



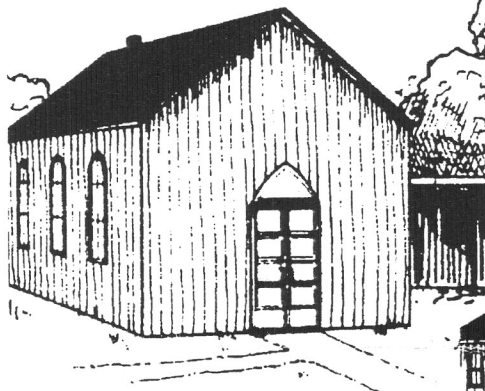
# The Journal

Volume 11 Number 3 Published by the Milton Historical Society

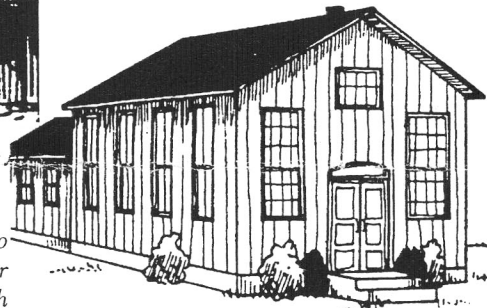
December 10  
1996

## Join us at Ontario Agricultural Museum for annual Christmas party on Dec. 19

Our Christmas party **Dec. 19** is at a new location this year – the Ontario



*The Mayne Corners Church at the Ontario Ag Museum will provide the setting for our Christmas Carol Sing. Originally from Perth County the building began life as an Episcopal Methodist place of worship in 1876. It closed as a United Church in the 1970s, was purchased and later donated to the museum. It was taken apart board by board and moved to its present site.*



*We'll enjoy the warmth and good cheer in Puslinch Hall at the Ag Museum following our carol sing in the church. It won't be the first cheerful event in this historic building, which dates from 1867, and was located at Aberfoyle in nearby Puslinch Township.*

## Key meeting on December 11 to organize future of Museum

A 15-member group with a big influence on the future of the Ontario Agricultural Museum meets Dec. 11 at the Milton site. The session is urgent since provincial funding for the museum ends March 31, 1997.

Efforts aimed at keeping the museum open next year and beyond have been under way for months, guided by the Rural Heritage Preservation Committee. Walt Elliot and Jim Dills, representing the Society, served on the committee and played a big role in the giant September fund-raising event at the museum.

This committee evolved into Country Heritage Experience Inc., with a new Board, as an organization that would control future museum operations.

The Dec. 11 meeting brings together Country Heritage directors, chaired by

Bob Monte, Waterloo. Other directors include Halton Region chair Joyce Savoline, Carolyn McDonell, Milton; Waterloo artist Peter Etril Snyder and Claire Rennie, former Ontario deputy minister of agriculture.

At the session the directors will consider a business plan for future operations. Then come the crucial steps to win approval for the plan from the ministry and the government.

Walt Elliot hopes the plan includes a strong emphasis on volunteer participation.

"I believe that a spirited group of volunteers from the Milton area could go a long way to assuring the continued life of the Ag. Museum," Walt says.

It's estimated that the museum would have to bring in about \$1,000,000 a year to ensure continued operations.

Agricultural Museum. The museum is on Tremaine Road, just south of the overpass at highway 401.

Program Chair Walt Elliot has made special arrangements for us to sing carols in the Museum's historic church. Dress warmly but some heat will be provided. Singing starts at 8 p.m.

Milton Seniors' Song Spinners under the direction of Joyce Hayward will be on hand to give our musical efforts some direction and strength.

President Helen Comber is already arranging the decorations at the site and she thinks a touch of snow in the air would add to the "old fashioned" mood of the season.

We'll enter the grounds through the service entrance and park near the administration building. A team of horses and a wagon will give us an outdoor ride to the church.

After carolling we'll head for Puslinch Hall at the front of the museum grounds (it's heated) for traditional snacks.

Executive members are asked to bring sandwiches or pickles, others desserts.

If you aren't sure of directions or need a ride call Ken Lamb, 873-6391.

## Let's not be shy – vote draws nigh

Nominations chair Marjorie Powys has put out the welcome call for new executive members.

Marjorie says at least four positions are open on the 1997 board; stepping down are president Helen Comber, treasurer Jessie Hamilton, secretary Marsha Waldie and special events coordinator George Wachmann.

Volunteers are asked to call Marjorie at 878-2545. Elections **Jan. 16**.

## We don't know what hardship is until we hear about Ad's roots

At our Sept. 19 meeting Ad Woodley told a fascinating tale about how his Loyalist ancestors came to the Cambridge area almost 220 years ago.

The Ballantynes and the Bells left England for New Jersey just before the start of the American Revolution. Five years later, the fighting over, they hitched their oxen and headed for the Niagara area.

Ad told how they waited for an east wind to push back the water of the Niagara River near the present city of Buffalo. Then they climbed into a stoneboat as the oxen swam towards the Canadian shore.

Their first act was to sign an oath of allegiance to the crown. The official

then handed them a shovel, blankets, some rough clothing and a peck of wheat seed.

Almost immediately the party of about 80 (20 families) started the 10-day trek to the small village of York, then the largest settlement on the Grand River. Then it was another two-day wagon trip upriver to the present site of Cambridge.

What proved a great help in the difficult years was that Ad's great-great grandmother learned the Mohawk language. When the crops failed in the "hungry years" the Indians made sure the Ballantynes and Bells were well fed.

Ad answered many questions from more than 30 members and friends.

## Library is heaven for research

The Georgetown Library basement archives may not be perfect but they're as close to research heaven as local historians will ever get.

At our Oct. 17 meeting in the library Walter Lewis and Mark Rowe outlined the steps leading to this exalted state. Walter is deputy chief librarian, Georgetown, and Mark is a teacher and past president, Esquesing Historical Society. About 25 attended.

Volunteers and summer employees, many of them studying for history

degrees, have worked for many years on the collections. One result is the compilation of birth, wedding and death notices that have appeared in Georgetown and Acton newspapers since they started publishing in the 19th century. Volunteer Marshall Neilsen is now working 12 hours a week to add similar items from The Canadian Champion.

Its collection includes all editions of the Acton newspaper since it began 120 years ago. Mark told how the Esquesing Society had received a number of provincial and federal grants to equip the archives area. When sliding shelves were needed the Friends of the Library came through with half the \$13,000 cost.

Marjorie Bethune, acting deputy chief of the Milton Library and Geoff Cannon, information service librarian, Georgetown took part in the program.

The Milton Public Library works closely with Georgetown on many projects. Two of the Milton computers provide access to the Georgetown archives.

The audience included representatives of Esquesing, Nassagaweya and Burlington historical societies.

