

The 2024 McNeil Cemetery Report



McNeil 175th Anniversary Decoration Day June 16, 2024 at 1:30 PM

McNeil Cemetery has been providing our community residents a truly peaceful and attractive resting place for 175 years...a wonderful blessing!

To both acknowledge and celebrate this momentous occasion your Board of Directors has planned several significant events including a special 175th Anniversary Day Service on Sunday, June 16th at 1:30 PM. Our guest speaker will be Rev. Karen Horst who has several connections to our area and cemetery. As well, the Board invited Doug Henderson, former secretary-treasurer Board member and member of the longtime established Henderson family, to share some historical comments and anecdotes. Arranged by Deborah De Jong, special music will include Micah De Jong, the Chimes Ensemble from Cannington United Church under the direction of Arlene Smith, and bagpipe music provided by Steve Harrison. Rick De Jong will serve as this year's Chairperson. You are cordially invited to come and join us on this special occasion, bring a lawn chair, and please bring a time capsule memory as highlighted in this newsletter!

Looking Back

The original site of McNeil Cemetery was a small plot of land off the farm of the McNeil pioneer family in the early 1800's. In subsequent years, additional land was purchased resulting in our most attractive ground we have today. It is noteworthy that the first funeral was held in 1849. It is not likely that the early settlers of that time could have envisioned the important role and beauty of our McNeil Cemetery as it is today...175 years later.

It is also not very likely that in their "wildest dreams" they could have comprehended the changes and significant developments in our society and lifestyle of 2024. A small cameo of the 175 years would

include Canada's Confederation, two World Wars, intense labouring to robotics, oil lamps to electricity, horse transportation to electric vehicles, computerized milking, television, the internet, our world becoming a global village, artificial intelligence, and so many more which comes to mind. Within these significant and almost incomprehensible changes, it is most reassuring that some things have remained the same. This would include our sense of community, our commitment to neighbourliness, respect for self and others, love, support, truth, understanding, and faith. As we stand at the threshold of the next 175 years, to 2199, we trust that these intrinsic human values will continue to be basic to all that transpires.

175th McNeil Anniversary Cemetery Time Capsule An Invitation!

In recognition of this year's special anniversary and to offer our community a chance to celebrate the lives represented by those at McNeil, the Board wishes to invite the McNeil community to submit a writing or two about a loved one now at rest at McNeil Cemetery. Submissions could be in the form of a short biography, a poem, a funny or poignant story, a special skill shared, a lesson learned, a memorable event, an impact or influence a loved one had on others, or whatever honours and celebrates the loved one's life! These are important, anecdotal connections the Board would like to capture through this collection of fond memories and share with future McNeil Cemetery supporters! Although there are no rules, submissions should be reasonably brief – no sets of family encyclopedias, please – as we hope the time capsule material will fit into a protective container of some sort, placed for its duration in the Vault Room, and clearly labeled to be opened in 2049 and beyond! If you have it ready, submissions can be made on Decoration Day, or mailed to me at 1825 Concession Road 4, Sunderland, Ontario L0C 1H0, or emailed to me at wickmcneilcemetery@gmail.com.

Note that the deadline is December 31, 2024! Thank you for sharing important memories and/or information through this project!

McNeil Cemetery Company Charter 110th Anniversary

2024 also acknowledges the 110th anniversary of the McNeil Cemetery Company Charter! The 1914 Board of Directors were James Innes as president, John Ferguson as secretary-treasurer, and as Directors Frank Leask, Stanley McLeod, James Watson, and Ernest Ferguson. Today we benefit from their wise foresight and vision.

McNeil Cemetery Decoration Day 100th Anniversary

When the McNeil Charter was only 10 years old, in 1924, the Board designated the third Sunday in June as Decoration Day for our community to gather and honour those resting in this special location. This date preceded the recognition of Father's Day by Canada and many countries. 2024 marks the 100th Anniversary of the establishment of the McNeil Cemetery Decoration Day Services – a time to celebrate!

McNeil Cemetery Lectern



Master Builder Neil!

To mark our 175th Anniversary, the Directors contracted with former Director and Trustee, Neil McLeod, to build a lectern which will be used in our Decoration Day services and by the cemetery for funeral gatherings. Neil's grandfather, Stanley, was a Director when the McNeil Cemetery charter was established on January 14, 1914! Neil's great-great-grandfather, Angus McLeod, was buried in McNeil Cemetery in 1863.

Thank you, Neil, for a job well done! Your ancestors would be proud of you!

Honouring Indigenous Peoples

We acknowledge that the land we gather on is the traditional territory of Mississauga people who are part of the larger Anishinaabe (Ojibway) nation. The closest Mississauga communities are Scugog Island First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation and Hiawatha First Nation. Georgina Island First Nation is also

nearby and they identify as being Chippewa which are also a branch of the Anishinaabe (Ojibway) nation. The Mississauga people of this territory signed the Williams treaties between 1921 – 1923.

