

TWEEDS MUIR

HISTORY



RIVER ROAD W.I.

VOL. I

RIVER ROAD W. I.

Organized April 21, 1921

Commencement of Tweedsmuir Book 1946

Curators:

Mrs. G. Campbell	1946 - 1948
Mrs. C. Campbell	
Mrs. S. A. Fulton	1948 - 1949
Mrs. G. Campbell	
Mrs. S. A. Fulton	1949 - 1951
Mrs. C. Campbell	
Mrs. S. A. Fulton	1951 - 1961
Mrs. C. Lindsay	
Mrs. S. A. Fulton	1961 - 1969
Mrs. C. Lindsay	
Mrs. C. Campbell	
Mrs. C. Lindsay	1969 - 1972
Mrs. C. Campbell	
Mrs. C. Lindsay	1972 - 1973
Mrs. T. Cook	
Mrs. John Begg	1974 - 1975
Mrs. Cyril McCaig	
Mrs. L. Jones	
Mrs. J. Begg	1976 - 1977
Mrs. C. Lindsay	
Mrs. C. Lindsay	1977 - 1978
Mrs. T. Cook	
Mrs. C. Lindsay	1978 - 1980
Mrs. C. Lindsay	1980 - 1982
Mrs. C. Campbell	
Mrs. C. Lindsay	1983 - 1984
Mrs. C. Campbell	
Mrs. E. Reck	
Mrs. C. Campbell	1984 - 1985
Mrs. B. Veenstra	
Mrs. B. Veenstra	1986 -
Mrs. J. Palmer	

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Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless	
Charter Members of Stoney Creek W.I.	
Judge Emily E. Murphy 1st. National Pres. of W.I. of Can.	
Mr. G. A. Putnam - superintendent of W.I. of Ontario	
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Business, Doctors, Music, Nurses,	
Grade 13, Agri. Colledge	
Technological Inst.	
Bayham Area School Principal	
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Farms of River Road Community

History and pictures

River Road Women's Institute

Organized April 21 1921

Commencement of Tweedsmuir Book 1946

Lord Tweedsmuir: born John Buchan in Scotland, Aug. 25, 1875, the son of Rev. John Buchan.

Historian, novelist and Governor-General of Canada from 1935 to 1940.

Called to the Bar in 1901.

From 1927 to 1935 he was a member of British House of Commons for Scottish Universities.

In 1935 he was titled "Baron Tweedsmuir".

Author of a number of biographies and historical works;

Sir Walter Raleigh

Sir Walter Scott

Julius Caesar

Oliver Cromwell

The Massacre of Glencoe

The King's Grace.

Some of his novels were: The 39 Steps

Salute to Adventures

The Three Hostages,

"Memory Hold the Dorr" was his Autobiography and one of his latest works. John Buchan, the first Lord Tweedsuir, died in Montreal on Feb. 11th, 1940. His library was bequeathed to Queen's University at Kingston, Ontario.

Lady Tweedsuir: Susan, wife of our beloved Governor General, has written many plays, children's books and reminiscences. She was an ardent W.I. Member in England, and was made an Honorary Life Member of W.I.O. She advocated that our organization across Canada compile the histories of our local communities and villages.

She returned to England following the death of her husband, and is still residing there. (1962)



JUDGE EMILY E. MURPHY, whose pen-name is "Janey Canuck" and who was the first national president of the Woman's Institutes in Canada.



MR. GEORGE A. PUTNAM, of Toronto, superintendent of the Women's Institutes of Ontario, who has a special interest in the work of Elgin, being a native of Lyons.

Founding of the First Institute

Nearly three quarters of a century ago the men of Ontario had their agricultural college and organized assistance in the various branches of farming but it was not until 1897 that the even greater importance of instruction for the mothers and homemakers of the country was pointed out with the effect that in that year Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless, herself a daughter of the farm, and one of the pioneers in advocating domestic science for homemakers spoke at a meeting of the farmers experimental union at Guelph voicing a general feeling among thoughtful men and women in rural Ontario in urging the need of science being applied in the management of the home and the family as well as in the production of high grade cattle. Her appeal made such an impression on one of her hearers Mr. Erland Lee of Stoney Creek, asked Mrs. Hoodless to repeat her address at a gathering at his own home. Thirty Seven girls and women formed the nucleus of a sister society to the Stoney Creek Farmer's Institute formed at this meeting, and the next Saturday 101 members were enrolled. Mrs. Hoodless was the first Honorary President and the first President was Mrs. E. D. Smith of Winona, wife of the now Sanator Smith.

