

# John confesses he is having love affair with other 'woman'

I publicly confess there is another woman in my life.

This isn't the usual affair when boy meets girl and a romance unfolds. This "affair" can be best described as an "infatuation."

I moved to a farm near Limehouse, with my parents in 1950. My grandfather, Angus McDonald, had purchased the 100 acres in 1923 and my father grew up here with eight brothers and two sisters.

The immediate area was called "Dolly Varden." Moving here in 1950 was the introduction to my life-long "romance" with "Dolly"!!

The name intrigued me as a young boy. Various members of the family would indicate that "the Dolly" was named after a famous opera or vaudeville star or possibly a woman who once lived there.

These details were too scanty and I felt a real compulsion to find out more about this "mystery woman."

A letter to the British Music Hall Society in London England requesting any information on one Dolly Varden netted an assumption that "she was only a character of fiction". No trace of a real life "Dolly Varden" on file!!

Charles Dickens wrote a novel "Barnaby Rudge" which first appeared as a series of articles on February 13, 1841. The work had a principal character called Dolly Varden, a buxom young girl "not likely frightened."

One theory is that Dickens was portraying a type of people who lived in the Limehouse district of London, England. Some would consider her somewhat a "folk-hero." Hence the name Dolly Varden for the small industrial community, just west of Limehouse on the Grand Trunk Line.

Other stories have been handed down by generations of residents at "the Dolly". One relates that a woman by that name resided there in a hut. One old-timer could recall his father, once an employee at the Dolly, tell the story about this mysterious woman setting fire to herself with Kerosene oil.

The community known as "the Dolly" is located between the 3rd and 4th Concessions of the former Esqueting Township on Lot 24.

Part of the Niagara Escarpment runs through this area with beds of limestone which have been used since the middle 1840s, for making cement and plaster.

Lime kilns were built at Dolly Varden by Messrs. Robertson and Laidlaw in 1872. The kilns known as "draw" or "shaft" kilns were about 50 feet high with a base of about 20 x 20 feet. A three day starting-up period was required to obtain a hot fire.

Lime was drawn every five or six hours when additional rock would be placed on the top of the kiln.

Near the base was an archway built into the wall of the kiln. Tram cars running on rails were loaded with burnt lime.

Farmers for miles around supplied the lime works at Dolly Varden with wood for the burning of the kilns. It was not uncommon to see several wagons loaded with fire wood headed for "the Dolly."

On May 12, 1874 Dr. McGarvin and C. S. Smith purchased the lime works. By this time four kilns were in operation, eight months of the year, with a capacity of 1200 bushels per day. By 1874 there were about 10 men employed with total wages amounting to \$325 per month.

The operation grew and eventually changed from the Canada Lime Works to the Toronto Lime Company. By 1917 the dangers of blasting and a shortage of limestone resulted in closure of the Limehouse quarries and a heavier concentration of activities at Dolly Varden.

William Gowdy, of Limehouse, once managed the Toronto Lime Works, and in 1927 the Gypsum Lime and Alabastine Company purchased the assets. Dominion Tar & Chemical eventually purchased the holdings at Dolly Varden.

Although the Ontario Geographic Names Board does not acknowledge the name, I have found Dolly Varden listed as "Stop 80" on a Toronto Suburban Railroad schedule dated May 10, 1918. One of the few times Dolly Varden was ever "in print" as a geographic location.

About ten houses once sat near the Fourth Concession. These were homes for workers at the lime kilns. A few residents of this area were raised in these homes and can recall their childhood at "the Dolly".

In 1920 the Toronto Lime Company was "making preparations for the erection of two additional houses near the works." A barn on the property was also being converted into a dwelling. Huge mountains of crushed limestone and a maze of automated conveyor belts occupy the area where the company houses once sat.

The kilns were last fired in 1931 due to economic conditions and a slump in the market. The area sat idle until Acton Limestone Quarries commenced operations in 1962. This was to become one of the largest and most modern aggregate operations in North America.

In 1967 Indusmin acquired the huge Acton Quarry and still operates today. Several farms have been purchased in the area for expansion of the quarry site.

Only a few years ago a ratepayers' controversy erupted and was dubbed the



THE ORIGINAL "draw" lime kilns at Dolly Varden. A three day starting-up period was required to obtain a hot fire. Limestone was dumped into the top of the kiln.

Life-long romance



WORKERS pose at the Toronto Lime Works at Dolly Varden in 1913. "The Dolly" provided employment for several men from the 1870s until 1931 in the manufacture of cement and plaster. Farmers for miles around sold wood to the firm for "firing the kilns."

**ACTON OUTERS CLUB**  
**GLASS DRIVE**  
 Saturday, March 5th  
 ANY GLASS BOTTLES, JARS ETC. WITHOUT LIDS  
 Pick-up Starting at 10 a.m.  
 PLEASE LEAVE AT END OF DRIVEWAY

**Hoover LIGHTWEIGHT CLEANER**  
 FEATURES YOU'LL LIKE  
 • Lightweight  
 • Handle Grip  
 • Large Throw-Away Dust Bag fills from the top  
 • 3-Position Handle Control  
 • Convenient Toe Switch  
 • Hood Only 5 1/2" High  
 • Unbreakable Motor Hood

• Wrap-Around Furniture Guard  
 • Instant Rug Adjustment... Dial Low-Normal-High-Shag Pile  
 • Triple-Action Cleaning Power: "It Beats, As It Sweeps, As It Cleans"  
 • Converts Easily For Optional Cleaning Attachments

**\$64.95**

OPTIONAL ATTACHMENTS **22.95**

**WIGO T.V.** SALES AND SERVICE  
 Downtown Georgetown  
 PHONE 877-3376

## Halton Sketches

by John McDonald

"Battle of Dolly Varden." This was subsequent to announcements that baled Toronto garbage would be buried at Indusmin's quarry site. A series of heated debates resulted in a citizen's group "G.U.A.R.D." being formed.

