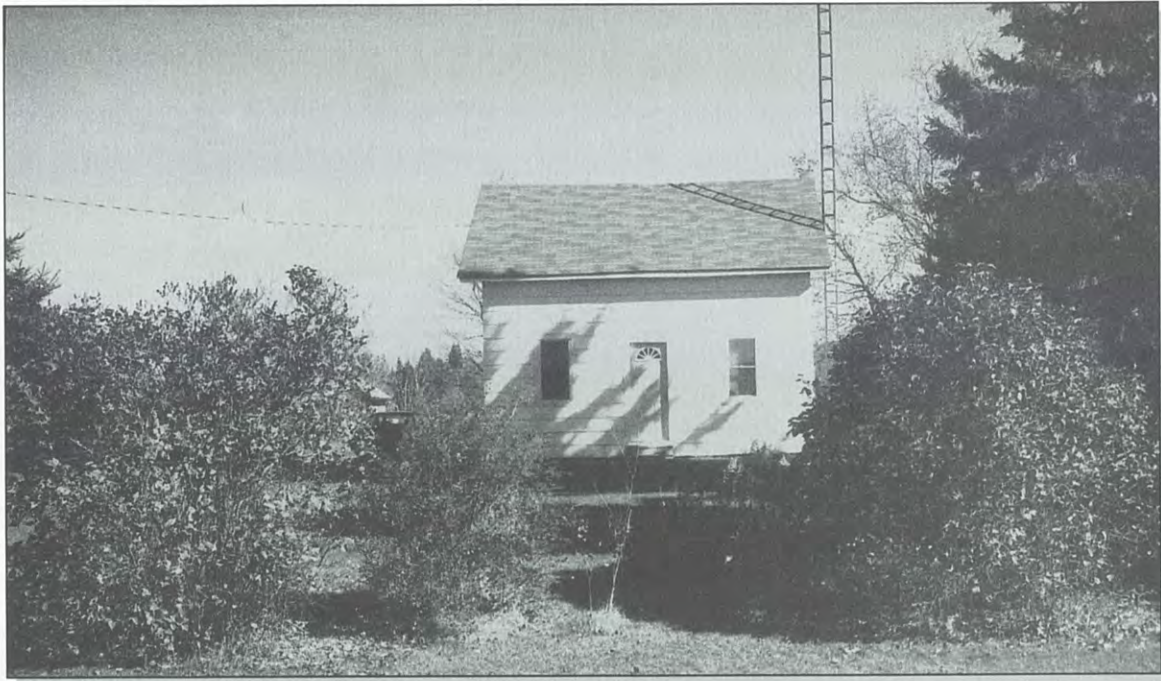
Jim Handley bought this farm property around 1935 from the Howie brothers (Edith Hodgson's family), who had inherited it. As the buildings were in disrepair, it was necessary to build a barn for the storage of hay almost immediately, and Angus Campbell, the local carpenter, helped in this, as well as neighbours and friends. Later Jim added a sheep shed and storage shed for implements, etc. There had been a house and barns at this location, and there was still an old blacksmith shop standing, which he demolished in 1948. He farmed the land for all of his life, raising sheep as well as cattle, one of the few farmers in the area who did so. His sheep manure pile was a great source of fertilizer for local people who wanted a little "extra special" help for their flower gardens.

In September of 1969 the barn and stable were struck by lightning, and both burned to the ground, destroying the winter feed, and some animals. It was necessary to rebuild and this time a more modern, open style, barn was built to accommodate fodder and animals. His daughter, Sheran, and her husband, Gene Watson, have, since Jim's death in 1988, taken over the farm, and added more buildings, as needed. They built a modern home on the west side of the farm in the mid-1960's, fronting the Coboconk Road, by the creek bridge, which is reasonably handy to the farm.

This property housed the first school in the Burnt River community, located on the small hill, directly across from the cemetery. It was built on or about 1870, and at times had up to 108 children enrolled, from Grades 1 through to 8. A new stone school was built in 1901 on the property of Ed Hopkins at the north end of the village, and this building was torn down. This is the site of the lot that was severed off the farm property for Sheran's daughter, Kelly, and her husband, Murray Duggan, to build a new home several years ago. Ada, Jim's wife, advised that they found small items like an ink pot, and a spoon, there when they were digging the basement. Oddly enough, this was the school to which Jim's mother and dad went when they were young.

Both Gene and Murray are interested in farming, so the tradition of working the land at this location will be continued for several more generations. This would have pleased Jim greatly, as he had a strong love of the land and the farming tradition.

J.H.



THE IKE REEDS PROPERTY

132 Burnt River Road

54

The property just to the north of the Burnt River cemetery was for many years, (from 1922, for more than a quarter of a century), the home and farm of Isaiah (Ike) and Greata Reeds. Ike was well known for his involvement in many activities in the village. Among other things, he refereed baseball games for the youngsters, took the money at the dances at the Orange Hall, and was affectionately known as a teller of tall tales. His kind-heartedness was legendary, and he was always pleased to perform favours.

Ike and Greata (Swinson) were married on the 5th of April, 1922, and moved into the farm at that time. They were both involved in the Kinmount Fair, and Greata gave many years of service to St. Luke's Anglican Church (she was organist for 30 years), and to many community organizations, including the Women's Institute. When interviewed on her 82nd birthday in 1986, she recalled her childhood in Kinmount where her parents farmed. She remembered attending the small school at Ironmine Road (which is no longer standing), and being taught with the other eleven pupils by Anna Handley (a sister of Joe Handley), who was only about fifteen years old. Greata also remembered that there was much less interaction between Kinmount and Burnt River at that time, as the road was too rough for regular travel.

Ike's parents and grandparents farmed in the area of the Pinery. His parents were Sarah and Ralph Reeds. Sarah was the daughter of Christopher Hodgson and Mary Yeates. She migrated to the United States with her parents in the 1860's, and there married George Thorne, a soldier. After his death Sarah returned to Canada with her mother and other members of her family, and married Ralph Reeds.

When Ike married Greata they bought the farm next to the cemetery. Previously the property had been owned by his cousin, Thomas, and Cora (Gardner) Hodgson. The Hodgsons had kept horses there, which they raced successfully in Canada and the United States, and a track had been maintained there for sulky racing. Thomas Hodgson sold the property about 1908 to Robert English and his wife, and it was consequently purchased in 1922 by Ike and Greata, when the Englishes moved to Lindsay. The Reeds kept dairy cows and supplied milk to many of the summer residents. At first they farmed the land down to the riverside, but in the late 1950's Ike had the river property subdivided off the farm and sold as cottage lots.

Ike and Greata owned a plot of land opposite the Anglican Church, and in 1960 they built a new home there. Ike continued with the farm until he completed a barn at the back of the new house, and in 1968 he sold the property to Greata's nephew, Alec Swinson, and his wife, Muriel, who moved up from Lindsay, with their family, two teenagers, Kathleen and David, and Brian (5 years) and Brenda (4 years). Alec played the fiddle, and had a group of musicians organized that played locally at the Kinmount Legion and other places. He also kept some livestock, and horses for his children to ride, and farmed in a small way.

At this time Ike bought a pair of oxen and gave much of his time to their well-being. He showed them (with great success) at fairs, and they took part in many parades. He trained the oxen himself, and made their leather harnesses. Ike died in 1976 and Greata in 1996 (when she was 93).

In 1978 the farm was purchased by Tom Hodgson Jr. and his sons, as Alec and Muriel Swinson decided to move back to Lindsay to be nearer their work. The house, itself, was severed from the farm lot and sold separately to Kathy and Brian Fleming. They have four children, all girls, who have grown up there, Angela, Kelly, Krista and Erin. Kelly is now married and living near Dunsford, Angela has finished college and is working away from home, and Krista and Erin are completing their schooling.

R.E.H.



Ike and his oxen team at the Kinmount Fair in the early 1970's.



THE TOWNSEND-WOOD FARM
123 Burnt River Road

55

Although this farm had a few different owners before 1890, we know very little about them. In September, 1890, Alfred B. Townsend bought it from James J. Nichols. The Townsend family had originally lived in the United States, but had left there after the American Revolution as United Empire Loyalists. After living along the north shore of Lake Ontario for a time, the family gradually moved northward, and settled at Powles Corners. Alfred Beverley (or A.B. as he became known) was a son of this family, and when he married Emma Branscombe they purchased the small farm at Lot 12, Concession 6 of Somerville Township. He farmed in a small way, with jersey cows, but he also took on the job of Assessor, Tax Collector, and later Clerk of the Township. Some time before the First World War he sold the back part of his property that was on the west side of the railway track, to the Burnt River Quarry.

Of their children, Harold married Margaret Shuttleworth of Burnt River, Viola (Ola) married Howard Wilson of Baddow, Ethel married Jack Taylor, and Russell married a girl from the Cambray area. After A. B. Townsend died, his son-in-law, Howard Wilson, looked after the farm. It was rented out to Don Young, and later to Lee Rettie. In 1945 Carmon Wood, a Supervisor and Roadmaster of the Canadian National Railway, bought the house and remaining 16 acres. He worked on the railroad from 1926 to 1968, and then retired to live on this property with his wife, Iva. He made various improvements, rebuilding the woodshed in 1958, and in 1988, after his death, Iva had her sons install white vinyl siding over the rough cast, and put on a new red steel roof.

Carmen and his first wife, Violet (Hambly), and his second wife, Iva (Scriver), were blessed with a large family. Carmen and Violet's children were: Jean(m. Hiram Switzer), Joyce (m. Douglas Godwin), Jim (m. Ruth Gillogly), and Ken (m. Shirley Hotchkiss). Carmen and Iva's family were: Shirley, Verna (m. Carl Humphries), Ross (m Joan Wright), Marion (m. Jack Beaudry), Phyllis (m. MacDonald), Barbara (m. Boyd Magee), Michael (m. Jean Wright), Maurice (M. Ruth McCullum), Carolyne (m. Dwight Fountain), Karen (m. Phillip Barrett), Cheryl(m. Bruce Hunt).

Carmen during his retirement looked after the Burnt River Cemetery grounds, and was very active in the New Horizon Club of the seniors, along with Mrs. Edith Hughes, as well as being an elder of the Burnt River United Church. He was also for a time a member of the Somerville Township Council. He died in 1986 and in 1991 Iva sold the property to Debbie Jackson and Allan Hare, who live there now with their children, Shaun, Shelby, Darcy and Tracey.

M.A.



THE HERB ARMSTRONG HOUSE
159 Burnt River Road

56

This property originally belonged to Robert Wilson, from 1898, but as he lived farther along the street, beside the station, it was rented out. For a period in the early 1940's it was rented by the Anderson family of Kinmount, and, after the war, in the late 1940's, Art Hulland and his wife, Etta, and their family, lived there for a time. In 1947 it was bought by Herb Armstrong and his wife, May, for a retirement property, and they moved from the Armstrong homestead on Concession 2, Somerville, to this location, with their youngest daughter, Shirley, and four teenagers from the Vanaman family, who were staying with them for a time.