They decided to call the new organization "The Women's Department of Farmers' Institute of South Wentworth". The name lasted exactly a week and at the next meeting was changed to the familiar "Womens Institute".

From its small beginning at Stoney Creek, it spread over Canada, America, Great Britain, Australia, Europe and South Africa.

The death of her child made Mrs. John Hoodless realize the need of greater education for farm women, especially in the matter of health and some of the early addresses at meetings had for their subject "Proper food for the Child" and "The Child in Health and Disease". Similar topics are studied today and the interest has broadened out to a multitude of other topics.

The W. I. has studied efficiency in the home, the needs of young children and citizenship. The work for community problems has been tremendous. After diligent endeavour music and medical and dental inspection in schools have been introduced, cemeteries have been improved, community halls have been built, fall fairs encouraged, playgrounds and skating rinks provided, hospitals supported, mobile kitchens provided, jam and garden seeds sent to Britain. The Tweedsmuir Village History Book has been begun for the purpose of compiling all possible early history of different communities. The W. I. is

First Institute - Cont'd

the only organization sponsored by the government though it is not government controlled. In 1942 there were 36,850 members . An effort is being made to raise this number to 50,000 this year on the occasion of the 50th anniversary. Across Canada and the United States and in foreign countries around the world Women's Institutes will celebrate the founding of the organization this week.

Democratic, non-partisan and non-sectarian, with a low membership fee of only 25¢ this great band of women which has grown to thousands, continues to work for the improvement of homes and home life in every possible way, the improvement of the individual, physically, mentally and spiritually and the betterment of the community at large, following the motto, "For Home and Country."

RIVER ROAD INSTITUTE

The River Road Women's Institute was organized in April 1921 by Mrs. Mac McKillop and Mrs. McLevy who were then the President and Secretary of West Elgin Institutes.

The ladies of the community gathered at the home of Mrs. J. A. Campbell and formed the local branch. The first president being Mrs. George Campbell, the first vice-president Mrs. J. A. Campbell and the first Secretary Mrs. W. A. Metler. The Charter members besides the above were Mrs. R. Lindsay, Mrs. W. Coleman, Mrs. D. B. McPherson, Mrs. T. McGaw, Mrs. J. Beattie. Miss M. Joyner, Mrs. S. Page. Miss Elsie McIntyre, Miss Emma McIntyre, Mrs. J. Barrie. Mrs. F. Chaplow. Jean Campbell Mrs. F. Joiner

When we started, our first thoughts were to improve the school grounds by planting trees and cleaning up. Then as soon as we made some money we erected swings and helped the section purchase a piano. We bought equipment to serve lunches for entertainments and were instrumental in starting school lunches.

Every year we have a picnic for the community in the school yard and at Christmas we always buy treats for the children of the community.

The combined efforts of the Institutes have been instrumental in introducing music and medical inspection in schools. We have given funds to many worthy causes including \$200. to the Memorial Hospital for a cot when it was first built. During the last war we put forth all our efforts and money to Red Cross Work, along with the other ladies of the community.

In our meetings we have studied the proper food for children, how to care for the sick, and many other interesting problems of the home.

We have also introduced the Blue Cross Hospitalization in our community.

River Road W. I. Jubilee Meeting

Feb. 1947

Films and Tweedsmuir History are Features of Meeting

The River Road Women's Institute celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the first Women's Institute on Friday evening in the River Road School when the members of the Institute, their families and neighbors, about 75 in number, gathered to pay tribute to that first band of women who started the Women's Institute at Stoney Creek in 1897.

Mrs. S.A. Fulton had the school prettily decorated in blue and gold, the Institute colors and the tables presented a fine appearance loaded with all kinds of good things to eat brought by the ladies of the community. The head table, where the older members of the Institute sat, held the pretty yellow decorated birthday cake with its 50 blue candles.

After the dinner, Mrs. W.A. Metler, president of the Institute, presided and a program followed with community singing, Mrs. S.A. Fulton at the piano; and a chapter from the Tweedsmuir Village History read by Mrs. George Campbell, telling of the founding of the first Institute. Mrs. J.A. Campbell, thanked Mrs. G. Campbell, Mrs. S.A. Fulton and many others who had helped compile the Tweedsmuir Book to date and also Mrs. Curtis Campbell for typing. Lantern slides from the public library were much enjoyed, one film being for the children and the other "This Canada of Ours," and one provided by the Department of Health on Tuberculosis. Miss Winnie Cummings and her father Wallace Cummings, and Mrs. S.A. Fulton, favored with many instrumental numbers. This pleasant evening was convened by Mrs. W.D. Metler, Mrs. S.A. Fulton, Mrs. N.D. Campbell and Mrs. W. Cummings.

