



PROMINENT LUNENBURGERS
Remembering the People that Make Us Special
1753-2013

Mildred Pearl Oxner



Courtesy
Nancy Haughn

b. 22 Dec. 1899 in Young's Landing, Lunenburg Co., d. 16 June 1968 in Lunenburg

Associated Places: Lunenburg Academy; Lunenburg Opera House (290 Lincoln Street); Central United Church; 91 Creighton Street, Purcell's Art Studio (217 Lincoln Street, formerly BJ Oxner's grocery); Hillcrest Cemetery

Contributions: Music, arts and culture

Lunenburg's "Mrs. Music," Pearl Oxner (*nee* Young) showed an interest in music at an early age, first by pretending to play an organ she had made from moss and stones, then moving to formal piano lessons at the age of 8. After graduating from the Lunenburg Academy in 1917, she studied business and music at Mount Allison University. Her first major role was in 1920 as the lead in the opera production of 'The Chimes of Normandy'.

In 1937 Pearl created the Lunenburg Academy Beethoven Choral Club, and was one of only twenty-four Canadians selected to join the Coronation Choir at Westminster Abbey for the crowning of King George VI. Two years later, Pearl led the Lunenburg Male Choir at the 1939 New York World's Fair, the only female conductor of the eighty-seven clubs that attended. The same year she travelled to Gloucester Massachusetts with the Lunenburg Male Choir to sing on board the Bluenose.

In later years, Pearl led the Lutheran Choir, Central United Choir, and performed with the Lunenburg Mixed Quartet. She also directed Lunenburg's Little Theatre Group, which at its height had as many as sixty members and was well-known across Nova Scotia. In recognition of Pearl's lifelong contribution to music in the province, the annual Nova Scotia Kiwanis Music Festival P. Oxner Baton is awarded annually for most outstanding conductor.

Throughout her career, Pearl gave music lessons to hundreds of Lunenburg children and adults at the Academy, or at her home studio on Creighton Street. Her daughters Diane (MacDonald) and Isabelle (Eisenhauer) have had similarly successful musical careers.

