

### Part 3 of 3

### Fire Department Years

In 1970-71, John and neighbouring businessmen got together to plan a volunteer fire department in the area. Everyone supported the idea and the community worked tirelessly to fundraise by selling tickets and hockey pools and hosting the famous snowmobile trail ride.

It was a proud moment when we welcomed the first truck (the truck shown is not the first truck). John was named the Fire Chief serving from 1971-1998. The fire department was intertwined with the hotel because the original method of notification was to ring the five fire phones in town and hope that there was someone home to answer. One of these phones was found in the hotel dining room and it was so loud it could be heard above the noise of the bands. I remember that there were two rules when the fire phone rang: if you were on the house phone you got off as it was used to call and dispatch volunteer firefighters, and if you were in the bathroom – you got out! Many, many times, we called the men and women on the lists to dispatch the crews to a fire. It seems hard to imagine in this age of cell phones and pagers. While this photo is from Joe and Madeline's time, it shows the location of the fire phone in the dining room just outside the kitchen.

The Buchanan's were a huge part of the Fire Department (and Hotel) years with Alec a loud and enthusiastic fund raiser. Here is a photo of one night he came to draw a winning ticket. He shook the box and seeing that it was creating attention, gave it a good kick sending the tickets flying to all corners of the room.



Fire truck (this was not the original). John Bolton and Alec Buchanan in the photo



Alec and Doug Buchanan with Dave Curl and Raymond Dube from Country Classics

## Relationship with the law

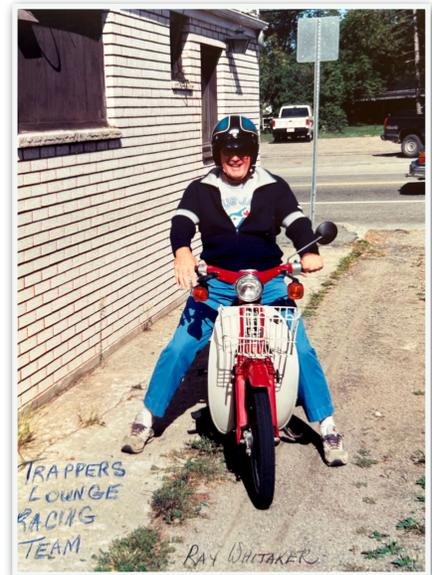
On quiet nights Elaine would put on a fresh pot of coffee near midnight and the local OPP duty team would join John in the kitchen for a cup. One night, Ron Seaver & Peter Ballantyne Sr. were called early because the coffee pot was missing. A trail of coffee led out the door and down the sidewalk. The officers followed the trail to the door of neighbour gentleman (who was known to overindulge and go a little off the rails when his wife was away). He answered the door saying "Hello Starsky & Hutch please come in for a coffee, I've just put a fresh pot on." He got a scolding from the officers and the coffee pot got returned to the kitchen with lots of laughs over coffee that night.

## Streaking Craze (sorry no photos)

The Trapper's Lounge joined the "streaking craze" that was all the rage in the 70s. It started with a local lad coming in the back door wearing only a paper bag over his head. As he ran through the bar, a woman called out "I'd know him anywhere". After the laughter subsided, the band played on.

Not to be outdone, a neighbour lady decided she wanted to get in on the streaking action. She brought a bag with her and went into the Ladies washroom and took off all her clothes. She ran through the bar with the clothes over her arm but misjudged a step and fell on her face in front of our bartender Stu. She recovered and ran out the front door. By coincidence, Starsky and Hutch were sitting in the parking lot. The cruiser followed her down the road lights and sirens going while calling "madam, put your clothes back on" over the loudspeaker! The coffee break had lots of laughter that night too.

John was always dreaming up pranks. A notable one occurred when Ray Whitaker lived in the village and would invite bar patrons for an after-hours pool party at his place. John arranged with Mike Short (from Bill's Live Bait) for a couple of pails of live fish and eels. He and an accomplice slipped out before midnight and dumped them in the swimming pool. The pool party was livened up considerably and when the OPP were called, they said it was not under their jurisdiction even though they were aware of the culprit.



Ray Whitaker

## The Art of Colin Edwards



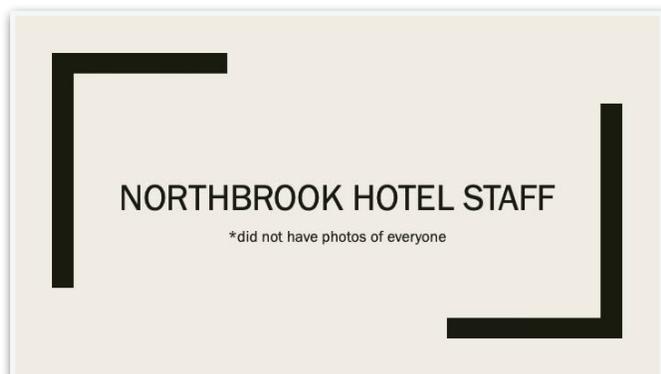
Grace & Colin Edwards

Colin Edwards, the art teacher at NAEC, was one of the bar's staff during the summer. He created a prototype of the "Parade Man" who had an urban 70s disco vibe. This got tweaked and countrified and the iconic Parade Man became the symbol of the Trapper's Lounge reproduced on hats and T-shirts and the signs throughout the Bar.