McNeil Cemetery E-mail

To facilitate the increasing popularity of e-transfers by our community in support of McNeil, we have established our own gmail account. To communicate and to e-transfer, please use the McNeil Cemetery Gmail account at:

wickmcneilcemetery@gmail.com

or contact Rick De Jong at pinedale14@hotmail.com. We hope this account will enhance the efforts to safely e-transfer funds for those who wish to support McNeil Cemetery through this approach.

Proud of McNeil Cemetery Enhancements

Recognizing the importance of 2024, plans began last year to further enhance our special resting place. Through the steadfast financial support of our community, the following enhancements were made:

- (1) Through Richard Hoskin Construction, the Vault Room and Tool Shed were thoroughly spray washed to remove dirt, debris and loose paint at a cost of \$1130.00.
- (2) Through the contractual work by Shanetech Quality Painting, the Vault Room and Tool Shed received two fresh coats of paint at an approximate cost of \$3200.00.
- (3) Concerned with the uneven boards inside the Tool Shed, Warren Jibb, James De Jong, Kevin Robertson, Doug Rennie and Rick De Jong excavated this space replacing the soil with stone generously donated by Doug Rennie, and cemented the floor at an approximate cost of \$750.00.



**Warren, Kevin and James Improving the Tool Shed!
Camera shy are Doug Rennie and Rick De Jong!**

- (4) Thanks to the volunteer work by Doug Rennie, two overmature maples were removed last year. The Board contracted Richard Hoskin Construction to

grind the two stumps at an approximate cost of \$800.00. Thanks to soil donated by Director Jim Carson, these spaces were landscaped and seeded.

(5) The Board ordered a sugar maple tree to be planted just east of the main gate in memory of all those at rest at McNeil. Gre=enbank Nursery supplied the tree at an approximate cost of \$500.00 and generously donated the cost of delivery, planting, securing and mulching around this McNeil Memorial Tree!

(6) The Board designed and had built a metal “McNeil Cemetery Est. 1849” sign and accompanying cross to be proudly displayed on the Vault Room. Approximate cost \$500.00.

(7) As noted above, we are grateful to Neil McLeod for building a beautiful lectern with its attached “McNeil Cemetery Est. 1849” sign! Cost \$450.00.

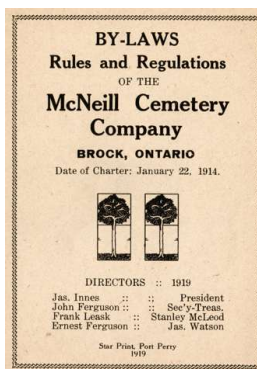
(8) The Board budgeted funds for Decoration Day that we may offer water and refreshments for our guests! A cake cutting ceremony will be part of this celebration! Approximate cost \$300.00.

(9) It is the intent of the Board to order and install commemorative plaques honouring those at rest in McNeil; one will be placed in front of the Memorial Tree and one affixed to the Vault Room. Approximate cost \$300.00.

As noted, significant funds were invested to mark our 175th Anniversary and to maintain the attractiveness and safety of our cemetery. None of this would be possible without the generous support of the McNeil Cemetery community and for this the Board remains very grateful! Your feedback on the aforementioned enhancements would be appreciated by your Board of Directors!

Did You Know?

• Doug Rennie recently discovered a copy of McNeil’s (Spelled McNeill) 1914 Charter, printed in 1919, in his father’s belongings. Ivan was a very active member of the McNeil Board! Thanks for this special “find” and donation to our archives, Doug!



• Margaret Kirton, Alexander Thorburn, Alexander Kirton, and Marion Stewart were the first recorded burials at McNeil.

• As indicated by Robert Ferguson in last year’s Cemetery Report, original Ferguson pioneers from

Scotland, Ann and Hugh Ferguson, had four sons who are buried at McNeil: John, the eldest son (1799-1879), Neil (1802-1895), Malcolm (1807-1897), and Donald (1816-1849).

In Remembrance

We solemnly remember all those at rest at McNeil Cemetery and acknowledge those who recently passed away including:

Ronald Bruce Fairman - June 18, 2019*

George Luzerne Williamson – April 29, 2023

Charles Leslie John Hartin – July 22, 2023

George Russell Davidson – October 14, 2023

Carol Ann Williamson – November 30, 2023

Dorothy Helen Miller – February 2, 2024

Harry Herbert Miller – February 2, 2024

James Ferguson Munro - March 9, 2024

Isabel Carson – April 30, 2024

“Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves a memory no one can steal” – Unknown

* With apologies to the Fairman family, Ronald’s name was not previously announced.

2024 Board Members

During the April 15, 2024 McNeil Annual General Meeting, the following 2024 McNeil Board of Directors was confirmed: President Warren Jibb, Secretary-Treasurer Rick De Jong and Directors Jim Carson, Neil Crockford, Magil Darnley, James De Jong, Brian Hadden, Doug Rennie, and Kevin Robertson. Regrettably, the Board also accepted the resignations of long-serving directors Ken Ferguson and John Munro. On behalf of the Board and the McNeil community, we are indebted to Ken and John for their many years of faithful and dedicated service and know they will remain supportive of the work of the McNeil Board. To the McNeil Board, we extend appreciation for their volunteer efforts to make our cemetery a safe and attractive resting place. The Board is anxious to add new members! If interested in being a member of the McNeil Cemetery Board, please contact President Warren Jibb at 705-741-0008 or Secretary-Treasurer Rick De Jong at 705-879-8141.

