

There is nothing "ironic" about Purdy Mill not being designated

CHAONICLE
To The Editor:

MAY 4/06

Re: Letter to the editor "All Castleton Town Hall planning behind closed door thus far", *Colborne Chronicle*, April 27, 2006

I have read many letters to the editor that left me angry but this letter goes far beyond that. It was laced with misinformation and innuendo. I am appalled the *Colborne Chronicle* would publish it.

Where to start? "Behind closed doors"? If there is one thing Heritage Cramahe can't be accused of, it is of acting behind closed doors. As a committee of council, *not* a subcommittee, our meetings are always open to the public, as is our membership. Our minutes are submitted to council every month. We also actively seek publicity for our work as we need public support for many of our projects, in the manner of monetary donations to fundraisers, artifacts for the Colborne Heritage site, and local historical information and photos.

Anyone who reads this newspaper regularly has seen our *open* public invitations to the openings of the Registry Office Heritage Site, or the Victoria Square fountain dedication, to use just two examples. Our work must be known to some of the public as we receive many requests from complete strangers searching for local family history. To claim we work behind closed doors is nonsense!

"Tearing apart the inside of the Town Hall." The panelling was removed, as were two layers of ceiling tiles, which were then donated to the Colborne Legion. This hardly constitutes tearing apart anything and is the necessary beginning to restoring the interior of the upper hall. It was damaged by a fire in the early 1970s. Instead of being repaired, the damage was covered up by the panelling.

The balcony was enclosed by the lowered ceiling, not closed because it was unsafe. Heritage Cramahe spent \$6,200 of the \$40,000 earmarked in 2000 for this work and we were lucky enough to find a local contractor, Jim Rutherford, instead of someone from Toronto, to do the work.

Heritage Cramahe is not "at a stalemate" with the subcommittee. We don't answer to anyone but Cramahe Township council. We have a completely different mandate which involves *only* the designated heritage features of the building. We have no involvement with kitchen, washrooms, elevators, ramps, plumbing, heating or electricity upgrades. They do not involve us unless upgrades would have a negative effect on the designated heritage features of the building.

We are an advisory committee which is to be consulted on work done to any designated building in Cramahe Township, privately or municipally owned.

I don't recall giving "permission" to the subcommittee to do anything to the town hall. Permission must be given by Cramahe Township council as it is a municipally owned building. We can't stop anything relating to designated buildings. We can only advise council for or against any plans involving heritage features and, so far, council hasn't consulted us on anything related to the town hall.

"User groups have been ignored". In fact, the Heritage Cramahe members were told by the subcommittee that its members represented the user groups and I assume this is true. Their membership seems to change at every meeting, so I don't always who represents what.

"Heritage Cramahe has no money." As mentioned before, \$40,000 was earmarked in 2000 by the former Cramahe Township and Village of Colborne councils for the restoration of the Castleton Town Hall. I have copies of the two motions made and passed at that time. About \$33,000 of that remains.

I couldn't agree more that the Castleton Town Hall isn't a museum or mausoleum as I have used it myself for several family occasions in the past. It has great personal meaning to my family as my grandfather and great uncle both served as Reeves of Cramahe Township in the early 1900s and would have used its original council chambers. My father worked out of it as well, as Cramahe Township's building inspector. My mother spent many years as a volunteer librarian. As well, many other members of my family have attended many concerts there over the years.

It has always been Cramahe Local Architectural Conservancy Advisory Committee's (LACAC's) and Heritage Cramahe's plan to restore the hall which is why it was designated in the first place! At the time of its designation in 1987, provincial grants were available to help with restoration costs. I'm sure last week's letter writer is aware of that program as he was the recipient of grant money for restoration of his own home.

Now, as for the privately owned Purdy Mill. It was purchased by my parents in 1972. Your implication the building has been neglected for "decades" is an insult. My father put hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars into the immediate maintenance needs of the mill and house in 1972 and several years after that. Every single window frame in the mill was damaged and every pane of glass was missing. The frames were all hand-repaired or replaced by my father and the panes of glass were replaced more than once, thanks to the continuing vandalism.

I personally cleaned the entire interior of

the building from top to bottom in 1984 so I could open it to the public as a museum and antique shop, which I operated for four years. I also spent at least \$20,000 of my own money replacing the mill roof and repairing the south foundation. No grants for me or my parents were available then.

There is nothing "ironic" about Purdy Mill not being designated while I served on the Cramahe LACAC committee. I

considered it a conflict of interest to do so and can just imagine the letters to the editor I would have had to endure had I done so, particularly as I had also received grant money.

For the record, no Heritage Committee can designate a privately owned property without a request to do so by the owner.

Roseanne Quinn /
Cramahe Township

Let us all share in the mourning

To the Editor:

My parents advised me there are three issues best not to discuss: religion, politics and, for the life of me, I can't recall the third. For the most part, I have followed this very wise advice. However, I find three current issues so near and dear to me, I can no longer sit on the fence.

First, the issue of no longer flying the flag on the Parliament building at half staff. This may well have been started as a new tradition, by a past government, but it is one I see in a very positive light. It shows we, as a nation, respect and appreciate our military and the great sadness of the loss of life of one of our own. To me, it hit home the great sacrifices our troops make, not only

now, but in past wars. We will always share great respect and sadness on Nov. 11, but I would like to see us grieve publicly for each and every soldier by lowering our flag on the national Parliament Building the heart of decision-making for Canadian people.

Second, the ban of the media at CFB Trenton for the first time as the coffins of our troops touched down once again on Canadian soil. Through television, we, as a nation, could collectively be with our troops and their families to show our respect and to grieve with the families and soldiers through this very solemn ceremony for those who gave freely the ultimate sacrifice.

Carolyn Peters /
Colborne

Ken Wood is an effective leader

To The Editor:

As chair of the Cramahe Ratepayers' Association, I have had the privilege of dealing with Ken Wood on a number of occasions. These took place mostly during the last quarter of 2005 and beginning of 2006.

During one of our ratepayer meetings, Ken spoke to our membership, sharing with us his vision on the further development and possibilities for Cramahe's Department of Parks and Recreation. One of the components his department is responsible for is the efficient operation of the Keeler Centre, both the ice rink as well as the large meeting hall.

Within a year of Ken's arrival, the centre turned an annual operations loss into a profit. He showed a remarkable ability to work with organizations within the community. This was extensively written up in the *Colborne Chronicle*, February 23, 2006. Glowing reports on his job performance came from the pen of former township CAO Merlin Dewing (Mr. Wood's supervisor until September, 2004) and from Trudy Merrill who took over from Mr. Dewing after his departure.

During Ken's presentation, he took the Cramahe Department of Parks and

Recreation into the future.

Having been in corporate planning myself, it was a challenging experience to listen to Ken. For those whose exposure to planning procedures is limited, let me remind them of the early inventions at the Ford Motor Company. Had Henry Ford himself not introduced mass-assembly methods for his Model T, where would this company be today? At that time, Henry was way ahead of the pack. I mention this because there are some in our township, even on the council, who lost Ken when he spoke of his visions.

Ken has a tremendous ability to work with people successfully. A perfect example is the Keeler Centre. It has become known as the most successful large complex in all of Northumberland County.

All political parties in Northumberland use this centre for their rallies. It also hosts all-candidates meetings and many other activities. Ken just has a positive manner in dealing with people.

I wish Ken all the success he deserves. If, indeed, he moves to greener pastures, it will be Cramahe's loss. He will be a very difficult man to replace.

Pieter Wyminga /
Cramahe Twp.