






ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 51, Georgetown, Ontario, Canada L7G 4T1
www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca

Vol. 34 No. 2

May - June 2009



In 1934, quintuplets were born to a young rural farming couple, Elzire and Oliva Dionne , in a small homestead  outside Callander, Ontario .

The birth was attended by two midwives  and Dr.

Dafoe .



Little hope was held out for their survival, but a birth announcement was placed in the local North Bay paper.

As the days went by, their care became entrusted to Louise de Kirline and was supervised by Dr. Dafoe.



When survival seemed to be a possibility, a great escalation of support and interest blossomed. They were



taken away from their family and placed under the guardianship of the Ontario Government. From this time on they became a lucrative tourist attraction and industry.

The Quints became near and dear to the hearts of many throughout the world. They were celebrities during a time of economic depression, a fantasy life to be involved in



from afar. As they grew and returned to their family, they matured into shy



protective teens, and interest still continued.



In early adulthood the fantasy began to

unravel, first with Emilie's death in 1954



failed marriages and the death of Marie in 1970



Survivors as babies, delightful as children,



unified again in adulthood they continue to spark the interest of many as proven by their latest publication



Family Secrets. All information on the Dionne Quintuplets came from the non-profit "The Dionne Quintuplets Digitalization Project" in North Bay. All images are in the public domain and can be found at : <http://www.city.north-bay.on.ca/quints/>

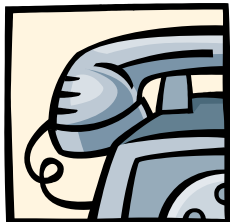


ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2009

- Wed. 13
May 2009 **The Exploitation of the Dionne Quintuplets** – It is with delight that we welcome back Donald Zaldin to speak to the EHS on the Dionne quintuplets who were born 75 years ago. In this age of multiple births hear the story and sensationalism generated by this mile stone in modern medicine.
KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Main & Church St., Georgetown, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed. 10
June 2009 **St. Stephen’s Community History** - Ken Whaley will speak about the community of St. Stephen’s Church at Hornby and will lead a short walk about of the cemetery. This will be preceded by our annual pot luck dinner. Everyone is welcome to attend. Bring your selected dish with your own plate and cutlery. Coffee and tea will be available.
ST. STEPHEN’S ANGLICAN CHURCH, Steeles Ave. at 9th Line, Hornby, Dinner @ 6 p.m.; Meeting @ 7:15 p.m.
- Sat. 20
June 2009 **Walking Tour of Georgetown** – Join local historian and author Mark Rowe on a walking tour of the Park District. It will last about one hour.
KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Main & Church St., Georgetown, 9:30 a.m.
- Wed. 1
July 2009 **Walking Tour of Glen Williams** – Join local historian Mark Rowe on a walking tour of Main Street on Canada Day. It will last about one hour.
WILLIAMS MILL, Main Street, Glen Williams, 10:00 a.m.
- Wed. 9
Sept. 2009 **Beardmore Tannery** - Well known local historian and author J.Mark Rowe will illustrate Acton’s leathertown history and explore the company that generated its leather producing reputation.
St. JOSEPH’S CATHOLIC CHURCH HALL, Church & John St., Acton, 7:30 p.m.

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE!

Refreshments served from 7:00 p.m.



Stephen Blake	905 877-8251	President
Karen Hunter	905 838-2109	Treasurer
Dawn Livingstone	905 877-6506	Secretary
Sherry Westfahl	905 873-7145	Past - President
J. Mark Rowe	905 877-9510	Archivist
Jan Raymond	905 877-9172	Publications
Marj Allan	905 877-9985	Membership
Cathy Hunt		Social

Society Notes

INTERNET CONNECTIONS

The Esquesing Historical Society has an official web site on the World Wide Web.

<www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca>

Send your e-mail to mrowe6@sympatico.ca or dawn.livingstone@sympatico.ca

EHS NEWSLETTER

John Mark Rowe prepared this newsletter with assistance from Karen Hunter and Dawn Livingstone. Submissions welcome.

You may opt to receive your newsletter sent electronically to an e-mail address you provide.

