

News archive inspires Mono's sesquicentennial celebrations

By Marni Walsh

A news article describing a picnic held at Mono Centre in 1923 has become the celebratory inspiration for Mono Council and its Canada 150 Committee.

To mark Canada's 150 years of Confederation, the Township of Mono will hold an old fashioned 'Family Picnic' on June 4 at the Mono Community Centre and invites the community to join them.

The 1923 article 'listed almost every person's name in attendance, more than 2,500 people,' reports Mono Canada 150 committee member Debbi Goss, 'and gave us a glimpse of what rural life was back then.

While the article 'was not 150 years ago, it represented our rural routes and sense of community,' she said. The committee 'starting talking about who those families were and where they and their descendants might be now,' she said.

'Councillor Sharon Martin had talked about a family picnic for a while and the two ideas just came together.'

The June 4 celebrations, an initiative of Mono Council, are being organized by a volunteer committee which includes Debbi Goss, Karen Morrison, Elaine Kehoe, Karen McLellan, Fred Simpson, Kim Perryman (Mono Director of Recreation), and Sharon Martin (Mono Councillor).

In 1867, at the time of Canada's Confederation 'there wasn't a lot of money for entertainment, nor was it needed to enjoy the simple things in life,' says Debbi Goss. 'We wanted to make sure of no or low cost to families. We're asking people to bring their own picnic, blanket, chairs etc., while we provide the entertainment along with lemonade, popcorn and ice cream.'

The committee hopes to bring the community together with storytelling, old time music and dance.

'An uncomplicated Sunday afternoon picnic' with plaid blankets, sack races and hula hoops.'

While all are welcome to join the picnic, it is the committee's hope that long time Mono residents and their descendants attend. 'We're working hard to reach as many of them as possible,' said Ms. Goss. 'There'll be something for all ages.

'We hope for a day of sunshine, where we'll spend time outdoors.'

The event goes on rain or shine''a day of celebration.'

The Mono Township Canada 150 Family Picnic will be held on June 4 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Mono Community Centre at 754483 Mono Centre Road in Mono Township. For more information visit: experiencemono.com.