

# Cedar Grove Farm Steeped In History

If you're interested in Ontario history and owls, you should meet Simeon Reesor.

He lives on a history-steeped Centennial farm at Cedar Grove and, as a hobby, carves fascinating little owls from sumach wood.

To sit in Sim Reesor's big comfortable kitchen and listen to him talk while an owl emerges under his fingers is a live lesson in Ontario history.

Reesors have lived in Markham township since Peter Reesor arrived here from Pennsylvania in 1804.

Reesors have lived on this particular Steeles ave. farm since Sim's great-grandfather bought it in 1845 after moving down from another farm, two lots to the north.

## CENTENNIAL

Mr. and Mrs. Reesor are proud of the Centennial farm sign which the Ontario Federation of Agriculture awarded them because the farm has been in the same family since Confederation but feel they shouldn't brag.

Centennial farms are common in this corner of Markham. There are nine others within a couple of miles of the Reesors.

Sim Reesor grew up on the farm while Canada was growing. In recent years, he has seen Metro Toronto growing, too — closer to the family farm every year.

He fears that his young grandsons won't be able to have the kind of country boyhood he had, when every summer day there were two swims to be enjoyed in two separate swimming holes on the way home from school at Cedar Grove.

## HOBBY

Mr. Reesor has retired from active farming now. His son, Murray, runs the 20-acre dairy farm with its fine herd of Holsteins while Mr. Reesor pursues his hobby of woodworking and woodcarving in the interesting and cluttered farm workshop under the big trees at the rear of the house.

Besides carving owls, Sim Reesor turns interesting decorative pieces on his wood lathe, has made some fine walnut and maple wood bowls and is somewhat of an authority on the maintenance and repair of pioneer spinning wheels.

He sometimes makes missing parts or does repairs to old spinning wheels which friends have acquired and brought to him.

If you've visited Black Creek Pioneer Village, you may have seen Mr. Reesor at the blacksmith shop, whittling out tiny birds and animals for the entertainment of visitors.

## CLOCKS

Among his many talents is grandfather-clock making. In the Reesor kitchen

is a handsome grandfather clock that Sim made when he was 20 — against the advice of his father who thought he should wait until he was a little older and had acquired more skill.

In the Reesor parlor is another grandfather clock, a treasured heirloom. It was the property of patriarch Peter Reesor who led the Pennsylvania Dutch Reesors here from Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, 63 years before Confederation.

Markham township still has many Reesors. Sim's father used to recall that there were 35 Reesors of voting age who picked up mail at Cedar Grove post office. There are still many in Pennsylvania, too. Markham Reesors sometimes go back there for family reunions.

## WORKSHOP

If you're interested in woodcarving and would like to visit a Centennial farm, you're welcome to make a call at the Reesor place provided you don't do so on Sunday. Sunday is a day for church and family visits for Mr. and Mrs. Reesor.

Saturdays are fine. Mr. Reesor will show you his workshop which is jammed full of the things that used to, and still do, make a farm run.

He'll show you his carved bowls, with trillium and flower decorations, and a cheese board carved from one limb of a walnut tree which Peter Reesor planted from a walnut he carried from Pennsylvania.

And Mr. Reesor will show you his owls — all carved from sumach wood which has a golden yellow-green sheen and a lovely grain.

I don't think you'll be able to buy anything from Simeon. He has never put a price on his work but sometimes will carve an owl as a gift for someone he likes. I'm proud to say he made a tiny owl for me.



Markham Centennial Library, Unionville.



A group of Stouffville's young ladies who had put on an evening's entertainment seventy years ago. Rear (left to right) Olive Hoover (Mrs. (Rev.) Hainer), Olive McNair, Blanche O'Brien, Maggie Stark, Edna Warriner (Mrs. R. J. Fleury), Maude Todd (Mrs. Fred Button), Jessie Leaney (Mrs. (Dr.) Wm. Jamieson of Hamilton). Third row (left to right) Ethel Byam, Cynthia Cook, Norah Barker, Edith Sangster, Carrie Rae (Mrs. Turner), Alma Hoover (Mrs. (Rev.) Mercer), May Urquhart. Second row (left to right) Maude Warriner (Mrs. Totten), Mary Lemon, Kate Darrach, Agnes Anderson (Mrs. Ernie Button), Josie Mitchell (Mrs. Banner), Gertie Dougherty, unknown, Violet Kester. Front row (left to right) Miss Aiken, Miss Nellie Haakie, Gertie Mitchell (Mrs. Frank McDonald), Jennie Lehman (Mrs. Cliff Pipher), Alberta Stouffer (Mrs. George Barkey). Only three of the above are now living.



How many of these Stouffville firemen can you recognize in this picture? The photo was taken in front of the Old Fire Hall before renovations were made and in the background can be seen some of the hand reel equipment that was used in the early days. The group (back row, left to right) Herman Burkholder, H. J. Malloy, E. A. Button. Front row (left to right) Wilfred Morden, Alex Grubin, Jacob McMullen, Frank Rae, Frank Nighswander, Jesse Davis, Harry Perry, Jos. Mertens, James Rae, Geo. Martin, Sam Strong, Bill Dougherty, Bill Lefraugh, John Lehman.

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