

# Club 35: A lasting tradition

There are many traditions and institutions which have weathered the erosion of time in the Highlands, but none symbolizes the warmth and hospitality of the area as much as Club 35.

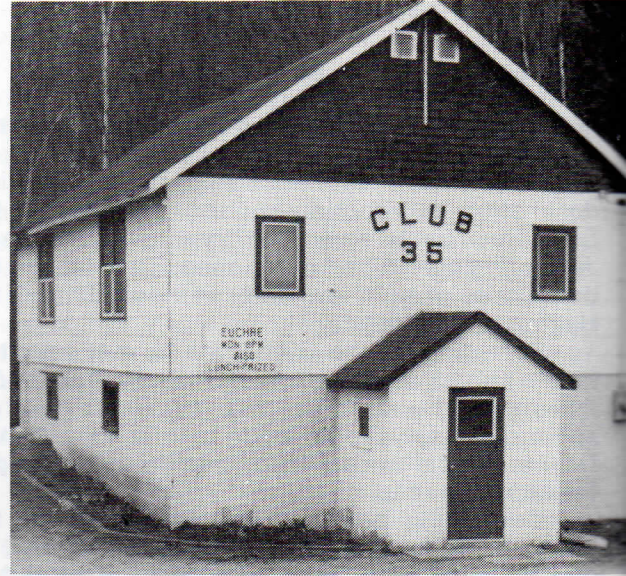
For many, Club 35, if they are aware of it at all, is just a name on the side of a building on Highway 35 at Halls Lake. However, like a cover does not reveal the contents of a book, the somewhat staid exterior of the building does little to indicate the true nature of this community social organization.

Club 35, in many ways, is the epitome of a rural lifestyle and days gone by. It represents an era when communication was difficult, neighbours often miles away, and the social contact offered by a regular meeting place provided the cement which bonded a community together. Despite the introduction of instantaneous communication, so-called advances such as television and radio, Club 35 still thrives. Perhaps it is the strong sense of community that surrounds this institution, or the realization that a glowing television set in the corner of the room is no replacement for face-to-face human contact, but Club 35 continues to bring people together.

Club 35 can trace its roots back to the sense of community fostered by early pioneers, however, as a formal institution, it was founded in 1947. It was in that year that regular meetings were held in the school hall on the old Hawk Lake Road. Saturday night was a time for gathering with programs being an informal mixture of music, dancing, special occasions and visiting.

In 1952, Bill and Amy Cooper donated a tract of land adjacent to Highway 35, and the organization formed just five years earlier bent

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to the task of constructing their own building.

Tapping the expertise of their members and the generosity of the community, the building took shape. While certain members of the club toiled on the building others scoured the area for furnishings. A piano was brought in from Toronto, furniture constructed, curtains and furnishings made and installed. Once again the community spirit was thriving in the settlement of Halls Lake.

The move to the new location, marked the introduction of the new name, Club 35. The new structure, built to accommodate the activities of the club, served as a focal point for the community. In addition to the regular activities offered by the club, the hall was often rented for wedding receptions, dances, political meetings, family reunions, anniversary celebrations and bazaars.

Of course, over the years, many changes have been made to the structure of the building. The heating system has been updated from wood to gas, the plumbing was moved indoors, the kitchen

appliances replaced and new furnishings added to replenish

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# 'It has always been a fun place'

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those worn by steady use.

In the tradition of its more than 40 years of existence, Club 35 continues to be a focus for the community. Monday night is still Euchre night at the hall. The friendly evening of cards attracts a regular following of permanent residents, and during the summer months, an increasing number of cottage owners join the crowd for a night out at Club 35. After all, where can you go for a fun night, including a light snack, all for \$1.50? (Inflation appears not to have struck too hard at Club 35,

for as the records show, the initial charge for a night of Euchre started at 50¢ and climbed to \$1 five years ago.)

One doesn't have to be a member to join in the fun, either. Guests are always welcome. At the moment there are 60

members on the club's roster.

Edith Russell has been a member of the club since it was formed. She recalls the early days when those attending would bring their musical instruments to entertain. "It has always been a fun place to be," she commented.

"You know, after all these

years, when you think of it, we have an institution here," Edith says. And how right she is.

Euchre is played every Monday Night at Club 35, Halls Lake, at 8 p.m. The public is welcome to take part.

This year's executive at Club 35 includes: president Murray Daniels; first vice president Myrna McCarthy; second vice president Shirley Bunker; treasurer Verna Sawyer; secretary Louise Watson; benevolent secretary Velda Harrison; social committee Betty Campbell and Olive Daniels.



Euchre night at Club 35 always draws an enthusiastic crowd. The games are arranged so players move from table to table offering an opportunity to meet new friends and renew old acquaintances.