

Historic plaque for Tweed's Centennial

by W. Clyde Bell and
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The Tweed and Area Historical Society is sponsoring the erection of an Historical Plaque marking the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of the Village of Tweed.

The plaque will be presented by the Heritage Foundation, Ministry of Culture and Communications at an unveiling ceremony at St. John's United Church Hall, Spring St. at 2 p.m., Saturday, November 23.

The text of the plaque, written with the assistance of the Historical Society, includes the history of the village, with reference to the All-woman Municipal Council that made history in 1967:

"During the 1830s a settlement, initially called Munroe's Mills and later Hungerford Mills, developed here on the Moira River. In 1850, when its population had reached approximately 100, it was surveyed and renamed Tweed by prominent millowner, James Jamieson. The community grew steadily during the mid-19th century with the development of lumbering and mining in the area. Later, as agriculture assumed greater importance, it became a service centre for local farmers. By 1891, when it merged with neighbouring Georgetown and was incorporated as a village, Tweed was served by two railways, and had several small factories, numerous businesses and over 750 residents. In 1967, after decades of modest growth, the community gained widespread attention as the site of Canada's first all-woman municipal council."

It is hoped that most - if not all - the members of the Centennial All-woman Council will attend the unveiling, at which the public

is also welcome. Clyde Bell, then Editor of the *Tweed News* recalls the events leading up to the historic election of that special council.

Mr. Bell said that at a first nomination meeting in the fall of 1967, Barbara Allen was acclaimed Reeve of Tweed, with Dora Courneya being acclaimed as a councillor. A second nomination meeting was needed to fill the other three seats. "It was Canada's Centennial year, and an All-woman Council seemed a good idea for a project," said Mr. Bell. "There was no law that said we couldn't try, so I wrote an editorial in the *Tweed News*."

After the second nomination meeting, five persons had let their name stand: *Tweed News* staff member Amelia Bosley, temporary *Tweed News* staff member Chris Sinclair, Land O' Lakes Tourist Association secretary Janet Whitfield, and two men - Anglican minister Rev. Sinclair (no relation) and Burt Thompson.

The two men plus Amelia Bosley won the three vacant council seats in the 1967 municipal election. But Burt Thompson took a job in another community and resigned, and Rev. Sinclair was transferred to another parish. This opened the door for Mrs. Sinclair and Mrs. Whitfield to join Tweed council.

"I knew the night editor at the *Toronto Globe and Mail*," said Mr. Bell. "I called him right after the swearing-in. The story broke on the front page of the *Globe and Mail* the next morning."

The event brought this community much publicity, and articles were written about the council in North America and in Europe. The All-woman council was not to last, though. In the next election, Mrs. Whitfield was defeated by a man.