

## LLOYD “ANDY” MATHER

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1932, in the old Chatterton place between Fort Stewart & Hermon, Lloyd Mather (quickly nicknamed “Andy”) was born. He is the only son born to Archie Mather & his wife Lizzy (nee McPherson). Archie & Lizzy also had two girls – older sister Pauline and younger sister Elsie.

From about 1936 – 1944, the Mathers lived at Cozy Acres. Who wouldn't love to live in a place called Cozy Acres? Even though times were often tough and food scarce at times, Andy recalls fond memories of these early years.



*Andy with his tame deer “Mickey” at Cozy Acres*

Andy has lived his entire life in Mayo Township. He attended several local schools including the Mountain School, Hermon School and McArthur’s Mills School, in that order. Getting to school was no easy task. He walked for miles down paths and country roads and crossed open fields in snow storms. But he survived and finished up his formal education back at the Hermon School before beginning full-time work on the farm. Later in life, Andy would serve on the North Hastings High School Board of Directors representing Mayo Township.

The Mather farm in Carlow/Mayo Township has been in the family for 5 generations except for a brief period just prior to Andy's father purchasing it back into the Mather name in the 1940s. Andy worked the land in his youth before electricity and mechanized farm equipment became the norm. As *all* the old timers *well* know, the work was so physically hard, that “most young people today just wouldn't do it”. Stories of working in the blistering heat removing rocks from the fields with a horse drawn stone boat come to mind. Forestry work such as felling huge maple and oak trees with cross-cut saws to farm chores like plowing the fields with a single furrow plough behind two Percherons were all in a days work.

But even with all this physical work, Andy still managed to get out and play for the Hermon Baseball Team, a sport which he still loves to this day.



BASEBALL FIELD at HERMON circa 1950

Mayo Township, North Hastings, Ontario

Front (L to R): Bruce Ramsbottom, Arthur McMunn, Bill Slater, Roy E. Hall, Pete Crawford, Blaine Mather

Back (L to R): Isreal Beaudrie, Andy Mather, Archie Mather, Alan Stewart, Jack Potts, Howard Ralph

By age 18, Andy had met Carol Smith, a “city girl” from Belleville, whose family moved to McArthur's Mills to run one of the two local stores. Carol's mother was “a Bruce” and also originally from the area. Andy was smitten and before long, in 1951, he and Carol were married.

Their only son Jack was born just over a year later and so they began their life together as a young family.



*Andy & Carol*



*Young Jack and his pup*

They started out living and working hard at the Mather farm and working in the bush, often with young Jack in tow. Later Andy worked at the cement block factory in L'Amable and even ventured out to Peterborough, working for the city utilities. But there are two professions that for most of his friends and family, really define Andy:

1. As a Lumberman, who worked very hard in the bush, through harsh winters and blistering summers; knowing the lay of the land like the back of his hand with every tree, plant and animal on the farm under his watchful eye.
2. And as Proprietor of a retail business in McArthur's Mills called *The Country Store*.

Andy and Carol describe this period of their lives as their busiest time! In addition to long hours in the Store, they continued to appreciate the outdoors with late night snowmobile or ATV trips in the surrounding woods and the all too infrequent hunting and fishing expeditions. Stories of his “Merchant Days” days still circulate today. A lot of the stories tell of how they went above and beyond to serve the people of their community with one old friend saying, “My family could not have survived without their help and I will never forget that”. They operated the store for 30 years, retiring in 1990.



*The store, some bikes, a dog and a sunny day!*

But retirement didn't bring much R & R. There were trips out west to visit Jack, fishing trips, hunting and camping at the farm, dances at the Mayo Community Hall, cleaning up after dances at the Mayo Community Hall and baking lots and lots of bread, all with a Springer Spaniel or two in tow!

Andy & Carol love dogs, particularly the Springer Spaniel breed. Although very early on it was Cocker Spaniels that had their attention. Today, they have yet another fun loving Springer named Anna, short for "Anna-versary" because she was a 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary gift to themselves, stating, "We've tried but we just can't live without a dog". Anna keeps them young makes them laugh every day.

You can't speak of Andy without mentioning his love of music. He taught himself to play the accordion and called for square dances many times. He and his sister Pauline, a fiddle player, have entertained at countless local dances over the years. You'll always find Andy with his signature ball cap tipped to the side and a big smile on his face! It should also be noted that Andy supplied many a community dinner with his delicious homemade bread.



*Here's a yummy batch of homemade bread!*

Now that son Jack and daughter-in-law Jill have taken over the farm, he is free to enjoy the beautiful scenery without all the hard work, although people close to Andy know he is secretly “addicted” to working in the wood and is still cutting and splitting every chance he gets!

Andy is a great storyteller who can recall his past in remarkable detail. Listening to Andy’s stories is like a history lesson of life in Mayo Township spanning the past 80 years. A rare resource indeed!

Like many his age, Andy has recently faced some health challenges with its inevitable ups and downs but he’s doing OK and can still tell a great story or a joke with the best of them!

This year, in October, Andy & Carol will celebrate 65 years together!