

**COMMUNITY CORNERSTONE**  
**JENNY KITSON**

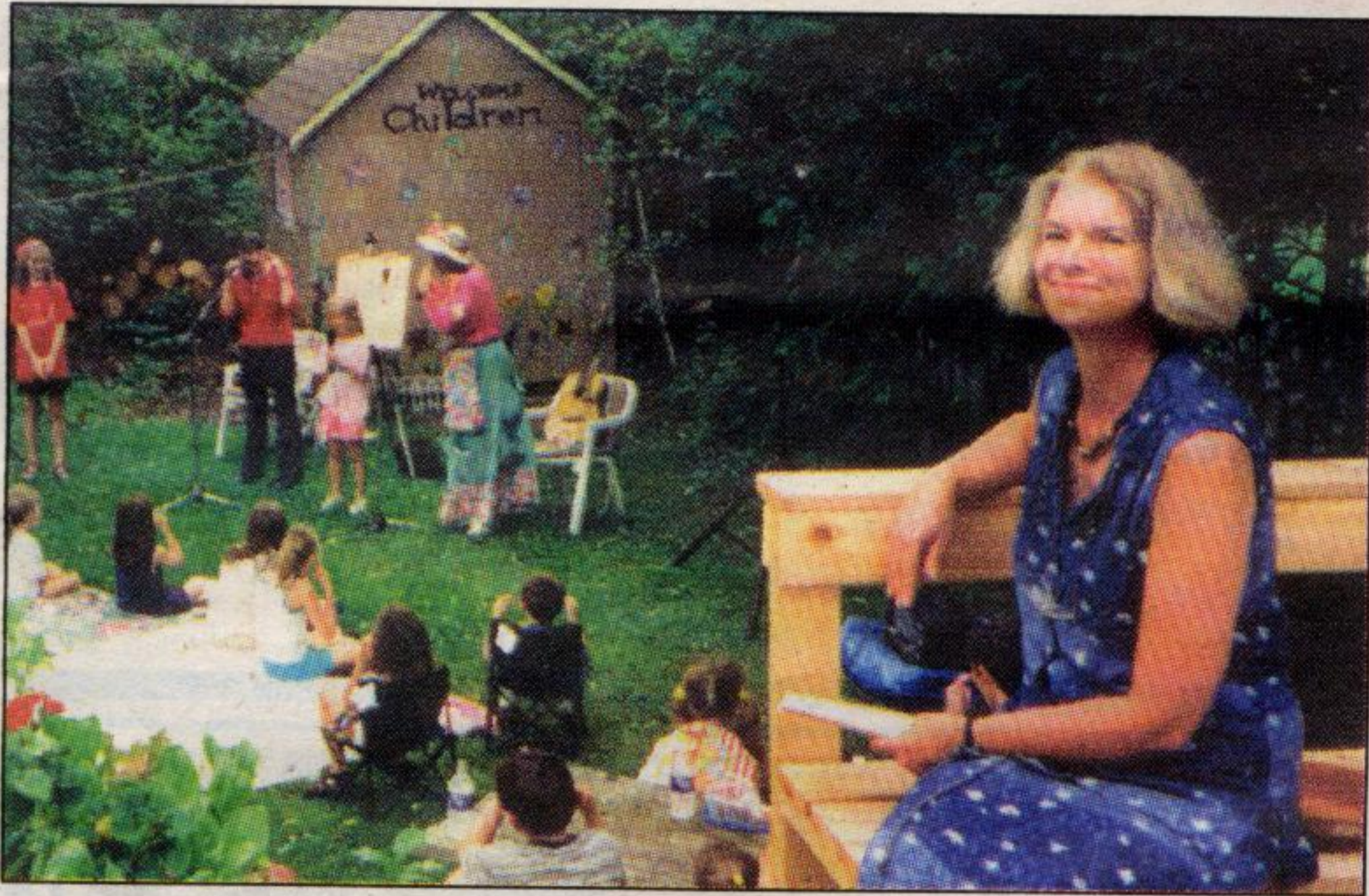
By DEBORAH QUAILLE

In the hamlet of Eden Mills, most residents are on a roster for assistance with the Community Hall, the centre of village life. It's where the exercise classes work up a little muscle; artists set up easels to sketch, paint and photograph the life models; and celebrations of all sorts take place.

Jenny Kitson, who lives across

grew gardens on donated land and went to markets gleaned what was surplus to the requirements of the vendors. The organization was affiliated with Feed the Children, but folded in 1994. I simply carried on on my own."

