

The Fenians Have Landed!

by Charles Taws

With assistance from Helen Lewis Schmid

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In these articles we have talked about the War of 1812 and the Rebellion of 1837. The next threat to Canada came in the 1860's with the Fenian invasions.

In Bowmanville as you walk west along the north side of King Street and pass the Bank of Montreal you can see a mural by their parking lot that shows the old Bank of Montreal building and the old post office. It is one of many murals painted by local artist Todd Tremeer. The Bank of Montreal building was originally the head office for the Ontario Bank. This influential financial institution had branches throughout the Province and, like all banks in the 1800's, issued its own paper money. The building was constructed between 1866 and 1868 and, despite it being worthy of its own story, its construction only has a small



This mural, one of several by artist Todd Tremeer that grace Bowmanville's downtown core, shows the Bank of Montreal (formerly Ontario Bank) building and the old Post Office which used to stand on the corner. This Post Office was replaced by the current building on Temperance Street in May of 1957 and was for many years the home of the Public Library. The old Post Office was torn down in 1966 and the Bank of Montreal was demolished in 1971.

link to this tale.

The 1860's was a time of high tension in Canada. There was still great distrust between the Canadian Government and the American Republic to the south. It was known that groups of Irish

Americans were organizing and training for a proposed invasion of Canada and American authorities were doing nothing about it. The Fenians did not keep their intentions secret so the Canadian Government was aware of their movements and was able to prepare by beefing up the local militias in many communities. Bowmanville, Orono and Newcastle boasted their own infantry companies. The Bowmanville Company, 40 men under Lt. Col. Cubitt, were eventually sent to Thorold during this crisis.

From 1866 to 1871 there were six Fenian raids into Canada: four raids in 1866 and another two in 1870 and 1871. The earliest ones took place in the Niagara and Lake Erie area and were the ones closest to our community. The excitement of military manoeuvres and the threat of invasion played on the people's minds and patience. Settlers along the Lake Ontario shore were agitated and kept watch for strange vessels on the water. "[It was] feared even the very next breeze from the south might

bring in a shipload of Fenians from the United States to occupy this part of Ontario".

Our story takes place in the summer of 1866. We're not sure of the exact date, probably after the Fenian raids in Niagara/Lake Erie region in June. One evening Robert Fielding came riding into Bowmanville on a white horse shouting at the top of his lungs, "The Fenians have landed at Hall's Marsh!" Up the Scugog Road he swiftly went. On to Hampton shouting his terrible news and it didn't take long for the word to spread to Orono and Newtonville. Hall's Marsh is a swampy area just west of Port Darlington. On hearing Fielding's frightful cry the men dropped their work and went home to grab a weapon. They came to the centre of town with their guns and rifles. If they had no firearms they carried pitchforks, scythes and even shillelughs- anything that would serve as a weapon. It was thought the Fenians would invade the town



Theron Dickey

He was born in Acworth, New Hampshire, but was an early influential settler in the Newtonville area. Besides establishing the first saw and grist mills in Kendal, he was a Clarke Township councilor and a director of the Port Granby Wharf Company. He died in 1875, but his saw mill, under different owners, operated until 1937.

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through the Flats in the valley (about where the Rotary Park staircase leads to today). The men strategically positioned themselves and waited.

In Orono shouts and ringing bells aroused all the people at an early hour. About 200 gathered on Main Street and local miller J.L. Tucker took charge. William Armstrong Jr., 15 at the time, remembered his father, William Armstrong Sr., being awakened by merchant G.M. Long. Mr. Armstrong went and woke his hired hand, Joe Marti-

nell, "They're here at last Joe", he said, "but we are ready for them." He had a double barrelled gun on his shoulder and a good supply of powder and shot in his pocket. It is interesting to note that William Armstrong Sr. was a saddler by trade. He died a year later (1867) and his son took over the business. William Jr's brother, Charles G. Armstrong, began a grocery store on Orono's main street in 1884. In fact, if you have a sharp eye you can still spy a faded painted sign for "C.G. Armstrong" on the side of his former store location on the main street. His descendents continue to run

Orono Foodland to this day.

