

## HELEN, MARYANN AND STEPHANIE SAWCHUK

*submitted by "the girls"*

As small children, we remember Christmas dinners of special food prepared by Mother, stockings filled with oranges and nuts, watching for the first star in the east window and sitting down with our parents, family and relatives to a beautifully set table. Dad would light the candles on the tree, always fearful of fire. After we would sing Carols in English and Ukrainian and carollers would drop in and join the festivities. We would, as children, crack nuts and play until we fell asleep and Dad would carry us to bed. In the morning was some excitement as we looked into our long, red woollen stockings. We always found nuts and oranges and some chosen catalogue toy. As we neared the bottom of the stocking, we hoped we would not find an onion, as this meant you were kind of bad. As we all looked at one another, no one would admit to finding an onion.

Sunday mornings were very special as it was the day Dad would take us outside and spend time with us showing us the beauty of nature. In the winter he made us skis, took us sledding and made us a skating rink.

As we got older, we looked forward to the skating rink that the boys in the community would make. Usually, the rink would be made on the creek and with the moon as our only outdoor lighting, many happy hours were spent skating with all our friends. Summer was fun, too, as we cleaned up the weeds in the creek and made a swimming place which we sure enjoyed.

Our Mother was a great cook and famous in the neighborhood for her cinnamon buns, as all the children will recall. She also spent many hours along with the other women in the community preparing food and curing or smoking meat for many weddings. The wedding would start early and usually two full course meals were served before it was over.

We enjoyed our Sunday outings with our parents, picking mushrooms, blueberries, Saskatoons, Sandcherries and Chokecherries. We all hated picking Raspberries because they took so long to pick and the days seemed so hot at Raspberry time. We often went to



*Maryann,  
Stephanie and  
Betty Sawchuk*

Beausejour and even Kenora. On one trip to Stead, Dad had three flat tires and Baba Sawchuk kept praying we would make it home.

Those days were busy ones with harvesting, picking potatoes, all our relatives dropping in to share the vegetables and good food. We also had a lot of daily jobs such as pumping water for livestock, carrying wood into the basement for the furnace and kitchen for the wood stove. In the spring, Dad bought cords and cords of wood that had to be cut and stacked. This appeared a never ending job. But when it was finished there would be long rows of neatly piled wood ready for use.

We girls shared the chores of the farm and helped our parents and in so doing we became a very close knit family which has lasted to this day.

Farming was not too profitable in those days, after Mother fed all those chickens for a year we would end up getting only 10 cents a dozen for the eggs. The same for butter which was churned for what seemed like hours, ending up being sold for 15 cents a pound. The potatoes after weeding and hoeing and hilling, picking, sorting, bagging and tagging, all hard work, would finally be sold at about 25 cents a bushel.

We always had company staying over. Our relatives from Poplar Park and Libau who sold their wood at the market in Selkirk, the Priest from the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church in East Selkirk would stay over after services. The Spring Tea would often be held in our home with many friends turning out to visit and talk of interesting things.

Mom and Dad often took us to socials or weddings and would pull us on a sled to home, half asleep, in the middle of winter.

We were very fortunate that we were never without food. There was never a lot of money but we girls always felt very secure, confident and well loved. Having no brothers meant Dad had to do most all of the farm work himself, with Mother doing far more than her share. We grew up sharing and working as a team.

Mother was always quick to remind us how fortunate we really were and that things could have been tougher, if Dad had not survived the Typhoid Epidemic that many of his fellow workers had died from.

Baba Sawchuk was a very cheerful and friendly person and was loved by all because of her personality. She died at age 94. Her husband had lost his sight in one eye shortly after coming to Canada in a brushing accident. His sight deteriorated until he was totally blind and Alexandra took loving care of him. We children would gather about to hear the grand stories he could tell.

Baba Wishnowcki used to babysit us and tell great stories about the old country and about her Mother (Our Great-grandmother) who helped many people as she was a mid-wife and Nurse. There was little money for her services so she was rich in produce and other gifts of the land. Baba Wishnowcki also told us about her husband who played his violin at many a party and wedding. Grandfather had gone to military school in Germany and with his training had obtained the rank of officer in the Cavalry.

We will always remember how warm our big house got when Dad filled the furnace up with wood, or how many

chores we shared to make our home warm and snug. Lucky for us we had such good parents that took a great deal of interest in our health, education and both our spiritual and emotional needs.

That is why we could not pass up this opportunity to share some of these treasured memories with some of the finest people that touched our lives in East Selkirk.