The next meeting of the Institute will be held at Mrs. W.A. Metler's on March 26, Mrs. J.A. and Mrs. George Campbell being conveners of the grandmother's meeting and roll call to be answered by displaying something belonging to one's grandmother. Hospitalization dues may be paid at this meeting.

FIRST WORLD WAR

Those who served from the River Road Community
in the First World War were

ROBERT WHITFIELD

ROBERT BARRIE

JAMES BARRIE who paid the Supreme Sacrifice at Vimy Ridge
on April 5th, 1917

THOMAS HILL

GEORGE CORMAN

CYRIL FAWCETT

ALBERT WARD

MONTY WARD

NORMAN WARD

GEORGE ABRAHAM

ABBERT WATSON

GEORGE CHAPPEL who paid the Supreme sacrifice at Paschendale
Nov. 2, 1917

JOHN BYE

WILLIAM WARNER

OLIVER ANTONE

STANLEY WEST

JAMES WHITE

RAY ROULSTON

GEORGE TRICKETT

HUGH FULTON

BETH ROULSTON, V. A. D.

SECOND WORLD WAR

When the Second World War came along the institute formed a Red Cross Unit of the Southwold Red Cross along with the other ladies of the Community who were not Institute Members but who did excellent Red Cross Work.

We got our first Red Cross yarn in December, 1939 at the Fingal work room and did the knitting and sewing assigned us as our part. Each month so much as given to the ladies who drove their cars to Fingal and the next month other ladies returned the work and received more. Altogether we returned 389 knitted articles for the Service men and 107 articles for the civilians. Our School with only about 10 children at most, returned 30 knitted articles. There were 521 sewn articles and 16 quilts also returned.

We had the ladies take salvage material into St. Thomas and clothes for the needy in Europe were left at the City Fire Department.

Some of the men of our community worked at the Technical Training School for air men, now the Ontario Hospital near St. Thomas on No 4 Highway.

We had a new Honor Roll engraved and hung in the School with the names of those who served in the First World War and Second World War with Rev. H. S. Rodney giving a very fine address.

We had our share of recruits for the War, in order of enlisting they were

NEIL D. CAMPBELL in the Ordnance Corp
JOSEPH COLEMAN in the R. C. A. F.
BOB LINDSAY in R. C. A. F.
COLIN O'BRIEN in the Army
CLARENCE CUMMINGS in the Army
LAWRENCE CUMMINGS in the Navy
ALBERT JOHNSTON in the R. C. A. F.