In Orono, as in Bowmanville, most of the men had firearms, but some carried pitchforks and crow bars. As the news spread across the countryside one farmer panicked and buried his pork, money and other valuables in the woods. By the time the news had reached far out Kendal it was supposed that Bowmanville had already fallen and the other communities were next in line. William Stark remembered a group of farmers doing statute labour on the roads and were anxiously awaiting the arrival of Theron Dickey from Newtonville with news. He was late this morning and the men had feared the worst. Theron Dickey travelled daily between

his home in Newtonville and his extensive milling operations in Kendal. At last, Mr Dickey's familiar horse and rig were seen ambling up the road. The farmers surrounded him inquiring about the situation. Mr. Dickey informed them that Newtonville had not yet fallen to the Fenian menace and that the countryside, at least as far west as Newcastle, was still in friendly hands. But, he warned that the country was full of Fenian spies and every stranger should be regarded with suspicion. "As he bade us good-bye and about to resume his journey someone in the crowd ventured to ask what he as going to do with the shot gun he had with him in the buggy, to which he re-

plied in a manner peculiarly his own and which those who knew him well will be able to appreciate, 'Good Heaven on earth, I am going to shoot every man I meet that I don't know.'

As time went by and the men waited, nothing happened. Soon it became apparent that the situation may not be what all thought it was. Investigations along the lake shore revealed that the Fenians had not landed after all. A schooner carrying stone for the Ontario Bank building had gotten lost in the fog and sent some sailors ashore in a lifeboat to find out where they were. In Orono, as it must have been in the other communities, it is recorded the men stopped at a nearby hotel for refreshments and then home to catch an hour or two of sleep before the sun came up.

Although the Fenian threat never amounted to much it was still a real force to those who lived through it and it had implications to our communities. The local militias were expanded and re-organized. Most communities built drill sheds for on-going military exercises. These large wooden barn-like structures were also ideal for any large community gathering or event. In Bowmanville the drill shed stood about where Carlisle Avenue is today. It was built in 1867 and a year later housed the

first Bowmanville fall fair. The fair was held here until 1908 (larger fair grounds were established on King Street East, east of St. George Street. The last fair was held in 1929). On March 6th 1912 the old drill shed burned and the property was deeded to the Goodyear Rubber Company. They built houses for their employees on the property. The Orono drill shed burned in 1924. In 1927, the agricultural building and skating arena were built on the site. The current Orono Arena and Grandstand on the fair property occupy the space today. The Orono Drill Shed had been superseded by the Armoury on Park Street in 1913. The Newcastle drill shed stood very near to where the new library now stands. It was in poor shape by 1899 and is believed to have been taken down around 1921. The drill shed in Kendal was just north of the United Church near Concession 7. Information is difficult to find but it is believed that it was built between 1869 and 1873. It too became neglected and eventually blew down in a storm, but the date of its demise is not known.

If you found this article interesting and want to see more check my blog on the Clarington Museums and Archives' web-site. Just go to www.claringtonmuseums.com and click on the blog icon.



The Armstrong Store in Orono c. 1921. William Armstrong Sr. was a saddler by trade and he established his business in Orono in 1857. The Armstrongs eventually went into the grocery business and they are still here today running the Orono Foodland. If you look in the top right hand corner you can see part of the painted "C.G. Armstrong" sign which is still visible to this day. Photo courtesy of Helen Lewis Schmid.



The faded C.G. Armstrong sign, painted on the brick side of the building in is still visible today on the main street in Orono.

