

Honorary Vice-President Mary Geraldine (Teed) Gillis UE, Middleton, Nova Scotia

Of UEL descent on three sides, and English on the other, the seventh of ten children of John F. H. Teed and Muriel Wetmore Teed, I was born on August 13, 1921 in the Loyalist city of Saint John, New Brunswick, the oldest incorporated city in Canada. I was raised to be justly proud of my Loyalist heritage.

I attended Winter Street School in Saint John, Edgehill Church School for Girls in Windsor, Nova Scotia, Modern Business College in Saint John, and worked at the Royal Bank, Saint John, until my marriage in 1943 to F/Lt. Donald A. Gillis, RCAF. Don was posted overseas two weeks after we were married, where he flew Mosquito airplanes until the war ended. He returned home first time. We had nine children, seven boys and two girls. One of the girls died when she was almost a year old. We had her buried in the Annapolis Valley and moved to Middleton, Nova Scotia, the following year from London, Ontario. We have now been here for forty-eight years. Don was from Paradise, Nova Scotia.



I have done volunteer work since coming to Middleton, holding executive positions on the boards of several organizations and sports clubs, including: Holy Trinity Church Guild, Middleton Tennis Club, Middleton Badminton Club, Middleton Hospital Auxiliary, Provincial Hospital Auxiliary, Annapolis Valley Historical Society, Annapolis Valley Highland Games Society, Scottish Societies' Association of Nova Scotia, and the UELAC Bicentennial Association (as Provincial Chairman). I have been awarded certificates from the province for volunteer work and from the American Association for State and Local History, for work done on the Loyalist Bicentennial.

In the summer, I leave my name at the Tourist Bureau in Middleton as a guide for the Old Holy Trinity Anglican (Loyalist) Church, my favourite place to conduct tours.

My involvement with the UEL was encouraged by my mother and accelerated after my family and I moved back to the Maritimes from London, Ontario in 1956. Mother gave me a membership to the New Brunswick Branch of the UELAC. With this, I became more interested and attended meetings when able. I also became a member of the Halifax/Dartmouth Branch and, during the Bicentennial, took part in many of their plans and activities. At the National Convention in Halifax, June 1996, some members took bus tours to parts of Nova Scotia. When the Annapolis Valley was visited, I arranged for a luncheon to be served at our local Macdonald Museum; and then conducted a tour of our Loyalist church in Middleton and the one in Clementsport. I helped to have the necessary steps taken to have our Loyalist church declared a local provincial heritage site when it was in danger of being torn down. This lovely old church is a favourite of mine, and I do all that I can to promote it. I have given talks on the Loyalists at local schools, always dressed in costume. As the saying goes, "*A costume speaks a thousand words*".

My children have been made well aware of their Loyalist heritage and taught to be proud of it. This was especially significant during the Bicentennial when, as Chairman, I travelled by car over 50,000 miles around the province, giving speeches and attending functions at different Loyalist locations. I learned a great deal from what I heard and read, which made me very proud of the way these people helped build Canada into the wonderful country it is today.

Last Post: Mary Geraldine (Teed) Gillis

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Mary Geraldine (Teed) Gillis, age 89, o 42 Victoria St., Middleton, on June 27, 2011, in Soldiers' Memorial Hospital, Middleton. Born in Saint John, N.B. on August 13, 1921, she was a daughter of John Francis Hannington and Muriel Vivian (Wetmore) teed. She is survived by daughter, Mary Heather, Annapolis Royal; sons Donald T. (Victoria), Middleton; W. Bruce (Deborah), Paradise; Thomas G. (Dorena), Halifax; James B. (Flora), Arlington, Texas; Timothy D., Middleton; G. Scott (Josephne), St. John's N.L.; Shaun A. Saint John, N.B.; and several grandchildren. She is also survived by brother, Hugh (Betty), Toronto, Ont., and sister, Gloria Trivett (Donald), Clifton Royal, N.B. She was predeceased by her husband of 51 years, Donald Archibald Gillis (of Paradise); and by infant daughter, Melody Ann, as well as by brothers, George and Eric, and sisters, Hazel Hazen, Beth Young, and Alice Teed.

Mary was educated in Saint John and Windsor. She was a passionate historian, who fought fiercely for her adopted province of Nova Scotia while always remembering her New Brunswick roots. A lifelong member of the United Empire Loyalist Bicentennial Association of Nova Scotia for the 200th anniversary celebrations in 1983. She was a founding organizer of the Annapolis Valley Highland Games, and pursued the preservation of built heritage. She took pride in the Gillis family's association with the Clan MacPherson and led two family excursions to Scotland to take part in Clan Gatherings. She will be lovingly remembered and sorely missed.

Lately Mary was quite interested in and supportive of our battle in NS against the various revisionists and de-constructionists - mostly university academics and their politically correct students - who have been attacking our New England Planter and Loyalist heritages.

...Fr. Adrian Ruggles Potter, Bear River, N.S. President, Clements Historical Society
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