# The Massie Messie Messenger

**A Quarterly Newsletter** 

Issue N° 2 — Summer 2009

#### **Geranium Tea and Sale**

by Connie Miller



"We are going to paint Grey County with geraniums", declared a pastor at the Massie United Church many years ago. He or she (no one can seem to recall who uttered that now-famous phrase) was promoting the annual Geranium Tea and Sale.

The first Tea was held in 1986 as a fundraiser for the United Women's Group. The event was the brainchild of Sue Gilbert and her daughter, Carolyn Gilbert-Reid. Along with 12 dozen geranium plants, preserves and baked goods were offered for sale. As Massie tradition dictates, there was also a dessert table. The sale was an unqualified successful – all 144 geraniums were sold.

This year, the sale was held on May 9<sup>th</sup>. The weather threatened rain, and rain it did – 21 millimetres (almost an inch). Still, the rain and cool weather did nothing to dampen the spirits of the event organizers. When the geraniums arrived, they were unloaded from the truck and placed on the hay wagon as usual. But the inclement weather forced a move to the church. What a colourful display of white, pink, red, fuchsia, and salmon flowers graced the floor and any available surface in the church basement! Tea, coffee and, of course, dessert were available at the community hall.



This year, a whopping 2,307 geraniums were sold. Congratulations and thanks to the organizers and all volunteers whose efforts combined to make this event a success.

Photographs by Connie Miller

1

#### The Other Miller's House

by Pete Miller



The Massie millpond is surrounded by Millers. Rather fitting since the man-made pond once fed both a saw mill and grist mill to serve the area. Connie Miller, a welcome new neighbour, wrote about her "across-the-pond" house (which she shares with husband Doug Fryday and assorted animals) in an article in *The Massie Messenger*, volume one. The "Pete Millers" – Rachel, Ben, Mackenzie and I, have lived on the north side of the pond, in "the Rices' house", since 1987.

Construction of our home took place in the 1850's not long after Massie was surveyed and settlement begun. By 1862, the first blacksmith shop was established in the location of our house by Peter Arnott and Duncan Matheson. There were at least 13 blacksmiths who plied their trade at this location. We've found

relics such as old glass bottles, title deeds, square nails and a handmade metal table, all things left behind by Massie's pioneers. We've also carted away countless rusty car wheels, bed frames and garbage discarded over the last century. The "dump" back then was just a toss out the back door to the ground below.

William Rice took up the blacksmith trade here in 1906. By 1912 he had bought a small parcel of land on the north side of the millpond, and erected a new shop there. It was subsequently used by his son George who died in 1964. George was the last blacksmith in the village. His wife Jessie lived in our house until 1986. The site of George's shop is currently occupied by a holiday trailer. The contents of his shop are now displayed at the Grey Roots Museum near Rockford in the pioneer village.

The Bighead River is the focal point of Massie and the hamlet's residents are treated to their own unique perspective of this natural beauty. Our home is no exception. We love the view from our south deck, high above the Bighead.

We've undertaken many renovations over the past two decades. Recently a large picture window was installed in the living room, flooding the room with natural light. In winter, we look out onto skeletons of trees and a carpet of white on the pond; in summer, it's a blanket of green, a canopy of blue skies and puffy clouds. In the distance the Niagara Escarpment rises from north to south.

Flooring has been updated in our home with the use of modern composite products. In trying to maintain the original construction, we chose wide plank flooring in the dining room and a hardwood look in the living room. Our kitchen was treated to an overhaul as well, with maple cupboards, a gas cooker and island breakfast bar added. The original living room/parlour is our dining room and we've got an antique harvest table to seat eight. A breezeway was built under the porch to handle the congestion of coats, boots and hats and to offer protection from the west winds which prevail in the fall and seemingly endless winter!

The list of renovations includes lowering the basement floor and pouring new concrete, adding an outside basement entrance and stairway to accommodate our business there, tiling the office floor and building a workshop. Most of the windows have been replaced with



energy-efficient models, insulation was blown in the walls, and a steel roof was installed over the original shingles to handle the winter snow load, which can be in the tonnes.

Unfortunately these century homes didn't include much in the way of closet space – there are only two closets in our house. People's wardrobes were all hung on hooks on the back of bedroom doors. The three small bedrooms upstairs were added on to the original structure, and all eight members of the Rice clan slept there! It seems a bit of a tight squeeze for three of us now.

