



The Cultivation of Cardinal Berry Farm

By Thelma Bradley

I have been a life-long resident of Guthrie in Oro-Medonte Township, having moved there with my parents and six brothers and sisters when I was an infant. We lived on a mixed farm, and later moved to a five-acre parcel along Highway 11. My parents always had a big garden and grew many fruits, flowers and vegetables.

After my marriage to Ross, we moved to Barrie. I attended Business College at night. But after two-and-a-half years the country life beckoned us back to Guthrie. We bought our first house with a fair-sized lot so we could do some gardening, which we both enjoyed.

I also became more involved in community activities - the Guthrie Bowling League, the local hall board and the local horticultural society. For thirteen years I served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Oro World's Fair; and for many years I was a member of the Flower Committee for the Barrie Fair. For over thirty years I exhibited at many local fairs, showing flowers, vegetables and baking.

Of course, with my mother having been a long-time Institute member, it was only natural that I go with her to meetings. Before long, our daughter became involved in 4-H and I became an assistant leader. I found myself taking on convenerships in the Women's Institutes, and eventually serving as President two dif-



ferent times. Now, thirty plus years later, I'm still involved as Treasurer of the Guthrie Branch. Having served on various committees over the years, I developed the ability to work with different people and the initiative to always try new endeavors.

A big change came into our life in 1972, when we bought a 70-acre parcel of vacant farmland and bush on the fifth concession of Oro. We set about building our new home and clearing some land for gardening. After a few years and a lot of hard work, we opened up a pick-your-own strawberry and raspberry business. We gradually enlarged our operation, adding red and black currants, rhubarb, asparagus and blueberries.

In 1986, Ross retired from C.G.E. and Black & Decker. Our business had grown to an extent that required a building of an outlet store on site. And we finally decided to name our farm Cardinal Berry Farm.

With the additional space in the outlet store, I began making a line of jams and jellies made from our own fruit. Because of our love of flowers we expanded into fresh and dried flowers. We grow all of

our cut flowers from seed. We have over fifty varieties of dahlias and over one hundred varieties of roses. We grow about one-quarter of an acre of other types of flowers. I dry the flowers using various methods - air drying, silica gel and glycerin.

Because we grow so many fruit crops that need good fertilization of bloom, a local beekeeper has thirteen colonies of bees located on the edge of the bush on our farm. We sell his honey, as well as maple syrup produced from our woodlot.

From May 1 through to November, we are open seven days a week. A number of people interested in horticulture come out to tour our gardens and collect information. When invited, Ross and I like to speak to groups about the various products of our farm. It is a very busy lifestyle, but one we enjoy. Part of the enjoyment comes from the many new friends we have made over the years.

Thelma and her husband Ross own Cardinal Berry Farm on the 5th Concession of Oro Township, just off Highway 11. Thelma is also Treasurer of the Guthrie Women's Institute in Simcoe Kempenfeldt District.

Congratulations

Anniversaries:

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| Cain's Corners WI, Simcoe West | 50 |
| Cassburn WI, Prescott | 50 |
| Helena Feasby WI, Waterloo North | 50 |
| Wellandport WI, Lincoln | 80 |
| Solina WI, Durham West | 95 |
| Staffa WI, Perth South | 95 |

Life Memberships:

- Solina WI, Durham West
- Doris Flett
- Dorothy Pascoe
- Jean Taylor

Certificates of Merit:

- Seymour West WI,
- Northumberland East
- Grace Wynn