The Massie Messie Messenger

A Biannual Newsletter Issue N° 24 Spring 2019

Jim and Lois Keeling



Lois Jean Long and James (J.H.)
Henry Keeling met in 1947 in Owen
Sound. His family lived next door to
her aunt and uncle's place. One day
when Lois was hanging out the laundry,
"This handsome fellow came trotting
across the field between the two houses
and introduced himself. He was carrying a basket of peaches!"

Lois was just 18 years old, but had

already lived an interesting life, moving with her family from Foleyet in northern Ontario to Newmarket and then Coniston (near Sudbury). Between schoolwork (at which she excelled – except math!), part-time jobs (including stints at Woolworth's and the Newmarket Hospital), and fun stuff like skating, baseball, hockey and dances, her days were full. Lois moved

to Owen Sound after high school in the hope of attending nursing school. To her sorrow, she was not accepted because she had polio (from the age of 2). But, being the plucky girl that she was, she moved into the YWCA anyway and got a job at the Singer Sewing Machine Co.

J.H., also 18 years of age, grew up on 16th Street East on a small cattle farm,



doing the usual farm chores, learning to repair machinery and helping his mother with her vegetable garden. His spare time was devoted to playing hockey and reading. He loved his bicycle which got him everywhere he needed to go until he bought his first truck.

Lois and Jim became engaged a few months after meeting, but their lives took a few unexpected turns. One of her sisters died suddenly of heart complications after an asthma attack, prompting Lois to return home. Later that year she answered a want ad for a teacher's aide and decided to attend North Bay Normal School. She loved her first teaching job in a small town near Windsor, where she enjoyed an active social life. The couple drifted apart. But that all changed when she received a letter written by Jim as he prepared for a tour of duty in the Korean War. He asked her to wait for him and, patiently, she did.

In September 1950, Lois began teaching at the air force school at Camp Borden and remained there until May. That spring she had trouble with her hip, due to the polio, and needed surgery. When Jim came home from Korea, she was in a plaster cast "from toe to breast", as she puts it, unable to move for three months. Jim visited her every weekend at the convalescent home in Willowdale. The cast finally

came off in August and they were married in Brampton in September 1952 – with Lois still on crutches!

Their first home was a two-room lean-to that had to be moved from Woodford to the three-acre lot on the east-side hill in Owen Sound. "I was awful thankful there was an indoor toilet," Lois laughs. They had no furniture so her mother and father gave them a chrome table and chairs, and they spent \$150 on a dresser and bed. Lois settled into the role of homemaker, giving birth to 4 kids over 5 years: Tim, Jane, Peggy and Judy.

Jim worked in trucking until the early 1960s when he borrowed \$500 from his uncle to buy his first backhoe – the start of his own business, J.H. Keeling Excavating. He dug a lot of foundations and did contract work for Bell Canada and the City of Owen Sound. "He worked so hard," says his wife, "so hard."



When Judy, the youngest, started kindergarten, Lois began supply teaching. "Once I got into class, all else faded."

The year 1969 was a major turning point for the family. Jim and Lois made the momentous decision to adopt a "little fellow" they had seen pictured in Today's Child, a weekly column in the Toronto Star that featured children looking for homes. Dan was a native Canadian from the Algonquin First Nation who'd had a very difficult start in

life. He'd been bounced around foster homes and it took some doing for JH and Lois to convince him that he was with them to stay.

That same year, after Jim's father died, they bought their farm on the Derry Line from his mother and built their house. They had beef cows, honeybees, ducks and chickens. Jim loved eggs and "could fry a mean egg," according to his wife.

Lois became involved with the local Women's Institute and United Church Women. She was a founding member of Tops (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) in Owen Sound. She studied sign language, reflexology and bookkeeping. She also volunteered at the hospital. "I'm an avid reader," she says, "and still love to tap my toes to music."

Jim continued to play hockey for many years in the Owen Sound house league with his team winning two championships. Eventually, he decided to give it up and focus his attention on his family. They enjoyed many memorable Sunday outings, the one free day that Jim had. He had a fascination with walnuts and planted trees on his property from black walnuts gathered from mature trees on 4th Avenue West. He would dry some of the walnuts in his basement and then sit there cracking and eating them. He also donated saplings to the Owen Sound Hospital to beautify their grounds. JH was a hard worker but he'd also take time to relax. After supper every day he'd go for a long walk.

