



Fairmiles, launched October 1942

Corvettes, fairmiles built

More than just a depot

At one time Midland Harbour was more than just a depot for lake freighters and small pleasure craft.

During World War Two, two Midland firms were actively involved in the construction of warships. In the early war years, Midland Boat Works — located where Downer's Yacht Haven now stands — manufactured small wooden submarine chasers and later on were involved in the construction of minesweepers.

Next door, at the Midland Ship Yards — on the property now owned by Indusmin — small steel corvettes were turned out.

Long time Midland businessman Ed Walker was involved with the electrical wiring duties at Midland Boat Works. Walker, who began his electrical business in Midland after coming from Guelph in 1935, remembers the boat works turning out "Fairmile Sub Chasers".

A log home on the river

An ancient log homestead on the banks of the Coldwater River has become a mecca for students of local history, lovers of antiques and arts and crafts enthusiasts.

Built in 1830, the Woodrow homestead was restored as a Centennial project by a group of Coldwater citizens. Located south of Coldwater just west of Highway 12, the old home houses a collection of artifacts and museum pieces, including a large wooden tool chest with George Borland's name inscribed on it.

Borland has an interesting connection with the Woodrow family. One hundred years ago, Catherine Woodrow fell in love with Borland. That family objected to the marriage, so Katherine and George eloped. She slipped through the kitchen window, and together they fled down the Coldwater river by canoe.

On display at the Woodrow homestead is a copy of the Geographical Astronomical and Historical Home Knowledge Atlas of 1889. Loaned by Ambrose Swaile, it reports that in 1889 the population of Coldwater was 450. Penetanguishene boasted a total of 2,000 residents while Midland struggled along with only 1,800.

Each year Coldwater Canadiana holds a variety of homespun events at the Woodrow homestead. A favourite is the sauerkraut meal, served in the stone floored kitchen. The cabbage is ground in an authentic old fashioned grinder.

A special attraction in the old kitchen is the open fireplace. Many local handicraft groups use the homestead for a meeting place, and the fireplace sheds a generous warmth over the gathering.



Shipbuilding in Midland spanned about half a century - from 1901 to 1957

Shipbuilding in Midland spanned about half a century. According to the book 'Georgian Bay, The Sixth Great Lake,' James Playfair and D.L. White founded the Midland

Navigation Company in 1901. They had ships built in Scotland and Collingwood before setting up the Great Lakes Transportation Company in 1912.

In 1910, Playfair was one of the founders of the Midland Drydock Company, which became the Midland Shipbuilding Company in 1916. Later in 1925, he unified

his shipping concerns into the Great Lakes Navigation Company and then sold the whole outfit to Canada Steamship Lines in 1926. This photo shows the

launching the Cloverdale on April 5, 1960. This photo shows the April 5, 1950 launching of The Cloverdale, one of the first of the bulk freighters launched here

after World War Two, according to Stan Pl... of Fifth Street, Midland who submitted this photograph. 1957 saw the end of shipbuilding in Midland.

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