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Volume 7 No. 2

Published by the Milton Historical Society

September 1, 1992

Society Announces Fall Program Line-up

Thursday September 17, 1992

Surveyor Fred Cunningham will talk about surveys that set the stage for local development.

Thursday October 15, 1992

Retired broadcaster George Atkins will povide some tales of local history

Thursday November 19, 1992

A film on the fire that destroyed Milton's stone mill plus some police recollections by retired OPP officer Alex McNiven.

All programs begin at 8 p.m. at Hugh Foster Hall.

Coffee available from 7.30 p.m. Join your friends at Milton Historical Society meetings.



"Wooden" Theme for North Halton House Tour

Val and John Grimshaw have organized a second house tour in North Halton for Saturday Sept. 26 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Val was the cond president of our Society.

This year's theme is "Wooden Houses". Those featured include two of log construction, four board-and-batten and three of clapboard exterior. Interior furnishings range from pioneer

primitive to modern Canadiana.

People provide their own transportation. Lunch may be purchased at Ebenezer United.

Tickets cost \$15; proceeds will help build a shelter for ancient stone artifacts at legendary Glastonbury Abbey, Somerset, England.

For more information please call Val or John Grimshaw, (519)856-4696.

Perfect June Day for Historic Homes Tour

The forecasts were dismal but the weather turned perfect June 6 for our Historic Homes Tour.

About 70 members and friends toured a dozen homes and public sites to help celebrate the 125th anniversary of Canada's confederation. Marion Detlor and other representatives of Milton & District Horticultural Society caught the spirit: they appeared in heritage dresses to conduct tours of the courtyard gardens at Town Hall.

Father Mark Curtis greeted visitors at the Holy Rosary rectory on Martin Street. Eagerly he told how much he and fellow priests enjoyed living in the recently restored home built for John Martin in 1857.



Milton Historical Society

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

Past President - Ken Lamb
Treasurer - Jessie Hamilton
Secretary - Tod Laing
Membership - Marjorie Powys, Annie Drew
Special Events - George Wachmann,
Lillian Krywaniuk
Publicity - Marie Sutcliffe
Liaison - Audrea Lear-Costigan
Program - Craig Reid
Archivist - Brenda Whitlock
Genealogy - Alex Cooke
Research - Jack Charlton and
Jim Dills
Publications - Marion Detlor

President - Walt Elliot

Annual Memberships Single \$7. Family \$10 Students \$5 Marjorie Powys obviously enjoyed showing her 1879 Mill Street home and its heritage furnishings; Marsha Waldie and Lloyd Pearson helped as guides.

At their Victoria Street home —the only urban Milton home "designated" by LACAC—Pat and Jim Douglas crowded their family into two rear rooms. But the adults took turns popping out to describe the many challenges involved in restoring the house to its 1887 character.

Others who opened their homes for the tour were Gail Watts, Cindy and Mike Ellis and Les Laughren, all on Martin Street. Hugh Foster Hall, the Acorn Tea Room, St. Paul's United Church and the Main Street Market were stops on the walk.

Walt Elliot said the tour was an artistic rather than a financial success.

"Unfortunately," he said, "we were not able to make a financial contribution to the Children's and Youth Foundation of Halton, as planned, since our costs exceeded money from ticket sales.

"Our experience, however, will serve us well in future events. And the dollar results don't reflect the work done by dozens of our members and the excellent co-operation extended by the Foundation and the Horticultural Society."

Walt headed the committee in charge of the event. Members were George Wachmann, Jim Dills, Marie Sutcliffe and Lillian Krywaniuk.

People are Right in Tune With Ad's Nostalgia Talk

Ad Woodley obviously hit the right note in his early April talk to a women's organization in Milton.

About 25 members of Beta Sigma Phi heard Ad recall life in Milton in the years before World War II. His audience kept him busy answering questions afterwards.

Surveyor Will Straighten Us Out On Our Base Lines

The Sept. 17 meeting in Hugh Foster Hall sets the stage for our new season. Our speaker, Fred Cunningham, fits right in with this theme: he'll talk about the surveyors who set the stage for local settlement in the early 1800s.

The meeting opens officially at 8 p.m. But most members arrive at least 15 minutes early to chat with friends over coffee.

Fred began surveying in this area about 40 years ago. Methods have changed tremendously since then and even more since surveyors first appeared in this area late in the 18th century.

"I'll give some idea of how the early teams went about their work" Fred says. "Highway 5 (Dundas Street) was the key to the county survey in 1790; the lakeshore survey was carried out in 1805 and the northern survey (one of the base lines became Steeles Avenue) followed 14 years later."

Fred will display a chain and a transit, traditional tools of the surveyor's trade. He'll also make a series of sketches to illustrate various stages in the work done in this region.

"When you have been in the business as long as I have, sketching is second nature," Fred says.

Another feature will be a rundown on computerized techniques used today. This subject will be covered by Tom Packowski. Tom, who has worked with Fred seven years, recently became the new owner of the business started by Fred in the 1950s.

George Atkins Will Share Historic Tales in October

A man whose voice was heard around the world while his heart stayed close to home is our October 15 speaker. The session will be held at 8 p.m. in Hugh Foster Hall.

George Atkins of Oakville was a household name in this country for more than 25 years thanks to his CBC broadcasts, especially on agricultural topics. This background no doubt will come through in his talk to us. But he will paint with broad strokes in his tales of local history.

One episode will deal with a group of men who deserted their ship on the lakeshore and eventually made their way to the United States – by way of Rattlesnake Point.

Part of the evening will be devoted to a video about a portion of Highway 25 (Oakville to Acton), its historic sites and pioneers.

George, who is well known to many members, farmed 15 years before joining the BC. His broadcasting career included amportant contributions to the programs "Radio Noon" and "National Farm Radio Forum" as well as other farm broadcasts and reporting of farm conventions.

Following retirement he was instrumental in founding an international farm radio network with an audience of 150 million. He stepped down last year. His contributions led to an honorary doctorate from the University of Guelph; he's also a member of the Order of Canada. He didn't say so, but George is probably the most decorated farm broadcaster in the country.

Local Scrapbook Now in Archives

Our archives now contain pages of a scrapbook kept by Shirley Dawson, Scarborough, who died in February. Many of the items refer to local servicemen killed or wounded in World War II and sports teams of the 1940s.