## MICHAEL PAUL ("SAX") SAWCHUK

*submitted by Sophie Sawchuk*

Michael Paul Sawchuk was born June 2, 1905, in East Selkirk, Man. He attended Happy Thought School, graduating from grade eight in 1921. "Sax" worked for a few years at Sharp's General Store. He learned to play the saxophone and joined the local orchestra which was organized at the Ukrainian Hall. He also took part in many of the dramas that were played there at that period. Later, the orchestra formed a smaller band and became very popular, playing at all the weddings and different functions for miles around the country.

Sax also served as Secretary-Treasurer of Happy Thought School for a few years.

He married Sophie Nickey in 1934 and moved to Winnipeg, where he worked for Grosvenor Taxi for many years.

They had one daughter, Shirley-Ann.

Sax passed away on November 20, 1954.



*Sax Sawchuk*

## THE SAWULA FAMILY STORY

*submitted by Verna Wusaty*

Around 1896, Eksenia and Wasyl Sawula emigrated to Canada from a Ukrainian district titled "Cheskey" near the city of Lvov. They travelled by ship for approximately two weeks with two small children. They suffered sea sickness while on the trip. Their personal belongings were all they brought with them. Eksenia's sister, Mrs. Kandia, had come to Canada earlier, and had settled in the Brokenhead Municipality. The Sawula family stayed here upon their arrival by train from Montreal. Two sons, Harry and Louis, were born here. The Holigroski family helped them adjust to their new life. They bought a homestead at Poplar Park in 1901. There was nothing but bush and swamp. Their first task was to build a house and barn of hand hewn logs. The house consisted of two rooms with a straw and sod covered roof. The floor was plastered with clay. Wasyl made the table, benches, and beds and the heat was provided by a cast iron stove. The buildings were situated on the road which was just a bush trail. Controversy arose when two neighboring homesteaders complained about this, and one day in Wasyl's absence from home, they attempted to knock it down but gave up when Eksenia cried.

Wasyl walked to Selkirk down the Old Colonization Road while Eksenia gathered and chopped firewood. The eldest son, Stephen aged twelve, worked by fishing for the Icelandic families in the winter and received meager pay and fish in return. Six girls were added to the family. Eksenia walked three miles to the store at Oak Point, through bush trails. She'd buy a bag of flour and carried it back in two trips. Then she'd return to get staple items.

Wasyl raised his own steers to use as oxen to till the fields. Harness was hand made from purchased leather. After they purchased a horse train.

The children attended the school at Poplar Park walking a distance of four miles in extreme cold winter weather and dressed lightly. Their brother, Stephen, taught school for part of the term. He later entered law and set up a practice in Winnipeg. The older children went out working, the boys for farmers and the girls found jobs in Winnipeg. The younger girls helped with haying and harvest along with the housework. They whitewashed the house before Easter and Christmas.

In 1910 a one-and-a-half storey house was built with a plank floor. Then they moved across the road to a house purchased from the Bespalco family. It was built of cordwood, plastered inside and out and then siding was put on.

Their early social life consisted of visiting neighbors and later centred around the church at Poplar Park which served the Catholic and Orthodox people. Later a hall was built and dances were held every Saturday night along with Sunday plays held after church. Weddings and funerals were held in the homes and then in the church and hall once they were built. Wasyl observed religious holidays and he read the Bible regularly to the family. If he had a button missing on his shirt, he wouldn't allow it to be sewn on as he believed no work was to be done on holidays.



Aug. 20, 1924, *Life on the Sawula Homestead.*

In 1924, Lena Sawula married Michael Wusaty. They had a family of four and one son resides on what was Wasyl's property, Lena still lives on their homestead started by her and Mike. She loves gardening and raising flowers in summer and visits from family and friends. Of the three other surviving members of the Sawula family, Kay and Eva live in British Columbia, and Minnie lives near San Diego, California. They each in turn have families living in British Columbia and the United States.

## LEOPOLD SCHALME

*submitted by Gus Riehl*

Leopold Schalme was born in Latvia in 1863 and with his wife and young daughter he immigrated to Canada and settled in the Libau area in about 1897. Part of the hamlet of Libau is located on what was Mr. Schalme's farm. His farmyard covered the spot where the German Lutheran Church and the residence of the late Albert Petznick now stand.

Their daughter later married Reverend Spohr of Winnipeg and they had two children, a son Arnold and a daughter Beatrice. Arnold was later to become director of 'The Royal Winnipeg Ballet', a position he held for many years.

In addition to farming, Mr. Schalme at one time owned and operated a steam powered sawmill. He also brought to the district the first mobile threshing outfit and one of the first Model "T" Fords.

Besides Lettish, his native language, Mr. Schalme spoke English and German fluently. He also had a limited working knowledge of Ukrainian and Polish, and he found this a great asset in the performance of his subsequent activities. He was at one time the assessor (20 years) for the Municipality of St. Clements, Secretary

Treasurer for the Libau School District, and Postmaster. It was he who gave the Libau post office its name, after a town in Latvia. Mr. Schalme had the Post Office name changed from Kreiger (named after Julius Kreiger) to that of Libau on Feb. 1, 1906.

