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# SOUVENIR PROGRAMME



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# THE POTATO

For over four centuries potatoes have fed both the rich and the poor throughout the world. The potato industry in Canada dates back to 1623. Potatoes had many uses in the kitchens of the early settlers. They were used to make yeast for bread and were crushed, boiled and mixed with flour for economy. Starch for the family laundry was squeezed from the grated pulp.

Today potatoes are still one of our most economical and commonly used foods. They are readily available the year round in many types and forms. No other vegetable is served as often or combines as well with so many foods.

Fresh potatoes contribute much food value to our diet when eaten often and cooked properly. They are an excellent source of Vitamin C and food energy. One boiled or baked medium potato, without butter or gravy, supplies about 100 calories.

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Ottawa



# ALLISTON FESTIVAL

## THURSDAY

QUEEN CONTEST AND CROWNING OF POTATO KING — featuring "Spice of Life", Arena 8:00 p.m. \$2.00 per person - children 12 and under \$1.00 accompanied by an adult.

MERCHANT'S SIDEWALK SALE — 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

## FRIDAY

BED RACE — Victoria Street - 6:00 p.m. - starting from Centre Street to Mill Street.

GRAND PARADE — Victoria Street - 7:00 p.m. - Bands - Majorettes - Beauty Queen - Floats - Clowns - Farm Equipment - Prizes for best decorated bicycles and floats.

MERCHANT'S SIDEWALK SALE — 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

LIONS' FROLIC — Midway - Street Bingo - Dunking Tank (Celebrity Splash) Mill & Victoria Sts.

PARADE BAND — Victoria Street - 9:00 p.m.



LEGION MONTE CARLO — 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. Admission Free.

TEEN DANCE — Banting Memorial High School - "US" - 9 p.m. to midnight. \$2.00 per person.

DANCE Featuring "Spice of Life" — Arena 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. \$5.00 per person.

## SATURDAY

ST. JOHN'S COUPLES CLUB POTATO PANCAKE BREAKFAST — 7 a.m. to 12 noon - 3 buttered pancakes with syrup and beverage \$1.25 per person. Victoria St. at the lights.

MERCHANTS' SIDEWALK SALE — 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

BUS TOURS TO POTATO FARMS — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - leaving from the fire hall - tour takes in following points of interest: Brayford Sod Farm; Billy Wood Farm (was owned by T.P. Loblaw); Brian McCague's Dairy and Mink Farm; Homer McMann's Asparagus Farm; C.W. Leach Potato Farm; Kellogg-Salada Farm; Nicolston Dam; Dorsey Potato Farms; W.D. Potato Company; Ontario Potato Distributing Incorporated; Hostess Foods; R.K. Beattie Potato Farm & Salada Foods. \$1.00 per person - children 12 and under 50c.

FLEA MARKET — 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. - Pottery, Handcrafts, Macrame, Paintings, Jewellery and many more. Victoria St.

FOOD BOOTHS — St. Andrew's Church (French Fries); St. Paul's Church (Pie Booth); Knox Presbyterian Church (Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Pop); Boy Scouts (Hot Dogs & Pop); Girl Guides (Hot Dogs & Pop).

LIONS' FROLIC — Midway - Street Bingo - Photography Contest and Exhibition - Riverdale Park at the Lions Pavilion 12 noon to 6 p.m.

SOUVENIRS — T Shirts - Steins - Coffee Mugs - Ash Trays - Spoons - Hats - Buttons - Penants.

PEE-WEE BASEBALL TOURNAMENT — Riverdale Park - all day.

SKATE BOARD COMPETITIONS — Paris Street North & Victoria St. - free style and slalom.



# POTATO PROGRAM

ENTERTAINMENT — Victoria Street - 12 noon to 4 p.m. - Local Talent.

BEARD-GROWING CONTEST — Victoria Street - Judging & Shave-Off 2:30 p.m.

SENIOR CITIZENS GARDEN PARTY — Old timers are welcome to meet at the Open House of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Holland (31 Doner Street) 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Entertainment (705-435-4685).

ONTARIO SPORTS TRAVELCADE — Riverdale Park - 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

FIREMEN'S COMPETITIONS — Riverdale Park - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Events - Waterball, Bucket Race, Hose Lay, Dress & Race, Ladie Waterball (Sunday).

KIDS' GAMES — Riverdale Park - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

ANTIQUE FARM EQUIPMENT — Riverdale Park - All Day.

HORSE SHOW — Western & English Classes - All Day - Brayford Sod Farm. 50c per person - children 25c.

ROTARY BEEF BAR-B-Q — Kellogg-Salada Food Grounds - Menu: Generous portion of roast beef, home-grown baked potatoes, cole slaw, relishes, rolls, beverage, dessert - 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. \$3.50 per person - children 12 and under \$2.00.

KINSMEN GOOD TIMES DANCE — "Jack Tiernay & Sons" & "Saturday Night" - continuous music - Arena 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. - Buffet - \$12.00 per couple.

LEGION DANCE — "George Cowie Band" - Legion Hall - 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. - \$10.00 per couple - Buffet.

CONCERT — We proudly present MARG OSBURNE - truly one of Canada's best known and loved entertainers with "Hennessy" a group specially chosen by Marg for talent and versatility - Banting Memorial High School - 8:30 p.m. \$3.00 per person.

## SUNDAY

ADMISSION TO RIVERDALE PARK — \$1.00 per person - children 12 and under free.

GOSPEL SINGERS — Chrystalaires - 10 a.m. to 12 noon - Riverdale Park (Bring your lawn chair).

ANTIQUE ARMS COLLECTORS' SHOW — Legion Hall - 10:00 a.m. to 3 p.m.

TRACTOR & TRUCK PULL — Brayford Sod Farm - 12 noon - Tractor Classes: 2 wheel drive - 5,000; 7,000; 9,000; 12,000; 16,000; and Unlimited weight - 4 wheel drive - 25,000, 30,000 and Unlimited weight. \$2.50 per person - children 12 and under free.

PARACHUTE JUMPERS — Brayford Sod Farm - 2:30 p.m.

FIREMENS' COMPETITIONS — Finals - Riverdale Park.

ONTARIO SPORTS TRAVELCADE — Riverdale Park - noon to 6 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m.

MIDWAY - Dominion Street - 12 noon to 6 p.m.

FLEA MARKET — Riverdale Park - 12 noon to 6 p.m.

PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST & EXHIBITION — Riverdale Park at the Lions' Pavilion 12 noon to 6 p.m.

KIDS' GAMES — Riverdale Park - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

CELEBRITY POTATO PEELING CONTEST — Riverdale Park.

PUPPET SHOW — Riverdale Park - 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m.

SENIOR CITIZENS GARDEN PARTY — Old Timers are welcome to meet at the Open House of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Hollands (31 Doner St.) 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - Entertainment (Senior Citizens' Choir).

GOOD TIME COUNTRY MUSIC — featuring - Open Road - Kent County Pickers - Wolf at the Door - Riverdale Park - 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

SOUVENIR PROGRAMME DRAW (Trip to Barbados) — Riverdale Park - 5 p.m.

FOOD BOOTHS — Riverdale Park - Tractor Pull (Brayford Sod Farm).

BAND CONCERT — Riverdale Park - 7 p.m.

VISIT THE SOUTH SIMCOE PIONEER MUSEUM — Riverdale Park.

BAR-B-Que and Dance Tickets sold at ticket booth on Victoria Street.



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# Alliston's Early History

by E. Cumberland

The history of Alliston harks back to the birth of a boy named William Fletcher in Yorkshire, England, April 1st, 1791. He and his two brothers John and Dickson became dissatisfied with life in England and set out for Toronto. They arrived with the princely sum of six pennies between them. They worked for some time on farms in the Toronto Gore to earn money with which to buy property for themselves. Eventually in 1821 William was able to do this, taking up land at lot 15, concession 3, Tecumseth Township (about four miles east of Tottenham now). In 1828 William married Miss Margaret McGirr, who was born in Glougher, Ireland, April 3rd, 1796.

On this farm the Fletchers prospered and raised three fine boys. In the fall of 1847 Mr. Fletcher and his eldest son, John, set out in search of a mill site, but, after exploring the streams of Adjala, Mulmur, and Tossorontio, they found nothing to suit their requirements. Not discouraged they crossed over into Essa and on lot 1, concession 1, discovered the site upon which Alliston now stands. This proved very attractive because in addition to ideal water power the location was valuable for the quality of its timber and the richness of its soil. This river was later called the Boyne. Over a period of years the Fletchers purchased

ten or twelve hundred acres of land, part of which was in Tecumseth Township.

## *First Dwelling Erected*

Early in November of the same year he and his son erected a log shanty, the first building in Alliston. This pioneer structure was composed of logs in the round, with gable ends and round poles for rafters and was roofed with clapboards fastened with small wooden pegs. It was floored with rough lumber and the chinks in the walls were filled with split cedar and moss. This residence stood on the south bank of the river, facing north at about 78 Victoria Street, West, where Nino's Restaurant is now located.

## *Saw Mill Built*

The first industry was a saw mill erected on the north bank of the river just east of the present footbridge. The nearest neighbours were two or three miles north and West Essa, where the Ruthvens, Stevensons and Turnbulls had settled.

## *Oldest House Erected in 1849*

In 1849 a fine frame residence was erected and still stands at 44 Fletcher Crescent. In the early days Indian ladies calling to sell their hand-made baskets received a gracious welcome at this home and down through the years, people of high and low degree found a measure of hospitality rarely equalled at the present time.

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## Alliston's Early History Cont'd

In 1853 Mr. Fletcher built a grist mill also on the north side of the Boyne River, to serve the farmers coming into the area. The first miller was a Mr. Grant the father of the first white child born in Alliston. The house in which he lived stood facing east at what is now 110 Victoria Street West. This house was later moved to 122 Victoria Street, West. This house was occupied by the Storey family for many years. It was replaced by the Guild Interiors building.

### *First White Child Born*

The first white child, Margaret Grant, was born April 21, 1854. She grew up, married William Banting and became the proud mother of one of our famous sons, Sir Frederick Banting.

In 1854, the Methodists, who had been holding services in different homes, decided to build a hall. This hall was located about 46 Victoria Street, West where Lewis Dominion Hardware is located.

Mr. William Turnbull with an eye to the future, moved from West Essa to open a General Store in 1856. This store which served the people from a wide area was located at 34 Victoria Street, West where the Windsor House now stands. That same year it was suggested that a village be formed under the name of Alliston. The origin of this name is partly in doubt but the one that is most commonly heard is that Mr. Fletcher named this little village after his birthplace in England.

