

Mona Everett



**Mona Everett in 2009**

Mona Everett, 94, worked on the family farm, raised a family, volunteered for many community events, and worked like a bee for many decades, and still has lots of memories of her most unusual job – that of Perth-Andover’s jailer during the years 1966-1969.

On February 13, 1960 when she and her husband Frank and family moved to Andover he became a provincial government employee as jailer. “It was the courthouse then, a beautiful building. Frank was the jailer, but maybe they called me ‘jailerette’.

“The prisoners were pretty good,” she said in a 2009 interview, “but this was in the days before drugs. When Frank was jailer they had court on Mondays and sometimes on Thursdays. The RCMP would come in and take the prisoners upstairs to the courtroom. Our apartment was heated by hot water radiators, but the courthouse had two iron stoves that burned coal. We had to carry the coal upstairs on court days so the courtroom would be warm.” Until 1966 the county was administered by the Victoria County Council and Andover was the capital of the county, and her husband Frank had to conduct some of the business that today would be done by the courts, such as bail hearings. It was rather informal: “If they (prisoners) wanted to get out before court day, they would leave a fine with Frank and he would take it up to court Monday morning unless they wanted to come back and pay it themselves.”

## Murderers To Be Hanged

The last convicted criminals hanged in Canada were in 1962 in Toronto, so that when Frank and Mona Everett moved to Andover in 1960, part of his duties as jailer would have been acting as an official witness to any hanging which would have taken place in the Andover jail. Shortly after the Everett arrived in Andover, that event almost took place. The scaffold was built, the rope tested, and two convicted murderers waited in their cells for their executions which traditionally took place at one minute after midnight. Although the noose

setup was tested a few times – and scared the kids – the hanging never took place.

## Mona - Jailer in 1966

Six years after he had taken the job as jailer, Frank Everett died and Mona took the job which she knew well by that time. From then until the Carlingford Jail opened in 1969, Mona Everett was a government employee dealing with criminals, drunks, and various other folks who had somehow crossed the law. She remembered some of the problems and some of the little things that happened: "One young fellow, when there were three or four prisoners in there one morning, said: "I don't want no breakfast". But when I passed out the bacon and eggs he said: "Oh good gosh, can I change my mind? I thought it was gonna be bread and water." I said that was the old days." One of the most memorable incidents occurred when a deer that may have seen its reflection in a big front window leaped right through that window and into the outside hall, closest to the street, then called Andover Main Street. "It came into the veranda and into the hall. They had remodelled the building and the deer went right through the window. Kirk (Sgt. Edward Kukurski of the Highway Patrol) and Gerald (Sheriff Grierson) wrestled the deer. I thought they were wrestling with a prisoner and I didn't want to go out, but I had to clean up the mess. There was blood all over the place. It must have crossed the river, got up on a stump and saw its reflection. This happened when I was jailer."