## Choose the past for the present

Never in the past has so much of Milton's history been available in print for the enjoyment of this generation and as a family pass-along.

**A Walk in Historic Milton, the County Town of Halton 1853-1974** - Released in an expanded version the booklet provides general background on the town, buildings.  
**Copies \$2**

**Directory of the Members of the Municipal Council of the Town of Milton 1857-1993** - A compilation of the members fully indexed for quick reference.  
**Copies \$5**

**Milton Remembers World War II 1939-1945** -By Ken Lamb  
Interviews recount war experiences and notes reflect wartime Milton. 140 pages, 170 photos. **Copies \$19.95**

**Milton Area Biographies** -By Alex Cooke A reference on more than 100 people from Milton's past who died before 1930. **Soft copy \$18.95, Binder Copy \$25.00**

**Moments in History, Reflections of Halton's County Town 1833-1865** -By Jim Dills  
A 200 page illustrated hard back book of "moments" which reflect Milton's growth and development.  
**Copies \$39.95**

**Walking Milton's Main St. in the 1920s** -By T. A. Hutchinson A light hearted introduction to the people and times of an early Milton.  
**Copies \$5.00**

**Most books are available from Smithbooks in Milton Mall or Harris Stationery downtown.**

**All are available from Publications Chair Ed Goodall 878-6613 or by writing Milton Historical Society, P.O. Box 85, Milton, Ont. L9T 2Y3**



### Milton Historical Society

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

The Journal is published three times a year.

#### Annual Memberships

Single \$7; Family \$10; Students \$5;  
Life \$60

## Author's family welcomed; our latest book featured

Not many speakers have their words celebrated 35 years after the event.

But a talk given by the late Thomas A. Hutchinson, a Milton lawyer, has just appeared in book form, "Reminiscing, Walking Milton's Main Street in the 1920s".

The original speech text, illustrated by some photos from Jim Dills' collection, has just been published by the Society. The 32-page text is being sold (\$5) by Smithbooks, Harris Stationery and Spice O' Life.

At our November meeting Audrea Lear-Costigan introduced and presented books to T. A. Hutchinson's widow, Mary, her daughter Joan (Goodchild) Nelimarkka and Mr. Hutchinson's daughter Donna Baldwin.

## Heritage program Sun. Feb. 16 now taking award nominations

The pieces are falling into place for a lively Heritage Day program at Hugh Foster Hall Sunday, Feb. 16.

Jim Dills will begin his popular history walk in Victoria Park at 1:30. Strollers will get back to the Hall just in time for the heritage awards ceremonies starting at 2:15.

Our distinctive limestone-mounted plaques will be presented to winners in four categories – heritage education,

### ***Our March meeting: Evergreen Cemetery***

At our **March 20** meeting in Hugh Foster Hall Mike Ledwith will speak on the 115-year history of Milton's Evergreen Cemetery.

Mike, a former Milton mayor, has served on the Cemetery Board for about 25 years; for more than 20 years he was president. He was succeeded by Marjorie Powys about a year ago.

Since its origin in 1881 the cemetery has operated as a non-profit public company.

Mike will bring along some of the company's early minute books to illustrate his talk.

writing, photography/art and architectural excellence.

Displays, singers, perhaps a bagpiper or two, and goodies ensure an exciting event for all ages.

Nominations for the awards may be made to Bruce Carlin (875-4588) by January 6.

### **Westward Ho**

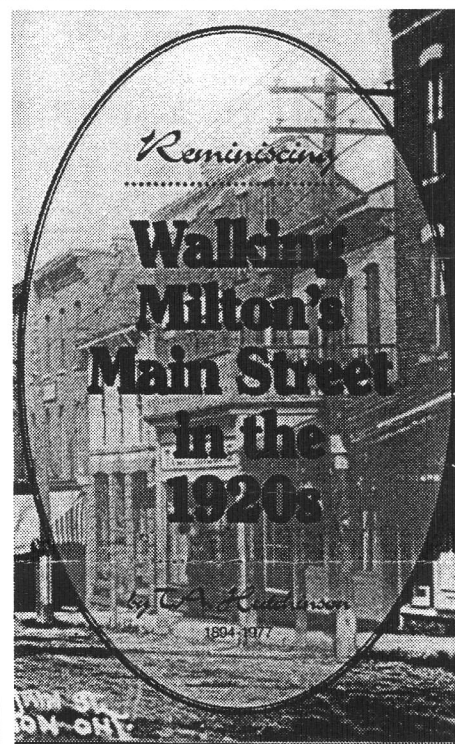
In late November Janet and George Wachmann set out by car for their new home on Salt Spring Island, B. C. It was George's seventh road trip since earlier this year when they decided to sell their historic home on Tremaine Road.

### ***Our April meeting sets musical note***

Many natives of this area will be in tune with our **April 17** meeting in Hugh Foster Hall.

Jean Somerville of Acton will give us the background of the Frank family of Nassagaweya with emphasis on their music.

Jean is the daughter of Andy Frank, leader of the well-remembered "Sodbusters" band.



### ***North Halton revisited at our January meeting***

John McDonald has done a lot of research in North Halton and we'll see the results of his persistence at our **Jan. 16** meeting in Hugh Foster Hall. The meeting starts at 8 p.m.

John will show slides of Limehouse, Georgetown and other North Halton communities.

We'll also have the opportunity to question John about his updated book "Halton Sketches Revisited", which has been selling well since it was published a few months ago.

### ***John Ladell sets us straight on Halton's early surveys***

Author John Ladell is well qualified for his talk at our **Feb. 20** meeting in Hugh Foster Hall.

He will tell us about some of the political and military factors behind the early surveys in this area. John became familiar with the subject in researching his 1993 book "They Left Their Mark, Surveyors and their role in the settlement of Ontario."

He will illustrate his talk with transparencies; he'll bring a copy of his book along, too.

## February show to include items from our archives

Seventy items from our archives will be on display from **Feb. 24-28** at Milton District High School.

The exhibition is being organized by the Society's archivist, Gail Richardson. As part of her studies at the University of Toronto (Rare Books and Manuscripts) Gail put together an exhibition catalogue for a small Ontario town - Milton.

This catalogue and the objects it describes are the features of the display.

Gail expects the students and other visitors will be intrigued by our historic books, photos and oddities such as a pair

## Mayor's levee Jan. 1 features local artists

Artists - past and present - will be the stars of the New Year's Day levee at the Town Hall. The doors open at 1:30 p.m. for the two hour celebration on Jan. 1.

Many local artists have been invited to display their works - each will have a "corner" to meet visitors and discuss their work.

As in other years Mayor Gordon Krantz and Councillors will greet residents and lead building tours for first-time visitors.

Refreshments will be served under the elegant hand of Jessie Hamilton.

of cuff links designed by inventor P. L. Robertson.

