

A genuine crossroads community, Crewson's Corners once had it all

By MAGGIE HANNAH
Herald Special

Distinguished among Halton's historically-fluctuating hamlets as a crossroads community merging two counties and four townships, Crewson's Corners - located "just the other side of Acton" - once offered its rural residents a church, a hotel and a store.

Crewson's Corners earned its name because of the Morden Crewson family that owned property on both sides of the townline separating Eramosa and Erin Townships, according to a long-time community resident.

Although there are a few houses on the Esqueving Township side of the line now they are new additions to the community and only one structure existed in Nassagaweya Township.

Jack Airdrie, 81, came to the area with his family in 1917. Only two other area residents, Doug Guthrie whose family arrived shortly after the Airdries, and Herb Brown whose family preceded the Airdries, are still in the area.

Today the community's population is approximately 110, Mr. Airdrie estimates. Only a handful of these people are retired.

Mr. Guthrie proudly recalls a time when Crewson's Corners was on maps and in school atlases even though Acton wasn't mentioned, quite a reversal of the present situation.

The reason for this fame stems from the fact the railway had planned to put a station at Crewson's Corners, Mr. Airdrie says, but Mr. Crewson wouldn't sell them land for it. They did have a water tower on the Eramosa side of the four corners, and farmers hauled wood there to supply the trains when they stopped for water and fuel.

However, without the station the Canadian National Railway let the stop disappear and settled on Acton a few miles to the east as their stop. As a result Crewson's Corners remained a crossroads and Acton became a town.

Mr. Guthrie says his family's farm at Lot 1, Concession 7, Eramosa Township, was all marked off into lots at one time and assumes this happened in the mid-1800s when the railway went through and plans were being discussed to erect the station.

Mr. Guthrie says oldtimers used to say the barn on his farm was once a livery or a wood-working shop. He has found wood tailings around the building which would indicate the stories may be true although it was long before his family came to the community in 1920.

Among Mr. Guthrie's memories of his youth in the hamlet are tales of playing on a local ball team during the depression. They were called the Crewson's Salts and used to challenge teams from other communities to pick up games. There was no league and it was all in fun, he says.

Mr. Airdrie lives at Lot 1, Concession 1, Erin Township, in what was originally a 12-room hotel. Later it became a convenience store, but Mr. Airdrie closed it in 1942. He took down the barn which had once housed customers' horses



and also took down the store addition. The hitching posts were still in place along the road when he purchased the building in 1936.

Not long after he purchased it Mr. Airdrie decided to fix a piece of wall which continually cracked no matter what papering and painting his wife did to spruce the room up. When he stripped it down he discovered a horseblanket nailed to the wall over which plaster had been applied. Under the

blanket were the original bathing doors of the hotel. Crewson's Corners also boasts the first oil well to be found in Halton County. Tony Senyuck dug his first oil well in a swamp on the Esqueving-Nassagaweya town line a bit south of the four corners in the early 1930s because an oily film could be seen on the swamp each summer.

Although he worked away on the well for probably up to five years he never got more than enough oil to convince himself there really was oil there but he wasn't drilling in quite the right location, Mr. Airdrie says.

The well provided another community story because a member of the Bilton family hung himself in the building over the well head in the late 1800s. Mr. Airdrie's brother found him while he was out hunting.

The hamlet once had a Methodist church but it has never had a cemetery. Mr. Airdrie estimates the church was built around 1906 as part of a circuit. This is why burials all took place in Acton, Rockwood, Eden Mills or Everton. When the church closed for lack of congregation the Orange Lodge bought the building. Although the lodge name and number still hangs over the door it is no longer in use.

A store operated on the Nassagaweya side of the corner for a number of years along with a gas station. Today it is a pottery shop. The stone house and barn originally built by Morden Crewson in the early 1800s are still in use. The barn is rare since it is built entirely of stone, rather than with a stone foundation and board walls, the usual type.

SIGNS OF SPRING

Sap soon to flow

Area schools teachers should now be booking visiting days for the Credit Valley Conservation Authority's annual maple syrup educational program, being held this year at the Orangeville Reservoir Conservation Area March 17 through April 10, excluding the school break week. To book your classes, contact George Roberts at the Authority office, 451-1615, but be forewarned that the program's already two-thirds booked. Every facet of the maple sugar and syrup mini-industry is examined, and maple products will be on sale.

The Orangeville Reservoir, meanwhile, will open its natural wonders to the general public Mar. 21 and 22, 28 and 29 and April 4 and 5 for the fifth annual Maple Syrup Festival. There's plenty to do and plenty to learn about, not to mention plenty to eat. Phone the Authority office for more information.

