

\$250 in 1938

W.I. cemetery entrance relocated plan Decoration Day ceremonies

The fieldstone pillars and metal archway of the cemetery entrance, which cost the Acton Women's Institute the ambitious sum of about \$250 in 1938, have been moved—at a heavy cost of \$3,500 in 1971.

The entry to Fairview cemetery has been moved from busy Main St. S. to Cobblehill Rd. Considering the Institute's fine contribution and Acton's lack of historic places, council decided to underwrite the cost of moving the stonework and archway.

Now finished

Using special moving equipment Brandor House Movers, R.R. 2, Acton, hoisted the gates onto floats and moved them to their new spot. There, according to some, they show to advantage even better than in their former location.

The metal arch was placed atop the highest pillars last Friday.

Second dedication

Maintained as a monument to the town's past, the gates will be the focus of attention again this year at Decoration Day when they are dedicated for the second time.

Years ago, the entrance to Fairview was at the very end of Ransom St., where an apartment building is due to be built soon.

Hopes for a proper entrance were talked about for years.

In 1938, council acquired two lots on Main St. S. and graded a former sand pit to make the spacious entranceway as it has been until now. The site caught the eye of the Acton Women's Institute, and they set themselves the goal of providing the gates.

Raising about \$250 in the 1930's was no easy matter for the hard workers of the W.I. With catering and cures they finally achieved their goal. Mrs. R. L. Davidson is one of the members who recalls the hours of work involved. Members can't look up the total cost for sure and some think the sum might have been more.

Only present W.I. members who were involved in the cemetery project are Mrs. Davidson, Mrs. Wilderspin, Mrs. Allan, Mrs. Wilds and Mrs. Lazenby.

Augustus "Gus" Clifford, now 88, recalls how he did the stonework for "as low a cost as possible" for the ladies. His bill to the W.I. was \$157. (The metal arch was ordered separately by the Institute. No price is available for the arch and former W.I. minutes are in the archives at Stewarttown).

He still has the detailed accounts of all his work, penned neatly in a small black notebook. Materials cost him \$62. After 205 hours of painstaking work, Mr. Clifford had \$92 for himself... about 45 cents an hour.

Saw new location

Mr. Clifford has been over to Cobblehill to see the gates in their new location and is quite pleased. He seldom gets out, however. His son Ted from Guelph drove him over.

Mr. Clifford lives on Arthur St. with his daughter Doris, Mrs. Sam Snow. His other two daughters are Mrs. Miriam Holloway, Acton, and Mrs. Eleanor Wannamaker, Stoney Creek.

Local fieldstone

Mr. Clifford did almost all the work himself, save for a man who put in the foundation, for \$7. The fieldstone came—in eight truck loads—from the farms of Jack Williamson and Bob Wallace. Its cost to Mr. Clifford was \$12.75. The pillars are eight feet high and 30 inches square; the smaller pillars five feet high and 24 inches square, with a 16 foot wall between the pillars.

Busy stonemason

Mr. Clifford, who still speaks with a pleasing accent, came from Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, England, to Canada in 1913 and his wife and four children followed the next year.

Always in demand as a stonemason, he worked at Beardmore and Co. and later for the town from 1942 to 1959. There are many fine buildings that show his mark as an artisan.

Dublin gates, too

As well as Fairview cemetery gates, he built Dublin cemetery gates. Stones were brought from the Jesuit firm in Guelph to be incorporated with the local fieldstone, he recalls.

He had his part in building various homes in Acton and Georgetown. He did outside stone work and fireplaces here and in Georgetown.

Active life

Mr. Clifford was active in St. Alban's church and was envelope secretary for 20 years.

There were six Clifford brothers in the army in World War I. Of the Acton veterans of the 164th Battalion just three are left—Mr. Clifford, Sam Perry and Dr. Buchanan.

Special ceremonies

The Women's Institute arranged the special dedication ceremony in 1938 which drew about 500 people to the cemetery.

Councillor Amos Mason—later Acton's first mayor—was chairman and he recalled for the crowd that the Women's Institute had plans for an entrance as long as a dozen years before that. In 1930, council named a cemetery board for the first time and supervision of the cemetery was vested in them. The board, R. M. MacDonald, C. Hansen and J. Bell, saw the two lots on Main St. acquired and the land all levelled.