MEMBERSHIP

Our 2009 memberships stand at 74. The individual membership rate is \$10. The family or institution rate is \$12. Cheques payable to the Society can be mailed to our post box. Membership runs until February. Marj Allen, membership secretary, will accept your 2009 fee at the meetings.

ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

www.archives.gov.on.ca

The new facility is now open at York University. The address is:

The Archives of Ontario
134 Ian Macdonald Boulevard
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M7A 2C5

Telephone: 416-327-1600

ARCHIVES

The Limehouse Women's Institute have promised the care of their Tweedsmuir histories to the EHS Archives. Their books will join the Tweedsmuir histories of Halton District, Acton, Bannockburn, Dublin, Stewarttown, Georgetown, Terra Cotta. The library also has microfilm copies of several Tweedsmuir histories.

Karen Hunter continues to work away at listing the Acton Free Press negatives that are housed in the Archives. She has now completed descriptions of 15 900 negatives!

The John Sommer collection relating to the Arts community in Georgetown continues to grow.

HALTON-PEEL OGS

Four Corners Branch Library, 65 Queen St., Brampton @ 2p.m.

Call Ann Logan at 905-845-7755

May 24 – Preparing for the Conference!

STREETSVILLE HIST. SOCIETY

The Society meets the 2nd Thursday of the month (Feb, Apr, Oct, Dec), 8:00pm, at Streetsville Village Hall, 271 Queen Street South. Call Norm Potts at 905.858.0070.

The Society has launched a *Tweedsmuir History of Streetsville*, Volume 1.

Information at 905.542.1877

BRAMPTON HIST. SOCIETY

The Society meets at Heart Lake Presbyterian Church, 25 Ruth Ave. at 7:15

May 21 - *Michael Seaman* Charles Henry Sheppard Estate and the Aurora Bunker.

June 18 *Walter Lewis* A Brief History of the Great Lakes ... with some sightings of the River Palace

MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society meets at the Waldie Blacksmith Shop at 16 James Street at 8p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

May 21 "Exploitation of the Dionne Quintuplets: A Canadian Tragedy" with Donnie Zaldin

June 18 –Annual pot luck dinner

NASAGIWEYA HIST. SOCIETY

The Nasagiweya Historical Society meets the second Tuesday of each month at Nassagaweya Presbyterian Church in Haltonville at 7 p.m. President Audrey Allison 905-854-2378

OAKVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

For further information visit

www.oakvillehistory.org and click on EVENTS or phone 905-844-2695

May 20 – "Bring On The Bloomers (the liberation of women during Victorian Times)" with Ken Weber @7:30

July 1st - Heritage Houses in Old Oakville -
Walking Tour @ 2p.m.

Walking tours are on offer every second
Sunday throughout the summer.

TRAFALGAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

June 30 - Alan Skeoch, Author & Historian
on "Your Home and Native Land".

<http://www.trafalgartownshiphistory.ca>

HERITAGE HALTON HILLS

Heritage Halton Hills has
spearheaded a project to recognize the
unique architecture of the Victory home, by
unveiling a storyboard on Normandy
Boulevard in Georgetown on 6 June 2009.
It will also recognize victory housing on
Churchill Blvd. in Georgetown and the
Acton homes on McDonald and Mason
Boulevards.

In a new program, Halton Hills
Council will allow for the owners of
designated heritage properties to apply for a
20% property tax rebate for 2009 this
autumn. Property owners will be notified
once the empowering by-law has been
passed by Council.

HORNBY DRILL SHED

The Hornby Drill Shed stood on the north-
west corner of Trafalgar and Steeles
Avenue, opposite the old Church. It was
built in 1866 of white pine. It was moved to
Frank Chisholm's farm where it was raised
to make room for stabling. Although a
demolition permit was approved in 2005, it
remained in place until sometime in the last
six months or so.



TERRA COTTA HIGH TEA

The Terra Cotta Inn sponsored a high tea
and fashion show on Sunday 26 April to
support renovation at the Terra Cotta
Community Centre hall. The plans for
reconstruction include restoring the original
hall to the look it had as the village
Methodist Church and to reconstruct the
newer portions of the hall to match the
heritage building.

