

John Spilleenaar

*A hero of the faith*

Do you know this hero?



Have you ever  
heard the last  
name  
“Spillenaar”?

. Sometimes the names of heroes are not recognized as easily as others. Are you familiar with the name “Spillenaar”? If you are, you may be aware of the lives that were touched in Canada through their commitment to reaching people in the North. If you’ve never heard their name before, take time to become familiar with whom John and Tyyne Spillenaar were/are. Since their years of missions work in the North, John has made the transition to his heavenly home. His wife, Tyyne, lives in Ontario and celebrated her 100th birthday this year!

## Where Did it All Begin?

John Spillenaar  
started his work in  
Kirkland Lake,  
Ontario in 1937,  
but he didn't stop  
there.



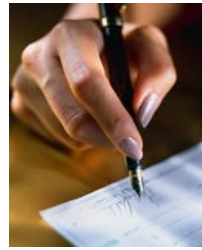
Rev. John Spillenaar first began his ministry work in Kirkland Lake in 1937 as an evangelist, then moved into pastoring in Timmins, South Porcupine, Kirkland Lake and Hearst, Ontario. In 1960, he sensed that God was calling him to take the message of the Good News of Jesus Christ to those in the North who have not yet heard it. It was then that he took on a position as the Director of Northland Mission.

DO YOU KEEP A JOURNAL?



or a DIARY with your deepest  
secrets?

# John Spillenaar kept a Journal



Here are a few excerpts from his journal so you (and the children you teach) can become a little more familiar with a Hero of the Faith

## *Dear Diary.....*

Ever since my trip to James Bay I have had a heart for those people.

God is calling me to take a six month course to learn to fly a plane so I can help these people.



*“Ever since my first trip to James Bay over 10 years ago, I have had a burden for those of our far North. We have prayed much about it, and now the Lord is opening the way for me to take a six month course in aviation, maintenance and repair as well as to fly at a cost of approximately \$1,000.00. I am leaving tomorrow for Chicago to begin this course, trusting that the Lord will supply the need. I realize that He who leads, will also provide. We request your earnest prayers that we shall be obedient unto our heavenly vision. Our aim is to take the gospel to the folk of our far North by plane.” (Feb. 15, 1950, John Spillenaar).*

## *Dear Diary....*

### Flying the plane



I have just gotten back the Canadian Arctic and Greenland. Many people came forward to accept Jesus

57 Inuit came forward in one service! God is blessing us!

*"I've just returned from the Canadian Arctic and Greenland. God blessed in the services – and many came forward to accept Jesus – 57 Inuit came forward in one service! We thank the Lord for the privilege of taking the Good News of the Gospel to the far North". (July 12, 1991, John Spillenaar)*

## Dear Diary....

### Greetings from the North

One morning we boarded a train to a place with six camps, each camp has an office, bunk houses, cookery, dining room and more

We gave out many copies of Christian magazines such as testimony



*“Greetings from the needy fields of Northern Ontario. I would like to give you an idea of a few days of our activities up here in this great northland around Hearst, Ontario (300 miles by rail north of Sault Ste. Marie):*

*Early one morning we boarded a train and headed into a country where there are no car roads. About 35 miles south of Hearst we left the train at the headquarters of a large pulp-wood company. The country around here is almost one large spruce swamp where very little grass grows, only moss from one to three feet deep. In this swamp of spruce trees, a road about 65 feet wide has been cut. Along this road are six camps, each camp consisting of an office, bunk houses, cookery, dining house, wash house, steam bath house, store house and a few other buildings. The only way of getting from camp to camp in the summer is to ride the steel rail track on which a truck equipped with special rail wheels travels. In the winter an ice road about 50 feet wide is made, over which the thousands of cords of pulpwood is taken by truck, sleigh and tractors. We visited three of the camps the first day, testifying to a large number of men and some women about the goodness of the Lord. We left many copies of Christian magazines: Gospel Gleaners, High School Christians, the PAOC’s Testimony magazine, Gospel Advocates and a Finnish magazine similar to our Testimony magazine, at each camp*

## *Dear Diary.....*

That night we held a service in one of the camps

We played guitars and sang songs

Some people wanted bibles so we got some that we had brought along to give them

## Inside the Camps



*That night we held a service in one of the camps and some men and women from the other camps came to attend the service. The majority present were Finnish men so we held a double service; my wife, who is Finnish, preached in the Finnish language, and I in English. We played our guitars and sang hymns in both languages. A few men after service wanted to buy Bibles in the Finnish language and we had some along to give to them.*

## Dear Diary...

That day we  
prepared to say  
Good-bye

When we were  
leaving the people  
asked us to come  
back because we  
were the only ones  
who preached in  
their language.

## Saying Good-bye



*The next morning as we were preparing to leave, the boss and others around asked us to please come back again, and 'when will you be able to come back?' because as they said, 'no one ever comes way in here, and especially to have a sermon and singing in the Finnish language'. It was the first service in Finnish ever held there.*

## God is my healer



Over the years I  
have suffered from  
heart attacks  
believed that God  
has always been  
my healer and  
could still be my  
healer then if he  
still needed me

*“Over the years I have suffered several heart attacks. After one of them I could only sleep in a sitting position, and had problems breathing. The heart specialist put me in the hospital and had me taking 11 pills daily. He told me I would have to take them for the rest of my life and I would never really get better.*

*For one month I took the medication, then one day in prayer, I said to my heavenly Father, “You have always been my Healer and you can heal me now if You still need me here. But I am also ready to go home.” I felt God’s healing touch then, and although I carried the pills with me for one whole year, I have never needed any of the medication during that time, and I feel perfectly well.”*

*My confidence in coming to God as my Healer results from the many times in my life when I had felt His healing touch, including the healing of an ear condition and also of gall stones. A verse that has been of great help to me is found in Proverbs 18:10, ‘The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous run into it, and they are safe.’ Satan tries to tell me that I am not righteous, but I have told him that ‘Jesus is!’ and that my confidence is in Him!” (May 1984, Tyyne Spillenaar)*

40 years.... WOW!

Rev. John Spillenaar resigned as the Director of the Northland Mission after ministering in Northern Ontario for 40 years.

## Heroes who changed Northern Canada

As Christians in Canada, we may never know the full impact that both Rev. John and Tyyne Spillenaar had in our nation as they shared the love of Jesus and the Word of God with the people who lived in northern communities, where often there were no churches.