

CONTRIBUTIONS TO AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY WITHIN LAMBTON COUNTY:

Although Arthur was not a "meeting" person, he was a positive supporter of agriculture and farmers and the important role they play in society. He was a member of OFA, NFU and Crop and Soil Association. He achieved and maintained select seed grower status and was asked by Peter Hannam to be a founding shareholder of First Line Seeds Ltd. out of Guelph, Ontario. This was a group of select seed growers from across Ontario whose purpose was to research and maintain public varieties of seeds, soybeans, wheat and corn.

Arthur was also a councillor for Lambton County Egg Producers for thirty years. This group has supported Agriculture in the Classroom since inception at various schools and fairs in Lambton County and Arthur assisted at these events whenever possible. He also supported his wife, Carolynne as she took on the role of Chair of Egg Farmers of Ontario.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Arthur was an excellent book keeper. He kept meticulous records, year-to-year of planting dates, seed varieties, harvest dates, yield data, fertilizer and chemical programs. In the poultry barns, records of production, lighting programs, feeding regimens and costs were accessible at all times. When computer programs became available Arthur transferred all records to the computer.

Arthur graduated from Watford High School and went to work immediately at the Toronto Dominion Bank in Petrolia. Within 3 years he was Assistant Manager and was then required to move to another location. Because farming was the love of his life he resigned and came home to farm full time with his father and grandfather on a mixed farming operation at Lot 3 Conc 11 in Brooke Township.

HOME BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT:

Arthur was born and raised on Lot 3 Conc 11 in Brooke Township. His grandfather came to this plot of land at the turn of the twentieth century renting 7 acres of swamp with a log cabin on it. Arthur Wellington Griffith dug in tile by hand in order to drain this piece of land. By 1920 he had cleared and drained 150 acres which now comprises "The Home Place". Arthur was fiercely proud of his roots being descended from the Jackson, Page and Saunders pioneer farm families in Brooke, Enniskillen and Warwick Townships.

In 1978 Arthur and Carolynne purchased the home farm of 150 acres from his father, John Griffith. The poultry barn had been built in 1965 for 5,000 birds, then doubled in size in 1968. When the egg board came into being in 1972, quota was reduced to 40% from 10,000 birds to 6,000 birds. Today this barn with additions and renovations, houses 27,225 birds in an automated computer controlled environment.

As well as being a First Line Seed dealer, Arthur also was a

top salesperson for Northrup King Seeds. With a large customer list of 1,000 names, Arthur was always available for seed orders and consultations on the newest and best yielding varieties of seed.

In 1979 Arthur built the first phase of an elevator dryer system to store seed grain. During his lifetime he and Carolynne purchased in excess of 1,000 acres of land. They also assisted their son, John to purchase his own land and broiler quota to begin farming.

CONTRIBUTION TO AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY - OUTSIDE LAMBTON:

Arthur's involvement in First Line Seeds Ltd. saw him attend monthly board meetings in Guelph, Ontario and at other various locations across Ontario. This association with other select seed growers afforded Arthur the opportunity to keep abreast of the latest developments in seed research as well as develop lifelong friendships. Arthur was also a member of the Se Can Seed Organization as long as it was in existence.

CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY BEYOND AGRICULTURE:

In 1975, Arthur and Carolynne purchased 10 lots in Inwood, Ontario. They extended Queen Street and combined the lots into 5 building lots and proceeded to build houses on them for re-sale. Arthur's entrepreneurial and organizational skills were honed during this project.

During Arthur's lifetime he was a regular attender of St. Andrew's B & E United Church holding the office of Chair of the Board of Stewards, Clerk of Session and eventually a Trustee on the Board until the closure of the church in 2007. He also led a boys group to Tyros for several years.

Arthur received recognition for 30 years of volunteer service from the Inwood Firemen's Association holding several positions within the organization including President.

Arthur also served as councillor for the Egg Producer's Marketing Board in the seventies and then as he became more involved in farm activities he encouraged his wife to fill that role. An avid supporter of the supply management system he encouraged and supported many young farmers to begin farming.

At the time of his passing he was Chair of the Board of the Saunders Family Cemetery, a private family cemetery where he and his ancestors are buried.

LENGTH OF SERVICE TO AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY:

In July of 1991, Arthur had a serious coronary heart attack and was not able to work for the following year. During that time he hired many young boys to help out on the farm. He was never able to do any heavy, physical work after that event. However, he continued to manage the farm operation which by then comprised of more than a thousand acres of land.

He was determined to farm all of his life and he was fortunate to be able to do that even though his life ended

abruptly on July 20, 2008 in his 68th year.

He loved to work with young people and during his lifetime mentored many young boys and girls as they came to work on the land and in the hen barn. He insisted the work be done perfectly as he took no short cuts in getting a job completed. He was meticulous about himself and the work that he did. He tried to dispel the myth about a farmer being a "hick or a hayseed" but a business man. He was a true gentlemen farmer.

Arthur was proud to call himself "a Farmer", recognizing that it is the noblest of all professions. His goal was to leave this world a better place than when he found it and this is evident in the many improvements he made to the land by tiling, reforesting and buildings that he acquired over his lifetime.

Arthur loved people and his sunny disposition attracted many to him. He was genuinely interested in other people's lives and work and in his lifetime travelled to many agricultural events in Europe, Scotland and America.

He has left his children and grandchildren a rich legacy of quiet determination, hard work and a passion and dedication to the land and what it produces.

At his passing, Arthur was recognized by both the provincial and federal ministers of agriculture, Hon. Leona Dombrowsky and the Hon. Gerry Ritz, as well as Ontario's Premier Dalton McGuinty for his passion, dedication and commitment to the land and the people who work so hard to produce safe, high quality food for Canadians - "The Canadian Farmer".

