

# New curator wants to get people back to Erland Lee

by Diana Buri  
Staff Writer

The community doesn't realize the valuable resource it has in the Erland Lee Museum Home and its new cura-

tor, Susan Henderson, intends to change that. Having come to the area from her native Picton, Susan, along with her husband, Jim, and their son, Michael,

took over occupancy of the home Oct. 1 and so far, the move seems to be agreeing with them. "I like the area very much," the spirited 29-year-old said last week.

"I'm very familiar with it and really like the country-city combination where you're close to the city but still living in the country. A history major at

McMaster University, Susan has a vast experience in her field, having worked at various

museums in the Kingston-Belleville area, as well as other cultural institutions such as art

galleries and libraries. But despite that fact, she's still looking forward to the challenges of this job.

"It's really quite different than any other position I've held. As a historian, I'll be able to answer questions about various aspects of the home."

As curator, she's directly responsible to the Vinemount Women's Institute, which she says is "a very active committee".

"Hopefully because of my background I'll be able to help the committee find different directions, making social history available to the school board, assisting them with ministry matters ... things like that."

As far as the actual decorating and promotion of the museum go, she'll be getting a lot of support.

"The Vinemount Women's Institute is a great bunch of women," she says. "They do just about everything. At Christmas, for instance, they do all the decorating. I've been involved with displays before, so I can suggest things ... but they've done alright up til now."

### "VALUABLE RESOURCE"

One of her prime objectives, however, is developing the museum as a "valuable resource in the eyes of the community."

"There's a sort of feeling — and it's not just isolated here in Stoney Creek — that people have about a local museum that they don't want to come in, look around, utilize the facility. I'd like to change that.

"I'd like to make it available to the community, to the school kids, I mean there's a wealth of information here. I'd like to see it used. The museum gets its fair share of tourists, but where its lacking is in local visits."

Another myth she'd like to lay to rest is the one surrounding the Women's Institute.

"People have this image of a bunch of little old ladies getting together exchanging recipes, but it's not like that," she said. "These women get together to discuss topical concerns, they lobby the government for a lot of issues, including nuclear disarmament."

A non-denominational group, the Vinemount Women's Institute does have a Judaeo-Christian undercurrent, which, Susan maintains, is "necessary in a rural environment."

### LOBBIED FOR COURSE

"But their concerns go way past that. They've also lobbied to protect the home economics course in school curriculum for both

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NEW CURATOR: Susan Henderson is the new curator at the Erland Lee Museum Home — she brings with her a vast assortment of experience and a wealth of information. —STAFFphoto.