The house was built in three sections. The original single storey features exposed timber frame construction and stone rubble foundations, and houses our workshop downstairs, kitchen, dining room and bathroom on the main floor. The "addition", built around 1900 was a summer kitchen which currently serves as our living room. The main floor laundry and the upstairs bedrooms were added last. It's our good fortune to have many skilled neighbours who have helped with the renovation – pouring concrete, doing carpentry, installing windows and building doors. Of

course nothing is level or square and it takes a real tradesman to conquer these challenges. Old homes may not have all the space and modern conveniences of new buildings, but we're confident in the integrity of these old structures – they will long outlive us. Plus there's something to be said for living in the country in a house that oozes character from every crooked wall, doorframe and tiny closet space. We wouldn't have it any other way.

Our half-acre lot has been planted with a variety of trees to protect our lawns, which receive rainwater and snowmelt as their only sources of moisture. We've built three perennial gardens and hang baskets of flowers to add colour to our mostly green landscapes. Snowdrops, lilacs, daffodils, tulips and trilliums give way to tiger lilies and peonies as the weather warms.

Massie is a warm, friendly community with an abundance of activities offered year round and we're proud to call it home. We plan on spending the rest of our days enjoying this wonderful place.

Photographs by Pete Miller

#### ATHLETIC FIELD UPDATE

A special public meeting was held on May 29, 2009 at the Massie Community Centre to elect three trustees to manage the Massie Athletic Field. The three-acre Field was transferred to the Massie Community in 1912 by Thomas and Ethel Taylor under a deed of trust. Three trustees were appointed to manage the grounds; one of the three was replaced each successive year. This practice continued to the mid-1940's when - apparently - no new trustees were elected. The Field has been managed by the Directors of the Massie Community Centre Board, at least since the 1960's.

Recently, the Directors of the Board decided to regularize the situation. The Athletic Field was surveyed, along with the adjoining properties owned by the Massie United Church and Gilbert and Sharon VanEck. The survey addressed an error in the description of the Field. The Directors also called the public meeting to elect three new trustees for the Field. The trustees, who are also Directors of the Community Centre, are Glen Martin, Chairman, Marg Taylor, Secretary-Treasurer, and Marilyn Bergman. The Board hopes to sever and sell the north half of the Field for a residential lot and to use the proceeds of the sale to pay for much needed improvements to the Massie Community Centre. The Board is now taking steps to obtain the necessary approvals.

#### Live @ Massie Hall Coffeehouse

#### **Jacob Moon** Saturday July 4th, 8 pm Doors open at 7:30 \$15 (all ages) includes coffee/tea/goodies www.jacobmoon.com



#### **Lars Jensen** With Special Guest **Brian Moniz**

Saturday September 5<sup>th</sup>, 8 pm Doors open at 7:30

\$15 (all ages) includes coffee/tea/goodies www.myspace.com/larsjensen www.myspace.com/brianmonizmuzic



I've known Larry's music for as long as I've been around these parts, almost a quarter century. He sang at the very first Summerfolk Festival in Owen Sound over 30 years ago. He's written countless songs about local folks, poverty, homelessness, relationships, Owen Sound, the Oklahoma City bombing, 9/11.... He's recorded several albums, on vinyl, tape and CD. Played on countless others. He's played the blues, rock, folk, as a solo act, in groups, as a collaborator, even with a symphony orchestra. Larry's guitar playing is as good as it gets – with its bluesy bottom end – and his voice is still as whiskey smooth and soulful as it was two decades ago. I consider Larry to be the benchmark for others to measure up to. It's about time he got his name on a Massie Hall poster!

Brian Moniz grew up listening to Larry Jensen. The first time I heard Brian, he was playing a 12-string acoustic guitar upside down and backwards, to accommodate his lefthandedness. There were 11 strings on it. It didn't matter, the guitar held special meaning. He had learned to play it that way. His compositions and voice carried a maturity beyond his years. Brian recently recorded his original songs on CD, posting some on Neil Young's Living With War website to rave revues. His music can be characterized as '60s protest songs meet the new millennium.

Larry and Brian are two of the finest singer/songwriters in Grey County. Don't miss this special evening.

#### Pete Miller

Contact Peter Miller at <a href="mailto:petemkit@xplornet.com">petemkit@xplornet.com</a> or call 794-3652.



