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Hornby Village Featured in Toronto Tely Write-up

by David Proulx
Telegraph Staff Reporter

It's doubtful whether anyone here will ever forget the afternoon of June 21st, 1951 — the day a tornado danced through the village.

It started as an ordinary afternoon with the men at work and the housewives cleaning up the remains of the lunch.

Then the sky turned an odd shade of gray and the wind picked up.

As garage owner Garnet Howden recalls it: "The twister just seemed to form out of nowhere above a tree on the western edge of town."

(The tree is no longer there.)

It cut across a farmer's field, narrowly missed the general store, ripped part of Howden's partly-completed garage roof off, and threw a board at the garage owner's head.

The twister turned toward the road and waltzed in and around half a dozen houses, tearing off chunks of roofs and lifting small articles out of backyards.

It uprooted trees and threw them across the Milton-Hornby highway.

Unharmed

The twister roared through Lloyd Wood's house, picking him and Bonnie and Frank Campbell up to deposit them unharmed 50 feet away.

The winds passed as quickly as they came and the 70-odd residents of Hornby settled back with a sigh of relief.

Miraculously, no one was killed. Only a handful received minor injuries.

And a few days later, Garnet Howden found the tarpaulin that had been covering the uncompleted section of his garage roof. It was in Streetsville, 13 miles away. The tornado provided conversation material for quite a few weeks in this normally quiet little village five miles east of Milton.

Situated on the baseline between Trafalgar and Esquesing townships, Hornby is divided into two parts, east and west.

It is one of dozens of small southern Ontario hamlets settled in the early 19th century. When the first pioneers came they really dug their roots in. Many direct descendants of the original families still farm the same land their ancestors did nearly 150 years ago.

Five Fathers

Hornby was founded by five men: John Dempsey, John Fisher, Abram Neilson, Thomas Joyce and John Wilson.

Travelling together from England and Scotland, the five landed in muddy York in 1818 and rode by stage to Halton county.

But for two stately elm trees offering shade beside the dusty road, Hornby might never have been settled.

The five original settlers spotted the trees and picked them for a resting place for the night.

When they awoke in the morning, they looked around at the flat countryside punctuated by countless streams and decided this was home.

They moved their possessions in by oxen, with the settlers and their families walking beside. The ground was cleared, log cabins were erected and Hornby was born.

Its first hotel was established, in 1830 by John McKindsey, later a senator. As the village grew, it became a stronghold of the Loyal Orange Lodge, with scores of families gathering each year to celebrate the glorious twelfth along streets decorated with archways of banners and Japanese lanterns.

Brain's Brewery

A steam powered saw mill provided employment for some of the townfolk and in 1845, John Brain decided to erect a brewery — the only one in the county.

His first building was made of logs. As business grew he hired more men, eventually winding up with 10 men producing between 4,000 and 5,000 barrels of beer a year.

When it came time to pick a name for the growing community, five prominent men gathered to choose "between Hornby and Farlton."

Hornby was chosen by a margin of one vote with the name Farlton being given to the soon to be erected Baptist church.

The name Hornby was suggested by John Howson to perpetuate the name of his wife's family country home in England, which Howson could not inherit because of religious differences between the two families.

Meanwhile, the sawmill had expanded to a cut of 1,000,000 feet of lumber annually and the residents decided they needed a better road to Oakville so they could haul lumber even when mud made the original road impassable.

With the aid of grants from local councils, 7,000 pounds sterling was raised and a road built of planks for 19 miles between Oakville and Stewartstown. To pay for the upkeep, toll gates were established every few miles. But five years later, the funds were exhausted and the road was

in bad repair. The tolls were discontinued and the planks slowly disappeared — mainly in the middle of the night.

Deceiving

Today, Hornby looks quiet but is actually populated by quite a few busy people.

F. A. (Alvin) Anderson runs a huge honey market with Hornby as its centre. He has 34 apiaries with 60,000 to 80,000 bees in each of 1,600 colonies.

They produce more than 100,000 pounds of honey a year.

One of the residents the town is proud of is Alfred Bridgen dubbed the unofficial 'mayor' for his activities in organizing the ball club, helping plan for the 12-acre community park and dozens of other public activities.

His brother, Gordon W. Bridgen, is the town machinist and inventor, with a rotary snow plow for township roads, a machine that plants gladioli bulbs and an asparagus harvester to his credit.

Gordon Bridgen also carries on an old tradition most towns have forgotten. Each day, holidays and Sundays excepted, he blows a whistle powered by a compressed air site.

"It can be heard for four or five miles and people actually set their routines by it," says Bridgen. He blows it at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.

