



the painted box

by Wendy Thomson

One night last week, I was out fairly late. Because my ride back was short of time, I walked the last half mile home. It was six-thirty in the morning (I said it was later) everything was absolutely still. The snow was full of beautiful shadows in the early morning light, the roads were clear, and the walk was most enjoyable. I took my time and savoured each peaceful moment.

Later, while stretched out in bed drowsing, I had a rather unsettling thought, while I'm not actually starting to GET old, I sometimes FEEL old. And act it too, I guess.

The outdoors used to be a pretty constant delight, each and every season. I'd be outside every time I got the chance. True, I did slow down in winter, but there were times...

After sitting recalling various winter happenings on the farm over the years, I've decided maybe I'm not acting older, just wiser.

I remember hauling the kids on sleds up and down endless hills, and being tackled by a friend who scrubbed my face vigorously with snow, just because I happened to hit him square on the head with a snowball.

Night herd
And the mornings I pulled on boots and coat over my nightclothes to chase up the road after our flock of geese and herd them back down, hoping nobody would run into us in the dark. "And there I was, just taking the geese for a walk in my nightgown..."

Then there was all the good times with the horses in the snow. The first winter they were here, not knowing any better, we kept them in the barn "out of the weather." In a sense, it was nice working around in there. It was small and warmish, and I liked dodging my way around the two fuzzy animals. But more than once I ended up with wet feet (again) by going to walk out with the water pail only to be brought up short by a pony hanging onto my coat-tail with his teeth. Earl Grey would just stand, looking the other way, pretending I wasn't there at all and it must've been some other pony hanging on.

The following year, with one horse and two ponies, it was outside with all of them. One morning, as I was feeding them, Daisy-pony let

ly and kicked me in the shin. More surprised than hurt, I said, "Daisy, it's me!" She gave me a look that clearly said "I KNOW it's you, dummy" and began lining me up for a kick from both feet.

Bucket hop
With my characteristic quick thinking and cool-headedness, I hit her over the head with the oat bucket, lost my balance, and landed right on (or "in") a spot another horse had very obviously been standing a few minutes before.

In the following years, many of the mornings feeding live horses outside at 5 or 10 below, were sheer misery. But then I think of that one special morning.

It was so cold, I huddled in between the horses and wondered why we kept them, anyhow. Then I noticed a curious stillness. It took me a minute to realize the sun was just beginning to rise over the trees to the east. As the rays touched the animals, not only the horses, but the cattle and geese as well, they stopped eating and stood absolutely still as the brief warmth slid over them.

Here again
I didn't understand, at first, but then as the sun reached me, I realized I did exactly the same. I stopped, raised my head, and thought "Ah... it's here again. I'm glad." That was a few years ago, but whenever I think of it now, that same peaceful quiet washes over me for a few minutes. I do believe all the misery was worth it.

These days, there's no reason to go outside. The kids are a little too big to pull around on a sled, and the livestock is all gone. I trot down to the road for the mail every morning, and that's about it.

Of course, you must admit I'd look a little foolish out tohogganping up and down the hills all by myself. But maybe—MAYBE—I'll try it. Must bolster up my self-image somehow!

Former member returns as speaker

The regular monthly meeting of the Daughters of Knox was held in the Mary Ellen Anderson room of the Presbyterian church Monday evening. President Mrs. Brian Moore presided. Discussions were held regarding the euche to be held at the church at 8 p.m. February 15. Price is \$1 and everyone is welcome. Women's World Day of Prayer on March 1 will have Miss Donna Riseborough speaking on Peace Within and Without at 2 p.m. at Knox Presbyterian church. Miss Riseborough is a theological student and a former member of the Daughters of Knox.

An open forum to which all are invited will be held Sunday evening, February 10 at 7:30 p.m. in the church. It will be an evening to learn about and discuss Third World Development Problems. An inter-church committee is planning to have a competent panel of knowledgeable people to assist in leading the discussion. A film will be shown and refreshments served.

Mrs. Harold Swallow and her group handled the study book and devotional portion which was to do with salvation. Hymns were sung, the meeting was closed with a prayer, and lunch was served.

Ceramics his topic

Guest speaker at Milton Chamber of Commerce annual meeting was John Secord of White Oak Ceramics. The Secords moved recently from north of Acton to Milton and their business is established in larger premises there now. He told Chamber members about his processes, pointing out most ceramics sold in Canada are imported.



MARY FUCHS, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Fuchs, Acton and Mark Douglas Hurst, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hurst, Acton, were married Dec. 28 at Knox Presbyterian church. They are living in Acton. (Photo by W. Stuckey)

Free Press Family Page

Health, safety tips given Greenock W.I.