Jim Keeling had a good life and a wonderful family: Lois who was the love of his life, five children, eight grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and a wide web of extended family and friends who mourn his passing.

Cornelius Vlielander 1942-2018



When Cornelius Vlielander (affectionately known as Corny) was five years old, his family boarded the Tabinta, the second vessel to leave the Netherlands after World War II, heading for Canada. Sponsored by a local farmer, they settled near Massie, committing one year of work to their host family, the Sutherlands. Their hard work paid off and they purchased their own farm just north of our hamlet in 1950.

Corny did not speak English yet, but he marched off to Grade 1 at Massie School with his first friend in Canada, Ronnie Rice, who spoke no Dutch! Corny found he had a passion and talent for baseball and enjoyed the Massie-Bognor rivalry. After graduation from OSCVI, his first job was at Dominion Motors in Owen Sound, which fed his love of the automobile. Later, employed as a union drywaller, he worked on residential, commercial and industrial projects across Ontario.

He married his true love Fay in 1963 and they purchased their first home in Bramalea where they began raising their family. Later they bought the 10th Line United Church near Walters Falls as their weekend retreat, but Corny dreamed of owning a farm on Grey Road 40 that overlooked Strathaven valley. This dream became a reality when he and Fay bought the 75-acre farm and named it Valley View Acres. Corny loved farm life. He restored the farmhouse (which had no electricity or running water) and raised beef cattle, chickens, goats, sheep and rabbits. A border collie named Cassie was one

of his constant companions. Fay and Corny raised four children on the farm: Lynn, Carolyn, Lisa and John.

The hard-working Corny established his own drywall business and a used car dealership. His first collector cars included a '66 Mustang, '56 T-Bird and a '56 glass-top Crown Victoria. He also became an avid collector of gas station memorabilia, '78 – '79 Ford pickups and John Deere tractors.

With their own motorhome, Corny and Fay crossed the country and even made it to Alaska. Corny served as a municipal councillor for over 20 years, first with the Village of Chatsworth and then the Township of Chatsworth.

Corny was outgoing and a keen storyteller who engaged strangers at coffee shops or park benches in conversation. In his youth, he entertained family and friends by walking on his hands – sometimes even up a staircase! He loved to play guitar and sing at impromptu jam sessions.

Proud to be Canadian and of Dutch heritage, Corny has no doubt passed on his values and enthusiasm for life to his beloved children and grandchildren. He is sorely missed.

Beau



Photograph by Shelby Hunter

We're very sad to report that this winter we lost Beau, the Black Lab speed bump of Massie. He was a loveable rascal who wasn't shy about helping out in the community, aerating and fertilizing neighbourhood gardens, checking out the vittles' at the annual fish fry, slowing down traffic and welcoming newcomers – human or animal – to our tiny hamlet. You could always count on him to drop everything and venture forth for a walk or a run (in his younger days). We miss you, old buddy!



Photograph by Lisa Downey

Live at Massie Hall 2019

The Great Canadian Swampstompers Saturday May 11, 8 pm

The folk-blues of the Great Canadian Swampstompers - Cody Zevenbergen, Steve Danard, Dylan McMullin and Lauren Jewell - will get your feet pumpin'. "Songs about lovers, loners, loafers, truckers and trackers, farmers and fraudmen, police and thieves, workin' hard and hardly workin', hound dogs, woodstoves and bad, bad women" will keep you mighty entertained.



Morgan X Barrie with special quest Tyler Beckett Saturday May 25, 8 pm

An emerging talent from the shores of Georgian Bay, singersongwriter Morgan Barrie's music reflects his love of the natural world and the human experience. He's influenced by folk, rock, blues, grunge and punk master musicians. Morgan's own music weaves "warm guitar riffs" with "thoughtful lyrics". Fiddler extraordinaire Tyler Beckett will join Morgan for this special concert.



Jenie Thai Saturday June 8, 8 pm

With infectious energy, Jenie Thai sings and plays barrelhouse piano "steeped in the blues." Described as gritty, composed and sweet, Jenie writes "tough and tender ballads direct from her heart to yours." Among her many accolades and successes, she was accepted into Paul McCartney's music school in Liverpool!



