

The Community Press
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Chisholm Lumber celebrates one and a half centuries
By: Shannon Binder Bray

The sense of community was awesome on Saturday August 25 as Chisholm Lumber celebrated their 150th anniversary at their Roslin mill site. The grounds were teeming with hundreds of Township of Tyendinaga and Municipality of Tweed community members, family and friends, to honour the six generations of the Chisholm family who have served the community since 1857 and continue to do so today.

The founder of the family business was William Fraser Chisholm, originally from Marmora, who purchased the Mill property along the Moira River in 1857. Chisholm's Mills changed to Chisholm Brothers when William's sons, Joseph Merrit and William Allan took over as second generation partners. Joseph Merrit bought out William Allan and Joseph's son, William Harvey inherited the business from his father in 1926, making him a third generation owner. William Harvey's sons Donald Fraser, Walter Ross and Joseph Clare became partners in the family business in 1945 and gave it its new name "W.H Chisholm & Sons". Upon their father's death in 1951, Don, Walter and Joe renamed the business Chisholm's (Roslin) Limited. Their sons, cousins Harvey, Doug and Paul became the fifth generation to own the business in 1981. The sixth generation is in place as well as William Fraser Chisholm's great-great-great grandson's Patrick, Jordan, Brett and Peter all work at the mill today.

The family celebrated with live entertainment, draws, great food, mill tours, chainsaw demonstrations and plenty of mingling. Local auctioneer Boyd Sullivan, also a close Chisholm family friend, was the master of ceremonies for the event and spoke highly of Chisholm's economic traits of being aggressive, adaptable to change and having strength at home. Sullivan proudly said the Chisholm's were and are "an absolute pillar of our community" and that "we are celebrating something that is older than Canada itself."

Tweed Reeve Jo-Anne Albert, Township of Tyendinaga Reeve Margaret Walsh, MPP Leona Dombrowsky and MP Daryl Kramp all spoke to the great accomplishments of the Chisholm family. Doug Chisholm was chosen to speak to the large crowd on behalf of the Chisholm family and showed appreciation for the "outstanding turnout" while commending Chisholm employees, customers, suppliers, business associates and neighbours. The Chisholm family hoped the celebration would give the public "a glimpse of what the company is all about" and cited the business's health and safety practices, sustainable forest management, record of employment stability, business diversification and success as a professionally run family business as proud achievements of Chisholm Lumber. Doug noted that "each generation gets 25-30 years to see what they can do with this business" and said "What's next? I really don't know...the constant is change...there's a good chance we will be back to celebrate our 200th in 2057."