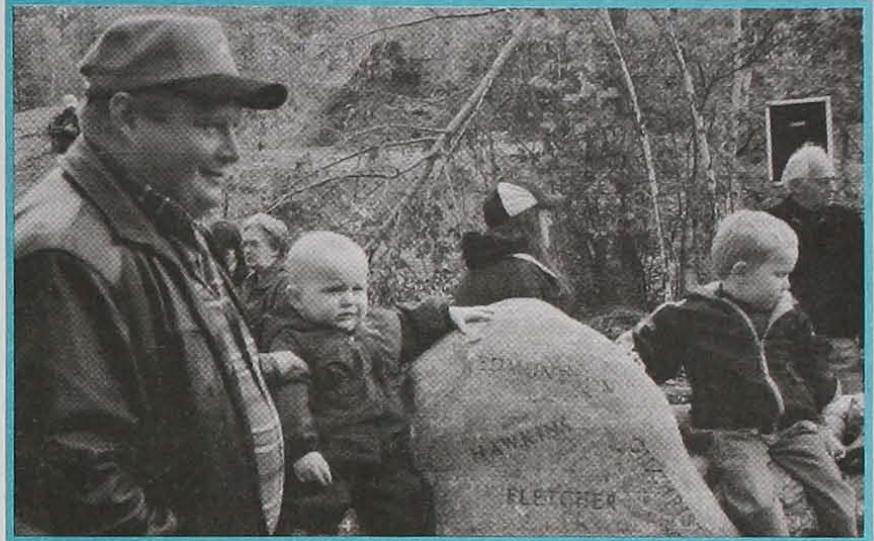


HOME & COUNTRY

The Stone Fence Project

By Loreen Rice Lucas



Youngsters enjoyed climbing aboard the stone fence for the first time.

It just takes a good idea and someone to act upon it. The idea evolved after local historian Joanna McEwen had read several articles I had written bemoaning the disappearance of stone fences, which are memorials to the labour they had entailed. When Joanna approached the three Women's Institute Branches - Harvie Settlement, Mitchell Square and Rugby - in Oro-Medonte Township with the idea to build a memorial with those very stones, our members needed little convincing.

Were we interested? You bet! All three Branches were enthused and members from each Branch came together as a committee under Joanna's direction. The questions of where, when and how this could be done were soon answered.

Where? A strip of untouched wooded property between Highway 11 and the 15th Line of Oro-Medonte had been purchased with public donations years before with the hope of building a university. With the arrival of Georgian College, the idea went by the wayside and the property was duly designated as natural parkland. A parking lot in rather poor condition along the 15th Line, which led to some walking trails, answered the "Where?"

Our timeline to work on this project was throughout the summer of 2003, with a completion date set for October.

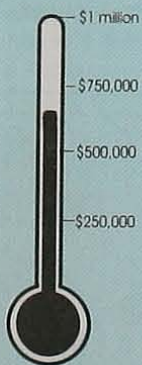
How? Now that was the big question! Because this was to be a work of art, as well as a memorial, funds were needed. We promptly sent a letter to the Ontario Arts Council, and then waited anxiously. We did receive a grant from the Arts Council sufficient enough to encourage us to go ahead with our dream. But we still needed more money.

Committee members accessed the Township Rolls from 1855 at the Simcoe County Archives compiling a list of pioneer landowners in an area surrounding the park over to the 7th Line of Oro and north to the Horseshoe Valley Road. Via a letter writing campaign, the descendants in the area were asked if they would make a specified contribution to have their family name engraved in a stone that would be part of the stone fence. The response was fantastic!

The Andersons and Scotts brought stones from their fences on properties nearby. Morris Shelswell and his sons helped move stones. Master Stone Mason Eric Scott set the stones in place with the help of Gary

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Headquarters Fund



To date:
\$614,795.32
Goal: \$1 million

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