Up until this time the sending and receiving of letters was a matter of some uncertainty. Times haven't

changed much! With a view to remedying this situation a post office was opened in 1867 in the Fletcher home and Mr. Fletcher's second son George was appointed Postmaster, a position which he held until he resigned some years later to contest an election in the county in the interest of temperance.

Progress was slow for a few years but in 1862 son George established a newspaper "The Alliston Star", the editor being Mr. Malcolm McCarthy. The subscription rate was \$1.00 per year. That summer saw the hopes of the Presbyterians growing into a fine church which was opened on September 6th at 115 Victoria Street, West.

### *First School*

Up until the time classes for school children were conducted at the Methodist Hall, but in 1862 or 1863 the Buyers Brothers, William and John, built a school at the Scotch Line (Boyne Street) corner just north of 158 Victoria Street, East (Medical Associated Office). This building was moved around 1886 to about 80 Victoria Street, West to be used as a show room for carriages and buggies.

In 1868 a foundry and agricultural works was established at about 20 Church Street, North. Since then the progress of the village has been a march of successful business enterprises. Thus Mr. Fletcher lived to see a tangled wilderness in 1847 changed into a busy and prosperous little community. The stately hardwood trees that were felled to clear the land and were reduced to ashes in large bonfires. These ashes were shipped to processing plants in the United States

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## Alliston's Early History Cont'd

for the making of potash.

In the 70's there was a period of active progress. In 1871 the "Alliston Star" became the "Alliston Herald". In 1872 the Wesley Methodist Church was erected on the north-east corner of Victoria and Centre Streets. The Fletchers were closely connected with this church, supplying the land and the brick as well as many other necessary items.

### *Alliston Becomes a Village*

In 1874 Alliston was incorporated as a village. The first council took charge in January 1875 with Reeve George Fletcher, son of the pioneer, presiding. The Councillors were P.D. Kelly James Aitken, Richard Chappell, John Strachan, with John Gilbert as Clerk succeeded by J.S. Hart.

Items of interest from the minute book of that year 1875 indicate that no animals, except cows and young calves were allowed to run at large on the streets of the village, from April 1st to December 1st. The weight of bread was also regulated, a quarter loaf being 4 lbs. and a half a quarter loaf 2 lbs. Pound keepers' fees were set indicating that turkeys wandering at large cost only 5 cents each to catch and 5 cents a day to feed compared with pigs costing 25 cents each to catch and 15 cents a day to feed. Another bylaw gave the treasurer authority to pay each householder 50 cents for each shade tree planted. The wisdom of this plan can easily be seen today since Alliston is noted far and wide for its shade trees.

On November 5th the corner stone of St. Andrew's Anglican Church was laid, the building being completed the next summer at 125 Wellington Street, West.

The possibility of a railroad through the village thrilled the people of Alliston. Plans were made to assist the building of the North Simcoe Railroad to run from Penetanguishene through Alliston to a point on the Toronto, Gray and Bruce Railway. This did not materialize but Alliston promised \$8,000.00 to aid in building a railroad from Clarksville (now Beeton) to Glencairn by the Hamilton and North Western Railway in 1877. This later became the Grand Trunk and it in turn became the C.N.R. and extended past Glencairn to Collingwood. This line stops at Alliston now.

Industry was encouraged by granting free taxes for a number of years. Late the same year or early in the following year the business section of the village fell prey to the fire demon.

In 1881 a bylaw was passed raising \$4000.00 to build a new school. The land situated on the south side of Albert Street was finally purchased from George Fletcher for \$150.00 per acre in 1885. The school at the Scotch Line was far too small even with the addition of an extra room. The Council passed a bylaw issuing debentures for \$6000.00 to build the new school having three classrooms on the first floor and three classrooms on the second floor.

Later development in the 80's included the acquiring of a Driving Park situated between Centre Street on the west to Dufferin Street on the east and Tupper Street on the north to Beech Street on the south. In 1888 a street

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sprinkler was purchased for \$30.00. The same year a firehall was built on land donated by William Fletcher, total outlay \$150.00.

In 1889 the Mercer Brothers were induced to come to town by granting exemption from taxes for five years. This company manufactured many agricultural implements of high quality in their factory at the south end of Paris Street now 63 Tupper Street, West.

In 1890, after much deliberation, it was decided to install five street lights. The lights were to be lit 313 nights a year at a cost of 90 cents a night.

The next year, 1891, Alliston grew up. On January 1st it became a town on proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. The first town council was made up of John Stewart, Dr. James D. Sutherland, Reeve; and Councillors John Moore, George McGirr, John F. Wilson, William Hutchinson, Thomas O'Callaghan, W.I. Clarke, James Jerrett, Henry Longeway and C.C. Lee.

On Friday, May 8, 1891 at 12:45 midday it started.

### **Continued Next Year**



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## BEST WISHES FOR A SUCCESSFUL POTATO FESTIVAL

## The Ontario Potato Growers' Marketing Board

The Marketing Board was established by Order in Council, the 17th day of March 1976. However, many years of work had proceeded that date. For over twenty years, marketing plans for potatoes had been proposed and worked on.

These early plans included the entire potato market. As a result of trying to regulate the fresh as well as the processed market, none of the many proposed plans were satisfactory.

In the Spring of 1974, the Potato Section of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association decided once again to bring some order into the Ontario potato market. This time, it was decided to try and organize that segment of the growers supplying the processed market. A committee was struck and charged with determining if there was enough interest among growers to proceed. A petition, directed to the Minister of Agriculture and Food, was circulated and signed by over 80% of the growers involved. The petition asked that a plan be developed to regulate the marketing of potatoes for processing and that an expression of opinion be conducted after the plan was developed.

The Minister of Agriculture and Food, through The Farm Products Marketing Board, appointed a Provisional Board to develop a plan.

Plan development required meetings to be held all across the Province where potatoes are grown. Input from growers in each area of production was used in arriving at the plan to be voted on. In January of 1976, the vote on The Potatoes for Processing Marketing Plan was conducted. Every farmer who had grown potatoes in either of the two previous years was entitled to vote.

An overwhelming majority of potato growers voting were in favour of the plan.

The Marketing Plan is a negotiating type plan. It requires the growers and processors to negotiate a minimum price to be paid for each class of potatoes used for processing. Negotiations are carried out in a formal manner each February. If no agreement can be reached through negotiations, there is a formal arbitration procedure which is followed.

In this year, there are some 125 potato growers serving approximately 14 processor buyers. The Ontario market will be over 200 million lbs. of potatoes used for processing.

As well as negotiating the price on behalf of the grower members, the board is also charged with many other responsibilities, such as quality improvement, promotion, information, etc.

To handle its affairs, the board operates an office, located at 1463 Ontario Street, in Burlington, Ontario.

The Board is composed of 8 Directors, serving 5 Districts of Ontario.

Ross Whiteside, Chairman



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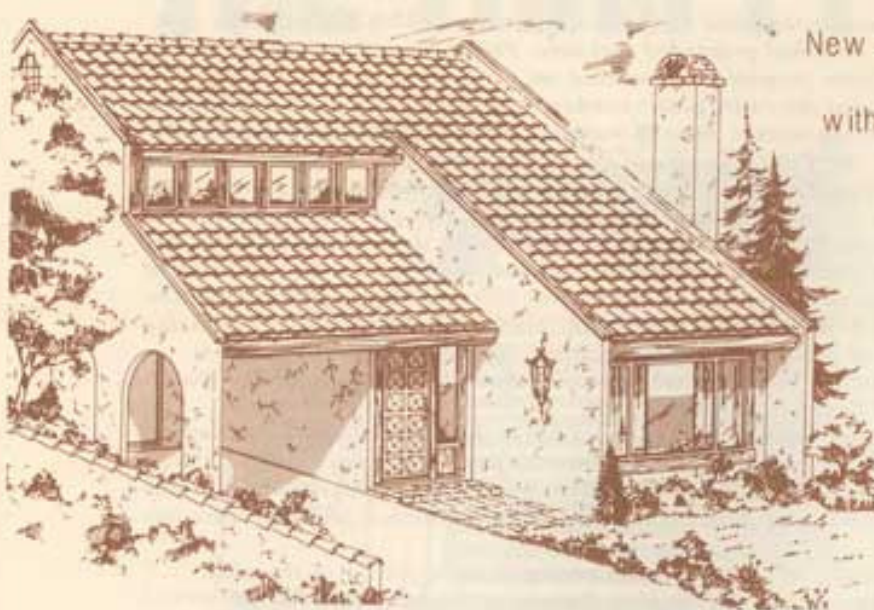
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## BUYING

Buy graded potatoes, for uniform size and good quality.

Look for types of packaging that allow you to see the product, for example plastic bags or paper bags with mesh windows.

Avoid buying green potatoes; they have been exposed to light and may be bitter.

Handle 'new' potatoes carefully. They are more perishable and bruise more easily than the later mature ones.

Buy only as much as you can store properly and conveniently. Usually, the larger the package, the less the potatoes cost per serving. Individually wrapped potatoes are the most expensive.

## STORING

Store potatoes in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place, at about 45 to 50 degrees F. At higher temperatures potatoes may sprout and shrivel, and at lower temperatures they tend to develop a sweet flavour. For best flavour and texture, allow potatoes that have been stored in a cool room to stand at room temperature for several days before cooking. If potatoes are kept in the light they will turn green and acquire a bitter taste.

Discard the green portion when peeling.

If a cool storage room is available, large bags of potatoes may be kept successfully four to nine months, depending on variety. However, if potatoes have to be stored at room temperature, it is best to purchase small quantities at a time and use them as soon as possible.

## COOKING

Potatoes that are baked, boiled in their skins, or french fried retain most of their nutritive value. Mashed and scalloped potatoes lose some of their nutrients during cooking and continue to lose more if allowed to stand. Potatoes that are peeled ahead of time and left soaking in water also lose vitamins.

For baking, choose mature potatoes of medium size, with smooth, unblemished skin and shallow eyes. Potatoes that are dry and mealy when boiled are good for baking, too. It is not generally recommended that potatoes be baked in foil as they steam rather than bake.

For french fried potatoes, choose varieties that become dry and mealy when cooked. For light coloured french fries, potatoes may be soaked in water for 15 minutes before cooking, but this increases vitamin loss.

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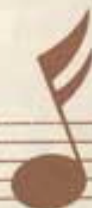


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# Progress in Potato Harvesting

In the 1800's potatoes were harvested by digging them out of the ground with the bare hands or with the use of a fork, which lifted the drill or row and the dirt sifted through the tines leaving the potatoes easier to pick and place in a pail or basket.

