

Lavish Beardmore family home now Italian education centre

The lavish Beardmore home in Toronto was a subject for Donald Jones in his Toronto Star column Historical Toronto.

The Beardmore family was a colorful one. For years they had a beautiful home in Acton, on the property where the Church and Maria St. apartments now stand. This home was torn down years ago, and The Free Press doesn't have a picture of it. Here is some of what Donald Jones has to say about this family and their house in Toronto.

"Few houses in Toronto have witnessed as much dramatic history as has the large yellow brick house at the corner of Beverley and Dundas Sts., which was once the famous Toronto mansion called Chudleigh.

"In the late 1830s, it was the handsome consulate of the Italian government, which built a large bar into the basement and covered the floor with Italian mosaics.

"During World War II it was confiscated by the Canadian government. Its

south lawn was turned into a parade ground and the house became a barracks for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

"But during the first 60 years of its history, this was 'Chudleigh' and the social world of Toronto fought over invitations to its New Year's Eve parties.

"Popular bachelor

"For it was the home of one of the most popular bachelors in the city's history, George Wathen Beardmore, the colorful Master of the Fox Hounds of the Toronto Hunt

and 'The Grand Old Man' of Toronto's sporting world.

"His father, George Lissant Beardmore, had brought a small fortune with him when he came to Canada from England in the late 1830s and invested it in a tannery which he opened in Hamilton.

"In 1865 he opened a large plant in Acton, where the company still operates. A hundred years ago in 1875, he built the family home at 136 Beverley St.

"At the end of the 19th century he built the great Beardmore Building, which has recently been restored on Front St. just east of the O'Keefe Centre as the company's sales office.

"After his death, his four sons continued to run the business, but the great love of son George's life was riding to hounds.

Beardmore, appeared on the front page of The Toronto Star on June 19, 1931, dressed as Tannhauser under a headline 'Native Torontonian Makes Air History'. He had never wanted to work in the family business and had gone to Europe to become an opera singer.

"When war broke out in 1914 he was imprisoned in Berlin but escaped and joined the British Secret Service.

"English Channel glide

"He loved flying as much as he did singing and in 1931 he became the first man to fly across the English Channel in a glider. There was to have been a competitive race the next day but when George learned there were to be a number of Europeans in the race he decided to fly the night before.

"When he landed at Calais he told reporters he thought the first man to glide across the English Channel should be a Britisher.

"In the late 1930s, the Beardmore home was bought by the Italian government as a consulate but was confiscated by the Canadian government in 1941 after Italy had entered the war.

Barracks

"It was a barracks for the RCMP drug and espionage squads for almost 20 years until 1962 when the Canadian government gave it to the Italian community as a rehabilitation and training centre for Italian immigrants.

"Today, as Costi, a member of the United Way, it serves over 90 different ethnic groups in Toronto.

"Near the bottom of the basement stairs, there's a magnificent mosaic on the floor left from the days when the house was the Italian consulate. It's in the design of a bundle of rods, the ancient Roman symbol of power that Mussolini chose for his Fascist movement.

"But there are few days when it can be seen. Most of the time it's covered with sawdust. The room is now a woodworking shop."

Look out below!



Presented at court

"It was said he had the best pack of foxhounds on the continent and while the Toronto Hunt was building its new club on Kingston Rd. in the 1890s, George kept the club's hounds in the stables behind his home.

"When the club opened in 1893, he was elected to its most important position, Master of the Fox Hounds, and for the next 38 years he decided when the club would hunt and awarded the buttons to members.

"He was president of the Canadian National Horse Show for 18 years and for over 25 years was Canadian director of the International Horse Show in London. He was presented at court and became a close friend of the racing set in England.

"His company was almost destroyed during the depression in the 1930s and was eventually sold to Canada Packers in 1944. But George never lived to see the loss of the family business. He died in 1934, but was still riding as Master of the Toronto Hunt when he was in his eighties.