With all this going for him it was only natural that he became the king-pin in the community. He was the interpreter and spokesman for that congregation of mostly farmers and laborers, with languages and cultures from many parts of Europe. And it was because of this accomplished man that the language barrier, which posed a problem in many new settlements, was here almost non-existent and he filled the position of Libau Postmaster from Dec. 1, 1905 to April 3, 1916 inclusive.

In the early 1920's Mr. Schalme moved to a farm two miles west of Libau and it was here that he passed away in 1927 as the result of an accident he had while operating a power saw. He was hit in the chest by a piece of the saw blade which had shattered, and although he was rushed to the Selkirk General Hospital, which at that time took several hours, the injury proved to be too severe, and he died a few days later. His accident occurred on Wed. Oct. 12, 1927 his arm amputated almost immediately and died on the afternoon of Tuesday, Oct. 25, 1927.

He was 64 yrs. old at the time of his death and he was buried in the Libau Lutheran cemetery on Oct. 27, 1927.

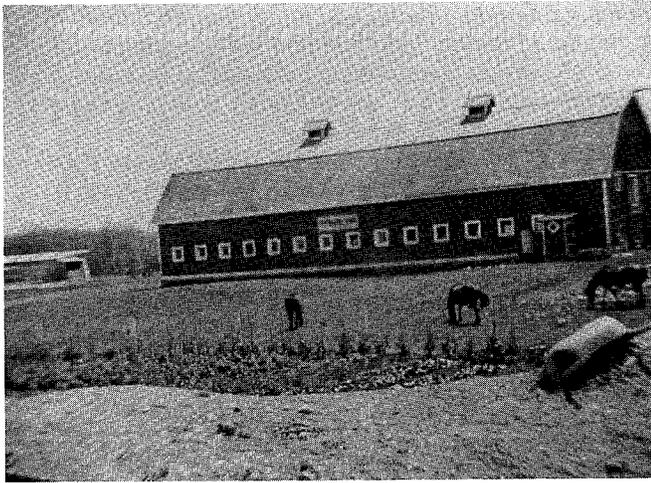
## REINHARD AND IRMGARD SCHNEIDER

*submitted by Hans Schneider*

River Lot 100 in the Parish of St. Clements, some three miles north of Lockport, is the home of three generations of Schneiders. At one time, their farm, with its two big red barns, the larger of which could hold 70 milk cows, was a landmark on Henderson Highway. The barns have long since been torn down and the cows and horses which used to enliven the scene have disappeared, another example of the changing scene and life styles of the area. Only the original house remains though much altered through two major expansions and several renovations.

In 1933 when Mr. Reinhard Schneider bought the farm and moved in with his wife Irmgard and their daughters, Elisabeth and Wiltrud, and son Hans, the house had no basement and was heated by means of a woodstove in the middle of the livingroom. Before the Schneiders came, it was the home of Harry and Anna Verheul who, at that time, managed the farm for the Sifton family of the Winnipeg Free Press and later moved to their own farm, a quarter of a mile south. Their hired man was Mike Dalebozik who also remained to farm in the neighborhood. In 1933 and for many years thereafter, the Schneiders place was called "Glenarma Farm", a name which appeared in the pedigrees of the purebred Ayrshire cows which the Siftions raised on the farm along with their string of polo ponies and thoroughbreds. originally, "Glenarma Farm" had been part of the large land holdings of Judge Haney. It was he who had built the house and barns and later sold the place to the Siftions.

The Schneiders took over the farm with the cows; some of the riding horses were also left behind by the former owners. This was the height of the depression and there



*Sifton Horse Barns.*

were not many buyers for thoroughbreds and polo ponies, not even among the Siftons' affluent friends. The Schneider children, of course, were greatly pleased and, for many years afterwards, enjoyed riding these fine animals. Another favorable circumstance for the children was the fact that Kitchener School was just across the road. It was a typical one-room school built in 1921 with a pot-bellied stove in the back and a pump under a spreading elm tree in the front yard. All this is gone now, only the big elm tree has survived to this day, though its companions throughout St. Clements have mostly all fallen prey to Dutch elm disease.

The Schneiders came to Canada in 1927 from Emmendingen in the Black Forest region of Germany together with some 100 other immigrants who settled around Little Britain in the R.M. of St. Andrews. The depression years were tough for the parents but happy ones for the children who found new horizons through high school in Selkirk and successful careers beyond the confines of the family farm. The war years were stressful ones for the family; because of their German heritage, they were officially classified as "enemy aliens"; on the

other hand, they suffered no rejection from their friends and neighbors and learned to appreciate more deeply the value of a free and tolerant society.

