

McKitrick Bed & Breakfast - heritage home is a family affair



By Constance Scrafield

Judy Holmes and her daughter, Tracey, bought the McKitrick House Inn on Broadway in December, 2014 but did not open their Bread and Breakfast until March 1, 2015.

‘There was lots to do,’ she told the Citizen. ‘New roof, furnace, we did over the attic, sound proofed it for my granddaughter to have.’

Coming from a long time of living in Brampton, ‘44 years. I owned the house and my husband had died five years ago. Tracey was living in Shelburne; she’s a teacher of special needs kids and works in a seniors’ group home.

‘Ford [Doug] wants to cut out EA’s and put a freeze on teachers ? I guess the class sizes will be increased quite a bit,’ she remarked.

Continuing her story, ‘My daughter wanted me to come and help with the kids. So, I sold my house and came to Orangeville to find somewhere to live and this house came up. It made sense that we all live here and run a business. It also has a commercial kitchen and I can make my preserves there. So, my daughter sold her house to and we bought this.’

The house was built in 1871 by Donald McDonald and later purchased by Alexander McKitrick, who also owned the Orangeville Banner and was the mayor of Orangeville, at one time.

Besides the family who live in the house, there is tenant as well, ‘Peter. He’s in his 80’s. A social worker brought him to me to see if he could stay here for a little until a space came up for him at the Avalon. He’d been living her for a while when it did and he didn’t want to go. So, I agreed he could stay here. He has his own room and he gets his three meals a day- he just eats with us. We watch television in the evenings together- so, it works out.

‘He’s quite a character. When my granddaughter gives him the finger, he thinks that means, he’s number one!’

For her clients, ‘I always have a room and there’s a nice lounge upstairs where they can have privacy and be comfortable. One lady was here who used to live here.’

Last year put her business through the ringer: ‘On the 4th of April, a 100 year tree ? not my tree- fell down on the house; 13th July, my car was stolen out out of the back and the police found it later in a field, stripped; the kid who was passenger is being charged

because he was of age...A couple of days later, we had a break in and then, another.?

She shook her at the run of it all. ?Then, I had surgery.?

Her very long line and large volume of preserves that she makes as another business, began 15 years ago when her daughter had a huge number of green tomatoes left over from her garden.

Tracey brought them to Ms Homes' Brampton home and ?we made salsas and other condiments and it went on from there. Now, I do 100 different things. I just had my nutrition labels printed. Two places right now sell them in Hillsburgh and Shelburne. They sell out at every show I do, the farmers' markets and fall fairs.?

Of the B & B, she has her reasons for liking it, ?I like meeting people. I'm from Manitoba and we're very out going there. I get to meet people all the time.

?Two couples come twice a year because they like to walk the trails around here. And there are surprises. One lady came because she wanted the sleep dentistry. I had to drive her there and back. They made sure I was qualified to drive her. She couldn't take a taxi because they had to be sure she'd be dropped at the right place.

?I'm happy doing this and settled in this place,? was her comment. ?Before we opened, we went to Cuba. My husband was in the healthcare business and he did a lot of travelling. I went with him sometimes. We went to New Orleans. He worked and I went shopping. That was fun. We did a five day cruise to Mexico too.

?We can also offer dinner here, with 24 hours notice. We cater small functions here, weddings, showers, that sort of thing. Of course, being in the middle of Orangeville that's so pretty with lots of nice restaurants and shops. We encourage people to come to see the shows at Theatre Orangeville with our accommodation and there is local fine dining here.?

As to her ambitions, ?I'm doing it day by day. There's still the renovations from the tree falling. The insurance has kept it waiting.?

Her preserves are a big part of what she is doing because ?It's not seasonal for me. I can buy fruit from St. Jacobs and in Action at McMullins. I can buy frozen berries for preserving.

?I have even sold them to a lady that does baskets. She was doing 55 baskets and put two or three jars in each one. When we first moved in here, another lady was getting married and she ordered 1,100 little jars to put in her gift bags.

?I'm always ready to provide whatever anyone wants,? she said.

For more information, to reserve accommodation or purchase Ms Holmes' preserves, you can email her at [HYPERLINK](mailto:judyholmesbb@gmail.com)
[?mailto:judyholmesbb@gmail.com?judyholmesbb@gmail.com](mailto:judyholmesbb@gmail.com) or check out the website [HYPERLINK](http://www.McKitrickHouseInn.ca/)
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