

Sap's still flowin'!



Hauling the sap back to the Sugar House.

Maple Lodge hearings resume in May

Hearings before the Ontario Labor Relations Board to help settle differences between union representatives and management at Maple Lodge Farms are scheduled to resume in May and June.

Keith Coutlee, industrial relations officer at Maple Lodge, said it was confirmed last Wednesday with union officials from Local 1105 of the United Food and Commercial Worker's International union.

"The hearings are scheduled for May 11, 19 and 23 and June 8 and 22," says Mr. Coutlee. "As far as the outcome is concerned, we'll just go through and let the board make the decisions."

Last week the two sides reached a stumbling block centered around the dues structure of the employees.

The union workers pay \$13.70 per month in union dues, but the union wanted to add an extra \$8 a month charge on top of that.

Management at Maple Lodge Farms, frustrated by thwarted attempts to resolve differences with the plant's union, are prepared to head back to the Ontario Labor Relations Board.

Keith Coutlee said he "wondered if there was an anti-Maple Lodge campaign" being carried out by the union.

Since the end of January, union representatives of Local 1105 of the United Food and Commercial Workers' International union and management had been meeting on a continuing basis in an effort to settle their differences.

About 400 grievances were filed by the union after a bitter three-week strike last fall. Most of the grievances blamed Maple Lodge for alleged union-busting tactics and failure to live-up to terms under a collective agreement reached by the two sides late last year.

HEADWAY

"We have settled nearly 300 of those grievances," said Mr. Coutlee in an interview. "We were making good headway."

Another area of major contention for the union was the company's recall procedure after the strike. During the three-week event, non-unionized workers were hired to continue work at the plant. But when the strike was over, the new employees remained while many of the strikers were not called back to work.

Maple Lodge stated that Canadian-U.S. border restrictions have kept them from acquiring the number of fowl they need to operate at full-capacity which in turn caused a drop in work.

Mr. Coutlee said in January there were 81 workers who had not been recalled, but that number now stands at 30.

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ENTRANCE THROUGH COCHRANE TRAVEL

Chairman's Message

BROCK HARRIS
 HALTON REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

The Halton Region Conservation Authority is dedicated to the cultural heritage of our watershed. In this area, we are fortunate to be richly endowed with an extensive network of forests. These wooded areas were extremely busy during the early part of spring as Halton pioneers began their annual pastime of gathering sap for the manufacture of maple sugar.

"Sugaring off" was a rich part of Ontario's past that portrayed one of man's earliest and most resourceful uses of his environment. In this day and age we are all concerned about the wise use of our valuable natural resources and are indeed aware of man's environmental mistakes of past generations. Yet, the production of maple syrup and sugar, as old as it is, is a truly classic example of how man could take from the landscape without destroying it.

It is for this reason that the Halton Region Conservation Authority provides an annual maple syrup

demonstration as a tribute to this early form of resource management. Maple sugar is perhaps the most traditional agricultural crop produced in Ontario and provided a time that local farmers would look forward to as the long winters came to an end. This deep rooted tradition was expressed well in an 1881 account of sugar times in Harper's Journal:

"There is a human and poetic quality in maples, which is easily felt, and though the land would be worth more for its lumber than for its sugar, many farmers would no more part with their maple bush or orchard than with any precious heirloom."

Sugar making was a laborious process for the pioneers as the entire family would assist with the operation that culminated in "sugaring off" or "sugar-eating bees" which finished the job on a festive note.

The Indians taught the French settlers in southern Ontario the technique of making maple sugar, followed by the United Empire Loyalists who brought large iron kettles with them. An early recollection of sugar making by Jane Johnson in Notes of a North American (1851) describes the process.

"In these forests, in spring, the sugar makers plunge carrying with them a huge pot, a few buckets and other utensils, their axes and a supply of food. They erect a shanty in the neighborhood of the most numerous maple trees, make incisions into as many as they can, visit twice a day to

collect the sap, boil it down to the crystallizing point and pour it into oblong brick shaped moulds."

The maple syrup industry has changed significantly from this early recollection, but the central theme remains the same, utilizing the environment wisely without damaging the resource. Local residents are welcome to visit the Sugar Bush at the Mountsberg Conservation Area and relive this rich part of Halton's past.

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Home of the Week

PLAN No. 7-1410
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TWO-STORY LEISURE HOME

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Both entries are elevated and weather-sheltered by the overhanging eaves. The main entry opens directly into the laundry utility complex, which thus serves as a mud room facility. A convenient pocket door separates the utility room from the adjacent galley-style kitchen.

The kitchen provides a step-saving work triangle, generous countertop work surfaces and ample cupboard storage. It is open to the dinette area, which has a swing-in door leading onto the deep, full-width deck, for easy access to outdoor dining in fine weather.

The large living room area features an energy-efficient free-standing fireplace for convivial evenings of entertainment and family gatherings. The stairway to the second level is adjacent to the fireplace wall.

One bedroom and the two-piece vanity bathroom are located downstairs; and the two larger bedrooms and the three-piece master bathroom are on the second level. The lower level bedroom has a partial walk-in closet. The two upstairs bedrooms boast full-width closets and spacious luggage storage under the eaves. The front-facing bedroom has a wide balcony with double access doors.

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