

The



Journal

Volume 5, Number 3

September 1, 1990



LITERALLY IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL FOR OUR SEPTEMBER 20 MEETING

We've got the ideal speaker and the perfect setting for our September 20 meeting.

Marjorie Powys will speak on some of the important facts that shaped Ontario education, with emphasis on local schools.

The meeting is being held in Richmond School, which is now located on the grounds of the Ontario Agricultural Museum.

It formerly stood on Appleby Line, near the rear gate of Kelso Conservation area. Children trooped into the one-room school every year from 1886 until 1865; an earlier school was built on the site some time between 1864 and 1872. Richmond School became an operating part of the Agricultural Museum in 1988.

If you know any former students or teachers, please ask them to come along. We'll meet at Hugh Foster Hall at 7.45 as usual and form car pools for the trip to Richmond School.

For her talk Marjorie will draw on her exceptional career as a High School teacher as well as her university thesis on teacher education. Marjorie will help create the proper historical atmosphere with her collection of inkwells, pens and other classroom memorabilia.

BE A BOOK REVIEWER AND A VIDEO CRITIC AT OCTOBER MEETING

It's show time and participation night at our October 18 meeting in Hugh Foster Hall.

Jack Charlton and fellow researchers Jim Dills and Alex Cooke are in the final stages of preparing a book detailing the history and people of some of the historic Milton homes. A photo is part of each building description.

You'll have an opportunity read up on any of the buildings you've wondered about. Also a chance to offer the names of any other homeowners who might be interested in the Society's plaquing program.

Another project to be unveiled October 18 is a slide presentation about Milton's history. It's designed to show some of the main influences on Milton's growth since the early 1800s. We hope you will give us the benefit of your advice since changes can be made before the show is in final form. We plan to make it available to schools and other groups; it should be especially interesting to newcomers to Milton.

We look forward to hearing your opinions on these projects and on other Society plans.



SPECIALIST IN ONTARIO HISTORY IS OUR NOVEMBER 15 SPEAKER

A widely-known specialist in Ontario history - Alan Skeoch - will speak to us November 15 in Hugh Foster Hall.

Alan is a high school history teacher and a broadcaster. His features on Ontario history are broadcast each week on the CBC noon hour radio show. One of the subjects he has researched extensively is the "Bernardi Story" - the experience of hundreds of destitute British children sent to this country in the early 1900s.

Alan is a director of the Ontario Agricultural Museum. His talk will concentrate on events of importance to this region.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING FOR BILL AND CAROL GREGG

Bill Gregg, a delegate, and Carol, an observer, had a new political experience in June when they attended the Liberal Party leadership convention in Calgary.

Bill strongly supported two changes in party policy made by delegates. One established an Aboriginal People's Commission within the party. The immediate effect was to grant delegate status to 150 aboriginals. A second change established a task force to develop procedures for future leadership elections. The basic change here is that in future all members of the Liberal Party of Canada - not just those attending the conference - are to vote in leadership contests. At Calgary 4700 delegates made the decision.

Bill says the five-candidate leadership race at Calgary essentially came down to one issue - is Canada better served by the passage or rejection of the Meech Lake Accord?

"It can fairly be said that those who believed that the Accord would create more problems than it would solve won the day with over 50% of the vote", Bill says.

(Bill shook hands with Newfoundland Premier Clyde Wells while both stood in line to vote.)

In Bill's opinion - an opinion shared with many delegates he spoke with - the election of Jean Chretien as Liberal leader represents a philosophical approach with these elements:

"The death of the Meech Lake Accord represents an end to constitutional patchwork in Canada," Bill says. "We must finally face and resolve a cultural problem that has been ignored or avoided for far too long.

"An incredulous population outside Quebec is asking: 'What does Quebec want? Why does Quebec find the rest of us so intolerable? Why is Quebec acting like a teenage child, threatening to leave home but demanding the family car to accomplish the objective?'

"The delegates believe it is time for tough love," Bill says. "It is time to get past politics to the people of Quebec and the those dissidents in the rest of Canada expressing animosity towards Quebec so that we may join in an appreciation of our common benefits and blessings within Canada.

"Quebec must decide to overcome its perception of being a conquered people. The rest of us must express our respect for Quebec's enviable culture, flair and language.

"It is because of the perception that Canada will need a humane approach to the problems we face rather than manipulation and expedient action that Jean Chretien received such decisive support in Calgary," Bill says.

Bill is optimistic that by the year 2000 Canada will be a better country than ever before.

HISTORY COMES ALIVE FOR STUDENTS ON WALK

Students from Holy Rosary School enjoyed a surprise "extra" during a history walk last June with Tod Laing and Ken Lamb.

The group was in Centennial Park talking about the important role Jasper Martin's mill had played in putting Milton where it is today. Four women nearby showed unusual interest in the goings-on.

They turned out to be four sisters, great, great granddaughters of Jasper Martin. They traced their family back to Jasper's third son, Edward, who emigrated to Yale Michigan, near Sarnia. The sisters were in Milton for a Martin family reunion.

About 30 grade five and six students took part in the walk accompanied by teachers Carmelle Lambert and Carol Cowan.



Milton Historical Society

P.O. Box 85
Milton, Ont., L9T 2Y3

President - Ken Lamb

Past President - Len McNeil

Treasurer - Jessie Hamilton

Secretary - Marie Sutcliffe

Publications - Marion Detlor

Programs - Bill Gregg

Publicity and Promotion - Tod Laing

Membership - Marjorie Powys

Municipal Liaison - Audrea Lear-Costigan

Special Events - Ad Woodley

Librarian/Archivist - Brenda Whitlock

Research - Jack Charlton, Jim Dills

Genealogy - Alex Cooke

Annual Memberships

Single \$7. Family \$10

Students \$5

BRICKS FROM MILTON YARDS HELPED BUILD THE COUNTRY

When the question period lasts as long as the presentation you know you have sparked a lot of interest.