The Armstrongs did considerable renovations to the house and barns, and the home became a gathering place for a euchre card game of an evening for some of the neighbours locally, as Herb was fond of that pastime. With his death in 1958, May and her daughter, Shirley, sold the house to John B. Horton, and moved to Fenelon Falls. The Hortons retained the house until 1964, when they sold to Walter and Kay Hawes. The Hawes were residents of Burnt River until his death in 1976, when she decided to sell in order to live closer to her remaining family members. It was purchased at that time by Norman Hickson, who was retiring from employment on the Canadian National Railway, and had friends locally. Mr. Hickson was a great gardener, and also had some cattle, and generally enjoyed his retirement here in Burnt River until he became ill in 1987 and was forced to sell. The property was then purchased by Vern and Ruth Eyers, who also were commencing retirement, and looking for a smaller property than the farm they had had south of Lindsay. Vern had been an employee of General Motors of Oshawa. They did further renovations in the downstairs area, to make it more spacious, and added a deck on the south side for easier entry.

Recently, in 1999, Vern and Ruth sold to return to Lindsay, as they felt they would be better situated closer to their family, and the property has been purchased by Walter Curl of Coboconk as an investment property. He has been renting the house, and using the barn to house his small herd of cattle.

J.H.



THE BRIAULT-POGUE PROPERTY

163 Burnt River Road

57

It is not known who built the one-story, small house on this property, but in the years before 1920 Walter Levi Briault lived there, and met and married Vida Sheehey, one of the daughters of the George Sheehey family. They moved to Coboconk shortly after that, and ran a small restaurant that was located directly across the main street from Shields' store. Whenever you went to Coboconk as a child it was a very special treat to be taken to Briaults for a pop, or you might, in the summer, have a chance to sit outdoors at the little ice cream parlour by the bridge, where you would slowly spoon the treat from the little glass dish, making it last as long as possible, and revel in the taste.

Walter maintained this property as an investment, renting it out to numerous people, one of whom was Mrs. Edith Wayne (later Hughes), an English woman, who came to teach school in the junior room at Burnt River, with her teenage son, George, in 1942. She met and married a local man, Gerald Hughes, and they moved on, to a house on Highway 121, south of the village, where she lived for the remainder of her years at Burnt River. Mrs. Hughes taught school locally around the area for many years, and then when she retired, took a very active part in the Burnt River community, helping to establish the first senior citizens group, the New Horizon Club, and supporting the Anglican Church Women's group in her church, as well.

The property remained vacant for a time and then was bought in 1948 by George and Victoria (Hunter) Pogue, on their retirement from farming in south Victoria. They renovated the kitchen and installed a bathroom, but otherwise the house remained much the same. George was a great hunter and spinner of tall tales, and the local men in the south end of the village would spend many an evening in his kitchen talking over events of the day. His good friend, Herb Armstrong, and his wife, May, had retired from their farm to live next door, and Henry Armstrong and Owen Rettie would often drop by of an evening, plus many relatives and friends from south Verulam. Geordie, as he was called, would sit with his feet propped high on the side of the kitchen stove, or any handy table, puffing his pipe, and holding strong on any topic that took his fancy. His wife's sister, Myrtle (Hunter) Armstrong, often came to stay with them on weekends, and at times for longer, and the three were most often seen together out and about in town.

Geordie died in April of 1975, and Viccie shortly after, in June of the same year, leaving the house to Myrtle. She lived there for a time, having decided to retire from her work as a practical nurse and housekeeper, and in the 1980's she also died, and the contents were sold, as well as the property, as neither Geordie and Viccie, nor Myrtle, had had any children.

Their nephew, Mervyn Hunter, purchased the house from the estate with the intention of renovating it to make a more modern home, but he, himself, became ill, and was not able to continue, and the buildings have remained vacant for the past ten years. This past year his son, Lyndsay, commenced some work on the buildings, as they were falling too far into disrepair. When tearing down the garage section, his sister, Elizabeth, whom he had inveigled into helping, made an interesting discovery. Buried under the corner of what had been Geordie's dog house, in the far corner, was the cornerstone of the old Eden church from Verulam. At the time of the sale some of the people from Verulam had come and searched the garage contents diligently to find this item, but had not been successful. Apparently Geordie had helped dismantle the old church, and rather than throw out the stone, had saved it, but no one knew exactly where it was, except that he had kept it in the garage. At some time or other the corner of the dog house must have needed some extra straightening, and Geordie used what came to hand, meaning to find something else later, and never did. The stone is to be given to the United Church in Bobcaygeon, to be placed with their artifacts collection from that area. How like Geordie to have the last laugh on us all. He would have enjoyed that immensely.

J.H.



Walter Briault and Vida at the time of their marriage.
[Lorna Sheehey]



THE ROL YOUNG HOUSE
165 Burnt River Road

58

The land on which this two-story, brick home resides was the original property of Samuel R. Carew, purchased from Crown land, and then sold to George Booth in March of 1897. It is not known if Mr. Carew or Mr. Booth built the original house. The Booth family originally homesteaded on the 3rd Concession of Somerville, near the Howie and Cavanaugh families. One branch of the family also homesteaded property on the east line adjacent to the English homestead.

The house was the property of Wilson Lamb in 1916 when he rented it to Mrs. William Shuttleworth Jr. and her family. She rented the residence until 1922, and then in 1928 Wilson and his daughter, Margaret, moved from their farm on County Road 121, south of the village, to make way for his son, James (Jimmy), newly married to Mabel Armstrong, to take up residence there. Margaret later married into the Brohm family from Coboconk, and on her father's death in the early 1930's inherited the house.

The George Wood family rented it for a short time in the 1930's from Margaret. The one feature that Phyllis Cook (nee Wood) clearly remembers was that it had a wonderful bannister on the stairs between the first and second floors, down which she and her brother, Merd, regularly slid. About 1935 it was rented out to the Stan Dancey family when he assumed the job of Burnt River station agent for the Canadian National Railways.

Roland and Mary Alice (Minnie) Young (nee Steel) took title to the home in August of 1938 when they sold their farm property on the "east line" (County Road 121), just to the west of where it intersects County Road 49. Rol, as he was known, worked for a time for the Handley Lumber Company, and his daughter, Alice Ileen, lived there with her mother and father, until her marriage to Earl Windover in 1942. At that time Rol and Minnie's son, Jake, was serving in the armed forces, and Don was working away from home.

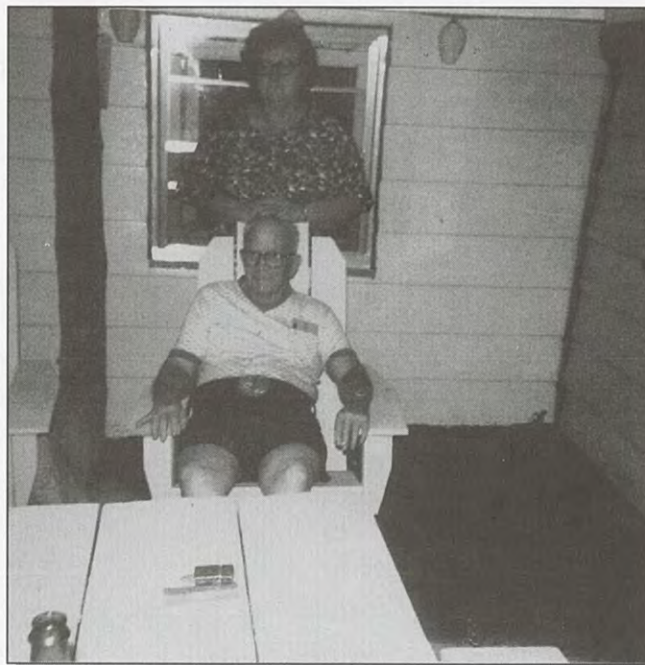
With Minnie's death in 1957, his daughter and her family (Eldon, Barbara, Lorna, Dennis and Larry) moved into the home, with her husband, Earl, to look after her father. Rol had made provisions for Ileen in his will that she should have use of the home for her lifetime, and so, upon his death in 1958 the Windover family remained there. They had lived prior to that in another section of the village, and Lorna has fond memories of visiting her grandparents as a child. She was allowed to stay overnight now and then, and her room upstairs

had a lovely, warm feather tick on the bed. Her grandmother always baked sugar cookies for her grandchildren, and her grandfather, who was fond of hunting, kept his hunting hounds in a small barn at the back of the property.

With Ileen's death in 1985 the property passed to the remaining members of the Rol Young family, and was sold to Clifford and Helen Lance. They had bought it as an investment, and renovated the inside completely, making structural changes as required, painting the old red brick a mellow, sand colour, and removing the front verandah roof, prior to marketing it. It was then sold to George and Jean Gusterson, an English couple who had run a successful fish and chip restaurant on Highway 121. They had decided to sell and retire, but did not wish to leave the area, as their daughter resided in Fenelon Falls. The Gustersons added a large recreation room across the back of the house and landscaped the front lawn area. George became ill with cancer shortly after this, and on his death, Jean sold the home and moved to Fenelon Falls. The house was purchased in 1991 by Daniel Van Dyke as a retirement home, and, although a widower at that time, within a year he married, and he and his wife, Gladys, lived there until 1999, when, with his failing health, they decided to move farther south, to be near her family. During their occupation they had cream-coloured, aluminum siding put on the house, over the brick

At this time Derek and Janette Cook purchased the home. Derek is a grandson of Don Young, and a great grandson of Rol and Minnie, and it seems fitting that the home has once again come into the Young family. They are a young couple, and this is their first home. They have recently had their first child, a little boy named Devan Roland, and are settling down quite happily in this fine, old house.

J.H.



Earl and Ileen Windover, 1981.
[Lorna Sheehey]



[Lorna Sheehey]

THE HUGHIE SHEEHEY HOUSE 170 Burnt River Road

59

For most of its lifetime this small one-story bungalow, with the sand-coloured insulbrick siding, was the home of the Hughie Sheehey family of Burnt River. It was a small log house originally owned by the Lively family, and in school records dating back to the early 1900's there is a reference to Lively children attending the Burnt River School, and on the maps they held property to the north of the village in what is now called the Pinery or Victoria Forest. Our first reference, however, is to the purchase of the property on Apr. 3, 1928 by John Howie and his wife, from the estate of Mary Lively, when they retired from farming in south-east Somerville (Concession 1). Upon Mrs. Howie's death, the home was taken over by their son, Frank, and his wife, Nellie, a sister to Ike Reeds. In 1938 they left Burnt River for Lindsay, where his wife died shortly after. For years Mr. Howie returned to attend the Anglican Church fowl supper on Thanksgiving Saturday. He would rent the Orange Hall for the evening, arranging for local, old-time music players, to make a get-together event for local people and those who moved away from Burnt River, to Lindsay and beyond, and called it "Nellie Howie Night".

