

# The Acton Free Press

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Second Section

## IT'S CAMPBELLVILLE'S 50TH BIRTHDAY



ST. DAVID'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH has roots going back to 1869, when worshippers gathered in a building south of the mill pond. This building was erected in 1891 at the north end of the village, on land donated by David Wheelihan. Present minister Rev. J. Schrial is shown at the doorway to the building.

### Celebration on Weekend Is Tribute to Pioneers

This weekend, Campbellville literally "rolls out the welcome mat" to former residents and other visitors, as the village celebrates its 50th anniversary as a Police Village. A gala weekend of fun has been arranged by the committee in charge, with plenty of time left over for reminiscing and renewing old friendships.

Although this is the 50th anniversary as a village, the hamlet's history goes farther back than 50 years... for it was first settled back in 1832 by a Scottish pioneer named John Campbell, whose name the community still bears.

Let's look back into those early years, and review some of the events that led up to the Campbellville of today.

On June 23, 1914, councillors M. J. Carton and David Hutchison moved a rather significant motion at the Township of Nassagaweya Council table. It called for the establishment of the hamlet known as Campbellville — then just a populated section of the large rural township — to become a Police Village with its own entity and its own Village Trustees.

The motion was approved, and passed by the County Council, and the village came into being.

**First Trustees**  
A group of men from the village, including Dr. George Carbert, Frank A. Wheelihan, R. C. Menzies, and E. D. Mahon, were instigators of the village idea. Two of them — Wheelihan and Carbert — were chosen as the first Village Trustees, along with merchant C. A. Elsley.

Today's trustees are Ray Olan, W. J. Hamby and Robert Elliott, and the population is around 300 in 1964.

But the founding of this thriving rural village goes back to the arrival of John Campbell there in 1832. He was a Scottish immigrant who trekked across country from Montreal to arrive at the side of the creek and choose his homestead. It was in the east half of Lot 6, the Third Concession, that he first built his wigwag style dwelling.

**Build Mill**  
John Campbell set up a sawmill there beside the stream, and laid out three streets which he named Colin, Queen and Mary. It was in 1838 when he erected the sawmill — after convincing the township road commissioners his millsite would be the best place to dam and bridge the muddy stream. (The township had been settled around 1821 by a man named David Scott.)

The wilderness from which John Campbell hewed a drawing point for other settlers, and a community grew. There was the blacksmith shop that began in 1842, and the sound of the anvil still rang through the village streets 111 years later... and the names of blacksmiths like Davidson, Menzies, Reed and Weir were known by everyone in the district. Then there was the inn, opening in 1848, and other hotels that followed. Some remained until the early 1900's and the last was burned to the ground in 1929, ending a thriving business in the village.

**Many Businesses**  
There was the wagon and carriage shop, the woodworkers, the taverns, the churches, the sawmills, and the woolen mills, the brick yard, the shoemaker, the daily stage, the tinsmith, and the general store. All were a vital part of community growth in Campbellville's early days.

Today, several residents can trace their ancestry to those hardy pioneers who were there when Campbellville was in its embryo stage. Today, you will find names like Elsley, McLaren, and builder for many years in Campbellville and district, and his ever-present wad of chewing tobacco?

**Elsey Apartment**  
The old Elsey apartment house on the Main St. that burned down in 1957? It began as a store around 1885 and after a succession of owners, was purchased by C. A. Elsley in 1923 and turned into an apartment building.

**Quaker Name**  
Prickly Ash school, situated on the farm by Roy Cairns? The old log cabin homestead where the church driving sheds now stand? The hearth stone from the cabin is still on the property.

**Over 90 Homes**  
When back in 1924, there were only 24 users of electric power in the village? There are now over 80 homes and business firms served with Hydro in the community.

**Rev. Frank Lawson Returns To Church**  
The board walks that lined the village streets shortly after the turn of the century? They lasted from 1900 to 1914 when Campbellville was incorporated, and the new sidewalks were laid.

**Back nearly a century ago,** when a Presbyterian Church occupied the apartment building overlooking the pond, now owned by Mrs. Mary Currie? It was a church from 1869 to 1891 when St. David's was built. There was also a Methodist church in Campbellville for several years, located where Rev. Ella lives now.



A BEAUTIFUL SPOT in Campbellville is the pioneer cemetery, built on land donated by the village founder John Campbell in 1853. The stately headstones look down on the village pond and the cemetery is surrounded by an iron fence that was a community project in 1949.

### Began in 1853

### Pioneer Cemetery Place of Beauty

One of the most beautiful spots in any Ontario Community is its pioneer cemetery, and the story is no different in Campbellville. High on a hill overlooking the village pond, and sheltered on two sides by a hill and a bank of thick trees, lie the graves and headstones of a generation past — the hardy pioneers who hewed their homes from the forest and laid the foundations for today's thriving community.

The Presbyterian cemetery is the pride of the community and the special pride of the lady charged with its upkeep, Mrs. M. A. Moore. "I keep the cemetery up. I guess that's my home mission work," she told the Champion.

**Presenting... A Brief History**  
In presenting this special section devoted to Campbellville of yesterday and today, the editors have not intended to present a complete history of the village. We have merely sketched the surface in attempting to present to our readers a brief outline of the storied past and the bustling present that is Campbellville.

To tell the entire story would require much more work than our staff has time to complete. We leave that to the anniversary committee and their very complete, up-to-date history booklet.

