

Completing construction program

# Mountsberg offers unlimited fun



NATURE TRAILS ABOUND in beauty at this time of year. Mountsberg Wildlife Compound hosts weekend jaunts through the bush on nature trails. The organized hikes follow movies about the ecology, animal life or one of many nature themes. A biologist accompanies hikers on their trek

through the woods and points out different things that may have been referred to in the movie earlier. The movies will continue as long as there is enough heat in the barn where they are now shown. Hikes will continue through the winter. (Photo by B. Burt)

Workmen are in the final stages of a construction program at Mountsberg Wildlife Centre. When the work is completed the area will be one of this district's finest nature retreats.

The Centre has been in existence for some time and in recent years has broadened its scope and is serving a broader range of interests for those visiting the area. The Centre is operated by Halton Region Conservation Authority and managed by Frank Timmermans and his staff.

Work is currently underway on a building that will house a 96-seat auditorium, a display area and a library resource centre as well as washroom, storage space and a lunch room or cafeteria. That project is due for completion some time in February.

**Nature trails**  
Until then weekend nature films will be shown on the second floor in an existing barn. In an interview Mr. Timmermans noted the hikes along nature trails will be continued even after it becomes too cool in the barn for visitors to sit through films. Usually the film and hike along the nature trails are scheduled to coincide.

Upon completion of the facility visitors will be able to see a subject of interest on film, hike along the nature trail with a trained and qualified biologist and if the interest is there, return later to the library to study his or her subject even further.

A new 65-acre animal compound is in the early stages of construction and will be ready late next year. Elk, buffalo, deer, goats, horses, geese, ducks, and an assortment of birds call the centre home.

**Catfish a plenty**  
A large lake provides good bass and catfish fishing now, according to Timmermans. The lake was the site for the first catfish derby earlier this

year and that is expected to be an annual event.

While this is the first year that bass have been noticed in abundance, Timmermans speaks from personal experience when he says the lake is loaded with them. Eventually he hopes to stock northern pike there. He says there are so many bass now, they aren't growing to any great size and the presence of a predator would help control the number and allow survivors to grow larger as well as providing a toad game fish.

This summer SWEEP students constructed a sugar shanty among a stand of maple trees. The shanty is situated near one of the nature trails and will replace facilities for maple syrup demonstrations at Rattlesnake Point.

Each day at least one busload of school children has visited the centre on a field trip. There are eight different programs covering a range in age groups.

**Varied programs**  
Among those programs Mountsberg staffers offer at the centre are programs dealing with the World of the Marsh, Earth Sciences, Stream Ecology, The Forest Community, Field Ecology, Nature in Winter and Maple Syrup Time. Courses offered often correspond with the season in which they may best be illustrated.

Kiddy Kirriculum is a program designed for youngsters under grade five and consists of a short nature



THE SUGAR SHANTY recently completed at Mountsberg Wildlife Compound is expected to attract thousands of people to see maple syrup demonstrations next spring. The shanty was erected by SWEEP students this summer. It sits away from the main buildings and wildlife cages. Formerly the Halton Region Conservation Authority maple syrup demonstration was held at Rattlesnake Point.

(Photo by B. Burt)

hike and films and some free time.

During recent winters, visitors to the centre have enjoyed rides on horse drawn sleighs and skating on an open pond. Timmermans suggests the area will remain a haven for naturalists or people who just want to walk in the bush or pay a visit to the animals. Other than skating on a pond, group camping in another area and the sleigh rides, uses of the area will remain of a basically passive nature.

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## Great elm is dying

A tree which began life about the time Samuel de Champlain's interpreter and guide, Etienne Brule, passed through the Hamilton area in the early 17th century will have to be cut down. The McMaster Great Elm, believed to be 350 or more years old, has been pronounced a victim of the Dutch elm disease despite extensive efforts by Royal Botanical Gardens and McMaster University staff to preserve it.

The giant tree, believed to be one of the oldest elms on the North American continent, is about five feet thick through the middle of its trunk, and stands approximately 75 to 80 feet tall. It is located a short distance north of Main St. near the McMaster Health Sciences Centre, and has been a familiar landmark to Hamiltonians, McMaster students and visitors to the city for generations.

## Buying trip at Kitchener

Larry Schuyler, owner of Schuyler Home Hardware Store at Milton Plaza, Milton, has recently returned from his semi-annual buying trip to Kitchener.

This Merchandise Market takes place at the Bingeman Park complex in Kitchener, and at Home Hardware Stores' headquarters in St. Jacobs. Mr. Schuyler and 425 other Home Hardware dealers across the country are co-owners and equal partners of this 100 per cent member-owned, low-cost merchandising and distributing organization.

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