Dini's got Spring Fever

CITY-TV's Dini Peity and internationally-known beautician Zehava will be among the special guests at "Spring Fever", a fashion and beauty show being presented April 14 at North Halton Golf and Country Club. Co-organizers The Beauty Spot and The Lingerie Boutique have also recruited Mayor Pete Pomeroy and Coun. Pam Sheldon as "guest clients": they'll loan their political visages to several demonstrations of Beauty Spot cosmetic and skin care techniques.

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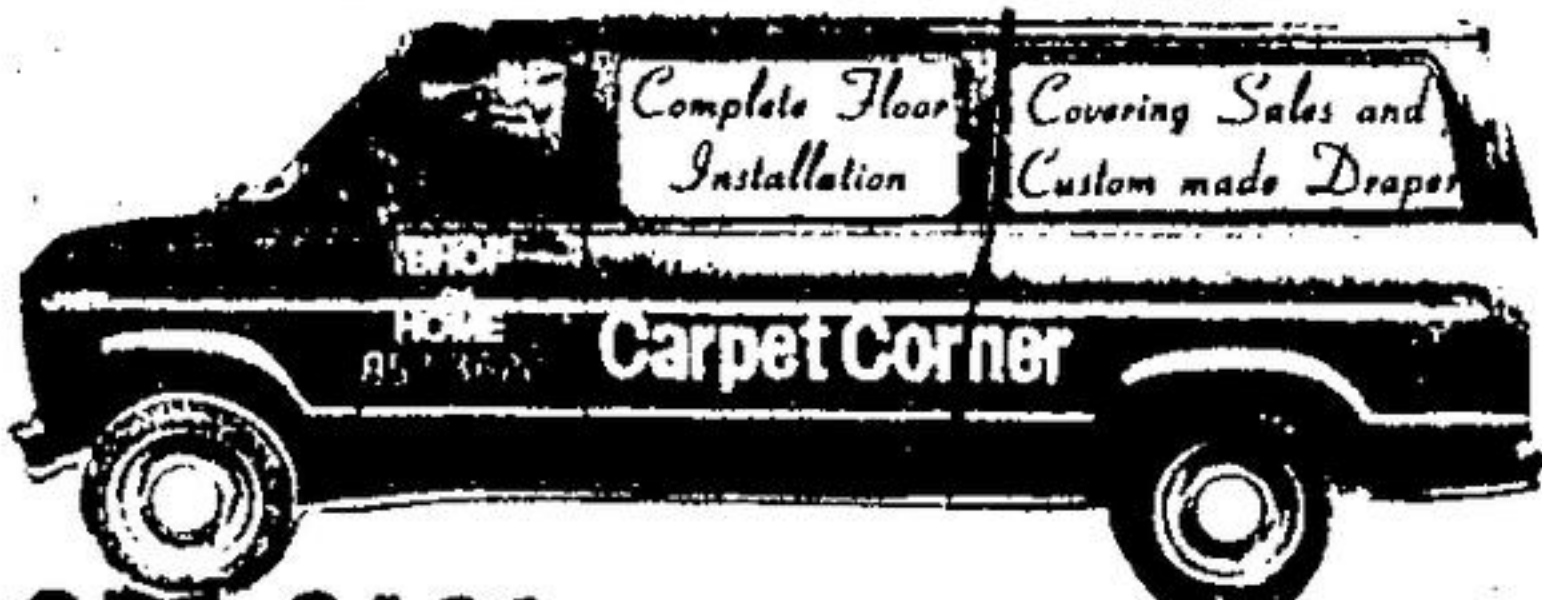
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DEATHS

GIBSON, John George (Sergeant-at-Arms Royal Canadian Legion Branch, 1339 Streetsville) - Suddenly in Mississauga on Saturday, February 14, 1981, John Gibson, beloved husband of Winifred, dear father of Anne (Mrs. M. Milimo), dear grandfather of Ryan and Lynda. Rosing at the Leo Funeral Home Ltd., 258 Queen St. S., Streetsville. Funeral Service will be held from the Chapel on Wednesday, at 1:30 p.m. Interment in St. Joseph's Cemetery, in lieu of flowers, donations to the C.D. of your choice would be appreciated.
10707dwl

CARDS OF THANKS

The family of the late W.G. Ming would like to express their thanks to Doncon Graham, Blund, McCune-Jones Funeral Home, all the relatives, friends and neighbours for the floral arrangements, donations food and cards of sympathy. Thanks also to Dr. A.E. Macintosh, Dr. Butler and the nursing staff at St. Michael's Hospital. Your thoughtfulness and kindness will always be remembered.
- The Mino Family
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