Shirley was a member of the Pettigrew family whose home was on Main Street where the Toronto-Dominion Bank is now located. Youngsters loved to slide down the "Pettigrew Hill". The house was demolished more than 20 years ago.

Shirley's father, Oliver Pettigrew, operated a pioneer taxi service in Milton.

Mill Fire Film, Then Police for November Meeting

At our Nov. 19 meeting in Hugh Foster Hall we'll see and hear two very different perspectives on local history. The session starts at 8 p.m.

Malcolm Phillips, a Miltonian, will show a film of the fire that destroyed the historic Martin Street mill about 30 years ago. The stone building, operated for decades by the Martin family, was built in 1856.

The movie was take by Bill Phillips, Malcolm's late father, who operated a body shop

close to the mill (on part of the present site of Carriage Square.) We'll see how firemen fought the flames and demolition crews cleared the site.

Our second speaker, Alex McNiven, is a member and descendant of a district pioneer family. Alex will give us a police perspective, not on the mill fire, but on unusual OPP tales of 40 to 50 years ago.

Alex served in the provincial force for 33 years until retirement in 1974; his career included ten years in this area.

In 19th Century Halton

Death and Damnation Were Big Topics But Sunday Shopping Was Nowhere

We saw a masterful job of condensation at our May 21 meeting.

Richard (Rick) Ruggle, a Norval clergyman and historian, spent years researching a 400-page thesis on how religion affected Halton residents in the 19th century. For us he squeezed the topic into 40 absorbing minutes.

Rick said he was surprised and a bit frustrated by one part of his work: he found few examples of how individuals felt about their religion. On the other hand, evidence of how religion dominated our society was everywhere.

Our speaker had identified 53 congregations that existed in Esquesing from the 1820s to 1900. (The township's population was about 4,000 in 1850, rose to some 8,000 ten years later, then fell to about 5,000 by 1900.)

"Religious groups played a big role in establishing early libraries, schools and newspapers," he said. "Political parties, to a large extent, reflected religious views. Anglicans and the Church of Scotland were Tory supporters; Free Churchmen, most Methodists and the United Presbyterians (Seceders) were Grits or Reformers."

Many congregations strongly supported the temperance movement. In the 1880s Halton

twice voted in prohibition.

"Halton was settled mostly by pre-famine Irish Protestants," Rick said. "Most Protestant denominations believed in strict observance of the Sabbath."

It was no swimming, no games, no visiting – even carrying water on Sunday was highly suspect, at least in the eyes of an Acton clergyman. Except for desperate situations, he felt, no defense of Sunday toting could hold water.

Death and damnation were ever-present subjects for Esquesing pioneers.

"Religious references on tombstones were very common until about 1870", Rick said. "The doctrine of eternal damnation was often debated. But the strict views of the pulpit were not always shared by those in the pews."

Three special events are scheduled this month at the Agricultural Museum in Milton.

- Sept. 6: More than 50 ponies and horses will perform in the program "Kids, Ponies and Fun!"
- Sept. 13: Harvest Festival and Farmers' Market.
 - Sept. 19-20: Christmas Craft Fair.

Enthusiastic Member, Stan Allen Lived Full Life

Stan Allen, an enthusiastic member and a major presence in Halton for more than 25 years after World War II, died two months ago.

Stan and Ruth came to Milton from Georgetown in 1957 when Stan became administrator of Centennial Manor. He held the job until he retired 20 years later.

Earlier he was prominent in district politics; he served as warden of Halton and reeve of his native Georgetown as well as councillor at both the Georgetown and county levels. He was defeated in two elections as a CCF (NDP) candidate at the provincial and national levels.

Ruth described her husband as "a real political animal."

About our Members

Eva Chisholm recently moved from her lton home to Eden Mills Manor. We hope Eva will be able to arrange transportation to our meetings. Her telephone number at Eden Mills is (519)856-1230.

Eva's cousin, Lloyd Chisholm, has been in Milton District Hospital for several weeks. Many of us will remember Lloyd's fond and funry horse-racing reminiscences at a meeting a couple of years ago.

If you notice Craig Reid favoring his right hand at our September meeting, don't be surprised. Reid shook a lot of hands at a family re-union last month in Erin. About 200 relatives attended.

Len McNeil was guest speaker in June for the 25th anniversary of Grandview Consolidated School, near Lindsay, attended by more than 1000. It was also a reunion of students and

achers who attended Manvers township schools. Len and Helen attended as students and also taught in the schools. They report many happy memories meeting former classmates, students and colleagues at the day-long event. Before the War the Allens spent many years in the Rainy River district. Stan joined the Army in Western Canada.

Many of us recall Stan's participation in our World War II program three years ago. Stan, who served in a Signals unit, told about his receiving a radio message announcing the end of the war. When he relayed the news to his fellow soldiers in the room they gave it a few moments reflection – then calmly returned to their poker game.

Ruth said that her husband had been failing for three years or so. He died shortly after a leg had been amputated. He was 79.

In addition to Ruth, Stan leaves two daughters – June in Georgetown and Sharon, Warkworth Ont. – and son Bob in New Zealand.

A few Copies Left – A Great Christmas Gift – Historic Homes of Milton

Wade Through April Rains For Program on Museums

Our April meeting was held on what was probably the worst day of a pretty miserable month. But the torrent didn't keep members from hearing Peter Ledwith's talk on museums.

Peter – the curator of collections at the Agricultural Museum in Milton – described many of the institutions he has visited during his 17-year museum career. He is president of The Association for Living Historical Farms and Agricultural Museums, an international body.

Like other groups, he said, many such museums in Canada and the U.S. have to "make do" with limited funds. Despite the tough times the Milton agricultural museum last year increased its attendance. It attracted about 70,000, including some 30,000 school children.

Despite Three Death Threats Retired Sheriff Sees the Funny Side

It takes more than three death threats to fluster former Halton sheriff Mac Sprowl.

During his June 24 talk about his 28-year career Mac said three people had promised to kill him. He made it sound like another statistic. Like the 20 houses he sold for debts. Or the 50 cars he put on the block, ranging from a \$50 "clunker" to a \$44,000 Rolls Royce.

He even had to read the Riot Act.

