

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Clarence Holinshead

BY PAULA BOON

Clarence Holinshead has a deep connection with his land.

"My great-grandfather settled it in 1867," he says of his family farm on the shore of Fairy Lake. "My grandchildren are the sixth generation to live here. There aren't many places around Huntsville that have been in the same family for 142 years."

Since it was first cleared, the land has been operated as a mixed farm, with livestock as well as hay and grain.

Until the 1930s, the family also ran a summer resort for tourists brought in by the steamships. "They grew all the produce and raised all the meat for the guests," Holinshead says, adding that the family also sold butter and beef to other area resorts.

The third of four children, Holinshead grew up in the very house where he now lives with his wife Pat. As soon as he was able, he joined his father in farm chores. "I drove the horses pulling the hay mower," he says. "We used to bring the hay in loose, which makes the best hay."

Holinshead's dad shared memories of looking across the bay toward town and seeing just four lights in the night. "Now we have to close the blinds or the lights across the lake are too bright," he says.

After graduating from Huntsville High School and spending two years apprenticing as an auto mechanic in London, Ontario, Holinshead completed his trade at West

End Motors, where he worked for 13 years.

He married Pat in 1970 and, just a stone's throw from his parents' home, they built a small house, where they raised their two children, Cyndi and Tom.

In 1981 Holinshead took a position as a lift mechanic in the maintenance shop at Kimberly-Clark, where he remained until he retired in 2008.

Holinshead attends Faith Baptist Church and was for years a supporter of minor hockey in Huntsville. He is a member of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and one of the directors of the Muskoka Soil and Crop Improvement Association.

Although he didn't completely take over the farming until 1992, Holinshead always helped out whenever he could. "All along the family's aim has been to keep the farm going," he says. "There's been times when it was hard."

For example, three years ago, Holinshead decided to sell off his cattle. "The price of beef just dropped too low," he says. "That was a sad day."

But Holinshead has a great love for working the land. "It's good medicine working at something you love to do," he says. "I plow and seed every year — earlier and later varieties. Family, friends and neighbours help to bring the hay in, and I sell it mostly to horse owners. We



take a lot of pride in our hay."

To this day, Holinshead uses his father's 1927 seed drill at planting time. "It's always kept out of the weather," he says, noting that the drill bears notes in his father's handwriting. "It says things like, '1942: Seeded six acres in such-and-such a field.'"

Holinshead's daughter and son have their own homes on the farm where they live with their families. "They want to preserve the place as much as I do," he says. "We are blessed with two wonderful children and their families."

Asked why his land is so important to him, Holinshead says, "Everybody's got a purpose, I guess. Why do people work at any job they love? Because they like it and it's in them."

While he understands that progress is necessary, Holinshead hates to see farms being lost. "It troubles me to see places around here that were good farms in their day and are ruined now — let go or bulldozed," he says.

For his part, he will keep the family farm going as long as he possibly can before turning over the reins. "I have no intention of ever leaving the farm," he says. "God blessed us with this land to care for and as long as He is willing, I will do just that. I love the smell of soil."

Thanks to Kelly Holinshead for suggesting that Clarence Holinshead be profiled.

LETTERS

Attack ads have opposite effect

Kudos to Stephen Harper and the Conservatives for their recent attack ads.

They have informed Canadians of the breadth of Michael Ignatieff's experience and success on the world stage, presenting a superior alternative to the present prime minister.

Regrettably, Stephen Harper's life experience has been largely acquired living behind his Alberta firewall until he was able to travel on the taxpayers' dollar.

Lenor Werry
Huntsville

Conservative ads not helpful

I am writing because of my disgust about the attack ads the Conservatives are running about Michael Ignatieff.

The ads are vicious, personal and not at all helpful in dealing with the many

serious issues the government should be concentrating on.

Leda Story
Bracebridge

Cyclist is thankful for good Samaritans after roadside fall

I just wanted to extend my deep appreciation to everyone who stopped to help me after a bike fall on Aspdin Road on holiday Monday. I was riding alone and the incident was witnessed by a nurse, who happened to be driving behind me.

As I lay on the side of the road thrown from my bike, everyone was wonderful in contacting the ambulance and my husband.

