

ROSE HOUSE MUSEUM



Rose House is one of the oldest remaining residences in North Marysburgh Township (originally known as “Fifth Town”—the fifth town to be settled west of Kingston).

The first Marysburgh settlers were United Empire Loyalists and Hessian (German) mercenaries who had fought for the British in the American Revolution. The term “mercenary” may be somewhat misleading, as these soldiers were *indentured* and forced to join the war effort.

They arrived here in June 1784, but did not receive their land until October. It was too late for the settlers to plant crops and winter was fast approaching. Their main concern was building shelter because up until this point they were residing in the tents that they used during the war!

By October 1784, about 40 persons had settled in this vicinity and had begun to clear and cultivate the land. A Lutheran log chapel was eventually erected (1789-1790) and was also used as a schoolhouse. Lessons were given in both English and German. This is the earliest German-speaking settlement in Ontario, predating the Waterloo County Mennonites.

Peter Rose settled among the disbanded German troops; he arrived prior to 1796. Eventually the congregation of the log church, located on this property, had dwindled in numbers and it was torn down. It is said that the squared timbers were used to construct this frame farmhouse for the Rose family. Previously they had resided in a log cabin closer to the water.

This house remained in the Rose family for five generations. In 1962/63 there were some renovations done on the house. It was purchased by the municipality and was converted into a museum, opening on June 4, 1967.

This dwelling is not unique among early County farmhouses, yet it clearly represents the ambitions of a hardworking farm family.

Unlike some of its neighbours, the Rose House looks much the same as it did generations ago, and retains the handsome simplicity of its straightforward design.