"I asked an expert whether I should use a megaphone. He told me to forget the fancy gadgets and to shout as loud as I could. I did – and it worked. The people quieted down and eventually dispersed."

His "reading" came during a labor dispute.

Fortunately the death penalty was abolished before he took office. Otherwise our speaker may have had to supervise the building of a scaffold, summon the hangman and witness the execution.

Mac retired March 31, the last sheriff in Halton; his successor is called "manager of civil enforcement". That's the way it is throughout Ontario. Other provinces, however continue to use the ancient title.

Mac had a busy career and often took work home at night. But there were quite a few laughs along the way.

He recalled a man who insisted he could not serve on a jury. Mac kept on demanding a valid reason for deferment. Finally the man confessed: "I would be no good at all. I've never made a decision in my life."

Most people, Mac said, had no idea who the sheriff was or what he did.

"One woman was about to lose her home because of debt. She told me she had known of a Mac Sprowl in Acton who seemed like a fine fellow. But this Sheriff Robert M. Sprowl is the meanest man I know."

Our speaker found that not all sheriffs burned the midnight oil. When he looked up a counterpart in Prince Edward Island he found a tremendous clutter. Things were a bit slow, apparently, and the sheriff had brought his windows from home. The row of paint cans indicated the court official was brushing up on more than legal precedents.

Although he has left the office, Mac is still living the role. He visits London this fall to take part in celebrations marking the 1000th anniversary of the sheriff's appointment in England. Following that, Mac plans to write a book, "There Was A Sheriff."

The former court official spoke to us in Puslinch Hall at the Agricultural Museum.

"I was born just one mile east of here – in Peru", he said.

His family has been in the area for four generations. The former sheriff is a lifelong resident of Acton.

Manor Residents Learn About Book

About 40 residents and staff members of Centennial Manor have learned about "Historic Homes of Milton".

Ken Lamb spoke to the group July 17 in the common room at Pettit House. He described some of the 61 homes pictured in the book and used both the publication and a photo display for illustration.

After the presentation a resident, Enid Mongraw, revealed that she and her late husband once owned the home at 141 Mill Street, shown on page 46, now owned by Joan and Tim Heiberg.

A few Copies Left – A Great Christmas Gift – Historic Homes of Milton





Journal ~

Volume 7 No. 1

Published by the Milton Historical Society

April 1, 1992

Sales of Society's Book on Historic Homes Suggest Book May Soon Become History Too

In these tough economic times our new book surely ranks as a good-news story.

"Historic Homes of Milton" arrived at Jim Dills' home Jan. 16, just a few hours before our regular meeting. What then looked like a

mountain of books in Jim's entry had dwindled by early March to a single carton holding 100 copies. Another 250 books or so were in the "pipeline" - between storage and the ultimate owner.

Six weeks after it first appeared the book had sold enough to cover expenses. What makes this

remarkable is that "Historic Homes" must be one of the few books of its type ever published without a grant from any branch of government.

What's responsible for the success? People obviously like the clear photos and the cover design. Buyers often comment on these features. The price \$14.95 (\$17.50 by mail) represents good value and this, too, has often been indicated by buyers.

We knew from the beginning that we had to promote "Historic Homes" exclusively to

people who grew up here or who had strong family roots in the town. That is why we limited the print run to 1000 copies.

The book is a spin-off from our program for plaquing heritage homes. Research needed

for the plaques made up a large part of the text written by Jack Charlton. One of the few additions was the information about present owners.

Photos were all taken by Rex Sutcliffe over 15 months in 1990 and 1991. Research was done in large part by Jack, Alex Cooke and Jim Dills helped by earlier work done by Valerie Grimshaw.

Valerie Grimshaw, Len McNeil and the late Mel Robinson. Ken Lamb edited the text, Don Hayward designed the cover and index and title pages and Stan Brown Printers, Owen Sound, produced the book.

Walt Elliot led the marketing effort. Three pre-publication ads in The Canadian Champion in December sold about 250 copies. From the beginning owners and people living in the 61 historic homes have been keen buyers. So have Society members. (Continued on page 2)

Historic Homes of Milton



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Volume I

Written by Jack Charlton
Assisted by members of the Research Committee
Arex Cooke and Jim Dilis and former memberVal Grimsnaw, Leonard McNeil and Mel Robinson

Photography by Rex Sutcliffe

Cover Design by Donald Haywara

Editing by Ken Lamb



Published by Milton Historical Society P.O. Box 85, Milton, Ont. LCT 2Y?

ISBN: 0-9695629-0-X

May 9.

Society's Book on Historic Homes...

(Continued from page one)

All but one of the schools in Milton purchased books for their libraries before the end of January. A few weeks later four outlets started selling "Historic Homes": Harris Stationery, Spice O'Life and the Chamber of Commerce in Milton. Brenda Whitlock's firm, Harper Books, is selling it in Campbellville.

Members of the executive have been selling to friends and to fellow members of the Horticultural Society, University Women's Club and other groups.

There's also an organized effort to sell by mail. Executive members and others are suggesting names to letter-writer Ken Lamb. So far more than 350 letter have gone out, including

The appearance of the book has sparked interest in membership and in the home-plaquing program. Jack Charlton has seven homeowners waiting for plaques, an unprecedented waiting list. A special brochure

300 to those invited to the Bruce Street School

reunion at Memorial Arena (Thompson Road)

detailing the program has been produced to distribute to any who may be interested.

Walt Elliot expects the book to be sold out by mid-year. And since the executive has decided not to re-print at this time, "Historic Homes" may soon need a historic plaque of its own. The Research Committee is concentrating on Volume II now.



Milton
Historical
Society
P.O. Box 85
Milton, Ont.
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President - Walt Elliot
Past President - Ken Lamb
Treasurer - Jessie Hamilton
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Archivist - Brenda Whitlock
Genealogy - Alex Cooke
Research - Jack Charlton and
Jim Dills
Publications - Marion Detlor

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

Life Member Ken Newell Died in Mid-December

Ken Newell died suddenly of a heart ailment a week before Christmas. Ken and Audrey became life members of the Society two years ago.

The Newells became well known in real estate since coming to Canada from England almost 20 years ago. Ken was an electrical engineer by training.

"We became interested in history in England", Audrey says. "When we lived at Evesham (near Stratford-on-Avon) Simon De Montfort was very much part of local heritage."