"He wasn't the only colorful member of the Beardmore family. His nephew, George Lissant



NOW AN Italian community rehabilitation and training centre, this house was in the past one of the centres of Toronto social life.

Let's talk about horses

by Jennifer Barr



With Jennifer Barr

Silently we crept through moonlit snow on rice krispie feet muffled litters at our foolishness. The little ones carried the carrots while we clutched apples, bread and hot milk. Our destination: the stable. The time: almost midnight Christmas Eve.

Year after year, we persist in trying to surprise the animals kneeling at the holy hour. Year after year we find a bunch of startled blinking horses all on fourfeet. We shrug and go about the business of distributing treats but we keep hoping.

This year we had seven horses munching carrots, two calves eating apples, eight chickens too sleepy to bother with the bread and both barn cats slithering around our legs begging for milk. The banham rooster was disturbed from his warm roost on a horse bottom (it's tough to go through life with chicken droppings on your backside) and proceeded with his usual run around the barn via horses' backs.

Our nine horse barn is rather crowded, the two calves share a box stall so do the small Welsh pony and the donkey. The chickens slutter another stall while the cats sleep in the storage area. However, it's cosy, warm and friendly.

Christmas chores

Apart from the midnight

visit, the feeding routine has to be the same even on Christmas, although it's interspersed with celebration.

The kids bring their stockings into us when they awake and bounce all over the bed eating smarties.

We have tea, coffee, and or milk depending on what we were doing the night before. Then we feed the stock who are generally quite surprised because it's still only 5.30 a.m.

Back to the house stamping and blowing, greeted by two children pleading "can we huh, huh?"

And we denude the tree.

The dogs help unwrap presents searching for their own. The cats sit in dignified splendor inside empty boxes showing only the tips of their ears. The white mouse, guinea pigs and hamster rattle shiny new water bottles.

Few mishaps marred this Christmas besides the Dalmatian eating the candy canes, a sick chicken in the basement, and the smallest pony kicking down most of her stall - just routine stuff.

We had a very enjoyable Christmas, hope you did.

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Look for a new column in this spot next week. This is the last totally horse-orientated column. The new one will embrace more varied aspects of rural life, including horses!

Church Services

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA KNOX CHURCH, ACTON

Rev. Andrew H. McKenzie, B.A., B.D., Minister
Mr. E. A. Hansen, B.A. Organist and Choir Master

Sunday, Jan. 4th, 1976

11:00 a.m.—Church School for Beginners, Kindergarten and Grades 1 to 8.
11:00 a.m.—Morning Worship
7:00 p.m.—Evening Evangelistic Service.

7:00 p.m. Guest Speaker—Walt Huntley, Gospel soloist, song writer, and one of the most outstanding homespun gospel poets. Accompanied by Dennis Pascoe. Outstanding gospel accordionist, on electric accordion. You will thoroughly enjoy their ministry. Don't miss it.

Tuesday
8:00 p.m.—Prayer Service and Bible Study.

ALL ARE WELCOME!
Excellent free town Bus Service for children and adults to and from Sunday School on the "All Red Bus". Also Rural pick-up. For information phone 853-2715 or 853-0766.

Luke 2:11 "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

MAPLE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH

177 Maple Ave., Georgetown (A Fellowship Baptist Church)

Sunday, Jan. 4, 1976

9:45 a.m.—Sunday School for all ages
11:00 a.m.—Morning Worship
6:30 p.m.—Evening Fellowship

Thought—Peace rules the day when Christ rules the mind.

BETH-EL CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Sunday, Jan. 4, 1976

Sunday Worship Services at 10:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Pre-school Sunday School during the morning service. Sunday School during the afternoon service.

You are welcome

Church of the "Back to God Hour" heard over these stations: Hamilton C.K.O.C. 7:00 a.m. dial 1150, St. Catharines, C.H.S.C. 8:30 a.m. dial 1220, Toronto, C.H.I.N.-FM 8:00 a.m. dial 101 M.H.Z., Toronto, C.K.F.H. 11:30 a.m. dial 1430.

