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Music at Port Milford

"Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything." — Plato



Meg Hill, Music at Port Milford's co-founder and Managing Director surrounded by some of her students.

One could quite reasonably ask the question, "What is it about South Marysburgh that enables it to attract so many people driven by a passion for music?"

It's not a naïve question.

For each of the past three years the old South Marysburgh School has hosted its bluegrass camp. Passionate violin, guitar, mandolin and other stringed instrument players from around North America learn from accomplished teachers, interact with each other and improve their playing skills. Two years ago, Milford fairgrounds became the location for the County

Jamboree that, owing to its increasing popularity, is moving to larger grounds closer to Cherry Valley for this year's event. In addition, the Sandbanks Music Festival and the Picton Music Festival are organized by a South Marysburgh resident.

Regardless of the answer to the question, and long before either the Bluegrass Camp or the Jamboree were even thought of, Music at Port Milford had been quietly forging a unique path that once seemed peculiar but, at the same time, so appropriate for this area.

Located off County Road 13 at the end of Colliers Road on property that was once part of the thriving community of Port Milford, Music at Port Milford affords 12 to 18 year old chamber music students a distinctive, immersive learning opportunity on the shore of Lake Ontario.

Under the leadership of Managing Director and Co-founder, Meg Hill, and a staff of six councillors, eight faculty members, a cook and a cook's assistant, Music at Port Milford is now celebrating its 31st year of operation.

The origin of Music at Port Milford – known colloquially as "MPM" – dates back to 1985 when Meg's mother, Doris McLaughlin Goldman, and other family members, bought 80 acres of property where MPM is now located. Two years later, in 1987, Meg – at the time teaching classical violin in New York – and her mother worked to establish what would become "a summer home where young musicians could hone their skills as chamber musicians, with outstanding faculty artists, in a nurturing environment, conducive to personal growth."

The first year of operation involved 17 students brought together for one week of chamber music coaching, singing and other activities. Meg and Doris acted in every possible capacity during the first year – teachers, cooks, organizers – but were encouraged enough to continue the camp in 1988 for a two-week program and in 1989 with a three-week program, but with additional staff and faculty. Twenty eight years later, Music at Port Milford now involves a four-week program.

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