The Greenock Women's Institute met at the home of Mrs. C. Allan, Churchill Rd., for January. Mrs. J. McCulloch presided. Roll call was "Something I have bought and will never buy again. Mrs. C. Allan gave a meditation on "Feeling sorry for yourself."

Mrs. C. Allan for current events gave an interesting account of a bus trip she took recently to Richmond Hill, Williamsburg and Monticello in U.S.A.

Dangers
Mrs. C. Storey and Mrs. R. Sinclair were in charge of the program on health and safety. Mrs. C. Storey gave tips on safety measures to use in emergencies and stressed that diseases do not kill as many children as accidents such as suffocation, pills, pins, needles and tiny toys.

Mrs. R. Sinclair read an article which was written by the editor of Did I Say that, of the Guelph Mercury. It went on to say while this is not of concern immediately in Wellington county regional government should be giving food for thought as people listen to the problems of Halton County. Mrs. Sinclair read from a bulletin that accompanies family allowances on things safe to take to picnics and read a poem from the news letter from Milton Ag. representative.

Mrs. R. Sinclair was presented with a silver dollar to be given to her daughter Janet. Each new baby born to a member receives one. Mrs. E. Winter and Mrs. G. Johnston were lunch courtesers and Mrs. C. Storey, courtesy convener, thanked all who helped.

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Free Press Personals

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Hurst and their young son are moving soon from his posting in Bangladesh to Paris, France. He'll be communication officer with the Canadian embassy there. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Hurst, are looking forward to visiting them in Paris this summer.

Hert Hinton has been appointed Acton Chamber of Commerce representative to the Halton region Chamber of Commerce. This group of reps meets once a month in Milton.

The music centre was packed Saturday night for the Y's Men's club snowmobile dance. With a sell-out crowd inside, some had to be turned away at the door unfortunately. Quite a few friends from out-of-town joined club members for the evening.

Almost 2,000 young people from all over the province had a marvellous weekend together at the Royal York Hotel, Toronto, for the annual Junior Farmer Talent Festival. Halton didn't do outstandingly well in the competitions, but a Wellington county entry won

the modern square dance competition and a University of Guelph team the old-fashioned square dance competition.

Enjoying the winter wrookend away from home from Acton and district were Doug and Sandy McLean, Ross Burt, Joe Brooks, Mike Noble, Bill Brooks, Carl and Cathy Sinclair, George and Sharon Henderson, Earl McLean, Frances McLean, Dev. Lelich, Heather Kirkwood, Doris Burt, Wally Ella, Ray Swackhammer, Janet Henderson, Harvey Burt, Leah Leslie, Bruce Cole, Beryl McEnery and Sharon Leslie.

A shock to friends of the Dittich family was the news Tuesday of the sudden death of Keith, the six year-old son of Rev. and Mrs. Doug Dittich of Inuvik. Apparently the lad died following a minor operation.

Miss Cassie Allan is in Guelph General for tests and friends hope she'll be home again soon.

The music centre was packed Saturday night for the Y's Men's snowmobile dance. Some had to be turned away at the door, unfortunately, because of lack of room. Quite a few friends from out-of-town joined club members for the event.

A warm welcome in cold weather has been extended to town newcomers by the Hi Neighbor welcome service lately.

Mr. and Mrs. U. Fieback and two children moved from Stratford to 128 Elmora Dr. Mr. and Mrs. T. Paul came from Toronto to 115 Longfield Road.

Retired farmers Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Leitch have come from Erin to 119 Wynford Place.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Trotter moved from West Hill to 60 Eastern Ave.

Mr. and Mrs. C. Trudering came from Mississauga to 133 Elmora Dr.

Rev. and Mrs. Ewing are newcomers to 185 Jeffrey, St. Alban's rector and the only man on the list to work in town! They came from Cayuga.

Mr. and Mrs. B. Ferguson and baby, formerly of Port Credit, are at 27 Knox Ave.

Mr. and Mrs. H. McKersie and baby came from Milton to 62 Coldduff Rd.

Mr. and Mrs. S. F. Mungam, at 150 Elmora Dr., came from Clarkson.

New residents in the Winston Apts are Mrs. M. Capperand from Toronto and Mrs. K. Hills from Glen Williams.

Mrs. N. Mitchell came from the seventh line of Esquesing into town to 236 Arthur St.

Hope they all enjoy living among friendly Acton people.

Life's covenants
Trinity activity Group met at the church Jan. 20. Mrs. Kathy McGillivray opened the meeting and conducted a short business meeting.

Miss Elaine Diggle took charge of the Bible Study on the meaning of the covenant between man and God of which the Bible speaks, far greater than any pact or contract. Other covenants that are made including marriage, Lord's supper, baptism, and many others were discussed. Each member participated by reading verses from the Bible.

A social time was spent over a cup of tea or coffee.

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