SPRING NEWS – 1899

ACTON FREE PRESS: 6 April, 1899

Should the Women Vote? Concluding that
prohibition of the liquor traffic will be
impossible to secure in Canada until the
women of the country have the franchise,
the Dominion Women's Christian
Temperance Union have taken the matter up
with vigour and are circulating literature and
petitions all over the land, having this view
in end. A meeting of the Christian ladies in
town was held in Knox Church School
Room last week to consult upon the matter...
LIMEHOUSE: The lime kilns are busy and
turning out lime in considerable quantities.
An interesting experiment of burning lime
with coal is being tested.

**ACTON: Site Secured for New Baptist
Church.** Mr. Robert Wallace has sold his
lot on the corner of Mill and Elgin Streets,
opposite the store of Mr. Chas T. Hill, to the
congregation of the Baptist Church. This
will be the site of the proposed new Baptist
Church to be erected this summer... Knox
Church's New Light - The electric Light was
first turned on in presence of the
congregation at Knox Church in connection
with the Easter Monday concert. The effect
was very pleasing and satisfactory...
"Puritan teas" are the latest fad in social
circles.

Hornby was Hub of Area

J.M. Rowe

The village of Hornby was considered the gateway into Esquesing Township during the early decades of settlement in this area. Although the Guelph to York Road was opened about 1834, it was little more than a cleared path. A trip by this route was usually a very rough and long drawn-out venture. Almost all the traffic from Esquesing, Erin, and Garafraxa townships would travel south to the relative comfort of lake travel, from Oakville.

The route of southerly traffic invariably followed the Seventh Line, later known as Trafalgar Road. Hence Hornby had an advantageous position. Located on the township base line, the Seventh Line jogged eastward before continuing south through Trafalgar township. As the village grew up around this easterly section which doubled as the Seventh Line and the Base Line road, travellers were easily induced to stop here. Hotels and taverns abounded to accommodate the weary or thirsty traveller. These travellers were often farmers from the back townships teaming their summer bounty south to Oakville and thence to Toronto by boat, where a good market price would be returned. Later stage coach traffic from Milton to Georgetown would stop off at Hornby.

When the township divided itself into 15 school districts in 1842, Hornby residents raised a storm of protest, resulting in the formation of a joint Esquesing – Trafalgar school section in 1848. Rather than renumber the sections Hornby was assigned number AE. Whaley's Corners, further along the baseline at the Townline was also a three township school section known as number BC.

In 1850, the road was planked from Oakville up to Stewarttown. A joint-stock company was formed to plank the road and to set up toll booths at strategic locations. One location was at Hornby. The future looked good for the central



village. Then the United Counties of Halton-Wentworth announced plans to split into two separate counties. The debate over the location of the new County seat began in earnest. Hornby residents were quite vocal in their campaign to situate the facilities there.

Alas, now the early years of optimism began to sour. In 1853, Milton was designated the County seat. In 1856, the Grand Trunk Railway opened its Toronto to Guelph line through Acton and Georgetown, diverting the grain trade easterly. Stage coach service however, kept a good trade going between the northern township and the new county seat. But Milton was finally successful

in establishing a rail link in 1877, when the Hamilton and North-Western railway opened through Milton and Georgetown. Hornby became a farming centre catering only to the occasional travellers, particularly north-south traffic.

In the 1950s Highway 401 swung very close to Hornby, breathing new life into the village. Although modern travellers will not stop for long, refuelling facilities and convenience stores still carry on effectively. As urban dwellers sprawl into the country, the village continues to serve as a hub of community life, even though the composition of its inhabitants has changed.
-*Georgetown Independent*, 4 May 1988



A 1961 aerial photograph of Hornby showing where Hornby Road meets Steeles Avenue.
EHS12692

Hornby Bits & Bites...