Gail would like to hear from volunteers who would serve as exhibition guides 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. since she can't be there all the time. If you could spare a few hours in late February call Gail at 878-3104.

### Sad loss

Alan Stuart Knight of Halton Hills, the 21-year-old grandson of Lois Knight, died November 17 in a car accident. The tragedy occurred near the intersection of the Fourth Line and 15 Sideroad.

### Sometimes we get lucky research comes to us

After the Ontario Historical Society Bulletin carried a note about our research project on P. L. Robertson we had a telephone call from Toronto writer Jim Packham.

Jim is doing research for a technical article about the Robertson screw. We gave him a photo of P. L.; in return we got useful information about the inventor's early patents.

Jim is publication editor of "Yesterday's Tools", newsletter of the Tool Group of Canada.

## Speakers swarm to podium at November show-and-tell

It was almost a stampede at our November 21 meeting when Walt Elliot called for show-and-tell volunteers.

A dozen speakers took part, mostly to tell about school history.

Adeline Mackay read the message written by J. M. Denyes in 1938 when he stepped down after 25 years as Halton School Superintendent.

Marjorie Powys told us that Milton High School was probably the only school to have a school uniform that was optional; few depression families could afford to buy any type of new clothing.

Ruth Taylor told about her continuing efforts to identify faces in school photos taken more than 60 years ago.

Other speakers were Bruce Carlin, Jim Dills, John Ladell, Treasa and Ken Lamb, Peggy and Craig Reid, Marsha Waldie and Ad Woodley.

## Marie Clements to ring in 1997

Marie Clements has been chosen to ring in the New Year at Victoria Park. In tolling the midnight bell Dec. 31 Marie will set the stage for the art theme at the Mayor's levee next day at the Town Hall. Sixteen of Marie's oil paintings were sold at a recent show in Milton.

Since suffering a stroke last year Marie, who is left-handed, hasn't done any oil painting. But she has started sketching with her right hand.

A patient at Milton District Hospital, the artist hopes to be transferred to Allendale where she would have more room to deploy her oils.

## Seeks PC nomination

John Challinor wants to go to Ottawa. John, a Town councillor and a life member of the Society, announced November 24th he is seeking the Progressive Conservative nomination in the coming federal election. The nomination meeting is scheduled for a date in February at E. C. Drury High School.

### Dates to Remember

Dec. 19	Christmas party, Ontario Ag. Museum	8:00 p.m.
Dec. 31	Bell Ringing, Victoria Park	11:30 p.m.
Jan. 1	Mayor's Levee, Town Hall	1:30 p.m.
Jan. 16	Regular meeting Hugh Foster Hall	8:00 p.m.
	<i>Speaker John McDonald</i>	
Feb. 16	Heritage Awards, Hugh Foster Hall	1:30 p.m.
Feb. 20	Regular meeting, Hugh Foster Hall	8:00 p.m.
	<i>Speaker John Ladell</i>	
Mar. 20	Regular meeting, Hugh Foster Hall	8:00 p.m.
	<i>Speaker Mike Ledwith</i>	





# The Journal

Volume 11 Number 2

Published by the Milton Historical Society

September 1  
1996



Saturday September 14 Rain or Shine

## *Ad Woodley will describe how his UEL family beat huge odds*

At our Sept. 19 meeting Ad Woodley will talk about the desperate conditions faced by his ancestors and other Loyalists when they arrived in southern Ontario more than 200 years ago. The program begins at 8 p.m. in Hugh Foster Hall.

Ad's family (Ballantynes) were among the first settlers in the bush where Cambridge (Galt) now

stands. With oxen providing the power they crossed the Niagara River near modern Buffalo. Ad's "foremother" learned the Mohawk language, a crucial asset in the Loyalists' fight for survival.

Ad, a long-time member of our Society, arrived in this area about 75 years ago. He and Reta farmed on Bronte Street, just south of Milton District Hospital.

## *Dig out your school pics for our November fun*

Show-and-tell sessions are among our most interesting programs. Lots of fun, too.

We're back at it Nov. 21. This time the subject is school pictures. But for our purposes "pictures" includes yearbooks, report cards and almost anything with a school flavour. Bring in your

treasures and tell us all about them.

Jim Dills promises a copy of his pamphlet "Indelible Imprint", a history of the Bruce St. School, for the first 10 participants.

For this November meeting we'll be back in Hugh Foster Hall, of course. As usual we'll begin at 8 p.m.

## **Here's how we can have fun and help save Ag Museum**

Former president Walt Elliot is directing a special appeal to members - help save the Ontario Agricultural Museum now and have a wonderful time doing it.

Walt is co-ordinator of a special event at the Museum Saturday Sept. 14. It's a fund-raiser for the group fighting to keep the Museum operating in 1997 and well into the 21st century. Provincial funding ends next spring.

The museum is on Tremaine Rd./Town Line between Steeles Ave. and Regional Road 9 (Campbellville Road).

Tickets are \$35 for adults (children under 12 free); \$20 is considered a charitable donation and receipts for income tax will be mailed. Tickets purchased in advance also include lunch of beef-on-a-bun and a drink.

Tickets are on sale at the Museum's gift shop, Delacourts, North End Nissan, Mike's Barber Shop, the Chamber of Commerce office, Halton Co-op. Walt (876-3377) and Jim Dills (878-6061) also have tickets available. Visa or Master Card holders may order by phone by calling toll free to 1-888-835-5002.

We can also show our support by making a donation. Cheques should be made out to "Foundation for Rural Living - ORHPC" and mailed to ORHPC, PO. Box

281, Milton, L9T 4N9.

"People all across the province have been telling us how much the Museum means to them," Walt says. "This special day is a unique chance to translate our feelings into tangible support. Ontario's Rural Heritage Preservation Committee has been hard at work for months on ways to save the Museum. A strong turnout will give the group a big boost. And it will tell the Provincial government that we are serious about our support for this wonderful institution."

Walt promises a fun-packed day - from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Dozens of attractions include musical entertainment, clogging and line dancing, farm-toy show and sale, 30 historic buildings with interpreters on duty, horse demonstrations, quilt collection, etc. Wagons will be on hand to take us from one attraction to another throughout the 80-acre site.

Walt had a timely reminder. Buy your tickets in advance and take advantage of a free lunch.

## *Can you help?*

Walt Elliot is co-ordinator of the Fall Festival at the Museum Sat. Sept. 14 and needs volunteers for various tasks. Please call Walt at 876-3377 if you can help.

## Signs of Chamber's recognition decorate Hugh Foster Hall

Our Society was named Civic Organization of the Year by the local Chamber of Commerce. President Helen Comber accepted the award at the mid-April Community Awards gala.

