

**GEORGETOWN CINEMAS**  
235 GUELPH STREET 873-1999

1 **HULK** PG  
Daily 6:45 p.m. & 9:15 p.m. Wed., Sat. & Sun. 2:00 p.m.

2 **THE FAST & FURIOUS** AA  
Daily 6:45 p.m. & 9:00 p.m. Sat. & Sun. 2:00 p.m.

2 **BLACK BEAUTY** Wednesday 2:00 p.m.  
Sponsored by Bell World & Imagine That Iron Works

3 **FINDING NEMO** G  
Daily 7:00 p.m. & 9:00 p.m. Wed., Sat. & Sun. 2:00 p.m.

GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE - Loto Centre - Georgetown Market Centre  
**Theatre Parking Available at Rear**

# Emotions run high as school closes

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**  
*The Champion*

Tears streaming down his face, Keith Merry was so choked up he could barely speak except to get out one phrase.

"He was my father."  
Saturday morning's open house at Percy W. Merry School embodied the word 'bittersweet.'

While elsewhere the roads were still mostly empty and the rest of the world had the general appearance of sleepiness, cars were filling the school's parking lot and spilling over into the adjoining field at promptly 8:30 a.m.

By 9 a.m., the auditorium was already bursting with former students, present and former staff and friends of the school who couldn't let the school close without saying a final farewell and celebrating its 45 years of existence.



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

**Keith Merry and Lois McDougall, son and daughter of the late Percy Merry — a school trustee whom the school was named after — reminisce while sitting on one of the school's original benches.**

Mr. Merry — son of the school's namesake, who was a local school board trustee for 16 years — was far from being the only emotional one in the auditorium. In fact, it was the odd occasion to see someone who didn't strongly display some emotion or other, whether it be delight at seeing old friends, teachers or students or sadness at saying goodbye to a school that seemingly meant so much to so many.

"The Percy Merry community was home to me, even though I lived in Campbellville," said Jim Watson, who taught at the school for two years when it first opened in 1958. "It was a collection of rural farm residents who were eager to learn and appreciative of the simple things. It's a shame this has to close. I guess it's the modern times."

Mr. Watson said he recognized some of his former students even 45 years later, and even recognized one by name.

When asked about favourite memories, Mr. Watson told a story about the school's caretaker, Wally Simpson, who was there for the two years Mr. Watson was teaching.

"(Mr. Simpson) was a retired farmer. He kept arrowroot biscuits in the furnace room and I used to sneak in and take them. He probably thought it was the students," Mr. Watson said, laughing. "He never found out."

In the auditorium, visitors browsed through various memorabilia, including old school class photos and newspaper clippings. Frequent yelps of joy rang out as friends reunited.

For Jessie Waite, who had just met up with a former teacher, the open house was all about saying goodbye to the old life and welcoming her new life as an adult.

"This brings a bit of closure. I'm 25 years old now, and now I get to start my life and have my kids," said Ms Waite, who's engaged to be married.

She said she came to the open house out of curiosity, wondering what the people she remembers are up to now. She said attending a country school creates a special kind of bond between student and school that city kids can't understand.

"This is a country school, so kids don't have the opportunities to play (with other kids) on the street like city kids. These are the kids the kids know. My fiancé was asking me why this is so important to me. But this is all I had," she said, referring to her friends at school.

Kathie Course agreed. She said because she lived so far away from her friends, she always looked forward to going back to school in September.

Ms Course was in the kindergarten class the first day Percy W. Merry opened and attended the school until the end of grade 8. She has a few memories from her first day: riding the school bus for the first time, having to take a nap in class and playing games.

"A big chunk of my life was spent here. I have no bad memories of school — I always liked coming," she said.

Poignant comments were made during an emo-  
• see SMOOTH on page 16

**CRUISE INTO SPRING**  
*with our DUO SPECIALS in store*

includes gas, lease, cart, duokit **\$678**

Air Liquide  
310A Steeles Ave., Milton  
**905-693-1211**  
While quantities last. Participating locations only.

**AIR LIQUIDE** Industrial gases Welding products [www.airliquide.com](http://www.airliquide.com)

100 years. A pioneering inspiration

**Sundance Spas** GREAT SAVINGS on all Models!

**GRAND OPENING SALE ENDS JUNE 30<sup>TH</sup>**

**FREE Built-in Stereo\***  
\*On select models

**6 Months No Interest, No Payments O.A.C.**

**20% OFF SPA CHEMICALS, TOYS & FILTERS**  
Must present at time of purchase. Not valid with any other offer. Expires July 1/03

**ALL SUNDANCE SPAS INCLUDE FREE Cover, CD Ozone, Step, Start-Up Kit, Delivery & Set Up.**

**COVER LIFTERS \$395<sup>00</sup>**

**The Sundance Spa Store**  
Hot Tubs and Leisure

2000 Appleby Line (Next to LCBO)  
Millcroft Shopping Centre Burlington  
**905-315-7800**

**The Milton District Horticultural Society** wishes to extend

*A Heartfelt Thank You*

To all of the following businesses for their valued support of the plant sale on May 15, 2003.

A & P	Landscape Gardens
Andrews Scenic Acres	Langholm's Nurseries
Arbor Garden Centre & Nursery	LaRose Italian Bakery
Canadian Tire Corp.	Loblaws Inc.
Clembrooke	Lumberville
Country Depot	Milton Greenhouses
Crawford's Country Gardens	PAO Horticulture
D&G Nursery	M. Putzer Hornby Nursery
The Flower Shed	Spice O' Life Card & Gift Shop
Harrop House Gallery	Springridge Farm
Home Hardware	Taylor Nursery
Jade Hardens	Teresa's Gardens
Kalena Flowers	Van Dongen's Tree Fram
Karen's Flower Shop	

*Support your local businesses!*