In the early 1900's potatoes were dug by a one furrow plow which turned the row over and the potatoes were picked out of the ground by hand. Later a potato plow was used, it consisted of a wide sharpened blade with a series of steel rods at the back of it. The plow was pulled by a team of horses and lifted the row up over the blade and the dirt fell between the rods leaving the potatoes on top of the ground making them easier to pick up.

Some years later the first horse drawn mechanical digger became a reality. It dug one row at a time and the dirt sifted through an apron driven by the main wheels on the unit. The potatoes were deposited right on top of the ground but still had to be picked by hand.

With the advent of the tractor with a P.T.O. the horse drawn digger was equipped with a gear box and power shaft. The digger now became tractor drawn and driven by P.T.O. Among the advantages of the new harvester and tractor was the fact that the horses were relieved from heavy work which was done more efficiently by the tractor. The potatoes however, still had to be picked manually.

The next great step forward for potato harvesting was the elimination of the back breaking job of bending down to pick the potatoes from the ground. This became possible with the invention of a picker which consisted of an elevator on which people separated the vines and clods or stones from the potatoes manually. The potatoes were then deposited into bags. Later, a grader and scale were put on the picking unit so that the potatoes were picked, graded, and weighed into bags which were tied and loaded on trucks ready for shipment to the market.

In the late 1950's with the advent of bulk handling, some of the picking units were equipped with special side elevators instead of baggers which meant that potatoes were picked and in some cases graded and then elevated into pallet boxes or bulk boxes on wagons or trailers.

In the early 1960's as processing became more prevalent and labour more expensive the two-row bulk potato harvester was invented. This harvester had special wide link chain which separated the vines from the potatoes mechanically and thus eliminated manual separation. Bulk boxes were also mounted on trucks for speedy delivery from the field to the farm storage or processor storage.

In the late 1960's windrowers were used to dig and place two rows of potatoes between the adjoining two rows and then the four rows were dug and elevated into bulk trucks.

Today, windrowers are quite common and in some

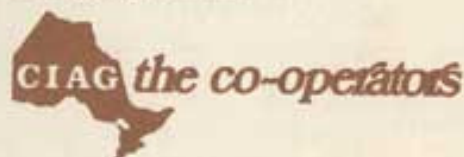
cases four rows of potatoes are placed between two rows and the six rows are dug and placed in large bulk boxes which hold 400 to 500 bags of potatoes. These boxes are mounted on tandem trucks which handle the heavy loads easily and transport them to storage quickly.

In areas where stones and clods are a real problem, air harvesters are used. These units perform like a giant vacuum cleaner sucking the potatoes up out of the clods and stones and depositing them on a cross elevator which delivers them into a bulk truck.

As you can see there has been vast progress in harvesting machinery in the last fifty years and particularly in the last fifteen.

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## A welcome from the Mayor

*It is a pleasure for me to welcome you to Alliston,  
"The Potato Capital of Ontario" for our 4th Annual  
Potato Festival.*

*The potato plays a large part in the economy of our  
area and we are pleased to be able to show you some of  
the potato operations and uses through the Potato  
Festival.*

*The success of this Festival becomes a reality only  
through the hard work of the committee and you our  
many guests who come to Alliston each year for this  
event.*

*Again welcome to Alliston and have a Happy Festival  
Weekend.*



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# Welcome Visitors

*As chairman of the fourth Annual Alliston Potato Festival, I extend a warm welcome to the many visitors attending this year's festivities.*

*We have finally achieved our goal of producing a Souvenir Program and we take this media to thank the advertisers for their support in making it possible.*

*My appreciation to the Potato Festival Committee for their support over the past year, and the many organizations and individuals who make the Festival an annual success.*

*Best wishes for a fun-filled weekend.*



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# Firemen's Games

Festival Visitors,

The Alliston Fire Department Welcomes you to the Fourth Annual Potato Festival, and invites you to the Games Site located at the south West end of River-Dale Park. On Saturday there will be sixteen teams participating in four events; water ball, bucket race, dress race and hose lay. The top eight teams will advance into Sunday's final.

The games are open to any Fire Department in Ontario and start Saturday at 10 a.m. and Sunday at 10 a.m.

Teams that participated in last year's Firemen games are as follows. Alliston, Angus, Vespra Hall #1, Vespra Hall #2, Orangeville, Palgrave, Everett, Tosoronto, Aurora, Grand Valley, Schomberg, Keswick, Creemore, with Vespra Hall #1 the 1976 Champions.

For any information regarding the games, please contact one of the following, Dave Evans Box 811 Alliston, Richard Boyes Box 961 Alliston, Rick Monkman General Delivery or any Fire Department Member.



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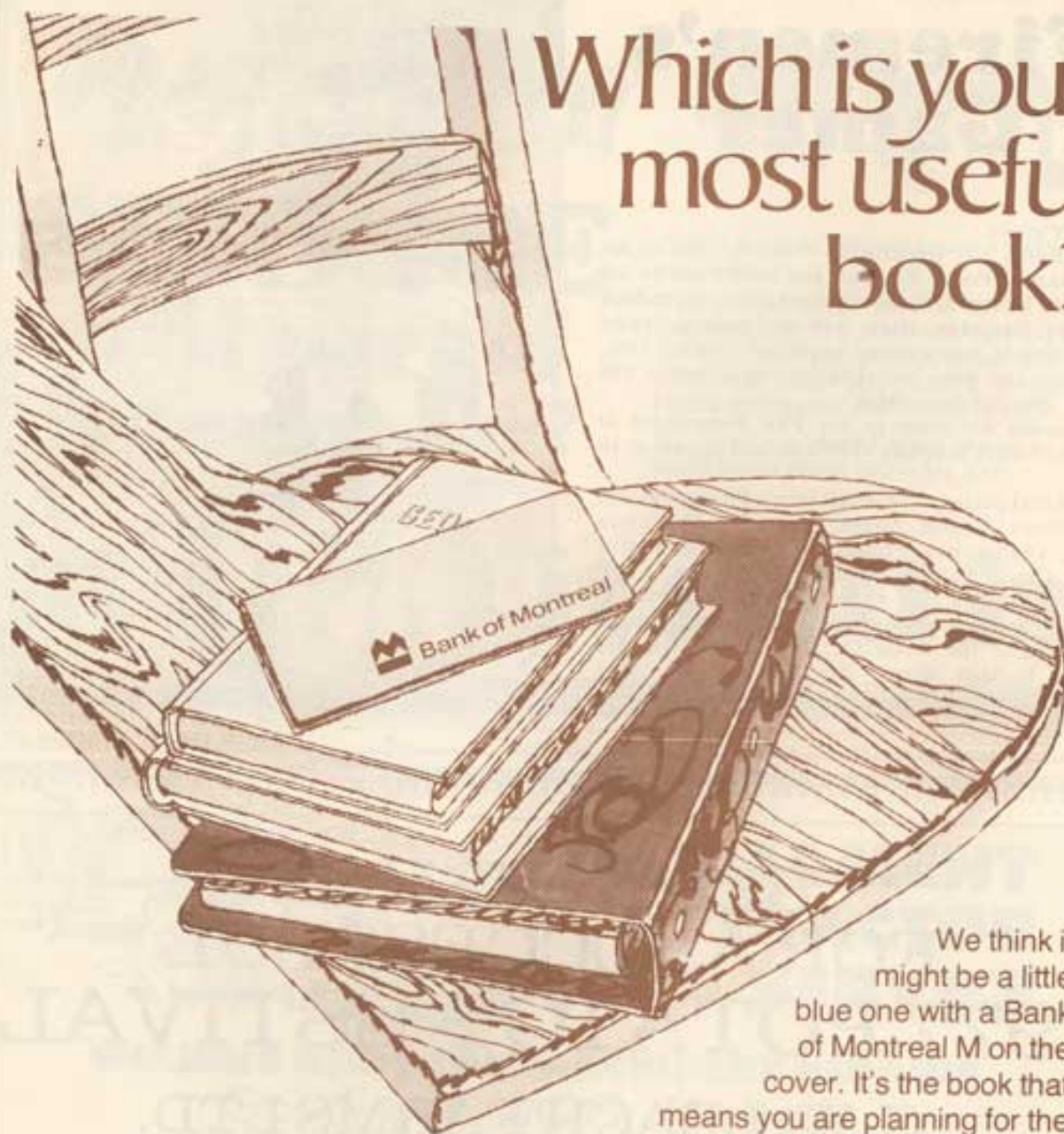
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## Rotary Club Beef Barbeque

One of the major attractions at the festival is the beef barbeque organized by the Alliston Rotary Club. Held at the Kellogg Salada Foods grounds, last year's barbeque attracted some 3000 people. Approximately 2,200 pounds of beef were served, together with 3000 baked potatoes and enormous quantities of salads, tomatoes, coleslaw and rolls.

A tremendous amount of work was put into the event by the Rotary Club members; apart from the planning there were 75 members who helped with cooking, setting up, serving and cleaning up afterwards.



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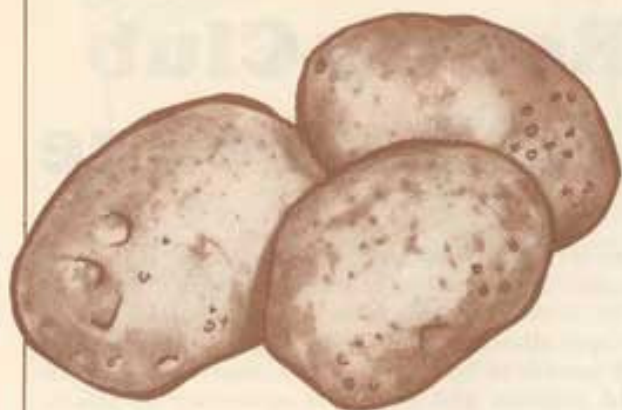
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# Reminiscences of an Old Timer

by J. S. (Sandy) Ellis

## *The Potato*

If it was not for the potato -- there would not be a Potato Festival. It's as simple as that, we may as well get down to business and talk "Potato". Other countries are welcome to their rice, yams and poi, but we prefer to become known as a nation of potato eaters.

The potato is thick enough in the skin to ignore the slurs and slams directed at it and its popularity continues to grow. It has been called such names as spuds - murphys - goobers - tubers - taters - taties - potats and pomme-de-terres. It comes in a choice of colours through red, brown, tan, beige, yellow, and off-white, but the taste never varies.

## *Its Uses*

The potato has more going for it than any other vegetable. It will put fat on the ribs of man, beast and fowl. It may be served in many forms but it always tastes like a potato. It can be boiled, steamed, roasted or fried with its jacket on or off. You may also mash it, slice it or dice it. When served cold, it is the housewife's delight as she lets her imagination run wild in concocting salads and other fantastic creations. The potato sandwich was made famous by the Bumstead family and the potato chef was discovered in 1930. It is claimed that a person can get a real "Bang" by mashing raw potatoes, adding some brown sugar and allowing the mess to ferment before running it through a still.