That's what happened at our March meeting when Jack Charlton spoke about brick-making. He described the plants that operated locally over a span of more than a century - some for a few years, others for decades. The arrival of the Credit Valley Railway in this area in 1879 gave an important boost to the industry.

Brick-making employed hundreds of people in the early 1900s - the funeral in 1912 of Dr. David Robertson, a Milton entrepreneur, was attended by 160 employees of his Milton Pressed Brick Company. At the time the firm's local plant was described as the largest and most modern brick plant in North America.

Milton bricks helped build homes and plants in many parts of Ontario and elsewhere. The town boasts many fine examples of the local brick.

Important facts in the decline of the industry were the slump in construction during World War I and the depression of the 1930s.

Although local brick production ended more than 15 years ago, the legacy of the industry is very much with us. It includes some unsightly gouges on the edge of the escarpment, which is still being mined, as well as many attractive buildings such as Knox Presbyterian Church, St. Paul's United, and McKersie's Funeral Home. In addition, Jack says, large trucks every day carry more Milton clay to brick plants elsewhere.

About 40 members and friends enjoyed the evening often adding their own stories to the events recalled.



BRING AND SHOW

Perhaps you have an item or a photograph from the past. Why not bring it to the meeting so others may see it. Historic pictures of Milton are always of particular interest.

OUR JOHN McDONALD SETS GEORGETOWN SCHOOL ROOM BUZZING

When John McDonald showed his Georgetown slides to students at Sacre Coeur School in April the room buzzed with excitement.

The 60 children (grades 2 to 7) were thrilled to recognize many of the buildings they saw on their way to school each day. They obviously enjoyed John's "then and now" technique - two or three slides showing the same location at different periods.

The youngsters benefited from John's broad knowledge of the area. Before he returned to his native Milton a couple of years ago, he had lived in Georgetown for many years: he served on the council there and wrote a book about the area.

Alex Cooke and Ken Lamb set the stage for John's remarks. Alex described how pioneers had obtained their land, quoting from some of the original applications. Ken explained that the great majority of people in the early 1800s worked as farmers and that the increasing population required new lands to be opened up.

Sacre Coeur, a French-language school, is located near the intersection of Highway 7 and Maple Avenue in what used to be the Wigglesworth School.



PIGEONS MAKE TALK FLY FOR ST. PETER'S STUDENTS

A Hallowe'en caper several decades ago brought a delighted response during a spring talk to more than 70 students at St. Peter's School.

Alex Cooke told how he and other students at the Bruce St. School had left one of the school doors jammed open when classes ended. Later they "acquired" a few dozen pigeons, which they set free in the school.

The description of the mess faced by the beleaguered janitor next morning brought a big laugh.

Alex and Ken Lamb spoke to the students for about 40 minutes. Half the time was devoted to answering questions asked by the youngsters following an earlier historic tour of downtown Milton. The audience was made up of grades 6, 7 and 8 with teachers Nancy Henderson, Lou Masi and Ann Takacs.

The Society and the school hope to make the historic walks and talks a regular part of the school program.

"PRE-HISTORY" PIONEERS ARRIVED IN HALTON ABOUT 10,000 YEARS AGO

Anthropologist Peter Ramsden, our May speaker, gave us a new perspective on "pioneering" in this area. Peter is a professor at McMaster University.

Scientists recently had made some important discoveries in northwest Canada, Peter said. Bone tools discovered there were remarkably similar to those found in Siberia, Japan and other parts of Asia.

Steadily experts are putting together the story of the earliest people in the Americas. Some of the chapters as outlined by Peter:

- Bone tools indicate that people were living in northwest Canada/Alaska 40,000 years ago. This area, known as "Beringia", was not affected by ice sheets covering most of Canada.

- The melting ice sheets separated about 15,000 years ago, opening a land corridor east of the Rockies.

- The changing climate at the end of the ice age forced people in Asia to "adjust". This led to migration into "Beringia" and subsequently down the land corridor to the open land south of the glaciated areas. This was about 15,000 years ago.

- Over the following 500 years these people established themselves throughout North and South America.

- Climatic changes eventually replaced grasslands with forests in this area. People adapted and about 3000 years ago had established the way of life that the white man observed on his arrival.

Peter's talk had a personal connection for our program director Bill Gregg. The early people apparently had been on his farm about 1,000 years ago: he found a spear point made from quartzite. Scientists have traced the material to a deposit on Manitoulin Island that had been mined for thousands of years.

In his opening remarks Peter referred to the "bias" implicit in the "European heritage" version of North American history.

"It suggests 'Nothing of importance happened before we came'", he says. "But a lot happened before 1492".

He compared this approach to what the Saxons had done to minimize or erase evidence of people (Picts) who had occupied Britain before the Saxon conquest.

On the subject of Ontario heritage legislation, Peter said we would soon have a law on heritage policy that would give the crown much broader control of heritage objects.

JUST ABOUT EVERYONE KNOWS JASPER MARTIN, P.L. ROBERTSON AND MAYOR GORDON KRANTZ

Three Miltonians who enjoy almost universal recognition in this community are P.L. Robertson, Jasper Martin and Gordon Krantz. All registered well over 90% in our historical quiz carried out as part of our display at the Canada Day celebration in Rotary Park.

At the other end of the scale Milton's best-kept secret may be the official name of the park on the mill pond. It's Centennial Park, but not one of about 20 contestants could identify it. Only one person was able to identify George Brown as the first mayor; two were able to specify 1857 as the date the Town of Milton was incorporated.

Edna Ball earned the title of best historian with the top combined score on the Milton and Canadian tests.

Jim Dills' photo display of sports teams going back to the early 1900s and of scenes from the original July 1 celebration in 1867 proved popular. But the breeze was too brisk to allow us to mount the display on the table top, as we intended.

Brenda Whitlock, Marie Sutcliffe and Ken Lamb handled the booth.