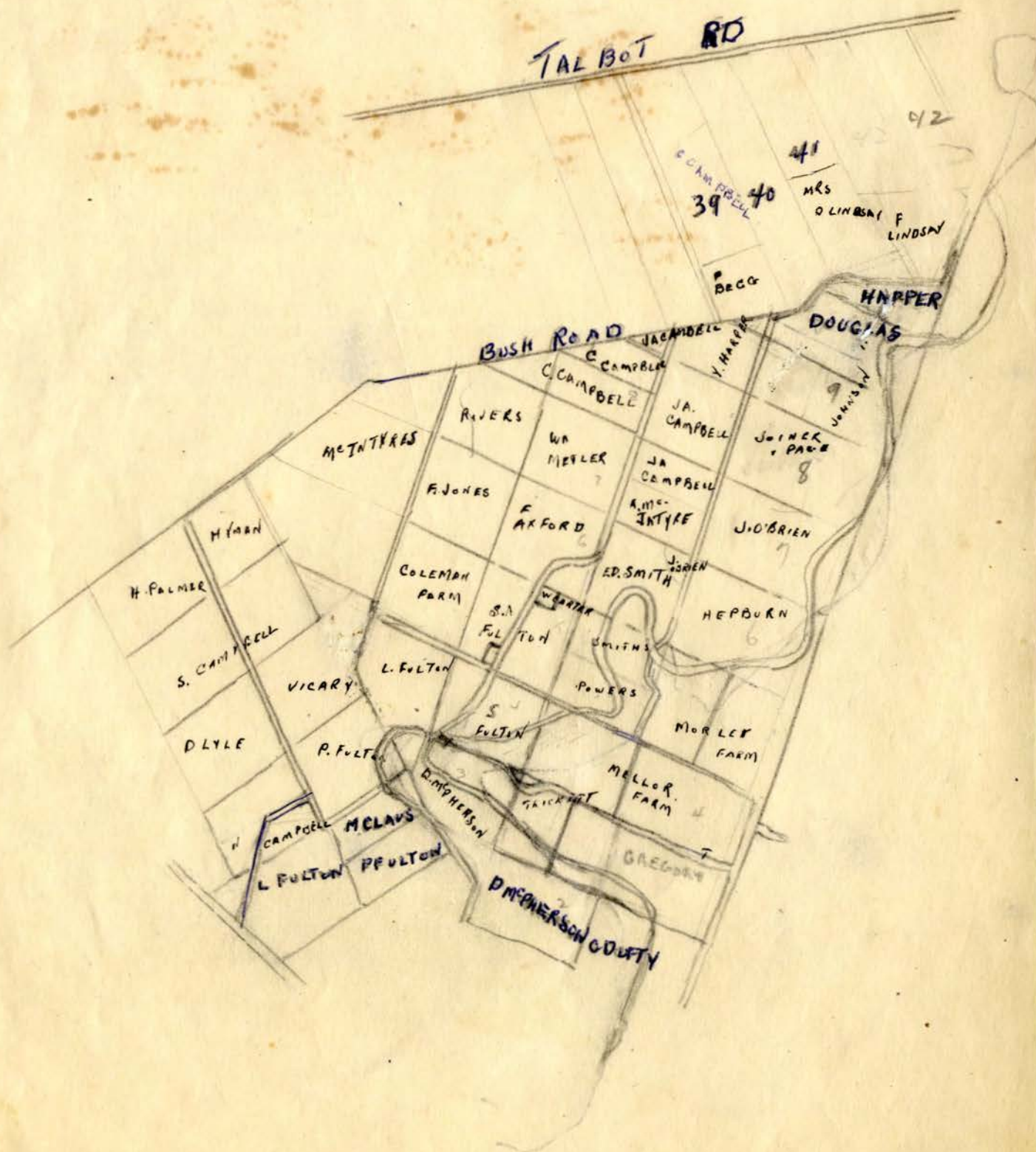
The first four were born and always lived in the community and were given fine wrist watches before going overseas. We sent boxes of food or cigarettes to all our boys overseas each month and greetings to those who stayed on the home front..

All our boys returned home safely. Bob Lindsay had a narrow escape when on a bombing mission he was shot down over France, but he was saved by the French Underground.

Second World War - Cont'd

When our boys returned from overseas we held a Community Party at the School lawn and had a musical program speeches, a fine lunch and dancing to welcome them back home.

1946



RIVER ROAD COMMUNITY

by Mrs. S. A. Fulton

To the people of Southwold and Elgin County the history and progress of the Talbot settlement forms an interesting study. Colonel Thomas Talbot, the real founder, was the son of an Irish peer. He was born at Malahide Castle, Ireland, July 19, 1771.

His early official and military career took him to Canada as private secretary to Colonel John Graves Simcoe, the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada. In 1792 he became a member of an exploring party in the Western District as far as Detroit. Impressed by the beauties and possibilities of settlement along the Indian trails throughout the region he conceived the idea of a settlement.

Later, after returning to England and selling his commission in the army, he proceeded to a point near Port Stanley. He was not successful in getting his land grant there and once more he returned to London desiring that his grant be in Yarmouth Township; but arrangements were made for his grant in Dunwich, a part of the Township being set aside for him and his settlement.

On May 21, 1801, Colonel Talbot with four followers arrived at a small stream later called Talbot Creek. There in a picturesque site high on a cliff overlooking the lake he erected his rude log residence. The nearest settlement was eighty miles to the west and sixty to the east while at the north lay a great tract of unbroken forest.

Three years later several families, Pennsylvanians of Irish birth were welcomed by Talbot at the mouth of Talbot Creek. In 1809-11 Mahlon Burwell blazed the first Talbot Road and townships east of Dunwich began to be rapidly settled.

Southwold prospered more rapidly than its neighbors Dunwich and Aldborough for it is said that Colonel Talbot held back the sale, settlement and improvement of lands near his home. He made many enemies among the Highland Scotch near his home owing to the injustices to which he subjected them. While Scotch predominated in Aldborough. Southwold was settled by immigration from England, United States, Niagara District and Scotland.

By 1811 Colonel Talbot was given control of London and Western Districts and completed the Talbot Road from Delhi to Sandwich. In 1824 his control was extended to twenty eight townships from Norfolk County to the Detroit River.

