

2010 Wentworth Maple Pancake Supper



Members of fiddler Dave Bagnell's band, "The Cobequid Mountain Fiddlers" provided the entertainment at the 2010 Wentworth Maple Pancake Supper. (Bridgewater Photo).

By Hope Bridgewater

This time of year is an awakening and beautiful period in the world of nature abounding in the Wentworth Valley. Maple syrup/pancake suppers are historic, patriotic, even religious symbols of celebration while being very much a reality of the here and now. Historic and patriotic aspects of maple trees are that the red autumn leaf of the sugar maple tree forms a central focus of our Canadian national flag, a famous hockey team is called the Toronto Maple Leafs, and a famous Canadian song has the words, "The Maple Leaf our emblem dear, The Maple Leaf forever, ...Our watchword evermore shall be, The Maple Leaf forever." The religious and historic symbol of pancakes in springtime is linked to Shrove Thursday, the day before the beginning of Lent and the day before the beginning of fasting. Maple trees are both historic and patriotic because the tapping for their sap and sugar was known to the Mi'kmaq, the Algonquin's (who called the sap "sinzibuckwud" i.e., drawn from wood) and other eastern tribes. Then, early fur traders and settlers from Europe learned of this sap and sugar miracle, and from the 1600's to the late 1960's used the method of tapping trees with spouts and buckets and then boiling the sap down to sugar. In the 1970's a technological revolution occurred with the invention of tubing, vacuum pumps, pre-heaters, reverse osmosis filters and improved evaporator pans.

Canada produces 85% of the Earth's maple syrup as it is part of Eastern North America's maple belt forest of hardwood trees which produces the world's maple syrup. The provinces producing maple syrup are Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. Cumberland County produces 70% of the maple syrup in

Nova Scotia, and less than 10% of good maple trees are even tapped in Nova Scotia. The seasons lasts from four to six weeks (usually in March and April) with cool nights for best results about -4C or -5 C, and warmer days, + 4C or +5C. The sugary sap of the sugar maple tree may be tapped without

Recreation Centre for the maple/pancake supper, Ethel Gilroy is in charge of admission tickets, Jean Wood is selling tickets on a quilt made by the United Church Women for cancer research, Jan Smith and Gwen Little are selling home-made baked food and preserves to raise funds for the United Church Women and Jean Bentley is selling maple syrup products from "Bentley's Sugar." Jean tells me that the Bentley sugar woods have 35,000 tapped maple trees, have a modern system of producing maple syrup and it takes 40 litres of sap to make 1 litre of maple syrup.

The lines forming for the supper were long, and both Willett Stevenson and Charley Patriquin skillfully arranged seating at the tables according to the arrival times of people. Once seated for the supper, people ranging in all ages had a traditional meal of sausages, pancakes, maple syrup, beans, brown bread and a choice of cakes. A doctor (a surgeon) from Halifax came to the kitchen counter to say, "I give you all an A+ for

supper, Clare Patriquin organized members to phone call volunteers to bring items to the supper which included baking many cakes, brown bread and beans. Volunteers in the kitchen cooked sausages and pancakes just before and during the supper. Then, there was the "clean-up" and, fortunately for sterile conditions and speed, the Recreation Centre has spent funds to acquire a new commercial dishwasher.

Adding to the joyful atmosphere were the Cobequid Mountain Fiddlers, led by director Dave Bagnell, playing old-time music, Down-East style. Dave Bagnell's primary mission to keep the tradition of old-time music alive today across all generations and his band consists of ages from 97 years to 11 years. As a fiddler himself, Dave's band consists of Betty Curry (pianist), Curtis MacKinnon, Donald Millard, Wayne Elliott (bass guitar),

Lloyd Smith, Don Sexton, Janet Callaghan, Auska Boehm (all present), Nancy Jennings, Shealynn Callaghan, John Hanland, Breagh Quigley, Tom Hannifen, Emma Murray, Lloyd Tattie and Marilyn Tattie (not able to attend this time). Dave is a well-known composer and his composition "Sherry's Waltz", done for his daughter Sherry in 1962, was played by Don Messer on his TV show and was recorded by Messer on a 33 1/2 vinyl record.

Onslow Belmont Notes

By Debbie Weatherby

My husband and I are expecting a new grandbaby later on this year so when Cindy called me about a baby sale yesterday I jumped at the chance to go and am glad I did. Talk about awesome deals!! Apparently they hold this sale twice a year at the Bible Hill fire hall and everything is in really good shape and for very reasonable prices.

