

Oxford Mutual 1981 Calendar Features Van Mierlo

Distributing calendars is a practice common to many businesses.

One which features local landmarks is the one put out by the Oxford Mutual Fire Insurance Company. The St. Marys agent is John Glover.

The company's 1981 calendar features the water tower and Junction Station of St. Marys, the corn crib at the Lakeside farm of Robert Harris and Sons, the miniature church in the seventh line cemetery and Wyton Pines Farm in West Nissouri Township and points of historical interest in parts of Oxford County. One is the dam at Thamesford.

The sketches are by Ingersoll artist Ray Van Mierlo.

Mr. Van Mierlo said he executed the sketches because they are scenes which are vanishing or are being allowed to rot.

The calendar was commissioned by the company. The 1981 one is the second Mr. Van Mierlo has done.

Speaking of the 12 subjects he sketched, he said it took him a day to do the preliminary work of visiting the locations. These were picked for their aesthetic and historic significance.

Photographs were taken to assist him in his sketches. The captions with the sketches were written by Bonnie Mott who accompanied Mr. Van Mierlo and

assisted with the photographs.

Of the sketch of the St. Marys water tower, Mrs. Mott wrote, "St. Marys water tower is a familiar landmark; in fact, it has become a symbol of the town and even bears the town's motto, 'St. Marys - The Town Worth Living In'. Built in 1899, the structure reminiscent of a fort tower, the stone itself and the exterior metal shield, as well as the interior were all refurbished in 1977."

Writing about the Junction Station, she said, "St. Marys Junction Station, circa 1858, stands lonely and abandoned at the outskirts of town. Yet, there is something majestic about its battle with time and vandals. A unique piece of architecture, the building was for a short time the centre of much activity. One of its most famous employees was Thomas Alva Edison, who at the age of 17, in 1863, was employed for a brief period as a night telegraph operator."

The sketch does not include the surrounding fence which was recently erected

by Heritage St. Marys to protect the building.

The miniature church in the seventh line cemetery in

"The memorial is a reminder of the constancy of faith and the continuance of life, even in the midst of sorrow."

The Wyton Pines Farm, the other West Nissouri sketch, is described to rest "in elegant seclusion behind towering trees and a stone wall that is itself a work of art."

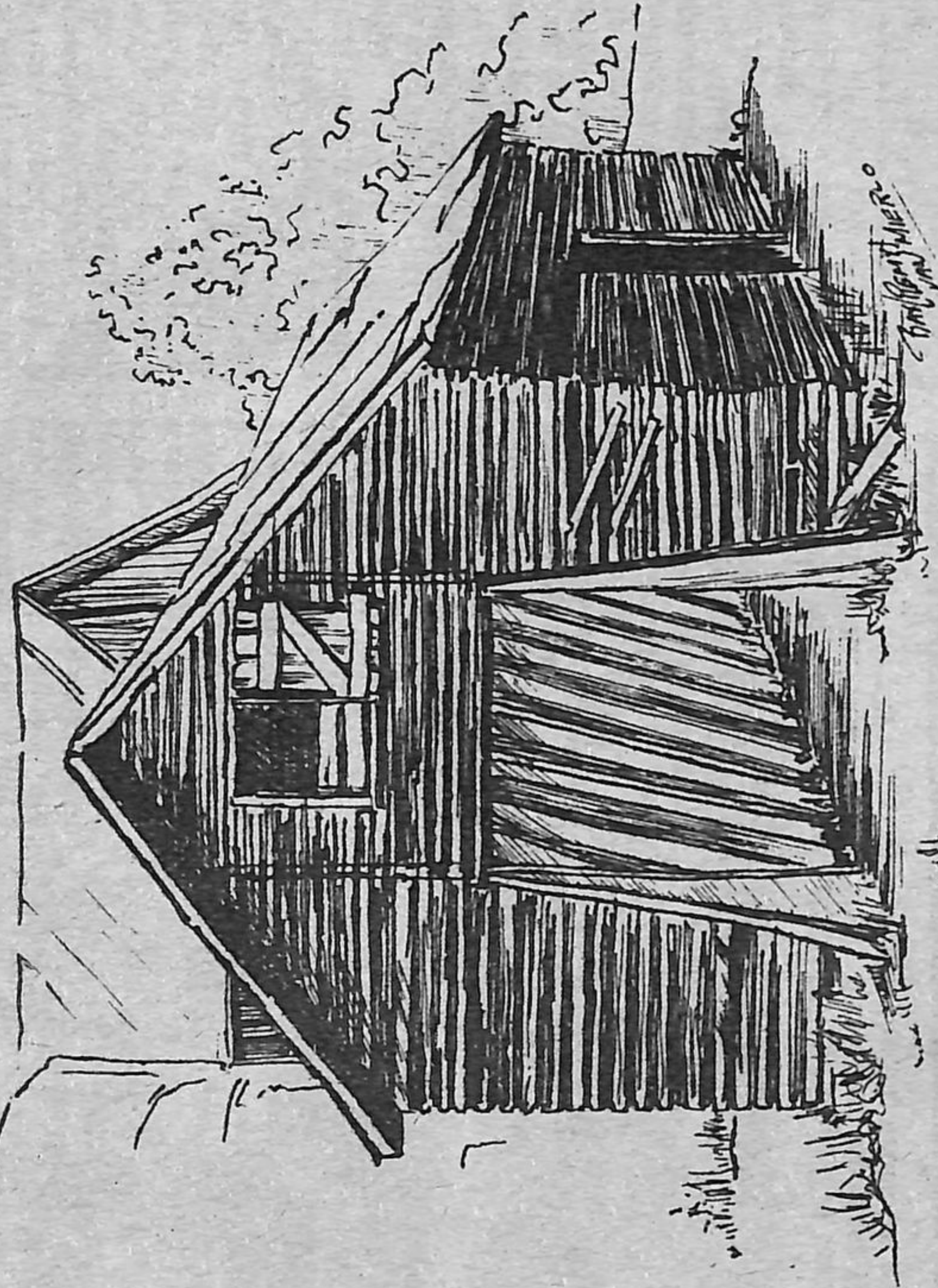
"First sight of the beige brick house with its white gables and gingerbread work, gives one instant nostalgia for the elegance and dignity that is associated with such an impressive home," Mrs. Mott said.

