

PLANTING A WISH & WATCHING IT GROW...

IN 2012, THE BACK FIELD WAS A WIDE OPEN AREA THAT HAD BEEN USED FOR MONO-CROP AGRICULTURE FOR DECADES. THE CHILDREN WANTED TO CREATE AN AREA WHERE THE DEER COULD HIDE FROM THE COYOTES, AND WHERE ANIMALS COULD FIND SHADE AND A NICE PLACE TO SLEEP. EMMI LOU EXPRESSED A WISH FOR A “RAINBOW FOREST.” SHE DREW A PICTURE OF THE FOREST THAT SHE WANTED TO CREATE AND SAID SHE WOULD LIKE TO SEE MANY TREES PLANTED FOR THE ANIMALS AND BIRDS. SHE ALSO THOUGHT IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO PUT BOWLS OF WATER AMONG THE TREES SO THAT WILDLIFE AND HONEY BEES COULD FIND PLACES TO DRINK IN THE FOREST. THE FOLLOWING YEAR, *THE GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY (GRCA)* LEARNED OF EMMI LOU’S WISH AND OFFERED TO SUPPORT HER VISION. *CHILDREN’S LANDS CANADA* PARTNERED WITH *GRCA* AND *TREES ONTARIO* TO BEGIN THE NEW FOREST. EMMI LOU AND HER FRIENDS CAME OUT TO HELP PLANT THE FIRST 6,500 TREES.



THE CHILDREN'S FOREST
IS NOW HOME TO THE
FOLLOWING NATIVE TREE
SPECIES:

- WHITE SPRUCE
 - BUR OAK
- BUTTERNUT HICKORY
 - WHITE CEDAR
 - WHITE PINE
 - SILVER MAPLE
- SHAGBARK HICKORY
 - SYCAMORE
 - TAMARACK
 - SUGAR MAPLE
 - BLACK WALNUT



EMMI LOU AND MANY OTHER CHILDREN RETURNED THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER TO HELP MULCH AND CARE FOR THE BABY FOREST. WHEN THE GRCA SITE MANAGER RETURNED IN THE FALL TO ASSESS THE TREES, SHE WAS THRILLED TO SEE HOW WELL THE CHILDREN HAD BEEN CARING FOR THEIR TREES. SHE COULDN'T BELIEVE HOW WELL THE BABY TREES HAD ADJUSTED TO THEIR NEW HOME. AS A RESULT, *GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY* AND *TREES ONTARIO* SPONSORED THE PLANTING OF ANOTHER 5,500 TREES THE FOLLOWING YEAR.

BECAUSE OF THE FOREST THAT THE CHILDREN CREATED,
PLANTING SEEDS OF HOPE RECEIVED THE
“CAROLINIAN CANADA CONSERVATION AWARD”
IN MAY OF 2015

EMMI LOU CONTINUES TO TRAVEL FROM TORONTO TO VISIT THE FOREST AND TO ENJOY THE TRANSFORMATION THAT IS HAPPENING ON CANADA'S FIRST CHILDREN'S LAND. THANK YOU, EMMI LOU, FOR THE VISION THAT YOU SHARED FOR OUR FIELD, AND FOR THE CHOICES THAT YOU MADE AS A YOUNG GIRL TO HELP IMPROVE THE EARTH. WE KNOW THAT THIS FOREST WILL CONTINUE TO INSPIRE OTHER CHILDREN AND WILL BRING MUCH NEEDED HEALING TO THE NATURAL WORLD.