

Community Notebook

Players Present: The 1990-1991 drama series presented by Milton Players Theatre Group kicks off Nov. 23, leaving just a few days to purchase a three-day subscription. The lineup includes *Dead Man's Hand* by Seymour Matthews, *Suitehearts* by William Van Zandt and Jane Milmore, *Steel Magnolias* by Robert Harling. The \$38 cost for a subscription is 20 per cent less than the cost of tickets bought separately. The February presentation is dinner/theatre. For information call 878-4039.

Cold Turkey: Smokers who want to kick the habit this fall are invited to the Lung Association's 'Cold Turkey' smoking cessation clinic. The five-evening program starts Monday, Nov. 5, 7:30 p.m. at Oaklands Regional Centre. Speakers, films and discussion groups comprise the program. Registration fee is \$10 which is sponsored through Christmas Seals. To register call 632-8499.

Housing Concerns: Area residents concerned about the lack of affordable housing in north Halton are encouraged to attend a meeting tomorrow (Thursday) evening at the Georgetown Cultural Centre, 9 Church St., Georgetown. The panel discussion and open presentation will cover co-operative housing, community attitudes, non-profit housing, group homes and personal experiences of residents searching for accommodation. The meeting runs from 8-10 p.m. To register for this free event call 853-3310.

Ready to Read: Master storyteller, author and consultant, Bob Barton will share his recipe for encouraging love of reading and books with parents and teachers. He'll be speaking on Wednesday, Nov. 7, from 7-8:30 p.m. at Royal Botanical Gardens, 680 Plains Rd., Burlington. It costs \$5 per person or \$20 per five people. To find out more call Micki Clements at 332-2220.

Bright Kids Meeting: The Association for Bright Children (ABC), Halton Chapter, will host a meeting titled 'Love Me, Love My Brain' on Tuesday, Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. at Lord Elgin High School, 5151 New St., Burlington. Guest speaker Margaret Walker, ABC Ontario, will discuss the state of gifted and enrichment education in Ontario and offer her views on what the new NDP government may mean to gifted education. For more information call Diane Leblovic, 682-4892 or Trudy Olsen, 681-2890.

Volunteers Needed: Young Parents Support Services requires volunteers to provide support and information to young pregnant women to enable them to make informed decisions regarding their future. Call Susan Stuart at 844-5502 if you have some time to offer to this service provided through the Halton Children's Aid Society.

Save Your Backyard: Bob Hart of Halton Region health department will be at Hugh Foster Hall tomorrow (Thursday) evening to explain how to develop a personal environmental action plan. His presentation is sponsored by the Canadian Federation of University Women, Milton and District. The 8 p.m. meeting is open to the public.

Hilton Falls platforms make viewing safer for visitors

By KAREN SMITH

The ground at Hilton Falls shook as the oldest living couple in Ontario called back the spirit of Edward Hilton.

The man who built a saw mill at the falls 155 years ago didn't really return in 1990, but the fictitious seance succeeded in amusing the crowd that gathered to witness the official opening of the landmark's two new viewing platforms.

With a \$30,000 grant from the Ontario Heritage Foundation (OHF), the Halton Region Conservation Authority (HRCA) built the Biosphere Reserve Viewing Area which will make the falls view safer and more pleasurable for visitors.

The viewing platforms were built on two levels at the falls, and include interpretive signs that highlight the cultural and natural features of the area," explains Gary Hutton of the HRCA.

One platform is located at ground level while the other takes visitors down a set of stairs to the gorge.

In the past, visitors had to hike down the side of the escarpment to see the 33-foot falls from inside the gorge. The trip was hard on less-able people and it harmed the heavily-wooded area.

The Friday afternoon occasion, attended by local government officials as well as representatives of the OHF and HRCA, was unlike traditional opening ceremonies. Organizers brought the history of the falls to life by staging a mini-play.

With the rumble of a shooting cannon, the six-character production 'saw' the oldest living couple in Ontario, said to be found living at Halton Centennial Manor, conduct a seance to communicate with early settlers at Hilton Falls.

Waterfalls on the Niagara Escarpment provided settlers with a source of power for logging and grist operations.

Remnants of the old saw mill can be seen at the base of the falls. Its history began in 1830 when the Crown granted 200 acres of free land to Henry Young, a settler in Nassagaweya.

During Mr. Young's ownership, Edward Hilton built the mill and ran it for a short time. But to take part in the Farmer's Rebellion of 1837, Mr. Hilton abandoned the mill and left it to rot.

In 1856, C. H. Park rebuilt the saw mill and operated it until 1863 when it was destroyed by fire.

Tales about the mill add mystery to its sketchy history. It has been said that gold was discovered nearby and kept in a great cave with iron gates. Another story names Hilton Falls as a stop on the underground railway used by slaves escaping from the United States to Canada.

The largest remaining forest tract in the Halton watershed, Hilton Falls Conservation Area is one of more than 100 public parks located in the Niagara Escarpment.



Halton Region Chairman Peter Pomeroy takes a peak at the new Hilton Falls Biosphere Reserve Viewing Area which officially opened Friday.



Jim Aikenhead of the Halton Region Conservation Authority portrayed Edward Hilton — who built a sawmill at Hilton Falls in 1835 — in a mini-play at the official opening.



The 'oldest living couple in Ontario', played by John and Anne Benham of Rockwood, conducted a seance to call back the spirit of Edward Hilton.

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