Five days later at our April 18 meeting the accolades lined a wall of Hugh Foster Hall, on display behind the speaker's lectern. In addition to the handsome metal plaque and certificate of recognition from the Chamber, tributes came from the town, Halton Region, Halton-Peel MP Julian Reed and Premier Michael Harris.

At our session the president gave credit to members of the executive and asked them to stand in recognition.

The Society was founded in the late 1970s when the vacated courthouse/jail building was threatened with demolition. Our group sparked the campaigns that persuaded the Town to buy the building from the Region for \$1. Several

years and \$3,000,000 later the historic building began a new life as our town hall.

Jim Dills was the society's first president. Other "originals" who remain include Jessie Hamilton, Don Hayward, Brad Clements, Len McNeil, Audrea Lear-Costigan, and Shelagh Conway.

## October meeting marks North Halton libraries centennial

We're off to Georgetown for our Oct. 17 meeting that celebrates the 100th anniversary of important heritage chapters. The Georgetown library opened in 1895 and Acton's three years later.

Our meeting is one of many events over several years to mark the important milestones.

We'll learn a lot about the close co-operation of the Georgetown library and the Esquering Historical Society in preserving and celebrating local heritage.

Another treat will be served up by John McDonald. John will tell us about his just-published "Halton Sketches Revisited", an expanded version of the "Sketches" launched 20 years ago by Dills Printing & Publishing. The new book contains more than a dozen additional chapters, including material on writer Lucy Maud Montgomery and department-store founder Timothy Eaton.

The library is on Church Street in Georgetown. If you would like to car-pool please be at the Milton Town Hall parking lot by 7:15 p.m.

## Treasured Memento

Marjorie Powys is the proud owner of a liqueur set of Venetian glass. It was originally presented to her father, Frank Hadley, by inventor/industrialist P. L. Robertson.

Marjorie says her father took a lot of ribbing about the gift because he was a committed teetotaler.

## Lillian Farlow dies in Milton

Former member Lillian (Transom) Farlow, 89, died May 18 in Milton.

A native of the area, Lillian in her earlier years had been a telephone operator on Main Street. She and her late husband, Gord, afterwards operated a store in Milton Heights. Gord died in 1981, also on May 18.

In 1968 Lillian wrote an article on the history of All Saints Anglican Church at Milton Heights which is on file in our Society archives.

Lillian leaves two sons - Art in Milton and Gord in Sarnia; both are retired. Her daughter, Jean, is a minister in Peterborough.

## West is new home for the Wachmanns

Janet and George Wachmann are looking forward to a nine-months sailing season in their home on Saltspring Island, B.C. George drove west in early August to take possession of their new house while Janet stayed here directing efforts to sell their historic home on Tremaine Road.

George has been a long-time member of the Society's executive, most recently as special events director. Earlier he represented the Society on two committees that researched a new home for the Halton Region Museum.

## Members mourn Tom Howard

Tom Howard, a long-time member, died May 23.

Tom had made his home in town since 1970, after he sold the family farm northeast of the intersection of Guelph Line and Steeles Avenue, to Halton Region Conservation Authority.

When archaeologists deduced that an Indian village had occupied the slopes above Crawford Lake it was no surprise to Tom; he often found arrowheads and other artifacts while working the fields.

Tom was born in 1917 on the original farm just east of the Indian Village; Bruce Trail hikers often stop to inspect the ruins.

The Howards, Tom's grandparents, came to this area from England about 100 years ago. Tom leaves three daughters and two sons - Lorna (McDougall) and Karen (Brown) in Calgary and Nancy (Service), Lorne and Jim in Milton.



## Milton Historical Society

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

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### Annual Memberships

Single \$7; Family \$10; Students \$5;  
Life \$60

***Heritage gardening program:*****Few blooms but talks fruitful**

Thanks to the late spring there weren't many blooms at the Town Hall gardens May 16. But that didn't stop our Horticultural Society speakers from presenting a well-rounded program on the Town project and heritage gardening.

Jennifer Mirosolin and Marion Detlor described the history and layout for the rose and jailyard plantings. Begun in 1987, the gardens were officially opened in 1990. The original perennial garden was about 18 inches deep; today the depth is eight feet and there are few empty spaces.

The Town buys the plants and members of the Milton and District Horticultural Society look after the garden. This means planting, watering, weeding and mulching for winter.

At the follow-up session in Hugh Foster Hall Jennifer showed slides of

the garden at its summer peak. Easy to understand why it has become so popular for wedding photos.

Marion read from early gardening books - Victorian Gardens (1873) and The Joy of Gardening (1910). The flowery, even mystical language produced many smiles.

**Insurance Policy**

Marion also discussed early flower and herb gardens and praised the work of heritage groups in preserving many seed varieties. In these days of seedless hybrids, she said, these collections represent an insurance policy not only for gardeners but for our very food supply.

Marion is Associate Director, District 6, Ontario Horticultural Society. She and Jennifer are former presidents of the Milton Horticultural Society; both played key roles in establishing and improving the Town Hall gardens.

**Chief sparks our interest in firemen's long history**

When he spoke to us in the Steeles Avenue firehall June 20 Chief Harold Penson condensed 140 years of history into 25 minutes. He then gave us 30 potluck diners a tour of the station's half dozen modern vehicles and the town's first motorized vehicle, a 1922 International truck, now restored.

The firehall auditorium was an ideal setting for the Chief's talk and for our group. The walls were covered with mementoes of the department and the hundreds who have served in it: fire helmets, honour rolls, photos, lights, sirens, fire extinguishers.

The Steeles avenue site is one of three Milton stations; the others are on Derry Road and in Campbellville. Chief Penson leads ten full-time firefighters and 47 volunteers. Many more want in: the volunteers' waiting list has 150 names.

Some other points made by the chief:

- Volunteers have returned the 1922 truck to vintage condition with wooden spokes and genuine gold-leaf mudguard stripes. (If you think you see it on parade some time Ontario license plate 184 345 will clinch the identification.) Original cost: \$3,500; the modern ladder truck we saw cost about 200 times as much.

- When the Martin Mill burned in February 1963 firefighters pumped water into the ruins for two and a half days.

- The Fire Department has greatly benefited from community donations. The Canadian Legion has donated many thousands of dollars over the years.

- Because of equipment weaknesses evident in fighting the Milton Inn fire on Main Street (Oct. 1973) the Town Council decided to spend more than \$500,000 on a vehicle with an 85-foot aerial ladder.

***Three speakers pinch hit for rural group headliner***

Because of a death in the family, speaker Wally Knapp missed our April 18 meeting. Wally is vice-chair of the Ontario Rural Heritage Preservation Committee.

In his absence Jim Dills, Walt Elliot and Peter Ledwith brought us up to date on efforts to keep the Ontario Agricultural Museum open beyond this season.

Peter, son of Mike Ledwith, has worked more than 20 years at the museum and is now curator of the extensive collections.

