

## Education has made progress

In 1916, Lillian Eaton of Acton earned \$650 a year as a school teacher and thought it was "good money".

As far as the education system is concerned, we've come a long way, baby.

Back in 1848 when the first classes were held in two rented rooms of a frame house in Georgetown, the government didn't support education. There were no taxes. Townsfolk just chipped in enough money to hire a school mar'm and rent a building.

Only after Confederation, when Egerton Ryerson's gem of legislation was passed ensuring that schools would be government subsidized, did institutions of learning change from private to public operations.

One room schools were literally that. No home ec rooms or gyms or science labs or cafeterias. No PA systems or swimming pools or audio-visual equipment. No plumbing.

There weren't even any textbooks at the

first formal school in Georgetown in the basement of the old Town Hall below the councillor's meeting place.

The "Old Maids" School, of the 1850s on Main Street across from the Congregational Church, consisted of long desks and benches. But not enough of them. Some students had to stand, and four or five shared a slate and chalk.

A far cry from today's broadloomed double classrooms and well-stocked libraries.

So were the rules.

"Children used to do what they were told, without question," remembered Mrs. Eaton. No wonder.

Contemporary teachers dare not hit a child. Pioneer children dare not anger a teacher for fear of being hit. Reputedly, Miss McMaster of the "Old Maids" schools was a whiz with the hickory stick.



Jack and his engines . . .

## Steam engine hobby a thrill for young

Always a favorite with youngsters are the steam engines Jack Layman brings to Pioneer Days.

The retired machinist makes them himself. It's a hobby he picked up just before retiring from Chubb's Security in Brampton six years ago.

The steam engines are table models of mill engines used in factories years ago, Mr. Layman said. The factories had boilers to produce the steam to operate the engine. The engine would then turn the line shaft and the belts running from it to the machinery.

One of the steam engines Mr. Layman will be demonstrating is the James Watt engine. It dates to 1840. James Watt was a British instrument maker.

"A lot of people think Watt developed the steam engine, but they were using steam before he was born," Mr. Layman said. "He just improved upon it."

Down in the Layman basement are the lathe, drill press, small milling machine and small shaper used to build these models.

"I do the machining. It keeps me away from the television," he chuckled.

Mr. and Mrs. Layman belong to the Ontario Steam and Antique Preservers Association, and to similar organizations in Niagara and Georgian Bay.

They frequently travel to steam shows around the province and even to the United States.

"You could be out every weekend from now to freeze out, between the Ontario and U.S. shows," Mr. Layman said.

It's a popular hobby, with many older participants fondly caring for original farm machinery, and antique engines they were used to in their day, he said.

"Every engineer who came along had his own idea of what a steam engine should be," Mr. Layman said. "He made it. Then, something better came along."

Models made by steam engine fans all run basically the same. Instead of steam, they run on air pressure from an air compressor, Mr. Layman explained.

Right now, the Georgetown man is working on a "grasshopper" engine, named thus because it resembles a grasshopper when it's running.

"I'm having trouble making the crankshaft," Mr. Layman admitted. "My first two tries didn't work."

Along with about six models of steam engines, the machinist will be demonstrating how to make rope, with a home-made rope machine.

"The kids like to do it. It's a hands-on thing," Mr. Layman said.

Using binder twine, this machine of wood, wire and bicycle chain makes rope of varying thickness depending on how many strands are used.

Mr. Layman and his model steam engines have been at Pioneer Days since its inception.

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