

Lumber yards thrived on Acton industry

By SUZANNE BROWN
Herald Special
Last Thursday the Esqueing Historical Society and the Dublin Women's Institute held a joint meeting in Acton. The Esqueing Historical Society was founded in 1975, said President Mark Rowe, "to promote and preserve the history of Esqueing."
Their archives are kept at the Georgetown library and are available to the public. At the meeting, history buffs had the opportunity to look over some of the items from the society's archives such as school registers, a

1917 Acton voter list and land deeds from as far back as 1872. As well, the Dublin Women's Institute had some of their Tweedsmuir histories on display. The Dublin branch of the Women's Institute was founded in 1925 and their Tweedsmuir histories, said curator Anne Dodds, were named after Lady Tweedsmuir (wife of a former governor-general) who suggested that the Women's Institutes of Canada keep community histories. The Dublin Tweedsmuir contains detailed records of the history and growth of the Dublin-Acton area using personal accounts and pictures handed down

through generations. These colourful local histories evoke images of an earlier time when Acton was still known as Adamsville (named after the three Adams brothers). Lumber mills at St. Helena, Speyside and Smiths sent most of their lumber to Acton, keeping the blacksmith shops busy. Local industries, woodworking mills, tanneries and glove and carriage works thrived. In 1843 Knox Presbyterian church was built and Acton's first cemetery (pioneer cemetery) was located behind the church. It is still there today, and although many were removed and reinterred at Fairview

cemetery, there are still tombstones there from the 1840s to 1870s. In 1847 Acton's second public school was built on the front lawn of the church. (The first school was Rev. Adams school house built in 1826). It was moved to Robert Little in 1881. "Early pioneers knew the importance of education," said Mr. Rowe. By 1841, (the year in which the Education Act was passed) there were, Mr. Rowe said, 15 schools in Esqueing. These early schools were one room log constructions. The teachers were paid so much a pupil and were boarded in turn at the homes of the pupils.

"Free" schools did not come about until the 1850s and not all of them were successful. In 1852, Georgetown's school declared itself free and "failed miserably" said Mr. Rowe. But eventually the idea did catch on, he said, as seen by the schools today. The next meeting of the Esqueing Historical Society will be held Nov. 13 at Knox Presbyterian Church in Georgetown. The guest speaker will be Ed Wakefield - an expert on glass, ceramics and china. Interested members of the public are invited to bring in pieces to be identified.



Ruth Kranendonk from the Dublin Women's Institute was at the joint meeting in Acton with the Esqueing Historical Society. Guest speakers talked about the history of northwest Halton.

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HAIR-RAISING SHOW



Frankenstein's bride would be proud of these hair styles she might have inspired. Peggy Rawlings (left) and Diane Lawson were part of the



The Hospital Auxiliary Fashion Show featured Cameron's Fashions and Elizabeth's Fashions last Wednesday at Holy Cross and included every kind of clothing imaginable, from sleep wear, to evening wear. (Herald photo)

No new schools with growth

Despite new residential neighborhoods in the planning for Georgetown's south and west, schools will still have to close in Halton Hills. That's the message chairman of the Halton board of education delivered Tuesday night to about 60 parents and area principals at Stewarttown Senior Public School. Betty Fisher said that even with the new development, there will still be schools that will have to close as part of the consolidation of schools in Halton Hills. Enrolments have been declining considerably at the board's 14 elementary schools in town, with schools 66 per cent full. To deal with that drop in students, the board set up a Halton Hills Consolidation Committee made up of 28 parents representing the 14 area schools, principals and trustees to recommend "the most efficient and effective use of the Board's resources."

Consolidation Committee explains closure process

Their verdict on which schools should be closed and where school boundaries should be is due January end, with the board expected to act on the recommendations by March end. "They've left it up to us to decide how many and which. This is a fairer process than a school closure committee," Mrs. Fisher said. Parents each have one vote on the decision and Halton Hills trustees Betty Fisher, Arlene Bruce and Dick Howitt, and the co-chairman of the committee John Kavanagh and Ron Chapman each have a half vote. Although schools are, on average, 66 per cent full, some are as low as 30 per cent full. The board has decided to go with a consolidation committee rather than just close those with 30 per cent enrolment, Limehouse representative on the committee Ray Denny said. If the board just closed all the schools that are only 30 per cent full, without regard for future growth, it could conceivably find itself with lots of new students and no school for them, one day, he explained. The purpose of the consolidation committee is to avoid such a scenario, Mr. Denny said. "We feel, that ideally, schools should be 80 per cent full, on an average. That means, some could be 65 per cent full and some 92 per cent," he said. "A school that closes may not be the lowest - it may have a higher

enrolment - but we'll have decided that school is not as needed." The committee wants to bring students in the planned subdivisions into existing community schools rather than build new schools in their area, Mrs. Fisher said, naming George Kennedy, Harrison, Pineview and Park schools as possible schools these pupils would be bused to. "I foresee that's the schools they'd be plugged into," the board chairman said. "The board of education feels quite strongly that as long as the schools can serve those students, it's best to bus those students," Mrs. Fisher said. "The board has agreed that elementary schools won't be going into that (Georgetown south and west) area." She acknowledged there was a site set aside for a secondary school in Georgetown south, but said she didn't know if it would be needed.