After his marriage to Violet Nichols of Toronto in 1937, Hughie Sheehey lived for a time with his family on the George Sheehey farm. In September of 1939, however, he rented this small house from Mr. Howie, and four years later, in April of 1943, purchased it outright. He was 29 years of age when he married, and had steady work as a section hand with the local branch of the Canadian National Railways, with whom he worked until his retirement at age 60.

Hughie and Violet had three children, Gloria (1941), Gregory (1944) and Eric (1947), and Violet worked from time to time as Assistant Postmistress, helping her sister-in-law, Alma. Upon Alma's death in 1956, she assumed full-time duties as Postmistress for Burnt River, working out of Alma's new house, the same as Alma had done. In 1962, however, after a short illness, she died from cancer. Both she and Hughie were staunch members of the United Church in the village, and after the retirement of Annie Suddaby, after many years of service, Violet had assumed the duties of Sunday School Superintendent there, with the help of her young teenage daughter, Gloria, and her friend, Robin Rettie. She also served in the office of Secretary-Treasurer for the Burnt River Telephone Company for some years prior to her death.

In 1968, his first family having all left Burnt River to work in other places, Hughie married a local girl, Lorna Windover, and their two boys, Glen and Sam, were born in this little home. During his life-time Hughie had added a kitchen and woodshed on the back of the home, and a windowed, side porch, facing south. He and Lorna made additional improvements of a bathroom and running water for the kitchen, as well as replacing the old siding with new aluminum, prior to Hughie's death in July of 1990.

Hughie was born in October of 1908, was a strong supporter of the local Orange Lodge, and always marched with it on the 12th of July, in the parades. He was fond of old-time music and he and his family never missed a community dance at the hall. He was also an avid gardener, and loved especially to cultivate flowers, as well as vegetables.

The house has just recently been demolished (August 2000) to make way for a larger home to accommodate Lorna, Glen, and Sam's family. Sam married Jenny Blackmore, a local girl, and they have two children, Ashley and Scott.

J.H.



THE JOSEPH HANDLEY SR. HOME
174 Burnt River Road

60

Joseph Handley Sr. and his wife, Margaret (Shuttleworth) bought this lot from John Hodgson in 1903 and had a house built to accommodate their move to the village. This was very early for Joseph to retire, as he was only 54 years old, but by this time, with the help of an inheritance, he and his sons owned several ranches, and he bought and sold cattle, so he kept busy. His sons were established on properties of their own, also, with Thomas and his wife, Annie, taking over the home farm. A front parlour was built to the front of this village home, but it was seldom used. There was a large, all-purpose kitchen, with a bedroom off it to the north, and a pantry-washroom to the east side of it. Attached to the back of the house was a summer kitchen and woodshed.

Margaret died in 1931, and his daughter, Eleanor (Ellen), now married and living on a farm to the south of the village with her husband, Will Rettie, looked after him, walking to the village every day, up the railway track, which was the shortest route, and back. His youngest daughter, Anna, and her family, came to live with him in 1937, and remained until his death in 1938. The house was willed to Ellen at that time, and remained vacant for several years, until in 1941 her son, Owen, and his wife, Viola, and their children, Eleanor, June and Joe, moved up from where they had been living in the house at the old Burnt River quarry. A new baby girl, Robin, was born to Viola that fall, and for a time she was not well, so the older children went to live with their grandparents, Joe and Eleanor with Will and Ellen Rettie, and June with Elizabeth and John Wilson of Baddow. Owen was working away from home in Peterborough during the war years, and only returned to work with his father on the farm in 1947. At that time the family were reunited, and remained living in the village house for quite a number of years, until Will and Ellen decided to retire from the farm in 1958.

At this time the two families switched homes, with Will and Ellen coming to live in the village house, and Owen, Viola, Joe and Robin going to the farm. Eleanor and June had left home by then, Eleanor married to Morgan Switzer, and living in St. Catharines, and June working in Toronto. Will passed away in May of 1962, and Ellen in 1964. Again the home was vacant for a time, with only Eleanor and her husband, Morgan Switzer, using it for summer holidays. In the spring of 1981 Owen and Viola decided to retire from the farm. They had the downstairs of the home completely refurbished with the help of their son-in-law, Mervyn Hunter, and

they moved up to the village, leaving Joe on the farm. Owen became ill shortly after they celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary in 1982, and died in March of 1983. Viola remained at the village house for a number of years after that, celebrating her 80th birthday there. The front room of that house has a beautiful, clear view of what is going on, both up and down the main street, and she used to sit by the north window and watch the village go by. Due to ill health she removed to a nursing home in 1991, and she died in 1994. The home was sold to Susan and David Slabotsky at that time, who use it as a weekend retreat.

M.A. and J.H.



THE THOMAS HANDLEY SR. HOUSE
171 Burnt River Road

61

Thomas Handley built this handsome brick house in 1940, with the help of his sons, Bob, Max and Wrex, and a Mr. Dickson. The house has a living room, with a fireplace, a dining room, a kitchen, three bedrooms and two bathrooms. There is also a basement and front porch. A wood furnace and a cook stove heated the house, but in 1966 an oil furnace was installed. In the same year a two-car driving shed was built.

Tom and his wife, Annie, retired to the village at the time the house was built, leaving the home farm to the care of the boys, with Tom overseeing things. Wrex took over the home farm with his marriage to Ivy Graham of Irondale, and Tom died in 1949. Their youngest son, Bob, lived for several years with his mother in the village house, and on his marriage Annie continued to live alone there until 1979. She died in 1981, in her 100th year.

Their eldest son, Jim, and his wife Ada (Routley) inherited the house at this time, and Jim continued to farm just to the south of the village, until his death in 1988. Ada and their daughter, Sheran (Mrs. Gene Watson) now own the house, and Ada still lives there. She is very active in the village Seniors organization, as well as Community Care and the Women's Institute, and a staunch member of St. Luke's Anglican Church, where she taught Sunday School for years.

M.A.



Mrs. Annie Handley in the 1940's.
[Beulah Robson]



(1930's) [Beulah Robson]

THE HANTHORN-HANDLEY HOUSE

176 Burnt River Road

62

In 1893, Robert English sold this Burnt River village lot to William Adkins for \$30.00, and Mr. Adkins built a house on it. In 1926, William Adkins' widow, Mary Agnes, and their son, Frank, sold the home to Robert C. Hanthorn, a Canadian National Railroad Section Foreman.

Robert Hanthorn and his wife, Edna Blair, lived in this house for sixteen years, and raised five children here. Beulah, a nurse, married Monty (Mossum) Robson, of Fenelon Falls, Blair, a teacher and later a school principal, married Vivian Mintz of Lindsay, Lorna, Secretary-Treasurer at the Board of Water, Light & Power Commissioners of Fenelon Falls, married Albert Jackett, Closson (Connie), a minister, married Betty Smith and resides in Canton, Ohio, Gayle, worked for Bornac Printing, and married Cathy Smyth (deceased), Toronto. The Hanthorns moved to Fenelon Falls in 1942 with a work promotion for Bob Hanthorn, and rented the house to Mrs. Ella Lambert. She remained there for a time, and then it was sold in 1946 to Robert Handley and his wife, Eliza Ann, as they had decided to retire from their farm on Highway 121, just outside the village.

Robert Handley died in 1950, and Eliza in 1974, and their daughter, Ella, inherited the property. With Ella's move to a retirement home in Lindsay the house was sold in 1990 to Chris and Janice Szczepaniak, a young couple, with two children, Miranda and Stephen, who now live there.

M.A.





(1974)

THE SHUTTLEWORTH-CHALMERS HOUSE

175 Burnt River Road

63

This house on the main street of Burnt River, the home of Linda and Ralph McGann, was built in 1900, and was the location of the Burnt River Telephone Company's switchboard for about fifty years, until 1970, when the company was liquidated. The property was granted in 1856 to Abraham Farewell, a land speculator, who purchased a number of lots in the area. It was bought in 1900 by Thomas Tinney, who sold it in 1912 to William Shuttleworth. William and his wife, Annie Irene (Hilyer), had seven children, William (who died in 1916), Emily, Eli, Mary (who was married to Robert Groves, and died in the influenza epidemic in 1918), Carolyn (Carrie), Thomas, and Margaret.

When the manual switchboard of the Burnt River Telephone Company was moved to the house from Sam Suddaby's home, the three girls, Emily, Carrie and Margaret, operated it. After William Sr.'s death in 1925, Carrie continued to operate it until her marriage to Oscar Graham from Sturgeon Point. Margaret then became the main operator, until her marriage to Harold Townsend (a telephone lineman), at which point Emily, and her husband, Fred Johnson, moved in and became responsible for it. The Johnsons lived in the house until 1935.

The house was then purchased by Charles Chalmers, a son of Dave Chalmers Sr., the owner of the Burnt River General Store prior to the Wrights, and his wife, Verlie (nee Handley). Verlie, with the help of her three daughters, Freda, Shirley and Linda, continued with the switchboard. With Charles' early death, she became the soul support of her family. She was always there for the people of the village, and in 1970, when the system was sold to Bell Canada, the people gave her a resounding farewell party for a job well done. Verlie lived in her home until 1992, when she took a room in the new Victoria Manor in Lindsay.

With Linda's marriage to Ralph McGann from Galway in 1947, they made their home there with her mother, and raised a family of nine, Joe, David, Barry, Murray, Sheila, Charla, Kim, Kelly and Tony (enough for a baseball team!). In fact, they have always fielded a team for the local lob-ball tournament from amongst their many children and grandchildren, which is held in Burnt River every summer. With Ralph's death this past year (2001) Linda lives alone in the house now, but keeps busy with all her family.

R.E.H.



THE SARA REEDS HOUSE
183 Burnt River Road

64

Sara Victoria (Hodgson) Reeds was the daughter of Christopher Hodgson and Mary Yeats, born in 1855. When her parents, after trying to settle in Canada, left to go to the United States for a time, she went with them. There she met and married an American soldier, George Thorne. They settled for a short time there, but her husband died, and when her mother, Mary, decided to come back to Canada to be with the rest of the family, after Christopher's death in 1872, Sara came also, with her two young sons.