Peter explained that the Agricultural Museum is the largest public museum ever to face closure in Canada. Its 35 buildings occupy 80 acres; before the cutback it had 25 regular employees and about 60 part-time workers.

Walt and Jim, who represent the Milton Historical Society on the Preservation Committee, outlined some of the organization's plans. Walt estimated that about \$1 million would have to be raised this year to ensure that the museum could continue operations in 1997.

Members showed a lively interest; Walt Elliot reluctantly closed the question period after the panel had responded to a dozen inquiries.

***About our members***

Former member Jean Robertson lost her husband, Hartley, several weeks ago. Hartley died in Palmerston where the Robertsons had been living since moving from Milton last year.

Alex Cooke, outstanding researcher and prolific author, lost his wife, Ruth (Walsh), in early July. A native of Guelph, Ruth earlier had worked many years in the office of Dr. Donald Aikenhead in Milton.

Ruth Lockie is up and around again after suffering a broken hip in a fall at her home. Ruth spent five weeks in hospital.

## If you like digging for facts you'll love our "P.L." project

We're off to a good start in our plan to produce a book about P. L. Robertson by 1998, the 90th anniversary of the inventor's arrival in Milton.

Already several members and former plant employees have "taped" their memories and contributed photos and other mementoes. But much more needs to be done over the next few months.

Here are some of the "holes" we're trying to fill.

- Just before World War I "P.L." played an important part in organizing Recess Screws Limited of Gillingham, Kent, England. Have you any information about this project or of "P.L.'s" many other visits to Europe?

- Before coming to Milton "P.L." reportedly worked as a salesman in Hamilton and perhaps elsewhere. We would like to know more about his early career. Who did he work for? And where did he go to school in Hamilton?

- Apart from an incendiary article in *Saturday Night* (1910) have you any clippings about "P.L.'s" patent disputes before the first World War.

- One of the important items "P.L."

developed to promote sales was a kit consisting of his patented screwdrivers



*P. L. Robertson, inventor and industrialist is the current subject being researched for a Historical Society book to co-incide with the 90th anniversary in 1998 of the start of the P. L. Robertson Manufacturing Co's. activities in Milton*

and screws. Do you own such a kit, or do you know someone who does? And by any chance, do you know the year that this kit was advertised on the front page of the London Times and the Manchester Guardian?

- After the death of "P.L." in 1951 many of his antiques and other treasures were sold in Toronto. Do you have any information about this sale?

If you have any clues to any of these mysteries please call Ken Lamb at 878-6391. We would also love to hear from you if you have any photos or anecdotes to contribute. And, of course, if you want to help track down some of the inventor's background outside of Milton call Ken or talk to him at the September meeting.

## Plan open house after refurbishing St. Paul's sanctuary

The community is invited Saturday Sept. 14, to tour the newly refurbished sanctuary at St. Paul's United Church and the Christian education facilities. St. Paul's is at 123 Main St.

The sanctuary has been out of use since late May while contractors repaired plaster and set up a forest of scaffolding to repaint the interior.

New colours in the sanctuary reflect the Victorian era when the present church was built. The original pine floor has been refinished with aisles carpeted.

Special historical material is being prepared for the open house and Ad Woodley will be describing the historical background of this century-plus building.

A special drawing of the original Wesleyan Church chapel, built on the site in 1852, has been done by Don Hayward as part of the church's historical background material.

Photos of the refurbishing project will also be on display.

The open house is from 9 a.m. to noon.

## Fall schedule of publications will add to Historical Society work in print

Two publications are tentatively scheduled for release by the Society this fall.

Many have chuckled at the tongue-in-cheek typewritten manuscript that local lawyer Tommy Hutchinson wrote some years ago. He remembered Milton's Main Street in the 1920s and the colorful characters he met as he "walked" along the street.

The Society has undertaken to print the pamphlet, with the permission of Tommy's family, since it provides an excellent reflection, not only of the street and its people, but also the features of a time before television, gas powered lawn mowers, and when cars were far less common.

The 40-page indexed pamphlet will

be available early in the fall. The price has not yet been finalized but it will be modest.

The second volume of Alex Cooke's biographies is also planned for publication this fall. Last year's binder has been extremely popular. Biographies contained in it were of those who had died before 1930. This year's volume will include those to a more current date.

Most of Alex's work on the book has been completed and it is slowly working its way through the editing, typesetting, proofing, and printing process that is required.

Those who registered their purchase of Volume I of this biographical series will have the first opportunity to add Volume II to their library.





# The Journal

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1996



The "Song Spinners" led by Joyce Hayward (at piano) opened and closed the Heritage Awards ceremony Feb. 15. The "Spinners" are from the Milton Seniors' Activity Centre

## Crowd overflows Foster hall for annual Heritage ceremony

It was standing room only Feb. 15 in Hugh Foster Hall at our seventh annual Heritage Awards program. In a colorful ceremony eight winners received plaques mounted on limestone salvaged by Brad Clements from the demolished Bruce Street School.

The event is jointly sponsored by our Society and Heritage Milton (LACAC).

The event opened with a flourish as Jim Douglas piped the winners into the hall; the winners included the piper's parents, Jim and Patricia.

Led by Joyce Hayward, the Song Spinners Chorus from the Milton Seniors' Activity Centre sang at the beginning and the close of the 75-minute program.

Shortly before the opening Jim Dills completed his "history walk" around Victoria Park and the Town Hall.

A huge quilt created by students of Martin Street School provided a cheery note in the hall. Other displays came from The Canadian Legion, Robert Baldwin School, Milton Historical Society, Milton Heritage (LACAC) and Paul and Judy Boivin.

Bruce Carlin kept things moving as master of ceremonies; Jessie Hamilton was in charge of refreshments. Those who presented awards were MP Bonnie Brown, Councillor John Challinor, Brad Clements, Society President Helen Comber, Past LACAC chairs Val Grimshaw and Don Hayward, Board of Education Trustee Tim Kingsbury and Mayor Gordon Krantz.

## John Wylie tells of hard times at Ontario Agricultural Museum

Director John Wylie at our January meeting described how the Ontario Agricultural Museum was making the drastic changes brought about by cuts in government funding.

The government announced the museum's \$1.8 million budget was to be cut by 50 per cent by April 1 this year. Funding will be eliminated completely as of March 31, 1997.

John said half the museum staff would lose their jobs at the end of next month and the remainder by March 31, 1997. The staff consists of 23 full-time

## For latest on Ag. Museum future don't miss our April 18 meeting

Tremendous efforts are being made to keep the Ontario Agricultural Museum a going concern even though provincial funding ends March 31 next year.

Wally Knapp, speaker at our April 18 meeting, is in a key position to tell us how the battle is going. Formerly agricultural director of the Royal Winter Fair, Wally is vice-chair of the Rural Heritage Preservation Committee. Its members have been working on plans to keep the museum alive since Nov. 30, the day after the government announcement.