Joseph Atkinson



by Myno Van Dyke

NEWCASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

“Joseph E. Atkinson stands as one of the most influential unelected Canadians of the 20th Century in creating a just and more equitable Canada. In almost every aspect of his life, Atkinson challenged Canadians to create a fair, safe and healthy society for every citizen, no matter what their circumstances. Whether the focus was on neighbourhoods, towns, cities, a prov-



Atkinson's childhood home still stands today in downtown Newcastle at 44 King Street East.

ince or an entire nation, Atkinson believed the truest measure of progress is how communities support and provide opportunities to disadvantaged citizens.” (from the book “Big Ideas” by Michael W. Pieri)

Joseph E. Atkinson was born in 1865, in a rented house owned by Dr. Chandler, just east of the Village of Newcastle on the east side of Golf Course Road where the Newcastle Golf Course is today. In 1866, after his father John was killed by a train in Newcastle, Joe's mother Hannah moved her family of eight children into a little house at 44 King Street East, Newcastle. Here she ran a boarding house where she took in men who worked at the Newcastle Woollen Mill and the Massey Foundry. Just before Joe's 14th birthday his mother died and Joe had to leave school to get a job at the Woollen Mill. His older sister Hannah ran the boarding house. After the Woollen Mill burned down he worked at the Post Office as a clerk. Apparently, he was quite short and had to stand on a box to speak to the customers. While at the Post Office he noticed an advertisement for a job as a clerk

at the Port Hope Times. He got the job, moved to Port Hope and this began a spectacular career in the newspaper business.

According to documentation filed when the Atkinson plaque was originally placed at the north-west corner of King and Mill Streets, (August, 1973) Joseph Atkinson remained a strong supporter of the Village. When the Community Hall was built in 1923, he donated a large flag pole and had it erected there. This wooden flag pole was originally the mast for a sailing ship and Atkinson had it delivered by boat to Bond Head. During the Depression he sent money to buy Christmas gifts for children of the unemployed, matching any funds that were raised in the village. He also paid for the iron fence on the south side of the cemetery in Bond Head (his family is buried there). At Christmas, he sent money to buy tea, cream, coal and roast beef for seniors who could not afford it. He had family living in the village and visited them often. Just prior to his death in 1948, he corresponded with Mr. Irwin

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Joseph Atkinson

Joseph Atkinson

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regarding fund raising issues for the new arena in Newcastle. And, most important of all, this man is a nationally known Canadian who not only founded the Toronto Star but did many great things to help the disadvantaged through the various charities he started and ended

with the Atkinson Foundation.

There is no question that Mr. Atkinson's zealousness for social and economic justice was founded here in the village that he grew up in. Michael Pieri, Executive Producer of "**Fighting Words, The Social Crusades of Joseph E. Atkinson**", said, "He walked tall in the storied history of Canada -- and I personally

think that his hometown, and its people there, helped in no small degree to shape the man who later became one of the great crusaders for social justice".

As an adult, Mr. Atkinson often told a story of when he was a boy, sitting beside a Newcastle pond watching the other children skating. A woman watching him asked why he wasn't skating with the others and he answered that his family could not afford the skates. The woman took him to a nearby store and bought him a pair of skates. He never saw her again or found out who she was.

