

The hamlets of Halton Hills

Churchill was settled by Brock aide

By MAGGIE HANNAH
Herald Special
Churchill, on the Third Line of Old Esqueving Township and the Erin Township boundary, was named after its church, and that remains the only community building it has had in close to a century.

The area's first settler was apparently Jacob Swackhamer. He was born in Pennsylvania and came to Canada with his parents and family as a United Empire Loyalist.

During the war of 1812 he served as General Brock's orderly and received a land grant for his services during the Niagara skirmishes.

His descendant, Wallace Swackhamer still owned the farm at Lot 32, Concession 3, Esqueving Township, until he retired a few years ago.

Mr. Swackhamer says the first home was built on a hill, he understands, because in 1854, his descendants still live in the area.

Mr. Swackhamer remembers the little log building which had once housed the area school as being very small with a door in the end and two windows about 12 inches square on each side of the door.

That's all there was to let in light," he says. It had become a hen pen on his family farm by the time he first saw it and even today he knows where logs can be found on the old farm left over from the building that are still sound.

That school was replaced by another log school up the Fourth Line in Erin Township probably Lot 2 or 3. It was only a rubble foundation when he first saw it and he has no idea when either building ceased functioning as a school.

Lorne School in Esqueving and Woodside School in Erin Township would have served area children in later years, he says.



ABBA-DABBA-DOO!

Ah, a boy and his Flintstone. Herald sports editor Dave Rowney photographed this young visitor to Canada's Wonderland giving Fred's nose an affectionate squeeze during a preview tour of the new amusement park Saturday. Something of a connoisseur of Disneyesque diversions by virtue of his previous employment with Ontario Place, our man Dave says Wonderland's "great". Fifty cents, please.

Although Churchill probably predates Acton that has probably been its residents shopping area since the first stores were established there, he assumes.

The cemetery opposite the church is not connected to the church, Mr. Swackhamer says. It is a community cemetery started in 1827 when John Swackhamer asked his elder brother Jacob for permission to bury his little daughter among trees on the corner of the farm.

Shortly after that a smallpox epidemic hit the area and there are rows of graves attesting to the toll it took of area families.

The modern section of the cemetery is laid out parallel to the road as one might expect but in the old section the graves are on an angle so they all face the east and sunrise, he says.

A marker on the north edge of the four corners shows it is 1,200 feet above sea level. Also of note is the fact it is the edge of the Niagara Escarpment. From there everything north of it flows to Lake Erie. To the south everything flows into Lake Ontario.

Churchill church members are also proud to say that the Upper Canada Missionary Society (Congregational) was formed in their church in 1841, just three years after the church itself began.

The United Church closed Churchill in 1968 but it has remained open as a community church with no denominational ties since that time.

The only additional area interest comes from the Communications Canada monitoring station situated on a hill just west of the community on the township boundary.

The station, one of four in Canada, is used to monitor radio frequencies for amateur, professional and other types of licensed radio stations.

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Home purchases rise despite high interest

Despite high interest rates Canadians were purchasing homes in greater numbers during the first quarter of this year than in the last quarter of 1980, a just-completed cross-Canada survey by the Canadian Real Estate Association reveals.

Residential transactions processed through the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) jumped by 2,450 to 42,761 in the first quarter of 1981 as properties valued at more than \$3 billion changed hands.

MLS is an optional listing service used by most of the real estate boards in Canada; and provides a wide exposure for properties on the market. The great majority of such properties are existing (resale) houses and the tabulation of these purchases has been found to be the most accurate gauge of resale house prices in Canada.

The number of properties offered for sale on MLS increased by 13,816 between year end and March, totalling 53,114 in March for all of Canada.

Average residential prices rose from an average of \$72,200 in the last quarter of 1980 to \$75,391 during the first quarter of 1981 -- an increase of 4.4 per cent.

The average increase was made to appear larger than it actually was by activity in volatile real estate board areas like Vancouver where prices were \$106,584 in the last quarter of 1980 and \$156,521 for the first quarter of 1981; Fraser Valley, B.C., \$109,174 and \$134,579; Okanagan Mainline, B.C., \$81,638 and \$101,466; Calgary, \$96,038 and \$104,433; Edmonton, \$86,402 and \$89,804 and Toronto \$75,460 and \$79,700.

But prices generally were not climbing at the rate observed in several of the Metropolitan areas. In fact in some areas, average prices weakened.

In Ontario, for instance, there were almost as many real estate board areas where prices declined as there were where average prices increased.

Average prices in some representative cities for the first quarter were: Kamloops, B.C., \$83,535; Grande Prairie, Alberta, \$80,191; Regina, Saskatchewan, \$51,940; Winni-

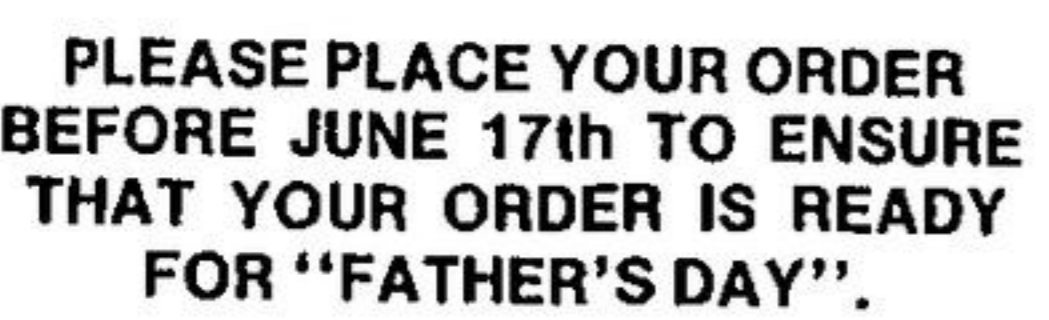
peg, Manitoba, \$52,014; Ottawa, \$61,444; Windsor, \$56,489; Montreal, \$52,534; Saint John, N.B., \$45,404; Halifax, \$54,103; and St. John's Newfoundland, \$53,148.

By provinces average prices during the first quarter were: British Columbia \$118,384; Alberta, \$95,868; Saskatchewan \$54,949; Manitoba, \$52,203; Ontario, \$68,913; Quebec (exclusive of Montreal) \$40,602; New Brunswick, \$48,577; Nova Scotia, \$50,271; Prince Edward Island, \$51,500; and Newfoundland, \$47,065.

Compared with the first quarter of 1980 volume of all real estate transactions (not just homes) processed through MLS was 27.4 per cent higher than in the same period in 1981. The number of transactions totalled 52,952.

The Canadian Real Estate Association with more than 53,000 members is an organization of more than 100 real estate boards across the nation and 10 provincial real estate associations and others, who have a direct interest and involvement in the real estate vocation in Canada.

New service opening
Community Resource Services of Halton, a non-profit agency providing various services within the criminal justice system, has its official opening this Monday (June 15) at 7:30 p.m. in the Centennial Hall of the Burlington Central Library. Correctional services minister Nicholas Leluk will be guest speaker. Additional information is available from the service at 639-4804.



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