STUDENTS AT HOLY ROSARY TAKE A HISTORIC STROLL

A downtown walk on a warm mid-May morning added variety to the local history program at Holy Rosary School.

Tod Laing and Ken Lamb led the two-hour sessions for the sixth graders. Highlights included a tour of John Martin House and visits to the Waldie Blacksmith Shop, and the old and new town halls. The youngsters were most enthusiastic about the former Main St. drinking fountain, now standing in front of Hugh Foster Hall. The event could have become a big splash without judicious teacher intervention.

A parent helper, Anne New, and teachers Jeannine Foley and Sheila Groves took an active part. Jeannine contributed a bit of personal history from 25 years ago. She was walking sedately along the street beside the old town jail. She had a hard time retaining her dignity, however, when an acquaintance, being held on a minor charge, kept shouting "Mrs. Foley, Mrs. Foley" from an upper jail window.

WE'LL BE ON DISPLAY IPT. 8 AT MILTON MALL

An open house at the Milton Mall Saturday September 8 opens the fall season for dozens of community organizations.

Our Society will have a local history display to generate interest in community heritage and recruit new members.

If you'd like to take a turn at our booth please call Ken Lamb at 878-6391.

PETER MCWILLIAMS PUTS YEARS OF LAW INTO 314 PAGE BOOK

Just as he promised when he spoke at our February meeting, lawyer Peter McWilliams has published another book.

He writes about an amusing, and amazing, cast of character he has met since he began his law career in Milton in 1953. You'll know many of them.

Peter has had many good days in court both as a defense lawyer and for 10 years as Halton's Crown Attorney. He tells about them. He also tells about some of the cases when, legally speaking, he zigged when he should have zagged.

Photos include many of Halton's legal greats as well as a good selection of historic buildings.

Peter is making the book available to members of our Society at a special price of \$25. Please call 878-6391 for further details.

A GOLDEN PARTY FOR RETA AND AD WOODLEY

More than 200 friends and relatives crowded into Hugh Foster Hall May 19 to help Reta and Ad Woodley celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

MPP Walt Elliot, a member of our Society, and Mayor Gordon Krantz were among the celebrities who dropped by: Premier Peterson and Prime Minister Mulroney mailed their greetings.

Reta's wedding dress was on display - she could have slipped into it again without popping a seam.

Reta, who grew up in Hornby, is a descendant of Henry Huffman, one of Milton's early land developers. Ad came to Milton from Cambridge as a boy.

WAR OF 1812 MADE MAP WHAT IT IS

The War of 1812 was a key event in Canadian history because it firmly established our border with the United States.

That was just one of the interesting perspectives given at our April meeting by William T. (Bill) McBride, historian and museum curator.

In the early 1800s, he said, about 60 per cent of the Niagara area people were former residents of the United States. It was not surprising that during the early months of the war there was little hostility between the opposing forces. It was the time of "the gentlemen's war".

But this changed as the war progressed: Canada was invaded five times with heavy loss of life and destruction of property.

In the latter half of the program, Bill concentrated on the "Hamilton" and "Scourge", two American war vessels sunk by a storm in August 1813. Fifty-three lives were lost, the largest naval loss in the war.

A book written by Ned Myers, one of the few survivors of the sinkings, helped greatly in our understanding of the event.

More recently excellent slides, taken by remote camera, revealed many details of the vessels - even paint surfaces seemed to be little damaged by almost 180 years underwater.

The vessels are now protected by a radar warning system. Scientists who were preparing a television program for students last spring wanted to bring up a few artifacts. But the province turned down the request.

Our speaker gave no indication when the vessels might be raised for displaying in a Hamilton park. He seemed more concerned about the recent arrival of zebra mussels in Lake Ontario. Bill hoped the mussels would not be able to reach the vessels sitting at a depth of 300 feet near the mouth of the Niagara River. At lesser depths, he said, sunken objects had become so encrusted that they were no longer recognizable.



YOU CAN JOIN Milton Historical Society at any meeting or mail in your membership. Now is the time to join for 1990 and a whole new year.

SOCIETY'S PLAQUING PROGRAM WILL HELP FUTURE HISTORIANS

There's more than meets the eye in our historic-building plaquing program.

Jack Charlton, who's in charge of the effort, says the research information will be a gold mine for future historians.

"Our plaques appear on about 50 buildings," Jack says. "But the facts printed on any one of them are a small part of the information we have compiled. Each building is the subject of many hours of research by Alex Cooke, Jim Dills and me.

"We are putting together a book that will include all our research as well as a photo of each building.

"When we have the book ready we'll make sure future historians have ready access to it. We'll insert a new page with every new plaque."

Jack says there is no single source for the history of a building. The Registry Office records deal with land transactions, not houses.

"Often we have to arrive at a construction date by noting a sharp increase in purchase price of the property. Sometimes we can get valuable information from files of The Canadian Champion: the newspaper would often refer to the construction of a particular home.

"Despite our best efforts, however, we sometimes have to resort to 'an educated guess'.

"Guesswork won't be needed as often in future thanks to the 1858 map of Milton recently located by Alex Cooke. It identifies many of the homeowners at the beginning of Milton's life as a town. (Incorporation was in 1857).

"Alex's genealogical work is also a big help. Since families of eight or more children were common in the 1800s Alex is not likely to run out of family trees for quite a while".

Over the years, Jack says, the Society has developed a process for plaquing buildings. The program was started by former President Val Grimshaw. Owners are asked to sign a form to get the search underway. Sometimes the owner has some information but invariably a lot of digging is required. Then it's a matter of selecting the wording for the plaque - this includes the date of construction and a reference to a "historic" owner.

Printing of the plastic plaques is done by Tonner Signs. Owners pay \$75 which covers out-of-pocket expenses of the Society.