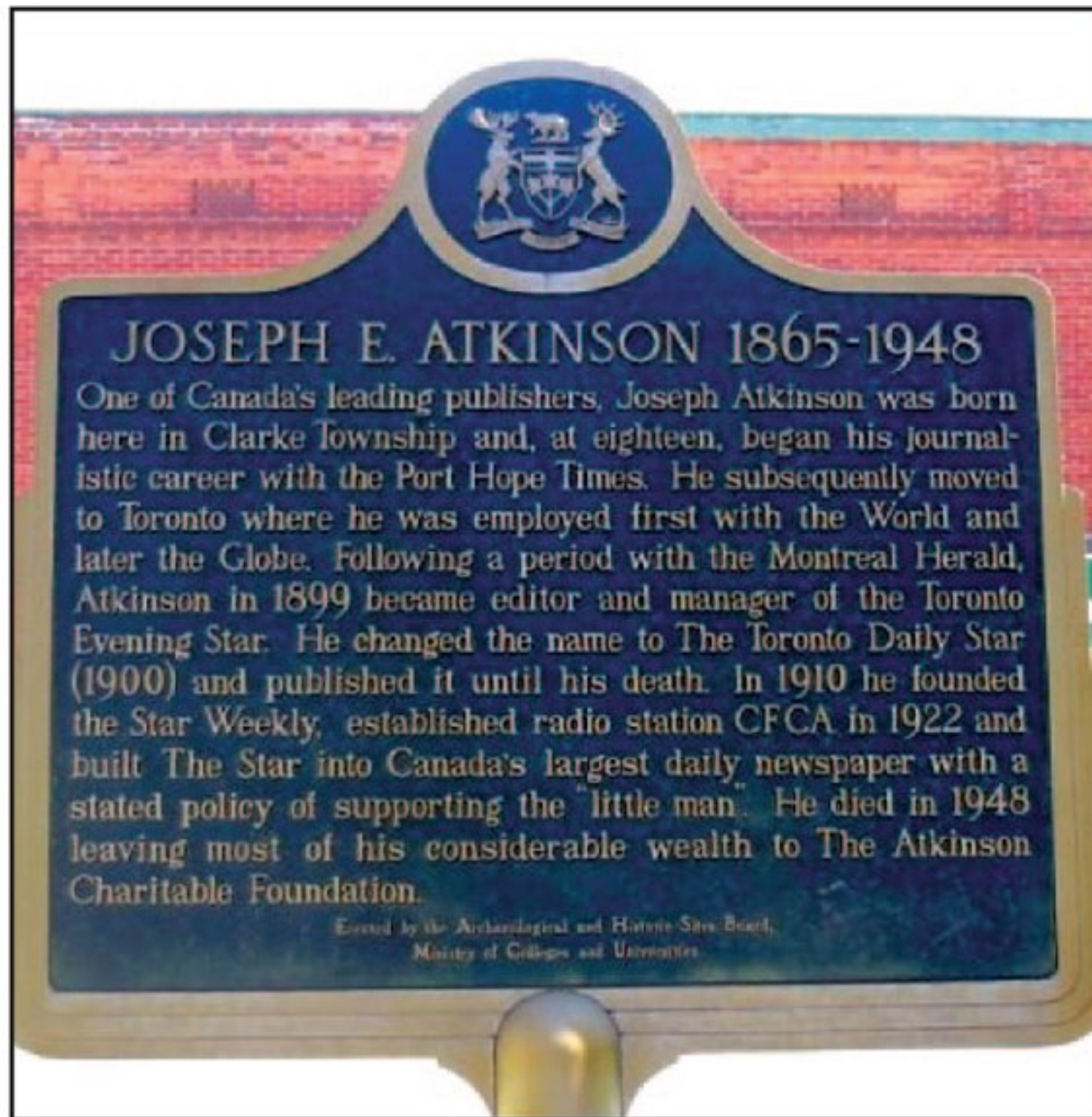
Over the past few years, attempts were made to have a street named after Mr. Atkinson in Clarington. However, this was turned down as there is a similar name in Ajax. Then, several attempts were made to name a park in his honour. This came to a successful conclusion after a suggestion by Clarington Library Chair Gail Rickard that the existing Memorial Park surrounding the library be split into smaller parks. This idea was supported by the Bowmanville Branch of the Canadian Legion, Municipality of Clarington, Newcastle Village & District Historical Society and the Clarington Library Board. Once this location was confirmed, the Newcastle

Hall Board agreed to have the Historical Plaque honouring Atkinson moved to the new "Joseph Atkinson Parkette" on the west side of the library. So, as you can see, many organizations worked hard to see this project become a reality.