De Montfort - the first advocate of a limited monarchy in England - and most of his followers were killed by forces led by the Earl of Gloucester and Lord Edwards at Evesham in 1265.

"When our home was at Kenley, south of London", Audrey says, "we were fascinated by the work of archaeologists who uncovered rillage that had been abandoned several hundred years ago after being devastated by a plague."

There Was Lots Doing At Third Heritage Awards Day

The atmosphere and attendance at the third annual Milton Heritage Awards ceremony Feb. 23 brought smiles to the faces of organizers. Our Society and Milton LACAC (Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee) are joint sponsors of the event, which now seems to have a heritage of its own.

Awards were presented by LACAC Acting Chair Colin Best; Mayor Gordon Krantz; Sue Miller, representing M.P. Garth Turner and Norma Peterson, representing MPP Noel Duignan. Walt Elliot, our president, was master of ceremonies.

Here are some of the features of the Heritage Week event:

• Four organizations mounted displays: LACAC, our organization, Halton Region Museum and Crawford Lake Conservation

...and the 1991 Heritage Award Winners were . . .

Heritage Education: Dr. William D. Finlayson, executive director Museum of Indian Archaeology, London, Ont. Bill pioneered digs at Crawford Lake, which led to a major educational effort there to tell people how Indians lived here in the pre-European era.

Visual Heritage: Barbara Fullum for preserving a large collection of portraits of 19th century Miltonians, all clearly captioned.

Architectural Award: Holy Rosary Parish (represented by Father Mark Curtis) for preserving and restoring a classic historic Martin Street house as a rectory for the parish's priests.

Heritage Writing: The late Mel Robinson 'represented by his wife, Bess) for a series of remarkable columns in The Canadian Champion in the late 1970s and early 80s, showing how families lived here during the first half of the 20th century.

Area. In addition, we displayed a book containing portraits of Miltonians of the 1800s, a collection donated by Barbara Fullum.

- Jim Dills led a downtown history walk for eleven chilled but enthusiastic followers.
- All four award recipients were eloquent in accepting the awards.
- Three former Award winners attended Joe Henderson, education winner, 1990; Len McNeil, visual heritage winner, 1989; Jan Quinton, representing Friends of Halton Region Museum, education winner 1989.
- More than a dozen people living in houses shown in "Historic Homes of Milton" were on hand: Kent Babcock, Hugh St.; Father Mark Curtis, Martin Street; Grace and Shel Featherstone, Highway 25; Jeannine and Doug Foley, Victoria St.; Phyllis Gorman, Charles Street; Tim Heiberg, Mill Street; Rev. Bob Hyde, James Street; Ruth Lockie, Court Street; Marjorie Powys, Mill Street; Betty Jo and Ted Stover, Mary Street.
- Author Jack Charlton and researchers Alex Cooke and Jim Dills were kept reasonably busy signing copies of "Historic Homes of Milton".

"Historic Homes" Dominates Open House Display Mar. 7

"Historic Homes" was the focus of our effort at Milton Mall's open house in early March.

A few days before the event, Jack Charlton, Alex Cooke and Jim Dills autographed a supply of "Historic Homes of Milton". Eight copies were sold, along with some of our walking-tour booklets. Several visitors made plans to have their homes plaqued.

Jim Dills' display of heritage homes, originally prepared for the Heritage Awards Feb. 23, did an encore.

Mid-December Wind, Snow Add Scares to Program

Our Dec. 14 visit to the Radial Railway Museum proved as interesting as expected and a lot more exciting.

More than 30 members and friends found their way to upper Guelph Line despite some scary "whiteouts". Windswept snow began about 15 minutes before our cars started out from Hugh Foster Hall.

The storm caused even more excitement a few minutes after most of us had left the museum.

"A change in wind direction caused stoves in both buildings to 'back-fire'", says Bill Gregg. "Big bursts of smoke quickly filled the buildings. Then the museum people took off the stove lids to try to solve the problem. Four-foot flames then shot up and the staff scurried around to pour water on them."

Another Book In The Works: A History of Hornby

Lois Knight is well into her second year on her book on Hornby's past. And she thinks she'll need at least another year to finish it.

She finds it fascinating. In its heyday in the mid 1800s, Hornby had 350 residents; today Lois estimates the population at 70.

Two steam-operated lumber mills at Farlton, just north of the community, were major features from 1845 to about 1885. The Brain family brewery was also a big factor.

"The beer, sold by the keg, originally had an alcohol content of 70 per cent," Lois says. "When the authorities insisted he reduce the content Mr. Brain replied, 'All right but it won't taste good!"

A thriving whiskey distillery with associated grain mill operated on Trafalgar Road.

Lois would appreciate help from anyone with knowledge about pioneer Hornby families or early commercial or industrial activities. Please call her at 878-4645.

Bill says no damage resulted. But it all made for a dramatic few minutes.

The scheduled part of the evening lived up to expectations. We relived the experiences of Toronto and Montreal tramcar users during the first half of this century. One of the cars (with stained-glass panels above the windows) was built in Ottawa in 1912. It operated on the line from Montreal to the south shore of the St. Lawrence.

Two other cars were built in the 1920s for the Toronto area. A maintenance vehicle for sweeping snow from the rails was purchased from New York City in the 1920s. All four cars made the round trip of more than two miles on the museum grounds.

Visitors admired the woodwork and other features of the ex-CNR station moved a few miles from Rockwood to the museum. A much smaller station from Meadowvale (a flag-stop) is on the site.

New Councillors, New Book Features of Mayor's Levee

All four new councillors helped greet about 200 visitors to the Mayor's New Year's Day levee.

John Challinor, Gerry Brooks, Ron Furik and Marion Howard teamed with Society members in leading guided tours of the Town Hall. Mayor Gordon Krantz and veteran councillors Colin Best, Brad Clements, Art Melanson and Rick Day were again prominent in welcoming visitors.

For the Society, Helen and Len McNeil greeted people on arrival and Jessie Hamilton arranged refreshments in Hugh Foster Hall. Jim Dills' photo display of plaqued homes and Alex Cooke's enthusiasm sold almost 20 copies of "Historic Homes of Milton". Others who to part in the program were Annie Drew, Ann and Walt Elliot, Treasa and Ken Lamb, Audrea Lear-Costigan, Marjorie Powys and Marie Sutcliffe.

