

Local author hits the book-launch circuit

by BART KREPS

The Independent

Cramahe Township resident Rob McLean is having a busy week. On Sunday morning, he tended to the last of 15 lambs born on his farm this spring. On Tuesday, he headed to Ottawa for a launch party at the National Press Council, for the just released-book he's co-authored with Liberal MP John Godfrey. There's another launch party in Toronto on Wednesday for *The Canada We Want*.

The book is a call for Canada to renew the vision that has made it the best country in the world to live in for five years in a row, in a United Nations survey. The authors argue that the strength of Canadian society is based largely on "national projects" - efforts that have united citizens across the country, and that have involved all levels of governments, in pursuit of common goals such as establishing equitable health care.

The book is an outgrowth of McLean's career as a chartered accountant. Formerly a partner in the firm Ernst & Young, McLean now works as a consultant in several countries. He notes that much public debate on gov-



Bart Kreps photo

Rob McLean finds time between books and consulting engagements to raise a few sheep on his Cramahe Township farm.

ernment programs has failed to look at costs and benefits in a comprehensive way.

"We remind people that the issue of health care is presented as a cost to government, but we look at the cost to all of society," McLean explains.

"There's a myth that private-sector approaches are always more efficient, but that's clearly not true in the case of health care," McLean adds. As evidence, he says that in the US, health care costs are 14% of gross national product and rising, while

in Ontario the proportion is 10% and falling. "Our system is more efficient - and our health is better too."

McLean and Godfrey discuss childhood health and education, and development of new clean energy sources, as worthy subjects for national projects in the new millennium. But they also suggest that the Harris government in Ontario is "the most destructive Canada has ever known" and that it has "systematically uprooted every major community-based institution." They label

the current ruling party the "regressive conservatives," in that they are trying to undo the national projects which earlier generations of Progressive Conservatives enthusiastically supported.

The Canada We Want is published by Stoddart and retails for \$29.95 in hardcover. McLean is in discussion with at least one local group about holding a book launch celebration in Colborne. Watch *The Independent*, or McLean's website at www.matrixlinks.ca, for more information.

WHALEY, EARL

Suddenly passed away at Kingston General Hospital on Sunday, April 11th, 1999. Earl Whaley in his 82nd year. Beloved husband of Evelyn Dorcas Whaley (nee Gummer). Dear father of Carolyn and Robert Atkins, Richard Whaley and Marcia Atkinson, Dianne and Ron Knight, Martin Whale and Linda Whaley and Brian Foster. Loving grandfather of Pam, Tracy, Lee, Lisa, Kerry, Angela, Jill, Angie, Melissa, Michelle and great-grandfather of Allysa, Chas, Chaise and Mike. Cremation with interment at Salem Cemetery. Friends are invited to attend the interment being held at 2pm. on Thursday, April 15th at Salem Cemetery. Donations to the Heart & Stroke Foundation would be appreciated by the family.

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Architecture enthusiasts tour Castleton



Members of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario toured Castleton and Vernonville on April 18. Castleton, originally called Piper's Corners, was established around 1806 when Joseph Keeler, the founder of Colborne, built the first mill on the stream that runs through the village. The Oriental Hotel building at left was built by Timothy Giroux in 1890. It contained eight guest rooms upstairs. At right, a tombstone in the Red Cloud Cemetery, which preserves a small piece of the prairie grass-land which once covered large parts of southern Ontario.

Nancy Powers photos