EVANGEL PENTECOSTAL TABERNACLE

P.A.O.C. 33 Churchhill Rd. N. Rev. S. M. Thoman, Pastor 853 2715

Wednesday, Dec. 31 10:15 p.m.—Watchnight Communion Service.

Sunday, Jan. 4, 1976

10:00 a.m.—Sunday School
11:00 a.m.—Morning Worship
7:00 p.m.—Evening Evangelistic Service.

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CHURCHILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

Churchhill Rd. N. Minister
The Rev. J. L. McFadden B.A., B.D.
Box 331, Guelph, Phone 821-3215

Sunday, Jan. 4, 1976

11:00 a.m.—Worship and Church School. Sermon Subject "As for me and my house".

Mrs. Eleanor McFadden in charge of service.

The Church on the Hill is an interdenominational congregation, ministering to the needs of the community.

All Welcome

UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA TRINITY CHURCH, ACTON

Rev. Anna Taylor Supervising Minister 824-3824

Rev. G. Rennie Dr. George Elliott M.A., Ph. D. Director of Music

Sunday, Jan. 4, 1976

10:00 a.m.—Public Worship and Sunday Church School and Nursery.

ACTON BAPTIST CHURCH

80 Mill Street East. Founded 1842

Pastor: Rev. Das Sydney B.Sc., M.Div. Pastor's Phone—853 1835

Sunday, Jan. 4, 1976

10:00 a.m.—Sunday School
11:15 a.m.—Morning Worship

Monday, Jan. 5, 1976

8:00 p.m.—Mission Circle annual Business Meeting and election of officers.

Tuesday, Jan. 13, 1976

Baptist men of Acton

THE CHURCH OF ST. ALBAN THE MARTYR

1872—Anglican—1974

Corner Willow St. and St. Alban's Dr. Rev. Leonard Ewing Rector Director of Music Mrs. Frank Oakes

Sunday, Jan. 4, 1976

9:00 a.m.—Holy Eucharist
10:00 a.m.—Sung Eucharist.

Everyone is welcome

BAHA' FAITH

You are warmly invited to attend a fireside discussion Friday evenings. Phone 878-6138.

"O My servants! Sorrow not if, in these days and on this earthly plane, things contrary to your wishes have been ordained and manifested by God, for days of blissful joy, of heavenly delight, are assuredly in store for you!"

Hilton Falls 583 acres more

With the acquisition of 583 acres north of Hilton Falls, Halton Region Conservation Authority now owns a solid block of land over 2,500 acres at the headwaters of the 16 Mile Creek.

According to HRA manager Murray Stephen the land will be used for cross country skiing, snowmobiling, nature walks and forestry improvement. A wildlife habitat will be maintained.

Seventy-five per cent of the total cost of \$579,000 will be born by a \$435,000 grant from the Ministry of Natural Resources. The other 25 per cent has been donated by the Ontario Heritage Foundation.

German Co.

The Niagara Escarpment property was purchased from a German company Twin Brook farms. It had been originally acquired by the company for quarrying but was refused rezoning by the former Township of Nassagaweya. It was not licenced under the province's Pits and

Quarries Act.

Sixteen Mile Creek, supplying a year round flow for the Kelso and Hilton Falls reservoirs, crosses the property. The Bruce Trail also passes through the area, well wooded with hardwood and mixed forest.

Food Traditions

At New Year

Traditionally, the New Year observance is associated with certain foods. The American Indians served biscuits and salmon, the Romans honey. In Quebec, the traditional cake, Le Cateau des Rois, is served on Epiphany. The cake contains a pea and a bean and the king and queen of Twelfth Night are elected by those receiving them.

Scottish celebrators carry cakes and spill ale to wish their host a good year. Rice cakes are served in Ceylon.

And, of course, in many sections of this country, serving black-eyed peas on January 1st is believed to assure good fortune to family and friends.

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