Volunteer Soiree held in Hornby Drill Shed on 16th. (*Canadian Champion*, 10 Jan, 1867)
Thomas Shanks Sr. aged 82 died on June 8th in Hornby. (*Acton Free Press*, 15 June 1899)

Gallant War Dead Honoured at Hornby Memorial Service

The century-old church of St. Stephen's, Hornby, was crowded with worshippers Sunday afternoon, May 5, for the special Memorial service in honour of two young men, John J. Robertson and Frank Joseph Weller, members of the congregation, who made the supreme sacrifice and gave their lives in World War II. (*Herald*, 15 May 1946)

New Sunshine School construction will start in the spring. (*Herald*, 1 Feb. 1962)

HORNBY – HERE & THERE / NOW & THEN

Selections from the EHS Archives

BRAIN BREWERY

This 9th Line business was established in 1845. The beer became famous and the business expanded to employ ten men and 40 horses! Only the main house remains, although it has been extensively renovated. This sketch is from the 1877 Halton Atlas.



St. Stephen's Church, Hornby was the first organized Anglican Congregation to serve Esquesing. Built circa 1841, it typifies historically the establishment of a Church of England parish in Upper Canada. The churches history is tied to the names of local pioneers who first settled the area evidenced by headstones in the surrounding churchyard cemetery. Its history is also tied to early names involved with the social welfare of Upper Canada (Bishop Strachan of Family Compact fame) and at the Halton County level (Francis Tremaine).

Hornby Presbyterian Church was established in 1838 at Lot 1, Concession 9, Esquesing township. It was linked at various times with Boston, Esquesing, Omagh and finally with Knox Presbyterian Church, Milton. In 1971, Hornby was amalgamated with Knox Church, Milton. It was destroyed by fire in January 1978. EHS 17633



Hornby Repeater Station on Steeles Ave. and the 6th Line was designed by a Montreal architect, in 1929 and built in 1930. It has some interesting ornamental detail around the windows, and is in quite good shape. It was used by Bell Telephone as a repeater station to boost phone signals between Toronto and Windsor, until 1995.



Hornby Drill Shed

The Hornby Drill Shed stood on the north-west corner of Trafalgar and Steeles Avenue, opposite the old Church. It was built in 1866 of white pine. Frank Chisholm (1912-2001) stands in front of the former drill shed which was moved to his farm to serve as a barn.

SS#AE Hornby
 The first Hornby school was opened in 1826 in a log cabin next to the Orange Hall. Hornby school became SS#Ae in 1848. This brick school was built in 1870. It closed in 1963 with the opening of Pineview School at 5 Sideroad. EHS12519



TOP TEN GEORGETOWN STORIES FOR 1959

Georgetown Herald, 7 January 1960

The visit of Governor General Massey, an honour seldom conferred on a town this size, made local history, perpetuated by a \$100 bursary established at the high school to mark his day in town.

Inauguration of letter carrier service was an important milestone in Georgetown's history, and was a contributing factor in a forward step by The Herald in establishing a carrier boy service replacing the former town mail subscriptions.

Cancellation of the Arrow contract and dismissal of over 400 local residents employed at Malton had major effects on town economy. As a result there was a plenitude of homes for sale as many secured new positions in the States and other parts of Canada, and a few returned to their British homelands.

The Malton situation, however, also made happier headlines when a group of aircraft engineers chose Georgetown as their base of operations in designing a gyroplane which they hope to market as the plane of the future and which is in final stages before a planned test flight.

Another provincial champion hockey team, Hunter's Realtors, added to Georgetown's sports laurel when they copped an intermediate title for sports headlines.

Prominent too in sporting headlines was a new golf club locating on the Bingham farm, while the North halt on club expanded with building of a new clubhouse and curling rink.

Opening of Delrex Market Centre marked the largest commercial expansion since the town's earlier days and added a dozen new stores to serve shoppers.

The industrial scene brightened when Standard Products located in a new highway factory, coming here from Windsor to be near the Ford plant for which it supplies auto accessories.

Dissolution of North Halton high school district, to be replaced with three separate districts, one of them centering around Georgetown High School was news-making, marking an about-shift in Department of Education thinking which at one stage almost created one central high school at Speyside.

And on the political scene, a turned-down Delrex request for release of 1163 building lots... the 60-40 question... a forthcoming auditor's report on subdivisions... and the December municipal elections kept readers interested more than usual in local affairs.

That's our choice for the Top Ten, but it only skims the surface of the hundreds of news stories which The Herald has printed. And, unlike a daily, whose existence depends of headlines, a weekly paper's forte are the smaller community stories which depict community life... the personals and birthday parties, church and service club meetings, weddings and obituaries.