

# Blyths have been foster parents to 45 youngsters over 27 years

by Anne Redfeare  
When it comes to being parents, Anne Blyth thinks, some people have it and some don't.

After taking in 45 foster children over 27 years, Horace and Anne Blyth are probably naturals. During their 35 years in the Acton area, the Blyths raised five children of their own (one adopted) and took in infants, toddlers, teens; anyone Halton Children's Aid Society was interested in sending them. Their big farmhouse in Nassagaweya teemed with children for years.

Now the Blyths are retired in Guelph, and are still willing to take in foster children. "Only now, the children don't call us Mom and Dad; it's Grandpa and Grandma," Mrs. Blyth says with a grin.

The Blyths and another Halton Hills family, the Gaffneys of Terra Cotta, were honored by Halton Children's Aid Society (CAS) Friday for their service as foster families.

The Blyths maintain that although the plaque commends them for 25 years service, it was two years before that they first took in a child as foster parents. "I looked after two sick children while their mother was in hospital," she explained. "In a way, I guess we just fell into the job with the CAS. They came one day and suggested since we could look after the sick little ones, maybe we'd like to look after other children too."

She can recall every one of the children they looked after, Mrs. Blyth says, and some still come back to visit. "Some stayed six years, some two years."

And some have only stayed a few weeks. On several occasions, Mrs. Blyth picked up a baby directly from hospital and kept the infant until adoption proceedings were finalized.

On top of that, Mr. Blyth, a dairy farmer, did volunteer driving for the CAS, and Mrs. Blyth worked in the resource section and provided relief care for other foster homes for vacations.

They recall the time when foster parenting was strictly volunteer work. "At one time we were never given any financial subsidy from the agency." Now, foster parents are paid for their trouble, but the Blyths warn that it isn't a way to make money.

"Actually, I never really thought about the financial end of things. I only thought about helping the children," Mrs. Blyth said. And sometimes, when there were 12 of them sitting down for an evening meal, a six-quart basket of potatoes didn't last very long.

Now their own children, and most of the children they fostered, have grown up, and there are grandchildren—10 of them—to visit. They can still recall the good times like the two sets of twins they looked after, whole families of children children coming into foster care and staying at the Blyth farm. "I think the farm was a very healthy place to raise children," Horace Blyth says now. They certainly raised enough of them.

At one time, too, children going into foster care made a clean break with their own family, and in returning to their family never saw their foster family again.

"I think that must have been hard. The adjustment a child had to make, coming into a strange home, was a big one," Mrs. Blyth said.

Now, the Blyths work with the natural families to help the children get settled in their own homes again.

Being a foster parent takes a lot of love, Mr. Blyth maintains. "The children need a lot of love, especially the special children, those who have been abused, or those with emotional problems." And they need a firm, sensible form of discipline. "We treat them all the way we would our own children."

Even though the Blyths have retired, they are still looking forward to having more foster children. Mrs. Blyth is taking a course in child care, but she maintains some parents will never be able to learn how to be parents. "It's just not something everyone can do."

## Greenock WI

### New officers elected for '83

The April meeting of the Greenock Women's Institute was held at the home of Mrs. J. McCulloch with 15 members present.

Mrs. S. McKinnon read meditations. The roll call was answered by the payment of fees for the coming year. The annual reports were read followed by the new slate of officers for the coming year. Past president, Mrs. J. Addison; president, Mrs. W. Aitken; first vice president, Mrs. R. McKeown; second vice president, Mrs. E. McGeragle; secretary treasurer, Mrs. R. Sinclair; assistant secretary treasurer, Mrs. A. Gates; Branch Directors, Mrs. A. Leslie, Mrs. C. Allen, Mrs. E. Patterson; PRO, Mrs. D. Milton; district director, Mrs. C. Aitken; and Alternator District director, Mrs. G. Wallace.