## *Early Times*

The Irish and the potato go well together and we have our share of Irishmen in this area. They brought along a few seed potatoes from the homeland which they zealously guarded across the ocean and up the St. Lawrence until they settled on their new land grant. The first piece of cleared land was reserved for the potato seed. Spaded by hand and planted with loving care, the return was bountiful. There were ample tubers to feed the family through the winter and a surplus for planting a larger plot for the following season.

For well over a century and a half, this area has been known as good potato land. Mass production was unheard of in these days, due to the back breaking labour involved. From the "working up" of the soil, to the weekly hoeing, there was always work to be done in the "potato patch".

Towns people and farmers produced more spuds than their needs, and the surplus was always in demand. Thus the potato was grown as a "cash crop" and larger

plots were planted. The first "new potatoes" to reach the market sold at premium prices and competition was born. The early variety of those times was known as the "Early Rose". It was red in colour and had so many knobs and carbuncles on it that many were displayed as "freaks". Winter potatoes were mainly called "Irish Cobblers". They came out of the hills in all shapes and sizes from marbles to monsters. Grading was never thought about. They were just Eaters.

## *The Dooley Did It*

The days of the cobbler were coming to an end and a search was in progress to find a more even-sized and higher yielding potato. In the late years of World War I a potato was accidentally discovered that combined yield, uniformity and flavour and proved ideal to the local soil type. It was called a "Dooley" with a doubtful origin.

There was an old timer named Jimmy Wheeler who lived at Baxter corners. He was known as a refreshing character with a persuasive gift of the tongue and travelled the roads with his stock of trees, shrubs, seeds and roots and his trusty order book in his hand. One season he was known to have guaranteed that the bugs would not touch the potatoes that he sold for seed, and when confronted with a leafless plant, he calmly stuck to his claim that the green tips were not guaranteed against bug damage -- only the potato in the ground.

On a call at John Arnolds on W.H. Lot #7 Con. #4 Essa, he sold a small bag of potato eyes which he said were called Dooleys. From this planting Mr. Arnold harvested eleven bags of smooth, uniform-sized potatoes which were recognized as high yielders. Giving one bag to his neighbour, Will Whiteside, the remaining ten bags were planted the following spring. The fame of the "Dooley" and the demand for seed and table stock caused a potato growing boom, which has led to the title "Potato Growing Centre of Ontario". Many superior strains have been developed over the years but the Dooley started it all.

## *The Potato Pioneers*

A young farmer from Mono Township purchased the farm of George Wilson on Lot #7 Con. #14 Tecumseth Township about the year 1918. His name was John MacKenzie. From his first seeding until the harvest, his operations and methods were closely observed by his neighbours who practised mixed farming and were skeptical of putting all of their potatoes in one basket. MacKenzie planted the unheard of amount of fifty acres in his first season to the amazement of his friends. His introduction of new methods, specialized machinery and storage systems revolutionized the



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## Reminiscences of an Old Timer Cont'd

industry and everyone began to think "Big". The following year brothers Kenneth and Robert MacKenzie forsook the Hills of Dufferin County and settled on the flats of Essa Township near enough to share labour and machinery. Kenneth bought the Walker Coburne farm on E.H. Lot #3 Con. #3 Essa Township while Robert purchased the Charles Kindler property on Lot #9 Con. #14 of Tecumseth Township.

The rich farmlands of the flats of Essa and Tecumseth townships experienced a boom as the potato became "king of the area". Many local farmers were bitten by the potato bug and climbed on the band wagon. Some of the pioneers were Herbert Dunn, George Drennan, Nicol Wilson, Thompson Banting, Norman Kerr, George Wilkinson, Howard Banting, Oscar and Lloyd Murphy, Jas. Ruthven, John Arnold, Robert English and the Whitesides -- Edgar, Will and Carl.

Herb Dunn was the first grower to achieve the magic yield of 500 bushels per acre and won the award in 1943.

Thos. Cussin's practised experience and his success on his Tecumseth farm made him the natural choice for appointment to the newly-formed special extension branch of the Department of Agriculture. His outgoing personality and ability as an organizer and speaker became well known throughout Ontario and the Maritimes. He played a big part in early policy for potato culture.

## The Battle of the Bugs

Potato bugs were the curse of the potato grower. There were only two methods to handle them and neither one worked. You could swat them with a shingle or drown them in Paris Green. A regular chore for the hired man was to fashion a shingle into a paddle and knock the bugs from the vines into a pail. When the pail was almsot full, a quart of coal oil was poured over them and they were then interred in the earth. They may have enjoyed the coal oil because they all seemed to be back eating the leaves the next morning.

Paris Green was the old standby! It came in a one pound box marked with a skull and cross bones. When diluted in water it was a beautiful azure green colour that reminded one of the gin pills we used to take. The bugs simply loved the stuff and climbed to the topmost stems to get their share as we made our way up the rows.

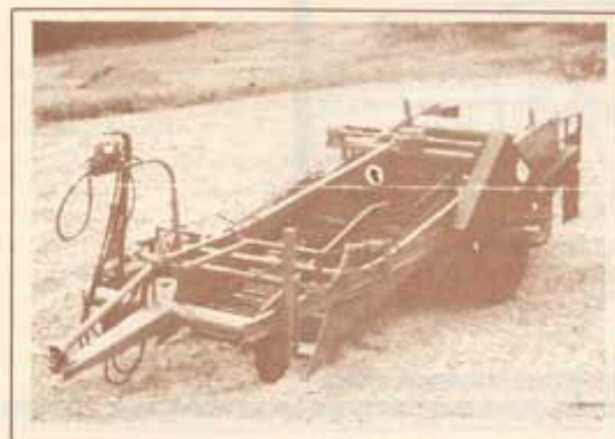
## Hard Times

No one had a nickel to rub against another after the Depression hit us in 1929 and this condition continued for some years. In 1931 there was a bumper crop of potatoes and the farmers figured on cashing in, but alas, the price opened at 12c per bag and dropped to 10c a bag (the bag cost more than this). This was the year I opened Sandy's Cities Service Station and I did a brisk business in gasoline and oil. The big trouble was that there were no credit cards in those days and my customers simply said "Filler her up and mark her down" until they had me on the ropes. One farmer got

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## Reminiscences of an Old Timer Cont'd

into me for \$50.00 and the best he could do was deliver 500 bags of potatoes in payment, which I refused as there was neither sale nor room for them. Donald Applegate bought 1000 bags of potatoes from Kenneth MacKenzie that winter for \$100.00 to keep his dairy herd producing. The following spring arrived with a breath of rotten potatoes in the air. A clothes pin was needed on the nose if one drove to the country as the entire crop was spread on the fields for fertilizer and ploughed in. Undaunted, the farmers planted another year and made a comeback with a profit. Our pioneer potato growers had faith in their product and the future and they won out.

### *The Cutting Bee*

One of the most satisfactory scenes I ever witnessed was the sight of a half dozen old timers sitting around a mound of potatoes while they used their pocket knives to slice them into seed for planting. Their faces beamed with pleasure as they smoked contentedly on their pipes or took a "chaw of tobacco" but their hands never faltered at their task. Reminiscing of the past with banter and jokes and happy laughter they rolled back the years and for a short time they were young again. They were not over the hill! Here was something that they could do better than any others. They seemed to stand taller and straighter in the knowledge that for a short time -- they were needed at the Potato Cutting Bee.

These Senior Citizens have now returned to the checkerboards. The record of cutting 20 bags of potatoes into seed per day -- no longer stands. They have been replaced by the mechanized monster that can slice 700 bags into seed in less than four hours and still guarantees an eye in 98% of the pieces.

Progress cannot be denied.

### *Making History*

It is many years since potatoes were dropped in the furrow and covered over on the next round of the horse and plough. It is well over 60 years since the seed was planted three to a hill made by the hoe. The arrival of the single-furrow plough with the cow catcher on the front was heralded as a big step forward. The days of the trusty horses were numbered as the tractor could be observed snorting and belching over the fields. Their power equalled that of twenty horses and they pulled a three furrow plough with ease. They had such names as Fordson, Massey Ferguson, Case, Allis Chalmers and John Deere. The next invention, of course, was the mechanized digger that rolled the spuds from a single row in record time. It was a stubborn affair full of cog wheels and belts that had a habit of breaking down at the most crucial moments. Many farmers were fit for straight jackets by the end of the season. All early tractors had steel wheels. When they hit a boulder in their path they shook the shavings out of the seat cushion while giving floating kidneys to the driver. After the experience the advent of the inflated rubber tires was like riding on a cloud.

From then on -- the word "Potato Patch" was taboo! The new word was "Potato Acreage" and a new era had arrived. Operators who thought "Big" were taking over and the 100-acre farm became a thing of the past as they put potato farms together consisting of 500 to 1500 acres and more. Their domains rivalled the Texas cattle ranches! There are the Marshalls, Riddells, Leaches, Brouwers, Dorseys, Cappuccittis, and Salada Foods while a new generation carrying the familiar names of MacKenzie, Murphy, Beattie, Brett, English, Elphick and Whiteside walk in the footsteps of their fathers.

Today the power units are fantastic to an old timer like myself. Tractors so large that an early Massey Ferguson would sit in the tool box of a "Big John" developing up to 350 horse power and pulling ploughs that turn 8 to 10 furrows of land at one pass over. The digger you see today is self-propelled and has the capacity to eject the tops, sort and grade and deliver to the waiting truck for storage at the fabulous rate of 1000 pounds per minute.

As Fred Flintstone would say "WHAT WILL THEY THINK OF NEXT?"



Mrs. Jean Perry and Glenn Gall took in the sights at last year's Potato Festival.

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# The Kinsmen Club of Alliston Inc.

Alliston's newest Service Club was formed in June 1964 through the efforts of the Kinsmen Club of Barrie and seventeen area people. As part of the Association of Kinsmen Clubs of Canada, the Alliston Club endeavours to provide service to the community through the fellowship of Kin.

Members of the Kinsmen Club of Alliston include a broad representation of people engaged in various occupations. Membership requirements are restricted to those between 21 and 40. Through dinner meetings every two weeks and projects to provide service to our community the spirit of fellowship, self improvement and community interest is developed.

The Association of Kinsmen Clubs is an all Canadian service organization devoted to the community's betterment. Projects, however, of a National scale have been and continue to be undertaken by Kinsmen such as the Kinsmen National Institute for Mental Retardation, research funds for Cystic Fibrosis and Mobile Dental Clinics. The Kinsmen Association is affiliated throughout the world with similar Young Men's service clubs and through this affiliation, provide funds for underdeveloped parts of the world.

