

NOVEMBER 2016

PARRY SOUND

SIDEROADS & SHORELINES

'TIS THE SEASON

Festive flourishes
to welcome guests

Simple & Delicious

Appetizers to delight and ...
'Who wants cookies?'

Snowmobiling preview

We look at the new models
to get you in gear for winter

Back, and forth, in time

JACK TYNAN

Preparing our holiday edition of Sideroads is like a brief journey back and forth through time.

As we compile this issue, surrounded by the colours and smells of an astoundingly warm October, we look ahead.

Our writers, layout artists and photographers are immersing themselves in holiday spirit and décor. We're considering winter sports, winter clothing and winter meals.

To create a winter magazine, to capture the nostalgia of winters gone by, we also travel back in time – to last winter, and the winter before that.

Every November/December issue is an exercise of gathering “favourites” from winters and holiday seasons past in an effort to include you, our reader, as we fondly look ahead. All while sitting in 20-degree mid-October weather in a t-shirt with a cool drink.

And isn't that what the holiday season is all about; identifying the cherished moments collected over cooler, shorter days, repeating them, enhancing them, and etching them into our memories.

Here's hoping this edition of Parry Sound Sideroads and Shorelines help you do just that.

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LETTER

“MAGICAL MEMORIES” OF SWORDS STORE

On September 28, my husband and I were retuning to our home in Arnprior, after visiting Sault Ste. Marie and the Agawa Canyon, when we decided to go through Parry Sound and the Park towards home. Fortunately, we picked up a copy of the July 2016 issue of Parry Sound Sideroads and

Shorelines.

When I got home I was delighted to see an article (“Magical Memories in Store”) about my mother's home where she was born. My mother Jean Sword and her sisters Helen, Hazel, Agnes and Lillian, and their brother Tom Sword Jr. were all born in that house at Swords, which was owned by their father, Tom and their mother, Eliza, sometimes known as “Lyde.”

After my widowed grandma Eliza remarried and moved the family to Ottawa, my mother married and lived her entire married life in the Arnprior area. But my brothers and I visited Swords with our parents many, many times over the years, staying often with my aunt Helen Graves and her family. When I am in that area I still have to drive that Tally Ho Road and stop in Swords to reminisce.

Thank you for the pleasant surprise of reading about my grandparents' store and my mother's birthplace.

Donna Moorehead Meek
Arnprior, ON



ON OUR COVER

Get your festive table the perfect look ...without the stress. See story, page 58.

(Photo: Heather Douglas Photography for HillTop Interiors)

PARRY SOUND
SIDEROADS & SHORELINES

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TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL FESTIVE DINNER

Set it and Forget It: Setting the table ahead of time will give you more time on the day of the party prepare food or fine tune your preparations. You can actually set the table several days before the big night, covering it with a clean bed sheet to keep the dishes and glasses from gathering dust. "I find after the table is set and decorated, stress is reduced. The rest is just food—big deal."

Sparkling Glassware: There's nothing more embarrassing than spotty drinking glasses. Similarly, glasses pulled from the cupboard at the last minute might be dusty. Make them sparkle by running them through the dishwasher before setting the table to make them sparkle.

Change of Venue: Consider serving dessert somewhere other than at the dining table so that guests can move around a bit after a lengthy seating at the dinner table.



(HEATHER DOUGLAS PHOTOGRAPHY FOR HILLTOP INTERIORS)



(HEATHER DOUGLAS PHOTOGRAPHY FOR HILLTOP INTERIORS)



(PHOTO BY ANDREW HIND)

Mixing glitz with the unpolished (such as burlap table runners or pinecones) for your table setting says elegance and cottage country at the same time.



(PHOTO BY PAULA BANKS FOR HILLTOP INTERIORS)

Be creative. Candles with garland or pinecones to fill the base make for a centerpiece that reflects that natural appeal of “cottage country.” A small galvanized garden container becomes the foundation for a sweet little bouquet. Make your own with small evergreen branches and fresh flowers, marching several down the table for a casual centerpiece during dinner that can also serve as take-home favours. A word of caution: while fresh flowers look enchanting on a dining table, avoid strongly scented ones as they can overpower the aroma of food.

Silver collections are out in full force during the holidays, adding sparkle to the dining room table, and French linens lend cosy winter layers we crave. Add a bit of rustic charm with a simple evergreen twig or holly sprig in napkin rings, or an earthenware container filled with clementines. Mixing glitz with the unpolished (such as burlap table runners or pinecones) for your table setting says elegance and cottage country at the same time.

You can add other décor to the table as well, but do so in moderation; there are so many other things that go on the table and you don’t want things overly cluttered. Instead of adding too much to the table, it’s probably better to focus your festive-décor energies elsewhere in the dining room. To add interest, adorn chandeliers with evergreen branches freshly cut from the woods (don’t put them up more than a day or so before your dinner event, or they may shed needles onto your table).

“Using real greenery is lovely. It’s nice whenever you can have something real to soften the artificial like china, cutlery, and glassware,” says Patten. “It also reflects our region nicely, and in my case reflects my personality because I love the outdoors.

For a fun idea, create a hot cocoa station on the dining room buffet, with marshmallows, cocoa powders and chocolate bits. This encourages people to make themselves at home, get up from the table to move around a bit, and takes some pressure off the host having to make warm drinks for everyone.

The heads of chairs can be decorative; perhaps add ribbons or a bow, hang swags or mistletoe sprigs over the back, or wrap burlap around back. Maybe add festive pillows. You don’t have to decorate all the chairs to make a statement, and indeed it may not be practical to do so as dressed up chairs make rooms look smaller and may impede movement. Instead, simply decorate the two end chairs to make a statement as you enter the room.

Adding Christmas cheer to a dining room table sets the mood for a night to remember, and lets the evening sparkle with engaging conversation and good food. Possibly no meal is more lovingly planned than our Christmas table. Set the table for a magical evening with a décor that defines the season. ♦

DECORATING RULES

Lena Patten shares some of her holiday decorating tips, good for dining rooms and beyond ...

“There are no rules when it comes to decorating. The important thing is find a style that inspires you and reflects your version of Christmas,” Patten says.

When decorating cottages, create scenes that invoke – through content or style – the north.

“Keeping like-minded items together makes items appear organized instead of cluttered, giving a cohesive look (grouping items by colour does the same thing and gives your eye a place to rest while taking in all the festive flourishes).”

About a month beforehand, look at what decorations and materials you have on hand before going out and buying new accessories. It can save you money and also inspire your decisions.



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