## Staff

We were blessed over the years with dedicated, reliable staff many of whom were family and many who became family. We couldn't find photos of everyone (and may have forgotten some) but we are grateful to all for shaping the Trapper's Lounge in the friendly, fun place it was.





Stewart Trepanier and Ferg McCarthy



Paul Dennis

Ferg McCarthy, Stu Trepanier and Paul Dennis were full timers. Brian Miller, Ed Yanch, Harry Scanlan, Sheila Perry, Cathy Credicott, Mike Bolton, John Sedore, Darrell Flieler, George Kosziwka, Dave Lyons, Jeff Douglas, Duane Love, Colin Edwards, Mark Rosenblath, and Glynn Warwick served their time in the bar. Mary Parks, Mildred Trepanier, Frieda, Helen Yanch Sr, Marian Yanch, Cindy Bolton, Cheryl Freeburn, Linda Sigismondo and Corrine Hayes all worked in food production and cleaning. Madeline and Ferg grew the cucumbers and made all the pickles for the sandwiches sold in the bar. Madeline is shown here with a whimsical calendar created by Colin on the wall behind her.

Grace and Ernest Mordak, Richard Cuddy and Jerry Salmond helped to scrub the bar floors on Sundays over the years. Elwood Trumble was the “back door” man.

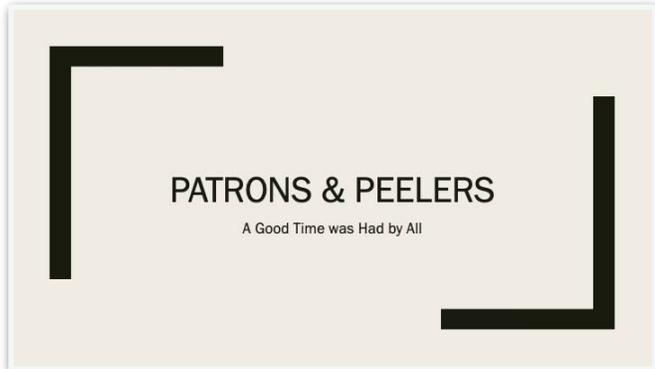
### Live Music



Reg Weber

Music was always a part of the fabric of the bar and anyone who could play the fiddle or guitar was welcome to play for the crowd. Reg Weber had moved back to Northbrook by the mid 1970s and he and John talked about bringing live music to the bar on Saturday nights. Reg’s band The Country Classics, became the popular house band of the time. Other bands included “The Sounds of Tyme”, “The Hangmen”, Western Hayriders”, “White Lightning” and the Malcolm Brothers to name a few.

## Amateur Nights and Halloween



As the popularity of live music grew, Reg Weber mentioned a Kingston Bar that was doing Amateur Nights based on the popular “Gong Show” on TV. John and a couple others went to scope it out and from then on, every Wednesday night in July and August became known as Amateur Night. It was wildly popular, and people were amazed at the real and somewhat dubious talent of some of the performers. Lines formed down the block signaling the need for both a front door

man (Mike did this job for three years before he was old enough to wait tables) and a back door man (Elwood Trumble). Everyone loved to come to dance. We have a photo of Canada’s then oldest man, Dave Trumble, dancing. John usually got to have the last dance!

John became an amateur matchmaker on the nights when he had to maximize space to get in as many people as possible. He would sit a single girl and guy together. More couples than we can count came together through this serendipitous seating arrangement. One summer, so many of these couples got married that Elaine had to bulk order fans from Campbellford Wholesale to give as wedding gifts.

Halloween was also wildly popular with the locals. John and Elaine would have a band on the Saturday night on or after Halloween and the locals showed up in full costume to have fun. Here are a few PG rated photos.

You never knew what each day would bring. There were countless birthday celebrations with people showing up with cakes to celebrate.



Dave Trumble (Canadian’s then oldest man) and Mary Brown (Ron Brown is of to the side).





Sundown over Dodge – painting by Colin Edwards

In the shoulder seasons, the local “get along gang” came out to play cards and pool and to catch up on the news and share a pint or two. Their afternoon gatherings led to popular hotel pool tournaments organized by Mike Bolton and John Sedore in the early 80s.

As the years went by, times were changing. Our children were grown, and patrons and staff were growing their own families, so the decision was made to sell the hotel. The Northbrook Hotel changed hands on January 30, 1994. John and Elaine had a final “Open House” party, and the place was packed. Friends and neighbours had commissioned Colin Edwards to do a painting of the hotel titled “Sundown over Dodge” that was presented on that evening.

It was a bittersweet moment and the end of the Bolton Family era of the Northbrook Hotel.



John and Elaine with Frieda Mitts

The Northbrook Hotel has changed hands three times since 1994. The log cabin was torn down to make way for more parking. The current owner and his family reside in the building, but it is not currently operated as a business.

Many of the staff, peelers and patrons have moved on to attend Amateur Nights in heaven. It is said that on a warm summer night, you can still hear the music and laughter coming from the building.

“If those old walls could talk” ...



Cloyne & District Historical Society Secretary Cindy Austin (L) thanking Cindy & Elaine Bolton for their presentation on February 17, 2024 at the Barrie Community Hall in Cloyne.