Plot Prices

The Board recently approved plot prices for 2024 : 1 Grave \$800, 2 Graves \$1600, 3 Graves \$2400, 4 Graves \$3200. For a complete price list of McNeil Cemetery services, a printed summary is located on the door of the Tool Shed or by contacting the secretary-treasurer, Rick De Jong.

2023 Financial Statement Summary

The Board remains very grateful for the generous financial support provided to McNeil in 2023 with

more than \$14 000.00 donated! These funds enabled the Board to continue to manage, plan and enhance our beautiful McNeil Cemetery! The Board extends sincere gratitude to our community for its generous commitment to McNeil. The following is a brief summary of the 2023 McNeil Financial Report.

Balance on Hand – December 31, 2022 **\$8 979.56**

Revenue:

GIC Cashed In at Maturity	\$11 270.49
Donations	\$14 042.75*
Funeral Receipts	\$5 214.00
Plot Sales and Cornerstones	\$3375.00
Care & Maintenance Interest	\$945.47
TOTAL 2023 RECEIPTS	\$34 572.71

* Special thanks to the Williamson, Beaton, Cookman, Hooper, and Donneral families for providing funds to purchase memorial sugar maple trees that were planted along the roadway!

Expenses:

Bank Fee/Safety Deposit Box	\$67.80
GIC Investment	\$16 500.00
Care and Maintenance Fund Transfer	\$1 250.00
Insurance	\$1 441.80
Secretary-Treasurer Expenses	\$1 385.73
Secretary-Treasurer Honorarium	\$750.00
Decoration Day	\$797.75
Grave Opening/Closing	\$2 698.44
Memorial Trees	\$1 988.76
Cemetery Maintenance – Grass Cutting	\$5 475.00
Cemetery Maintenance – Vault Room	\$4 420.21
TOTAL 2023 EXPENSES	\$36 775.49

Bank Balance December 31, 2023 **\$6 776.78**

Long Term GIC Investments **\$124 683.45**

Decoration Day Service will be held at the cemetery on **June 16, 2024 at 1:30 PM**. Please find enclosed a stamped, addressed envelope in case contributors are not able to attend this year's cemetery service. E-transfers can also be made through our email: wickmcneilcemetery@gmail.com. Indeed, we are most grateful to our McNeil community for their outstanding givings and generous support! In the event of inclement weather, the service will be held at Wick Church 1 km west of the cemetery.

Report on McNeil Cemetery Upkeep

The Board worked hard with volunteer time and efforts to maintain our attractive McNeil Cemetery. Such participation enables us to stay within our budget. The following McNeil Cemetery enhancements were accomplished:

- Thanks, in part, to the generous contribution by the late Pearl Armstrong, James De Jong Contracting replaced the leaking and broken Vault Room windows at a cost of \$4 420.21. We thank James for this important service as we continue to protect this important cemetery asset.

- Once again, a generous load of rich topsoil was donated and delivered to McNeil by Regine and Brian Marsh owners of EarthArt Landscapes. The Board worked hard to fill in low areas and spread new grass seed! We thank the Marsh's for their thoughtful support of McNeil Cemetery!

- Based on the fine work demonstrated in 2023, the Board met and renewed its contract with Colton Currins of King Currins Landscaping for 2024. We thank Colton Currins for his thoughtful and professional service and wish him continued success and safety in caring for our Cemetery.

Official Tax Receipts Update

Always appreciative of its contributions, official tax receipts for income tax purposes are issued for all donations of \$25.00 or more. Please make cheques payable to the **McNeil Cemetery Company Ltd.** All mailed donations should be sent to: McNeil Cemetery Company, c/o Rick De Jong 1825 Concession Road 4 Sunderland, Ontario L0C 1H0. For your convenience, electronic transfers may be made to McNeil Cemetery at wickmcneilcemetery@gmail.com or by contacting Rick De Jong at Pinedale14@hotmail.com.

Wick Presbyterian Church Paintings

Victoria and Curtis Hadden, owners of the Wick church building, commissioned extraordinary artist Walter Campbell, to render a painting of historic Wick Presbyterian Church. Framed prints are available in varying sizes at reasonable prices. If interested, contact victoria.hadden13@gmail.com for more information.

Chair Donation

Concerned for safety, McNeil purchased a number of new, used chairs for use at the cemetery. Our old, almost antique, wooden chairs are available and will be on display during Decoration Day. Anyone who wishes to make a donation to McNeil for one or more of these chairs, your support would be appreciated! As the saying goes ... "Chair Today, Gone Tomorrow!"

Stay in Contact

Always wanting to be sure our contact list is up to date, please send Rick De Jong any changes to your address or email.

Wishing You Safety and Good Health

The McNeil Cemetery Board of Directors wishes you and your family safety, good health, and peace throughout 2024.

