



Preserving, promoting, and developing Wellington North's unique cultural resources to build a vibrant community and a prosperous economy.

## CULTURAL MOMENT FOR JANUARY 16<sup>TH</sup> CELEBRATES SYLVIA CADESKY

On her shoulders is an exhibit on display at the Mount Forest Museum & Archives that showcases some of the unique women in the history of Mount Forest. Today's cultural moment celebrates Sylvia Cadesky; 1920 - 2017



“Saucy” Sylvia Cadesky could have been a professor of German at any university, but she chose another path. Singing in the clubs of Toronto on weekends for extra money in the late 1930s while finishing a degree in modern languages offered Sylvia another option. When she received a full scholarship at Ohio State University to study German for her masters, Sylvia took the scholarship but continued to play her piano and sing in the clubs and hotels of Akron and Cincinnati.

Then she got an offer that she couldn't refuse. Radio WLW out of Cincinnati, the “Nation's Station” and a “Star Maker,” offered Sylvia a job as staff vocalist. Following singers like Rosemary Clooney and Doris Day, Sylvia took the offer and started a 70-year career in entertainment. Her mother, Tillye Cadesky, who gave Sylvia her first piano lessons in Mount Forest must have been proud and thrilled.

By 1946, Sylvia hosted a coast-to-coast broadcast eight times each week. “She plays her own piano accompaniments and chats informally with her radio listeners in a charming way. Her bubbling laughter travels along the airwaves into people's homes.”

(*Columbus Review*, 1946) Radio put Sylvia in the company of Ella Fitzgerald and Duke Ellington who asked her to join his orchestra which she did for five years. The “Saucy” comedic part of her act was accidental when she filled in for an MC in Akron who never showed up. Sylvia realized she had a flare for comedy. International offers came in, but Sylvia opted to perform close to family and home. Sylvia had two loving marriages and died surrounded by children and grandchildren although they were not her own.



In 2002, Sylvia Cadesky was inducted into the Newport Jazz Hall of Fame, alongside Ella Fitzgerald.

Submitted by all the volunteers at the Mount Forest Museum & Archives who mounted the exhibit “On Her Shoulders: Unique Women in the History of Mount Forest”