Sporting her navy T-shirt that boldly proclaims Feed the Children - although many other disadvantaged



One of Jenny Kitson's favourite volunteer jobs is offering her home and backyard to the Children's Area of the annual Eden Mills Writers' Festival.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

from the hall, also assists in fund raising for the upkeep and accessibility funds by doing something a little more unique. Out in the nearby bush every March, using old-fashioned evaporator pans over hardwood fires, Ms. Kitson carefully boils down gallons of maple sap to create golden syrup which is then sold in small lots to net money for the community.

"I had about five gallons this year, which made approximately \$900," she says with a smile.

A self-employed computer trainer and programmer, Ms. Kitson juggles work with several other voluntary positions in north Halton and Wellington. She sings in the Guelph Chamber Choir and is a member of Vox Intoxicus, which she describes as "a fun group of six voices who sing for pleasure and occasional gigs." She's also a six-year volunteer and director of the Eden Mills Writers' Festival, an event that takes place every September. The festival creates a year-round position that chugs into gear soon after one event is complete so that there are constant improvements to the weekend of presentations to the literary crowd.

Without a doubt, however, some of her most interesting and important work is the gathering of food to feed the needy.

"I started in 1992 with an organization called Feedback Canada. They

individuals are included in that catch-all - Ms. Kitson makes the rounds of vendors just before noon at the Milton Farmers' Market each Saturday, collecting from June to October.

"The vendors are very good to me and save some foods especially. By August I can fill two pickups with food each time. There are fresh fruits and vegetables, baked goods, and often jars of jam or something with tiny dents in them. Occasionally I'll get meat given to me too."

After gathering the food into round bushel baskets, Ms. Kitson and another volunteer, Gloria Blanche, also of Eden Mills, use a borrowed pickup truck to make deliveries to Halton Women's Place, Hope Place, Halton Recovery House, a couple of group homes and Deborah's Home. After each place has taken what they need, any leftovers are then delivered to the Guelph Food Bank.

There are occasions when the summer bumper crops are too prolific and, if any group needs food, they are welcome to call Jenny Kitson regarding the surplus at 519-856-0591.

"There isn't anybody else gleaned at the market. I want to make sure foods aren't wasted and go to good homes. It seems to be a win-win situation," states Ms. Kitson.

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**North Halton Happenings**

**AUGUST 3**

• Sketchy at Best at the J.C. Taylor Nature Centre, The Arboretum, the University of Guelph, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. Beginners and experienced sketchers are invited to learn some basic drawing tips and tricks. For more information, please call 519-824-4120, ext. 52113.

**AUGUST 10**

• Summer Wildflowers at the J.C. Taylor Nature Centre, The Arboretum, the University of Guelph, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. Enjoy and discover summer blooms. For more information, please call 519-824-4120, extension 52113.

**AUGUST 12**

• Georgetown Agricultural Society's General Meeting in the Exhibit Hall at the Georgetown Fairgrounds, 8:00 p.m. Please call 519-853-1465 or 905-873-6157 for more information.

**AUGUST 16**

• Starlight Children's Foundation's Family Fun Day at Victoria Park, Milton, 9:00 a.m. - noon. Local dignitaries in attendance, play stations, literacy centre, silent auction and wishing well.

**AUGUST 16-17**

• Garlic is Great Festival at the Country Heritage Park, Milton, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**AUGUST 17**

• Conservation Halton's Spirit Sings event at

Crawford Lake, 5 kilometres south of Campbellville at the corner of the Guelph Line and Steeles Avenue, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required for this magical evening of traditional native teachings, games and food. For more information, please call 905-854-0234 or visit [www.conservationhalton.on.ca](http://www.conservationhalton.on.ca).

• The Nature of Colour at the J.C. Taylor Nature Centre, The Arboretum, the University of Guelph, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. Hike and discover the natural meaning of colour. For more information, please call 519-824-4120, extension 52113.

**AUGUST 22**

• Georgetown's Rock 'n' and Roll 'n' Classics Car Show on Main Street South, 5:00-11:00 p.m.

**AUGUST 24**

• Plant Bugs or Bug Plants at the J.C. Taylor Nature Centre, The Arboretum, the University of Guelph, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. Learn more about the relationship between plants and insects. For more information, please call 519-824-4120, extension 52113.

**AUGUST 29-SEPTEMBER 1**

• Steam Era at the Milton Fairgrounds.

**SEPTEMBER 5**

• Mayor's Golf Tournament for the United Way at the Granite Ridge Golf Club, Milton. All money raised in Milton stays in Milton. For more information, please call 905-875-2550.

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