In 1826 the Village of London was chosen as a site for the new future capital by Lieutenant Governor Simcoe and became the judicial capital of the district.

River Road Community Cont'd

Talbot somewhat retarded the growth of London by encouraging settlement along the Talbot Road. St. Thomas formerly called Kettle Creek or Stirling was named in 1817 after the Colonel and had at that time a store at Kettle Creek and another on the hill above. In 1830 the Village had about fifty houses and in 1837 a population of 700. One writer Patrick Sheriff states that in the thirties between Port Stanley and St. Thomas, "There is a carding grist and saw mill and a distillery and brewery".

Situated in the flats below Kains Hill was the Kains distillery owned by W. K. and Archie Kains. North-east of the distillery was Peter Hamptons ashery and soap works. East of the soap works was Turvilles grist mill. North of the Turville House later occupied by Miss Paul. North of the Paul house was the Reiser brewery later the Rudolph Begg brewery. A carding mill owned by Hiram Comfort and a store were south of these. The residential section of the Village was clustered along the western embankments in those days.

In 1845 the population of Southwold was about 2300. Fingal was at that time a thriving manufacturing Village with a population of 800. The industries included implement manufacturing, saw mills, tannery, veneer mills with walnut being the principal wood handled. However through no fault of the early pioneers but rather through the diversion of trade from the stage route to the railroad built through St. Thomas the decline of Fingal and other small Villages was brought about. St. Thomas was incorporated into a village in 1855 with a population of about 1300. Here in the Town Hall was held the first meeting of the County Council of the new county of Elgin. An agitation had begun in 1846 to create a new County for at that time the southern Townships were part of the County of Middlesex. The new County was named in honor of the Governor-General Lord Elgin.

Colonel Talbot, the central figure of the settlement died in 1853 and was buried in the splendidly kept Cemetery at St. Peters Anglican Church Tryconnell. Much has been written of Colonel Talbot, of his eccentricities, his management of his settlement and his dealings with the settlers. No man who did not have the promise of a first class farmer could get land from him and to this policy which laid the agricultural development of Elgin may be attributed the splendid position of the county to-day. The progressiveness handed down by the early settlers has kept Elgin County to the front.

River Road Community Cont'd

Out over Kains Hill in a southwesterly direction from St. Thomas lies the River Road Community. The name undoubtedly was given by the fact that the first road followed the course of the Kettle Creek. Situated as this settlement was but a short distance from St. Thomas the residents did not feel the need of stores and shops as did other vicinities farther away. This community now approached by the winding Kains Hill built in 1912 was formerly reached by a steep hill directly east of J. Y. Harpers residence. The community is comprised of the land lying between and along the Bush, Mill and East River Roads running somewhat parallel in a southerly direction from the Bush road. The easterly road joins the road leading west from Highway No. 4, the central one joins the Mill Road, while the western one joins a side road joining the second River Road.

The early surveyors must have indeed encountered many difficulties in laying out Townships, concessions, side roads and road allowances. They endeavoured to make townships about twelve miles by eight or ten miles wide usually starting at a river or lake. Road allowances could not follow any particular pattern in many instances owing to hills ravines, creeks and valleys.

Winding Kettle Creek and the ravines leading to it made it necessary in many places for the surveyors to alter the course of roads in Southwold. In our community we have many instances of these diversions. Here and there it seems the roads presumably follow Indian trails, some along the brow of the hill, some sliding down to the valley below. During the spring, summer and autumn months many of the residents of near by St. Thomas enjoy the rural scenic beauties afforded them by a drive along the winding River Road overlooking Kettle Creek Valley.

However as road building become more mechanized more of these curves may be eliminated as is done on highways.

Even here we can see remains of former roadways which were replaced by more direct ones after grading and gravelling or filling ravines. One of these old roadways is situated about half way up the Fulton Hill heading into the field above. Another one was around the brow of the hill west of the River Road School, while at one time a road followed the course of Kettle Creek in the Valley.

Two bridges span Kettle Creek in this community, one on the East River Road and the other, the Fulton Bridge at the foot of the hill. The latter a fines teal structure replaced the old wooden one and was constructed in 1912

The Rural Telephone line was installed in 1910 during the

River Road Community - Cont'd

spring months and connection was finally made with the Fingal central late in the Summer.

The Rural Hydro was installed on the River Road in the fall of 1929

In 1963 the Bell Telephone Company bought the Rural Fingal Telephone Company and installed Bell phones.