

Perth and District Historical Society

Perth and District Historical Society - News Release –October 2025

The Perth and District Historical Society October 16, 2025 Meeting: The Godfather of Canadian Film Making

The Perth and District Historical Society's regular monthly meeting for October 16, 2025, welcomes James Forrester with a presentation that looks back at Canadian Film Making in its early days.

Jim introduces us to Frank Radford Crawley, known as Budge Crawley, born in Ottawa. Early on he developed an interest in cinematography and film making. Along with his next-door neighbour, Judith Sparks, who shared his interest in film making formed a team in their personal lives as well as their professional ones during the early years of Canadian film making. As a team they produced short as well feature films, television shows and commercials, and animated cartoons. Choosing to work independently, Crawley was a pioneer in the creation of the independent film sector in Canada. In addition, they provided training thereby developing a new generation of Canadian film makers. Their efforts resulted in hundreds of awards. Most notably was the Academy Award for the best documentary film, *The Man Who Skied Down Everest* in 1975.

Throughout his life, Crawley maintained ties with Perth and area, the principal point for this presentation. Official sources show that he was born in Ottawa in 1911 and died in Toronto in 1987. However, in reality his passing was at Perth's Great War Memorial Hospital as noted in the May 14, 1987 edition of the Ottawa Citizen.

The Perth and District Historical Society is dedicated to learning about and popularising our history and is a forum for discussion and celebration of our area's rich culture and heritage. The meetings are held the third Thursday of the month and are open to the public, at 7:30 pm at the Royal Canadian Legion, Perth-Upon-Tay, Branch 244, home of the Hall of Remembrance, 26 Beckwith St. E. in Perth. The usual "Toonie Fee" applies for each meeting. For information, contact Ellen Dean at 613-264-8362. Our website at www.perthhs.org has additional information about us and items of interest related to Perth and district.

Article submitted by the Perth and District Historical Society