Peter Ledwith to Tell What's New With Historic Farms, Ag. Museum

We'll hear about new trends in historic farms and agricultural museums at our April 16 meeting. (8 p.m. Hugh Foster Hall). And we'll get the news from the person in a unique position to give it.

Speaker Peter Ledwith is president of the Association for Living History Farms and Agricultural Museums. The organization includes scores of such facilities in the United States and Canada.

Peter is Curator of Collections at the Agricultural Museum in Milton where he has been employed for 17 years. His talk will include new programs at the local Museum for this coming season.

Rick Ruggle Heads May Program: The Church Life of Halton Pioneers

At our May 21 meeting (8 p.m. Hugh Foster Hall) we'll hear about the first churches in Halton and how they helped shape the lives of the pioneers.

Our speaker, Rev. Richard (Rick) Ruggle, has been serving St. Paul's Anglican Church, Norval, for about 20 years. He also is a chaplain for service people at the Borden, Ontario base.

Rick researched Halton's church history for a thesis prepared during his theological studies.

He is a long-time member of the Esquesing Historical Society. His writing on local history includes "A History of Children's Aid in Halton" published about 14 years ago.

Ad Woodley Preserves Memories of Gordon Home

Ad Woodley has recorded the memories of Rose Sheppard who spent several years in the Gordon Home for children more than 50 years ago.

Rose's memories (she now lives on Ontario St.) are mostly pleasant although she still recalls how guilty she felt about one incident. Visitors gave the youngsters a roll of pennies for the collection plate at St. Paul's United Church. But the temptation of the chewing gum machine along the route to church proved too strong.

The Gordon Home operated from 1919 until 1936 at the northeast corner of Main and Court Streets. (The Salvation Army shop now occupies part of the site.) It was home to needy children from both Halton and Peel counties. It closed after the government decided to emphasize foster homes rather than group residences.

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1992 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY		
ADDRESS	□ FAMILY \$10.	
	□ SINGLE \$7.	
TELEPHONE POSTAL CODE	□ STUDENT \$5.	
Please Mail to Milton Historical Society P.O. Box 85, Milton, Ont. LOT 2V3	□ LIFE \$60.	

Ambitious Plans for Historic Building Tour

George Wachmann and Walt Elliot are working hard on a tour of historic buildings Sat. June 6.

When we wrote this all the details had not been decided. But the general plan was in place.

We will be renting Hugh Foster Hall for the day as a base for handing out maps, serving coffee and general organization. Tickets will cost \$10.

The tours - which can be made by foot or by car - will include many of the heritage homes

Historic Homes Program Fills Hugh Foster Hall

An enthusiastic audience of more than 60 crowded Hugh Foster Hall Feb. 20 to hear Jim Dills' talk on Milton's heritage homes.

Jim described how research done for our home-plaquing program led to the "Historic Homes of Milton" book published in mid-January. He briefly explained some of the steps involved in getting the book into print.

In showing slides of some of the 61 homes pictured in the book, Jim grouped them into three periods: frame, stone and brick construction.

Jim paid tribute to author and fellow researcher Jack Charlton, researcher Alex Cooke, designer Don Hayward, photographer Rex Sutcliffe and editor Ken Lamb as well as to former researchers Val Grimshaw, Len McNeil and the late Mel Robinson.

Acting chair of Milton LACAC, Colin Best, introduced the six committee members.

Other features of a hectic evening:

- Book signing by Jim Dills, Alex Cooke and Jack Charlton.
- •Three home owners signed applications to have their homes "plaqued".
- President Walt Elliot revealed plans already are under way for a second volume, this to include public buildings as well as residences.

illustrated in our book, "Historic Homes of Milton". We will visit the interior of six or more homes as well as several public buildings. Homes will include those of the Stovers, Mary St. and Marjorie Powys, Mill St.

St. Paul's United Church, Main Street, and the Sproat House, Margaret Street, are among the public buildings to be visited.

Proceeds of the project will be donated to a young people's charity in the community.

We will be hearing more about this major event at our April 16 and May 21 meetings.

Winter's Worst Welcomes Miagara Escarpment Talk

More than 25 shivering members slipped on icy roads to get to our January 16 meeting about the Niagara Escarpment. The thermometer registered -20C.

In compensation, perhaps, Ken Lamb described how tropical seas covered the Michigan Basin for about 25 million years. The sediments are what we now know as the escarpment. In another part of the talk Ken described the role of the Niagara Escarpment Commission in planning and controlling land use.

A series of slides provided by the Commission showed geological, historical and industrial features along the international landform that extends in Ontario from Queenston Heights to Tobermory.

Brief Notes...

More than 150 wished Lydia Royce well at her 85th birthday party held March 1 at the Derry Road home of son David.

Rose Harrison, former Citizen of the Year and town councillor, helped ring in the New Year at Victoria Park.

Three New Directors Join Society Executive

Three members were elected to the executive at our annual meeting January 16:

Lillian Krywaniuk, Craig Reid and George Wachmann.

Lillian has a special interest in pioneer cemeteries and will be developing a program to reflect that interest. Craig is a former Esquesing councillor; he spoke to us last years as part of a panel on municipal politics. George is serving on an advisory committee related to Halton Region's plan for a Heritage Centre near Highway 25 and Britannia Road.

Bill Gregg, who was program director, and Ken Hassard, special events, have stepped down.

Tracings

- Ken Hassard underwent a heart byass operation in February. He was home within a week and was soon out walking on his patio.
- •When accepting the Heritage Award for her late husband, Mel, Bess Robinson told us she and Mel not only taught at Bruce Street School but also went to school there. Limestone from the school serves as a base for the metal plaques identifying award winners.
- During the recent restoration of the historic home now serving as the rectory at Holy Rosary Church some interesting items literally came out of the woodwork. Father Mark Curtis told us that papers and parts of children's games were uncovered. The rectory was built in 1857 for John Martin, son of pioneer mill-builder Jasper Martin.
- •One of our oldest houses is home to one of our youngest residents. Laura Madelaine Dusmet de Smours was born March 10. A couple of years ago her parents bought "Rosehill Cottage" on the west side of Highway 25, just south of Derry Road. The house was built about 150 years ago and was in the Willmott family until 1972. (See page 10 "Historic Homes of Milton".)