GO AHEAD
MAKE HISTORY

JOIN
MILTON
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
NOW

Membership
Application

Name _____

Address _____

Post. Code _____

Telephone _____

Family \$10 Single \$7
Student \$5

Please make cheques payable to
Milton Historical Society and
mail to :

Milton Historical Society

P.O. Box 85
Milton, Ont. L9T 2Y3

The



Journal

Volume 5, Number 2

April 1, 1990



Make A Bow

Members of our Society and other Halton heritage organizations were recognized Feb. 21 at a reception in the Region Museum.

The Museum certificate recognizes us for "thirteen years of service in the conservation and promotion of heritage". Signed by Regional Chairman Peter Pomeroy, the certificate was presented to president Ken Lamb by Mayor Gordon Krantz.

More than a dozen members attended the Heritage Week event, which also opened a new display at the Museum.

THREE NEW MEMBERS JOIN SOCIETY'S EXECUTIVE

Three members have joined the Society's executive and two others have taken new positions.

At the annual meeting Jan. 18 Marion Detlor was elected to the new position of publications director. This involves distribution of the walking tour booklet and others to come and advising on the type of new publications we should produce.

Bill Gregg was elected program director; Marie Sutcliffe is our new secretary.

Marjorie Powys, formerly secretary, is now membership director and Tod Laing, who was in charge of programs, is now publicity and promotion director.

Audrea Lear-Costigan has taken on the new job of ensuring proper liaison with the Town Council.

As announced in the January issue, Jean Butts, secretary, and Dorothy Gould, membership, retired because of other responsibilities.

MALL VISITORS INTRIGUED BY FORMER MAYORS, BUILDINGS DISPLAYED

The Open House at Milton Mall Feb. 24 got off to a stormy start but the snow let up by noon and the normal Saturday crowd appeared.

Scores of shoppers stopped to try to identify photos of nine former mayors. And to try to place the half dozen buildings that have disappeared during the past few decades.

Our second display - a reproduction of the earliest edition of The Canadian Champion known to exist - was also popular. Visitors included Audrey and Ken Newell, who rejoined the Society after a few years' absence.

The display was put together by Jim Dills. Those who greeted visitors, distributed heritage information and sold walking tour booklets were Ad Woodley, Jessie Hamilton, Marjorie Powys, Alex Cooke, Ken Hassard and Ken Lamb.

At the Nasagieweya Historical Society booth Joe Henderson coaxed music out of his 80 year old phonograph with the wonderful "horn".

MANY MEMBERS TAKE PART IN NEW YEAR'S LEVEE

Many members again took part in the New Year's Day levee at the Town Hall.

At our suggestion, Councillors replaced Society members as tour guides. And they seemed to enjoy the experience.

We provided and served refreshments and mounted a large historical exhibit in Hugh Foster Hall. We also helped welcome visitors in both buildings. Members taking part were Tod Laing, Brenda Whitlock, Jessie Hamilton, Treasa Lamb, Alex Cooke, Jack Charlton, Jim Dills, Marjorie Powys and Don Hayward.

After the event we suggested to the Town that for next year's celebration special invitations should be sent to community newcomers. We believe it is an ideal way to learn about the Town and meet those who make decisions about Milton's future.

TWO SPECIAL DAYS ADDED BY AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM

Two special events will add spice to the summer program at the Agricultural Museum.

One is "Meet the Artist Day" - Sunday June 17. Well-known Mennonite artist Peter Etril Snyder will display and sell prints and other examples of his art. All dads will receive free posters to mark Fathers' Day.

On July 21 the Museum is staging the re-opening of the steam power display, which has been closed for several years. The re-opening coincides with the annual Great Canadian Antique Tractor Field Day at the Museum.

NEW SCULPTURE RECALLS VISIT TO ROCKWOOD ACADEMY

A sculpture to be unveiled Apr. 28 at Guelph University brings back memories for many members.

In the early 1980s we took a bus trip to view Bill Gregg's military vehicles and the historic Rockwood Academy. At the Academy we met sculptor Josef Drenters who was in charge of the restoration, and whose sculpture "Pioneer Family" was displayed at Expo '67. Josef died in 1983.

In his memory Andreas, Josef's brother, has created a second "Pioneer Family". A steel and copper work showing four figures on a horse, it is the ninth piece to be installed at the Donald Forster Sculpture Park, Macdonald-Stewart Art Centre.

MICHAEL WILSON IS A MEANIE

Garth Turner doesn't save all his best sallies for the House of Commons.

At the Heritage Celebration in February the MP watched as Mayor Gordon Krantz and MPP Walt Elliot presented plaques on behalf of the Town and the Ontario Government.

When he got his chance at the microphone Garth quipped: "I wanted to bring plaques from Ottawa but Michael Wilson wouldn't let me."

AD WOODLEY SHINES AT THE LUNCH BUNCH

When Ad Woodley spoke to the Lunch Bunch at Caledonia United Church in January about 50 seniors came to hear him.

Ad concentrated on the 1920-40 period in Caledonia. He described how that town and Milton shared many geographic and industrial features, including key roles played by flour mills and the predominance of clay soil.

Ad has a standing invitation to return to the Lunch Bunch.



Milton Historical Society

P.O. Box 85
Milton, Ont., L9T 2Y3

President - Ken Lamb

Past President - Len McNeil

Treasurer - Jessie Hamilton

Secretary - Marie Sutcliffe

Publications - Marion Detlor

Programs - Bill Gregg

Publicity and Promotion - Tod Laing

Membership - Marjorie Powys

Municipal Liaison - Audrea Lear-Costigan

Special Events - Ad Woodley

Librarian/Archivist - Brenda Whitlock

Research - Jack Charlton, Jim Dills

Genealogy - Alex Cooke

Annual Memberships

Single \$7. Family \$10
Students \$5

ALL TOGETHER! LET'S HEAR IT FOR ONTARIO'S HERITAGE YEARS

There are milestones galore over the next few years in Ontario. And we're all invited to whoop them up - appropriately, of course.

The Premier's Task Force on Heritage Years has asked groups throughout the Province for suggestions - we got ours in just before the January 12 deadline.