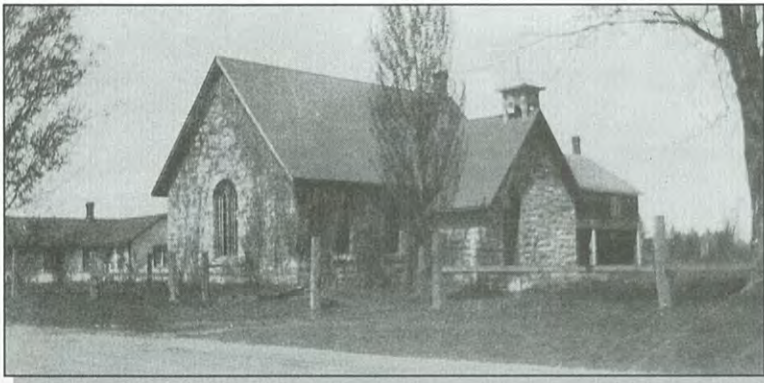
She met and married Ralph Reeds, and they homesteaded a 100-acre parcel of land at the very end of the present Burnt River Road, on the south-west corner, as you turn onto Pinery Road (Lot 13, Concession 9). There they raised their family, but the land was very poor, and it is believed that upon being widowed, she arranged to acquire the small parcel of land on the west side of the street, in Burnt River, between the General Store and the Chalmers house. The small home she built there is shown in the photo of the laying of the cornerstone for the Anglican Church in Burnt River in 1903. The land surrounding Sara's home was used as overnight pasture for her son, Ike's, milking herd, and the cows were driven up the road every evening, and collected in the morning.

In the early 1950's Ike Reeds decided to sever lots off this area of land. He took two house lots off between his mother's former home and the Chalmers house, using one for himself and his wife, Greata, and he sold the second lot to Ken Thurston, after he had built a single-story house on it.

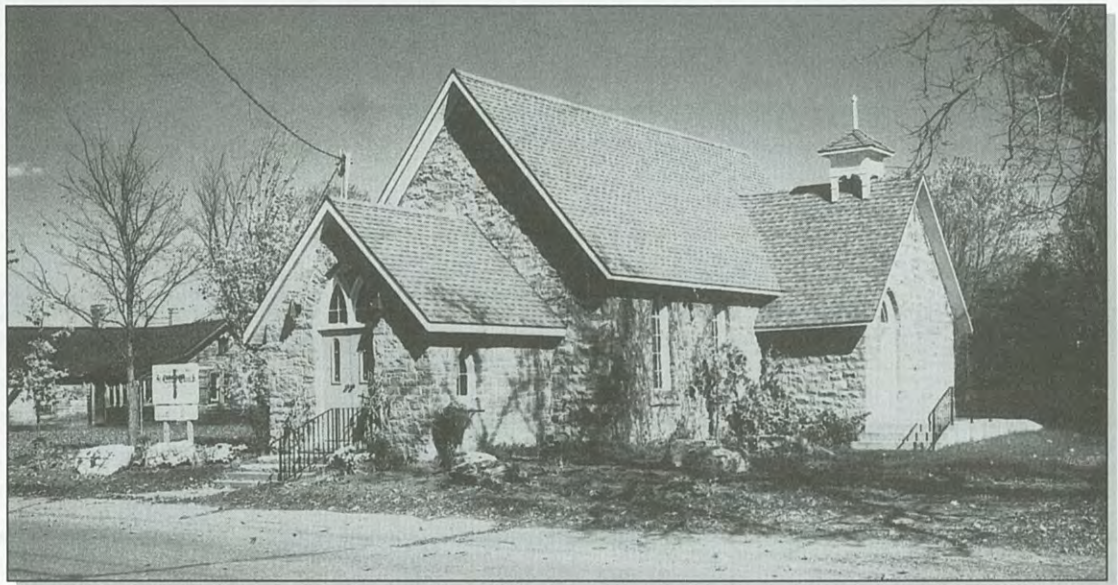
It is thought that prior to this he had severed the lot where his mother's house was located, from the major portion of the land. The house was rented out for a number of years, prior to it being bought by Mrs. Hoskins of north Verulam. This was during the late 1940's. Her son, Colin, came home for a time to stay with her, in the early 1950's, as she was not well, and upon her death, the house was sold to John Dudman, Allan's oldest son, and his wife, Shirley. They lived there for several years, and then moved back to Shirley's family farm, just outside Fenelon Falls. It was rented out from time to time after that.

In 1971 Robinette (Handley) Harding moved back to Burnt River, after her husband, Bill, died, and bought this small house. She refurbished it throughout the inside, and put new siding and windows on, making it into a comfortable home for herself, until her death in 1989. The house has passed to her family, and is used by her son, Bryan, and his family, as a weekend retreat at present, as he resides in the Oshawa area and his sister, Carol, lives in Montreal.

J.H.



(1940's)



(2000)

ST. LUKE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
178 Burnt River Road

65

The work of the Church of England (as it was then known) was begun in Burnt River in 1896 by Rowland Maconachie. He was a lay-reader for the Church of England who lived on Lot II, Concession 9, where the Forestry house was located. It was not productive land and eventually he left Burnt River. The Maconachie family had a Christmas tree and party yearly for all the families in the village. No child left without a gift, usually an orange. He held church services in the Orange Hall and organized Sunday School classes for the Anglican Church. Reverend Soward from Kinmount was the priest in charge.

The Anglican adherents soon decided they wanted a church in Burnt River. Previous to this they had been going to St. Peter's at Bury's Green in Verulam. A "bee" was organized and enough stone was soon cut and carried to the church site from the local Burnt River quarry. Richard Carr was the stonemason hired to build the church, but while his work was meticulous, it was taking too long and costing too much, so he was let go and William Shuttleworth completed it. (You can see where the rough stonemason took over part way up the walls.) The church was designed by Samuel Suddaby and it was rather unique. The door was on the side, near the front of the building, and parishioners walked in beside the altar and then turned down the aisle. This was changed in 1968 by adding a front entrance and narthex to the church. When the church was built a wood stove heated it, but now they use electric heat.

According to the Fenelon Falls Gazette, "The Anglican Church cornerstone on the southwest corner was laid in 1903 with a time capsule (a box) placed under it. The church is 37' x 25', with an entry hall 10' x 18', and will cost \$750.00. William Shuttleworth and his brother-in-law, Joseph Handley Sr, along with Rowland

Maconachie and Samuel Suddaby are responsible for the construction of this church.” The new Anglican church opened May 24, 1904, and the service was followed by a tea and entertainment for 25 cents, and later a dinner in the Orange Hall, also 25 cents. There have been two anniversary celebrations since then, one in 1953 (50 years), and another in 1978 (75 years), and there will soon be another in 2003 (100 years). In 1953 the Parish Priest was the Reverend Lloyd McFarlane, the Rector’s Warden was Ray Handley, the People’s Warden was Frank Wright, the organist was Mrs. (Jos.) Mattie Handley, and the Treasurer was Mrs. (John) June Handley. In 1978 the Parish Priest was the Reverend Reg Brooks, the Church Wardens were Ray Handley and Moss Handley, and the Treasurer was Mrs. (Isaiah) Greata Reeds.

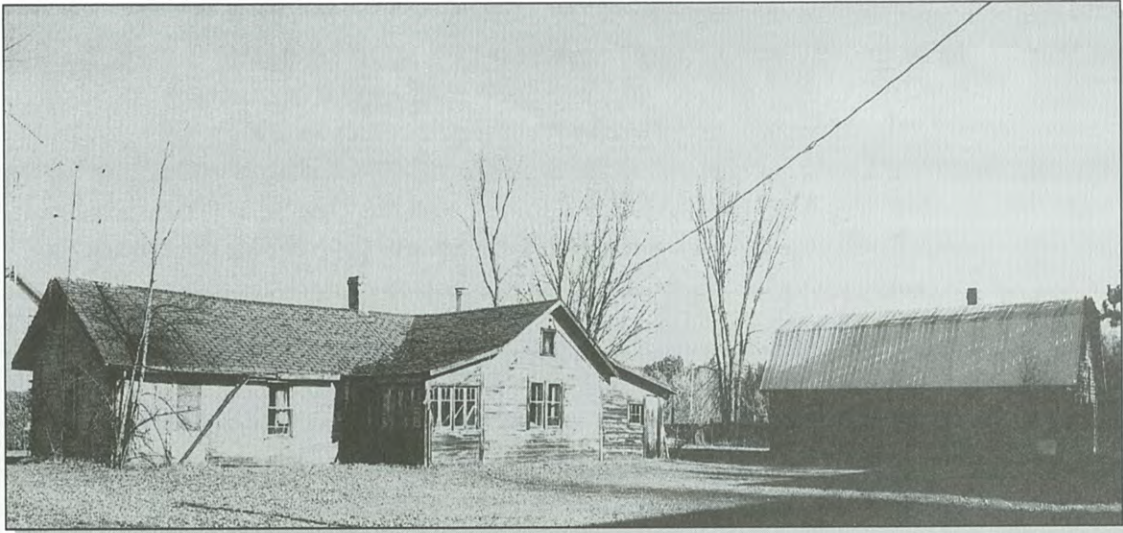
The driving shed behind the church, much-used in the horse and buggy era, was renovated into a parish hall. The fowl suppers on Thanksgiving Saturday, and the Anniversary dinners (May 24th) were held there until the Recreation Centre became available in 1983. As well as dinners, Sunday School, and Summer Vacation Bible School were held there. The hall has been demolished now, as it was considered too unstable, and thus uninsurable.

The women of the parish have been active, first as “The Willing Workers”, then in 1931 they were organized as the A.C.W.(Anglican Church Women). In 1948 a Guild was formed in addition to the A.C W., and over the years these women have largely financed the necessary repairs to the church and parish hall, as well as extra furnishings for each. Lately, due to attrition, the numbers have declined so much that regular meetings are no longer held.

Some of the organists have been Margaret Shuttleworth (Mrs. Harold Townsend), Mattie Handley (Mrs. Joseph Handley Jr.), and Greata Reeds (Mrs. Isaiah Reeds). At present, Norma Lawton and Hugh Armstrong share this responsibility. There have been many memorial objects donated by parishioners over the years, including a new communion table from Mrs. Joseph Handley Jr. (Mattie) for the anniversary in 1953. In 1978 the new hanging lamps were dedicated to the memory of Mabel Lamb, Eliza Ann Handley, Edward Cameron, Beatrice Cameron, Isaiah Reeds, Kelly McGann, Agnes Jane Cameron, Robert Cameron and Florence Brooks.

In the year 2000 the Rector’s Warden is Erin Handley, the People’s Warden is Darlene Sheehey, and the Treasurer is Audrey Thrasher. Ada Handley has been involved with young people’s activities in the church for over fifty years, both with the Sunday School in the past, and with the Summer Vacation School, which she runs for a week every summer. With his Lay Pastoral Assistant, Ronald King, the Reverend Donald J. Lawton is presently ministering in this parish.

M.A. .



