

EDITOR'S NOTE

Gliding through winter's splendour

It seems rather ironic that my first introduction to a Parry Sound winter and meeting John Macfie coincided in the fall of November 1978. There I was, a city girl clad in flimsy high heel boots, a fashionable open-collar coat and no hat, out on one of my first Parry Sound reporting assignments photographing bloody deer carcasses hanging from trees in the bush at some hunt camp off the Bunny Trail, and trekking through deep snow with this amusing Macfie character from the Ministry of Natural Resources.

After that rude awakening to the realities of surviving Parry Sound winters, those flashy boots were history, and I'd concluded that folks up here must have the right attitude, along with a sense of humour, to not only endure Parry Sound winters but thoroughly enjoy them. I've since more than forgiven John for this good-humoured initiation to the north country – not that this is north by his standards – and he, of course, went on to become a North Star columnist, following his own journalistic bent. The rest of his story is featured in this issue of *Sideroads*.

Putting down roots in these snowy parts – and liking it – has a lot to do with cultivating winter interests. Cross-country skiing gets me through our winters. Nothing is better medicine for my seasonal doldrums than gliding around the Georgian Nordic Ski Club's Nine Mile Lake trails as bright sunshine streams onto new fallen snow. An annual highlight at the club happens around the third Sunday in January when the ladies take over the burrow and trails for Women on Skis. Details of the history of this popular event from those behind the scenes who have made it so successful, are featured in this issue.

For other hardcore outdoor enthusiasts, ice fishing, kite skiing, and venturing out on the snowmobile trails define winter pleasure. In this issue, Sarah Bissonette introduces us to some fellas who like to get out on the ice with some bait and an ice auger for a great day with friends – whether the fish are biting or not. Elsewhere in this issue, nature lovers can trek in the footprints of local photographer Ted Krug, as he captures glimpses of wildlife not often seen on our snowy winter landscapes.

For those of us who welcome the days of keeping the homefires burning and pursuing indoor interests, this issue features articles about local quilting opportunities, recipes from our Mennonite neighbours, ideas for planning spring landscaping projects, and featured in our atHOME section, tips for seasonal decorating.

A favourite indoor winter pastime for me is curling up with something good to read, like Andrew Hind's account of *Adam Brown's White Christmas Miracle at Red Rock*. Something about this icy tale makes me feel cozy and thankful to be inside. Our winter issue of *Sideroads* also takes readers back into our history with Steven Duff's article about the 100th anniversary of the Station Gallery train station on Avenue Road. Steven also escorts us behind the music scene in Parry Sound to introduce us to Ralph and Helen Elsaesser away from their instruments.

So, as this special issue arrives on your coffee table, join us in toasting the anniversary of the launch of *Sideroads* of the Parry Sound area one year ago. Relax and enjoy.

Charlene Peck
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LETTERS



TO THE EDITOR

Dear Charlene,

Recently, I was on a Probus bus tour which stayed overnight at the Comfort Inn before taking the boat cruise next morning. I picked up a copy of *Sideroads* for myself and also mailed a copy to cousins in Calgary. We are all very interested in genealogy and have done extensive research on the Taylor family. Four generations lived in Parry Sound. My father, Viv Taylor and his brother Hal were both killed in the Second World War. Of the seven siblings, one is still alive and living in Florida. Aunt Zoe (Taylor) Warren Micin had a cottage near Killbear for many years. Some of the family still have cottages on Huckleberry Island. My great grandfather built the first tannery in Parry Sound. My grandmother had something to do with starting the St. John's Ambulance in Parry Sound. but I was not able to find anything recorded, just family information.

When I was able to spend more time on genealogy, I spent a few days in Parry Sound in 2002 and stayed at the Armstrong home which is the Victorian Manor featured on page 28 of your fall edition. I got goose bumps when I arrived at the bed and breakfast, and realized it was only two doors from the Taylor family home on Rosetta. Unfortunately, it has not been kept up in the grand style of the Victorian Manor. I spent time at the museum, the library and the Anglican church which has a stained glass window dedicated to the family.

I thoroughly enjoyed your fall issue. How long has it been published? Have there been any previous articles that may be of interest to me about the Taylor family?

I have read and re-read the magazine from cover to cover.

Many thanks,
Wendy (Taylor) Parker



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