A long time guest of the Schneiders, first as a little girl of eight and later when she boarded with them to attend Selkirk High School, was Gabriele Philippi, the daughter of friends from Marquette, Manitoba. In 1960, she became Mrs. Schneider Jr. and, to this day, lives on the old farm with her husband Hans, their four children and Mr. and Mrs. Schneider Senior. Elisabeth, who has been the librarian at Happy Thought School for many years, married Joe Schilling in 1946. They have a farm on River Road north of Selkirk. Their four daughters and three sons are all happily married and have children of their own. Wiltrud, the youngest of the three Schneider children, married Harold Romano in 1952. Although he was born and raised in Gonor, they only met in Toronto in 1949 when both were working there. They have five children, three sons and two daughters, and now live in Halton Hills, Ontario. Harold has had a successful business career and is now President of A.H. Robbins Company Ltd. (Canada), a pharmaceutical manufacturing company.

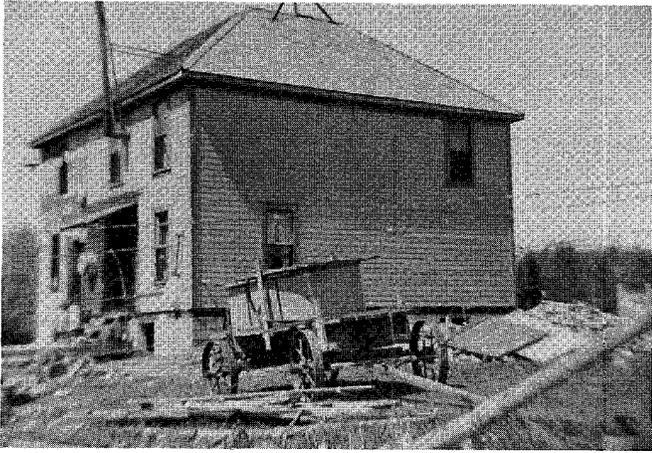


*Mr. and Mrs. Schneider, Elisabeth, Wiltrud and Hans.*



*Reinhard and Irmgard Schneider.*

In 1983, Mr. Reinhard Schneider was 96 years old; his wife Irmgard was 91. They have 16 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. They still live on the old farm together with Hans Schneider, his wife Gabriele, their sons Roland, Christian and Bertram, and daughter Friederike. Hans Schneider has had a lengthy career with the Manitoba Government where he now holds the position of Commissioner of Corrections. Roland and Christian are graduating as electrical engineers from the University of Manitoba in 1983, Friederike is entering the 4th year of honors science course and Bertram is attending Selkirk High School. There is every expectation that the old house and farm will remain in the family for generations to come.



*Schneider's renovating the old Victor Sifton house.*

## **JULIUS SCHWARK**

*submitted by N. Froehlich*

Julius Schwark was born on Jan. 15, 1854, in Malince, Poland, to German parents. Julius could speak German and Polish.

His wife Ernestine was born on Jan. 29, 1854 in Russia. Ernestine was the daughter of Samuel Froehlich and Wilhelmine (nee: Wentland).

Julius and Ernestine had three daughters: Emilie, born on Feb. 7, 1888, married Julius Block. Freida was born in 1890, and she married Christoph Langner of Beausejour. Karoline, the third daughter born to Julius and Ernestine died at 12 years of age in Greenwald, Man.

Julius and Ernestine came to Canada in 1903, settling in Beausejour and for a short time in Greenwald.

Then they moved to Michigan, USA, where they picked fruit and berries, and our grandpa (Julius) worked as a carpenter. They lived there 10 years.

In 1919, both at the age of 65 years, they came back to Canada, and purchased a house and barn at Gull Lake from Lena Zirk. They had a large vegetable garden, neatly kept by a picket fence made of round sticks.

Grampa Schwark kept bees, a pig or two, and some

chickens. Early at sunrise he would be out in his homemade boat fishing, he cooked huge Jackfish and poured a vinegar solution over this. It was delicious eaten cold.

You would find him in his little workshop, making wooden spoons, wooden buckets, and butter churns, which he chopped and whittled down from cordwood. He wove beautiful baskets and plant stands out of red willows. He also made and wore wooden shoes, his were thick wooden soles with leather uppers.



