

# NORTH HALTON HERITAGE AREA

## Historical Look at Milton

The thud of an axe on a solid white pine broke the forest stillness as the first settler challenged his new land. Here on crown land, bordering the Sixteen Mile Creek, was to be Milton.

The settling had been untouched except by nomadic Indian tribes who settled for their agricultural-type of life. The first surveyor in the early 1800's reported, the area to be primeval forest, unbroken except for the occasional beaver meadow and a few Indian corn fields in the lower valley flats.

To this area came Jasper and Sarah Martin in 1821, both 21 years of age, and their two sons, John, three and Joseph 4 months old. They had arrived from Northumberland in May of 1818 and had spent three years in York before they ventured into the wilderness to claim their land. The original 100 acres soon became 200 as Jasper Martin obtained another 100 acres from Joseph Whitefield who returned to England.

Although a scattering of settlers was evident in the area, they were all isolated from one another and in 1820 when Thomas and Elizabeth Harrison built their log home on lot 12, there were no white women around for socializing for almost a year.

The Willmotts began the first settlement work on their farm on lot 10 Trafalgar in 1818. There were others as well. The early settlers included the Martins, Whitefields, Fosters, Greenias, Huffman and Teetzel.

Seeing the potential of water power from the Sixteen Mile Creek, Jasper Martin had a grist mill in operation by 1822. In 1825 he added a sawmill and ashery. In 1830 George Brown opened a store and post office on what was to become Main Street.

Dr. James Cobban chose Milton to set up the practice of medicine. He was one of three doctors between Hamilton and York.

In her 33rd year, in 1830 Sarah Martin died. Three years later Jasper Martin died and the work of the mills became the responsibility of their two sons, John and Joseph.

By the mid 1830's the area was a booming farming community and a public meeting was held to select a name for this progressive town. It would be called Milton.

In 1846 the first protestant church was built, and referred to as The Auld Kirk. Elizabeth Harrison organized the first school in a log building near the present site of P.L. Robertson's manufacturing plant and the same school served for the first Sunday School as well.

By 1848, organizations began to appear in Milton and the Milton Branch of the Loyal Orange Lodge was established.

In 1851 the town's first developer, Matthias Teetzel, divided property into lots and offered them for sale. A brick school house replaced the log school and the community expanded.

After great controversy in June 1853, legislation was passed separating Halton County from the County of Wentworth and Milton was chosen as the seat for county buildings and judicial matters. Hugh Foster donated land and in March 1854 began the building of the Court House. Being a County Town, Milton became an important community and roads and road systems were established and a stage coach service to Bronte, twice daily, was put into effect.

The 1850's brought many changes to Milton. The first library was organized, the first newspaper was established and John Martin erected a large new Market House to be ready for the recently organized Halton Agricultural Society Fair. Brick and stone houses were under construction and the main street was developing into smart shops and trading places.

The first disaster to strike Milton was the burning of a chair and cabinet factory. Men lost their jobs and a public meeting was called to consider help for them.

Again disaster fell, John Martin's flour mill burned. Within weeks it was rebuilt in stone at a cost of \$30,000 and John White became part owner.

In June 1857, elections were held for the first time and local government took over from the Trafalgar area governing seat. Times were happy and Milton was in a social whirl. One such occasion was when the Milton and Acton Brass bands participated at a social party. It was held in the town hall. People came at six p.m., tea was served at 7 p.m. and the ball commenced at 9. It finally broke up about 5 a.m. the next morning. Their stamina has to be admired.

In 1857, the town's stone school house was built, a registry office established (at the site of the present health unit offices), several churches were being built and streets and sidewalks being installed. Mail service began on a daily basis between Campbellville, Acton and Milton. Milton was also looking into telegraph connections.

Milton took an active part in the political scenes connected with Confederation. A new Market House was built (the present Town Hall) at a cost of \$5,000.00, and a political battle emerged when they discovered that revenue for the year had been only \$4,000.

Early progressive communities felt that a railway through town was a must and in 1871 Milton agreed to have the Credit Valley Railway (CV) pass through the com-

munity. However, this was not accomplished until 1879 by which time the Hamilton and North Western Line (now CP) opened first in 1877.