Photograph by Connie Miller



Photograph by Marg Taylor

### HEALTHY BEEF BONES ITALIENNE DOG TREATS

1 CUP WHOLE WHEAT FLOUR
1 TBSP OREGANO
1 TBSP BREWER'S YEAST
2 LARGE GARLIC CLOVES
1 LARGE EGG
2 TBSP FRESH PARSLEY
1/4 CUP ORGANIC BEEF BROTH
1/4 CUP FRESH TOMATO, MASHED
2 TBSP GRATED PARMESAN CHEESE

Separate egg white from yolk. Put egg white aside. In a bowl combine brewer's yeast and flour and set aside. In a blender combine yolk of egg, garlic, parsley, oregano, beef broth and tomato. When thoroughly blended, combine both liquid and dry ingredients in a bowl and start to form a ball. Knead several times until it becomes dough-like. Roll out dough to a thickness of about 1/4 inch and cut into desired shape. My dog Winchester likes his treats bone-shaped!

Bake in 350 F oven for about 1/2 hour. Remove treat from oven. Beat egg white, and brush on treats. Now sprinkle cheese on top over the egg white. Reduce oven to 200 F, and return treats to the oven for about one hour. Remove from oven and leave until they become bone hard.

NOTE: Brewer's yeast and garlic are not only favorite flavours for dogs, they also boost their immune system and help ward off those pesky fleas.

#### Dr. Connie Miller

#### **QUILT RAFFLE**

It was 30 years in the making - a beautiful quilt, started by Irene Tribble, a long-time member of the Massie Women's Institute. Life intervened and Irene put the quilt aside. Three years ago, she brought it out again. Perhaps it could serve a greater purpose, she thought. So Irene asked a Mennonite woman, Mary Stutzman, to finish it.

The quilt is now being raffled off by the Massie Women's Institute and the Retired Women Teachers of Ontario. Proceeds of the raffle will go to the Schoolhouse Project at the Grey Roots Museum. Tickets are \$2 each and may be purchased from Marg Taylor, Blanche Martin, Marilyn Bergman or any member of the Institute. The pattern used for the quilt is Rose of Sharon and it was appliquéd by hand in a blanket stitch. The draw will be held September 3, 2009

#### MASSIE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

The regular May meeting of the Massie Women's Institute was held on May 7th at the home of Marilyn and Ralph Bergman in suburban Massie. The theme was education. Ralph gave a talk on the use of new technology including cell phones, digital cameras and the internet. For the roll call, members described a new skill each would like to learn.

The regular June meeting was held on June 4th at the Downey cottage in Sauble Beach. The theme was current events and each member described a newsworthy event. The roll call was "show and tell". We all enjoyed a potluck lunch.

The next regular meeting will be held on July 2nd starting at noon at the farm of Mary and Bob McKessock, on the Massie Road, east of Massie. The theme is Domestic Science. For the roll call, members are asked to bring an apron and tell its story. Leone Diebel will host the August meeting where the theme will be Mental Health. For more information on the Institute, call or email Marilyn Bergman at 519-794-4109 or mariberg44@gmail.com.





Kim with her sprayer that holds 1,000 gallons of solution.

Mike and I are now residing in Mayfair, Saskatchewan. Talk about remote....our laneway is over two kilometres long...and we see moose and beaver every day that we drive out to our main farm, 600 or so acres. We don't spend a lot of time in our new house because work takes up so much of it.... we just finished seeding close to 40,000 acres. Yup, that's a lot of zeros. About a dozen people on the crew, and we work 18 hours a day or more during the busy times. Mike

is their maintenance man and he's loving it. However, that means that we don't get to see each other through the week as he is gone with the seeding crew, and I am one of two spray operators.

The seeding crew travel around each land area.....the 40,000 acres are scattered around the North Battleford region. So everyone lives in RV's through the week, including Mike. So far, I have been able to come home every night after spraying, and that is great as I can check the horses and have a hot shower.

The weather is unpredictable. One night in May it was +22 Celsuis and slightly breezy; by midnight it was snowing and -10. We can only spray when it is +10, so then I service the sprayers. The machines are huge John Deere 4830's.....they have 100' booms and look like prehistoric birds when the booms are out. We spray mostly Roundup.....sorry to the organic folks back home, but that is the way it is out here. I am enjoying the sprayer as it is brand new, and has lots of gadgets. It's a GPS unit so you set the headings and let go of the steering wheel and it steers itself. Kinda cool and freaky all at once.

Our trip out here was full of misadventures... the horse trailer broke down in Winnipeg and the horses had to stay there 'til it was fixed (two weeks). But they've now settled in. We did go riding a couple of times before seeding started, and the scenery here is breathtaking. Don't think for a moment that Saskatchewan is flat, far from it. Some of these hills are more like small mountains. Every day we see more new land here, and we're constantly amazed at the topography. Lots of water everywhere and trees. Not hardwoods of course, but different varieties of poplar and evergreens.