"If I am out of town and don't blow the whistle, half the kids in the village and farmers in the fields almost miss their lunch. They've come to rely on the whistle so much they don't believe it's noon unless they hear it."

Hornby's school is a two-room brick structure with 48 pupils taught by Mrs. John McCutcheon and Mrs. Gordon Fisher.

High school pupils go to Milton, Oakville and Georgetown.

CBC Tower

The town's main landmark is the 650-foot transmitting tower of the Toronto-CBC's radio station, CBI.

It is also the home of about two dozen former Avro aircraft workers, some of whom have found employment and some who have not.

John Wallace, after several weeks of occasional work, says he has found a new job as guard at the county jail in Milton.

"It was quite a blow at first, being laid off like that, but you can always manage with odd work around the farms until something better comes along," he says.

So far, the townfolk haven't decided whether Highway 401, being constructed near the edge of town, is going to bring in more business.

Says garage owner Garnet Howden: "We get quite a few people in the spring and fall when they're out for rides in the countryside, but whether the new highway is going to increase business no one is quite sure."

"Most people just want to travel fast on these super highways. They don't bother stopping off and seeing the towns along the way."

LORNE SCOTS TO GUARD QUEEN

Lt. Col. Arthur Kemp, commanding officer, announces that his unit has been assigned to furnish a 10 man guard of honour for Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of her departure from Malton on June 30th.

Will Make Terra Cotta A Better Place to Visit

Trout fishermen — and they've been having fair luck, too — are the advance guard of visitors to the 310-acre Terra Cotta recreation Area which recently entered its second year of public ownership. Purchase of this popular area, which last year, attracted more than 45,000 people, was made last year by the Credit Valley Conservation Authority.

Anticipating even larger attendance this year, the authority conducted a vigorous winter work program which included the manufacture of 100 peeled cedar-planked picnic tables, and additional comfort stations.

The staff completed the closing in of the picnic pavilion, and is now building extra outdoor fireplaces.

During the winter and spring additional access roads have been built into the property, and several hundred traffic control and information signs prepared. Signs have also been made to identify flowers, shrubs and trees along the various nature trails which have been cut through the well-forested acreage.

Two dams will be replaced by this fall, and further stocking of the spring — fed ponds is anticipated next spring.

New group picnic areas have been added and provision made for a limited amount of overnight camping.

Last fall, the Authority established its permanent headquarters in the original central lodge at Terra Cotta. The building accommodates the business office, board room and workshops. It also serves as the base of operations for Field Officer Ted Sutter, whose "beat" extends throughout the entire Credit Valley watershed.

Industrial Season Ends For Darts and Cribbage

The Industrial Dart and Cribbage league brought their season's play to a close two weeks ago with a banquet and dance. Some 250 attended. Awards were won by the following:

CRIBBAGE

Champions — Orenda: Earl Emmond (capt.), Jim Bradley, Neil Ellison, Ken Woods, Art Hiltz, Zeke McCandless, Jim Williams.

Play off Champs (Orenda) — Provincial: R. Lorusso (capt.), T. Herbert, L. Boyd, O. Rayner, B. Tuck, B. Breen, H. Arnold, R. Williams, R. Molet, O. Herrington.

DARTS

Panthers (League Champs) — Bruce McCartney, capt.; Ken De Rose, Joe Stamp, Ron Cash, Harold Hiltz, Dave Stamp, Jim Yates, Herb Harlow.

Thistles (playoff champs) — Fred Briggs (capt.), Harry Botoms, Ian Veitch, Roy Rudiger, Dave Capperado, Vic Perry, Geo. Sandifer.

Doubles Champions: Eddie McDermott, Jack Cole.

Singles Champion: Harry Botoms.

Consolation champs: Mushrooms Harry Brandford, Claude Reid, Frank Anderson, Herb Wild, Nelson Handy, Don Ward.

This year's leagues were prob-

ably the most successful in the history of the league, which has been organized for Tuesday and Wednesday nights in the Legion Hall for some years.

The banquet was held in the Legion auditorium.

FARM NEWS

PASTURE MANAGEMENT MEETING PLANNED

J. A. F. Pasture Management will be discussed at a meeting sponsored by the Halton Soil & Crop Improvement Association, on the farm of Brock Harris, Burlington. This meeting is called for Monday afternoon, May 25th, and will mark the starting of Halton's Pasture Development Programme. This will feature a Pasture Management competition in which livestock farmers may compete.

The programme for May 25th will include as speakers, Howard Henry, Field Crops Branch, Ontario Department of Agriculture; Wm. Campbell, Soils Department, O.A.C.; and J. Norman Bird, Pasture Competition judge for this year.

In addition to the competitors enrolled in the Competition the programme is designed to be of value to all livestock farmers.

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