

Poole Creek is one of Stittsville's gems.



Out and About With John Curry

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*Stittsville Richmond
Community Voice*
Oct. 29, 2020 edition

From its source in the wetlands west of the village, the creek winds its way through the community including the Amberwood golf course before emptying into the Carp River, just north of Maple Grove Road. It is a so-called cool water stream, a rare feature in the Ottawa area.

Over the years it has received attention on several fronts such as stocking with brown trout, improvement work to enhance water quality and aquatic habitat, creekside tree planting and intense examination such as happened in the Upper Poole Creek Subwatershed Study. The popular Poole Creek pathway follows the creek along much of its route, particularly from West Ridge Drive through to the Sweetnam Drive area.

But why is this waterway called Poole Creek? What is the significance of the name?

The name comes from a pioneer property owner, John Poole, who is believed to have lived and farmed on the land immediately east

of what is now Stittsville Main Street, about where Wintergreen Drive is today. An early deed shows that the property was owned by a John Poole. The McCurdy family purchased the land from John Poole in 1876 and continued to own it right through to 1973 when it was sold to Holitzner Homes. A decade later the 449-home Wyldewood subdivision was developed there.

The McCurdy ownership of the property is confirmed by the fact that Belden's Carleton County Atlas of 1879 shows this 95-acre parcel belonging to William McCurdy. This fits with the 1876 sale of the property from Poole to McCurdy.

The McCurdy family's home property was where the Iber Road business park is today. The McCurdy family, settling on the land in 1819, continued to own this land fronting on what is now Hazeldean Road until just after World War Two.

Belden's Carleton County Atlas refers to Poole Creek as being the west fork of the Carp River. The Carp River in the Hazeldean area is referred to as the east fork. It is very likely that at the time of the production of the atlas in 1879, the name Poole Creek or, more probably, Poole's Creek, was in use locally in the small community of Stittsville but had not yet spread to the wider area.

John Poole, it is believed, had owned the land for quite a while and was elderly when he sold it to the McCurdy family. Reportedly, for years there were the remains of an old barn and

house on the land. This was taken as evidence that John Poole had lived and farmed there.

The McCurdy family purchased the land from John Poole for use as pasture land. This makes sense because it was excellent pasture land because of the presence of Poole Creek running through it. Poole Creek had water in it all year round, even in the hottest summers, so there was always water available to the grazing stock.

The land, which over time became known as the McCurdy property, became the site in later years for the Stittsville community's ball diamond. The ball diamond was there in a field for many years before the development of the Alexander Grove ball facility in the time following World War Two.

This property was also a favourite play area for village youngsters who would float rafts down the creek in the summer. In the winter, there was skiing or tobogganing on the property's hilly slopes.

Even after the McCurdy family sold its home farm property just after World War Two, Arthur McCurdy retained possession of this Poole Creek property. It was his hope to perhaps one day build a house there. Instead, he ended up selling it in 1973.

At one time Arthur McCurdy planted willow trees along Poole Creek through the property to make it even more picturesque. However, beavers in the area made quick work of the young willows, chewing them down.