

## Majority of Ontarians favour prohibition, but numbers show more Milton residents are against ban of alcohol

'Time Capsules' are gems of information extracted from past issues of *The Champion* and other publication to provide a window into Milton's past. Explanatory comment is sometimes provided to place the situation in context.

October 1898

Majority for prohibition. There were 4,939 votes polled in Halton last March in the Barber-Kerns election for the Ontario Legislature. Last Thursday there were only 3,166 recorded for and against prohibition, with the same voters' lists being used. With the vote being so small, the majority of 622 for prohibition carries no weight. Results: Halton 637 for prohibition, 209 against, majority for 338.

All provinces vote for prohibition except Quebec. Total Dominion majority for prohibition 11,636. In Milton's East Ward 12 voted for prohibition, 40 against; in the North Ward 36 for, 41 against; South Ward 50 for 26 against. Voting in Milton 98 for prohibition and 107 against.

Town Council is likely to be called on shortly to consider a proposition from the Williams Company, shoe manufacturers of Galt. This company is reported to do a large and growing business, employing 65 hands on pegged boots and shoes of all kinds. They are searching for a new location. They ask a loan of \$6,000 to be repaid in installments without interest and it's figured that provided the payments are made promptly, the total interest will amount in about \$1,400.

The ratepayers of Milton, though anxious for as many new industries as possible, will not countenance anything like a bonus.

The proposed loan to the Williams Company, however, can hardly be classed as a bonus and the proposition appears to be worthy of the serious consideration of our town council.

The Toronto Terra Cotta Company's works on the C.P.R. just west of Milton, which has been closed for some years, are being put into working order and will resume operations shortly under the efficient management of Mr. Lewis, who is well known here.

It's understood that the new management will operate on a large scale and employ a

### Milton Time Capsules



goodly number of hands.

At the Monday evening meeting of the town council, the usual formal business was put through as well as passing By-law 275, compelling the erection and proper maintenance of eavestrouthing to prevent dripping upon the sidewalks. This is a move in the right direction and it's hoped that the chief constable will watch most strictly after its closest enforcement. The penalty for non-compliance is \$5, payable to the Town.

By-law 276, on the storing of coal oil and combustibles, was read a second time. No report was given about the Williams Shoe Company, matter but it was intimated that another and larger concern in the same business was interesting itself in Milton as a possible sight.

Last Monday, the frame of David Irving's new barn was successfully raised on his homestead, lot 13 in the fourth concession of Nassagaweya. Placed upon stone walls of nine feet of height with posts 20 feet long, the building — which is 50 feet by 84 feet — will present a large and imposing appearance. About 150 of Mr. Irving's friends and neighbours, many from quite a distance, attended to watch at the work, which was happily unmarked by accident or mishap though the breaking of one of the plates, a purlin, formed a somewhat alarming incident.

Sides were chosen as usual and an exciting race ended in those chosen by Robert Currie slightly beating Alex. McPhedran's party. A bounteous supper received ample justice and crowned the pleasing event most fittingly. Mr. Irving is to be congratulated upon the progress thus far made in the erection of so fine a structure, the work on which is being done by Messrs. Logie and Leachman.

This material is assembled on behalf of the Milton Historical Society by Jim Dills, chair of research, who can be reached by e-mail at [jdills@idirect.com](mailto:jdills@idirect.com).

## OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

### Rural resident says injustice was served with the decision to close Percy W. Merry

Dear Editor:

On Wednesday, Nov. 20, the Halton District School Board trustees voted to close Percy W. Merry School, effective June 30, 2003.

The whole process leading up to this vote, and especially that night itself, has left me feeling disillusioned, angry and upset. Parents devoted many hours working to save our school because it was important to us and we felt that we actually had a chance to save it.

However, I think it became abundantly clear on November 20 that we actually had no chance, and we never did. By the things that were said and the questions that were asked during the debate that night, it was obvious to me that the trustees had made their minds up about Percy Merry long ago.