Live at Massie Hall 2019

My Sweet Patootie Saturday June 22, 8 pm

The fun-loving trio of sassy Sandra Swannell (vocals and swing fiddle), singer-guitarist Terry Young and junkyard percussionist and singer Paul Clifford return to Massie Hall - yippee! "Shades of vintage swing, country blues, folk and ragtime collide in an uplifting and humorous show performed with tight vocal harmonies and instrumental virtuosity."



JAZZ at Massie Hall Saturday July 13, 8 pm

A musical dream team: Paul Danard on bass, Cody Zevenbergen on guitar, Steve Wood on drums and Charlie Bell on sax. Whether you are a jazz aficionado or a music lover of any stripe, we're sure you'll love this swinging quartet!



Trevor MacKenzie Band Sunday July 28, 2:30 pm

According to esteemed folk singer-songwriter James Keelaghan, "Trevor MacKenzie is quite possibly one of the hottest electric guitar players on the planet. He's not shy about observing and then destroying musical boundaries..." Trevor and his smokin' band will perform at Massie Hall's first outdoor afternoon concert! Join the fun!



Live at Massie Hall 2019

Drew McIvor Saturday September 14, 8 pm

Drew's concert last year was so popular, he's back for more with his trusty six-string. You're sure to enjoy this playful, chatty, charismatic crooner who performs with masterful simplicity.



The Trio Saturday October 5, 8 pm

Back by popular demand: the powerful vocals of Chris Scerri, the electrifying violin of Victoria Yeh and the masterful guitar and vocal stylings of Jon Zaslow. Together, these exceptional artists re-invent the songs of musicians that influenced generations, from the Beatles to Bruce Cockburn.



Deanne Hallman and Friends Saturday October 9, 8 pm

Like many natural-born singers, Deanne made her debut in church - in her case, at age 6, singing "Amazing Grace" solo, in Walters Falls. "Her debut album, Hello World, is reflective of her musical curiosities and has flavours of rock, orchestral, Africana and jazz."



Reserved tickets \$22. Visit massiehall.com for tickets or contact Ralph at 226-909-5667





Photograph by Peter Turk

Massie Spring and Summer 2019 Events

Thursday, April 25 Call of the Forest: The Forgotten Wisdom of Trees – this exquisite documentary will be shown at Massie United Church. 7:30 pm. By donation. Contact Renee 519-794-0865 for details or visit calloftheforest.ca. at

Saturday, April 27 Massie Community Cleanup. 9 am – 1 pm. Come one, come all with your garden tools, your mops and brooms and your enthusiasm! Lunch provided.

Saturday, May 11 Geranium Tea from 1 – 4 pm. Pick up your flowers and stop for tea and goodies. Order geraniums from Pat at 794-2397 or Marg at 794-2085.

1st Live at Massie Hall concert of the season: The Great Canadian Swampstompers, Saturday, May 11 8 pm. Tickets \$22. Call Ralph at 226-909-5667 to reserve your seat.

Sunday, May 12 Mother's Day and Baptism Sunday at Massie United Church. 11:15 am. Call Ed at 794-2503 if you wish baptism.

Friday, May 17 Shoreline Chorus concert at Massie United Church, 7:30 pm. Tickets at the door: \$15

Massie Hall Vintage Car Show. Exhibitors \$5, visitors free. Refreshments available. Sunday, July 7

Live at Massie Hall on the outdoor stage for the first but not last time: The Trevor Sunday, July 28 MacKenzie Band. 2:30 pm. Tickets \$22. Call Ralph at 226-909-5667.

Sunday, August 25 Massie Hall Annual Fish Fry with outdoor entertainment, 3 – 7 pm. Reservations required. Call Marilyn at 226-909-5667.

Saturday, Sept. 7 Magnificent Mums at Massie Hall sale, 11 am – 3pm. Order your mums from Marilyn at 226-909-5667.

FOR THE FULL COMPLEMENT OF LIVE AT MASSIE HALL CONCERTS SEE PAGES 4 – 6

The Massie Messenger is a community newsletter. Send us your stories, photographs or artwork that has anything to do with Massie! Email Renee at editor@massiemessenger.ca or call 519-794-0865.