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Historical society upset over Main St. building demolition

Group members say walls could have been saved

By RICHARD VIVIAN

The Champion

New construction plans for the Milton Bible Church on Main Street has the Milton Historical Society up in arms.

Historians are frustrated they weren't contacted about new plans to demolish the 105-year-old building in its entirety. Previous plans would have seen the front and one side wall preserved while the rest of the building was re-constructed.

"We're very upset no one even bothered to approach us and ask for our input," said Mirella Marshall, historical society president. "All we wanted was time to get our engineer in there and do an assessment of what could be done. We want to help the church move on with their project — we aren't looking to stop them."

Contractors working for the church started taking the front of the building down brick by brick Tuesday — one week after receiving a demolition permit from the Town.

Pastor Jim DeMarsh said architects and engineers working for the church said the walls weren't salvageable.

"They were just too old and frag-

ile. We were trying to save them, but they told us it just couldn't be done," he said. "We're cutting out all the fine brickwork and saving it (for use in the new building)."

But Ms Marshall disputed Pastor DeMarsh's comments on the salvageability of the existing front and side wall. She said the historical society's restorationist and stone mason both looked at the building and felt it could be saved.

"With the proper supports, they (church) should be able to use them," she said.

Neither the restorationist nor the stone mason have conducted an in-depth survey of the building — looking at it from the street only.

Using some brick and window

• see DEMOLITION on page 16

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Census statistics already outdated

By RICHARD VIVIAN

The Champion

Milton may have been shrinking, but it's growing now, said Mayor Gord Krantz following the release of 2001 Canadian Census results this week.

According to census results — reported by Statistics Canada (www.statcan.ca) — Milton's population dropped by 633 between 1996 and 2001, bringing the estimated population to 31,471.

"It is pretty factual — you probably can't argue that our community didn't lose people in that time — but it is definitely outdated already," he told The Champion.

In the year since the census was conducted, Milton's population has grown and is more accurately sitting around 37,000 individuals, the mayor said.

"I predict, certainly by the time the next census comes out (in 2006), Milton will lead the pack — not only in Ontario, but we'll

• see TOWN on page 16

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