

June is Seniors Month- Celebrate

Frances Hogenbirk is the final Member of the Acton Seniors Centre I will be introducing you to this year. I hope you found it interesting to learn a little about some of our very busy, active members of the Acton Seniors Centre. People 55 and over often say they aren't "Old" enough to enjoy the Centre, but as you can tell from the different people I have written about, age is only a state of mind.

Francisca (better known as Frances) was born in Montreal, Quebec on Boxing Day, so she was a belated Christmas Gift to her parents. She tells me her parents Mathias and Rynaldina Mersel were wonderful people who came to Canada in 1923 from Rotterdam Holland (now the Netherlands). They came with very little, but a determination to make something of their new lives, especially for their six children who were all born in Canada.

Frances was the fifth child, and although three of her siblings have passed away, her oldest sister Pauline and her husband Bruce live in the Beaches area of Toronto. And her younger brother Peter and his wife Dorothy live in Niagara Falls.

She attended Bannatyne Public School, and Verdun High School. Which is a suburb of Montreal.

While at High School she decided to take a commercial course which she felt would stand her in good stead in the working world. When she left school at 17 she worked as a stenographer



A photo of a sweet sixteen year old Frances taken the year before she left school.

for an Ice Manufacturing Company and stayed with the company for five years.

Her next position was with Northern Electric Company in Lachine, Quebec, and she was there for 12 years.

In 1954 she met her husband Jan Hogenbirk at one of the Dutch events she enjoyed attending. He was living with his sister Dina who had lost her Canadian husband that year. Jan and his sister were born in Laren, Holland and he immigrated to Canada in 1952.



Frances has helped Elma Braidia with the Spring and Christmas bake table sales at the Acton Seniors Centre for many years. It never takes very long to clear the table.

lived there until 1974. Jan worked for Bell Canada, and in 1974 the company moved many of their employees to Toronto.

Although it took her husband one hour to drive to work each day they never regretted their move to Acton, and loved living in such a friendly town.

Frances's husband passed away in 1986 after almost 30 very happy years of marriage.

Their children were all born in Quebec, and sadly their first child Nancy passed away when she was only six weeks old. John her oldest son and his wife live in Sudbury with their two sons and one daughter, Tom lives in Barrie with his wife and three boys. Her daughter Barbara remained in Quebec and is a doctor in Pointe Claire, Quebec.

Frances has always lead a very busy life and worked as a volunteer at the Y.M.C.A when she was in her teens helping in both the library and the Ladies swimming classes.

In 1947 she was a Brownie Leader in Quebec, and continued with the Brownies until they moved to Acton.

She has been very involved with the Trinity United Church. (Where she has been Treasurer for the Trinity Activity Group (Tag) for the past 10 years). In 2004 in recognition of the many volunteer hours spent at her Church, she was very proud to accept a certificate recognizing 25 years of volunteering from the Ontario Volunteering Committee

Several years ago she even managed to find time to be a Red Cross Visitor for five years. She also volunteered at the M.Z.Bennett school, until she started working part time at the Georgetown

Public Library.

Wednesday mornings she helps at the parent/child center, and has done so for the past twelve years

You will see Frances on the front desk at the Centre every other Wednesday afternoon.

Jan enjoyed showing Frances his homeland in 1977 and again in 1986. They also visited places where her parents grew up, and some of her relatives who still live in the Netherlands She enjoys traveling and enjoyed five vacations in Bermuda with her sister Pauline and brother in law Bruce. She has been on seven cruises, and in 1999 was chosen as Ms Rotterdam when on a cruise of the Mediterranean where they visited Italy and the Greek Islands.

More recently she joined the Leathertown Red Hat Ladies and enjoys their various activities.

You might wonder how she finds time for herself, but Frances still enjoys golfing four times a week in the summer (weather permitting), bowling, swimming and darts. Until a few years ago she also enjoyed playing tennis, badminton, roller skating and ice skating and square dancing.

As usual with the many 55+ people in Acton this is another very busy lady volunteering in many places, and keeping her body and mind young with the various activities she enjoys.



ACTON SENIORS' RECREATION CENTRE

By JULIE CONROY

I hope you enjoy reading about Frances Hogenbirk, who certainly has spent a lot of hours volunteering to help make a difference in the many places she has lived.

Volunteers put in many hours in our town, whether by driving people to appointments, sitting on committees, helping at schools, delivering meals, or just being there to talk to lonely people on the phone. There are many ways you can help make a difference to someone's life.

The Centre will be closed on Monday July 2 to celebrate Canada Day. Make the day special as you visit with friends or family or watch the spectacular fireworks in the park, realizing how lucky we are to live in such a beautiful country.

The birthday tea to celebrate everyone who had a birthday in either June or July was well attended. Nine members and their guests enjoyed the cake and ice cream.

There were only four carpet bowlers last Monday. It was the last game for the season. Nives Bozic's Brown team beat Pat Jones Black team 8 to 7. Betty Lockerby is home from the hospital, and we wish her well. The Carpet Bowlers want to wish everyone a great summer and said they will see everyone in September.

Winners at last Wednesday's evening euchre were: High Lady - Donna Rowley, High Man - Henry Wedge, 2nd Lady- Eileen Wedge, 2nd Man- Don Milton, Lone Hands- Betty Brewster, and the Booby was won by Frances Hogenbirk. I understand the evening euchre will continue through the summer if there is enough interest, so the next game will be July 18 at 7.15 p.m.

At the Thursday afternoon bid euchre, Muriel Dzierla, and Shirley Hunter both had mooners. The canasta and cribbage on a Thursday morning and the bid euchre on Thursday afternoons will continue right through the summer.

The hand stitching to the top of our queen-size quilt is almost complete. It truly was a labour of love and everyone who helped, whether an experienced quilter or one who was learning to quilt, enjoyed the experience. It will be displayed at the Fair and a draw will take place later.

If you enjoy rotisserie chicken, we have some tickets for sale at a great price for dinner at Andy's on four different days. For more information check the front desk.

The 50/50 this week was won by Ian McAllister, which is really a coincidence as his wife Jane won last week.

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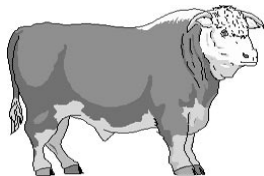
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