

HISTORY OF LOUGHBOROUGH TOWNSHIP

(Speech by Betty Roberts at the opening of the Art Show
"COLOUR IT LOUGHBOROUGH", Sydenham, Oct.26th,1991.)

THE MILLS

I'm going to begin by talking about the industries that flourished here. This place must have really hustled and bustled. In many ways it was a self-supporting area, with water-power, timber and building-stone right at hand. Naturally the main focus was the mills at the outlet of Sloat's Lake - now Lake Sydenham. There were sawmills, a shingle-mill, a grist mill (for grinding the farmers' grain), and a woollen-mill. George Yarker owned the mills here in 1836, and others after him were Booth & Woodruff, and lastly Frank Anglin. Foxton, Switzer, and Woods had sawmills on the Millhaven Creek in the village. The payment to the miller for grinding grain was 1/12th of the final product. The sawyer took up to 1/2 of the lumber he sawed, as payment. Frank Anglin was very industrious, and in his later years he specialized in making cheese boxes and sold them all over Ontario.

In 1870

In 1870 there was twice-daily stagecoach service to Sydenham and Battersea. The local hotel trade flourished. The Keeley Inn - now the Grainger home in Railton - was a stopover point. Some of the hotels in Sydenham were : The Switzer Hotel on Portland Avenue -- it was an early one, and the building is still there. On Main Street was The Union Hotel - where The Burger Pit now stands. The Woodruff family operated The American Hotel, which later burned down in a fire that nearly wiped out the village. Then there was Mace's Hotel (next to where Bill's Bakery now is located). The Maces also had a brewery and distillery in the village.

In 1880

Ten years later the Kingston, Napanee and Western Railway extended its line from Yarker to Sydenham. The train was known as The Bay Of Quinte, and the station was located where the Brewers Retail is now. This rail extension, no doubt, was because of the mining of mica, phosphate and lead in the Sydenham area. By this time, Loughborough Township was a flourishing agricultural community. There were cheese factories every few miles. Milk was shipped daily to Napanee by train, and later the Acme Farmers Dairy put up a plant in Sydenham to process milk. The Condensory , as it was called locally, was still standing where the I.G.A. is now, when we came here eighteen years ago. Sydenham also was a cattle-shipping point for the railway. The local train service was a great thing. Some students came to High School by train. Travelling salesmen arrived by train, set up their wares in a Sydenham hotel, and orders would be taken for all the latest in clothing fashions, etc.