The task force - chaired by John Eakins - lists 12 "historic Provincial anniversaries" for the three years beginning in 1991. Those being celebrated next year are:

- . the 200th anniversary of the passage of the Constitutional Act, which allowed for the establishment of Canada;

- . 175th anniversary of the Common School Act which provided for the establishment of government-supported elementary schools and marked the beginning of a systematic approach to education in Ontario;

- . 150th anniversary of the establishment of the British American Institute near Dresden. This vocational school for fugitive slaves was organized by Josiah Henson and a group of abolitionists.

The task force staff is working in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and Communications. Its office (Room 324) is in the Legislative Building at Queen's Park.

WE'RE GOING WAY, WAY BACK AT OUR MAY 21 MEETING

We're going back just about as far as we can go in local history at our May 21 meeting.

Our speaker is Dr. Peter Ramsden, one of Canada's prominent archaeologists and an expert on early Indian culture. He'll tell us what he and other archaeologists have discovered about the Paleo Indians, residents of this area some 10,000 years ago. They were the first humans in what we know now as Milton.

Peter will also tell us about the problems of protecting archaeological sites. A professor in the department of anthropology at McMaster University, Peter had a strong influence on recently-passed Ontario laws to keep robbers away from archaeological sites.

With his broad knowledge of the subject, our speaker is well equipped to answer whatever questions we have on digging for historic clues.

NEITHER SNOW NOR COLD CAN STOP PETER MCWILLIAMS

The storm Feb. 15 caused all kinds of traffic chaos. But it didn't stop our speaker, Peter McWilliams, and more than a dozen members from making their way to Hugh Foster Hall.

The prominent lawyer presented an interesting case, mixing recollections of local "characters" with excerpts from histories of two southern Ontario families.

Peter, who obviously enjoyed trading yarns with friends after his talk, expects to have a new book out soon. Unlike three previous technical books on Canadian criminal law, this work will be for the general public. It will deal with Peter's unusual and off-beat court experiences.

As soon as it's off the press, we'll make it available to Society members.

DIVING FOR LOST SHIPS HIGHLIGHTS OUR APRIL MEETING

At our April 19 meeting we'll hear about new developments to raise two historic vessels from the bottom of Lake Ontario.

Many things have happened since our program several years ago on the Hamilton and the Scourge. Right now there's a lot of interest in a series of dives scheduled for the last week in April and early in May.

The Ontario Science Museum and other North American museums are taking part via satellite. As a result both adults and children will see special programs about the underwater project.

The vessels sank in a storm during the war of 1812. Some 160 years later they were located near the mouth of the Niagara River. Later still the U.S. Navy gave the City of Hamilton title to the vessels.

At our April meeting we'll learn about complex plans to raise the ships and place them in Hamilton's Confederation Park. A five acre section has been set aside for the Hamilton & Scourge Museum.

Our speaker is William T. (Bill) McBride, an extremely versatile man. Among other interests, he has helped establish The Hamilton & Scourge Society, The Canadian War Plane Heritage Museum and the Hamilton International Air Show. Many will also know him as the director for nine years of the Canadian Football Hall of Fame & Museum in Hamilton.

JACK BENNETT HITS RIGHT NOTE TO BEGIN 1990 SOCIETY PROGRAMS

If Jack Bennett ever tires of playing the violin he could launch a new career as a public speaker.

At our Jan. 18 meeting Jack played only a few bars. But his many stories collected during 70 years of playing kept his audience alert and laughing.

Jack was playing in Niagara Falls a few decades ago when a major bridge came tumbling down. When a policeman notified Jack that the bridge was gone, Jack replied: "I guess I shouldn't have played so loud."

His many friends and relatives in the audience enjoyed being teased about their youthful dancing antics 50 or more years ago.

IAN HAS HIS OWN VERSION OF THE FRONT PAGE

Publisher Ian Oliver of The Canadian Champion has a new office wall decoration. It's a front-page reproduction of the earliest known copy of the Champion yet found - April, 1862, less than a year after the newspaper came into existence.

Jim Dills had the front-page framed and he and Ken Lamb presented it to Ian during Heritage Week celebrations in February.

The historic newspaper is one of more than a dozen early editions of The Champion that the Society acquired last year from Mrs. Marion Berry, daughter of the late Robert Fox and a former Milton resident.

PERSONALLY SPEAKING . . .

More than 60 relatives and friends shared Joe Gooch's 90th birthday party January 3 at the Burlington home of his son Ern. Born in London, England, Joe came to Milton as a youngster. He and Mary moved to Acton last year.

Ed Parsons has been getting along with a walker the past few weeks following an operation. He hopes to be rid of the apparatus before long.

Lydia Royce is grateful to be free of severe pain in one eye. Lydia is still taking treatment for loss of vision.

Tod Laing flew to Scandinavia in early March for a skiing holiday. No doubt she restricted her runs to historic slopes.

LEN MCNEIL IS WINNER AT FIRST HERITAGE CELEBRATION

Past President Len McNeil claimed one of four Milton Heritage awards presented at the Feb. 18 Heritage Celebration in Hugh Foster Hall.

Len was recognized for producing a number of slide presentations. One, of course, was on our plaquing program. Others traced the history of the Town, the story of P.L. Robertson and his inventions, and the history of St. Paul's United Church.

Other award winners were: the Friends of the Region Museum for their role in helping in heritage education; Bonnie Mullen for dozens of newspaper articles about Nassagaweya and its pioneers; and Robert Webb and Kathryn Woodcock Webb (60 Mill St.) for a continuing restoration project on their 98 year old home.

A committee of LACAC and Society members chose the winners who received unique awards: copper plaques attached to chunks of limestone from the old Bruce St. School. Jim Dills co-ordinated production and Shirley Dills made red velvet bags for them and fitted them with felt underpads.

Our display featured former mayors' portraits and a reproduction of the oldest known edition of The Canadian Champion (Issue 47, 1862). Jim Dills, Ad Woodley and Alex Cooke put it together. Marjorie Powys answered visitors' questions and sold memberships and history-walk booklets.