My apologies as I do not remember much of the incident or names, but I did receive

great care by everyone as well as the staff at Huntsville Hospital. Following this incident I'm grateful for my carbon helmet as my head and arm took the brunt of the fall. For anyone who will listen: you need to wear a proper fitting helmet because you just never know when something can happen.

Again, my sincere thanks to everyone who stopped. I am very thankful to live in a small town with very kind people.

Julie Cameron-Smales
Port Sydney

Reasons given for size of new ice pad 'completely ridiculous'

I am writing this letter about the new ice pad.

Why on earth are we building an Olympic-size pad? The reasons I have been told by council and residents alike are just completely ridiculous.

Firstly, to attract international hockey events.

Really? Ottawa just held the world junior championships, and guess what? Without an international ice pad in sight. And now to hear that because we'll have an Olympic pad, the aboriginal championships is interested in this facility? Once again, another lie. They've played on North American pads this year and all others. And finally, the silliest reason, is to hold short-track speed skating

competitions. Are they serious? Short track is held on standard ice surfaces.

I can't imagine the Otters or any other Junior A, B, or C teams playing on this pad. What a waste. We could have had a world-class standard size rink that all could enjoy. Now to use the pad we'll have to wait for all these international competitions. Nah, I'll be next door watching the Otters' game while we have 4,000 empty seats in anticipation of short-track speed skating.

Well done, council. Maybe the next administration will get us a real hockey arena, so we'll have three separate sizes. What a joke!

Cole Mik
Huntsville

High school staff members go above and beyond for Youth Eco Summit and Enviro Fair

I had the privilege of volunteering at Huntsville High School's first annual Youth Eco Summit and Enviro Fair last Thursday.

During the day, community partners involved in local green businesses and initiatives were invited to set up booths explaining who they are and what they are doing for the planet, and over 200 environmentally-concerned elementary students from Parry Sound and Muskoka came together to tour the exhibits, listen to a keynote speaker, participate in student-led workshops, and to view student-produced environmental films.

In the evening the community at large was invited to also tour the exhibits and to listen to another excellent environmental speaker.

From what I saw and experienced, the day was logistically flawless and extremely well

done. I felt very proud of the teachers who worked so hard in organizing this event, the high school students who helped make it run so smoothly, those who ran the workshops, and the administrative team who had the wisdom and trust necessary to support such a huge undertaking at the school.

As the parent of a Grade 9 student at the high school, I am certainly aware of areas in which the school could improve. However, I am also aware of many of the extraordinary teachers and administrators who go above and beyond the normal call of duty to provide our children with meaningful experiences which contribute to their development as well-rounded, socially-aware global citizens. The Youth Eco Summit and Enviro Fair is one excellent example.

Lela Shepley-Gamble
Huntsville

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

E-mail:

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When sending letters to the editor be sure to include your name, address and phone number. Unsigned letters cannot be used.

Town hall meeting on G8 plan to take place Friday evening



This Friday evening, the Summits Management Office will host a town hall meeting at the Algonquin Theatre to present the public with plans to date for the upcoming 2010 G8 Summit being held at Deerhurst Resort and answer questions from local residents.

Parry Sound-Muskoka MP Tony Clement will make introductory remarks, followed by a presentation from the management office and the Integrated Security Unit — a partnership between the Royal

Canadian Mounted Police, the Department of National Defense, the Ontario Provincial Police and the North Bay Police Service — which is responsible for security at the summit.

Representatives from the two organizing bodies will then be available for questions from the public.

The meeting will be held in the theatre starting at 7:30 and will run until 9:30 p.m. All area permanent and seasonal residents are welcome to attend.

 FRANK HILL'S PICK OF THE WEEK 2006 PONTIAC VIBE	 2.2 L, 4 cylinder engine, auto, 67,020 km. Stk # TP9043 \$11,995	 5.3 L, 8 cylinder engine, auto, 80,396 km. Stk # 8656-A \$12,995	 3.4 L, 6 cylinder engine, auto, 39,994 km. Stk # TP9074 WARRANTY \$15,995	 4.8 L, 8 cylinder engine, auto, 81,401 km. Stk # 7536-A \$14,995	 BRAY MOTORS PONTIAC BUICK GMC CHEVY TRUCKS  HWY 11, SUNDRIDGE (705) 384-5333/4 • 1-800-989-1113 braymotors.com
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