Broadly, the group faces a double challenge: 1) to convince the government to make the Milton museum site available to a body representing rural Ontario and 2) to come up with programs and activities that would make the project self-supporting.

This has all the signs of a fascinating evening.

and 29 part-time employees.

Programs will be scaled down this summer: the popular school programs will continue from late April to June.

John expressed concern about the loss of the museum library and disposition of the world-renowned archives.

At the same time he was encouraged by strong support from individuals throughout the province and by the efforts of farm suppliers and such groups as the Halton Federation of Agriculture and a committee formed to preserve Ontario's rural heritage.

## Many have fond memories of Roxy/Princess theatre

More than 40 people at our Jan. 18 meeting enjoyed a lot of laughs as members reminisced about our former downtown theatre.

The program marked the 100th anniversary of moving pictures. On Dec. 28, 1895 in Paris the first paying movie audience watched a 20-minute film.

Ad Woodley, a farm boy in the 1920s, recalled how theatre employee Reg. Marshall took pity on penniless, movie-struck youngsters. Suddenly discovering a job that had to be done on the front seats, Reg. left the door unguarded so the youngsters could sneak in.

Movies weren't the only entertainment. Ad loved an Australian showman who launched a boomerang into the audience. Ad thought it would take someone's head off. But the weapon curved smoothly back to the thrower's hand.

The Chatauqua group from New York State came here for many years; the only inducement they needed was the advance sale of 30 tickets.

### Health Tips

Another downtown attraction was the yearly visit of the Medicine Man peddling his "Four-Star Elixir" for \$1 a bottle. He promised it would cure just about any ailment. Ad was more impressed with the scantily-clad songstress who trilled "Have You Ever Been Lonely, Have You Ever Been Blue?"

Bruce MacNab worked as a theater usher in the 1930s. His free passes gave him the feeling of a big-time spender in those depression years. He was taken by the endurance of his boss, Reg. Marshall. Reg. could take care of 24 bottles of beer at the occasional all-day pub session. He didn't cause any disturbance there. But he broke the trance at a local meeting of spiritualists when he began snoring at a transcendent moment.

Mike Ledwith, who came to Milton in 1946, spoke about the theatre's travelogues. His favorite commentator was a

Baptist minister from Toronto. There was wide suspicion that the good man smoked—a gossip's dream. During a break in the program the minister visited the projection room. On his return Mike smelled smoke and noted a bit of cigarette paper stuck to the reverent lip. Case closed.

Ruth Taylor still relives the thrill of watching "Cinderella" in 1949. The Roxy also has family ties. Ruth's great uncle Tom Hume built a frame theatre on Main Street in 1912. It was destroyed by fire three years later; in 1916 he replaced it with the brick building that became the Princess and later the Roxy.

Ruth displayed dozens of photos she took when film crews produced two movies here in the 1980s. Her husband, Don, had a role in the CBS mini-series "I'll Take Manhattan" and many other local people took part as "extras". The Town Hall and the cenotaph were prominent parts of the "set". Most of the MGM film "Mrs. Soffel" was shot in this area.

## Mike's numbers in we're well in black

We spent more than we took in last year but we're still solvent and the 1996 picture looks good.

Figures presented by auditor Mike Ledwith at our Feb. 15 meeting showed that we paid about \$3600 to re-print our "walk" booklet and to publish "Milton Biographies". This was the big factor in a \$4,000 drop in our current account during the year. At year-end it was \$956.85

Mike said the current account position should reverse this year from sales of the two books.

Our total bank assets at Dec. 31 last year were \$14,735.26; we had no liabilities.

Mike paid tribute to treasurer Jessie Hamilton for her excellent records.

## Local experts talk on heritage gardens

In the past few years the gardens in and around the Town Hall courtyard have caught the public imagination.

At our May 16 meeting we'll hear from three ardent gardeners who had a lot to do with planning those gardens. Jennifer Mirosolin, Marion Detlor and Sean James are executives of the Milton District Horticultural Society, which keeps the plants looking great.

Our speakers will take us on a tour of the area pointing out special features, especially the extensive plantings of heritage roses. This part of the program starts at 7.30 at the garden, weather permitting.

Following the outdoor session we'll walk a few yards to Hugh Foster Hall where we will hear more about important advances in heritage gardening.

## Three-time author joins our Society

John Ladell, who recently joined our Society, has authored three books. John and his late wife, Monica, collaborated on *Inheritance—Ontario's Century Farms, Past and Present*, first published in 1979, and *A Farm in the Family* in 1985. John's most recent work, *They Left Their Mark, Surveyors and Their Role in the Settlement of Ontario* appeared in 1993. He worked on it for five years.



### Milton Historical Society

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

The Journal is published three times a year.

#### Annual Memberships

Single \$7; Family \$10; Students \$5; Life \$60

## Full house greets Laura Secord on lively visit to our stage

Finally, at our March 21 meeting, we got the real story on Laura Secord's historic 20-mile walk. It had to be authentic, it came from Laura herself.

At least that was the idea behind the drama staged by the Mississauga South Historical Society. About 60 crowded into Hugh Foster Hall for the 100-minute play.

On stage the heroine comes back to life in 1996 to visit Milton. She is interviewed by Eric Gibson, president of the Mississauga South group. (Patrick Watson's earlier CBC "Interviews" with long-dead icons provided the model.)

The format gave Laura a double perspective. As a woman born more than 200 years ago, she described the personal terrors of the 1812 War. In her Milton reincarnation she found humour and mystery in horseless carriages, telephones, tv and other modern miracles.

### Recognition Delayed

The play explained why it took almost 50 years for Laura's heroism to become widely known. At the time of the battle of Beaver Dams she wanted her role kept secret: she feared revenge by the Americans, who lost many soldiers in the fight, and who continued to control the Niagara area where she lived.

Later she sought help from the government and supported her position by detailing her wartime role. She eventually gained government acceptance. And in 1860 when the Prince of Wales presented her with a £100 gold award she finally became a public figure.

In 1913, one hundred years after the epic walk, Laura won new recognition. Ontario entrepreneur Frank O'Connor wanted instant recognition for his new candy firm. Laura has been on the box ever since.

Professional actress Elizabeth Clarke played the role of Laura. Eric Gibson, who did much of the writing and research, was the interviewer. Eric's wife and fellow-researcher, Marian, was a narrator as was Anneli Lees, Laura

Secord Inc., Oakville. Ruth Taylor of our Society played herself, a great-great-granddaughter of Laura Secord's sister Elizabeth.

### Bess Robinson has died at 84

Bess Robinson died Dec. 9; Bess and her late husband, Mel, were among the founders of our Society 17 years ago.

