

Stories of Wolfe Island

Over the past year, my student researchers and I have had the privilege of meeting many wonderful Wolfe Islanders and listening to fascinating tales of personal and island history. We are a small research team from the Strathy Language Unit at Queen's University, and our aim is to record and transcribe oral stories and interviews with a range of Wolfe Island residents.

The Strathy Language Unit is dedicated to the study of Canadian English. We are interested in how Canadians use language and in how this use changes over time and across different regions. We are also interested in the stories Canadians tell and in what these stories tell us about ourselves and our country. In order to explore these issues, we decided to compile a corpus of recordings of Canadians discussing their lives and their communities. These recordings are being transcribed and will later be used to study language and local history. In the case of the Wolfe Island recordings, the materials will also be archived with the Wolfe Island Historical Society for the benefit of future generations of Islanders.

Why Wolfe Island? We could have begun our recording project in any community, but Wolfe Island seemed like the ideal place to start. We were fascinated by the history of the island and the fact that so many families have been on the land for multiple generations. Once we began our work, our

choice was positively reinforced by the incredible cooperation of Wolfe Island Historical Society board members, who have introduced us to residents and aided us with logistical matters, as well as by the warmth and generosity of the many Islanders who have welcomed us into their homes and shared their stories. In our own way, we have come to feel like part of the Wolfe Island family.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of you who have already participated in this project. We would also like to encourage those of you who have not yet participated to get in touch with us. Whether you are long-time resident or a newcomer, whether you are young or old, whether you think you have anything interesting to share or not (you do!), we would love to meet with you. The session will simply involve sitting down together and talking about family, farming, work, school, memories of the past, aspirations for the future... whatever comes to mind. We look forward to hearing from you at wolfeislandproject@gmail.com



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