September closures not being ruled out

By ANI PEDERIAN
Herald Staff
Elementary schools could close as early as next September, parents were told at a special meeting last week. Organized by the Halton Board of Education, the special meeting informed parents of the progress being made by the Halton Hills Consolidation Committee, a committee set up by the Board to deal with declining enrolment in town schools. Committee member and Speyside parent Jim Kenzie said the changes may not be as soon as September in all cases. Set up to reduce the impact of declining enrolment on the board budget and on the quality of education, the committee makes its recommendations of which schools should close in the north and where students should continue their education next September, to the Halton board Jan. 28. "We're almost all of us parents and, of course, our major concern is for the children," Park School parent Pat Bodig said as she introduced herself as one of the 46 committee members. "We're concerned about their future education and we also feel we have to be responsible to the board and to you

the ratepayers to make the best use of your tax dollar." She said by closing some schools and making changes to the boundaries from which they draw students, the Board hopes to provide a better program for its pupils. "To say students are not getting a good education would be incorrect," Board chairman and Halton Hills Trustee Betty Fisher said. "They're getting a good education, but not the ultimate education they could receive to Board standards. They (students in schools with small enrolment) just do not have all the resources we consider are needed for the best education for students." Speyside parent and committee member Fran Goodkey said there is a point at which a school starts to fall apart. Speyside Public School has 99 pupils this year, and has room for another 161 to be healthy. With fewer pupils, there are less extra curricular activities and less resource people available for students. By closing some schools and busing their former pupils to other schools, a better program would be provided all students, Mrs. Bodig said.

IN THE HILLS

Muppet puppets
Have you heard about the upcoming puppet workshop? Learn how to make your favorite Muppet character or design one of your own. Join in Tuesday, Nov. 26, at Cedarvale Community Centre, 7 p.m. Cost is \$6. Pre-registration is a must. Call the Recreation and Parks Department at 877-5185 ext. 260 for more information.
Teen gospel
The Tom Franzak Band is reaching the young generation with the gospel; his music is predominantly for teenagers and young adults. You can hear Tom and his music Nov. 4 at a Celebration Rally in Georgetown. He'll be performing at the Holy Cross Parish Hall on Maple Avenue starting at 8 p.m.

Region transit talk

The Physically Handicapped Citizen's Association are holding a public meeting Nov. 7 at 7:30 p.m. The location is Robert Baldwin Public School on 180 Wilson Drive in Milton. The issues to be discussed will include local and regional transportation and accessibility with reference to Sec. 10 of the Ontario Building Code. For more information call 877-1436.
Guide to Bible
NORVAL - Dr. Thomas Bandy, Minister of St. Andrew's and Ballinafad United Churches will head up an afternoon and evening bible study Nov. 17 from 3-9 p.m. He will help pupils explore the composition, the themes and the message of the Bible. It will be a layperson's guide to Bible Study. The cost will be \$5 per person and is sponsored by the elders of Home, Huttonville and Norval churches. Area church members are invited to join in the unique opportunity to look at the Bible and its message for today. For more information call 877-4184.

How does the Board close down a school?

What steps will the board follow once it decides to close a school? Halton Board of Education Chairman Betty Fisher said if a school is to close, a meeting will be held at the school with parents. There'll be an integration meeting following, in which the Board will try to make the transition for students between the old and new school, smoother. What happens to the physical building and its innards? Mrs. Fisher said that in Georgetown, the Board knows what the future development is going to be. The town approved Secondary Plans detailing it this summer. "If we see development on the horizon and we can't fit it into the schools (operating after the Halton Hills Consolidation Committee makes its decision),

then we would mothball and maintain a school until we see that development on stream," chairman Fisher said. "If that's not the case, we would sell it." She noted Acton hasn't many schools and it would be of no advantage to sell a school then have development come along requiring another school. "That would be silly and financially irresponsible," Mrs. Fisher said. If the decision to sell a school is made, then the school equipment will go to the school the transferred pupils are going to, including equipment financed by parents. Some furniture, if it's not needed at that other school will go to other board schools or be stored, Mrs. Fisher said. Money from the sale of the school will go into the Board's capital reserves fund to be used anywhere in Halton, likely for additions to other schools, she added.

Futures for youth

Halton Hills will have a Futures. That's Futures with an s. Last week the provincial government announced they will be initiating a new program to help youths find work. The employment program, called FUTURES, provides on-the-job training and encourages educational upgrading. Halton Hills will participate in the program and the local YMCA's Youth Employment Service (YES) will offer the program out of their Georgetown office on Main Street. Futures is for young people between 16 and 24 years of age who are finding it difficult landing a job. Starting in November, participants will be taught job search skills and they will be paid by the government to work at a job placement for a specified period of time (up to 16 weeks). If a youth agrees to seek further education at night school, they are able to work during the day for a year on a government subsidy. YES co-ordinator Ed Tooke said his office will probably hire another staff person to help with the anticipated extra workload. The Y program offers job counselling, job placements and a three month follow-up, but their program does not offer a wage subsidy to employers. Since opening June 1 the North Halton YES has counselled over 90 young people. For more information about the Futures program call 877-6979 or 878-8711.

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