

Gale 150

YOUR STORY IS GALE'S STORY

APRIL 2018

BILL MACPHERSON'S STORY

Bill McPherson - a steadfast presence at Gale, not just on Sundays! He ensures everything is in its place for the Sunday service. He greets newcomers that enter through Gale's doors, particularly those that are not noticed. He fills in where needed, carrying in the prayer bowl or the bible and taking up the offering. If you have a question about something, anything to do with Gale, just ask Bill. If he doesn't have the answer, he will know who will!

Bill was baptized at Gale as a young child, in January 1951. His family lived about 7 miles out of Elmira on a mixed farm, a farm that he grew up on raising dairy, pigs, and chickens. Currently Bill resides in Elmira, and recently sold the farm to a neighbor who had been renting the land.

Bill started kindergarten class at Gale when he was 4 (his sister was 6). Mrs. Simpson, the minister's wife, was one of his first Sunday School teachers.

Honourable mention must go to Mrs. Pearl Brubacher, Bill insists. She made the children feel very important. He recalls the one year that she organized an event

where she invited her class to her house for an evening dinner which she prepared herself. Then after dinner, there were games. The next year Mrs. Brubacher took them out to a restaurant for dinner. Mrs. Brubacher taught Sunday School for at least 25 years.

Mrs. Brubacher was hard of hearing but was absolutely thrilled to work with young people. I asked Bill how the children communicated with Mrs. Brubacher if she was hard of hearing. He said they spoke loudly and repeated themselves often!

Sunday school was a big thing back in the day. Bill remembers when there were many classes and every week those classes were full. When there were easily 50-70 kids registered in Sunday School, Emerson Fogel was the Sunday School supervisor. He took photos of every class. You can find some of these photos in Gale's Historical Books in the church library.

When Bill was about 15, he got involved in the newly formed Gale Youth Group, which had members ages 13-20.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Bill MacPherson	1
Bill MacPherson(cont'd)	2
Kim Dendstedt	3
Diane Coulman.....	4
Gale Kids	5
Upcoming Events	5
Sarah Bradshaw.....	6

"We aren't called to shine our own light, but to reflect His."

- Matthew 5:16

May our stories be the continuation of Jesus' story and His message of God's love.

It was a very active group. Around that time, Rev. McCleary was the minister at Gale. Bill thought very highly of this generous man. He was a gifted speaker. Bill remembers that he was quietly involved in the community. He was on the Board of Guiding Light School. He probably did more than anyone ever knew. Bill was very sad when Rev. McCleary passed away in 1967. Bill was 17 at the time.

Another influential person that Bill recalls is Denton Taylor, Margaret Taylor's husband. Margaret was responsible for starting the church library. Every Sunday, Denton, an experienced elder, would watch for and welcome all those that came into the church, paying extra attention to those who were new to Gale.

Bill became a member of Session at the age of 39, after being nominated several times! Bill recalls, back in 1992, there were 21 members on Session. Today there are only 9. In 2013, the Board hired Bill as grounds keeper for the new church. He retired from active Session in 2015, after serving since 1989. Bill had also sat on the Board of Managers for 18 years at Gale.

If you haven't gotten the impression already, Bill loves to keep busy. Besides volunteering and working at Gale, Bill loves gardening and landscaping. While he rented out his farmland, he would still go out there to cut wood. Bill enjoys attending farm shows, musical events, and the Royal Winter Fair. He is an avid cyclist as well, though these days, a two-hour trip is "tops" for him!

I asked Bill what changes or developments at Gale over the years have surprised him. He feels that church attendance is much more sporadic. Back in the days, if someone missed attendance it would be noticed. Someone from church would check in with the person or family to be sure that everything was okay. However, over the years lifestyles have changed. People are travelling and vacationing. They like to Sunday shop. Bill has observed that people are connected in so many ways to their community, through sports, clubs, organizations, and other activities. All these things impact church attendance.