My "infatuation" and "romance" with Dolly Varden continues. I still strive to find a clue about the possible existence of a woman after whom a very small but nonetheless important industrial community was named.

Plan Now!

TO ATTEND OUR  
**"Fashion Musical"**  
 MONDAY, MARCH 28th  
 M. Z. BENNETT PUBLIC SCHOOL  
 MARILYN'S  
**Village Boutique**  
 124 Mill St. East - Acton - 853-3910

## ROXY THEATRE

878-3272  
 878-3208  
 MILTON

Wed. 23 Thu. 24 Fri. 25 Sat. 26 Sat. Matinee 2 p.m.

WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS  
**GUS**  
 FEBRUARY 27

Bill Osco's  
**Alice in Wonderland**  
 FEBRUARY 28

Also  
 A warm touching and unique story  
 Mar. 1  
 JACK LEMMON GENEVIEVE BUJOLD  
 Wed. 2  
 ALEX & THE GYPSY

Thu. 3 Fri. 4  
 ADULT ENTERTAINMENT  
**CHARLES BRONSON**  
**JILL IRELAND**  
**"FROM NOON TILL THREE"**  
 Show Times: Sun. to Thurs. 8 p.m.  
 Fri. and Sat. 7 p.m. & 9 p.m.



EVENTUALLY FOUR kilns were erected at the Dolly Varden works to produce ingredients for cement and plaster.



MESSRS. Robertson and Laidlaw built the two original lime kilns at Dolly Varden in 1872. C. S. Smith of Acton owned the Canada Lime Works when his sketch from a company envelope was used in the 1880s.

The Halton Roman Catholic Separate School Board  
**Advance Registration**  
**Kindergarten to Grade 8**  
 St. Joseph Catholic School, Acton  
**Thursday, February 24th, 1977**  
 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
 at  
**ST. JOSEPH PARISH HALL**  
 Church Street East, Acton  
 Children who will be 5 years of age by February 28, 1978 are eligible for Kindergarten, September 1977. Proof of age is required.  
 Parents will be advised of the Board's transportation policy at the time of registration.  
**R. J. O'Brien, Chairman**  
**C. G. Byrnes, Director of Education**

**Top quality at a low price, that's Value**

**Bright's Tomato Juice** 49¢  
**Green Giant Corn Niblets** 37¢  
**IGA, Shasta, Carlton Club Assorted Flavours Soft Drinks** \$2.99  
**Dare Cookies** 79¢  
**McCain's Superfries** 69¢  
**Aylmer Soups** 4 for \$1  
**Spartan Apples** 89¢  
**Radishes** 39¢  
**Bunch Carrots** 99¢  
**Green Onions** 39¢  
**Lemons** 49¢

**Snackin' Cake Mixes** 69¢  
**Tenderflake Lard** 45¢  
**Beans with Pork** 25¢  
**Light Bulbs** 49¢  
**Fruit Cocktail or Peach Halves** 59¢  
**Flamingo Butter Tarts** 99¢  
**IGA EXCLUSIVE MARLY Smoke Dinnerware** \$8.98

**FRESH! Pork Loin Roasts**  
 RIB PORTION \$1.09  
 TENDERLOIN PORTION \$1.19  
**Veal Cutlets or Sirloin Veal Steaks** \$1.69  
**Loan Pork Chops** \$1.39  
**Dinner Hams** \$1.89  
**Side Bacon** \$1.39  
**Loan Pork Chops** \$1.19  
**Wiener** 79¢  
**Breakfast Slices** \$1.09  
**Sandwich Meats** 69¢

**PRODUCE OF U.S.A. CANADA No. 1 GRADE Lettuce 3 FOR 99¢**  
**PRODUCE OF U.S.A. Sunkist Navel Oranges 99¢**

**SAVE 8¢** ON THE PURCHASE OF A 20 FL. OZ. JAR OF PLAIN MEAT OR MUSHROOM RAGU  
**Spaghetti Sauce**

**SAVE 12¢** ON THE PURCHASE OF A 6 OZ. BAG OF MILK CHOCOLATE BUTTERSCOTCH OR SEMI SWEET  
**Chips**

**SAVE 8¢** ON THE PURCHASE OF A PKG. OF 60 BAGGIES PLASTIC ALLIGATOR  
**Sandwich Bags**

**SAVE 15¢** ON THE PURCHASE OF A 1-kg BOX OF GAINES  
**Puppy Choice**

**SAVE 10¢** ON THE PURCHASE OF A 24 OZ. BAG OF ECONOMY  
**Farmkist Prunes**

**FREE DELIVERY WITHIN TOWN (ACTON) LIMITS**  
**ACTON I.G.A.**  
 8 Main St. North - 853-1960