

**Witnesses put persecution behind them to flourish**

# Emerging from fear's shadows

Continued from page A1

In Georgetown, the small group met in homes, then rented halls. As the congregation grew, negotiations began to buy property and build their own hall.

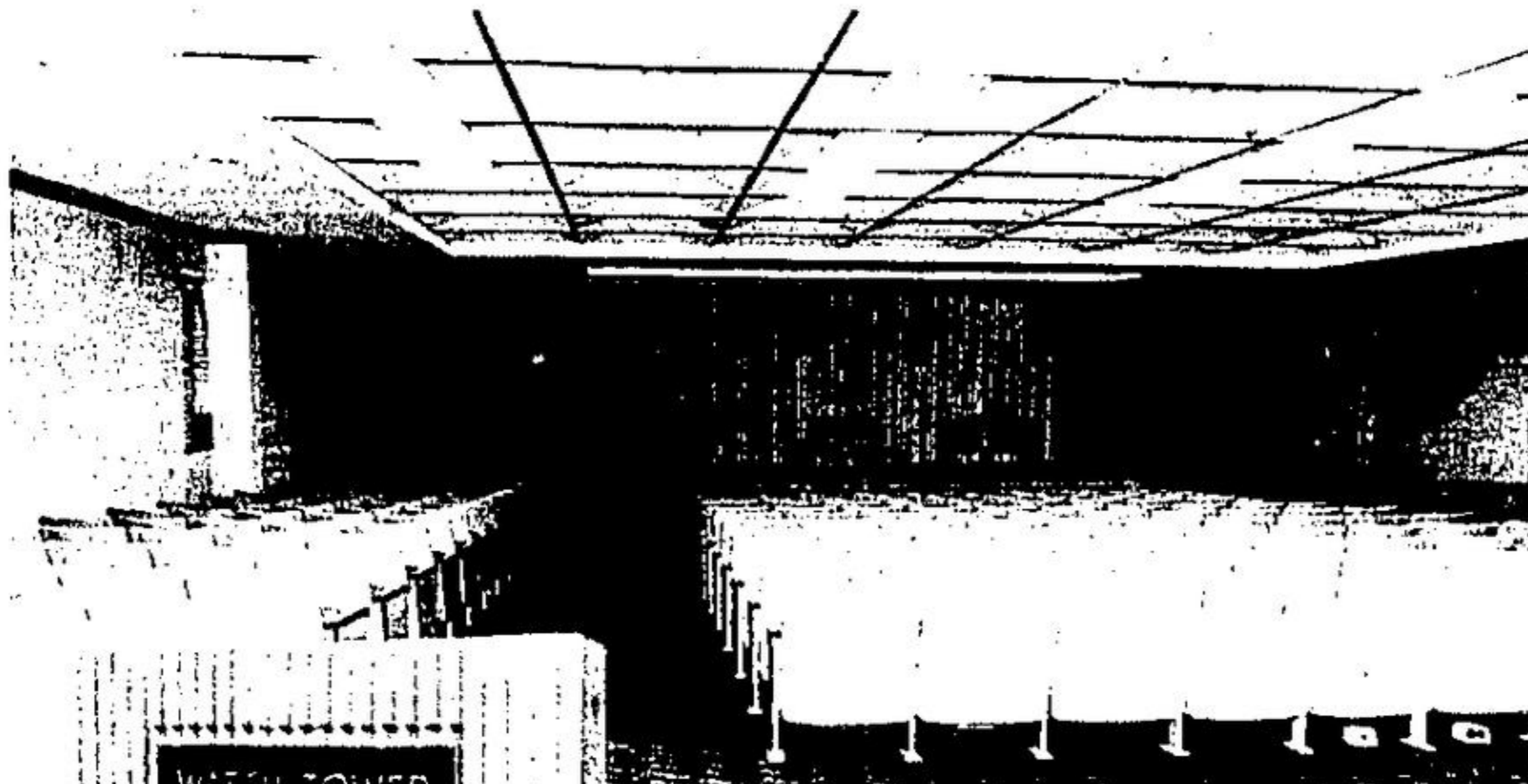
It was 1967 when the local congregation built its own Kingdom Hall, as Witnesses call their place of worship, on Highway 7 just past Sideroad 20 near Limehouse. The group grew so large that members from Acton split off to establish their own hall in 1969 on Highway 25, near the town line.