The Kinsmen Club in Alliston, with over 30 interested members have provided many forms of worthwhile service to Alliston and area over its 14 year history. Monetary contributions to Minor Hockey, Figure Skating, Recreation facilities have been made on a yearly basis. Assistance to the local Association for the Mentally Retarded and the Alliston Community Library have been given. The organizational skills of Kinsmen in Alliston are employed in the successful operation of the South Simcoe Pioneer Museum and the Red Cross Blood Donor Clinics. In accepting the goal of the Alliston Potato Festival Committee, Kinsmen have supported this committee in the operation of the

Saturday Night Dances and further supported the Committee by turning over in excess of \$17,000. towards their goal of an indoor swimming pool.

As a Canadian Service Club, Kinsmen are involved with promoting National Heritage Day and this has proved to be most successful in making Canadians aware of the positive aspects of their country. Alliston Kinsmen gave the gift of Kin to the Town of Bradford by sponsoring a new Kinsmen Club recently. The National Association has recognized the Alliston Club through various awards over the years. Kinsmen in Alliston began the Inter Service Club Meetings with Alliston's other service Clubs to stimulate fellowship and interest in each others work.

Kinsmen is a family affair and husband and wife membership is encouraged. The wives of Kinsmen members (the Kinettes) have proved to be an invaluable asset to the work of Kinsmen while carrying on service projects of their own towards community betterment.

The past 14 years have been rewarding to the community and to those members of the Kinsmen Club of Alliston. The future looks even brighter. To obtain more information on the Club, write Box 852, Alliston, or contact any member of the Club.

## Potato Nicknames

"Taters" presumably is a derivation of the gaelic word "pratie" which itself probably was derived via "prata" from "patata".

The term "Spud" probably is derived from the three tined fork commonly used to dig the potato crop years ago in England and Scotland.

"Murphy" a slang term in early use in Ireland is an example of the use of personal names to designate the potato, a practice which probably commemorated a particularly successful or outstanding grower.

## Potato Pork Casserole

Make as POTATO BEEF CASSEROLE but use 1 pound minced pork in place of beef and 1 - 10 oz. can condensed tomato soup in place of mushroom soup. 6 servings.

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**MOON'S**  
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[1] Filling the planter with seed potatoes.



[2] Four row potato planter.



[3] Spraying for disease and insect control.



[4] Vines killed before the harvest to avoid mechanical damage.

## The Potato Story



[5] Windrowing two rows of potatoes over for harvesting operation.



to thicken skin on tubers for less

the  
ato  
ry



er on top of two other rows to speed



[6] Potato harvester loading into bulk truck. Note dropping of side of box to reduce bruising.



[7] Rear view of potato harvester returning vines to the field.



[8] Sideview of harvester.





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*The Grand Parade Friday and the midway are just two of the highlights of the Festival.*



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\*\*\*\*\*

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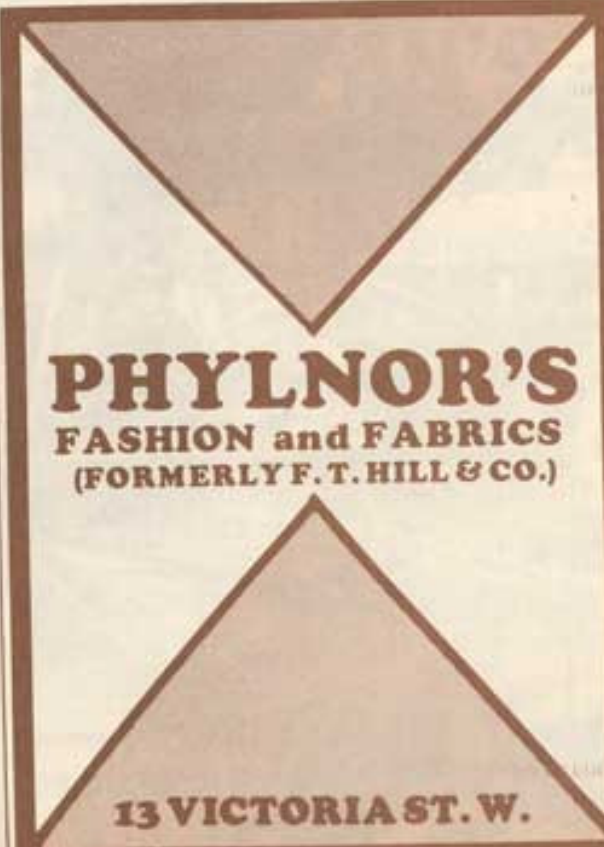
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# South Simcoe 500 Bushel Club

The South Simcoe 500 Bushel Club is actually a competition organized and sponsored by the South Simcoe Potato Growers' Association.

On a potato tour to Virginia in the early 1930's, Tom Cassin, Thompson Banting, Carl Whiteside and Herb Dunn saw some attempts to grow 500 bushels of potatoes per acre. During World War II when Food for Britain was a theme, growers set 500 bushels per acre as an objective and recognized their producers with the higher yields.

Over the years, other ideas have been incorporated into the competition with more and more emphasis placed on quality. Each grower's field that is entered in the competition was judged on the following basis in 1976:

Yield	- 200 points
or Dry Matter	- 100 points
Overall Field Evaluation	- 50 points
% Marketable Tubers	- 25 points
Total	375

Prizes, donated by companies associated with the potato industry, are presented to the winners at an "After Harvest" banquet-dance which allows everyone to unwind after a long hard summer.

This past year the top yield was 536.4 cwts. per acre (i.e. 670.5 bushels per acre). You can see that the original target has been surpassed but the competition continues to be keen among the growers.

The overall winners since the conception of the South Simcoe 500 Bushel Club are:

1940 J. Herb Dunn	1960 Ron Beattie
1944 Jas. Sleightholm	1961 Ross Brett
1945 Thompson Banting	1962 Frank Elphick
1946 Hugh MacKenzie	1963 Ross Whiteside
1947 Home McMann	1964 Eldred Lundy
1948 Eric Gallagher	1965 Wm. Dorsey
1949 Victor Gallagher	1966 J.K. Crang
1950 Edward Banting	1967 John Brouwer
1951 Warren MacKenzie	1968 Bob Dorsey
1952 Ken Whiteside	1969 Eldred Lundy
1953 Clarence Leach	1970 Ray Cole
1954 Homer McMann	1971 Charles Marshall
1955 Jack Willson	1972 Ross Whiteside
1956 Jim McCague	1973 Ray Cole
1957 Bill Roth	1974 Jack Marshall
1958 Ross Whiteside	1975 Bill Dorsey
1959 Alvin Murphy	1976 Bob Fraser

## POTATO MEASURES

- 1 pound equals about 3 medium potatoes or 6 small new
- 2 medium potatoes yield about 1 cup mashed
- 4 medium potatoes yield about 3 cups diced
- 1 medium potato yields about 1 cup thinly sliced



Alliston Herald copyright photo  
1976 Festival Queen Marg Van Hart presents the 500 Bushel Club trophy to Bob Fisher.

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# Mr. & Mrs. William Banting

William Banting was born in Bond Head, Ontario, son of John and Hester Meredith Banting. He had three sisters - Susanah, Rebecca, Maria Jane and four brothers - Charles, Thomas, James and John.

In 1850 William's parents moved to "Fyfield", their farm at Thompsonville, eight miles west of Bond Head. Later the east 100 acres was given to William.

In January, 1879 he married Maggie Grant, the local miller's daughter. Their first three sons - Nelson, Thompson (1882) and Kenneth were born on this farm. In 1885, William sold to go West and fight in the Riel Rebellion, but while in training the rebellion was over and he was left without a farm. They then acquired a farm at Beeton Junction. While here, another son was born only to die from whooping cough about two months later. The following year their only daughter Essie arrived. In 1890, six year old Kenneth had to be pulled twice from the Bailey Creek which flowed just behind the barn. This speeded up their search for a permanent location and in March, 1891, they purchased the Meredith Farm in Essa Township - Lot 2, Concession 2 on the floating bridge line. Late that fall another son was born to become Sir Frederick Banting.

Mr. Banting died on March 3, 1928. Mrs. Banting the first white girl born in Alliston, died December 2 1940. Both are buried in the Alliston United Cemetery.

## THE BANTING FARM LOT 2, CONCESSION 2, ESSA TOWNSHIP

1834 September 19th; the Crown offered it to a soldier who did not accept it.

1852 December 20th, offered for Sale.

1855 December 24th; Sold to William Carter for £2 s12 d8.

1857 January 28th; sold to John Meredith for the sum of 225 pounds.

1859 October 28th; John Meredith died and left the farm to two of his sons; James and Edward.

1868 March 6th; James, in his will, left the north half to his brother Thomas as long as he lived, then it was to go to their brother Edward.

1875 March 22nd, Thomas sold his half of the farm to Edward Meredith. The Merediths all lived together in a large 13 room frame house with white clapboard siding. The taxes in 1886 were \$42.73. The original barn was close to, and directly north of the house. After it burnt, they built it at a much greater distance from and to the west of the house. This beam type barn was 50 feet by 80 feet running north and south. It served for many years and was still good when the Bantings took over.

1891 March 14th; the Estate of Edward Meredith sold to William Banting. At this time about 80 acres had been cleared and the other 20 acres were in good bush; hard maple, soft elm, rock elm, basswood, beech, ash, red oak, spruce, cedar and other lesser species. About 75 hard maples were tapped each year for syrup and sugar. William kept pure bred Shorthorns, and was one of the two men who promoted good cattle in Simcoe County. He believed in hard work every working hour and you were expected to make the best of all leisure time. In 1903, he installed a complete water and sewage system in his house, to have hot and cold water constantly on tap in kitchen and bathroom, and the convenience and comfort of an inside toilet - an almost unheard of "Luxury" in a country home at that time. He also had the house brick clad that same year. There has always been a good supply of fresh water on this farm. With a sandpoint pounded down 25 feet, it is like pumping out of a lake. William used a windmill for power and Thompson a gasoline engine.

