

## Tour of homes opens doors to history

The Annual Harvest House Tour of the Mississauga Heritage Foundation will take place on Saturday, Sept. 24, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.

The selection of homes on this year's tour reveal the diversity of Mississauga's historical and architectural past. Representing over a century-and-a-half, most of the houses originated as small structures, to which later additions were made, reflecting both a changing community and the personal tastes of their owners.

Inspired by romance or sheer whim, the homes feature various collections from cherubs to clowns, Canadiana, oils, watercolors and contemporary art. The graciousness of Benares will tempt the imagination, while the Gaskin's House recalls their own love affair with their "shack in the woods."

Seven homes will be open for viewing on a route which allows for an independent and leisurely pace. Tickets for the tour are \$12.50 and include such old-fashioned refreshments as cold cider, tea or coffee, and home-made cookies at the Bradley House Museum; tickets also cover admission to a special exhibit of antique christening gowns from the Museum's own vast collection. Tickets go on sale Sept. 6, 1988 and will be available at the office of Heritage Mississauga - Civic Centre, Suite 2101 - and at other locations in the City.



**They're cookin'**

Mayor Russ Miller and his wife Gerry examine the Georgetown Gourmets' booth at Saturday's Mohawk Festival Country Chili Cookoff in Campbellville. (Herald photo)

Hills helped sponsor this local cooking crew. Left to right are Jean and Fraser Gaultier, Rene Gaultier, Russ Miller and Gerry Miller. (Herald photo)

## Vaccination is best way to fight influenza

Influenza vaccine is the single most effective way of preventing or attenuating influenza and has long been recommended for those at high risk of serious illness or death.

This recommendation on how to avoid the "flu" is from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) - a body of experts on immunization selected by Health and Welfare Canada to establish policy on the recommended use of vaccines.

But NACI also recognizes "that only about 20 per cent of this population (those at greatest risk) receive vaccine annually." What does this mean? It means that each winter in Canada, when influenza strikes in epidemic force, there are a considerable number of deaths and a preponderance of unnecessary and very serious, life threatening illness. This is the worst kind of human suffering and death - that which is preventable.

Who is at risk? Any person over the age of 65 years is at risk, not only of getting influenza but of suffering from the serious life threatening complications that frequently accompany influenza infection. Anyone of any age who has chronic heart, lung or kidney disease, or anyone with chronic conditions such as diabetes and other metabolic disorders, cancer, anemia, immunodeficiency or immunosuppression is at elevated risk.

Anyone over the age of 65 who has one of these chronic disorders is especially at risk. Residents of nursing homes or chronic care facilities frequently fall into this category and are at additional risk because their institutional environment may promote the spread of the disease.

What is influenza? Influenza is a contagious respiratory disease caused by a virus. We tend to think of anything which causes the sniffles, headache, muscle aches, stomach ache, nausea, fever, or diarrhea as the "flu." There are many viruses which can cause these symptoms - the common cold, and a host of other respiratory viruses included. But only the influenza virus has such wide ranging effects that it poses a real threat to your system.

Most viruses tend to attack specific parts of a body, but influenza tends to attack everything. That is one reason it is so hard to diagnose just by looking at the symptoms. True influenza is hard to identify but generally speaking, if you have had it you will know it - it is many times worse than the common cold.

Why is influenza so dangerous? One aspect is that it is extremely contagious - one of the most contagious viruses found. It also plays no favorites - anyone can get it. Up to 30 per cent of the population contracts influenza in any given year. In especially bad years the incidence can be much higher. In the 1979-80 season, 680,000 Canadians came down with it. There really is an epidemic every winter. The real danger with influenza are the complications.

The influenza virus leaves your body's resistance weakened and open to other infections. Bacterial pneumonia is the most common complication and it can be very serious, especially in the elderly. Non-bacterial complications are less common but can be even more serious. These may include viral pneumonia, acute kidney failure, and a variety of nervous system disorders. Any of these complications can be fatal. It is estimated that more than 1,000 Canadians die each year from influenza.

Does influenza vaccine work? Yes it does. In any given year it provides between 70 and 90 per cent protection against true influenza. It won't protect you from the common cold or any of those other viruses that

have symptoms similar to influenza. If you get the sniffles after your flu shot, it's most likely because you happened to pick up another contagious virus. The vaccine should be administered in September or October to give your body time to build up immunity before the flu season starts in November. If you are over 65 or in any other high risk category, you should ask your physician if the vaccine would be appropriate for you. Annual immunization against influenza could save your life.

Today's influenza vaccines are extremely safe. However, anyone who is allergic to eggs or egg products should not be given influenza vaccine because there may be minute traces of egg protein in the vaccine which could cause an adverse reaction. Otherwise, the risks of the annual epidemic of influenza far outweigh the risks involved with an

annual shot of vaccine. Influenza may produce symptoms similar to other viral infections such as the common cold. But it is far more serious. In 1918 it wiped out more than 10 million people in one year. It is particularly dangerous to those over the age of 65. It can be prevented with annual influenza vaccinations.



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