Revived Tradition Rings Bell In Midnight Milton Ceremony

About 20 members helped revive a Milton bell-ringing tradition on New Year's eve.

Hundreds (estimates ranged from 400 to 700) at Victoria Park enjoyed a ceremony last held in 1985 when the town hall moved from Main Street to the renovated Court House.

Our former president Len McNeil was the first of seven "ringers". He represented 1985 when he was chosen "Citizen of the Year". Other "Citizens" followed, each pulling the rope to recall one of the "lost" years since 1985. Charles Jones, a direct descendant of Hugh Foster, rang in 1992. (Hugh Foster donated the four acres on which Victoria Park, the Town Hall and Hugh Foster Hall now stand.)

Following the ceremony several onlookers took vigorous but unofficial pulls. They sounded fine.

Mayor Gordon Krantz acted as master of ceremonies; the Kinsmen Club made the arrangements and provided refreshments.

Jim Dills began the bell-ringing tradition in 1967 to mark Canada's centennial; he rang the bell again in 1979 as a former "Citizen of the Year".

The bell - part of Miltonians' everyday life for generations, tolling from the former Town Hall - was installed on a cairn in Victoria Park a few months ago.

- •Mayor Gordon Krantz welcomed the opportunity to present the heritage education award to Bill Finlayson at the Feb. 23 ceremony. As a long-time member of the board, Halton Conservation Authority, the mayor has known Bill for years and was well aware of his pioneering work at Crawford Lake, a conservation area.
- •New members of our Society this year include Margaret Beettam and Beatrice Byrne, Acton; Lillian and Arthur Lamb, Marie Clements, Jennifer Passfield, Milton; M.J. Ruddell, Georgetown.

Masagiweya Society begins New History of Old Nassagaweya Township

The Nasagiweya Historical Society is now embarked on its project to publish a new history of the township of Nassagaweya, since 1977 a part of the town of Milton.

It will be only the fourth history written about the old township. The first was Joshua Norrish's History of Nasagiweya, written in 1889; the second an updated history compiled for the centennial of the township in 1950; and the third, Nassagaweya - A History of Campbellville and Surrounding Area; Its Land And People, published in 1982 by the Campbellville Historical Society.

Editor Ken Wilson is eager to hear from anyone who may have interesting information stored away in attics, chests or closets, particularly if it has not been publicized or published before. This may include old photographs, newspaper clippings, family histories, memoirs— anything to do with the people of the township, their work and activities since the first settlers arrived in the 1820s.

Just drop a line or call Ken at 363 Burlington Cres., London, N5Z 3G9 (phone (519)686-9548) or contact Mrs. Mabel Parker, R.R. 1, Campbellville, L0P 1B0 (519-856-4095), or Mrs. Joyce Batt, R.R. 1, Campbellville, L0P 1B0 (416-854-0205).

Documents and other material will be copied on the spot, and secure arrangements made for rephotoing your treasured pictures.

Make History as a Member of Milton Historical Society.

Nothing but Yes-Men Attend Our 1875 Council Meeting

Bill Gregg apologized for the lack of fireworks at the re-staged 1875 council meeting during our March 19 meeting.

He explained that council minutes made up his chief source of information. These minutes recorded only decisions made, not the heated discussion that presumably went before the votes.

In any event the meeting seemed to be well received. The "actors" read from a script prepared by Bill. Much of it related to council's decision to allow six or seven hotels and shops to sell packaged alcohol.

Bill acted as town clerk. Councillors were Walt Elliot (mayor), Ken Lamb (reeve), Jack Charlton, Alex Cooke, Don Hayward, Tom Howard, Bruce MacNab, Len McNeil and Ad Woodley. Gerry Brooks represented a temperance group appearing before council.

Nassagaweya Church Book Marks 150th Anniversary

A 90-page book is being published to help mark the 150th anniversary of St. John's Anglican Church in Nassagaweya. (Guelph Line and No. 10 Sideroad.)

"Footprints" was written by local historian June Andrews, Campbellville. It traces the key developments in the congregation as well as in the Anglican Church in Canada.

The book may be purchased at St. John's and at St. George's Anglican Church, Lowville. You may also obtain "Footprints" by telephoning 854-0275 or 854-2254. Until May 31 the price is \$15.

	Milton Historical Society, P.O. Box 85, Milton, Ont. L9T 2Y3.		
A SARTON DAY	I enclose my cheque for copies of "Historic Hor	nes of Milton' at \$14.95 (\$17.50 by mail).	
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PETERS SERVICE REPORT	Phone number	Postal Code	

Volume 6 No. 3

Published by the Milton Historical Society

January 2, 1992

Tour takes 43 seats at Queen's Park

We put together a healthy list of "firsts" during our Nov. 19 visit to Queen's Park. Here are some of them:

. The Society's first group visit to the Legislature

. The first public talk given by Jim Bradley following his election a few minutes earlier as acting provincial Liberal leader.

. Walt Elliot, who spent several years in the Legislature, was recognized by the Speaker while he sat in the visitors' gallery.

. It was the first time our guide had led a

uilding tour. She did a good job too.

More than 40 members and friends made the seven-hour trip. During lunch in the Opposition's board room several prominent MLAs dropped by to welcome us. In addition to Jim Bradley, a former history teacher, these included: Joan Fawcett, Member for Northumberland and chair of the Liberal caucus; Frank Miclash, Kenora, Liberal whip; Dalton McGuinty, Liberal, Ottawa South.

Noel Duignan, NDP, and Walt's successor as member for Halton North, arrived after a hectic morning. He came from a Milton news

Historic Homes, Families
Highlight Feb. 20 Meeting

More than 60 homes researched by the Society will be stars of our Feb. 20 meeting at Hugh Foster Hall. The program begins at 8 p.m.

Jim Dills will show slides of the plaqued homes. His commentary on the homes and the families who lived in them comes from research done by Jim, Alex Cooke, Jack Charlton, Len 'IcNeil and Val Grimshaw.

These are the homes featured in the book "Historic Homes of Milton" that makes its

appearance in January.

The book, published by Milton Historical Society, will of course be on sale at the February meeting.

conference where he had announced the government funding for the purchase of the controversial LAC Mineral escarpment property (west of Bell School Line, north of Steeles Ave.)

