

Anne I. SARGALES

NOMINEE: Anne I. SARGALES

MEMBER SPOUSE: Wallace A. SARGALES, #16166

DETACHMENTS(S): Gogama Detachment 1955 – 1961
Massey Detachment 1962 – 1966

NOMINATOR: Marci S. GETGOOD

SILENT PARTNER STORY

The years in Gogama were extremely difficult for her and for us kids. We moved there in the spring of 1955 from Sudbury. My mother is from Regina so “the bush” is extremely uncomfortable for her, she needs wide open spaces. The isolation was even harder to take. Even as a child, I was fully aware of how unhappy she was and how she hated every single minute, no, make that every single second of being there.

We arrived on a bitterly cold, bleak day to a filthy, cold, drafty old house, in need of repair. Deep snow even though it was past Easter. I was eight, my brother four, my sister a three month old baby. There was no hospital, no doctor, no dentist, not even a hairdresser. There was no library, no recreational facilities, and no restaurants. Fresh fruit, vegetables, and milk came in by train, once or twice a week. Selection was limited and the prices were astronomical.

I remember everything from the Hudson Bay store smelled or tasted of coal oil. Clothing was purchased by way of mail order. How we loved our catalogues. We had no television for several years, poor radio reception and a crank phone (our ring was six long, three short). As we were on a party line, we had to endure everyone’s rings as well. My mother stuffed up the bell with socks so the baby could sleep.

Electricity was supplied by a generator provided by the Lands and Forests for their employees. There were frequent power outages. The forestry kids and us went to a one room school house; grades one to

thirteen, in one room, one teacher. I think the maximum enrollment we ever had was 21 kids. For the entire time we lived in Gogama, I was the only white, English speaking girl in my age group...I never had a friend. The town of Gogama was primarily a French speaking community so we were never accepted by the community nor did we socialize with the locals.

We were there for five years. My mother did all of the things you mentioned except for office work. My Dad was too meticulous in his record keeping to allow anyone near the office. However, every other part of police work was also my mother's domain and became mine, too, when I was old enough. The office, court room and cell block was attached to the house so we were part of it all, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, couldn't escape, ever. You can imagine our delight when my Dad was transferred to Espanola in the summer of 1961.

He was originally stationed in Espanola but a year later, summer of 1962, he was assigned to the newly formed detachment in Massey, Ontario. Again, we had the office in our home, a sign on the front lawn and a cruiser in the driveway. The whole family was on duty but to a much lesser degree than in Gogama. We mainly answered the phone and the door, took messages, etc. My mother opted out as much and as often as she could, got a job, joined a bowling league and socialized. It was a difficult transition for my brother and I going from a one room school house to a real school. I started high school in Espanola. My father finally transferred to Toronto in 1966. We all rejoiced...and we all try our damndest never to go north of Bloor Street!!!

I'm sure she must be one of the oldest, if not the oldest surviving spouse from the days of one man detachments. There weren't one man at all...more like one family. And while I have some good stories to tell at dinner parties, I really wish our family had had more a more normal existence. I know my mother does.

About Massey

Located 100 kilometers west of Sudbury on the Trans Canada Highway (Highway 17), Massey is part of Sables-Spanish Rivers Township, which was created in 1998. Close to the northern shore of Lake Huron, and Chutes Provincial Park, Massey is home to approximately 1,000 residents.