



The Regional Municipality of Halton  
www.halton.ca

# More Blue & Green During the Holidays



### Items for Blue Box

- Cardboard boxes
- Fine paper & envelopes
- Newspaper
- Boxed beverage containers
- Plastic bottles
- Aluminum food & pop cans



### Items for GreenCart

- Turkey, ham & meat, including bones
- Challah bread
- Gingerbread
- Latkes, fruits and vegetables
- Paper napkins
- Paper plates and cups



### Items for Garbage

- Clear moulded plastic packaging
- Plastic film
- Bubble wrap
- Plastic plates and cups
- Wrapping paper
- Bows & ribbons

**Christmas Trees:** Christmas tree collection occurs in January (urban areas only). Check your Waste Management Calendar or [www.halton.ca/waste](http://www.halton.ca/waste) for exact dates. Remove all tinsel, lights, decorations and plastic bags before collection. Ensure trees do not become stuck or frozen in snow banks.

## More Blue & Green for a Better Planet

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## Storey Glove Co. on Bower Ave. had a poignant message on back of postcard Postcard Detective Blake brings life in 1800s alive

By Frances Niblock

Through modern technology and turn of the century artifacts, Acton's Dennis Blake, sometimes billed as a "postcard detective," is able to recreate the Acton of the early 1800s through the writings of local citizens.

Using early 1900s postcards and so-called cabinet cards – mounted pictures of people that friends would display in a glass cabinet – and computer software, Blake, in a recent presentation to the Esquesing Historical Society, offered a look at life in Acton at the turn of the century.

Blake said the "crux" of his presentation is a woman called Lizzie Fisher who he first "met" when he found a cabinet card with her name on it, photographed by an Acton photographer. Over the years, he also found four postcards that Fisher had written to her sister Hilda in the early 1800s featuring a lithograph of an Acton scene on one side and an address and message on the other.

At that time – prior to the telephone – postcards were the preferred method of communication, taking advantage of two times daily mail delivery and a one centre stamp. Fisher's cards intrigued Blake and he set out to try and "find" her using the Internet to comb through census information and marriage and death records, Blake tracked Fisher down to a small village in Perth County where she'd been born – one of 11 children. He also discovered that Fisher had married Acton blacksmith Ernest Hall and had a son Albert in 1809.

Blake was not able to find out much about Fisher, other than her religion, address on Queen Street, who she married and her child.

"This is one of the charming things about it. She's an unknown, a little person that has done nothing historical



Old Acton Public School is on card sent by Ettie Laird, who is 1898, at age 16 became Acton's first librarian in the Free Library in town hall

except to exist. One of the reasons for studying history is to give dignity and recognition to those that went before us, and that's what I was able to do," Blake said.

Blake, a visual arts instructor, has been collecting postcards for 30 years – his first was a riverbank scene that he bought at the Aberfoyle antique market when he was a teen. He has a collection of between 50 and 60 Acton postcards.

"Using my collection of postcards of Acton as historical artifacts, I thought it would be interesting to use Fisher as the crux of a postcard presentation on Keynote – it's Apple's version of power point – to take a walking tour of through Acton in 1908 when Fisher lived here," Blake said, adding he also used information from author Mazo de la Roche, who lived in Acton for three years, and from Acton's Early Days.

Blake said he had three main points in his presentation, beginning with the idea that postcards were a democratizing force and that Fisher's postcards were an authentic voice from the past.

"Lizzie did not write very well, she spelled phonetically and when you read her cards you hear how people spoke in those days. Also, many of these postcards had not been seen in over 100 years – so

there was something unique or romantic about that," Blake said, adding many postcards were destroyed during the paper drives during WWII.

Blake said he began collecting postcards for the evocative inmates, but his interest was peaked when he attended a presentation of a postcard collectors association where an archivist described postcards as artifacts and explained what you could learn from them, besides seeing a beautiful image.

"That peaked my interest to see what I could do with Acton – I have between 50 and 60 postcards that I've found on eBay or at paper shows which are like a stamp show," Blake said, adding the postcards have allowed him to combine his collecting hobby with his interest in technology that allows him to present the images and learn about the lives of people who sent the cards. He said many of the messages on the postcards are banal – talking about the weather, theatre showings, sporting events, and in one, how the local temperance option had not passed in Acton and it was still possible to get a drink in town.

On March 14, Blake will make his presentation to the Kitchener Waterloo Postcard Club.