Both halls seat over 200 people and aren't like traditional churches. Bare of icons, they look more like theatres. Rows of comfortable chairs face a stage under neon lights. Witnesses from Milton also departed and now have about 115 members in their congregation.

With the construction of the Watchtower complex last year, the Georgetown congregation no longer needs its Kingdom Hall, instead using a hall in the new complex. The land and building near Limehouse are up for sale.

The Watchtower complex has brought the sect's headquarters, which had moved back to Toronto after the war, back to Halton Hills.

The complex is one of five writing centres where Witness literature in four languages is printed and distributed to countries around the world. The semi-monthly magazines, The Watchtower and Awake!, are prepared here.



Inside the Kingdom Hall at the Watch Tower complex outside Georgetown's Moore Park subdivision, Jehovah's Witnesses from the immediate area gather. The local congregation developed shortly after the Second World War, first gathering in the Kingdom Hall which still stands on Highway 7 between Acton and Georgetown, near the Limehouse sideroad. With Acton's Witnesses now worshipping at their own hall on Highway 25 and Miltonians building their own congregation, the old Highway 7 hall has become surplus and will be sold. (Herald photos)

"It's put Georgetown on the map because our magazines are published internationally in millions of copies," according to Walter Graham, who lives at the complex. He said the new complex is attracting a lot of Witnesses

who want to see it. "We've had busloads from eastern Canada and the U.S. on tours, and the excitement will go on for years," said Mr. Graham.

The complex is also a residence for about 150 Witness

volunteers who have various skills they're putting to work for the Watchtower. Mr. Graham said there are no paid positions in the complex, which is financially maintained by donations from Witnesses around the world.

Receiving \$30 in spending money a month and a \$30 gas allowance, Mr. Graham said life is cheap at the complex. His car can be repaired for 90 cents an hour by the two licensed Witness mechanics who keep the six Watchtower vehicles in order. Beauty salon and barber shop visits are free, requiring only that complex residents pay for the materials used. Laundry is also done for free by other volunteers.

Meals are all supplied at the complex, with fruits and vegetables coming from a farm owned by Witnesses 16 miles north in Erin.

Originally owned by Mr. Perry, the farm is operated by ten volunteers who also raise chickens, beef cattle and eggs.

"We just got 600 bags of potatoes we want you to eat before they go bad," said Mr. Perry to complex resident Mr. Graham. Although Mr. Perry has sold the farm to the Watchtower complex, he still lives there.

Admittedly \$30 a month isn't much spending money, Mr. Graham said he does some freelancing to help him buy toothpaste. He's a commercial artist while other volunteers are electricians, millwrights, plumbers and writers.

Because the complex is the headquarters for 1,200 Witness congregations, it receives a lot of correspondence weekly. Mr. Graham and other volunteers are kept busy answering it.

"We reassured town council when we built here that we wouldn't inundate Georgetown with Witness evangelists," said Mr. Graham, adding with a laugh "we want Georgetown to like us."

To keep their word, the 150 volunteers living at the complex don't belong to the Geor-

town congregation. They travel around in southern Ontario evangelizing in other communities. Going door-to-door to spread their word is an important aspect of their faith, and helps increase the sect's membership.

Sunday worshippers gather in Kingdom Halls to study the Bible and the latest issue of Awake! or The Watchtower. One of the elders asks the questions printed on the bottom of each page, and members of the congregation expound on the answers.

