

Kennedy, Thomas Laird

Helped Davis' early career

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Premier praises late T.L. Kennedy



A memorial plaque was unveiled, Friday, to honor Col. T.L. Kennedy, a former Ontario Agriculture Minister and Premier who was known as Old Man Ontario. The plaque was unveiled by his two daughters, Mrs. Jane Hughes, left, and Mrs. Ruth J. Jackson.

An historical plaque was unveiled, Friday, to commemorate "the best agricultural minister we ever had."

Those words came from Ontario Premier, Bill Davis, who attended the unveiling, and spoke lengthily about the man who had taken him under his wing.

The minister was Colonel Thomas Laird Kennedy who also became affectionately known as "Old Man Ontario."

The plaque was erected on the front lawn of Dixie Public School, 1120 Flagship Dr., which was once part of the Kennedy farm.

Col. Kennedy was elected in 1919 to the Ontario Legislature as a Conservative and held the seat, except for one term until his death.

Like many of the original residents of Toronto Township, now Mississauga, Mr. Kennedy was a fruit grower.

While in the Legislature he served as the Minister of Agriculture from 1930 to 1934 and again from 1943 until 1952.

He served briefly as the Prime Minister of Ontario in 1948 until 1949.

Dr. Paul Cornell, professor of history at the University of Waterloo and representing the Archaeological and Historic Sites Board, said the Kennedy Farm was more than a landmark before the Second World War.

Born in Brampton, Dr. Cornell, said "the only way to Toronto was down the Centre Rd. and then along Dundas to Toronto."

"We always had to pass the Kennedy Farm and we could look at it and feel that something was solid."

Mr. Davis said Mr. Kennedy had a major influence in the current Premier's early political career.

He said Kennedy had the uncanny ability to forecast what crops and farm production would be almost to the dollar by sizing up the weather.

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