



The Knockout Beauties held a BBQ and Raffle at the Masstown Market on May 7th. Winner of the Mother's Day basket was Jennifer Layden. All funds raised will go towards the Relay For Life held in June. Left to right- Tina Gratto, Angela Wyllie, Heather Teule, Michele Reyno and Margaret Davis. Missing from photo was team member Linda Lane. (Harrington Photo)

GREAT VILLAGE FIRE BRIGADE Robert Layton – 65 Years Service



MLA Karen Casey presented Robert Layton with a Certificate of Appreciation for 65 Years of Service with the Great Village & District Fire Brigade and Recognition for the Longest Serving Fire Fighter in the Province.

By Linda Harrington

Great Village: Robert Layton has recently been recognized for 65 years of volunteer service with the Great Village and District Fire Brigade. It turns out he is also the longest serving volunteer firefighter in all of Nova Scotia.

Robert joined the Brigade as a teenager in 1945, at a time when he felt it was "just the right thing to do".

There have been lots of calls over the 65 years but the most memorable is the Christmas Eve fire in 1968, when the Great Village Fire Hall burnt to the ground. "We live just up the road from the hall and could see the flames leaping high when we came out the driveway," he says. "We lost all our equipment, along with the hall and had to start from scratch again.

Robert worked at LC Layton & Son's general store, directly across from the fire hall, from 1946 (the store was first started by his grandfather in 1870). He later bought the business, which was known as RF Layton's general store from 1959 until it closed in 1996. The close proximity to the hall meant Robert was often first at the hall and so he would usually drive one of the trucks. In the early years the Layton's own truck was actually used to transport gear to the fires.

Robert has served as Captain in 1966, Deputy Chief in 1972 and Chief in 1973-74. At the age of 81, he is still helping out where he can; now holding the position of Lieutenant of Fire Police. This position involves directing traffic, which can be a dangerous job especially at traffic accidents. "Some drivers just never slow down. I have seen firefighters have to jump out of the way of passing cars," he recalls.

Robert has been such a regular face around the hall; he says a few months ago members thought he must be away on vacation, as it was so rare to not see him around. Robert had an unfortunate fall in February and has been laid up with a broken ankle.

He is eager to get back into his routine with Great Village and District fire Brigade and has no plans of 'retiring'. "Why should I retire?" he asks. "I will only retire when I have to. The boys in the Brigade have been really good to me. They are a great bunch."

At the recent Annual Banquet Robert received a special trophy from the Great Village and District Fire Brigade and Fire Commission, along with awards from MLA Karen Casey and the Fire Marshall of Nova Scotia.

His volunteering extends further into the community where he helps with the Legion Pancake Supper, the Brigade Lobster Supper and Saint James United Church Pancake Supper. He also sings in the Church Choir.

"We have always felt it was an important thing to do, to help people in the community, even when we ran the store," says Robert about how both he and his wife Meredith look at their volunteer efforts. "You help your neighbor however you can."

Meredith Layton is one of the founding members of the Great Village and District Fire Brigade's Ladies Auxiliary. She has been a member for 43 years and says they originally started out knitting mittens for the firemen but after the hall burnt in 1968 they broadened their activities to include a great deal of fund raising.

Meredith has volunteered many hours with the Brigade Auxiliary, the Women's Institute, 4-H, Friends of Saint James United Church, the Great Village Historical Society and the Elizabeth Bishop Society of Nova Scotia. "When you live in a small community, you have your hand in a lot of things," she says with a smile. "We were both brought up that way, and feel you should help out."

Congratulations to Robert Layton on 65 Years of Service with Great Village and District Fire Brigade. Thank you to the Layton's for their continuing volunteer community support.

Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade News

By Clair Peers

Three Founding members of the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade were recently honored by The Governor General with the Fire Services EXEMPLARY SERVICE MEDAL in recognition of 50 years of loyal service to security in Canada.

Vaughan Dickey, Russell Jennings and Lee Higgins were all part of the beginnings of an organization that helped make the community a safer place to live for the last half decade.

This spring we have had cool, damp weather, keeping the fire risk low in the woods. The hazard of grass fires should be over now since it is now green. A reminder though, that, although the threat is minimal at this point, it only takes a few days of sunny weather to dry the forest and

Who Needs a Burn Permit?

bush again. So it is still important to be extra careful & vigilant. If you see a potential problem, don't hesitate to call 911 and report it. A few minutes can make a big difference.

If you feel the need to light a fire, think about the potential consequences and also how smoke will affect your neighbours.



Pictured above are Vaughan Dickey, Russell Jennings and Lee Higgins who were recently honoured by the Governor General with the Fire Services Exemplary Service Metal in recognition of 50 years of loyal service to security in Canada. The three were founding members of the Onslow-Belmont Fire Brigade 50 years ago. (Peers Photo)

In Colchester County burning permits are required after April 15. Residents may apply for a permit at the nearest Department of natural Resources office.

Who needs a permit?

This information is taken

from the DNR website: Anyone who wants to set a fire in or within 305 meters (1000 feet) of the woods in Nova Scotia during the fire season. Some municipalities may require an additional permit or may prohibit any burning.

Here is the web site with info <http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/paal/ndxdnr.asp>



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