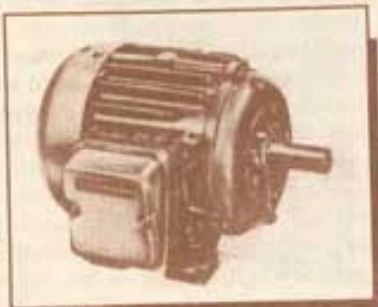
1915 March 3rd; William sold the farm to his son THOMPSON BANTING, who, when a boy, helped plant a row of hard maples across the front and laid claim to the farm when he grew up. Thompson married Lena Knight of Alliston in 1910 and spent his first five years on a rented farm, W2 L.5, C.5, Essa, until his father was ready to retire. Thompson purchased a Rural Mail Box in 1913. His eldest son Edward was just three weeks old when they moved from Elm Grove to the Alliston farm. It was a cold windy day and they wrapped the baby in blankets, then newspapers to make the trip by horse and cutter. Later they had four other children - Helen, Ralph, Arthur and Marie. Thompson had four extra good years at Elm Grove then his last year he was eaten out by army worms. During the first year on the Alliston farm the grain suffered from a severe hail storm. The next year on August 13th, 1916 during the noon hour, while threshing, a fire started in the barn yard. The flames soon spread with a strong wind and took all of the buildings except the house which was saved by continually pouring water on the roof. A new barn was built that same fall and winter by George Snell. The barn, 42 feet by 90 feet, was of plant truss construction, with a hip roof (something new in those days) and on a brick foundation, three bricks thick. The eight-sided implement shed was built the following year, also of brick (his father-in-law was a brick layer). Those bricks were purchased from the Presbyterian Church in Alliston. It seems they bought Alliston brick for their new Church, then decided to use pressed brick.



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1919 March 31st; purchased the East half of West half of the same lot from Franklin Bettschen. This made the farm 145 acres. In 1920 the farm had its first car, a new Chevrolet for \$995.00. In 1925 the large old home was torn to the ground and a smaller eight room house was built on the same front foundation and using most of the same old material. W. Hancey of Alliston wired the new house for electricity at a cost of \$42.50. Then in 1928 an Delco Plant was installed to supply electricity to the house, barn and implement shed. The Delco was changed to hydro in 1935. At this time six horses did the field work and in 1940, two horses were replaced by a small Ford tractor. In 1946, a second tractor replaced the remaining horses. In 1950, a self-propelled combine was purchased and hay and straw hailleurs the following year.

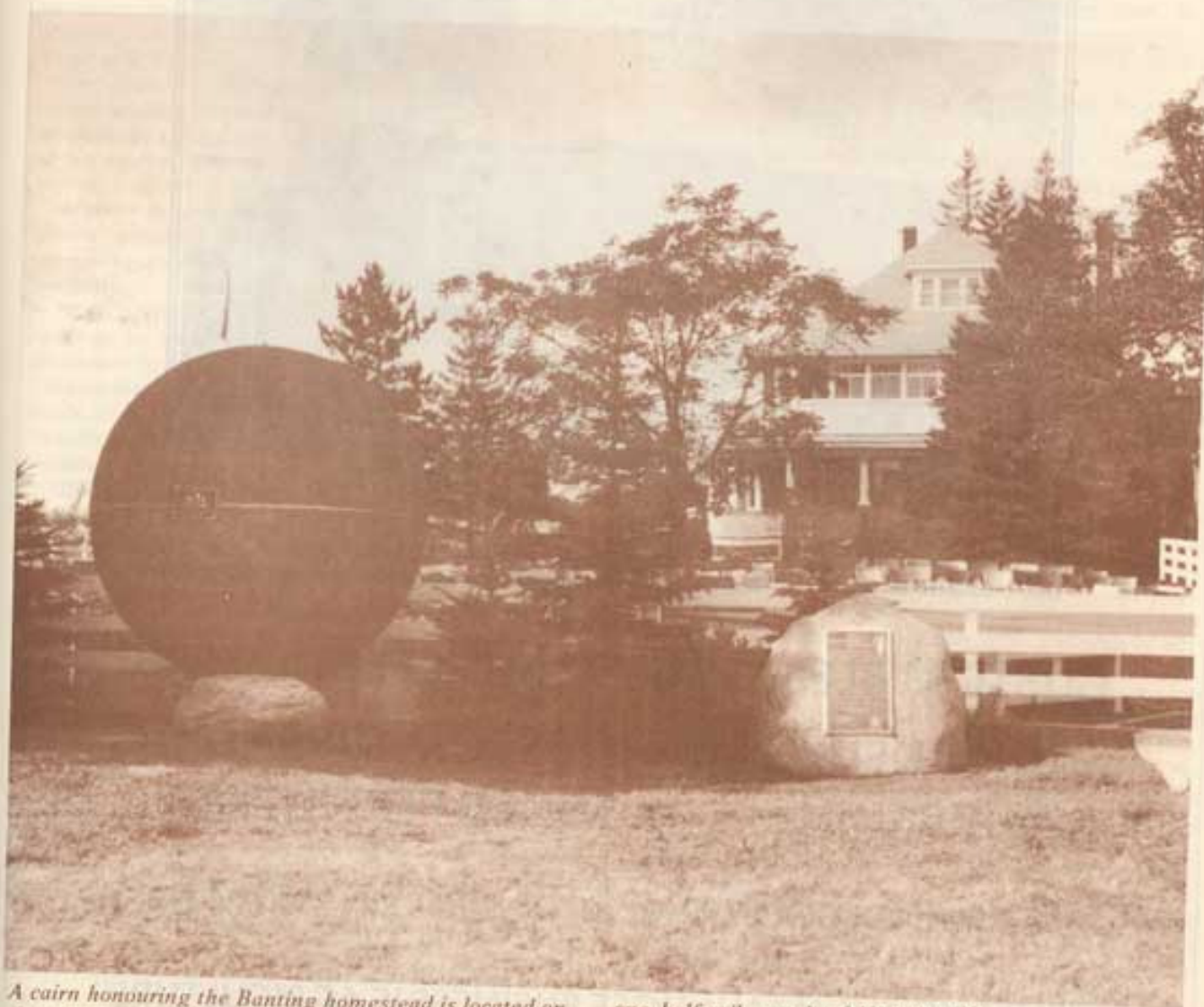
Mr. and Mrs. Thompson Banting were faithful members of Wesley Methodist, later St. John's United Church. He belonged to the Masonic

Order and the I.O.O.F. Mrs. Banting was an active member of the Women's Institute.

Thompson died July 4th, 1964 and Mrs. Banting died April 12th, 1963. Both are buried in the Alliston Union Cemetery.

1952 April 10th; Thompson sold the farm to his son Edward Banting who had been working it for a number of years. Edward married Louise Reid in August, 1961. Their children are Marie, Charles and Ann. In 1916 the taxes were \$121.56, in 1970 they rose to \$747.48. Mixed farming has been the practice on this farm. Thompson's main crop for many years was potatoes. He was one of the organizers of the "500 Bushel Potato Club", and winner of the gold watch in 1945. Edward in 1950.

Mr. Edward Banting.  
Alliston, Ontario  
October 18, 1975.



A cairn honouring the Banting homestead is located on the third concession of Essa Township approximately

one half mile north of Highway 89.

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# Potato Varieties

[Revision of Factsheet "Potato Varieties," July 1974]  
W. Nap, Soils and Crops Branch, Alliston

Ontario produces about 45,000 acres of potatoes annually. This acreage is composed of many varieties. Although 44 varieties are licensed in Canada, some have been outdated and are no longer grown. Others are specific for certain areas of Canada and are not grown in Ontario. Still others are new varieties unfamiliar to growers.

The National Potato Breeding Program has divided Canada into five regions for purposes of potato breeding and variety testing. These regions are Pacific, Prairies, Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic.

In Ontario, the Ontario Regional Potato Committee is responsible for evaluating the seedlings and varieties, in addition to recommending outstanding varieties for licensing and for use by the grower. Their recommendations are published annually in Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food Publication 363, Vegetable Production Recommendations.

The grower each year is faced with the question of what varieties to grow. His decision should take into account the area in which he is producing, the demands of his market, and disease factors that may confront him during the production year.

A short description of some of the more commonly grown potato varieties and some of the newer promising ones is given below in approximate order of maturity.

**NORLAND:** An early red-skinned variety. Dry matter tends to be low. Quality when harvested is good but decreases in storage. Texture and flavour are distinct. This variety is very susceptible to ozone damage which tends to limit yields in the Essex-Kent area. It sets heavily and therefore requires good fertility and moisture. It is moderately resistant to scab.

**ONAWAY:** An early-maturing variety. It sizes as early as Irish Cobbler and Superior and yields as well as either variety. It is a good cooking variety but it does not process. Tubers have medium-deep eyes and tend to be somewhat rough. It is resistant to scab but susceptible to verticillium wilt.

**SUPERIOR:** A high-yielding early variety that produces fairly smooth tubers. The skin is smooth but it has a tendency to russet slightly if left to maturity. Tablestock quality is good and it is a good chipping potato in misummer. It is resistant to scab but very susceptible to verticillium wilt if left to maturity.

**IRISH COBBLER:** A standard early variety that produces high yields. The tubers are rough, blocky and irregularly shaped. Eyes are deep. Cooking and chipping qualities are good. It is susceptible to scab, blight and verticillium wilt.

**VIKING:** A high-yielding, red-skinned early variety. Tubers tend to be rough, especially when moisture supply is ample and when widely spaced in the row. It is somewhat resistant to droughty conditions. Culinary quality is good but it does not chip. It is resistant to common scab, but susceptible to verticillium wilt.

**AVON:** An early-sizing variety that produces slightly rough tubers. It may develop harvest cracks if grown to maturity. It is grown almost exclusively in the Essex-Kent area where scab is a problem. Cooking and chipping qualities are very good. It is resistant to late blight and common scab.

**CHEROKEE:** A medium-early variety. Tubers are attractive with medium-shallow eyes. Yields are medium and quality is similar to Avon. Misshapen tubers may be a problem under adverse weather conditions. It is resistant to scab, net necrosis and common races of late blight.

**NORCHIP:** A medium-to-late-maturing variety. Plant vigor is good. Tends to set heavy; therefore, requires a wider spacing in the row. Yielding ability is moderate. It is an excellent chipper and produces fairly round, shallow-eyed tubers of medium size. It is moderately resistant to scab, but susceptible to verticillium wilt and blackspot when stored for long periods of time.

**CHIEFTAIN:** An early main-crop variety. The skin is smooth and bright red. Tubers are very uniform. Yields are good, but it sets heavily and therefore requires good moisture and fertility. Culinary quality is good but it does not process. It is susceptible to verticillium wilt and resistant to common scab and late blight.

**KENNEBEC:** A high-yielding main-crop variety. Tubers set early so that it can be harvested as a late early. Tubers are elongated, with shallow eyes and white skin. Set is small, so tubers tend to be large. Subject to sunburn, secondary growth and growth cracks under adverse weather conditions. A good processing variety. Kennebec is very susceptible to greening and verticillium wilt. It is fairly resistant to common scab and late blight.

