

# Woman traces her Acton roots

## Granddaughter honours former Fire Chief

A search for her roots drew Kathy Thomas of Charlotte, North Carolina, to Acton, and to the driver's seat of the 1926 Studebaker fire truck that her grandfather, former Acton Fire Chief Murray MacDonald, drove while fighting local fires.

That Studebaker is being lovingly restored as the showpiece for the new Heritage Museum in the Churchill Road fire station – part of the rich history of firefighting in Acton that is being researched and written by volunteer firefighter Scott Alan, with the considerable research skills of Acton's Dave and Kay Dills.

Alan's day job as a Peel Police detective helped him trace Chief MacDonald's relatives, leading to Kathy Thomas and her husband Jim. The couple visited Acton recently, stirring up childhood memories for Kathy Thomas, as they traced MacDonald's imprint on Acton. He was a customs agent, baseball player, umpire, Mason, member of the Independent Order of Foresters, and sat on the fair, school and cemetery boards.

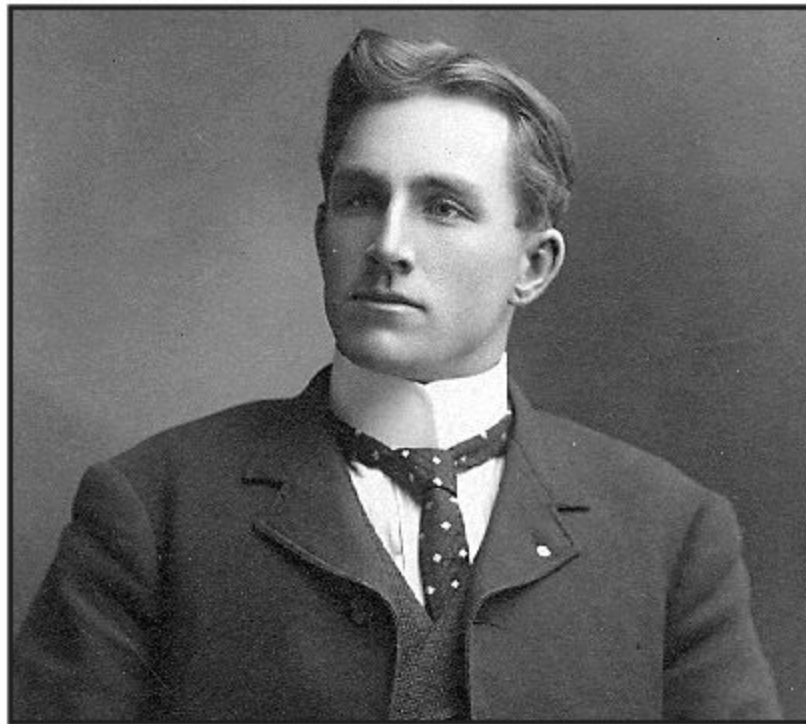
On a tour of Acton, led by Alan, Thomas rang the same bell at the Town Hall Centre that her grandmother, Ettie MacDonald, did when MacDonald was chief. As her husband hastily dressed, Ettie MacDonald would dash across Willow Street to ring the bell to summon firefighters.

Thomas also toured the Churchill Road fire station and Heritage Museum, and Fairview Cemetery, where her ancestors rest. Alan said Thomas recalled visiting her grandmother at her grandparent's Willow Street home after her grandfather died in 1941.

"I think she'll be back, in the near future, once I get the truck done," Alan said last Wednesday, adding the Heritage Museum is almost complete.



**RELIVING MEMORIES:** North Carolina resident Kathy Thomas, visited Acton recently and sat in the front seat of the 1926 Studebaker fire truck that her grandfather, Murray MacDonald drove when he was Acton's Fire Chief. – Submitted photo



**Murray MacDonald**



**Bell Ringer**

# Partners for the Future

A Strong Halton for a Strong Ontario – Partners for the Future is an advocacy platform that sets out Halton Region's position on key issues impacting residents. Developed in advance of the October 6 provincial election, it will assist the community and local candidates to better understand the challenges facing the Region and to outline what Halton requests of the next provincial government. The document has been posted online at [www.halton.ca/ontarioelection2011](http://www.halton.ca/ontarioelection2011).

"Halton voters should be informed about the challenges facing the Region and how local candidates would ad-

vocate for Halton's interests at Queen's Park," said Gary Carr, Regional Chair. "Areas such as municipal infrastructure, the natural environment, a thriving economy, public health and social services are significantly impacted by program and funding decisions made by the provincial government."

In early September, Chair Carr will ask provincial election candidates to respond to a questionnaire to explain to voters how they would resolve critical issues facing Halton. The questions and responses received from candidates will be posted on Halton's website. Visit

[www.halton.ca/ontarioelection2011](http://www.halton.ca/ontarioelection2011) to find out more about the issues facing Halton.

The Province has mandated Halton's population to double to 780,000 by 2031, requiring approximately \$8.6 billion for

hospitals, child care, emergency services, roads and other infrastructure. Municipal infrastructure funding needs to be a priority with the provincial government in order to maintain the current quality of life in Halton.

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