Joseph Atkinson was a fierce proponent of literacy. Fuelled by his own experiences here in Newcastle, he saw education as a way for the poor to better themselves. He promoted reading and offered readers free books through a Toronto Star library service. There are some other interesting library connections. When the plaque was originally placed in Newcastle in 1973, it was primarily through the wonderful efforts of Cecil Carveth. At the time, Carveth was the Chair of the Library Board. The next Chair of the Library Board was Pauline Storks, who spoke at the ceremony in 1973.

On Saturday, September 8th, 2012, at 2pm, a Dedication Ceremony will take place on the grounds of the new "Joseph Atkinson Parkette" at 150 King Ave. East in Newcastle. As well as local dignitaries, Atkinson family members will be present to participate in the ceremony.

Please come. And bring your lawn chair..



Historical Atkinson Plaque will be relocated to the new "Joseph Atkinson Parkette" in Newcastle this September.

Lots Happening This Fall



by **Jim Abernethy**, Editor

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The Orono Agricultural Society celebrates 160 years of Rural Traditions when the Orono Fair gets underway this weekend. Be sure to pull-out centre-fold section of this edition and take it to the Orono Fair..... it contains the complete schedule of events for the entire weekend starting Thursday Sept 6th.

Clarington Farmers can count their blessings this year and are thankful for the timely summer rains that we received

during an unusually hot summer. The rains were enough to make the difference between harvesting fair/good crops this season as compared to the low yields that are anticipated by farmers in much of Ontario and the disastrous situation in some parts of the Canadian & US Mid-West.



Newcastle Lions Club Dog Walk

Please join the Newcastle Lions on our Walk For Dog Guides. The Newcastle Lions are hosting their 18th Annual Walk For Dog Guides on Saturday October 6st. 100% of the funds raised will be sent to the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guide Programs. Call Jean Graham 905-978-5239 for more information on the Walk and www.dogguides.com for information on the Dog Guide Program.

My hat goes off to local apple farmer **Kirk Kemp** for having the foresight to make a capital investment this past April into small windmills and helicopters well before Ontario fruit farmers experienced those severe frosts following the unusually early arrival of Spring 2012.

As a result, most Ontario fruit farmers will not have much a crop this Fall, however you wouldn't know it driving by the many Algoma Orchards in Clarington. Well done Kirk!

After 50 years of service in the same Historical Downtown Bowmanville location, it comes as no surprise that Sully the Barber has made it official..... yes, Sully is retiring!

Saturday September 8th will be the last official day that Sully will offer his services.

His wife Emily has arranged a "Come & Go" Retirement Party to take place the following day. Celebrations take place at the Memorial Park Clubhouse on Sunday September 9th between 11 AM - 3 PM..... address is 120 Liberty Street South in Bowmanville.

So, consider this editorial your invitation to drop by to say hello and acknowledge Sully's 50 years of service..... good wishes only and all are welcome!

If you missed receiving your copy of the last edition of ClaringtonPromoter.ca then you missed out on the Clarington Older Adult Association - 2012 Fall Program Information Insert - 8 pages of various activities and social programs that are available to all seniors residing in Clarington.

Do not fret..... you can read it online, simply go online to claringtonpromoter.ca then click on "Past Editions" and link into our August edition.

Sally Barrie, Administrator of the Clarington Home Support Division of Community Care Durham is looking for Volunteers to assist with caring for some of our more senior people living in our community.

If you have been looking for a way to give back to your community, then here is your chance!

Community Care Durham Clarington is appealing to the entire Clarington community including Bowmanville, Courtice, Wilmot Creek, Newcastle and Orono to help beef up their transportation Volunteer base.

This local organization delivers more than 55 meals on a daily basis across Clarington, and each month make another 500 trips driving clients to medical appointments.

Transportation Volunteers are provided with a set fee for fuel and vehicle expenses. The Meals on Wheels Program could use the



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benefit of some additional transportation Volunteers to help out for a couple of hours once a week.