Noel is co-chair of a committee responsible for a \$100 million renovation of the Legislative Building during the next few years.

Our visit included 30 minutes in the House. Treasurer Floyd Laughren was attempting to explain changes in the budget but it was hard to hear over the numerous interjections from the floor. This was typical: most visitors to Canadian legislatures are "shocked" by what goes on during debates.



Members toured the Legislative Assembly of Ontario buildings on an Art and Architecture tour.

100 Milton Students Take a Walk Around Town

At the request of St. Peter's and Holy Rosary Schools the Society arranged three fall walking tours for senior students. Ken Lamb guided a total of about 100 students through historic downtown areas.

We would like to broaden our cooperation with Milton schools on local history programs. If you would like to take part in such a project please contact Ken Lamb (878-6391) or Walt Elliot (876-3377).

Expert Works for 22 years But the Puzzle Remains

How would you like to spend 22 years on a puzzle only to find you still have more

questions than answers?

That's the position of archaeologist Bill Finlayson who spoke to us Oct. 17 at Crawford Lake Conservation Area. He is professor of Canadian Archaeology at University of Western Ontario and executive director, Museum of Indian Archaeology, London.

Bill described the work started at Crawford Lake in 1972. Since then he has dug about 40 sites within 10 miles of the lake.

"After more than 20 years of investigation it has become clear that the Iroquoian occupation of the Crawford Lake region is

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Liaison - Audrea Lear-Costigan
Program - Bill Gregg
Archivist - Brenda Whitlock
Genealogy - Alex Cooke
Research - Jack Charlton and
Jim Dills
Publications - Marion Detlor

Annual Memberships Single \$7. Family \$10 Students \$5 Life \$60 exceedingly complex," Bill says.

Since the Indians had no written language the archaeologist tries to reach conclusions by counting and classifying parts of tobacco pipes, bits of shells and bones. Then he compares "finds" at one site with those at other locations.

"When we find a lot of pipe fragments at one site we could conclude that two peoples were merging in the area and that a lot of negotiating and smoking were going on," Bill

says.

In a generation of searching Bill has found many clues. But he still is not sure what happened to the several Iroquoian-speaking peoples who lived in the area from 1200 to 1650 A.D. He is still looking for the Indian site that was close to Crawford Lake in the early 17th century. He feels sure it was there because of the amount of corn pollen found in the lake sediments.

"I'm looking for more sites," Bill says. "Joe Henderson told us about one north of Speyside and we're investigating it. If you have found arrowheads or other artifacts, or know someone who has, please let me know."

Send the information to William D. Finlayson, Museum of Indian Archaeology, 1600 Attawandaron Road, London, Ont. N6G 3M6.

And if you have any ideas where he could find the \$500,000 he needs to finish the Crawford Lake project he would like to hear about that too.

We Expect Busy Time At New Year's Levee

We'll be out in force again for the Mayor's levee at the Town Hall New Year's Day. The two hour event begins at 1.30 p.m.

Mayor Krantz and a majority of the Councillors were on hand to greet visitors last Jan. 1. We expect the same participation this

Our Society is again co-operating in organizing the levee. We're looking forward to seeing many members there. Volunteers to help should call Walt Elliott at 876-3377.

Jur January 16 Meeting: Escarpment News, Views

The Niagara Escarpment dominates the geography of southern Ontario. But what role has it played in our history and how does it affect our lives today?

Ken Lamb will attempt to answer those very large questions at our Jan. 16 meeting in

Hugh Foster Hall. Starting time is 8 p.m.

One of Ken's qualifications is that he (and Treasa) have hiked the entire Bruce Trail, which follows the escarpment from Brock's monument at Queenston Heights to Tobermory harbour at the top of Bruce Peninsula. Todd Laing, who has covered all but a few kilometers of the trail, may also give a hiker's perspective.

The program will include scenic slides of the escarpment. Copies of recent illustrated

books will be on display.

The Play's The Thing It our March Meeting

Did you ever feel you wanted to be on the

stage? Or a drama critic?

If you did — or even if you didn't — our March 19 meeting in Hugh Foster Hall (8 p.m.)

is the place for you.

Our program will feature the reenactment of a Council meeting. We're combing the records to come up with an engrossing session. In fact, we may combine two or more council confrontations. Bill Gregg is coordinating the evening.

If you want to be an actor in this drama, get in touch with Walt Elliot (876-3377) or Bill

Gregg (853-2776).

If you are a budding critic, bring along a notepad - we'll ask for your verdict at the end of the "production".

About our members

A founding member and former president of the Society, Len McNeil has been recognized for serving 10 years as treasurer of the Board of Trustees, St. Paul's United Church. 'e and Helen received a copy of "The Niagara scarpment", a coffee table book.

Jack Charlton is feeling fine after undergoing a heart by-pass operation a few months ago.

The Archives

We wish to thank the following:-

ELEANOR COULTER, now living in Alberta, for a delightful 47 page booklet recording memories of her childhood in Lowville. Mrs. Coulter wrote this mainly for her family but it makes fascinating reading for those who know the area involved and gives insight into what was a very close-knit community.

MRS. LEO HORNELL, now living in Scarborough, for a framed group photograph of the Milton Band taken in 1921 outside the old Court House.

MRS. BARBARA FULLUM of Garnet Street, for a large number of old photographs, negatives, telephone directories etc. The photographs are extremely valuable to us as they are of notable Miltonians of the 19th century.

We are always interested in receiving similar items both from the last century and the more recent past. All donations will be catalogued and stored safely at the John Sproat (John Martin) House on Margaret St.

Sarah Martin Greets Us At Martin Street School

Sarah Martin, a direct descendant of pioneer Jasper Martin, was one of about 50 children who greeted Alex Cooke and Ken Lamb during a September visit to Martin Street School.

Sarah's grandfather was the youngest brother of the late Carl Martin, former mayor, prominent businessman and long-time Society member.

Our speakers described conditions that brought people to this area and showed slides of prominent buildings and historic sites. Teacher Valerie Stuart and Librarian Kay Bounsall arranged the session.

For Alex it was a bit of a homecoming. He was a local School Board member when a major addition to the school opened about 30 years ago. A photo of the event hangs in the school.

The original building opened in 1920 as a high school.