THE WOOD-JAS. HANDLEY HOUSE
182 Burnt River Road

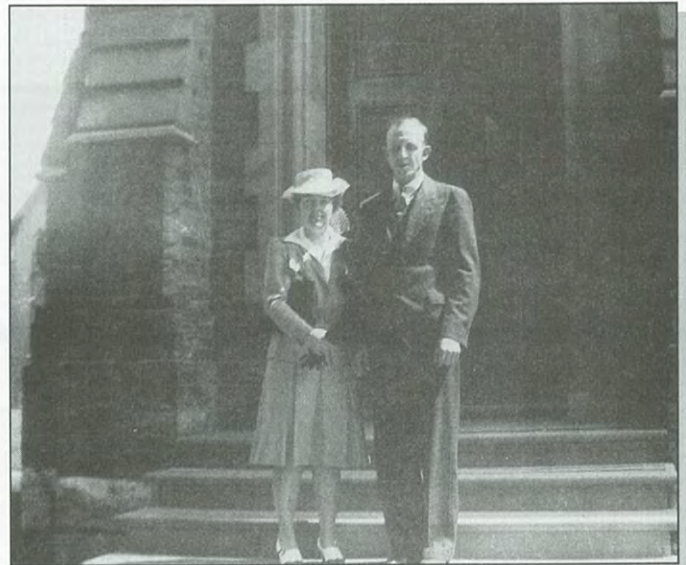
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A Mr. Martin built this one-storey, frame house in 1908. It had two bedrooms, a kitchen and a living room. There were also two outbuildings, a barn and a shed. In 1910 William Wood, Ada Handley's grandfather, who was a Section Foreman for the Canadian National Railways, bought it and lived there. In 1915 his son, Edwin Wood, acquired the property. He was also a Section Foreman for the Canadian National Railways. He had an addition put on the house in 1917, another bedroom, kitchen, pantry and a back kitchen. The carpenter was Ernie Hughes. Edwin Wood was transferred to Cameron in 1930, and rented the house, usually to Section men and their families. Earl Henderson, who was in a wheel chair, rented it for a time, and he had sections cut out of the doors and door frames so that he could go from room to room.

James Thomas (Jim) and Ada (Routley) Handley bought the house from her Uncle Edwin in 1942. Jim, who was a carpenter, immediately lined the inside walls with donnaconna and knotty pine. During the years they lived there, Jim improved the house and outbuildings. In 1944 he built a porch on the front, and in 1946 he added a woodshed and installed hydro. He built a workshop for himself in 1950, and generally improved the property by tearing down some of the older out-buildings.

In 1979 Jim and Ada moved to 171 Burnt River Road, the house previously occupied by Jim's parents, Tom and Annie Handley, and this house has been vacant from that time. Ada and her daughter, Sheran, still own the property.

M.A. .



Jim and Ada Handley on their
wedding day, 1942

June Hunter asked me to write on behalf of the cottagers about early days at Four Mile Lake. I assured her that, compared to others, I was a relative late-comer to this magic place, since my husband, Angus, and I bought our property on “the Arm”: in 1965. We bought our double lot from an elderly lady named Rebecca Graham, who at one point owned most of “the Arm: as far as I can gather, and was selling it off, piece by piece, but only to people who met with her approval. We were one of the lucky families that she liked, as was my friend, Sybil Rampen, who bought the point property from Mrs. Graham some years later.

The person who really knew about early days on Four Mile Lake was my old room mate from my days at the University of Toronto, Marion Fowler. Today Marion is a much-respected, Canadian author, but then she was an English student from Richmond Hill, named Marion Little, who talked a lot about the wonderful summers she has spent during her growing-up years at Four Mile Lake. Her maternal grandfather, Rowland Maconachie, was an Anglican lay minister, and his father sent money from England, at Mr. Maconachie’s request, to help build the little, stone Anglican church in Burnt River. It was Rowland who had one of the first cottages on the lake, the second one north from the public beach, now owned by the McTavish family. Apparently he arranged to have the building brought from his property on Concession 9, Somerville (where Cecil and Lynn Johnston now live) on sleigh skids, in winter, and established there. The Erp cottage was built in the area south of the public beach around 1916, and shortly after, the Robert English family sold their property in Burnt River, and bought two lake lots on which cottages were built, after their move to Lindsay. Members of the family still own these.

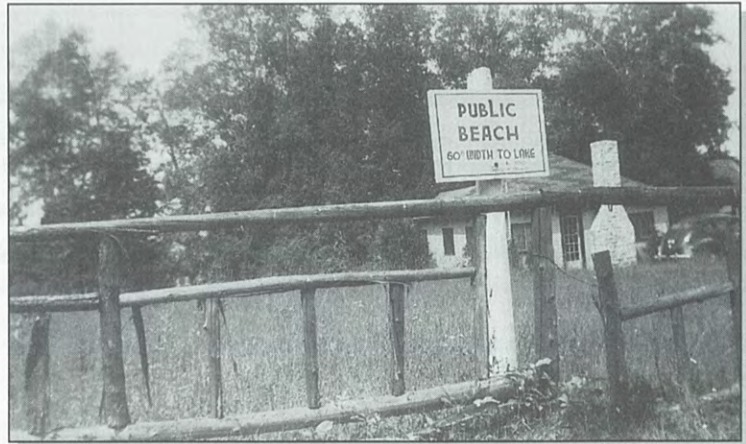
Grandfather Maconachie spoke of going out with the Indian natives to fish for large mouth bass. In those days, apparently every time you dropped your line in the water you caught a fish, and after half an hour you would have a sack full. The fishing was still wonderful in the early 1930’s. The best was supposed to be at the head of the lake, although “the Arm” was also very good, especially where the giant rocks came down to the water at that spot my family used to call “the enchanted place”. We would picnic there, and sometimes my children would tent. Now there is a large, permanent home built on that location.

Marion recalls that in the thirties “the Arm” was largely uninhabited, although there was an ice house on what is now our property. The men of the community would have a bee, and cut ice in blocks from the lake, storing it in sawdust in this building, for use in everyone’s ice boxes during the summer months. This was mostly arranged by the Wrights, who owned the general store in the village. They would deliver groceries and ice to the cottagers, upon request. When Chester and Marion Godwin established their small grocery store in the late 1940’s, they also provided this service.

Originally the road did not go directly west to the Public Beach area of the lake, but split at the crooked tree, and went south up over the hill to “the Arm:”, and north, across the field. All the lands along the lake in that area originally belonged to Thomas Hodgson Jr., and during his lifetime 50-foot lots were severed off the land directly along the lakeside. On his death each of his six daughters was willed a lot, with the administration of the remaining property to be done by the eldest, Rita Kastner. This opened up that part of the lakeside for development. One lot, however, was left open as a public beach. Eventually, the road was taken directly west from the crooked tree to this, and then split to go north and south along the backs of the lots. One of the first purchasers of two lots were the Douglas family of Lindsay, along the north branch of the road, and there was a small shack south of the Douglas property, which the local people used to change for swimming.



Alex and Sheila McLeod, their last summer at the Lake, 2000.



The Public Beach, 1940's.
[Alex McLeod]



Looking across "the Arm" at the Dixon family's "magic place". [Sybil Rampen]



Marion Little's father had a cottage built beside her grandfather's, directly adjacent to what is now the public beach, and it is owned today by her cousin, Peggy Brown. She can remember playing with Briar Douglas during the summer months, from the age of three. Also, the two Scott families, each brother married to a Hodgson sister, and Doug and Berta McLean, had built on their lots. Berta McLean was another Hodgson sister, and with Rita's death the administration of the properties there fell to her and her husband, Doug.

In 1932, the Shosenberg family came to live permanently on the lake on their property which was up over the hill to the south. Along this section of the lake, just before you came to "the Arm", the beach was easily accessible, and sandy. They built small cottages along the lake front there, and rented these out during the summer season. Their son, Bill, and their two granddaughters, June and Joan Baughman, who lived with them, used to ride ponies out to the Burnt River School, and this was quite a novelty at that time. They stabled them during school hours at Fred Palmer's farm, adjacent to the school. The Shosenbergs called their small rental business "Sharno Villa", and it was in operation until 1951, when they sold the property and moved to Fenelon Falls. Bill married one of the local girls, Doreen Handley, and they now reside in Fenelon Falls.

Alex McLeod's mother and father purchased the two lots directly adjacent to the public beach, on the south side, in the early 1940's. Gradually the lots along to the south and north from the public beach were all sold. The Grays, the Browns, the Ellises, the Weldons, the Caustons, the Campbells, the Golds, and our good friends, the Clarks, have been here many more years than us, as have a lot of other families in this area. We all have in common a great love of the lake

In one of our rambles around the lake my husband, Angus, and I met an elderly gentleman, Mr. Earl Hugill, and his wife, who owned a farm to the north which included many acres of land on the Coboconk side of the lake. Mr. Hugill had built cottages on that side, and had developed his wood-working skills to a great extent. He gave me a little bowl, and an egg cup that he had turned on his lathe, out of sumac wood. We bought an old ice box from him. Later, when he and his wife both died within a few weeks of each other, we went to the auction sale that was held at his farm house, which, to me, was very poignant. I still have a box of quilt pieces that Mrs. Hugill had cut out, some of which I have used to decorate cloth bags and cushions. I remember that Professor Ham was at that auction sale bidding on giant cross-cut saws. He was a local boy from the Coboconk area, and owned property on the other side of the lake. At one stage in his career he was President of the University of Toronto.

An old-timer, who was a popular handyman around the lake was an Irish bachelor name Clarence Cavanaugh. He built beautiful retaining walls and stone steps for many cottagers, and did general odd jobs for everyone. Clarence didn't drive, and walked everywhere. If he was coming to the village from his home on the back road to Kinmount, he would walk down the railway track, as it was shorter, spend an hour or so around the general store passing the time of day with anyone who would stop and talk, and then be on his way back home.

There is quite an older group of cottages at the south end of the lake as well, started initially when Alexander Rettie divided his land so that his daughters and sons could all have lake lots for their families. They then sold some of their land to their friends and, as it was easily accessible to the Coboconk Road, that entire end was soon developed. The Wilkinson family established a permanent home there on or about 1946, with their children, Nancy, Hugh and George, all teenagers at the time. They attended high school in Fenelon Falls, driving in, and providing a ride for some of the local children in the area. Mr. Wilkinson was retired, but made violins as a hobby. He died sometime in the 1960's, but Mrs. Wilkinson remained there until the late 1970's, when she sold her home to Russell and Carol Schierholtz.

The Andersons also have a cottage in this south area of the lake, with a splendid view of the whole lake looking north. Dr. Anderson started the sailing club in the 1970's and it continued for some years. We all took turns hosting end-of-summer get-togethers. Frank and Myra Dyon were very active in this as well, and they now live permanently on the lake.

I should mention also that Rick and Brian Causton started the Four Mile Lake Cottage Association in the 1970's, and Brian now lives permanently on the lake, enjoying the good life at Four Mile!

Jane Dixon
293 Birchglen Road
Four Mile Lake



Angus Dixon and his son, Michael, at the “crooked tree”, the summer of 1970. [Jane Dixon]



**DUDMAN CONSTRUCTION (1980) LTD.
and BURNT RIVER QUARRIES INC.**

68

In 1965 I purchased a TD-6 loader/dozer and a 1959 Ford dump truck to start M. M. Dudman Construction. I began working for cottagers on roads and septic systems, over time purchasing more heavy equipment, and working for developers constructing subdivision roads. Goldie kept the books for the company and did the parts pick up. We worked as far away as Rice Lake, Harcourt Park, Washburn Island and Brown Hill. The business continued to grow and we incorporated in 1980, taking our present name of Dudman Construction (1980) Limited. By this time, our son, Malcolm, his wife, Patti, our son, Ed, and son-in-law, Jim Goodhand, were all working with us, as well as several more employees from the immediate area.