The Pioneer Cemetery was outgrowing its location and in 1881 today's Evergreen Cemetery came into being. In 1887 a waterworks system was installed in Town with water piped from the Niagara Escarpment at a cost of \$20,000. Forty coal oil lights lit the streets of downtown but on Dec. 3, 1891 electric lights brought a new era into night lighting. Telephone service created an eventful 1893 when 14 subscribers were serviced from a switchboard located in a drug store owned by Higgenbotham and Co.

As the 20th century emerged, verandahs were being removed from Main Street stores; sidewalks of cement replacing boardwalks and a new station had been completed for the Grand Trunk Railway (now the Chamber of Commerce Information Centre). The town purchased its own electric light plant in 1905, and the question of establishing a House of Refuge for the indigent was on everyone's mind.

Milton had a population of 1,450 in the early 1900's and P.L. Robertson, a young man with a dream to produce socket headed screws bought land from John Scott and set up a machine shop to perfect his idea. He employed 21 men and lit his shops with acetylene light and ran his machines with 20 horsepower gas engines.

Between the turn of the century and the Second World War, Milton underwent modernization both socially and technically. A hospital was in the works and an underpass under the railway at Court St. was being debated. Automobiles were being seen on Milton's streets and the need to drive "slowly" was much apparent when a local man was killed, however it was a "buggy and horse" accident. The Red Cross opened a branch in Milton and the 20th Battalion Halton Lorne Rifles and the 36th Peel Regiments provided instant draft for overseas service.

By 1919 the Gordon Home for orphans was being operated at the north-east corner of Court and Main Street by the Children's Aid Society and in 1921 the Martin St. School was built as the town's first high school.

The 1930's were harder for people in Milton, the P.L. Robertson plant closed for 10 days and men were walking the street looking for work.

Milton today is very different from what the first settlers saw and it reflects the countless contributions of generations past who created what we share today.

The Milton Historical Society seeks to recognize the past in appreciation to all those who went before.



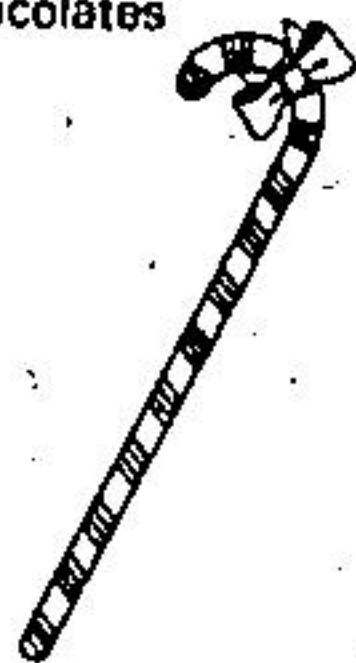
197 Main St. S.  
Rockwood, Ontario  
N0B 2K0  
(519) 866-9963

Come to our factory outlet store and you will find the best assortment of Christmas candies, candy canes, chocolates and fudge for the Holiday season.

Makers of Old-Fashioned Homemade Candies and Chocolates



Since 1923



CHECK THIS DATE  
SUN. DECEMBER 5th 1982

DECEMBER 1982						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

### COME TO AN UNIQUE XMAS BAZAAR

Featuring rides on an antique streetcar. We'll have Santa Claus with a little gift for the kids. Handcrafts - Baked Goods - Food of all kinds and The Gift Shop with interesting items.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5th, 1982**

11.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.

You can ride a streetcar of a bygone era at the museum on weekends until Oct. 31st.

See map for location -

**HALTON COUNTY RADIAL RAILWAY**

Chudleigh's



Fresh Baking daily; apple pies featured!

Complete Fruit and Vegetable Market.

Extensive Gift Shoppe. in a barn!

Hay mow play area for children.

Hayrides on the weekends.

Chudleigh's Apple Farm

R.R. 3, Milton, Ontario

Hwy. 25, 2 miles North of 401.  
Everyday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

TORONTO LINE

270-2982

416-878-2725