LAMBTON AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME ASSOCIATION
NOMINATION FOR MR. ARTHUR GRIFFITH
R.R.#7, ALVINSTON, ONTARIO

FROM: CAROL BROWN
R.R.#1
ARKONA, ONTARIO
NOM 1BO

Upon meeting Arthur Griffith in March of 1999, as he met with me in my home, to see if I would be interested in working for him in the office. I remember this day as if it was just yesterday, as I had been a stay at home mom for many years and had been out of the work force for quite some time. Sad to say I was very behind the times in the new generation of office work, but Arthur was never critical and made me feel at ease even with little ones running around while we chatted. I knew at that moment he was a "family" man and such a gracious and patient man.

I really couldn't believe that he would hire me that day with zero experience with the new computer bookkeeping system he had. The words to describe this man at that moment could only be patient, kind, risk taker and a man who would give you a chance. As he left my house that day, the deal was signed with an old fashioned handshake and I started to work for Mr. Arthur Griffith the following week. I can only tell you that here I am, in 2010, still working for the Griffith family.

It was Arthur Griffith that gave me the chance, me with no new tech experience and way behind the times. He not only gave me the chance, he has done this over and over again for so for many people over the years that I knew him. Whether it was students coming to work for him, other staff members or someone coming by to sell something. Most of us would not have the patience like Art, but he had a tremendous amount that all of us seen each day in him. With people stopping in at the busiest time of year during planting season wanting to sell something, most of us would not give them the time of the day, but no not Art. He would take the time to see what they had and usually in the end would buy it and then with a hand shake they were on their way with a smile and Art heading out to the field with a smile, too.

My experience working and being around Arthur Griffith has taught me so many things. Hard work pays off and Art was so into this. There wasn't a morning he didn't show up in the office early before anyone arrived to get everything organized for the day. And some mornings as I walked in the back door I could smell

bacon and eggs cooking thinking that he had missed breakfast at home, but I soon learned, Art was not just making breakfast for himself, he was preparing it for me and the other staff. There were even times when a sales rep would stop by to sell something and next thing you knew they were joining us at the table to a meal, too. The kindness from this man shown is beyond this world and many of us can learn so much from his actions each day.

Art was a true genuine farmer and loved his work to the end. With fields to prepare and plan for planting, to the taking off the crops in the fall, keeping track of how each crop yielded and if things didn't fair out too well, he was planning how to change things for the coming year so it would be better for the land and everyone else. In Art's eyes you just didn't farm to get the crop off, you went over the top and did more than your best. As to Art, the land was his responsibility and he had to give back to the land and use it in the right way and care for it so it could fulfill to it's potential and possibly beyond. Art, not only cash cropped, he housed an average of 25, 000 laying hens in the years that I knew him, which took much planning and daily overseeing. In the office he kept things in order with checking the markets daily, keeping track of his flock of birds and amount of eggs that were being produced, to amount of feed and how to change it to make the birds a top flock in Canada, making any changes in the office that would be beneficial to his staff and his farming business.

Art loved to purchase land with century old homes and renovate them to bring back their beauty and over the years that I knew him, he certainly did this. No short cuts were taken, as Art was proud of the heritage in his community and wanted to share this with others, whether it was fixing them up to rent them out or to sell them to someone who would enjoy their history as much as he did. In his mind you didn't tear them down because they were old, you just gave them the love back that they had missed for so many years.

Art was always striving for new ways to do things on the farm and would always take the time to attend whatever seminars, open houses, courses or just sit and listen to someone talk about something new on the market. He wasn't going to get behind the times. As Art always said, "The world is moving so fast, I am not letting it get away from me, I am going right along side it", and he did. He learned many new ways and technology to use on his farm that would be beneficial on the land or in the laying hen barn.

Art was able to take some trips within Canada and to other countries to learn and receive valuable information about how "he" could make the most of his operation. He attended many local seminars and functions, whether it was put on by

F.C.C., chemicals companies, feed companies or supporting a great cause or even helping out with local school events, and fairs. He always attended local activities and bought tickets in support of a charity to support them in any way he could. To name a few – local fairs, fish fries to support the local firemen, b'b'q's to support local groups, church functions, and school functions to support his grandchildren. These are just a few, the list could go on.

Art supported his staff and encouraged each one to do the work with pride and accomplishment. He was very precise in his teachings and his staff looked up to Art with all true respect. Art was a great teacher to his staff and to his grandchildren. Art taught each and everyone that tidiness was a form of great accomplishment and pride and all could say that Art never left things unattended, whether it was weeds that needed spraying in the yard, to the grass that needed cutting, to new gravel needed on the laneways to keeping up with the painting of buildings. Art took pride in what he had, partly because of the importance of his ancestors hard work and also of the new generation coming up on the farm, his grandchildren.

Art loved his life being a husband, father, grandfather, a Lambton County farmer, business man, and a friend to all.

To sum up the life of Mr. Arthur Griffith is a difficult thing to do, as he was truly an awesome gentlemen in so many avenues here in this world, whether it was on the farm, in the community, being a great friend to all, supporting his family, guiding his staff and just loving life with many laughs and telling stories and jokes that drew so many to him.

I feel he deserves to be in the Lambton Agricultural Hall of Fame because of the many reasons I have portrayed in my story above. I have truly never met a man in this world that could accomplish all this and still at the end of the day be positive and end the day in a smile. Arthur was proud to be a Canadian and proud to be living in Lambton County as a farmer and just wanted to make this tiny bit of the world a better place for everyone and he did!