Moving from the old church to the new one has been a highlight in Bill's life. The last Sunday at the old church was well attended, the sanctuary was packed. But to Bill's delight, there were even more people the next Sunday at the new church! "Yes - we did the right thing", he remembers thinking.

As grounds keeper, Bill has observed how Gale is obviously "more visible" in its new location. Not only is it more visible to the community, it's parking lot is a great place to watch the comings and goings of Elmira! Bill has noticed how people use the parking lot to eat their lunch, text, let their dogs out to run, and even change babies' diapers! Police will write up their reports in Gale's lot. Paramedics and truck drivers will have their coffee breaks there too. He has watched children learning to ride their bicycles in the parking lot and teenagers learning to drive cars. Gale, in many ways and in its new location, continues to serve its community!

Gale committees are something new and different, Bill remarks. These committees are vital in making things happen at Gale. They balance out the smaller Session and allow busy people to participate and share their gifts with Gale. Bill also hopes that it prevents people from becoming overwhelmed with and burnt out by the responsibilities and "business" of running a church.

Over the years, with his involvement at Gale, Bill has **connected** to many people and some have become his closest friends. As an Elder, Bill has made many visits to see people. Bill says he feels that God is behind him with each visit.

.....continued on page 5

KIM DENSTEDT

"I often say that I came to Gale for my children and stayed for me.

Listening to the message each week has contributed to my spiritual growth. But getting involved in the church has resulted in a feeling of fellowship with others in the congregation.

I find that sense of community is an essential component of faith that I never really understood before."
- Kim Denstedt

Kim and her husband Jim were both raised in Listowel. Jim was brought up on a farm. Kim lived in town.

The two met in 1973 then married in 1978 at Knox Presbyterian in Listowel with Rev. J.J. Harold Morris officiating.

Jim currently works at Home Hardware as a supervisor. Kim works as a professor at Conestoga College. She teaches these courses:

- Public Relations for Integrated Marketing Communications
- Corporate Communications
- Media Relations Strategy
- Portfolio
- Specialized Writing for Public Relations

Kim's career has also included running a public relations consulting business as well as journalism.

Jim & Kim have a son, who currently resides in Baden, and a daughter, who lives in Kitchener. They also have three grandchildren.

Kim is actively involved at Gale Presbyterian church. Her contributions have been vital in helping Gale build, maintain and improve its website. Kim is an Elder and also a member of Session.



DIANE COULMAN & FAMILY

"My story began when I had three little boys, and we were going to a different church. I wasn't feeling that our needs were being met there, so decided to do some "Church Shopping". Each Sunday we attended service at a different church. When we arrived at Gale, something compelled me to return several times. One Sunday as I was shaking hands with Jack Boyne, the present minister, he said, "You're new here aren't you?" to which I replied, " Yes, I've been doing some church shopping. I'm trying to find a church that suits our needs."

Jack shook my hand warmly and replied, " Well you keep up your "shopping", but know that you are most welcome here."

That sealed the deal for me! His sermons three weeks in a row had had a real message for me personally, and with his non-pushy manner and pleasant welcome, it was enough to keep us returning. That was about 33 years ago, and I have never regretted my decision."

- Diane Coulman

I grew up on a small farm near Mount Forest (one hour north on Highway #6). We were a large family of 10, and scraped by on very little money, but never were hungry or cold. We grew or raised much of our food on the farm, wore hand-me-downs from our cousins and did not realize that we were poor until we hit highschool and saw how other kids lived. Our neighbours were much the same as we were, lots of kids, little money, but happy anyway.

Lee grew up in Toronto, the youngest of only two boys. His brother, Don was 10 years older, so it was sort of like his mom raised two separate kids. Today, the 10 years matters not, and he and Don are good friends. I always tease him about being the rich kid from Toronto, but in reality, they really weren't. (just in comparison to us!)

Lee and I have been married for 17+ years.

Lee has one son, Daniel, who lives and works in Vancouver. He has been there since the summer after first year university when he went out for a summer job, and never returned! Daniel works in sewage & fresh water systems in Vancouver. He can often be found on his high tech electric bike on his way to jumping into his sewage treatment job as a power engineer and water specialist. Lee finds his way to Vancouver as often as possible for a visit.