I think the public process was, in fact, just a farce — a procedure that they went through only because they had to, not because they cared about what we had to say. All of the parent presentations — full of great ideas, information, alternatives to closure, and reasons for why closure would be so premature — fell (with the exception of two trustees) on deaf ears. In my opinion, Percy Merry simply wasn't in the board's long-term plans and hadn't been for some time.

The bottom line is that financially, Percy Merry is worth slightly more to the board closed than open.

This is because of the Capital Strategic Plan and new pupil placement grants. However, this dollar amount pales in comparison to the disruption, devastation and sense of loss felt by our children upon hearing that their school will be closed.

After all, Percy Merry is their school. Much more than reading, writing and arithmetic goes on

inside its walls. Our children feel a sense of ownership and pride for their school, and this is even more so for Percy Merry because it serves the rural community, and is the glue that keeps us together.

At a time when both Milton and north Oakville are experiencing unprecedented growth, and most elementary schools in the area are at or way above capacity with new families moving in daily, it just makes no sense at all to close any school here.

The trustees saw this wisdom when deciding to delay the decision to close Martin Street Public School. Why not keep Percy Merry open as well?

The reasoning used to delay the Martin Street decision applied equally to Percy Merry, yet was ignored completely when deciding our fate. The whole process was extremely unfair, and discriminatory against Percy Merry.

As an aside, the Toronto District School Board cut \$90 million out of its budget without closing a single school, despite having some with less than 60 per cent capacity. Why is it so necessary for the Halton board to close schools, especially ones in such a high-growth area?

I can't believe that in seven short months, our beloved little school will be gone. Forty-four years of serving our rural community will be gone forever. Percy Merry, the heart of our community, will cease to exist, except in our memories. My daughter loves Percy Merry, and so did my brother and I when we went there.

Simply put, it's a great place to be, and I feel that my children are privileged to be able to go to Percy Merry.

In September, our children will board buses for Sam Sherratt, and

we will make the best of it, but it will never be the same.

Gone forever is the opportunity for our children to attend a small school in our community, with its close, caring, nurturing and safe environment, where everyone knows everyone and I never have to worry about my small children wandering away and getting lost, or missing the bus to come home. I dread June 30, 2003.

Once this day comes and goes and Percy Merry's doors are closed forever, I will change my route to ensure that I don't drive by the school any more. To see its windows all boarded up, and weeds growing in the playground where generations of children have played, and in the gardens where flowers once grew, will break my heart.

And the worst thing of all is knowing that it just didn't have to be, if only the trustees had listened to us with open minds, had properly examined all of the information and had more than dollars as their number one priority.

I would like to thank Trustees Erica Andrew and Peggy Russell for listening carefully to what we had to say, and supporting us on Wednesday night. To Trustees Kelly Amos and Annette Kirk, two of the three trustees for Percy Merry families, I would like to say that we were very disappointed and angry at your lack of support for us.

You both completely turned your backs on us, the people you were elected to represent.

We will definitely remember this next fall when we return to the polls to vote.

Annette Page  
Burnhamthorpe Road West

Fax your letters to the editor to (905) 878-4943 or e-mail them to [miltone@haltonsearch.com](mailto:miltone@haltonsearch.com).

**Milton Heights Academy**  
*Pride in Achievement*  
LOCATED ON THE BEAUTIFUL GROUNDS OF  
COUNTRY HERITAGE PARK, MILTON

# OPEN HOUSE

Saturday,  
November 30th,  
10:00 - 2:00 pm

For Further Information Phone 905-693-1557  
8560 Tremaine Road, Milton

A PRIVATE SCHOOL FROM J.K. TO GRADE 8

- ☆ Small Classes (14 max.)
- ☆ Qualified Teachers
- ☆ Enriched Academic Program
- ☆ French Throughout School
- ☆ Before & After School Care
- ☆ J.K. Full and Half Days
- ☆ Reasonable Fees