**CLERGY CLASSES**  
As there are no paid ministers, the work of the congregation falls on the elders. There are eleven elders in the Georgetown congregation and they are all men, each chosen as someone the congregation can look to as an example. Acton has eight elders.

Women can be "ministers" but not elders, explained Mrs. Witshire, a minister for 20 years.

"The Bible says women can't teach in the congregation, but they can teach in the community. It makes a distinction and we try to live by it," she said.

Mrs. Witshire said that she didn't want the responsibility of being an elder.

"I don't think women should take any lead in the congregation. Man is the head of the family," she said.

Much of what the Witnesses say is qualified by "the Bible says..." — their familiarity with the holy book probably originated in the war years when it was most important to know the Bible well when evangelizing. They couldn't depend on passing out copies of their literature door-to-door.

Since the war years, Jehovah's Witnesses have learned a lot about public relations, as proved by their increased congregations.

## 'Call the Mounties, they're Nazi spies!'

When Benjamin Wiens bought a farm in Norval in 1940, neighbors were suspicious. He had a German name.

The RCMP was called to investigate Mr. Wiens' group of seven newcomers. There was suspicion that the new neighbors were German spies looking for secret information from a nearby Canadian army camp.

However, the RCMP found nothing illegal about the newcomers. They discovered they were Jehovah's Witnesses, and believed the Witnesses' explanation that they were merely farming to raise money. The story told police was that the farm and hadn't had a chance to set up their illegal press yet.

Edward Noseworthy, now living in the Watch Tower complex on Highway 7, and six others operated a small press in the barn of the farm during the war years when there was a federal ban on

Jehovah's Witness literature. He said the press they operated was nothing like what Witnesses now use locally to put out the million-plus issues of their publications.

"We worked the machine by hand and fed it by hand," he said. "We didn't use electricity because we were afraid it would jump up the electricity bill and cause the RCMP to return."

The early investigation of the farm by police meant the Jehovah's Witnesses could carry on their efforts to provide spiritual guidance for 3,000 fellow believers across Canada secretly, with little likelihood of the RCMP returning.

Material along the same lines as the Watchtower magazine was printed for Witnesses, as well as some bound books. The scarcity of such literature at the time was such that some members were writing out articles from old magazines owned secretly by fellow members.

In order to have their own copy to study.

Mr. Noseworthy declined to say how the press equipment was hidden in the farm, saying that the secret may have to be used again one day. Jehovah's Witnesses are still being persecuted in Poland and Russia and Canadian Witnesses are afraid the conditions they faced during the war years may one day return in Canada.

Mr. Noseworthy said working on the farm was a useful cover for it helped Witnesses avoid suspicion and also earned them money for their printing operation through selling produce.

"I was down in the area about three years ago, but I couldn't even recognize it," Mr. Noseworthy said. "We were on the creek side of the road, but there are so many houses down there now I can't find the place."

The Norval farm was on Winslow Churchill Boulevard, south of Highway 7, but is now occupied by housing.



Brian Nicol (left) is an elder with the Georgetown Kingdom Hall in the new Watch Tower complex. Along with Eva Witshire and Jack Perry, he met with The Herald to talk about the history of Jehovah's Witnesses in Halton Hills. Mr. Nicol said knocking on doors constitutes an important part of the sect's activities. By calling on people at their homes, Witnesses hope to spread God's word and win new members to worship with them. (Herald photo)

## Noah's Ark recovered? A question of faith

Noah, that man of the Bible who has caused so many to wonder. The great ark that God commanded him to make has supposedly been found on Mount Ararat, and as far as I can determine, the find is authenticated by a people of various cultures and religions.

How big was this ark? Let's forget about "cubits" for the time being. In feet (forgetting about metric as well), it was 450 feet long by 75 feet by 45 feet high. It contained a total of 1,518,750 cubic feet, or 1.52 times ten to the sixth power, cubic feet.

Using wood-to-cube ratio as measured aboard the USS Constitution (of Boston) and the HMS Victory (U.K.), assume that 15 cubic feet of wood can be dressed daily by a four-man work crew.