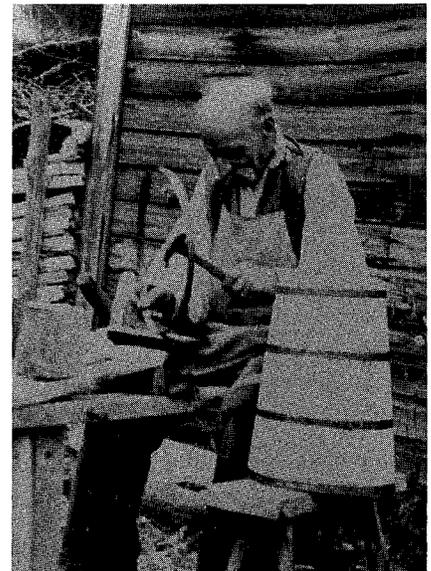
*Ernestine Schwark, Michigan, U.S.A., 1919.*

He also made his own gun, which he loaded with buckshot to hunt rabbits.

Ernestine (our Gramma) died on Aug. 17, 1932, at 78 years. Our Grampa lived alone and stayed in his home where he (Julius Schwark) died on Dec. 8, 1944, at 90 years of age. Both are laid to rest in the Trinity Lutheran Church Cemetery at Thalberg.



*Julius and Ernestine Schwark sitting in front of their home in Gull Lake, 1920's.*



*Julius Schwark making a butterchurn (Gull Lake).*

## SIR PETER SCOTT, CBE DSC LL.D

Sir Peter Scott has played an active part throughout his life in the conservation of the natural environment by taking practical steps to prevent the extinction of species and to protect natural areas, by increasing public awareness through writing, through the medium of radio and television, and by working tirelessly in a voluntary capacity for a number of international non-governmental organizations, some of which - notably the Wildfowl Trust and the World Wildlife Fund - he was instrumental in creating.

For fourteen years he was the presenter of the BBC's natural history television series 'Look', and for more than twenty years a member of the Children's Hour Sound Radio programme 'Nature Parliament'. Later he spoke commentaries for Anglia Television's Survival Programmes and is a Director of Survival Anglia Limited.

In 1946 he founded the Wildfowl Trust which has, as its objectives, education, research, conservation and recreation. This organization of which he is still Honorary Director has specialized in showing birds to people, in studying their biology and ecology, and in breeding waterfowl species threatened with extinction. For example, in 1950, when less than 50 Hawaiian Geese, or Ne-Ne, remained alive in the world, all on the big island of Hawaii, three were sent to the headquarters of the Wildfowl Trust at Slimbridge, England. By 1981 this stock had produced over 1,500 birds, 200 of which were sent to repopulate the Haleakala Crater on the Hawaiian Island of Maui from which the species had disappeared. Similar breeding success has been achieved with a number of other endangered species such as the Laysan Teal, the New Zealand Brown Duck, the White-winged Wood Duck, the Philippine Duck, the Ruddy-headed Goose, the Trumpeter Swan and others.

In 1956 Scott joined the Executive Board of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and in 1963 became Chairman of its Survival Service Commission which is charged with the



*Bluebills drawn while Peter Scott was on a train May 24, 1949.*

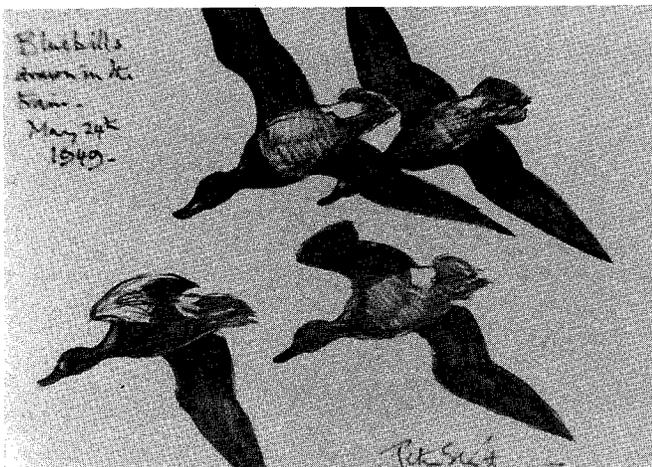
prevention of extinction of animal and plant species. As such he invented and created the Red Data Books, now widely used as a basis for international and national conservation legislation. The Survival Service Commission, of which he was Chairman till 1981, forms a scientific network of more than 1,100 specialists in zoology, botany and ecology throughout the world.

In 1961 he was one of the founders of the World Wildlife Fund (of which he designed the well-known Panda Symbol), and was Chairman of WWF (International) until 1982, as well as Chairman and now Founder Vice-President of the British National Organization of WWF. He was also one of the Founders of the Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands, and the Falkland Islands Foundation.

His interests extend across a wide range of environmental problems from species to ecosystems, from wetlands to tropical rain forests, from marine pollution and the over-exploitation of whales, to human overpopulation.

By profession Peter Scott is an artist who specializes in wildlife painting. He was also trained as a biologist and is a general naturalist with a particular interest in birds and coral reef fishes. He is the author of 15 books, and has illustrated some twenty others. He is an Olympic Bronze Medallist in single-handed yachting (1946), was British Gliding Champion in 1963, and is the holder of the international gold badge for gliding with all three diamonds. Formerly he was Lord Rector of Aberdeen University and has since 1974 been Chancellor of the University of Birmingham.