Then came the time for culmination of the W.I.'s ambitious plans.

Unveiling

Representing the Toronto Convention of the Women's Institutes, Mrs. Abbott of Erin spoke, reminding the '38 crowd "we pause on the brink of a world war".

The unveiling of the bronze tablet which reads "Erected by Acton Women's Institute 1938" was performed by Mrs. J. E. Gamble, Acton, Halton County president of the Women's Institutes.

Rev. Dr. Morrow had the opening prayer, Rev. E. A. Brooks read scripture and Rev. H. L. Bennie closed the ceremonies with prayer. Bandmaster Perrott led the Acton Citizens' Band.

Will take part

Mrs. R. L. Davidson and Mrs. V. Wilderspin will join Acton Ministerial Association when the new gates are rededicated this Decoration Day, Sunday, June 6. New shrubs will also be planted.



SMALL BLACK notebook which shows all his costs in building cemetery pillars is gone over again by stonemason Augustus Clifford, 88, Arthur St. The stonework took him 205 hours for a fee of about 45 cents an hour, and the total project cost Acton Women's Institute about \$250. —(Staff photo).

Ospringe

Cookie day, tour reported

By Mrs. D.G. Robertson

Mr. and Mrs. Keenan and daughters spent a few days with relatives at Lindsay.

Mr. Albert McCutcheon has been a patient at Guelph Hospital.

Mr. and Mrs. Max Schotsch and children visited over the week end with relatives at Burkes Falls.

In Europe

Miss Beverly Bruce R.N. of Toronto Western Hospital staff spent a few days with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Byron Bruce. Beverly has just returned from a tour of Spain and nearby places in company with friends.

Mrs. M.M. Bruce of Whitewood Sask. is visiting with her sons Ward and Byron and families.

Carol Stewart celebrated her ninth birthday on Saturday, her guests being school chums.

Tour pottery

Eighteen members and friends of the local Women's Institute, enjoyed a visit to White Oak Pottery, on 5 sideroad at 25 highway.

Mr. Secord, the owner, explained the production from start to finish and answered many questions.

The ladies had a chance to follow the different procedures needed to complete the beautiful pieces of pottery.

Mrs. E. Archibald extended a vote of thanks to Mr. Secord for the informative and interesting evening.

Norman Buck, a student at Mohawk College, and Bob Bruce of McMaster, Hamilton, are home for the holidays.

Lost ring

Take a quick look... have you lost your wedding ring? Acton police have a 14 Karat gold wedding band they'd like to see returned to its owner. It was advertised in last week's Free Press without any luck.


The local "Brownie" Group were out bright and early Saturday morning selling cookies. They found the response good and were soon sold out.

Brown Owl, Judy Short and Tawny Owl, Mrs. George Rudder are leaders of the group.

A banquet and enrolment for the combined groups from Ospringe and Erin will be held in Burns Church, Erin, later in the month.

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ALL MEATS CUSTOM CUT AND WRAPPED



NEW POSITION off Cobblehill Rd. shows cemetery entrance to fine advantage. The stone pillars and wall were built by Gus Clifford, and the metal arch added. Acton Women's Institute donated the gates to the town in 1938 at a cost of about \$250. They have been moved over the past couple of weeks and will be rededicated on Decoration Day June 6. —(Staff Photo)

Plans for band camp

At least five young Acton band members and likely more will be attending the Ontario Youth Music Camp at Beaverton this summer. As well, Joe Petric will be chief counsellor for a month and will also lecture on the accordion and repertoire.

The Acton players expect to be going to camp the first week in July. Last year eight young people enjoyed the week of camp and practices, culminating in a concert.

The cost is about \$70 each, and the band is holding a dance May 29 to raise money to assist in expenses.

New Sergeant at Milton OPP

Three Sergeants serving with the Ontario Provincial Police were recently transferred to other detachment offices.

Sgt. M. R. Speicher, who was in charge of Milton Detachment OPP for the past 18 months, is now in command of the Waterdown detachment. Staff Sgt. E. J. Giddens, who was at Waterdown seven years, was transferred to the Fort Erie detachment.

Sgt. A. P. Thomson of Fort Erie has been transferred to take command of the 30-man Milton OPP.

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