Orphaned as an infant, Bess was raised in the home of her uncle Tom Coxe. They lived at first on a farm north of No. 5 Side Road, now the site of Greystone Golf Club; their home is now occupied by Greystone staff.

When they moved into town Thomas Coxe built an identical home at Martin and Woodward, now occupied by the Delacourts.

Bess and Mel were teachers; for a time they taught together at the Bruce Street School.

### Keep up Canada's wartime Corvette

Our long-time member, Marion Detlor, lived in the Maritimes during the War and later attended Dalhousie University in Halifax. She often saw Canada's fighting ships bucking the Atlantic in their wartime roles.

Not surprisingly Marion has taken a special interest in Canada's only surviving World War II corvette, HMCS Sackville docked in Halifax next to "Bluenose", the famous schooner.

The corvette is maintained in wartime condition. Those who pay for what needs to be done are caring veterans and their friends through the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust.

Now that some of the supporters have passed on Marion hopes others with a soft spot for the Canadian Navy will take up the challenge. Call Marion (878-7397) or write: Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, HMCS Sackville, FMO Halifax, B3K 2X0

## Potluck at firehall opens June meeting

Our June 20 meeting is a double feature. We'll meet at 6.30 at the Steeles Avenue Fire Hall; that's on the north side of Steeles, just west of Ontario Street. We should be ready to sit down at the potluck supper by seven. We'll be eating indoors – no worries about rain or mosquitoes.

Afterwards Fire Chief Harold Penson will tell us how fire-fighting in Milton has changed over the years. We'll also hear about the 1922 fire engine that has been faithfully restored and is now on display at the station.

### Jim Dills tells what's in a street name

Even though a spirited water chlorination meeting nearby "stole" some of his audience Jim Dills had well over 20 appreciative listeners Feb. 15 for his talk on Milton's street names.

Late in our session Marsha Waldie hurried in from the chlorination hubbub at the Optimist Centre with forms for us to register our individual ideas on chlorination.

Early developers often named streets after family members: Elizabeth, James, Mary, Joseph, John, Margaret are among more than a dozen "first names" Milton streets. About 30 local streets bear the names of prominent families, such as Martin, Robertson, Syer, Gowland, McNabb. Formerly there was a Foster street commemorating pioneer developer Hugh Foster but this road is now part of Charles Street. Hugh Foster Hall is the only recognition of the family name although Hugh St. adjoins the former county (now town) property.

Milborough Line, Jim said, represents a typical Canadian compromise; the road marks the boundary between Milton and Flamborough Township.

When Jim asked his audience for research help Mike Ledwith, Bruce MacNab and Jack Charlton were among those who remembered those who gave names to half a dozen streets.





Bruce Carlin co-ordinated the event and presided.

## Heritage Award Winners recognized

### Education

Martin Street School was recognized for a two-day celebration last May, marking its 75th anniversary.

Students, teachers and parents pitched in to craft a many-sided program. Each classroom concentrated on one of the eight decades since the school opened.

Fourth grade student Creighton Reed gave a detailed description of planning and research.



Student Creighton Reed, left in front row, described Martin Street School's winning project. Presenter Tim Kingsbury is at extreme left.

Obviously impressed by the anniversary atmosphere, a visiting graduate admitted he was the "historic" prankster who once had cut the power supply to the entire school.

### Education

Robert Baldwin School's award-winning class project was about the Niagara Escarpment. It told how the Escarpment had affected the lives of local people, especially farmers, lumber men and quarry workers.

Helped by teachers Mary Hancock and Barb Holmes, the grade four students visited museums, researched local history texts, interviewed Milton historians, including Alex Cooke, and hiked the Bruce Trail from Rattlesnake Point to Crawford Lake. Then they put all the pieces neatly



Teacher Mary Hancock and presenter Brad Clements join in celebration by winning class from Robert Baldwin School.

together in a teaching display for the benefit of other students and parents.

### Architectural

Last fall Paul and Judy Boivin moved into their handsome new home on Thomas Street. They were surprised and delighted to win an award for "appropriate in-fill construction in a heritage neighborhood."

The Queen Anne style home is across from the Milton Fairgrounds on a lot severed from the property formerly occupied by Dr. Mary Rudyk.

The home was the last project taken on by Cambridge building Bill Hunter, a family friend, before his retirement. They're still friends.

### Architectural

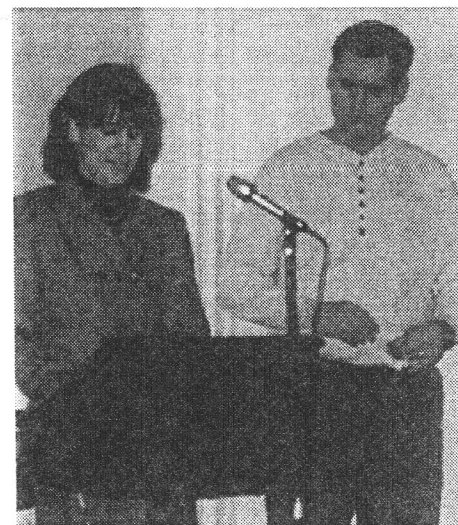
Jim and Patricia Douglas took an award for restoration of a designated property. They have been busy, one project after another, since they moved into the home

at 100 Victoria Street almost ten years ago.

The house, built in 1887 for merchant John Bastedo, was designated in 1991.

Many members will recall we visited the Douglas home during our house tour several years ago. It was also among those featured in our book *Historic Homes of Milton*.

Presenter John Challinor, second from right, shares limelight with award-winning Douglas family.



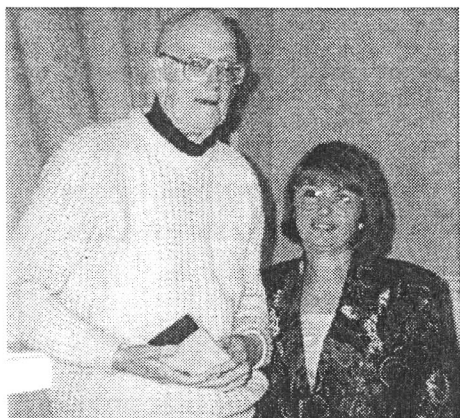
Thomas Street housebuilders Judy and Paul Boivin explain their project.





## Writing

## Heritage Award Winners recognized



Biographer Alex Cooke and our president Helen Comber.

Alex Cooke's award recognizes his latest accomplishment in a 40-year heritage career.

Alex compiled more than 100 life histories for his book *Milton Biographies* published last fall.

A founding member of our Society, Alex is equally well-known as a "Friend" of Halton Region Museum and for his work with the Halton/Peel Genealogical Society.

And there's more to come. Alex has completed more than 100 additional biographies for a second volume about Milton residents.