In 1989 Burnt River Quarries Inc. began operation on Part of Lot 9, Concession 6 of Somerville Township, providing our own company, as well as the local townships and contractors, with limestone aggregate products. Our daughters, Penny and Brenda, came to work for the company at this point, to run the scale house. We purchased Part of Lot 8 and Lot 9, Concession 6, from John Sokol (formerly owned by Wallace Jones) and this property was approved for quarry expansion in 1994. The quarry has opened a new line of business to us in rock landscaping which is growing rapidly in popularity.

In 1992 we purchased a gravel pit on Part of Lot 11, Concession 7, from Morley Rettie (son of the late Lee Rettie). This pit is our source of sand and gravel for filter sand, winter sand, river rock, etc. Our company also saw another milestone when our grandson, Anthony Goodhand, started to work bringing a third generation into the company.

The need arose for more garage area to do repairs on our trucks and equipment, and in late 1999 we purchased a building on Part of Lot 1, Concession 11 (on County Road 121 just south of Kinmount), which we use as a repair center.

Dudman Construction (1980) Limited and Burnt River Quarries Inc. continue today as a family business, serving the local area.

Marshall Dudman, President

JOSEPH HANDLEY & SONS
Lumber and Millwork, Burnt River
“A STORY of SAWDUST”

69

All of us have our own key to the past....something that takes us instantly back.....when we and the world were different. I only have to smell the aroma of freshly sawn lumber and I am a child again.

Joseph Handley operated a shingle mill in the village of Burnt River, in Somerville Township in 1918. The cedar logs were brought to the mill by horse and sleigh. There they were cut into knot-free blocks, 16” long, then sawn into thin slabs. The slabs had to be trimmed of any bark, and the completed slab was a shingle or “shake”. The “snipes” were what the slivers of bark were called, that were taken from the edge of the shingles. Another by-product of this operation was excelsior, which resembled curly straw. This was used by companies to pack around fragile merchandise for shipping. These two by-products made ready kindling for wood stoves and furnaces. This proved to be a disaster to the owner of the shingle mill.

The Lindsay Daily Post report stated in its January 18th edition of 1924: “A bad fire broke out in Mr. Joe Handley’s residence Thursday, January 18th about 7:30 a.m. The house was a large, white brick, with a frame kitchen and wood shed attached. A spark from the furnace ignited the kindling nearby, which were the “snipes” from the shingle mill. The house was completely destroyed.” I, myself, was too young to realize the importance of this tragedy, but do remember being taken to my Grandmother and Grandfather Brisbin’s place, next door, with my sister, Doreen, by our older sister, Marion. This, in itself, was an adventure, because, as I recall, the snow was very deep and very white. We walked on the crust over the top of the fence. Once inside our grandparents’ home, we sat at the window and watched the fire destroy the building and its contents that we used to call home.

This tragedy happened in a leap year, and as “luck” would have it, a new baby sister was born the following February 29th, at the Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay, the only sibling in our family so “honoured”, as we referred to it. She was named Berta Ruth.

“Mr.Handley was away at the time of the fire., quoted the reporter of the Lindsay Post. Mr. Handley was indeed away, transporting the first machinery that was to be a sawmill in Burnt River. The machinery was coming from an abandoned mill on the 3rd Concession. When the team of horses with the sleigh load of machinery broke over the ledge hill, visible in the distance were clouds of smoke, billowing from the house fire. On that sleigh was the carriage track, trimmers, edger and cut-off saw. The boiler and steam engine used for the manufacture of shingles was still intact on the cement pad, and was used for the sawmill.

The construction of the new mill was a joint effort by many good men. New timbers were brought from John Austin’s mill in Kinmount. Angus Campbell was the able carpenter. Bill Rettie was the millrite, and Owen Rettie the engineer. With their expertise the sawmill was soon ready for the logs.

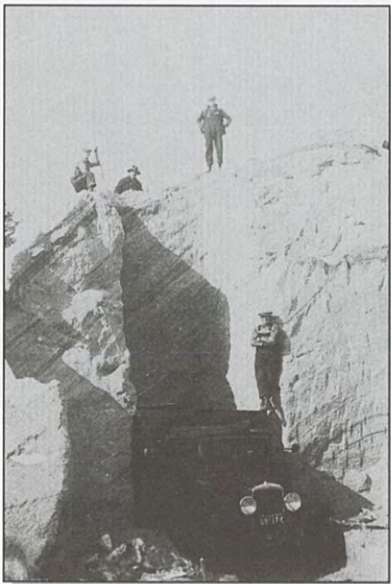
In the beginning the logs wre brought in by horse and sleigh, all winter long, until the yard was filled. Then, they were piled in the ditch from the corner of the main street to the beaver meadow.



Joe Handley's Lumber Camp, in the late 1920's, Joseph Handley Sr., standing at front of group.



A load of logs for the Burnt River Mill, 1948



The sawdust pile at at Burnt River Mill, late 1930's



Looking over the roof of the sawmill at Burnt River, to the south.





Staff of the Handley Planing Mill at Fenelon Falls, on or about early 1940's:
Back Row: Ambrose Ferren, Morgan Switzer, Chester Godwin, Earl Godwin, Bill Shosenberg
Front Row: Earl Windover, Ray Handley, Clyde Robinson, Carl Akister



After Christmas the logs that were in the yard were cut first, so there was room for the lumber to be piled. Slabs were piled in rows, and edgings were tied in bundles and piled as well. The sawdust was removed and piled in another area. This whole operation made work for many men around Burnt River. When we went skiing to the ledge hill, we always stopped by the row of edgings and picked out our "ski poles".

While the farmers were cutting logs, they also cut cedar posts and pulp wood. The posts were piled in Charlie Hodgson's field, behind where the station was. On the other side of the tracks pulp wood was piled, thousands of cords of it. These were the days when a cord of wood was a pile eight feet long, four feet wide, and four feet high, a "real cord". There was a siding at the station, and the pulp wood was loaded into box cars and shipped out from there. Two men from Newfoundland cut poplar logs, and when it came time to saw them, they were so full of frost they could not be rolled up the skids with canthooks, so had to be slid up by hand. Ray Handley and Chester Godwin were given this job by Ray's dad. The two lumberjacks were Ernie Anstey and his son, Clifford.

Joseph Handley's two sons, John and Ray, were a big part of the lumber operation. Lumbering became the life work of both sons, and the lumber company flourished. John worked diligently at the Burnt River sawmill. In 1934 the "Sash & Door Factory", as it was called in Fenelon Falls, owned by Fred Chambers, was purchased. It was renamed J. Handley & Sons and the new lettering for the front of the mill was cut by Bill Shosenberg, now a son-in-law, having married Doreen.

In 1936 a tractor-trailer was purchased, and the following year another truck was bought. This meant the lumber could be trucked to Toronto, or wherever it needed to go. John Handley drove the tractor-trailer, and Claude Hopkins and Chester Godwin worked on this part of the operation with him. They took loads of poplar lumber to the Wirebound Box Company at 1000 Gerrard Street in Toronto. A good quantity of pine lumber went to the Laidlaw Lumber Company. Ray Handley drove the other truck, and it made regular trips to the lime kiln in Coboconk with slabs, eight cords to the load. In the spring of 1937 Chester Godwin started driving for them, a new "Maple Leaf" Chev truck, and John went to Fenelon Falls to run the business there. Two new International trucks were bought, and Ray and Chester drove them until Chester was called up for the armed forces in 1943. There was a good business in cedar posts, but they all had to be peeled before being shipped. It was a back-breaking job at just one cent a post, but a lot of the teenage boys around earned their spending money after school and on Saturdays doing this.

A cook house was erected and a bunk house. When the whistle at the mill blew the cook knew the meal had to be on the table. The tradition of the monastic rule of silence meal time is obscured in the past, but not one word was said except perhaps, "pass the bread". The workers would eat big meals.....meat, potatoes and corn syrup...in fifteen minutes. Eat and get out was the rule. The pork came, not in the form of roasts and chops, which would have required refrigeration, but salted, cured bellies, packed in boxes. This fat pork was used to fuel the men, because strenuous exercise in cold weather causes the human constitution to crave fat. Some of the pork was also bought from the farmers in the district. Chester Godwin recalled being given the job of helping Ray to kill and butcher a large sow that had been purchased from Joe Handley's brother, Robert. It weighed well over 600 lbs, and the only way the boys could scald it to remove the bristles was to lay sacks over it, and then pour hot water over all. The diet of the lumberjack was soon to become less dependent on fat port, however. With refrigeration there was fresh meat, vegetables, and even apple and raisin pie. Warm raisin pie, with corn syrup, was a specialty. Mmmm, good!

An extensive lumber business was carried on in both Burnt River and Fenelon Falls. Following Joseph Handley's death in 1945, his two sons continued the business. John died of cancer in 1980. The sawmill had ceased operation some years prior to this because of the scarcity of timber in this area. The mill in Fenelon Falls continues, however, and has been renamed Handley Lumber Ltd.

Ray was president until his death in 1999. This operation is a thriving retail outlet, now carried on by his four sons. It has been a proud part of the community of Fenelon Falls for some 66 years now.

I cannot end this saga without some mention of the "competition". Bert Rettie bought a small sawmill in 1935. This mill was bought from Garfield Nichols, who lived north of the school, on the north road, and he relocated it off the Bobcaygeon road, just south of the corner of County Road 121 and County Road 49. Here custom and private sawing were done. The logs for the private sawing were from Galway Township. Five years later this mill was relocated to the village of Burnt River, where the Somerville Centre now stands. In 1945 some of the machinery was moved to a mill Bert started in Fenelon Falls, and the remainder was sold to the Bow Lake Lumber Company, owned by the station agent, Stan Dancey. Mr. Dancey and his son, Blake, operated the mill until the late 1960's at this location.

I am indebted to Chester Godwin, a long time, faithful employee of Handley Lumber, both before and after World War II, for many of the facts of this story. Chester's three brothers, Leonard, Doug and Earl, also worked for Handley Lumber until they enlisted in World War II, and all served their country with distinction.

Peggy (Mildred) Handley Rettie



**SOMERVILLE STATION 2 FIRE HALL
AT BURNT RIVER**

70

186 Burnt River Road

In 1971 Station 2 Fire Hall in Somerville was allocated quarters in the township work shed at Burnt River. There was very little extra space there to do training, as well as house trucks, and when training sessions were held, the trucks had to be parked outside. However, despite these drawbacks, fire prevention classes were put on for the public, and meetings were held for the volunteers on Monday nights, once a month. Other halls took turns practising with the Station 2 volunteers, as well. This location was used from 1972 until 1995.