**BELLEISLE** (formerly seedling F58010): A main-crop variety with moderate to high yielding ability. A good boiling and baking variety. Tubers size late. Handling qualities are excellent as the variety resists bruising. Tubers are oblong, and medium in size. Skin has a tendency to net. Belleisle is resistant to common scab. It is susceptible to verticillium wilt. Belleisle is very susceptible to the herbicide metribuzin.

**NETTED GEM (RUSSET BURBANK):** A late maturing variety. Tubers are long, heavily netted and russeted. Cooking quality, particularly baking quality, is very good. It is susceptible to secondary growth and misshapen tubers, and requires wide spacing in the row and a regular, adequate moisture supply and good fertility. Resistant to scab but susceptible to most other diseases, including leaf roll, which causes net necrosis in the tuber.

**SEBAGO:** This variety matures very late. A good cooking variety but does not chip very well. It has a very short rest period and breaks dormancy early in storage. It must be treated with a sprout inhibitor (tablestock) or stored at temperatures below 4 degrees C. (40 deg. F.) (seed). Sebago is resistant to scab and late blight but is very susceptible to blackleg.



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## A message from our Member of Parliament

*As member of Provincial Parliament for Dufferin Simcoe and on behalf of the Government of Ontario I extend congratulations to all those involved in any way with the Alliston Potato Festival.*

*This area is known across Canada for its potato production and the Festival has emphasized this to many people. You have put Alliston on the map, as they say.*

*One of the wonderful features of the whole program has been the bringing together of many groups from the town and vicinity. The fine spirit that exists speaks well for this area and its people.*

*Sincerely,  
G. McCAGUE*



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ORDERS**





## Potato Acreages in the Alliston Area

VARIETY	1975	1976
Kennebec	8,267	7,351
Superior	2,481	3,020
Netted Gem	1,503	1,494
Norchip	1,749	3,699
Cherokee	65	42
Sebago	220	44
Raritan	40	51
Irish Cobbler	38	30
Ontario	10	50
Onaway	5	10
Norland	39	4
Green Mountain	70	125
Chieftain	60	25
	14,547	15,945

Total Ontario Acreage	44,218	45,540*
Total Ontario Estimated Value	\$40,332,800	\$37,023,000

\*harvested acreage only. An estimated 2,772 acres were not harvested in fall of 1976 due to early snowfall and frost.

## Commercial Potato Acreage

	1975	1976 (estimated)
Prince Edward Island	46,000	53,000
New Brunswick	4,300	4,000
Nova Scotia	54,000	58,000
Quebec	49,500	52,000
Ontario	44,200	45,500
Manitoba	32,000	37,000
Saskatchewan	2,500	2,500
Alberta	18,000	17,000
British Columbia	10,000	11,500
Canada	260,500	280,500

## Cheesed Spuds

Scrub medium baking potatoes (1 per serving); pare or not. Cut each into 1/4 inch lengthwise slices, then into 1/4 inch sticks. Pile each "potato's worth" on a piece of foil. Sprinkle each pile of potato sticks liberally with onion salt, celery salt, freshly ground pepper, and 2 tbsp. grated parmesan cheese, making sure all surfaces are seasoned; then dot each serving with 2 tbsp. butter or margarine. Bring edges of foil together, and allowing plenty of room for expansion of steam in each package, seal securely with double fold. Cook potatoes on grill top over coals about 30 minutes or till tender, turning packages several times. Serve piping hot in foil.

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# Thursday Night Jitter ????

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Have you ever felt that on times when you've wanted to look your best, the inevitable happens; your mirror laughs back at you and you feel like the Goodyear Blimp?

That hair all neatly curled, suddenly flops down; the kitchen mop has had better days.

My stomach feels upset! I guess I should have eaten dinner, instead of that whole bag of pretzels.

Take it easy, be cool, everyone has been told.

What we wouldn't have done at that time for any form of tranquilizer. Look at all of those people out there, must be nearly a thousand. I wonder if there are any tomatoes.

Our very happy make-up lady is now dancing up and down the hall with one of the gentlemen. It all seems

like a dream.

Thirteen of us, all thinking of the things we should be doing and how we will do them wrong.

Somehow, a very helpful group of ladies managed to help us remember our names and a few other important things, to guide us through the evening. Suddenly, as quickly as the evening started, it was over. The excitement though, continued for three more days.

Remembering the events that followed: pancake breakfast, dinners, dances, tractor pull . . . just meeting people; a steady flurry of activity.

The year has gone too quickly for me, but for everyone else who will be looking forward to this year's festival, it hasn't gone fast enough!

Marg Van Hart  
1976 Alliston Potato Queen



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# Personalities to Remember

Theodore Pringle Loblaw was born at Elmgrove, Ontario, July 1, 1872, son of William James Loblaw and Isabella Stevenson, grandson of William Stevenson and Elizabeth Pringle. He was always called "Thede" but most of his Toronto associates called him "Tom". He had two brothers and a sister -- Will, Jack and Maizie (Mrs. E. Kinsey). When he was about four years old, his father was killed and his mother moved her little family over to West Essa Corners, nearer her parents. This gave him the opportunity, which he loved, to be near his Grandfather's home.

He helped to do chores and attended Burns School. One of the things that impressed him and his school mates was to listen to a maiden lady called "Amelia" praying to her God.

In the early 1890's he had an ambition to go to Toronto, and it is said that he left his Grandfather's farm with only \$2.00 in his pocket. He found a boarding house with a Scottish family, Mr. and Mrs. Adam, whose daughter he later married. He found work in a grocery store owned by Mr. Cork, and he and Mr. Cork's son, Milton, became friends for the rest of their lives.

On June 2, 1897 he married Isabella Adam and adopted Jean (his grand niece) and raised three foster sons, Alex, Jack and James, nephews of Mrs. Loblaw. They started a grocery store on College Street. A very small thing happened which changed his whole way of thinking. Saturday was always a busy day and to prepare for it they would "do up" sugar in 25c, 50c and \$1.00 bags and pile these on the counter. He noticed that customers would come in, pick up a bag, pay the cashier and go out without saying a word. An idea developed "why not do this with everything in the store?" In 1919 he opened his first self-service store in West Toronto. A company was formed with Mr. Loblaw as President and Mr. M. Cork as Vice-President. Stores were opened all over Ontario, Buffalo, Edmonton and Chicago.

In 1927 he purchased his grandfather's farm and modernized the house, improved the barns, dug a well and under drained the farm. In 1932 he had a religious experience when the Oxford Group came to Toronto. He went out telling his story in many churches in Ontario and his main theme was that he had found "Amelia's God". In the spring of 1933 he died after a sinus operation. He was so well and favourably known that a great sadness fell over the community. He was buried in Alliston Union Cemetery.

He was a member of the United Church in Mimico, Ontario, the Masonic Order and the Kiwanis Club. He donated a large sum of money to the Toronto Western Hospital and Emmanuel College. His home town benefited greatly by his generosity. He spent considerable money paving Victoria Street and later contributed largely to the building of Stevenson Memorial Hospital. A legacy was left for the hospital's maintenance.

As a tribute to his memory -- "I never knew him to do a mean thing".

W.J. Wood,

William Stevenson was born May 7, 1807 at Smailholm, Scotland. His wife Elizabeth Pringle was born December 25, 1810 at Edinburgh, Scotland.

They were married April 6, 1832 in Scotland and at once set out for Canada. They spent sixteen weeks crossing the Atlantic on a sailing vessel. They had to bring their own food and suffered untold hardship.

They landed at Kingston and continued their journey by boat to Toronto. Leaving here they walked sixty miles north-west through unsurveyed lands to Essa Township, crossing the rivers on logs. The Ruthvens and Stevensons were the first settlers west of Cookstown, Essa - Con 1 Lot VIII.

After the Rebellion of 1837 William was a strong supporter of the Reform principles and was a Commissioner of the Peace for twenty years.

First they attended Turnbull's Chapel at West Essa, a methodist church. Soon afterwards a Presbyterian missionary visited the district and services were held in Mr. Stevenson's log barn and later the frame home. They helped build and support Burns Presbyterian Church. He was the first Treasurer and an elder.

In 1853 a twelve roomed frame house was built with a large woodshed, in it stood an old wooden pump. This house still stands as a monument to the skill of those who built it. (1977).

It is interesting to note that the relatives in Scotland always enclosed seeds of wheat in their letters and these were planted here. Mr. Stevenson walked many times to Holland Landing to have his grain ground for flour.

They had eight girls and two boys. Two girls died in infancy and one boy, Willie, died at thirteen years of age.

Isabella married James Loblaw, Parents of T.P. Loblaw, Grandparents of Hunter Loblaw and Mrs. Iris Dickey. They lived at West Essa.

Rachel married Thomas Loblaw and lived at Meaford.

Elspeth married George McGirr, Grandparents of Mrs. Elspeth Alderson, Mrs. Elspeth Milne and Mrs. Jean Corrigan. They lived at Alliston.

Mary married Robert Turnbull and lived at West Essa. Grandparents of Bruce Turnbull.

John never married.

Margaret married John McGirr, Grandparents of Mrs. Margaret Murphy. They lived at Alliston.

Francis married John Ruthven and lived on the lands of Glen Afton Farms.

The Stevensons celebrated their Golden Wedding on April 6, 1882. William died April 27, 1884 and Elizabeth October 28, 1895.

The Stevenson Memorial Hospital was named in memory of this couple.

Mr. T.P. Loblaw.



# Export Marketing

Normally when we speak of exporting of potatoes from Ontario we are referring to the shipping of potatoes (tablestock, processing or seed) to the United States of America. However, in the 1976 season, exports were made directly to Europe from Ontario for the first time and then it may have been a "one time only" deal.

In 1976 areas of continental Europe and England experienced very severe drought conditions which greatly reduced potato production and thereby opened up an export market for North American potatoes and processed potato products.

For example, Maritime Provinces have exported over twice as many potatoes in 1976-77 as compared to the previous 1975-76 season, 607,360,000 pounds in 1976 compared to 260,800,000 pounds in 1975 with most of this increase going to Europe.

This new potential market was not overlooked by people in Ontario. In early fall of 1976, R.K. Beattie Limited, Alliston, started to co-ordinate the accumulation of potatoes for export to Europe.

The first effort consisted of about 13,000 cwts. packed in 100 pound jute bags. Since most packers

were already near capacity packing for domestic customers, it was necessary to have 5 packers working on the shipment to get it ready quickly enough to meet the ship sailing schedule.

