

Art Ellis, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, bookkeeper of the Mackenzie Printery and Newspaper Museum has actively been involved in the creation and development of the museum since 1997.

Art was born October 4<sup>th</sup>, 1938, when his mother flagged down a train to get to a Red Cross outpost at Hawk Junction, a stop on the Algoma Railroad to bring Art into the world. Mother and father were working at a gold mine during the depression and returned to their home town of St.Catharines early in Art's life, where his dad, worked as a carpenter. Art grew up in a family with two brothers.

In 1954, after graduating from high school, at the age of sixteen, Art and a buddy decided there was no future in St.Catharines, headed out in a 1940's Chrysler Coupe and went around the original Stoney Creek traffic circle on the Queen Elizabeth highway three times debating to go East or West, and East it was. They made it as far as Cornwall, where there was plenty of work, building the St. Lawrence Seaway. They moved on to Montreal as Art's friend wanted to try out for the Montreal Alouette's. Art wanted to travel out west, so after a few months he hitchhiked to British Columbia. He had just turned seventeen and went down to the Vancouver docks, where he acted as tour guide for the foreign sailors with time off to tour.

After meeting some of the seamen and enjoying a cocktail or two back on board a Danish tramp steamer where he spent the night, Art woke up in the morning discovering the ship had sailed. The captain gave him a job in the galley and Art found himself cooking and baking bread, dozens of loaves of bread every few days. Just one of Art's many hobbies, he had just baked a loaf before I talked to him. Art's molasses cornmeal bread recipe sounds wonderful, so good, that he has shared the recipe with us at the end of this article.

The next two years were spent going around the world twice on the tramp steamer, with Art getting an education in life experiences and as he said his "university education".

After two years Art was ready for a real education, and disembarked when they finally hit Vancouver again.

Art made application to Ryerson for the Electronics course and was informed he was accepted to a new college in Hamilton, The Hamilton Institute of Textiles which was being changed to a broader scope of courses. Upon arriving at the college, Art discovered there was no student council, no activity rooms nor any of the other things a new student would expect, Art attended to getting all of the mentioned amenities, including a name change to The Hamilton Institute of Technology that school grew into what we now know as Mohawk College.

Having met a young nurse, Art didn't finish his electronics course, but got married and took on an apprenticeship as a carpenter, like his father. After a few years, Art recognized that a person could make more money as a building estimator and in February 1962, Art opened his first business, Art Ellis Construction, with a \$600 cheque from his mother, representing his baby bonuses over the years.

Today the company is called Artell Developments Ltd., a premier real estate development Company in St.Catharines.

Art started buying up industrial land in St.Catharines, building on the land, or buying existing older buildings and renovating for resale or rent. He built strip malls throughout the St.Catharines area as well as being part of the group that brought Wendy's Hamburger outlets to Southern Ontario including the building of the first store in St.Catharines.

Art was on his way, people have always liked Art, he is known as a straight shooter and a very hard worker. At one time or other he owned or had built many of the industrial properties in St.Catharines.

Art and a business associate took over control of the gold and diamond exploration company, Currie Rose Resources Inc. a listed TSE company of which he was vice president/secretary/treasurer. Art was a director of the original Home Savings and Loan Corporation, and was a director of West 49 and Jumbo Video Inc. all public share corporations

Not content to relax and just focus on his many hobbies, such as engraving, carpentry, building and working on his outdoor live steam railroad, Art invested and became a director in West 49, which was established in 1995 and quickly built their reputation as Canada's #1 men's, ladies and boys action sports retailer. Now owned by the YM Group of Companies that owns stores with trusted reputations, such as Urban Planet and Stitches, the parent company is Billabong, a brand worth billions of dollars worldwide.

At the same time, Art got involved with Jumbo Video, a Canadian chain of franchised and corporate video stores. Founded in May 1987, and the third largest source for rented videos, the assets of the chain were purchased by Quebecor Media. After selling its assets to Quebecor, the remaining shell company agreed to a reverse takeover by clothing retailer West 49.