I have three sons, Jeff, Kevin and Robin, all who have "flown the coop" so to speak.

Jeff is living and working in the Yukon.

Kevin lives in Heidelberg, teaches highschool at Cameron Heights Collegiate, and is married with 2 kids. Dylan is 3 years 10 months old, and Maddie is 2 1/2 years. They are the pride and joy of our lives! Lee and I babysit them every Friday, and it's the best day of the week. They keep us young, AND totally exhaust us at the same time.

Robin, my baby, is teaching highschool with WRDSB but at this point, does not have a permanent position. He has been doing Long Term Occasional teaching at Waterloo

Collegiate Institute this year, and we live in hope that he will soon get a contract!

I was an elementary teacher all of my working years (33 years), mostly at rural schools near Elmira. At present, I continue to supply teach when I'm not busy with:

- a) the grandkids
- b) volunteering at the church
- c) volunteering at Woolwich Community Services
- d) friends, or family members

(Actually, I am doing less and less of the teaching thing, but just haven't quite been able to give up on it entirely....)

Lee was a Systems Engineer for his career and it took him to Dartmouth, Nova Scotia for 13 years, then back to Ontario where he worked at Raytheon in Waterloo until his retirement. At present, he is working part time at "Elmira Vacuum and Electric," where he either sells vacuums and their parts, or fixes them. He is quite happy with this job, as it fulfills his great desire to problem-solve, as well as interact with people. As well, Lee volunteers as a driver at Woolwich Community Services, taking people to their medical appointments. Plus, he seems to spend a great deal of time at the church, doing a plethora of things. (board of managers, apple pie coordinator, monthly luncheon helper, photographer, repair man etc.)

In my spare time, I like to read, go to the gym, swim, ski, bike and sew quilts. I belong to a little group that gets together once a month to work on our projects, visit, eat etc. We call our group "Stitch and Bitch"! As the years go by, it seems we do more of the latter and less of the former....

Lee has one huge interest when he isn't working and that is flying. He owns a Searey airplane, which is a little two-seater that can land on water or land. He keeps it in a hanger near Teviotdale, and any spare moment that he has, is spent either flying it or working on it. He goes to Breslau airport twice a week to meet with other "like-minded" guys, have lunch, and talk about airplanes.

Well, there you have it, a little glimpse into who we are! Lee and I feel blessed to be part of Gale Presbyterian Church and all of the wonderful people that make up this congregation.

KIDS @ GALE

MAKENA JANECZKO

My name is Makena Janeczko. I am in the 5th grade at John Mahood Public School. My teacher is Mr. Ellis.

I do synchronized swimming at the old Elmira pool.

At school I play European handball. My team is called Golden State.

I have one dog named Eddie. And 5 fish.

I have been going to Gale since grade one or two.

I've gone to Camp Kintail with Gale for the family weekend.

My birthday is on June 21st.

My favourite animals are turtles and horses.

When I get older I want to have a big house and my own big field so I can have my own horse. If I had a horse, I would like a big brown horse.

And I like to play football with my Dad. My favourite team is the Minnesota Vikings.

VICTORIA DOW

Victoria Dow is 9 years old. Her birthday is on July 15th. She attends Mitchell Woods Public School in Guelph.

Victoria likes school and she feels that her teacher, Mr. Kenny, is a good teacher.

At recess Victoria plays rugby. She has learned this sport from her Dad and is teaching her friends how to play. She also likes to play volleyball in the gym.

Victoria has been coming to Gale pretty much since she was a newborn!

Sunday School crafts at Gale are a highlight for Victoria. She also enjoys Camp Kintail. She recommends that you stay in the lodge if you get a chance to go to Camp Kintail...the rooms in the lodge are better!

Victoria has a cat named Muffin. Lately Muffin has been acting a little weird. She likes to hide behind coats, then jump out at you. "Surprise!" Muffin is very hyper, Victoria explains.