In 1973 he was knighted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II "for services to conservation and the environment".



*Painting of birds flying at Libau Marsh by Peter Scott in 1946.*

## OTTO AND IDA SCRAMSTAD

*submitted by Florence Martin*

Otto Scramstad was born in Rena, Norway, in 1872, the son of Per and Gurine Scramstad. At the age of twenty-one, he emigrated to Minnesota, U.S.A. While in Fergus Falls, Minnesota, he married Ida Hanstad, who was born near Oslo, Norway, in 1874, she was the daughter of Olaus and Andrea Hanstad.

They moved to Starbuck, Man., where they farmed for many years, later they moved to the Mayfield district and in 1923 they were on the McGillvray Farm, called the school section.

Later, owing to Mr. Scramstad's health, they moved to Selkirk, where he operated the ferry between East and West Selkirk. Ida and Otto Scramstad had four daughters and seven sons.

Oscar, who passed away at the age of seventy-seven, on Jan. 14, 1975.

Gustave married Leah Northcut, and they had one daughter and two sons, Maurice and Alvin, they lived in Virden, Man. Gustave died on April 15, 1972. Ella married Knute Halland, they have three daughters, Viola, Verna and Lorraine, and one son, Clarence. They live in Minnedosa, Man.

Florence married James Martin, and they have three sons, Wilfred, Ralph and Lloyd. They lived in East and West Selkirk. Jim passed away on June 7, 1961.

Elmer married Catherine McLeod. They have five sons, Harold, Ronald, Elmer, Dennis and Melvin, and two daughters, Donna Mae, and Marilyn (Susie). Elmer died on Nov. 20, 1982. They lived in Vancouver, B.C.

Clarence married Ada Hickes, they have one son Raymond, and a daughter Audrey. Ada passed away on April 8, 1973. They lived in Selkirk.

Harry married Margaret Patnaude. They have three daughters Beverly, Lynda, and Barbara. Harry passed away on Sept. 17, 1960. They lived in Carman, Man. Alice married Randolph Christie, they have one son Randolph (Punky) and one daughter Gail. Alice passed away on May 24, 1982.

Mary married Findlay Johnstone. They have one son Iver and two daughters Joan and Fern. They lived in Selkirk.



*Otto and Ida Scramstad, Fergus Falls, Minn.*



*1939. Front Row, Left to Right: Harry, Elmer, Mary, Ella, Florence, Alice. Back Row: Gustave, Bob, Oscar, Otto and Clarence when they were together at Dad's funeral.*

Bob married Dorothy Bussell. They have four sons: Leonard, Alan, Clifford and Gordon, and two daughters Kathy and Elaine. Dorothy died on Nov. 11, 1981. They lived in Selkirk.

Otto Jr. married Thora Johaneson. They have three daughters Karen, Barbara, and Judy-Lynn, and live in Vancouver, B.C. Otto Jr. died on June 23, 1976.

Otto Scramstad Sr. died in Selkirk on Nov. 6, 1939, at the age of 68 years. Ida Scramstad passed away on Feb. 21, 1970, at the age of ninety-six.

Otto Scramstad was a man of great generosity and his wife Ida who assisted at many births, not as a midwife but a good neighbor, in the old days.

There are many grandchildren and great grandchildren surviving these early residents of the area.

## THE SEMENCHUK FAMILY

Panko Semenchuk came to Canada in 1906. Upon his arrival in Selkirk, Man. he was met by his older brother Andrew who had come to Canada in 1900 and was established. In 1908 he met Pearl Dutka whom he later married. Panko and Pearl lived with Panko's cousin Karol Kolton in Narol.

Living conditions were very hard for everyone, so the new groom left to find work to make ends meet. He went to Ignace, Ont. where he worked for the Grand Trunk Railway (now known as the Canadian National Railway), while the new bride stayed behind with the Kolton family. After three years with the railway he came back and purchased land at River Lot 264 in Narol, and started building a log home. He did continue to work out during the summer months, till he could get some land cleared to derive a living for his family.

Panko and Pearl were blessed with eight children, five girls and three boys. They were Marion, Anna, Katherine, Jack, Henry, Sophie, Emily and Arthur. Panko and Pearl were engaged in mixed farming until their demise. Panko died in 1946 at the age of 66. Pearl passed away in 1960 at the age of 73. Henry, the second youngest son is still engaged in farming the land.