In 1995 a federal government infrastructure grant was obtained by the Township of Somerville which enabled them to buy the former school, which had been vacated several years earlier in favour of a larger establishment at Coboconk. It was planned that space in the building, itself, would be rented to the County Library to house the Burnt River Branch, and to the Canada Post Corporation to house the local Burnt River Post Office, on the north end, and that the south end would be utilized for a training room, washrooms and radio room for Station 2 Fire Hall. A two-bay garage was planned to be built onto the south end of the building to house the fire trucks.

This all came to pass, and the new wing of the Fire Hall was officially opened in 1996. Meetings are held twice a month, on Mondays, for the volunteers, with rigorous training sessions being conducted, and new procedures studied. Mutual Aid meetings are held here once a year, which bring other Fire Departments to this hall, with new ideas for equipment and training. A hydraulic "jaws of life" has also been donated to Hall No. 2, after a harrowing accident on Highway No. 503, which resulted in one of the Toronto media being killed. Friends and family of this person funded this piece of equipment in order to aid at future such occurrences.

Sandra Blackmore
Volunteer Fireperson, Burnt River

BURNT RIVER PUBLIC LIBRARY
“The Years of the Library at Burnt River”

74

The years of the Library have passed like light years, all running into one giant spectrum, and the times that stand out most are the near disasters, of course, but through it all there has been a staunch core of loyal supporters, who believed that having a library in this small community was vital.

In 1972 I ran a small lending library in conjunction with the Post Office at Burnt River, and I remember the day when one of the older community members, a great reader, who regularly borrowed books from me, came and suggested that I offer the premises as a place for a community library. I didn't know at the time that the Victoria County Librarian, Jan Nowakowski, was looking for a location in Burnt River, and I thought it was the most wonderful idea. I would have access to all these extra books, and I had extra room to do this—in fact I had been looking for an idea to utilize my space more economically. People would drop in for their mail, and there would be the books, so available. I could surely talk them into reading them. And so it came to pass, and in February of 1973 we opened the Burnt River Library, after Mervyn Hunter, with his worker, Ron Newman, built shelves for us along the walls of the large room in which the Post Office was located. Our original Library Committee of Boris Roeske (chair), Mrs. Edith Hughes (secretary-treasurer), Pataricia Fell, Susan Douglas, June Handley, Wesley Jordan and Charles Luno, had received a small grant of funds from the Township of Somerville to pay for the materials for the shelving, and the time and labour costs were donated by Mervyn Hunter. We expanded over the years with more shelving in that room, built by John Blackmore, and we took over the back room, with Wes Jordan and Charles Luno building shelving along the wall there. All our children's books were moved into that section, as the Library expanded. It was all many times more wonderful than I had even contemplated!

I remember going into Lindsay for my first workshop in 1973, and we made puppet mice, then had a chance to look over all the large selection of new books that Jan Nowakowski was preparing to send out. Books are my thing, and to see such a great group of new ones from which I could pick and choose, was “seventh heaven”, so to speak. We all adjourned to Jan's home later to have supper and try out her new organ singing Christmas carols. I have used that mouse pattern to make puppets for the plays we do in the summer over and over, and each time I think of that workshop.

I remember staging “Cinderella” as a project for March break one year shortly after, and the kids interested worked that week making the scenery (in small scale) in the back room of the library. We set it out on the long table, and taped the story on a borrowed cassette player, so that we could move the puppets, etc., as it went along. Then we staged it on Saturday afternoon. Absolutely crazy, when I think of it now, but we didn't have any puppet stage then, so this was next best.

Shortly after that each library was supplied with a puppet stage, which we use regularly every summer, and we were also given a basic supply of 6 to 8 puppets. This has grown, as I have copied from the original design and adapted or redesigned as needed. We had a troupe of puppet players who came regularly every summer to put on the plays, and when this ceased we were given a folio of all their plays. We still perform our favourites.

The school when it was in Burnt River had a winter program whereby people in the community volunteered to work with the kids for four or five sessions teaching or showing them how to do different things. I, of course, volunteered to run a Library Club! I'm not quite sure why, but I ended up with a group of six older boys and one girl. It was strictly a volunteer thing, so perhaps they just liked the idea of getting off the school grounds

and coming across the road to the library. They were a good group, however. We did an info search like a treasure hunt the first session, then indexed books, then practised a puppet play and made the scenery for it, and finally staged it for the kindergarten. I ran these clubs for three or four years in conjunction with the school.

I have had discussion groups these past few years for the adults, and these have been very rewarding as an adult program. I admit there have been times when the discussion was louder than one might think was necessary, as opposing factions voiced their opinions, but they never got to physical blows. There have been two offshoots of this program that pleased me. Our local Millennium Committee began with a discussion forum on the subject in January of 1997, and in March of 1998 I had a program on Investment Clubs which resulted in one being formed locally.

Last summer I worked with the local Recreation Association's summer program, and the children visited the library to see what we had available. I had story hours for the smaller ones visiting, after the first info session, and for the older group we practised a play which we performed out of doors on their last day and everyone came. It was a nice way of involving the library in the program, and the children enjoyed it. I did too!

We've done many things over the past twenty-eight years, and I've had strong support from the entire community in all the projects, which has made it a pleasure to work here in the Burnt River Library. We moved to our present location on July 1, 1994, when the Somerville township provided space in their newly purchased public building (formerly the school).

Our present Library Advisory Committee is as follows:

Susan Douglas (chair)	Laurie Ruehl (secretary)	Bea Hodgson(treasurer)
Noni Campbell	Gary Morton	Bob Orr
Audrey Thrasher		

June Hunter
Branch Library Staff.



The directors and staff of the Burnt River Telephone Company, taken May 23, 1964.

Back Row: Hugh Sheehey, Maurice Watson, Tom Hodgson

Front Row: Charles O. Hodgson, Mrs Eva Mark (Kinmount Operator), Mrs. Verlie
Chalmers(Burnt River Operator), James S. Fell, John W. Wilson
(Mrs. Dorothy Hodgson, Sec-Treasurer, is absent from the photo.)



THE BURNT RIVER TELEPHONE COMPANY

75

In September of 1907 a group of gentlemen gathered together, and after a series of meetings, formed the Victoria Telephone Co. Ltd.(the name was later changed to the Burnt River Telephone Company). The first elected directors were J. H. Brandon. Sam Suddaby, Y. Smith, Wm. Fell, W. A. Bishop, A. B. Townsend and Jas. Akister. A charter was applied for and received on November 27, 1907, under the name of the Burnt River Telephone Company, and the original directors of this were Wm. Fell, John Hodgson, Alf Townsend, Roland Maconachie, Wm. Britnell, and Sir Sam Hughes. The share capital of the company was \$5000, divided into 500 share at \$10 each.

The head office of the new company was established at Burnt River, with Wm. Fell as President, and Sam Suddaby as Secretary-Treasurer. The first line was built to Fenelon Falls from Burnt River in 1908, through Verulam, followed by a line to Kinmount the same year. In 1911 a line was built to Baddow, and in 1914 a line to Coboconk. The first switchboard was installed at Burnt River Dec. 9, 1909, with Sam Suddaby the first operator, succeeded by Margaret Shuttleworth (the switchboard having been moved from Suddaby's Store to Wm. Shuttleworth Sr.'s home), Mrs. Fred Johnston, and Mrs. Verlie Chalmers. In 1920 a switchboard was installed at Kinmount with Ralph Byrne as operator, but after the fire at Kinmount in 1942 the service was discontinued. In 1946 the service at Kinmount was recommenced, and in 1956 a separate switchboard was reinstalled, in the home of Mr. J. Mark, with Mrs. Eva Mark as operator.

Throughout the 1920's, 30's and 40's the telephone company continued to thrive, with new directors coming on board. Mr. John Wilson of Baddow became very active as a Director in securing the supplies and materials to keep the lines functioning. The linemen working for the company over the years were as follows:

Thomas Suddaby 1907 to 1913, 1915 to 1921
John Wilson 1914
Harold Townsend 1921 to 1929
Owen Rettie 1930 to 1941
Maurice Watson 1942 to 1970

The Presidents elected over the years were as follows:

Wm. Fell 1907-1916, A. B. Townsend 1916-1922, E. R. Hopkins 1922-1923,
Josiah Flett 1923-1928, Thomas Suddaby 1928-1932, Jas. H. Fell 1932-1948,
C.O. Hodgson 1948-1967

However, new technology gradually being introduced to the communication business in the 1950's and '60's put the small telephone companies out of business, as it was too expensive for them to change over to the new systems. In March of 1967 the majority of the shareholders of the Burnt River Telephone Company voted to accept the offer of the Bell Telephone Company to buy out their shares, and in 1970 the company ceased to exist. At the time of closing there were 566 telephones in operation on their lines.

J.:H.

The Burnt River branch of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario was organized in January 1908. The executive members were Mrs. John Hodgson, Mrs. T. Perdue, Mrs. E. R. Hopkins, Mrs. D. Nichols, Mrs. C. Hodgson, and Miss Dodd (Mrs. F. Godwin). The first role call was "Some useful suggestions, or asking a question on any subject on which information was wanted". An integral part of Women's Institute meetings is the "paper". A topic is assigned to a member, the subject is researched, and the information imparted to the members. In this way, over the years, the members have kept informed on a variety of subjects. A sampling of these gives an insight into women's interests in the early years: Use for old newspapers, uses for wood alcohol, making butter for winter use, and how to spend a winter evening. More recently, members have presented papers on free trade, immigration, agriculture in the '90's, today's education system, and retirement planning. Over the years most meetings have been held in the homes of the members.

The Women's Institute motto is "For Home and Country". The ladies have always focused on the home, family life and the good of the community. Members are talented in the homemaking arts. Many quilts have been made and raffled, given as gifts, or kept on hand to be given to families who suffered the misfortune of a fire. Members contributed to the welfare of the community to the extent the treasury allowed. They have purchased milk for families with limited incomes, and newspapers for a disabled person unable to afford his own. Also purchased were wood, clothing, a wheel chair, blankets and sheets for a sick person. Over the years, the Institute ladies have taken on many projects of a like nature. Donations have been made to many, many good causes and many items needed in the community have been purchased and donated. 4-H Clubs have been supported. The cemetery and its care have always been dear to the hearts of this group. The W.I. organized its purchase and erected the lovely gateposts and gates. The interest in the cemetery continues as the members have donated shrubs to help beautify the area. During the war years local boys were given presents when leaving, boxes and cigarettes were sent, and welcome parties given upon return. For those who did not return, money was collected and a monument erected to their memory in the Burnt River Cemetery. In 1932 the Institute arranged for and paid an instructor to give singing lessons in the school. This continued until singing instruction became the responsibility of the school board

In order to accomplish all this funds had to be raised. Dinners, pie socials, concerts and oyster suppers were given. Euchre parties, bake sales, plays, bazaars and bingos were held. The ways of raising money were many and varied..

