

Florence B. Adams, 90, has seen a lot of changes



Florence Adams has knit hundreds of these preemie sets for the Colchester Hospital. At 90 years of age she continues to knit these cuddly sets, as well as tiny finger puppets for children in hospital. (Harrington Photo)

By Linda Harrington

Florence Bird Adams was born on October 15th, 1920 on the family farm in Great Village. Her parents were Tom and Clarke Bird and she had 4 brothers and 6 sisters.

Florence married Albert Adams and they had 11 children, 7 boys and 4 girls. She also raised her four oldest grandchildren. At one time there were as many as six teenagers living in the household.

Florence spent her early childhood in Great Village before moving to East Village when she was in Grade 10. She lived there until she was married and then moved to Dartmouth while her husband was in the army, during WWII. They moved back to East Village in 1946, living there until 1954 when they moved to the house on

Station Road, where her youngest son currently resides.

Florence has 25 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great grandchildren.

The most obvious changes Florence says she has observed over the last 90 years are the advances in technology, especially computers. "Computers are everywhere now. We only just started having television when I was growing up. I used a treadle sewing machine and made all the kids clothes. We didn't even have a bathroom until 1960," she says. "I once played a game of solitaire on a computer but I wasn't interested in learning anything more."

Another big change she notes is the differences in family life. "When I was growing up you never heard of a

married woman working out of the household, unless as a teacher. They stayed home and looked after the children." Florence did not work until all her children were grown. In later years she would often pick strawberries and rake blueberries for some extra money. "I did well with the blueberries but not so well with the strawberries," she laughs. "I think I ate more than I put in the box." Florence's daughter Marie Peppard says her mother kept up berry picking until she was 75 years of age.

Florence says she was not very happy growing up so far back in the woods and having to walk 2 1/2 miles each way to school, "Because of the long walk we had to come home right after school. Father thought if we wanted an education we would have to walk to get it, and since mother wanted to make sure we received our education, we had to walk."

Marie says her mother made all their bread, put down preserves, knit all their socks and sewed all their clothes. "She made fantastic Halloween costumes and we always won first prize," says Marie. "And she would always make sure we had a birthday cake, too."

Florence thinks she first started writing poetry when her oldest son moved to British Columbia, "I wrote a poem to tell him how I felt and then I kept on writing poems for family over the years."

She has filled three books with her poetry, all written by hand. At one time she was in hospital in Halifax and her husband was very ill at home, she says she wrote many poems about her thoughts at that time. She is always expected to write a poem for the annual Bird family reunion and often writes poems for people instead of sending a birthday card. "I sometimes get requests from friends and family to write a special poem for someone," she says.

Florence B. Adams poetry has been gracing the pages of each edition of the Shoreline Journal since the beginning. "Ken Kennedy was at a function where one of my poems was read and he asked my sister for a copy of it," says Florence. "I have been sending them in each month ever since."

Ken Kennedy says

Florence's first poem was titled "Ode to East Village Schoolmates" (see attached poem) and it was published in the August, 1994 issue of the West Colchester Free Press (name was changed to the Shoreline Journal in August, 1997). Florence began contributing as a correspondent for Station Road Notes about the same time. "I remember she would call me to go over to her cozy little home and pick up her "scribbles" and invariably we would sit for a spell with a cup of tea," says Ken. "We had talked about putting all her poems in book form and sell the books for \$10 or so and I figured they would sell like hot-cakes. One of my greatest regrets is that the idea never came to pass. Someone still should do it. The technology is there now that wasn't there when my old MS-DOS with floppy disc and inkjet printer was the order of the day." Ken passes along best wishes to Florence, "May she ever write notes and poems 'till the day she dies - and no doubt the Great Publisher in The Sky will still have her writing for time immortal."

Marie says her mother wrote a hymn for Saint James United Church and Edna Peppard put it to music. It has been sung in Church for special occasions. She has even had one of her poems published in book, sponsored by a senior's literacy program, and she attended the book launch when it was held in Dartmouth.

In addition to writing, Florence keeps busy knitting preemie sets and tiny finger puppets for the Colchester Hospital. She estimates she has knit over 100 of the infant sets in the last few years.

She is a member of the Saint James United UCW and has belonged to the Rebecca Lodge both in Great Village and Londonderry and the local senior's group. She enjoys doing the crossword puzzle and cryptogram from the paper each day but wishes she could have a game of crib more often. "My one

complaint," she laughs, "There is no one to play cards with."

Florence is the oldest resident at McCaull Villa, where she has lived since 2002.

She also regrets her limited mobility sometimes prevents her from attending Church (because of the stairs) but she tries to attend whenever serv-

ices are held in the basement or at the Legion Hall.

Her secret to living to 90 years of age is taking one day at a time. "What I can't get done in one day will get done the next," she says.

Congratulations and Best Wishes to Florence on her 90th Birthday.

ODE TO EAST VILLAGE SCHOOL MATES

By Mrs. Florence (Albert) Adams (Aug.1994)

Let your memory travel back to years of long ago,
When you were a child at school and what you didn't know.
Think of all the homework done; the lessons learned each day;
The books we carried back and forth; the games we used to play.

The history we found so hard; the sums we had to add;
The essays and the spellings; the strap the teacher had.
The three blackboards upon the wall; the desks we had to share;
The two boys in the back seat, pulling the pretty girls hair.
Think back to your favourite teacher, of course we all had one,
We studied hard to please them; they made learning fun.
Don't forget the ugly black stove in the middle of the room,
And the closet in the corner that held the mops and brooms.

Oh yes, those outside privies! A friend to one and all;
Not too bad in the summer but drafty in the Fall.
Remember the concerts and picnics; all the jokes and fun;
Annie I Over the schoolhouse and Atag@ with us all on the run.
You'll find your former schoolmates scattered all over this land;
The things learned at East Village School may account for where they stand.

Some schoolmates have answered the final roll call; they are missed in the scheme of things;
But keep the memory of old schoolmates and the happiness it brings.

I've been trying to jog your memory for facts, you may recall -
Something from those old school days you can tell us all.
But if your memory draws a blank just tell us how you do!
Give us news of your present life;
HOW ARE THINGS WITH YOU?



Florence B. Adams poetry has been featured in the Shoreline Journal since 1994. Florence and her daughter Marie Peppard look over some of her poetry collection.

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