

House History - 196 Woodstock Street North, Tavistock



left - Woodstock Street North (looking south), photo taken sometime after 1905.

The house at 196 Woodstock Street North is the first house on the left. It was built circa 1895.

The size and colour of the bricks suggest they would have been made at the Entricken Brickyard on the 15th line of East Zorra Township.

right - 196 Woodstock Street North, photo taken in 2018.

An addition was added to the front of the house in the late 1950s.

Today this 1 1/2 storey home features a double living room, dining room, kitchen, 4 bedrooms, 1 1/2 bathrooms and an enclosed back porch / sunroom. The house has a full basement and limited attic space.



It wasn't so long ago that Tavistock had a healthy list of houses that stayed in the same family for several generations. Times changed and people moved away and new owners bought older homes.

Not so with the house at 196 Woodstock Street North. It's been a "Neeb family home" for almost 100 years.

In 1921 Edith Neeb, then a new widow with three young children, determined that she had to leave the farm in South Easthope Township that had been home with her late husband, Henry, and make a new life for herself and her children. Edith and the children moved to Tavistock. Five years later Edith purchased the property at what is now 196 Woodstock Street North.

The property traces its history back to the Canada Company that contracted land to the early settlers. It was part of Wilker's Survey (Plan 329) signed in 1882 covering a wide swath of land north of Hope Street. Registry Office transaction (detailed at the end) attest to the many times the land was subdivided and sold.

Of most interest to this house history, the property was sold to Jacob Seltzer for the tidy sum of \$135 in 1896. Mr. Seltzer's estate sold it to Catherine Engel, the widow of Henry Engel, for \$175 three years later in 1899. Catherine Engel retained ownership until 1926 when she sold to Edith Neeb for the then princely sum of \$2,000. Thus began the Neeb era.



Edith Neeb (shown in this photo at age 17) was born in 1887, married in 1908 and widowed in 1921. She died at her home in 1955.

Edith was a true woman of her generation ... an excellent seamstress; talented knitter, tatter and crocheter; accomplished cook and baker; and exceptional housekeeper who varnished the woodwork almost every year.

The three Neeb children were Frieda, Clarence and Walter.

Frieda (1909-1986) was a teenager when she moved to 196 Woodstock Street North. It remained her address for her entire life.

Frieda is best remembered as the talented lady who decorated wedding cakes for countless Tavistock brides. She worked at Wilker's Grocery Store and as a housekeeper for Dr. and Mrs. Taylor. She was a kind lady, always willing to help others.



Clarence (1912-2000) was just 14 when the family moved into the home. One can imagine him as a young boy sliding down the long bannister. In the early years of his marriage to Frances Merklinger the couple lived elsewhere in Tavistock. With Edith's passing they, along with daughter Beverly, moved back home.

Clarence is remembered as a businessman (Weitzel's General Store and Neeb's Shoe Store), Fire Chief, and as an individual active in his church and his community. His community work included the Tavistock Men's Club, most especially their annual sauerkraut supper; the Agricultural Society and Fall Fair; and giving blood more than 100 times. Clarence's obituary was appropriately headlined "Tavistock Was His Life".

Frances (1919-2016) was an excellent homemaker, accomplished in many crafts and hobbies and, like women in Tavistock of her generation, a capable business partner. She enjoyed spending time with her friends and was active at her church.



Walter (1916-1972) was always known as Wally.

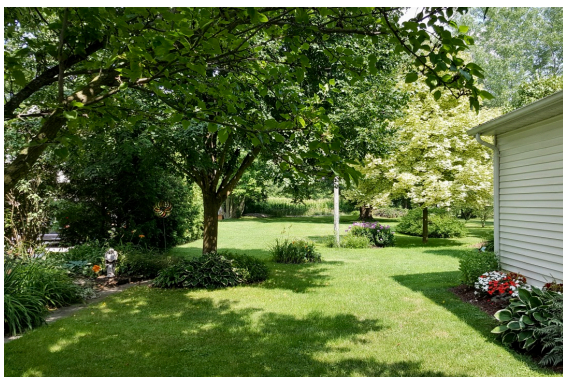
In his early working years Wally was employed by Zimmerman Brothers in Tavistock and lived at home. He moved away during the years he worked at AV Roe, the company that made parts for the Avro Arrow. Wally, too, returned to live in his boyhood home.

And now the house belongs to Beverly, the third generation.

She is shown in these photos as a tiny girl with her Grandmother Edith and slightly older in the long back yard that was almost all garden.



Beverly (1952 - present) moved to 196 Woodstock when she was three years old. With the exception of some years living in Stratford she, like the others in her family, has a firm attachment to this home. Like the others in her family, she is known for her active participation in her community and her church. Beverly is an accomplished pianist who taught music in her home for many years and has been the organist at her church for over 40 years. Now retired from a career at the Stratford Beacon Herald and Perth District Health Unit, she is enjoying life at 196 Woodstock Street. If everything goes as planned, she'll be there for years to come.



The back yard has taken on a new look over the years. The vegetable garden is now lawn interspersed with flower gardens and most recently, a new patio area was added.

Registry Office Transactions

Plan 329 - Block C - subdivision of Lot 20 Conc 5 South Easthope Township

Date	Seller and Buyer	Price
1874	John Martin Honer to Peter Wilker	
1878	Peter Wilker to Samuel Zurbrigg	
1880	Samuel Zurbrigg to Peter Wilker	
1880	Peter Wilker to Samuel Zurbrigg	
1881	Samuel Zurbrigg to Henry Rausch	\$1,200

Henry Rausch took the land he purchased from Samuel Zurbrigg and sold it in varying sized lots.

1884	to John Dopp		
1888	to Joseph Duval		
1888	to Catherine Weitzel		
1888	to John K. Lemp		
1888	to Herman Wenzell (name unclear)		
1888	to William Zurbrigg and, importantly for this history		
1896	to Jacob Seltzer	1/3 pt	\$135
1899	Jacob Seltzer estate to Catherine Engel	1/3 pt	\$175

Plan 307

1926	Catherine Engel to Edith Neeb		\$2,000
1962	Edith Neeb to Frieda Neeb		\$1
1961	Frieda Neeb to Frieda Neeb and Clarence Neeb		\$1
1978	Frieda Neeb & Clarence Neeb to Walter Neeb estate, Frieda Neeb, Clarence Neeb, Frances Neeb		
***	several transactions all within the Neeb family		
2005	Beverly Neeb		

The present lot size is 48' x 297'.

history prepared 2018