Pioneers in Canada and the U.S. worked 25 cu. ft. daily, and using the following formula:

$15 \text{ cu. ft.} \times 6 \text{ Days} \times 52 \text{ Weeks} = 4,680 \text{ cu. ft. YEAR}$

$0.38 \times 10 \text{ to } 6 \text{th power cu. ft.} = 4,680 \text{ cu. ft. per year}$

we can calculate it would take 81 years to build the Ark.

With 120 years' warning, there was lots of time to seed, harvest and store food for the flood period. This would feed the people and the animals during the building and still leave time to rest or take vacation. The Ark was big enough to contain all the animals required by God and to carry 45 boxcar loads of food.

Yet after all this, I still believe in faith alone, as God



### IN THE CHURCHES

By Bob Ollivier

said it happened that way and I believe it. Thanks to Bob Gage of Georgetown for the mathematical breakdown.

Remember the Good News of Reconciliation at Holy Cross tonight at 8 p.m. at the church, for all parishioners.

Christian Education is growing and the U.S. has 15,000 Christian schools with two million students enrolled. An average of three schools per day are opening every day. This tends to show the effect of our public school system, and the efforts of parents and young people to get an education free from the bias of the pro evolutionists, and the inclusion of vulgar and otherwise offensive material in the curriculum.

The Sudan Interior mission that has served Africa since 1893 and the Andes Evangelical Mission serving South America are merging. They are compatible in goals, policies and doctrinal beliefs.

Communist East Germany has launched a program to build new churches and restore old ones, and is making plans to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther. Four thousand Protestant ministers and 1,200

Catholic priests have active congregations in East Germany. Communism doesn't conquer all.

Book Review: The Battle for the Mind by Tim Layhaye. The theme is the encroachment of Secular Humanism. The diagrammatical exegesis on humanism is an excellent book for the thinker and the person who wishes to work through the book.

Not for all readers, as it is sometimes hard to comprehend, yet it is worth the effort. Secular humanism says "No deity will save us — we must save ourselves", whereas all Christians believe that only God can save. The book is dedicated to Dr. Francis Schaeffer and is recommended for the modern thinker.



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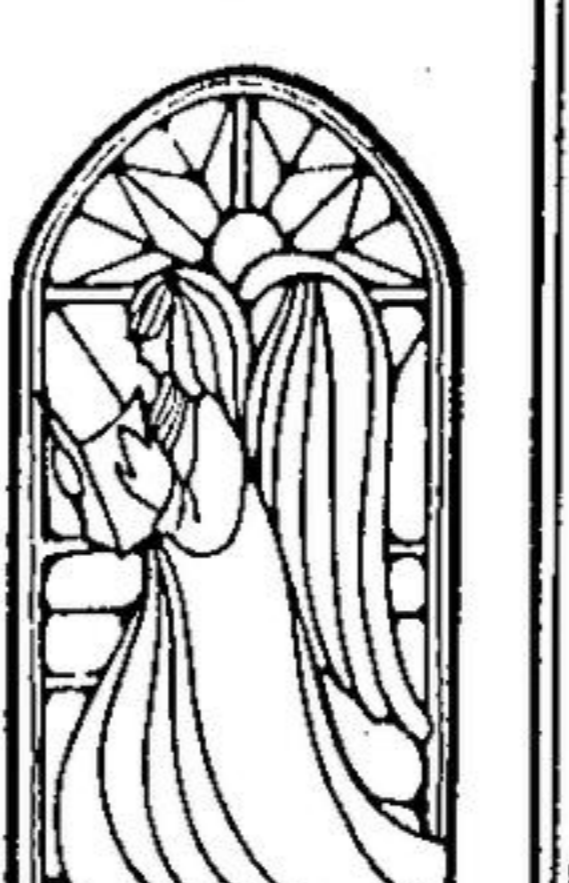
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