



Community Page

Milton's Senior of the Year keeping busy at 73

By MELANIE HENNESSEY
The Champion

Speaking with active community volunteer Maisie MacKay, it's easy to see that she would rather talk about anyone but herself.

Sitting in the cafeteria at the Milton Seniors' Activity Centre, the soft-spoken Scottish woman continually points out the help she's had from others in her volunteer ventures.

Ms MacKay was recently named Milton's Senior of the Year for all her hard work that ranges from helping organize fundraisers at the seniors' centre to promoting the work of the local Women's Institute.

"I'd sooner not have publicity," the modest woman said.

She was presented with a plaque for her award at Milton council's September 27 meeting, which she said came as a complete surprise to her. "I didn't know that I won until I got there that night," she said with a laugh. "I couldn't believe it. It was really a distinguished honour."

And, it was an honour well-deserved. Although she's 73 years old, Ms MacKay is busier than some people half her age.

She spends her days volunteering at the seniors' centre and is a member of the centre's advisory board, taking on the responsibility of fundraising and special events for the facility.

She became involved at the centre around 1996, after one of her friends urged her to join. "Before you knew it, I was enjoying the volunteering here," she said.

Things took off from there and soon, she was spending almost every waking moment at the centre, logging about 2,000 volunteer hours last year alone.

"I'm here pretty well every day," she said. "I enjoy it — you're always meeting different people and helping them."

But, she was quick to point out that in everything she does, she has the help of other volunteers and staff around the centre. "We all work together as a good group," she said. "We have a lot of special people here."

She gave particular recognition to Town Recreation Supervisor Tammy Townsend. "She's been a great help to me and support," Ms MacKay said.

And, Ms Townsend had equally glowing thoughts on Milton's Senior of the Year.

She said even if Ms MacKay has a million things going on at the centre, she'll

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MAISIE MACKAY

always make time to help others out.

"She's very caring, kind and considerate of others," she said.

Ms Townsend added that Ms MacKay puts a lot of personal touches into everything she does at the centre.

"She treats it as if it's her job. She's the most dedicated volunteer I've probably ever come across," she said. "Most things probably wouldn't happen here (at the centre) without Maisie."

For Ms MacKay, one of the initiatives she said that she's most proud of at the centre is the publication of a cookbook, entitled *Timeless Treasures*, that contains recipes submitted by more than 100 centre members. Ms MacKay was a driving force behind getting the book off the ground, and it's now sold 2,300 copies across the country. "I'm very proud of that cookbook. It's one of my biggest achievements," she said with a smile.

Outside the centre, Ms MacKay also volunteers with the Halton chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star, getting involved with the organization back in 1976.

"We do a lot of good, such as we give to the hospital," she said of the group's work. "It's a good way of socializing and helping the community."

Ms MacKay also recently joined the Women's Institute and helps out with public relations. She said in her spare time, if she has any, she enjoys gardening.

"By the time that's (volunteering) all done, I don't have too much time," she said. "I just like to get involved in all these different things."

When presenting Ms MacKay with her award, Mayor Gord Krantz expressed his gratitude for her volunteer work, joking that it wasn't an award for seniors, just "more mature individuals."

"I personally applaud you for all the work," he said. "Thank you very much for all the contributions over the years."

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Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Milton Senior of the Year Maisie MacKay consults the cookbook, 'Timeless Treasures', that she helped put together.

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