This year, as Community Care celebrates 35 years of service, they also celebrate the Volunteers who provide the necessary services to help our seniors maintain independence and quality of life in their home.

So here is your chance to make a difference by enriching both your community and your life in your community. Join a very special team of Volunteers and make a positive and immediate contribution to residents in Clarington at Community Care Durham.

For more information, please contact the local office at 905-623-2261 or send an email to sbarrie@communitycaredurham.on.ca. Visit the website at www.communitycaredurham.on.ca

Leadership



by Peter Hobb

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There are many qualities that characterize a good leader. There is no such thing as the perfect leader and each leader will have a different set of qualities.

In a business context leadership is about creating and communicating the vision of the business and motivating people to work towards it. When you lead you need to focus primarily on the people you are leading rather than the operational

details. Leadership is more than having great systems and procedures for your team. The objective is to get people aligned and moving in one direction – the direction that will allow your business to be truly great!

To motivate people you must dwell on the positive. You must create an environment that will encourage your employees to use their initiative and take creative risks. This will increase their enjoyment in their job making them more productive. This is easier said than done. Sometimes we tend to deal with employee problems or errors negatively and aggressively. If you react with anger you are likely creating fear and negative emotions in the workplace. If employees fear you they still may follow you, but they will be less motivated and less productive. This is not good leadership. A negative workplace will contribute to higher turnover rates, poor quality work, an in-

creasing number of errors, conflict between team members and more customer complaints about service. The days of imposing strict discipline are gone. Leaders now focus on trying to “catch somebody doing something right” so they can reward the employee and reinforce a particular kind of behavior.

There is a gap between what employees’ value and what their employers’ believe employees value. For employees, doing interesting work, followed by appreciation and recognition, and feeling “in on things” are the top three motivators (From: Niebrugge, Vicki, Declining Employee Moral: Defining the Causes and Finding the Cure, NOVA Group). Employers believe the top three motivators for employees are good wages, job security, and promotion /growth with good wages being number 1. According to a study by Niebrugge, employees rank wages in fifth

place in terms of importance.

A good leader has a great sense of vision. They can visualize where a company needs to go and how to get there. Also, they are able to articulate this vision so people will not only buy into it but they will direct their efforts, skills and creativity to make the vision a reality. A good leader understands the distinctive qualities of the business, what makes it unique in the market place, and has an idea what the business will look like in the future. A united vision of where the company is going will inspire confidence and enthusiasm.

Another key quality of a business leader is being a good mentor. Mentoring means you work with your team, encouraging them to take responsibility for improving their own performance and giving them guidance on how to achieve this. You need to spend time with your team to provide positive feed-

back and training. You want to understand their goals and help them grow both professionally and personally at their own pace. As they grow and develop you also want to reward them frequently so they will be encouraged to continue developing. Remember, employees want to feel appreciated and be recognized. You also want to pass on your leadership skills. The more people in your company that are willing to take on leadership roles, the more productive they will be and the stronger your company will be.

Everyone has the ability to take on a leadership role. In fact, employees should feel empowered to do so. For example, how many times, when you have an issue with a company, have you had difficulty finding someone willing to help you deal with that issue? How often have you tried to contact customer service and been directed to someone

else or had your call dropped? Hopefully this isn’t happening in your business. Putting yourself in your customer’s shoes, if the person you first speak to about a customer service issue promptly takes responsibility for handling your issue, your opinion of the company will likely improve and you will probably be more than happy to do business with them again. When employees take responsibility for handling the problem and do not try to pass it on to someone else they are showing leadership.

There are many more attributes that a good leader displays. Reading books about famous leaders or observing people who show good leadership qualities are great ways to improve your own leadership skills. Like anything, to be a good leader you have to work at it. I am sure if you do work at it you will be rewarded and your business will flourish.