Information used in these pages comes from various sources... the 50th Anniversary Committee of the Village, Joshua Norrish's 1889 "History of Nassagaweya", M. J. Carton's 1950 Nassagaweya Centennial booklet, Gwen Clark's "Hilton's Pages of the Past", and from staff interviews with many residents of the village. You will understand, then, if you find material duplicated or conflicting.

**Great-Grand-Daughter**  
Mrs. Moore figures, she is the last village resident who will be buried there. The cemetery is getting filled up, and the younger generation prefers the newer cemeteries located near their church, she surmised. Now 87, Mrs. Moore is the former Mary Reid, and a great-granddaughter of John Campbell who founded the village. Other than her niece, and a nephew, she is the last surviving relative of the Scot who settled there in 1831.

**Large Funeral**  
Attending the large funeral were two prime ministers, Sir Robert Borden was there, as well as Prime Minister R. B. Bennett, Hon. Hugh Guthrie and Hon. R. J. Manion. Pallbearers were some respected residents of the village, James Schram, Andrew and George Allen, Robert Menzies, W. M. and William Blacklock. The graveside address was given by the Hon. Arthur Meighen.

**Weathered Stones**  
Today, the headstones in the graveyard show the wear of time and some are hard to read as years of weather have worn the engraved characters thin. But the cemetery is well kept, a credit to the community that takes time to think about their forebears.

**Present cemetery committee** of trustees includes Roy Parker, Robert Elliott and William McLaren, with Mrs. Moore as treasurer.

**Presenting... A Brief History**  
Our sincere appreciation to all who have helped to make this issue interesting.

—The Editor.

### Do You Remember?

## Those GOOD Old Days

Do you remember these from Campbellville's past history?

\* Richard Hubbert, whose father Michael, a native of Ireland, purchased the lot for the present Hubbert home in 1872? Michael and Richard Hubbert were well known for miles around for the fancy hand made shoes they sold. The shop is gone now.

\* When the village Post Office was in the Fred Garrett home across the road from the present location on Main St. It left there in 1958.

**Carriage Trade**

\* The carriage shop that was once a carriage maker's and undertaker's, and later used for woodworking, buggy painting and a harness shop? It was torn down in 1954.

\* When C.P.R. fares were \$1 return to either Guelph or Hamilton, butter was 19 cents a pound, and whiskey \$1.10 a gallon? That was in 1870, according to an old ledger book owned by Cur-gill and Wheelihan, and preserved by the Wheelihan family.

\* Johnny Gilmour, a mason and builder for many years in Campbellville and district, and his ever-present wad of chewing tobacco?

\* The late Robert Menzies, village smithy, who used to shoe horses in the little workshop now owned by Doug Inglis?

\* The old Elsey apartment house on the Main St. that burned down in 1957? It began as a store around 1885 and after a succession of owners, was purchased by C. A. Elsley in 1923 and turned into an apartment building.

\* Robert Currie, who had 10 children and a 10-room house? The home is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Dennis and family.

\* Mrs. Harry (Mary) Watson, who although she was a domestic, was known as one of the most accomplished dancers in the area? She was well known and loved by everyone, especially the children who would stamp their feet on her doorstep when they wanted a treat of ice cream.

\* The old log cabin homestead where the church driving sheds now stand? The hearth stone from the cabin is still on the property.

\* The drill shed that stood opposite the Temperance Hall? Built around 1898, it was owned by the Department of National Defence and was used for storing arms and equipment for No. 4 Co., 20th Lorne Rifles, Nassagaweya Agricultural Society also used it for local fall fair exhibits. It was removed in 1922.

\* The late John Ware, and his sons Bert and Tom, who built many of the homes in Campbellville and district?

\* When back in 1924, there were only 24 users of electric power in the village? There are now over 80 homes and business firms served with Hydro in the community.

\* The board walks that lined the village streets shortly after the turn of the century? They lasted from 1900 to 1914 when Campbellville was incorporated, and the new sidewalks were laid.

\* The first village trustees, Frank Wheelihan, Dr. G. R. Carbert and C. A. Elsley?

\* Back nearly a century ago, when a Presbyterian Church occupied the apartment building overlooking the pond, now owned by Mrs. Mary Currie? It was a church from 1869 to 1891 when St. David's was built. There was also a Methodist church in Campbellville for several years, located where Rev. Ella lives now.



G. W. GOLDSRAW  
Chairman of Celebrations

### A Message from the Chairman

By G. W. Goldsraw, Chairman, 50th Anniversary Committee

The welcome mat is out this weekend in Campbellville

The Anniversary Committee has been intent on planning special events to interest all age groups during the weekend. Please join us for fun and reminiscences, and take time to renew old friendships.

A full program has been prepared and there will be souvenirs of the occasion available — including a history of the village produced in booklet form by the residents themselves.

Whether you're a former villager or a newcomer to the area, please accept our hearty welcome to come and join us in our festivities, that will mark the 50th anniversary of the date Campbellville became a police village.



E. D. MAHON  
Named Honorary President of the 50th Anniversary celebrations in Campbellville, Mr. Mahon is a descendant of village pioneers and has done considerable work on the history of the village which will be available this weekend.



DOWN THROUGH THE YEARS the centre of activity in Campbellville has been the village pond — a recreation centre for the youth and a drawing card for visitors who marvel at its beauty. John Campbell built a dam soon after his arrival in the village in 1832, to flood the creek and operate his mill and the pond has been there ever since. Recently it was acquired by the Halton Region Conservation Authority and maintained by that body as a conservation project. Picnic tables have been provided. A tree will be planted beside the pond during this weekend's 50th anniversary celebrations.