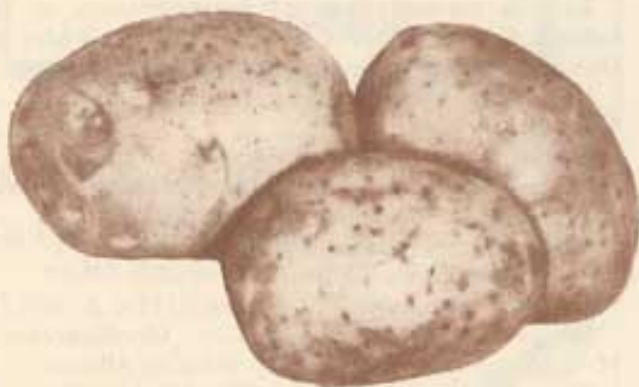
Due to the high cost and labour requirements for handling potatoes in jute bags, the decision was made to try exporting potatoes bulk in containers. (Most of us have seen these containers on trucks or trains and have probably read about container ships.)

Potatoes were brought directly from the fields, graded and loaded in bulk into CP containers. Inspectors from Plant Quarantine Division, Agriculture Canada, were on hand throughout this loading process to ensure that the potatoes were of good quality and free of disease.

The containers were then taken by truck to Toronto, by train to Quebec City and finally by ship to France. In total almost 8,000,000 pounds of potatoes were shipped directly to France from the Alliston area.

It is gratifying to know that there are still those who will develop opportunities as they become available. With the experience gained, there will be no hesitation in the future if such an opportunity arises.

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# Export Marketing



[1] Bulk load of potatoes, directly from the harvester.



[3] Loading directly from the bulk field truck to the CP container.



[2] Grading and inspecting.





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## Potato Festival Committee

Dear Members:

On behalf of the local staff of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food stationed in Alliston, I would like to commend you for the job you are doing in publicizing one of the important agricultural products of our community. Ralph Shaw and shortly his successor as Potato Specialist has a close working relationship with the potato growers in the technical end of potato production. Chuck Kingsbury as Field Crop Specialist is involved in much of the crop recommendations which are a part of rotation programs for potato growers. George Garland as Agricultural Engineer has been involved in storage construction, drainage and equipment recommendations.

Barbara McArthur, our Home Economist is called upon on numerous occasions for potato recipes and works with the 4-H Homemaking and ladies groups in the county. George Hunter and his staff is responsible for the grading standards of the area potatoes. Bessie Kent and Sharon MacKenzie of the office staff, service many inquiries across the counter and help all of us with our communications, by letter, press and telephone. Marlene McLeod, Bill Cooper and myself, in the field of Agricultural Extension have many varied contacts with the agricultural community.

As a total staff, we join in congratulating you on the programs to date and wish you the very best in 1977.

J. Keith McRuer,  
Agricultural Representative,  
South Simcoe.



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# The Alliston Fire Brigade

The Alliston Fire Brigade was officially formed in December 28th, 1906, when 22 volunteers turned up at a meeting in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall for the organization of a fire fighting force. With Councillor R.J. Wallace acting as Chairman the following men were chosen as members of the first brigade -- W.G. Fisher, J.H. Mitchell, R. Holmes, W.D. Latimer, W.J. Wood, A.J. Kernich, W.B. Clifton, J.A. Ryan, W. Storey, J.A. Hutchinson, M.S. Glass, H. Speers, H.A. Baycroft, W.H. Kirley, W. Stanyou, C. Taylor, J.J. Stanyou, H. Brown, G. Smith, C. Fisher, R.J. Wallace and J. Williams.

The officers of the original brigade were J.J. Stanyou (Captain), J. Williams (Chief), R. Holmes (Lieutenant), W.B. Clifton (Secretary). Mr. Williams was Chief until his death in 1930. Since the first meeting, the brigade has held all of its meetings in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall.

The original fire fighting equipment which the brigade possessed, consisted of two-wheeled hose reels, which were pulled by horses and a hook and ladder wagon which was also horse drawn. The members had no uniforms until November, 1907 when they purchased rubber boots and coats. Fire helmets were to come later.

After the death of John Williams in 1930 Arthur Merrett took over as Chief until 1945. Since then the Chiefs have been A. (Short) Bergin 1946-47, Norman Bray 1948-49, Russell Ludlow 1950-51, John Whiteside 1952-57, Bill Boyes 1958-67, Harold Parsons 1968-1973, Jim Hunter 1973-.

The brigade managed with the horse drawn reels and hook and ladder until 1925 when the town, at the request of the brigade, purchased a Model "T" Ford which was sold to Tottenham in 1934. A Chevrolet truck with reel was then bought and later sold to Thornbury. In 1947 a used International fire truck was purchased. However, the main vehicle was a GMC 1950 pumper truck which was brought into use in 1951. The GMC held 500 gallons of water which is usually adequate to extinguish most smaller fires. The older truck was equipped with a front pumper but did not carry any water.

The trucks carried two Scott Air Packs, and resitubes were donated by J.M. Patton which were the newest thing in artificial respiration equipment. Most of the firemen knew how to use this lifesaving equipment. There were 2,000 feet of 2½ inch hose and 300 feet of one inch hose carried on the trucks. Each spring an inventory was taken to see if it was adequate.

In 1959 the Fire bell was changed to a Siren. Each year gifts were given to the Bell Telephone girls for their work in phoning the men.

The brigade holds one meeting a month usually on the second Thursday. Six regular practices are also held during the year, but extra practises are sometimes held during the winter for instruction in first aid.

New members are elected to the brigade by a vote of the active members. If more than two members vote against an applicant, he is refused admission.

The Alliston Brigade belongs to the Simcoe County Mutual Aid Association for the purpose of aiding neighbouring municipalities in time of fire or disaster.

Plaques are given to men who have served over 15 years. In 1960 - Thomas Goddard 34 years. In 1961, Norman Horsburgh 17 years. In 1965 Roy Peterman, 24 years. In 1957 John Whiteside was made a life-time Honorary Chief. Mrs. Harold Parsons received the Long Service Medal and Citation on behalf of her late husband who died in 1973. He had served for 30 years.

The fire trucks had always been housed in the south part of the Town Hall. In 1962 the "Lock Up" just north of the Town Hall had been demolished and a new Fire Hall was built on this property in the same year, at a cost of \$6,000.00; the fire men did all the necessary labour. The Building Committee was Ron Beattie, Chairman, Arthur Grose and Ambrose Heydon. By November the trucks were transferred to this building. In December the Annual meeting was held in the Fire Hall and since then all meetings have been held there. The rates for fire men -- \$50.00 per fire of \$35.00 for the first hour and \$25.00 for each additional hour.

In 1973 an Emergency equipment van was added. Wayne Bishop was the first official from the Fire Department on the Potato Festival Committee. In 1974 John Heydon and Wayne Bishop built the large potato that was taken around to the various towns for their parades.

In 1975 the Offices were changed, there is now a Chief - Jim Hunter, Deputy Chief - Ambrose Heydon, Platoon Chief and Secretary - Bill Bendell, Captain of each vehicle - John Heydon, Brian Gibson, and Dave Evans.

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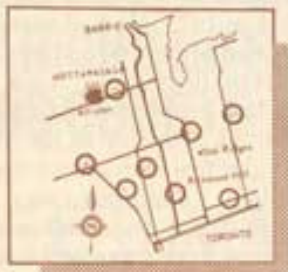
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Everyone joins in the fun on Grand Parade Day.

## History of the Potato

The earliest recorded history of the potato comes to us from the Spanish who discovered it in Peru and Chile in the early 1500's. The "papas" were used by the aborigines in place of bread and were also dried in the sun to preserve them. They were usually cooked, but often made into flour. There was evidence of long continued practice of cultivation, however crude. The potato was and still is wild in the mountainous regions of Chile and Peru.

The potato was probably carried to Spain by explorers of the sixteenth century and for over a century after its introduction was grown more as a curiosity than as a food. The Irish first recognized its great value for food and it was cultivated as a field crop in Ireland before 1663. For the Irish it quickly became a staple article of food in the greater part of the country. In 1845 and 1846 when the potato crop failed because of late blight, it was referred to as the Potato Famine with a great many deaths and many emigrating to other countries.

The date and method of introduction of the potato to North America is not known but it was probably introduced by early Spanish explorers. Over the years through selection and breeding there has been considerable standardization of the crop which now includes smooth to heavily russeted skins, red, blue, white colours, oblong and oval shape, deep and shallow eyes, etc. Continuing selection and use of its many varied characteristics makes it possible to use the right variety for each specific use.



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## The Fertilizer Industry Comes to Alliston

It has been estimated that without the chemical fertilizers that are used throughout the World, one third of the World's population would die of starvation. In the Alliston area, fertilizers play a very important role in the economical production of high quality potatoes.

Up to the 1950's, fertilizer used in the Alliston area was manufactured in large plants in Toronto, Hamilton, Welland and Port Hope. The fertilizer was packed in 125 lb. jute bags and shipped by rail car during the winter months to Alliston. The local growers would use horses and sleighs or wagons to move the fertilizer to their farms in readiness for spring. As the roads improved and trucks became available, the fertilizer was moved directly from the plants to the farms. Fertilizers such as 2-12-6, 2-12-10 and 4-10-8 were popular grades during this period.

To meet the demand of the potato growers to mechanize their growing operations, the fertilizer suppliers have built blending plants in the Alliston area. Now the various sources of plant food, such as ammonium nitrate and urea, derived from Alberta's natural gas; phosphates manufactured from rock phosphate from Florida; potash from Saskatchewan; sulphate of potash magnesium from New Mexico, are assembled at the local plants. Here the materials are blended together to formulate granular free-flowing, high analysis fertilizers such as 15-15-15, 10-20-20 and 16-8-8. The fertilizers are loaded in bulk on the growers' bulk trucks, tractor drawn spreaders and truck-mounted spreaders to be moved directly to the potato planters or spread directly on the fields.

The Alliston potato growers are served by plants operated by United Co-Operatives of Ontario, Gen Star Chemicals Limited, Cyanamid Farm Supply Centre owned by Cyanamid of Canada Limited and the CIL Agromart owned by Cardinal Farm Supply Limited.

## Pancake Breakfast

The Potato Festival Pancake Breakfast has been served for the past three years by the Couples Club of St. John's Church. They have served from 1200-1500 people and with the usual community co-operation, hope this year to top 1800.

Our booth is situated at the main intersection of the town and starts the Saturday festivities of the Potato Festival off with a bang.

The breakfast begins at 7:00 a.m. and continued through to 12:00 or 1:00 p.m. with some customers lighting up the scene in bright but odd night attire. Toe tapping music, a visit from our queen and her princesses, prizes, sunshine? and our morning smiles, begin the festivities for the day and hopefully brighten yours.

Won't you join us?

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# Your map to the ALLISTON POTATO FESTIVAL