Victoria contributes to many facets of our Gale community and eagerly provides suggestions for Gale events and activities. In particular, she is hoping that the movie "Coco" will be featured in one of the up and coming Movie Nights at Gale.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Reverend Dr. Walter McLean, former minister of Gale, will be joining Reverend Scott as our Guest Minister on Sunday, June 10th Communion Service.

Reverend Zander Dunn will be our guest minister for World Wide Communion Sunday on October 7th.

GALE HISTORY

In the Narthex, please look for the Historical Memories Books along with a bulletin board featuring photos of Gale through the years.

There you will find more information about Gale's history and coming events in celebration of the 150th anniversary.

Bill MacPherson cont'd.....

A touching story that Bill shared with me assures me that God works through Bill in many ways. One cold winter day, while Bill was scraping snow from the sidewalks at Gale, a young man approached him. The man asked Bill if he could go into the church and pray. Bill unlocked the door and disarmed the security system. The man went down to the front of the sanctuary and prayed for about 10 minutes. Even though Bill is not certain about the man's circumstances or what he prayed for, we can only know for certain that God put Bill in that man's path to "open the door" to the comfort and warmth of God's love.

Bill will admit that it was uncomfortable for him to be "interviewed" for My Story. He is such a humble man. He does not want anyone to feel left out or unappreciated. There are SO many people to mention when we look at Gale's history and "current times". Bill feels that everyone's contributions to Gale are invaluable. Not only is everyone's story integral to the story of Gale, more importantly, those stories are the **continuation** of the story of Jesus and his message of God's love.

SARAH BRADSHAW

When the Bradshaw/Docherty family moved to Elmira from Toronto in 1996, we decided we wanted to join a church in the area. We went to visit a few without anyone speaking to us. So one Sunday, Angus, age 1, David and I visited Gale. We were a little nervous because Angus, like any toddler, could be unpredictable. Sure enough as the scripture was being read, Angus gets up from the pew and wanders towards the pulpit. Reverend Linda didn't miss a beat. She smiled, welcomed Angus and continued the reading. At the coffee hour, people came up to us and welcomed us, telling us how nice it was to see Angus comfortably wandering among them during the service. We were hooked! Gale was and still is a truly welcoming community. - Sarah Bradshaw

Sarah grew up in Toronto attending Bloor Street United church until moving to Elmira.

She has worked at Sun Life Financial since 1996.

Sarah's son Angus graduated from Dalhousie University with a B.A. in 2017 and is currently living and working in Calgary. Her younger son, Quinn, is in second year of a commerce degree at the Sobey School of Business at Saint Mary's University in Halifax.

Sarah has many passions. She loves to hike and she completed the Bruce Trail in October as part of a group. Sarah loves the great outdoors, as she explains, "I adore spending time at our family cottage on an island in Georgian Bay. I love sailing, swimming, playing tennis and exploring the waterways and islands in my kayak."

This August, Sarah is joining a trek in Tanzania in support of Crossroads International, a non-profit that works to

empower women and girls in developing countries.

Sarah has a long history of volunteer activities in the community and in Gale church. Her father was a role model for Sarah, serving on a variety of charitable boards, fundraising for United Way and serving in many capacities at Bloor Street United. Currently, Sarah is an active volunteer with the Canadian Cancer Society.

At Gale, Sarah is always involved in something! She has taught Sunday School, she sits on the Board of Managers, and she even gets involved with the

Youth Group from time to time! Sarah, who is associated with Woolwich Township Trails, has invited Gale's Youth to plant trees. She entices our youth group with promises of delicious refreshments back at her home. Sarah has had the youth in her home on previous occasions (tree planting and a progressive dinner) so we do know that the Youth Group will be in store for a delicious treat.

Sarah, with her kind words and encouragement, enthusiastically supports the various committees and groups at Gale!



For more information on Gale Presbyterian's 150th Anniversary, please visit the church website, church office, or find us on Facebook.

www.galepresbyterian.com

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