## Writing

The book *Milton Remembers World War II* produced a heritage award for Ken Lamb.

Ken taped memories of men and women involved in World War II. Originally these were meant for our archives. But thanks to The Canadian Legion and Jim Dills' publishing know-how, the recordings were converted into the 140-page *Milton Remembers*. For Ken it was two years of intensive activity between the interviews and production of the finished publication.

By mid-year we'll completely repay The Canadian Legion, which contributed the \$10,000 publishing costs.

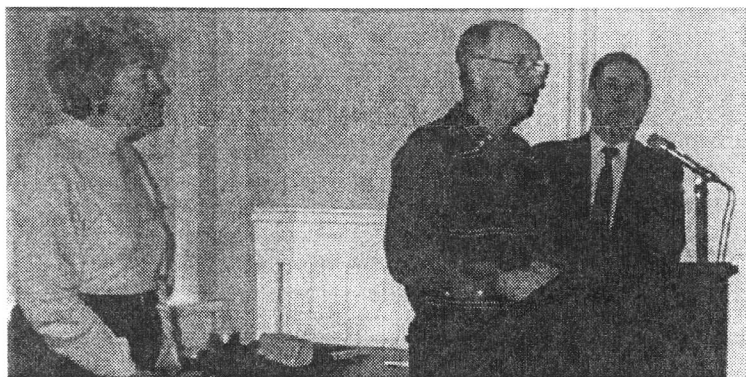


Writer Ken Lamb, left, takes careful handoff from Mayor Gordon Krantz.

Money from future sales will go to the Society; to date more than 600 copies have been sold.

All photos  
courtesy  
of  
Anne Elliot

## Architectural



Ann and Don Corker recall conservation headaches under sympathetic eye of presenter Don Hayward, right.

Don and Ann Corker, next-door neighbours of the Douglas family, took the honours for conserving a non-designated property.

They bought the 140-year-old cottage (94 Victoria St.) in 1994 and have been hard at work ever since. At one stage the walls were chained together over the winter to keep them "square".

During work on the floor Don discovered well-preserved newspapers put down as insulation more than 40 years ago.

## Visual



MP Bonnie Brown, presenter, recognized Canadian Legion representatives Bill Maskell, Bruce Kitchen, Fred Johnson, Bob Randall and Bruce MacNabb.

Its new museum "Remembrance Hall" on the third floor of its Charles Street building made a winner of The Royal Canadian Legion.

The project was just one of many undertaken by Milton Branch 136 to mark the 50th anniversary of World War II. Open to the public at no charge, the museum contains hundreds of photos, books, medals, uniforms and other war mementos.

Branch president Bob Randall, along with veterans Bruce MacNab, Fred Johnson and Bruce Kitchen, were on hand to accept the award.

## Walt Elliot elected to arrange programs

Former Society president Walt Elliot has returned to the executive.

At our annual meeting Jan. 18 Walt was elected program director to succeed Don and Ruth Taylor who held the position for the past two years.

Walt served as MPP for Halton North in the Liberal government of David Peterson and placed second to Ted Chudleigh in the 1995 provincial vote.

There were no other changes in the executive as Helen Comber begins her second term as president. Other board members: Marjorie Powys (past president); Jessie Hamilton (treasurer); Marsha Waldie (secretary); Ken Lamb (newsletter); George Wachmann (special events); Frank Sisson (membership); Bruce Carlin (publicity); Ed Goodall (publications); Gail Richardson and Brenda Whitlock (archives); Jim Dills, Tim Kingsbury, Jack Charlton (research); Alex Cooke (genealogy); Audrea Lear-Costigan (town liaison); Carolyn Goodall, Treasa Lamb (telephone). Mabel Parker represents the Nasagiweya Historical Society and Don Pelz represents Heritage Milton (LACAC).

## Personal Chapters . . .



✎ Bruce Carlin has taken a strong promotional role in Milton's campaign to help Deidre Scholtz. The five-year-old needs a bone marrow transplant to treat a life-threatening type of anemia. More than 2000 local people have been blood-tested in a search for a marrow donor. Deidre's parents are responsible for the tests' costs of more than \$100,000. But it seems likely that the many money-raising projects will cover the entire amount.

✎ George and Janet Wachmann are pondering a move to British Columbia. To help get a taste of the Pacific life they've arranged a June house-swap with a couple on Saltspring Island. They'll also look at possibilities on nearby Vancouver Island. The Wachmanns had spent several years planning a rural seniors housing community near Guelph Line and Britannia Road. But they had to drop the project when drillers failed to find water on the property.

✎ Marsha Waldie can't wait to ditch her leg cast and crutches and get back to work. Marsha suffered a severely dislocated ankle Feb. 20 in a two-car collision at Appleby Line and Derry Road. She was on her way to her job in Hamilton when she was hit by a car that went through a stop sign. The other driver and her young son escaped serious injury. Marsha hopes to be back on her feet by late April. Then she'll replace her car that was demolished in the accident and be on the road again.

✎ Bob Jarvis, current winner of our President's Award for maintaining heritage homes, is writing a book about freshwater sailing. *The Last Viking* traces the career of his grandfather Aemilius Jarvis who took part in some 300 lake races and won the major award, the Canada Cup, three times. As a yacht designer Aemilius collaborated with Sir Thomas Lipton, a star of the international America's Cup competition. With the book a few months from completion Bob is contacting publishers.

✎ Marie Clements, who suffered a stroke several weeks ago, is in Milton District Hospital. Marie is working hard with the physiotherapist to regain movement on her left side, get out of the wheelchair and back to the easel. Marie is an artist who paints with her left hand.

## Choose the past for the present

Never in the past has so much of Milton's history been available in print for the enjoyment of this generation and as a family pass-along.

**A Walk in Historic Milton, the County Town of Halton 1853-1974** - Just released in an expanded version the booklet provides general background on the town plus more than 40 buildings and sketches. Copies \$2

**Directory of the Members of the Municipal Council of the Town of Milton 1857-1993** - A compilation of the members fully indexed for quick reference. Copies \$5

**Milton Remembers World War II 1939-1945** -By Ken Lamb Interviews recount war experiences and notes reflect wartime Milton. 140 pages, 170 photos. Copies \$19.95

**Milton Area Biographies** -By Alex Cooke A just released reference on more than 100 people from Milton's past who died before 1930. Soft copy \$18.95, Binder Copy \$25.00

**Moments in History, Reflections of Halton's County Town 1833-1865** -By Jim Dills A 200 page illustrated hard back book of "moments" which reflect the growth and development of the Milton area from its earliest period. Copies \$39.95

**Most books are available from Smithbooks in Milton Mall or Harris Stationery downtown.**

**All are available from Publications Chair Ed Goodall 878-6613 or by writing Milton Historical Society, P.O. Box 85, Milton, Ont. L9T 2Y3**