The next one will be in October which is after the birth of the grandbaby so will know the sex then and be able to buy different clothes. Took Tim and Ashley in for an ultrasound and was able to view the images and just fascinating. In one pic the eyes were looking at us and looked like something from outer space. Too funny, also saw the spine, ribs hands chin etc. Very exciting, the new Grandbaby weighs in at 1 lb 6 ozs for now. Amazing sight to see.

Belmont Baptist Church

services are held every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. with Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. Prayer meeting is held Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m.

Services are held at the Trinity United Church every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. There is also card playing of 45's every Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. with lunch and prizes provided. All are welcome to come for an enjoyable evening.

Condolences go out to Rick (Katherine) Johnson of Crowes Mills and the families on the loss of his sister Brenda Gail Semple on March 24, 2010; Kenneth (Sheryl) MacKenzie of Crowes Mills and the families on the loss of his father George Elbert MacKenzie; Elaine (Gerald) Stevens of Lower Onslow and the families on the loss her brother Raymond Howard Totten on March 19, 2010; Frank (Carolyn) McNeil of Crowes Mills and the families on the loss of his brother

Joseph "Joe" James McNeil on March 27, 2010; Russel Lynds of Belmont and the families on the loss of his wife Avis Elizabeth Lynds on April 12, 2010; Joan (Paul) Clough of Onslow and the families on the loss of her father Vernon Freerick Pulsifer on April 30, 2010; the families of Keith Allister Hamilton who passed away on May 16, 2010, he was a well respected man and Susan (George) King of Onslow and the families on the loss of her brother Lloyd Matthew Tothill.

Congratulations go out to Doug and Stella Anthony of Derek Drive on their 50th wedding anniversary on May 21, 2010.

I've been seeing lots of geese on my travels and even saw a coyote one day which kind of startled me as it was the first one I have seen that close. A few hawks and also those gorgeous eagles, 3 or 4 deer and then the usual squirrels and pheasants. Wow, talk about an awesome sight.

...producing Maple Syrup
...takes 40 litres
of sap
to make 1 litre!

harm to the tree as less than 1/10th of the tree's sap is taken. The sugar maple tree is by far the best type of maple tree to tap as it contains the most sugar content. The proper density of the final syrup should have 66% sugar, be measured by a hydrometer and have no preservatives or chemical agents.

I remember when growing up in Wentworth going over to the sugar woods owned by my Uncle George Tuttle and sitting on the bench in a shed without sides watching the sap boiling in the evaporator pan heated by a wood firebox underneath. Uncle George would throw some of the syrup on the snow, watch it harden and give it as maple toffee to the crowd gathered around. His method was tapping the trees with spouts, having buckets for the sap, gathering the saps in a large barrel and hauling the sap by horse or tractor to the sugar camp. Today, farmer and lumberman, Vernon Sprague of Wentworth, taps his 40 sugar maple trees in the old way, hauls it to his shed, and boils it into syrup for family use. His wife, Eleanor, says it is the very best maple syrup.

Entering the Wentworth

an excellent supper. This is a well-organized event as I recognize from having to be well organized in an operating room."

We were grateful for the doctor's complement because in addition to the volunteers previously mentioned, other volunteers were working in the kitchen, waiting on tables, clearing the tables for new diners, and serving at the cake table: Georgie Patriquin, Doug Curry, Bill Baker, Twila McMaster, Mary Anne Jay, Martha Wilson, Peggy Patriquin, Jeannette Murray, Thelma Redmond, Marie Duranceau, Councilor Kathy Redmond, Jans Henderson, Eleanor Sprague, Melanie Sprague, Aubrey Giffin, Joe Patriquin, Bob Smith, Jean Mooring, Pearl Crowley, Carol Messer, Bernie MacAloney, Carolyn MacAloney and Betty Curry (when not playing the piano.) I was in the line-up for the supper, but later I came in the kitchen to help with the "clean-up." Two teenagers from the Cobequid Education Centre, Travis Bentley and Megan Neil, had a class project on volunteering, did a great job in helping and they deserve a high mark from their teacher. Previous to the

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Margaret Currie checking Spring Snow Crab Apple



Chris Letcher prunes Dapple Willow

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