



The Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program (CIP 150) is part of a coordinated federal approach to celebrating Canada's 150th anniversary. Under the theme "Giving back to Canada" – shaping the future, leaving a lasting legacy and giving a gift to Canada – this program is designed to support the rehabilitation, renovation and expansion of existing public infrastructure assets such as community centres, recreational facilities, local arenas, cultural centres and other community infrastructure.

Expanding trails in this woodlot is a symbolic celebration of Canada's 150th. The construction of the transcontinental railway was critical in uniting East and West and these trails will bring the Wilmot community closer together in a fitting natural location. The whistle of the VIA train can be heard as one walks in these woods and invokes the spirit of 1867 as a reminder of the importance the railway played in uniting Canadians. These trails will be a lasting legacy for Canada's Sesquicentennial.

Construction of the Schmidt Trails was completed in part with funding received through the CIP 150 program.



Enid, Clara and Harold Schmidt

Known as Mr. Baden, Harold J. Schmidt (1920-2001) gave of his talent, time and resources through many different aspects of community life. Contributing to his community, as a church leader, local historian, politician, member of many committees, and a businessman, Schmidt had time for everyone. Much of Schmidt's charity went unrecorded; approached by many over the years for assistance, he gave generously and without record.

Harold was the only child of Abraham (1889-1934) and Clara(Snyder) Schmidt (1891-1999). Harold's father died as a result of complications from a farm accident in 1934, but his mother Clara soldiered on as a single mother during the Great Depression with the help of neighbours and fellow members of Shantz Mennonite Church - acts of generosity that left a life-long impression on him.

During the Second World War he was in Alternative Service at Montreal River (Jul-Nov 1941) and Mount Seymour (beginning Jun 1942), working first as a cook's assistant and later doing camp office work.

In 1946, he married Enid Culp (1920-2011), a nurse and daughter of Alvin and Alma Culp of Vineland, Ontario. Enid played a supporting role in his many involvements.

Former Wilmot Township Mayor Wayne Roth, who grew up in Baden, remembers that Schmidt was always active in public life and always in touch with the community. He remembers that Harold would arrange for once-a-month screenings of National Film Board films at the community hall. "That was the social event of the month for a small town," said Roth.

In the late 1950s, Schmidt served a growing rural population as first secretary-treasurer of the Baden School Board and the Waterloo-Oxford High School Board. He was secretary-treasurer of the Wilmot Municipal Telephone System and led its conversion to rotary dial service. From 1973 to 1997, Schmidt was elected Councillor to Wilmot Township Council and he was a strong advocate of the Township's decision to purchase and restore Castle Kilbride as a museum. He called his part in the museum project "his proudest achievement." He was also a member of the Baden Chamber of Commerce and the Baden Park Board.

Remembering the assistance of his church in times of need, Schmidt became involved in charitable organizations connected with his Mennonite faith. He served as secretary-treasurer of the Mennonite Aid Union for more than fifty years. He was cofounder of the Mennonite Benefit Association and he was a long time supporter of the Mennonite Relief Sale in New Hamburg.

Schmidt was honoured with the Ontario Volunteer Service Award, was named Wilmot Township Citizen of the Year in 2000 and is a member of the Waterloo Region Hall of Fame.

The lands for these trails were generously donated to the Township of Wilmot by the benefactors of the Schmidt Estate as a legacy to the memory of Harold and Enid Schmidt's contributions to Baden and Wilmot Township.