Jessie Hamilton handled the refreshments, resplendent in a navy heritage skirt. The skirt and Jessie's apron were originally worn by her grandmother, Elizabeth Wedge, a Burlington dressmaker.

Walt Elliot presented Ontario heritage plaques to the award winners and Mayor Gordon Krantz honored them with Milton's merit plaques.

An estimated 200 attended the event, which featured displays by Milton, Nasagaweya and Campbellville Historical Societies, Milton LACAC committee and Halton Region Museum.

The event was co-ordinated by Diane Sage of the Milton LACAC organization and has been in the planning stages since last October.

Time now
to Join



The



Journal

Volume 4, Number 4

January 1, 1990

HAPPY NEW YEAR

by Ken Lamb

Welcome to the 1990s. I hope this will be a special year for each member of the Society. May 1990 bring you and your families good health and many satisfactions.

The coming ten years may well see Milton grow far beyond its present 33,000 population. And we already see evidence on Highway 25, north of Steeles, and elsewhere, that our town will soon be home to many more industries. Residential developers hold large areas just waiting for additional water supplies.

It's easy to see that we are on the edge of great changes here. Mississauga is a preview to our future.

Of course, not everyone is ecstatic about such changes. But from the Society's perspective, expansion brings new opportunities and challenges. One of the roles we can play is to make new residents feel at home by giving them an appreciation of Milton's past by developing brochures, delivering talks, visiting schools, preparing displays etc.

Plenty of work for all of us in the coming decade.

Looking in the opposite direction - so to speak - what were the people in Milton thinking and reading about as the 1980s approached?

Here are a few happenings as related by The Canadian Champion in late 1979:

*Marilyn McNabb was named top 4H member in Halton.

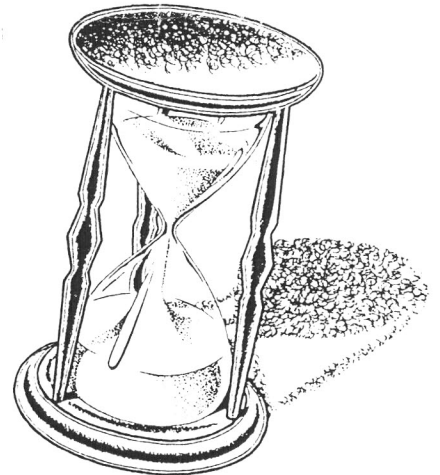
*Eva Tuck, of Hornby, who obtained her driving licence at 74, was 90 and still at the wheel.

*Al Waters won two prizes in the Halton Conservation Authority photo contest.

*Milton's firemen, police and ambulance drivers were being recognized for helping in the great Mississauga evacuation following a train derailment.

*Joe Waters was honored by the Canadian Legion Branch on its 50th anniversary.

*A riot at Maplehurst caused \$50,000 damage.



*Russell Cooper of Black Creek Pioneer Village was a December speaker at a Society meeting.

*Mel Robinson was writing about the early days of World War I

*The Champion stated confidently: "The Town Hall will almost certainly be moved to the Court House and jail complex on Brown St."

Most of these items strike a familiar note. But when we turn back to 1889 we find interesting contrasts - in sports emphasis, vocabulary, government finances even.

The evidence:

A century ago people in Milton learned that the Olympic lacrosse team here was meeting to close out its business for the year... merchant tailor W. Bews was moving to a new location on Main St... Nassagaweya Council passed a bylaw granting aid "to certain poor and indigent persons"... the Milton Poultry and Pet Stock Society was preparing for its second annual meeting, a three-day event ending on New Year's Day... Several churches scheduled social events known as a "Christmas Tree"... the Premier of Manitoba was telling

Continued on page 5

SOCIETY AND LACAC DEVELOP PLANS TO CELEBRATE HERITAGE WEEK

The Society is working with LACAC to put more emphasis on Heritage celebrations in February.

Most of the planning is directed to a display and Temperance Tea in Hugh Foster Hall February 18 with related events, including a heritage contest and history walk.

Jim Dills represents the Society in meetings with LACAC assisted by Brenda Whitlock, Ad Woodley and Ken Lamb. They'll be calling on Society members for help with the February celebration. In the meantime Don Hayward is busy developing the poster for the event.

NEW SOCIETY SYMBOL FROM DON HAYWARD'S PEN

In the name plate of this issue of The Journal you'll see the Society's new logo developed by one of our past presidents, Don Hayward.

The logo is a stylized representation of a mill and includes a rendition of water and trees which were the early elements of development in the community.

The new logo is designed for better reproduction in all its sizes. The previous logo which included an early sketch of the mill did not lend itself to all sizes of reproduction.

The new logo has also been included in the recently purchased display material and is on the 1990 membership cards.

Our thanks to Don for his work.

SENIORS AT CENTENNIAL MANOR ENJOY HISTORIC BUILDING SLIDES

About 40 residents of Centennial Manor enjoyed a Nov. 21 slide presentation of Milton's historic homes and buildings.

They saw the presentation created by past president Len McNeil. It includes public buildings, such as the present and former Town Halls, and many of the homes bearing the Society's plaques reflecting their history.

In a short preview to the program president Ken Lamb described some of the Society's activities. He also gave a special welcome to our treasurer Jessie Hamilton and her mother Ellen Reid, a long-time member of the Society now living in the Manor.

SOCIETY GUIDES STUDENTS

More than 50 students of St. Peter's School spent several hours last fall learning about Milton's past.

Before lunch they toured the town hall in the capable hands of the Mayor.

Afterwards, Jack Charlton and Ken and Treasa Lamb gave two groups a tour of the downtown area. Although November 29 was the coldest day of the fall, the youngsters didn't complain.

The students showed keen interest in the fact that three men had been hanged at the old jail. One boy wanted details on the hanging technique. Another asked where any bodies had been found in the jail yard.