Bell Ringing Returns to Local New Year's Eve Celebrations

The Town of Milton will ring in the New Year with a ceremony in Victoria Park.

Mayor Gordon Krantz says the Kinsmen Club is playing a major role in the midnight ceremony. The historic bell was recently given a place of honor on a cairn in the Park. It's the bell that rang out for generations from the old Town Hall on Main St.

People honored as Citizen of the Year for the past six years, or their representatives, will start ringing the bell at six minutes to midnight New Year's Eve. This is to "catch up" on the six-year interval since the most recent ringing of the historic bell.

The bell was rung to herald 1967, the country's Centennial Year, and every year following. Crowds gathered in the middle of the street in front of the old town hall for the brief ceremony.

Continuing a tradition, the Kinsmen will serve refreshments after the ceremony this year.

Is this Ballotomania?

At our September meeting Don McMillan suggested that some voters in the sprawling Halton-Peel federal riding are confused about who represents them where. He supported his point with two incidents.

A woman was clearly distraught after

voting in the 1988 federal election.

"I voted for the wrong Turner and I want my ballot back", she told a poll clerk. No one was able to calm her.

"I'm going to get help and I'll be back,"

she threatened.

At this point the poll clerk telephoned

Don, the returning officer.

When the voter re-visited the polling booth Don was able to convince her that "her" Turner (Liberal Leader, John) was running in Vancouver Quadra and only people in that riding could vote for him. And there was no way she could take back her vote for Conservative Garth Turner in Halton-Peel.

As it "Turnered" out both John and Garth

were elected.

In the second 1988 incident a male voter stomped out of the voting booth.

"I can't find Russ Miller's name on the

ballot," he complained.

Poll officials tried to explain that Russ wasn't a federal candidate but was running in the municipal election two months later. (He was elected Halton Hills mayor.)

The voter finally departed still

unconvinced.

Manor Bandstand Moved to Milton's Victoria Park

Victoria Park has a bandstand again.

During the fall the stand that had been in front of Centennial Manor since 1974 was transported to the park. The move was made necessary because of an extensive building program at the Manor on Ontario St.

Since the Town was planning to put in a new bandstand anyway the gift save taxpayers

many thousands of dollars.

Long-time residents have fond memories of the original structure. But Ed Jones of King Street has mixed emotions. He was climbing around the old bandstand as a young boy in the early 1920s when he fell and broke a leg.

Addition of the bandstand is one of several recent improvements to Victoria Park. Others include installation of lights; return of a refurbished cannon near the cenotaph; a new fountain; and installation of the bell that originally hung in the tower of the former Town Hall on Main St.

About our members

Todd Laing has taken a reluctant break from hiking. She hoped to complete the 760-kilometre Bruce Trail this fall. But with only a short distance remaining she slipped during a rainy September hike in the Bruce Peninsula and suffered a broken left arm. Todd wore a cast for about six weeks.

.∢egional Government Voted Down At Meeting

Regional government wasn't knocked out at our September meeting but it lost badly on points.

Three retired municipal politicians were on hand to compare regional government with

the former system in Halton County.

Harry Barrett, former Oakville mayor and Regional representative; Don McMillan, who served in Nassagaweya and Milton; and Craig Reid, an Esquesing Township veteran, together amassed some 80 years of public service.

Harry established the tone for the evening. "Regional government was such a success," he cracked, "that the Province never

formed another Region after Halton."

All three speakers agreed that the Region suffered from duplication of planning staffs, inspection teams and other services at the central and municipal levels. They felt the Region had to take responsibility for reducing costs.

Policing represented a special case in larry's view. Although these costs represented about 40 per cent of its budget, the Region had no effective way of controlling such spending. The Province, which paid 20 per cent of police costs, appointed the majority of members to the Police Commission. And this commission resolves any budget disputes.

Don McMillan shared the view that the previous Halton system was more efficient and less costly than the Regional model. But he believed politicians of 20 and more years ago

were partly responsible for the switch.

"They knew improvements were needed but they couldn't come together to make changes because they feared such changes would prevent them from being re-elected."

Other points made during the 90-minute program:

- Craig Reid said property taxes were so high that many old people had to sell their homes. Property owners are bearing a disproportionate share of the tax load.
- Harry Barrett suggested that all people paying income tax should be assessed \$100. The sum would be returned to local governments to reduce the mill rate.
- Craig Reid believed the landfill site (under development southwest of Britannia Road and Highway 25) is costing much more than it should. He blamed political maneuvering for much of the extra cost in the \$40-million project.
- Don McMillan described a "community of interest" problem in the Regional set-up: people of Nassagaweya had great difficulty in identifying Milton as the focus of their community.
- Don felt politicians had more fun in earlier times. They fought hard but held no grudges. A few hours before his first raucous nominating meeting, a voter in Nassagaweya approached him, "If I get out of hand tonight don't be afraid to tell me 'Shut up and sit down'. Your father always did."

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Historic Home Photos Displayed at Milton Mall

A photo display at the Milton Mall in early September featured more than a dozen of almost 70 historic homes plaqued by the Society.

The display was a major part of our presentation at the fall Open House. Visitors were invited to match the historic photos with street addresses of the homes.

Scores of shoppers stopped to chat including a new member Olive Byers of Streetsville. Society hosts were Marion Detlor, Jim Dills, Walt Elliot, Jessie Hamilton, Marjorie Powys and Marie Sutcliffe.

Do You Have a Candidate For Our Heritage Awards?

We're on the lookout for winners of our Heritage Awards for 1991. The winners will be announced at a ceremony in Hugh Foster Hall during Heritage Week in mid-February.

As for the past two years, the awards will be made in four heritage categories: writing; visual (photos, videos, etc.); education; and architectural restoration or preservation.

Walt Elliot (876-3377) would be happy to receive your nominations for any or all of the awards. The winners are recognized for their contributions in Regional Milton.

Pre-Publication Offer

Historic Homes of Milton

Publication January 1992

Volume I Historic Homes of Milton presents the historic past of 61 Milton homes with stories of some of the families that occupied them. It has been carefully researched and the book will be of historical significance. It is being published by Milton Historical Society.

Pre-Publication Price \$10. – 1992 Price \$14.95

Mail coupon with payment to Walt Elliot. 7096 Tremaine Rd. R.R. 1 Milton **L9T 2X5** before Dec. 31, 1991

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