We have magpies in our yard. They're colourful and loud and



Mike standing in front of the combines

certainly different from our birds at home. I have even heard the meadowlarks calling and they are lovely. Because of our numerous grain bins we have lots of deer in our yard; the dogs don't even notice them anymore.

The weather has finally started to come around. We got rain the past couple of weeks and some heat.

The people here are super friendly and welcoming, and that has helped immensely. However, we are a little homesick for all the familiar faces. We miss all the fun things we get to do at home in Massie. However, we love the big paycheques we get here.

We are so glad that *The Massie Messenger* is up and running, a true link to home and friends.

Hugs to all. Feel free to drop us a line anytime. Our new address is Box 10, Mayfair, Saskatchewan S0M 1S0 or email us at

kimleverdeneau@gmail.com

Photographs by Kim Lever-Deneau

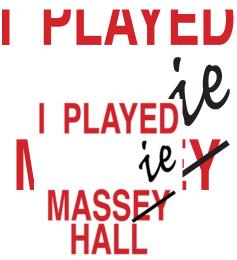
#### **Newfie Dinner**

Many thanks to Peter and Lois Turk.... and their relatives from Newfoundland who delivered the seal flippers straight to Massie! Peter did a wonderful powerpoint presentation about their travels in our easternmost province. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the evening a success, especially the cooks: Doug Fryday & Connie Miller, Laura & Glen Martin and Ralph & Marilyn Bergman for preparing the Jiggs Dinner, Lois Turk who whipped up the Figgy Duff and Pat & Peter Campbell, Connie Neelands and brother Ed for the Pea Soup. Carl Seeley spruced up the church and hall grounds, and Lisa Downey and Rick & Jane Ribbel did a great job of serving up the grub! A special thanks to all who had the courage to sample the seal flippers at this special event a fundraiser for Massie United Church.

#### **Massie T-shirts**

Soon-to-be collectors' items, Massie t-shirts created by Ralph Bergman, are now on sale. The Massie Coat of Arms is available in men's sizes S, M, L, XL and women's (a more flattering cut) S, M, L.





A limited number of "I played Massie Hall" t-shirts, as presented to Jory Nash, are also available.

Sale price is \$22 for all t-shirts. Proceeds go to Massie United Church, Massie Hall, and Outreach. Contact Ralph Bergman at (519) 794-4109 or by email at ralphbergman@gmail.com.



## Photograph by Connie Miller

#### Massie 2009 Events

July 26 - Music 3:00pm & Dinner, 5:00pm - 7:00pm Massie Hall Fish Fry featuring music at M.O.P.A.C., the Massie Outdoors Performing Arts Centre - Advance tickets only - Contact Jerry & Lisa at 370-2050

September 14 - 7:30pm Massie Hall Board Regular Meeting

September 27 -11:00am Massie United Church 114th Anniversary Service

#### **Walter's Falls Group of Artists**

11th Annual Celebration of Art and Creativity

August 22nd, 23rd and 24th, Friday 7pm-10pm, Saturday 10-5, Sunday 10-4, Walter's Falls Community Hall - featuring 18 local artists displaying works ranging from the practical to the whimsical to the sublime. Everything from kaleidoscopes, wild willow baskets, stained glass, jewellery, watercolours, chalk pastels, hand felting to photography, pottery, cabinetmaking, woodcuts... (www.ddontario.com/wfga).

#### **Discover the Escarpment Studio**

Spectacular Fall Vistas, Artwork, and Fine Crafts with over 20 artists in and around Bognor, Massie, the Queen's Valley and Walter Falls. Visit the artists in their studios, working in such media as Painting, Woodcarving, WoodTurning, Felt Sculptures, Watercolours, Pastels, Photography, Sculpture, and Prints. Thanksgiving Weekend October 10 & 11 from 10am to 5pm

#### **Editorial Board**

Irene Fedun — Editor Peter Turk —Website Advisor Ralph Bergman — Art Director Pete Miller — Concert Listings Editor We welcome articles, announcements, advertisements, photographs, illustrations, cartoons.... Anything about the hamlet of Massie, its residents and former residents. As the saying goes, this is your newsletter – help us make it a vibrant contribution to our community. E-mail editor@massiemessenger.ca

or call Renee at 519-794-0865.