A second favorite topic was the Waldie Blacksmith shop on James St. Here, as elsewhere, our walking tour booklet was a big help in answering questions.

A photographer from The Canadian Champion accompanied Jack Charlton's group as they walked down Main St.

We may even win a new member as a result of the tour. A girl expressed interest in joining. When Treasa explained that she would be alone in her age group, she replied. "That's all right. I'm more comfortable with older people anyway." She is interested in both history and archaeology.



Milton Historical Society

P.O. Box 85

Milton, Ont., L9T 2Y3

President - Ken Lamb

Past President - Len McNeil

Vice President - Dorothy Gould

Treasurer - Jessie Hamilton

Secretary - Marjorie Powys

Programs - Tod Laing

Publicity & Promotion - Jean Butts

Membership - Audrea Lear-Costigan

Special Events - Addison Woodley

Librarian/Archivist - Brenda Whitlock

Research - Jack Charlton, Jim Dills.

Genealogy - Alex Cooke

Annual Memberships

Family \$10 Single \$7 Student \$5.

JACK BENNETT HAS BEEN PRACTICING 70 YEARS FOR OUR JAN. 18 MEETING

Violinist Jack Bennett has been entertaining people around here for more than 70 years. At our Jan. 18 meeting he'll show he has lost nothing of his playing skill and has added a few yarns to an already bulging repertoire.

Jack, whose lessons started with Milton music teacher Harry Wheeler during the First World War, will tell us about his colorful career. He'll bring along his historic fiddle, fashioned from a counter in a celebrated bar at Yonge and Bloor St. The instrument eventually will be on display at a museum in Brookville.

A retired farmer, Jack has always lived near Carlisle. He earned his first musician's dollar as a six year old with the B & B orchestra, named after the Bennett and Bogle families.

He later played throughout the countryside with the Bennett dance band. Another part of his career included a stint with Hamilton radio station CKOC 55 years ago.

Jack has been a leading figure with the Milton Senior Citizens' Orchestra for more than 20 years.

Don't miss our Jan. 18 meeting. We'll enjoy a lot of music and memories. A lot of laughs, too.

SPEAKERS COMING THROUGH LOUD AND CLEAR AS SPEAKER SYSTEM BOOSTS VOLUME

From now on no one should have any trouble hearing our speakers.

The Society had planned to buy a loudspeaker system for use at our meetings in Hugh Foster Hall. Instead, we have made arrangements to rent a system from St. Paul's United Church. The unit is not at present being used by the congregation.

We used the system at our November meeting. It gives every indication of suiting us just fine.

OUR MARCH 15 MEETING PUTS FOCUS ON EARLY INDUSTRY

How industry helped shape Milton's history is the subject of our March 15 meeting. Jack Charlton will make the presentation.

"In our research, Jim Dills, Alex Cooke and I have been putting more emphasis lately on local industry," Jack says. "It's interesting to find how the influence of various activities has fluctuated over the years."

NEW EXECUTIVE TO BE ELECTED AT OUR JANUARY 18 MEETING

Past President Len McNeil has been working hard to present a full slate of nominations at our January 18 meeting.

Jean Butts, publicity director and Dorothy Gould, membership director are stepping down because of other responsibilities. Ken Lamb has completed the traditional two-year term as president. Other directors may ask to be nominated for new roles.

When we were going to press, Len said the following had agreed to have their names stand: Jessie Hamilton, treasurer; Jim Dills, research; Alex Cooke, genealogy; Jack Charlton, research and plaque program; Brenda Whitlock, librarian-archivist; Tod Laing, publicity.

Besides those nominated by Len, others may be nominated from the floor at the Jan. 18 meeting.

But even if members would prefer not to be part of the executive there is still plenty of work for all, Len says. If anyone has a special interest any member of the executive would be more than happy to receive offers of assistance.

PETER K. MCWILLIAMS TO LAY DOWN LAW AT SOCIETY'S FEBRUARY MEETING

A man with a wide knowledge of legal - and illegal - doings in Halton over several decades will be our speaker Thursday February 15.

Peter McWilliams, whose office is on Main St., has wide experience in both civil and criminal law. He served as Halton's Crown Attorney from 1958 to 1968.

Peter is just completing a book about his career experiences and undoubtedly will have many colorful things to tell us.

If you get to the meeting by 7.45 or so you may have a chance to chat with Peter before the session officially begins.

At one time, Jack said, brick makers had 30 kilns operating in this area. And the manufacturers claimed our district was North America's most important brick making centre.

The meeting is on the "Ides of March". But surely the proper advice this time is "Don't beware, Be there."



CONTRIBUTIONS EXPAND ARCHIVES
PERHAPS YOU CAN HELP TOO

We would like to thank the following people for their generous donations to the Archives:-

Marjorie Powys, 121 Mill St. Milton, for a photograph of P.L. Robertson and also one of the Robertson plant and employees. We particularly appreciate the photograph of "P.L." because it is the first we have been able to obtain for our Archives.

Mrs. Kathleen Husband, 74 Sanford St. Unit 3, Barrie, Ont. for an original Halton Historical Atlas published in 1877 - a rare and valuable gift which we were delighted to receive.

Mr. and Mrs. Doug Gowland, 237 Poplar Dr. Oakville, for Milton High School year books for the years 1938-39 and 1940, and also some local sports photographs. Our collection of year books is gradually increasing. We fully understand that these are keepsakes one sometimes hates to give up but they are a valuable record of life in Milton and we thank Mr. and Mrs. Gowland.

Mrs. Mary Hayward, 250 Ontario St. S. Milton for a framed photograph, in excellent condition, of the Milton Band and Fire Brigade taken in 1921. We are short a few names on this one so if anyone thinks they could put names to faces, we would love to hear from them.

We have also acquired some very early copies of The Canadian Champion, dated in the 1860s. These are the earliest known copies of the newspaper. We have had them microfilmed and copies will be sent to the Provincial Archives but the original newspapers will be kept in appropriate conditions by the Milton Historical Society.