Standing convenors are: cards, fruit and flowers, Miss E. Pearson; agric. and Canadian industries, Mrs. G. Pridmore; Citizenship and world affairs, Mr. C. Johnston; education and cultural activities, Mrs. J. Addison; family and consumer affairs, Mrs. A. Gates; resolutions, Mrs. E. McGeragle; Tweedsmuir curator, Mrs. G. G. Wallace; pianist, Mrs. G. Pridmore; auditors, Mrs. E. McGeragle, Mrs. J. Addison; courtesy, hostess for next meeting.

Lunch was served by the committee of Mrs. J. Veerman and Mrs. G. Johnston assisted by the hostess.

## No charges in two car crash

No charges were laid following a two car crash Saturday afternoon on Highway 7, one-and-a-half miles east of Guelph.

Darlene Allinson, 42 Mowbray Place, Acton, was making a left turn into a driveway when she was in collision with a vehicle driven by Peter Clapperton, R.R. 2 Ancaster, who was attempting to pass her. There were no injuries. Allinson's car received an estimated \$1,500 in damages and \$2,000 damage was sustained by the Clapperton car.



Horace and Anne Blyth look over an album of their foster children. The couple have cared for 45 youngsters over a span of 27 years.

## \$6,000 for cemetery study

The Town is going to spend \$6,000 for a consulting firm to study existing landscaping and make proposals for improvements at Fairview Cemetery.

This whole matter began in 1978 when the Royal Botanical Gardens gave the Town a report dealing with landscaping improvement needs at Fairview.

In the next couple of years after that Town officials discussed with ratepayers on several occasions the problem of mosquitos in the cemetery area, the ponds in the cemetery and Town operations at the cemetery. Experts from the University of Guelph also looked at the cemetery and came up with some recommendations about how to deal with the pond and mosquito problems.

Late in 1980 council decided to put aside \$6,000 in the 1981 budget for a consulting firm from Orchard Park, New York, through Creative Memorials in Milton, to study the cemetery problems and come up with a long range plan. The firm visited the cemetery and submitted a report dealing with how to solve immediate problems, as well as how to come up with a long range plan, but it wasn't accepted by council. There was an outcry that an American firm was doing the work.

The Royal Botanical Gardens report referred to the age and deterioration of Norway Spruce trees in the cemetery and last year Town staff had to remove six old trees as well as two others which had been uprooted in storms.

The staff approached the consulting firm of Cosburn / Giberson, which has worked for Halton Hills on previous landscaping pro-

jects, to look only at landscaping but not review planning of more plots west of the pond.

After several site visits it was decided the consultant should conduct a "specimen tree survey" to determine the future in the cemetery of big spruce trees; conduct a "woodlot survey" to make recommendations about the lands west of the pond; propose "pond area improvements"; and draft a "landscape and development master plan" for the cemetery so future development and "visual character" of the cemetery could be co-ordinated in the master plan.

This new report will be compiled through visits by the consultants to the cemetery, by reviewing all of the old cemetery reports and by examining water level data assembled by the Town over the years.

Austin noted Cosburn, Giberson has worked in Acton before and is familiar with Fairview Cemetery. The \$6,000 for the study is covered in the 1983 budget.

Councillors approved the study without comment.

## Deer on roadway car goes into ditch

A deer in the middle of the road caused Russell Elliott, of the Second Line, Nassagaweya to go into the ditch and strike a stop sign, at 2 a.m., April 23.

Halton Regional Police say Elliott was westbound on 15 Sideroad, Nassagaweya intending to turn north onto the Second Line when he encountered the deer.

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by Sally Smith  
**Ci Epsilon Chi**  
Xi Epsilon Chi, Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi finished out its year with the election of new officers for the coming year. Joyce Finlay is president; Susan Johnson vice-president; Cheryl Beaton secretary; Maureen Borroughs treasurer and Nancy Little corresponding secretary.

Several service projects were accomplished during the year—we helped pay for dental work for a young person. Our group gave a scholarship to Acton High. We donated money to the youth section of the fall fair.

The sorority knitted toques for Georgetown and Guelph Hospitals for the babies to wear home from the hospital. We held a draw at the olde Hide House with proceeds going to Charity.

The sorority had a dance in February at the Band Hall with proceeds going to a local charity and draws of gifts donated by local businesses.

**Joyce Findlay president**

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TWO SITTINGS

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