Their fellow members honoured four long-time members with Life Memberships, as follows:

Greata Reeds, Bertha Palmer, Dora Dudman and Verlie Chalmers

Alma Rettie was awarded a Certificate of Merit.

In recent years the fine tradition of the Women's Institute has continued. Quilts have been made and raffled, 4H Clubs and leaders have been supported, papers are still presented, and the interest in home and country remains. Today Women's Institute members make use of the internet, E-mail, the fax machine, and the computer to communicate with other members world wide, and to do research and keep informed. The local membership is much smaller, but the same caring and sharing attitude prevails.

Audrey Thrasher

COMMUNITY CARE SOMERVILLE

77

In 1988 the Burnt River United Church Women's group (UCW) was concerned about the lack of services for seniors in the village. The concern arose as one of their older members was in need of services. Meals on Wheels was especially needed. Community Care Victoria County was approached. The goal of Community Care is to enable seniors and special needs clients to remain as independent as possible through the delivery of home support service. Eleanor (Switzer) Carew, a member of the UCW, volunteered to do the leg work. Other groups in the village were approached to send representatives. Ada Handley represented the Anglican Church Women and Audrey Thrasher the Women's Institute.

At that time, the greatest need was for Meals on Wheels. A public meeting was held in the summer of 1989. Representatives attended from Community Care Victoria County and Community Care Fenelon Falls. Procedures and structure were explained. Burnt River Meals on Wheels was then formed. Eleanor, Ada and Audrey then became the co-ordinating committee. The groups represented by the co-ordinating committee each made a monetary contribution. Community Care Victoria County provided a grant of \$1,200 for start up costs. Meal trays and a used freezer were some initial purchases. In September 1989 the first meals were delivered. The meals were then, and are at present, cooked at the Burnt River-Somerville Centre. The following month the first monthly Diners' Dinner was held in the club room at the Centre.

Since 1989 services such as transportation, friendly visiting and reassurance calls were added. On December 7, 1994 Burnt River Meals on Wheels became officially Community Care Somerville, a non-staffed local of Community Care Victoria. The co-ordinating committee has remained, and is now called Community Care Somerville Advisory Council. The Advisory Council has been expanded and now has several more members who support Community Care's objectives.

Some original Meals-On-Wheels cooks and drivers remain: Darlene Smith-cook, and Reginald Hodgson, Bernice Hodgson and Frank Hickey-drivers. As services have expanded, so has the equipment. A new freezer was purchased and cupboards built to accommodate the ever-increasing need for storage. The most recent purchase is an enclosed, heated meal delivery system to keep the meals hot on longer routes. As the present direction of health care is to enable people to receive more care in their own homes, Community Care will no doubt continue to grow.

Audrey Thrasher

THE BURNT RIVER 2000 COMMITTEE

78

The Burnt River 2000 Committee began as a discussion topic at the Library's monthly group gathering in January, 1997. The subject was proposed by Bob Orr, a regular member of these get-togethers, which were organized by June Hunter of the Library staff. A lot of ideas and thoughts on how the millennium could be celebrated in a small place like Burnt River were "batted around" that night, and there was such enthusiasm that it seemed natural that a group should be formed, quite separate from the discussion regulars, that would address the subject.

Accordingly, a general letter was made up that could be sent out to all the active groups in the village, inviting them to send a representative to an open meeting on April 23, 1997, at the United Church hall next door. Those representatives that took an interest in our idea of a millennium committee that would address the task of holding events, or completing projects that would celebrate the year 2000, were encouraged to put forth their ideas. The following were mentioned:

- A mural to be painted on one of the walls of a prominent building in the village.
- The planting of daffodil bulbs, which multiply naturally, throughout the village.
- The beginning of a collection of old photographs of the families in the area, with proper storage facilities made to house them, at the Library.
- A direction post set somewhere on a corner in the village, giving distances to all the major rivers in the world.
- Some type of plaque or memorial to our pioneer ancestors.
- The placement of a time capsule.
- A celebration of some sort on July 1st.
- A history book on the Burnt River village and surrounding area.

A date was set for a second meeting to be held Jun. 26, 1997, and the following interested people came out:

Marg Allen	Herb Blackmore	Bob Orr
Ada Handley	Vic Wilks	June Hunter
Audrey Thrasher	Doris Wilks	Reg Holloway

At this meeting it was decided to have a logo contest, but that in the meantime we would inquire into the ordering of T-shirts, caps and sweats, as a possible fund raiser, and that we would ask the various groups in the village for a donation of \$25 each as seed money to commence operation.

The Executive for the committee was elected that night as follows:

President: Bob Orr	Corresponding Secretary: June Hunter
Treasurer: Vic Wilks	Telephone Committee: Ada Handley

The positions of Recording Secretary and Vice-President were not filled at the time, as no one volunteered, but it was hoped more of the groups would be sending representatives, and some one from amongst those would help out. We did secure a Recording Secretary at our next meeting, Darlene Smith, and Gary Morton and Brian Causton joined our group.



Burnt River
2000



The Burnt River 2000 Committee
Back Row: June Hunter, Herb Blackmore, Bob Orr (chair),
Gary Morton, Vic Wilks, Reg Holloway
Seated: Margaret Allen, Audrey Thrasher, Doris Wilks, Ada Handley
Absent: Darlene Smith, Brian Causton



As the year went on our plans began to take shape. We received \$200 in seed money from different groups, and we decided to go ahead with selling clothing with our new logo, in the colours of forest green, gold and white, as a fund raiser. Also, Audrey Thrasher proposed that we make a historical calendar and sell these to the community for the year 2000. June Hunter and Marg Allen volunteered to spearhead this effort, and we became very busy launching these fund-raising projects. All of the families in the community were asked to bring in old photos to the Library that might be used in such a calendar, and the response was overwhelming.

In February of 1998, we had a wine and cheese party on a Sunday afternoon at the Library to display our new logo on the clothing we were marketing, and award prizes to the logo contest winner, Donna Merriman, and runners up. At that time we made copies of all the old photos we had received for the calendar, with captions, and it made a very interesting afternoon looking at the goings on of yesteryear. It also proved to be very good advertising for our calendar, which was due to go on sale in July of that year.

Meanwhile, others in the group were working very hard at determining what we could realistically do as projects, and for what items we might be able to obtain millennium grants, or money from our Township Council. Early in 1999 a request was sent from our committee to the Somerville Township Council for assistance in funding the following projects, and, as well, a grant was requested from the federal government Millennium Bureau for assistance in producing a pictorial history of the Burnt River area, with added histories of buildings and homes 75 years or older. The Township of Somerville supported our programs for millennium celebrations with monetary assistance of \$6800 as follows:

Mounting of the old school bell, and painting of an historical mural on the outside wall of the Library building (\$1950)

Establishment of a cairn and plaque to honour our pioneer ancestors, with a time capsule in the base. (\$3000)

Establishment of a millennium memorial garden at the front of the Burnt River and District Recreation Centre (this is to be an ongoing project in future years, funded by memorial donations) (\$500)

The compiling and printing of a pictorial history of the village and surrounding area of the Burnt River valley (\$100 as a sponsor)

(A millennium grant of \$2,050 was requested of the federal government to help fund this project. The Burnt River Women's Institute also became a joint sponsor for the book with \$100 support.)

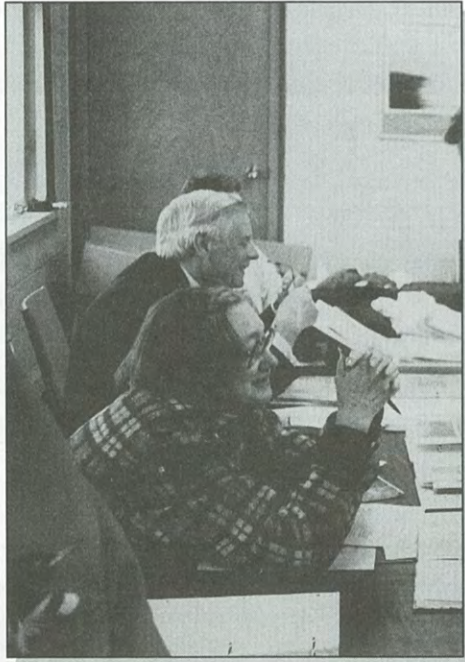
The establishment of a direction sign adjacent to the turn into the Library/Post Office building, on the main street, indicating distances from Burnt River to other significant waterways of the world. (\$750)

Celebration of the advent of the year 2000 and the new millennium with a winter picnic on the grounds of the Recreation Centre on the afternoon of January 1st, 2000 with a parade, winter games, skating, a bonfire and outdoor food (\$500)

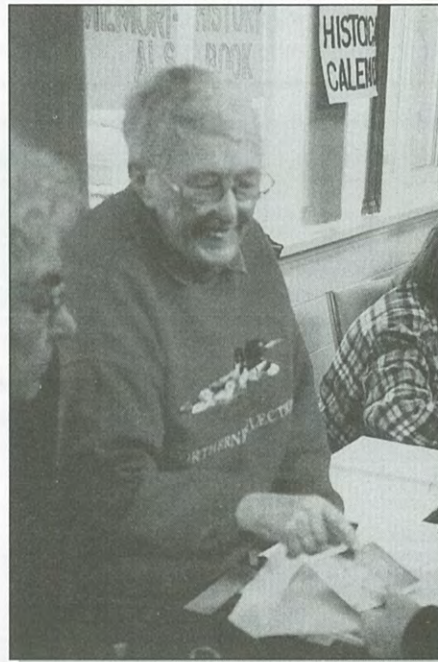
(The Burnt River United Church Women donated \$100 toward the funding of this event.)

To date our Burnt River 2000 Committee has accomplished its goals, raising over \$2500 by its own fund-raising efforts, also, to help in this. With the able assistance of all its members, and the strong support of the community at large, we have truly celebrated the incoming next one thousand years. We leave a long-standing record of those who have gone before, for the people yet to come.

J.H.



Marg Allen



Reg Holloway
June Hunter

NEWCOMERS TO OUR AREA

In the tradition of the early pioneers of 150 years ago, newcomers continue to arrive in Burnt River to explore the prospects of a new life. Although families descended from the pioneers remain a majority among the permanent residents of the village, the number of newcomers is increasing and they are playing a constructive part in the life of the community. Some have been attracted by the prospect of a self-sufficient life on farms originally cleared by the settlers, others are making their year-round homes in retirement on the pleasant banks of the river, or on Four Mile Lake. With the advent of the internet, some have transferred themselves and their businesses from the city to the clean air and attractive environment of the countryside, still others are joining a growing band of artists and craft-workers who are gathering in the area. We hope both newcomers and present residents will enjoy reading the stories of the first settlers, and the pictures of life the way it was.

Margaret Allen

Reg Holloway

June Hunter