Our collection of Archives is increasing in a very interesting manner, thanks to your generosity. We hope one day to have permanent quarters where these items can be stored, displayed and generally made available for public study. In the meantime, the items are being well cared for, cataloged and stored in our room at the John Martin house. If you feel able to donate items of interest, please contact - Brenda Whitlock 876-4989; Jim Dills 878-6061; or Ken Lamb 878-6391.

WE ENJOY "QUALITY TIME"
DURING OUR MILTON MALL DISPLAY

Although we were not in the busiest traffic lane at the Dec. 2 event in Milton Mall, some interesting people stopped by the Society's display.

Don McEachern told how he used to deliver the paper to P.L. Robertson at his home (John Martin house). When he was in the house, "P.L." would be waiting in his chair at the sitting-room fireplace. He would always exchange a few words with Don.

The former paper boy, now an employee of Robertson-Whitehouse, has fond memories of "P.L." - and his generous tips at Christmas time.

An Oakville visitor was a member of the Anderson family who operated a Main St. barber shop for two generations.

Another person who stopped by showed great interest in the display of our building plaque program. She was enthusiastic about having the Society prepare one for her home.

As a result of our appearance at the Mall we have two new members: Frank Ruhl, who owns the property near the hospital and formerly the home of Ad and Reta Woodley; and Anne and Doug Ptolemy of Halton Ave. A great way to start our new year.

Members who attended the booth were Jessie Hamilton, Tod Laing, Jack Charlton, Alex Cooke, Jim Dills, Ad Woodley and Ken Lamb.

WE'VE GOT A BETTER WAY NOW
OF GETTING OUR STORY ACROSS

The Society now has a way to tell its story more graphically.

We have just bought a four-panel display unit. Green on one side and gray on the other, the unit is ideal for displaying photos and similar documents. It will be a big help both for community events and for regular Society meetings.

The portable display unit was used for the first time at our booth in Milton Mall Dec. 2.

Designed to stand on a table, the unit is easy to set up and take down. It is light enough for one person to carry in a canvas bag, although hoisting it onto your shoulder takes a bit of doing.

THROWING IT OUT? Are you sure it wouldn't be a welcome addition to the Archives? Year books, directories, identifiable photographs, dated clippings etc may be worth a second look. Call Brenda 876-4989.

PRESIDENT PLAYS CATCH UP ON RECENT VISIT IN EDMONTON

When Treasa and Ken Lamb were in Edmonton for the wedding of son David, Ken dropped in on the Old Strathcona Foundation, a heritage organization.

No sooner had he introduced himself when the man behind the desk demanded: "When are you going to do something about the old jail in Milton?"

"We already have," Ken replied, describing the evolution of the jail as part of the new Town Hall.

It turned out that Patrick Ward, the Foundation official, used to be a guard at Milton jail, commuting from his home in Guelph. He said he and a friend had once dreamed of converting the lock-up to a restaurant. Customers would have been served in "cells" and their bills would have taken the form of "fines". Policemen presumably would have been waiters.

Dreams aside, Patrick has played a big role in many of the Old Strathcona restoration projects on the south bank of the Saskatchewan River. At present they're on their way to raising \$200,000 to restore the McIntyre mansion in honor of the first Member of Parliament in the area following Alberta's becoming a Province in 1905.

WE'LL SOON BE ABLE TO GET BETTER LOOK AT HILTON FALLS

There's good news for people who like Hilton Falls but are leery about teetering on the rocky creek bank to get a good look.

Halton Region Conservation Authority is building an observation area at the brink of the falls just opposite the historic mill ruins. It's similar to the recently-installed unit overlooking Nassagaweya Canyon in the Crawford Lake conservation area.

A rock wall is being built at the edge of the stream. As at Crawford Lake, three plaques will give the history of the mill as well as geological features of the area.

A distinctive feature of the Hilton Falls structure will be a set of steps down to the river floor. A second stone wall will be built on the east bank below the falls.

The idea is to give people an excellent view of the falls while limiting pedestrians to a confined area. Started in November, the project is to be completed in the spring.

HERE AND THERE WITH SOCIETY MEMBERS

If you're in Georgetown keep an eye out for our librarian-archivist Brenda Whitlock. She's working two days a week at the Oxbow Book Store.

Milton Choristers, a 50 voice group including member Shirley Dills, presented Handel's "Messiah" Dec. 3 to a full house at St. Paul's United Church. The group had been practicing three hours weekly since September. We haven't verified it but some said the full oratorio was last performed more than 50 years ago.

Following this fall's presentation in the Oral History series at Halton Museum, Alex Cooke was invited to speak to students at Holy Rosary School. Joe Henderson's appearance in the same series led to an extensive article in the Burlington Spectator.

Brad Clements is planning extensive work on the western section of his business block at the Martin - Main corner. Brad says the historical character of the property will be retained.

LIFE LONG AREA RESIDENT CLIFF HARDY HAS DIED

Cliff Hardy, a recent member of the Society but a life-long resident of the area, died Nov. 10. Born on Martin St, Cliff operated a dairy farm in Esquesing (First Line) before moving to a Milton apartment a few years ago.

Cliff, 80, passed the mandatory driving test a few weeks before he died but quickly lost strength and did not drive again.

Cliff leaves daughters Judy, Toronto and Brenda Jones, Newmarket; brother Jack and sister Mary Young both of Milton and sister Clara Heggie, Brampton.

HAPPY NEW YEAR Continued from page 1

Prime Minister John A. Macdonald that his province favored full trade reciprocity with the U.S... Readers were constantly reminded about the wonders of "Professor Loiset's memory system"... and the gross debt of the Dominion was reported at \$288 million. Yearly expenditures were about \$37 million and revenues almost \$39 million.

If Dickens' recipe for happiness applied to the 1889 finances, those really must have been the good old days.



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MAKE HISTORY

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