## METRO AND NATALKA SEMENIUK

*submitted by Helen Doherty*

Helen Doherty interviewed Bella Semeniuk on Jan. 25, 1983, and she related the following:

Daniel Steven Semeniuk's father was Metro Semeniuk. His mother was Natalka (Ewaschuk). They came first to Whitemouth, then to Selkirk and later settled in Narol. They lived in Ewaschuk's place for awhile and then Metro bought a little one-room house for them to live in.

Metro and Natalka had three children with them when they came to Canada and soon had additional family: Steve, Jim, Norman, Mary, Katie, Lily, Andrew, Bill and Mike.

Bella married Daniel Steven Semeniuk on Dec. 28, 1920 in Regina. Steven dug wells in Saskatchewan. Later they came to Manitoba to the Hnatko Romano home near the tracks at Gonor. They stayed in Romano's for about two weeks and then moved to the Ewaschuk's place. Ewaschuk's were already living in Narol for sometime and had a store. Annie was married to John Nahorny.

Bella had come to Canada on her own. Her husband had come to Canada earlier and had died here. Mother had a sister in Canada. The people in the old Country had told Mother to take her three daughters and go to Canada. In the old country if you were not wealthy and had no land or money, it didn't matter if you were good looking or not, no one would marry you. Mother sold out and came to Canada. They didn't want Mother to come to Canada because she had three children and no husband, and wanted to know who would help her. Mother told them she had a sister and brother-in-law, Yvan Begurski. Mother did come to Canada on the sponsorship of Begurski's name. Mother went to work after she came to Canada and I went to babysit for the Jewish people and we all got along fine.

Bella and Steven Semeniuk had three children, Mattie, Eddie and Pauline, 9 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren. Daniel Steven Semeniuk passed away on June 28, 1976.

## FEDKO (FRED) SEMENIUK

*submitted by John Gloss*

Fred Semeniuk and his wife Justyna came to Canada to East Selkirk in 1901. They stayed at the Immigration Hall for a while, and later moved to a place which later was named Poplar Park. They moved into a wilderness with no roads, just a few trails the Indians made and here they built a little shack and called it their home.

Flour, sugar and other groceries were carried on their back from Libau a distance of 3 miles. Such was the beginning of these pioneers; for money they worked at different jobs. In 1902 they applied for a homestead and in 1906 it was granted to them. In 1914, the CNR built a track, running right through the middle of Fred Semeniuk's farm. Then came a store and a Post Office called Poplar Park. This was in 1914. Eventually, they built a house, such as it was.

Fred and Justyna had 7 children. Mike the eldest who



*Fred Semeniuk and his wife, Justyna.*

died during the influenza epidemic. Annie, who married John Kereliuk. Her husband died but she is still living at the age of 78. Harry, Steve, William (Bill) are all dead. Mary is living and married to John Gloss. Lina is still living, she married Dmytro Lysaichuk, but he died a few years ago.

Fred was a hard worker. Besides working his farm and making it a success, he was one of the pioneers who built the Holy Trinity church. This was in 1906. In those days there were no building contractors. All work was volunteered, everybody was a carpenter. The church was built of log hewn by hand and still stands until this day.

In 1913 they built a hall, and here was the core of the community. It was called a Reading Society. They would gather on Sundays and chat, read books and such. Besides that there were dances, a fiddle and a drum was



*Semeniuk home at Poplar Park.*



*Blacker's old barn, Jacob Semeniuk and Martha Semeniuk (nee: Kormali), Nick Rycar and Mary Blacker Semeniuk.*



*Dora (Doczia) Seniuk, 1908  
Kolomia,  
Ukraine.*

the orchestra. Besides dances there were plays, "Prystawlyna" as they were called. People came from as far as East Selkirk and other areas to see these plays.

In 1940 Fred had his leg amputated due to gangrene setting in, but that did not stop him from working. On one leg and a pair of crutches, he operated the binder cutting the crop while his daughter Mary, who was then married to John Gloss, drove the tractor. He split all the firewood. He never stopped until his dying days.

Fred died May 3, 1946.

Justyna died April 20, 1945.

## **WILLIAM AND DORIS SENIUK**

*submitted by Mary Muzychka*

William Seniuk came to Canada in 1912, and very early on got acquainted with John Wasylyk. In 1913, William sent for his wife Doris and their three children, Mary, John, and Annie. Annie was just a baby at the time. When the family arrived at Wasylyk's, they lived in the new granary built by the Wasylyk family. This was to be the Seniuk home from 1913 to 1915. Mother took Mary to Donald School to enroll her, but as her father was not a taxpayer, only renting, they said they had no room for her. William had no money to buy property because he had spent it all on the trip coming to Canada. William had been a property owner in the old country, but never sold it, he had left it to his sister and their family. Work was very hard to get and finally William got a job in Fort Francis, Ontario. Soon he moved the whole family there. Three more children were born to William and Doris, Nick, Eva, and Mike in Fort Francis. They remained there from 1916 to 1920. William worked in a lumberyard. Then in 1920 they returned to Gonor, where they bought some property. It appears that Cybulski's were selling out and William Seniuk and a friend bought it jointly. They built a small dwelling with a door in the middle, closed up, so each family had a room and a

