

Tributes to the Lovely Townships of Grey and Bruce

A Series delivered over C F O S by Kris Morris of Victoria and Grey Trust

ARRAN TOWNSHIP

For the traveller going west out of Owen Sound along the beautiful Blue-water highway, one of the most romantic places he can choose to stop and tarry is in the lovely Township of Arran.

Lying in the middle of the County of Bruce, this small municipality has a distinct Scottish flavour. Named after the Island of Arran at the mouth of the Clyde River in Scotland, the Township was one of the earliest regions to be carved out of the wild that was once Bruce County.

Land in the Township of Arran was open for sale in 1852. From its beginnings life has not always been easy here and early settlers complained of the stone and swamp that had to be cleared and drained before civilized life could begin in this rugged and picturesque portion of our region. But the early pioneers preserved and with the help of the gentle rivers of the Township, which include the quiet and meandering Sauble, and blessed by the fertile soil, Arran grew rapidly.

From its early beginnings when its first residents had to walk over the primitive roads to Southampton for supplies, Arran has never stopped progressing, from Dundee and Clyde, from Glasgow and Sky came the

Telfords, the Kennedys, the McKecknies and the Roberts. Soon Arran had roads and railroads. The Saugeen and Owen Sound road being a major artery through the Township and soon the Township had a lawsuit. Then in 1861 it separated from Albemarle and Amabel to form a separate Township.

However, Arran has always been a lucky place to live. It settled with its sister Townships at a profit of \$2,832.00. Arran was on its way. The Township lies in the middle of Bruce County and is the home of many charming rural villages that are richly endowed with romantic names. Where else in the Twin Counties can one drive down maple shaded lanes of communities such as Elsinore, Invermae, Burgoyne and last, but in no way least, Tara—the largest village in Arran represents to its visitors the perfect model of a peaceful rural Ontario town. Stately brick homes and prosperous business line its streets which are intersected by gentle streams and bridges. Tara has always had a history of small manufacturing and although its early cheese and pottery factories, woollen and saw mills have passed into history, there still remains a centre for milk processing and seed cleaning plants. It is hard to find a more pleasant

and relaxed spot in our twin counties to visit as in the graceful village of Tara.

Agriculture is the homework of this Township. The story of the farms in Arran is a story of her past, present and future. Farming is on a large scale here with a preference toward Herefords. Arran cattle have become well known at the livestock auctions in both Grey and Bruce Counties and 4-H Clubs are active and busy in this bountiful Township. Each year the farm products of Arran rank high during the many fall agricultural fairs that take place in our region. The Township has many clubs and organizations. The Women's Institutes maintain many of the traditions of the Township and continue to grow both in strength and in service.

For a small Township, Arran has had more than its share of distinguished sons and daughters. She is justly proud of her native son William H. Hurst, born of Irish immigrant parents on a farm near Arkwright. This youngest son of nine children of a sturdy pioneer family greatly respected by their neighbours, went on in life to become the Premier of Ontario from 1914 to 1919. A period, when his own Township offered many of its sons in service to their country during the First World War.

Arran was also the home of Dr. Andrew Thompson who became a world renowned meteorologist.

Arran Township seems a fortuitous place in which to grow up. Smack dab in the middle of the Township is lovely Arran Lake, the largest in the county South of Highway 21. Blue Arran is nearly three miles long and covers nearly one thousand acres, a haven for fishermen. The lake offers pike, perch, small mouth bass, rock bass and many other fine game fish. The

lake caters to both the hunter and the bird watcher since it is a migration area much loved by ducks and geese.

Indeed, the waterways and lakes of Arran Township attract both the casual and the expert naturalists, every fall since this is one of the loveliest pieces of land in which to view the glorious changing of the seasons.

So, hats off to Arran Township, the wonderful place to be from, the even better place in which to live.