Around 1997 Art was cleaning up the estate of his youngest brother who had recently passed away, found amongst his possessions was an Adana benchtop platen printing press, a fine little press made in England, Art saved the little beauty hoping to give it a try someday but had no type or knowledge of operation

While reading the St. Catherine's Standard, Art spied an advertisement for the annual Wayzgoose printing craft fair, held annually in Grimsby. Art attended the fair to try and learn about the Adana and get some type and while there on that Saturday morning accidentally ran into two businessmen that Art had done business with, they were Mr. Al Teather, of the St.Catharines Standard and Mr. Lou Cahill of the Ontario Editorial Bureau, both founders of the Mackenzie Printery museum. They were surprised to see Art there and questioned him why. Art explained the little press he had and they retorted that they had a building full of presses in

Queenston, known as the Mackenzie Printery and if I wanted to play with presses I would be very welcome there.

Art had just come off the board at the Rodman Hall Arts Centre in St.Catharines, a position he had held for almost two decades and explained to Al and Lou if there was ever an opening on the Museum board that he could be tempted to join, of course they were aware of some of Art's mechanical skills. Art got the phone call Monday afternoon informing him that he had been given a membership, nominated and voted to the board, and to get the hell down to the Museum and start fixing things, the rest is history

Art was made aware that the Museum had originally been given many printing artifacts and some were still in storage in a warehouse owned by the St.Catharines Standard. Upon finding out about this Art opened up the storage area and found the 1894 Whitlock newspaper press that was used to print the Thorold News for many years and which was bought by the St.Catharines paper and stored the press away. It was time to get this press running and on display, The Niagara Parks Commission the owners of the Museum property were having financial problems at the time and would not consent to putting an addition onto the Museum.

Fortunately Mr.Teather made contact with the Marshville Festival board of directors in Wainfleet Ontario, and sold them the idea to build the Museum a building to display the press and other artifacts as well as arrange for the moving of it. This first year of operation was 2003 and has been run every Labor day Weekend ever since.

Art has made the press his personal baby and attends to the maintenance, cleaning, part repair and replacement, setting up the form, guiding the art work, and running the press to print our very popular annual calendar. Surplus Museum artifacts, type and cuts are sold on flea market tables at the Festival and that bring in over a thousand dollars a year to help our general budget.

Art's many hobbies, include the design and casting of commemorative medals. He was a director of the Medallic Art Society of Canada, and also active in the American Medallic Sculpture Association. Recently Art designed and cast the winning entry for Canada's 200th anniversary of the war of 1812 and attended the presentation of the first medal to Governor General David Johnston.

As Art is now spending more time and travelling with his new wife, he is actively looking for a dedicated person to set up the press, run the press, printing our famous calendars on the three day Labor Day weekend and to clean the press after the fair. Art will be around to train the person this year, so please, if you are interested, or know a mechanical person who is, please let Art know.

Art's molasses corn bread recipe is as follows.

## Cornmeal Molasses Bread

This corn bread recipe is my absolute favourite! It has a slightly sweet flavour, and a slight "crunch" from the cornmeal. It's great for sandwiches, and makes the BEST toast!!

### Ingredients

1 c very warm water (about 110 degrees)

1/4 c molasses

1 pkg active dry yeast (or 2 1/4 tsp.)

1 Tbsp canola or vegetable oil

3-4 c bread flour

1/4 c corn meal

1/2 tsp salt

### Directions

1. Combine the warm water, molasses, and active dry yeast in a glass measuring cup or small bowl. Stir with whisk until yeast dissolves, and then let stand about 5-10 min. until yeast proofs.
2. Add the oil to the yeast mixture. In a large bowl, combine the cornmeal, salt, and about 2 cups of the flour. Add the yeast mixture, and stir to combine. Add flour a little at a time until the dough forms a ball and pulls away from the sides of the bowl.
3. Knead dough on a lightly floured surface, adding flour if needed, until dough is smooth and elastic (8-10 min.). Put dough in an oiled bowl (or spray with cooking spray), and turn to coat. Cover with plastic wrap or damp towel, and let rise in a warm place for 1 hour or until doubled.
4. When doubled in size, deflate dough, and shape into loaf. Place loaf in a greased 9 x 5 in. loaf pan, cover, and let rise until it's about 1/2 in. above the pan. Bake at 375 for about 25 minutes. Remove from pan and let cool. For a softer crust, brush top lightly with melted butter after baking.