kitchen. This friend had 2 sons and William had six children, so with the adults counted, this dwelling that was divided in half, housed 12 people. William Seniuk's side had 3 beds in the one room log house and it was a tight place to live in. Steve was the first child to be born to William and Doris in Gonor. Mary remembers when the furniture arrived at the Gonor Station and loading it up, and there was no room to put the baby carriage, so she had to wheel it all the way from the station to Cybulski's. Mary also recalls a big wind storm in 1922 that blew over their storage shed and the straw caught on fire. This wind also destroyed the electric rlwy. stations on the Winnipeg-Selkirk route on the west side of the river. On the east side, Mary Smith's and others had their roof and some log dwellings damaged.

The children attended Donald School and had to walk



*Mr. William Seniuk and  
his wife, Doris.*



1930, *Seniuk boys, John, Nick, Steve, Mike, Harry, Peter, Billy, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Wasyl Seniuk.*

2 miles to attend. In winter the boys put straw inside their rubbers to keep their feet warmer and the girls wore moccasins.

William Seniuk sold the house to Kupchak's in 1923-24 and bought more land and he and Mr. Smith built another log house for the Seniuk family.

William Seniuk had two accidents involving run-away horses, that left him a bit disabled.

As William got older, he got more ill and his wife, Doris, looked after him, as well as her family, for 15 years.

William Seniuk died in 1968 and his wife Doris died on Feb. 6, 1977 at the age of 88 years.

The five daughters and seven sons of William and Doris Seniuk are: Mary who married David Muzychka of Narol, Katy who married Mr. Preston of Winnipeg,

Alexina who married W. Colony of Winnipeg, Eva who married Mr. Teron of Winnipeg, Rose who married M. Fairis of B.C., John of East St. Paul, Nick of Winnipeg, Mike of Narol, Steve of East St. Paul, Harry of Winnipeg, Peter of Montreal and William of Narol.

There are 39 grandchildren and 50 great-grandchildren, and 5 great-great-grandchildren. Ann Martin died in 1945 and son Mike passed away in 1973.

Mary Muzychka, wife of David of Narol says, "I used to sew shirts for my in-laws from flour bags that were dyed either brown or blue using only one pattern. Father-in-law was a big man, so the shirt fit him ok, but his son Walter was a thin man and the shirt sleeves hung over his shoulders. Then Walter got a little older and he didn't want to wear them no longer." Mary remembers her sister, Anne playing in a Christmas concert. "I made her a white dress from flour bags and one bag the dye wouldn't wash or bleach out so I put that piece to the back of the dress, as she was going to face the front of the stage. When Anne turned around, on stage, you could see the dye on her dress and it made me feel so bad," said Mary.

## MR. AND MRS. M.R. SHARP

*submitted by Sidney Sharp*

Mr. M.R. (Morris Scharfe) Sharp came to this community around 1917 and opened a small general store, which he operated for over thirty years.

He married Rose Zelig on September 18, 1918 and they came directly to East Selkirk to begin their future. Both Mr. and Mrs. Sharp were born in Romania; Morris in Bessarabia, and Rose in Vilanu. Rose journeyed with other members of the Zelig family to Lipton, Sask. in 1901. The family moved to Winnipeg in 1914. Rose's brother Isaac was a pioneer participant in the North Winnipeg Farmer's Market. Members of the Sharp family are: Charles (Carl), son of Morris and his deceased first wife; Molly; Sidney and Ruth.

Carl has established himself in the manufacturing business in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Molly (Mrs. H. Lupe) has lived in Winnipeg since 1945. Sidney is also in Minneapolis and carried on his business in Manufacturing Agencies. Ruth (Mrs. H. Dveris) a graduate B.A. and M.A. in Education teaches in the Winnipeg School System.

Mr. Sharp loved East Selkirk and Canada, because he never forgot how wonderful it was to live in a free country. Having come from Europe, where, because of his heritage, he knew what lack of freedom and oppression meant. He found in this community people who judged a person on their merits and ability. Feeling very proud of being elected during 1933 to 1939 inclusive as Reeve of St. Clements, his race was never an issue. Early in the 1940's he was appointed Justice of the Peace, to arbitrate small claims, etc. Sidney recalls an incident when two neighbors had an altercation, and the Justice of the Peace fined one of them \$25.00. The man said he was without funds and did not want to go to jail (gaol). The Justice told him not to worry, paid the fine himself and probably never collected from the guilty man. His place



*Elaine Muzychka in front of William Seniuk's house.*