She describes the corn crib on the Lakeside farm of Robert Harris and Sons as "unique".

"Juxtaposed with the modern silo, the two become a commentary on the rural scene past and present," she said.

The Thamesford dam is facing extinction. That was the reason Mr. Van Mierlo selected it.

Mrs. Mott said, "Thamesford residents have banded together to fight to preserve this beautiful dam and its setting. Situated behind the historical mill on Highway 2, the waterway and the surrounding pastoral environ-



AN INTERESTING EXAMPLE of local architecture which is rapidly disappearing from rural Ontario is this Lakeside shed. The scene is one of 12 which the Oxford Mutual Fire Insurance Company has on its 1981 calendar. (Staff Photo)

ment are a source of delight to both local residents and travellers."

Mr. Van Mierlo did the sketches using Indian ink. "It has to look realistic enough for people to recognize the scenes but, by the same token, the way I see things is a little different from anyone else," he said. Pen and ink drawings are just one aspect of Mr. Mierlo's work.

"Being an artist is not easy, you have to do all sorts of stuff on the side," he said.

In addition to managing an art shop called The Art Bucket in Ingersoll, Mr. Van Mierlo teaches, appears on television and is a potter.

A record number of competitors have entered the 1981 Western Fair Farm Show princess competition. All are sponsored by agricultural organizations in Western Ontario. The majority are from Middlesex County but entrants are from as far away as Listowel and Wingham.

On Tuesday night 28 attractive young women will parade across the stage of the Paddock Theatre at the Farm Show to await the decision of the Farm Show princess judges.

Prior to that, on Friday, February 27, all the girls will attend a buffet dinner at which they will be introduced to the judges, committee members and invited guests. At that time they will be interviewed and answer an agriculturally-oriented quiz.

The competition is limited to girls between the ages of 16 and 21. With her application each was asked to list her accomplishments in 4-H and Junior Farmer clubs as well as community ac-

tivities and hobbies or special talents.

The winner is selected on the basis of her interest and participation in farm organizations, personality, and general knowledge. She will receive three pieces of luggage and a silver tray to commemorate the occasion.

Farm Princess candidate:



Cheryl Anne West

CHERYL ANNE WEST, 144-1560 Adelaide Street North, London, 21, UCO, Ilderton, sponsored by East Nissouri Junior Farmers.

Feb 26/81

Browns Corners Institute

Mar. 4/81

Brown's W.I. held a euchre last Thursday night.

High prizes went to Mary Pearson and Stanley Clarke and lone hand prize to Robert Burgess.

Low prizes went to Myrtle Napton and Bill Switzer.

Everyone is reminded of euchre for the Cancer Society this Saturday, March 7. A hot luncheon will be provided at 12:30 followed by euchre. Admission will be \$3.50 each.

A good crowd is hoped to support the Cancer Society.

Browns Corners

Mar 11/81

Brown's W.I. held a successful euchre and luncheon with all proceeds for the Canadian Cancer Society. Everyone enjoyed a bountiful meal of ham and scalloped potatoes, complete with a fabulous assortment of desserts.

High prize winners were Sylvia Butcher and Reg. Harris, Lone Hands Marj Hunter and Irwin Tate.

Lucky prize winners were Calvin Elliott, Verna Switzer, Dorothy Taylor, Clarence Tate, Sheila Greason, Jean Robinson, Pearl Nichol, Bill Switzer, Joyce Tate, Iva Hutton, Freeda Conn, Ray Wakem, Joyce Burgess, Ina Wells, Myrtle Knapton, Lydia McCaul, Elmer Knapton, Bob Arthur, Gordon Mills, Helen McKellar, Garfield McCaul, Frank Levy, Bert Butcher, Laura Webb, Murray Webb, Helen Elliott and Marg Pearson.

There will be a euchre as usual, on this Thursday night. Everyone is welcome.