

## Bridge in Dundas spans 60 years



Since Virginia Malone Goodwyn and her sister, Theresa, invited eleven friends over for a bridge one Saturday afternoon 60 years ago, the world has shuffled through many changes but Dundas has played the same steady hand.

Dundas is one of those spots on the map you never see while you're going somewhere else. Tucked away in the farm fields between Kenbridge and South Hill on the border of Lunenburg and Brunswick counties, Dundas is little more than a grocery store and a post office.

The men o the store's front porch will give you directions if you are lost, once they figure out how to reorientate themselves to route numbers (a modern inconvenience) instead of family farms. Dundas natives think in terms of people instead of road signs.

At Virginia Goodwyn's farm, you can almost hear the bridge game buzzing with voices and the tinkle of tea cups on saucers. Mrs. Goodwyn herself links the old Dundas with the new. The single store in town was built by her father in 1908 and it outlasted

four other stores that came when the town became a center for lumber and crops before the depression.

The railroad had come through in 1907. “That’s when Dundas started to bloom,” Said Mrs. Goodwyn, who laughed a lot when talking about Dundas. She has a light tripping laugh—which is just the right pitch for the bridge games played among her Victorian furniture.

The farm she and her husband, Wallace, live on goes back to 1770, they believe, if that date on a brick found in the basement is right. Like an old violin, time plays long and sweet here.

How many more hands of bridge she will play, she doesn’t know. Her bridge club won’t let her quit. Seven charter members have died now: Lee Bacon, Margaret and Lucy Wilkinson, Ruht, Elizabeth and Fleda Goodwyn, Frances Ripberger, and Thelma and Ella Hawthorne. Four charter members are still alive, Ella and Harriet Bacon and Theresa and Virginia, who is the only one still playing bridge.

You have to have lived a long time to see changes in Dundas. Mrs. Goodwyn, who remembers going to church in a buggy, can tell you how much it has changed by the friends who have passed away—and the way the women play bridge. Everything else just about stays the same.

While the game itself wasn’t serious business when the club first started, social conventions were. “You wore your very best hat and gloves,” recalled Mrs. Goodwyn. “It was a real party!..and I tell you, we served a salad plate with dessert and a drink, a real meal!...I don’t know that our bridge was so great, but the social hour was,” she laughed again.

In today’s bridge club, the game comes first, then the “gossip,” as Mrs. Goodwyn describes what went on during the social hour. “Now we have members who really make a study of bridge,” she said and her game has improved because of it, she admits.

As long as the main roads continue to bypass Dundas—which is the way Mrs. Goodwyn likes it—there will always be time to address the people side of life and measure history’s flow by the changing faces who sit around the bridge table.

“Yes, the Dundas Bridge Club was the club of Dundas. That was it!...The men, I don’t know what they did,” she laughed again.