

Thanks for the loaner

Last Saturday at the Keeler Centre, The words of those who spoke at the Olan Ovation, eloquently outlined the importance of the Castleton General Store and the impact its owners have had in the community.

The role of a store in a hamlet or village is unlike that in a large centre. As Keith Olan explained in his closing remarks, the store is a source of contact for the community. When a school is closed or the Township offices move, or a business closes, the community loses one of the things that binds it together. If you lose contact within the community, you lose the community.

For the past 18 years the Castleton General Store, through the wisdom and the genius of the man who ran it, maintained that contact and more. An intelligent businessman, and a welcoming personality, Keith built a business that became the focal point in Castleton. Through the support that he and Eileen have given to innumerable ventures in the area, and their involvement in the everyday life of the hamlet, their store has become a hub, and a place to go for a few idle minutes in a busy day. It has held that place as a community contact point.

Somehow his staff learned from their gregarious boss those intangibles that make a customer feel like more than a customer, along with the parameters of good service. The store has grown to be a gathering place.

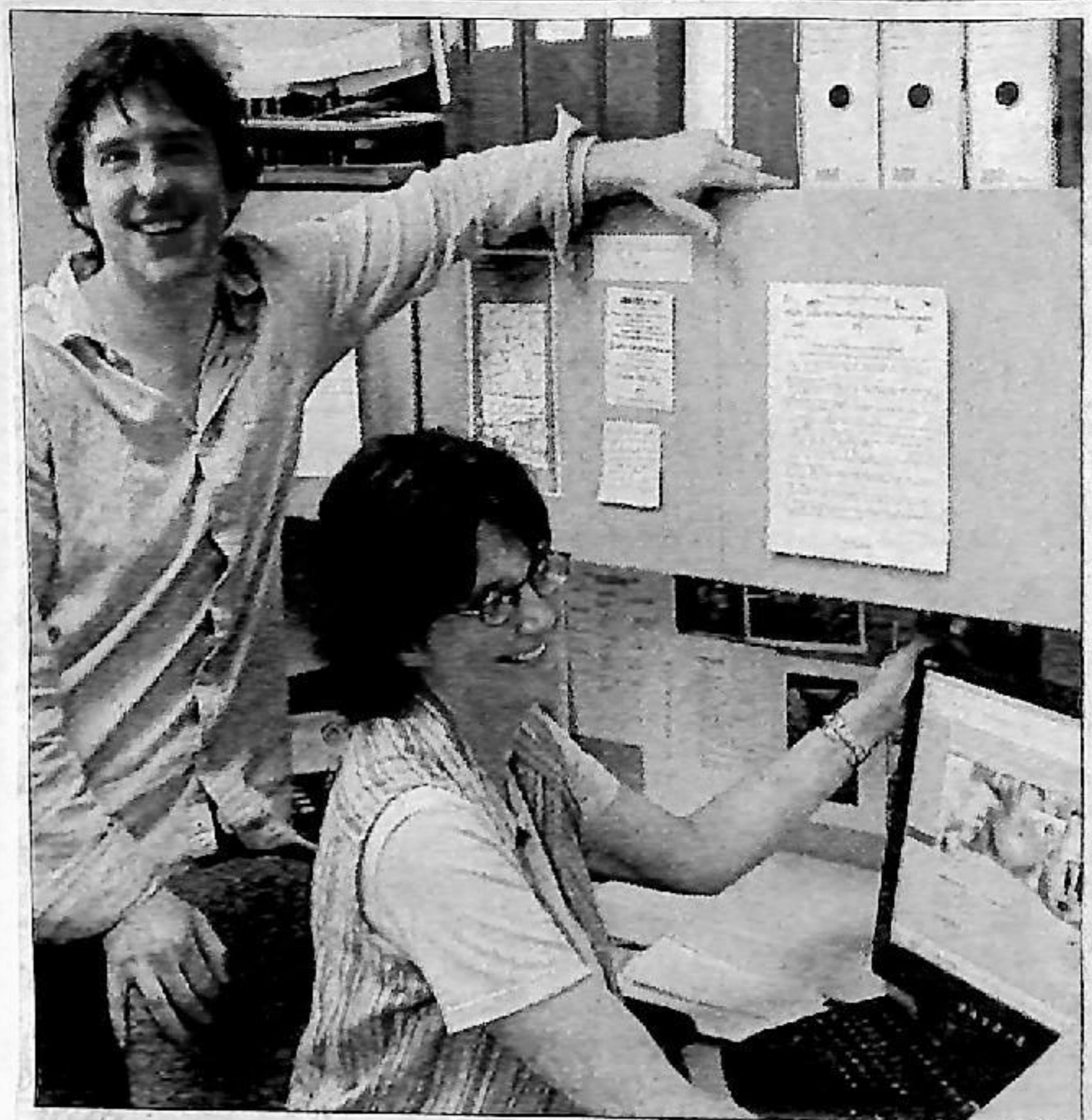
The Olans have done that and maintained the historic nature of the building. George Chandler commented that the store is older than the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the helicopters operated by the Canadian military. It has maintained its historic footprint.

Yet, underneath all of the jests and jibes last Saturday, there had to be an underlying and unspoken sense of impending loss.

For one day soon, the Olans will close the doors of the Castleton General Store for the last time, leaving behind them a community blessed with a wealth of uplifting experiences, a debt unpaid for at the general store.

Perhaps the words of Ray Rolfe summed it up best, in his comments to the Olan extended family: "Thanks for loaning us your parents for 18 years."

COLBORNE CHRONICLE JUNE 9/05



Cramahe website designer Dan Labecki goes over the site with acting clerk Joanne Elliott.

PHOTO BY BOB OWEN

Cramahe gets new website

By BOB OWEN
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Cramahe has a new and much improved website. At www.visitcramahe.ca there is 50 per cent more information than in the old one.

Website designer Dan Labecki of Wake Media says that the Township needed a "wider frame" in which to insert information. The old site wasn't particularly pleasing to the eye, and the technology used in it was outdated. This one represents the Township and its place on the Apple Route and in the County of Northumberland.

Dan explained last week that the new site is more dynamic and easily updatable. It already contains between 130 and 140 pages and the final section on the Keeler Centre isn't in yet.

The one down side of that is that it is difficult for dial-up users to move through the site. Dan is doing what he can with the images to make it more user friendly for those not yet on high speed internet.

Dan took a few minutes to walk through the site last week.

The home page sets the tone with the colour scheme and five pull-down navigation titles at the top.

Under "government", the visitor to the site can access bylaws, download planning applications, read messages from the Township, get employment or tender information, even find emergency contacts.

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