

# Our Readers Write

## Thanks Milton for contributing to our food drive

Dear Editor: On behalf of the Milton Fire Department we would like to thank the community for the generous donations of food and other items for the needy during our first annual food drive.

Due to the overwhelming response, unfortunately some areas of town were not covered due to time restrictions. The amount of food collected during this drive is in excess of 3,000 lbs.

If you were missed, you can still drop off your items at the Central Fire Station on Steeles Avenue.

It is gratifying, during these tough economic times, that you, the citizens of Milton, opened your hearts and made donations so that others could have a happy Christmas Season.

Seasons greetings from the staff of the Milton Fire Department.

**Doug Shortt**  
Secretary  
Milton Firefighters Club

## Happy New Year to volunteers for their valuable effort

Dear Editor: I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteer drivers, captains and canvassers, and all other volunteers for their excellent assistance and support during the past year.

I truly hope they will continue with their dedication in this most important cause.

Wishing everyone health and happiness in the New Year, on behalf of the Milton Unit of the Canadian Cancer Society.

**Carol Kerr**  
Milton Unit  
Canadian Cancer Society

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# Dixon family roots remain despite loss of historic home

Dear Editor: Re: 'Historic Home Destroyed' Ella Patterson's column of Oct. 30 and 'Fight to preserve historic home on Thompson Road ends with demolition' by Rob Kelly, Nov. 27.

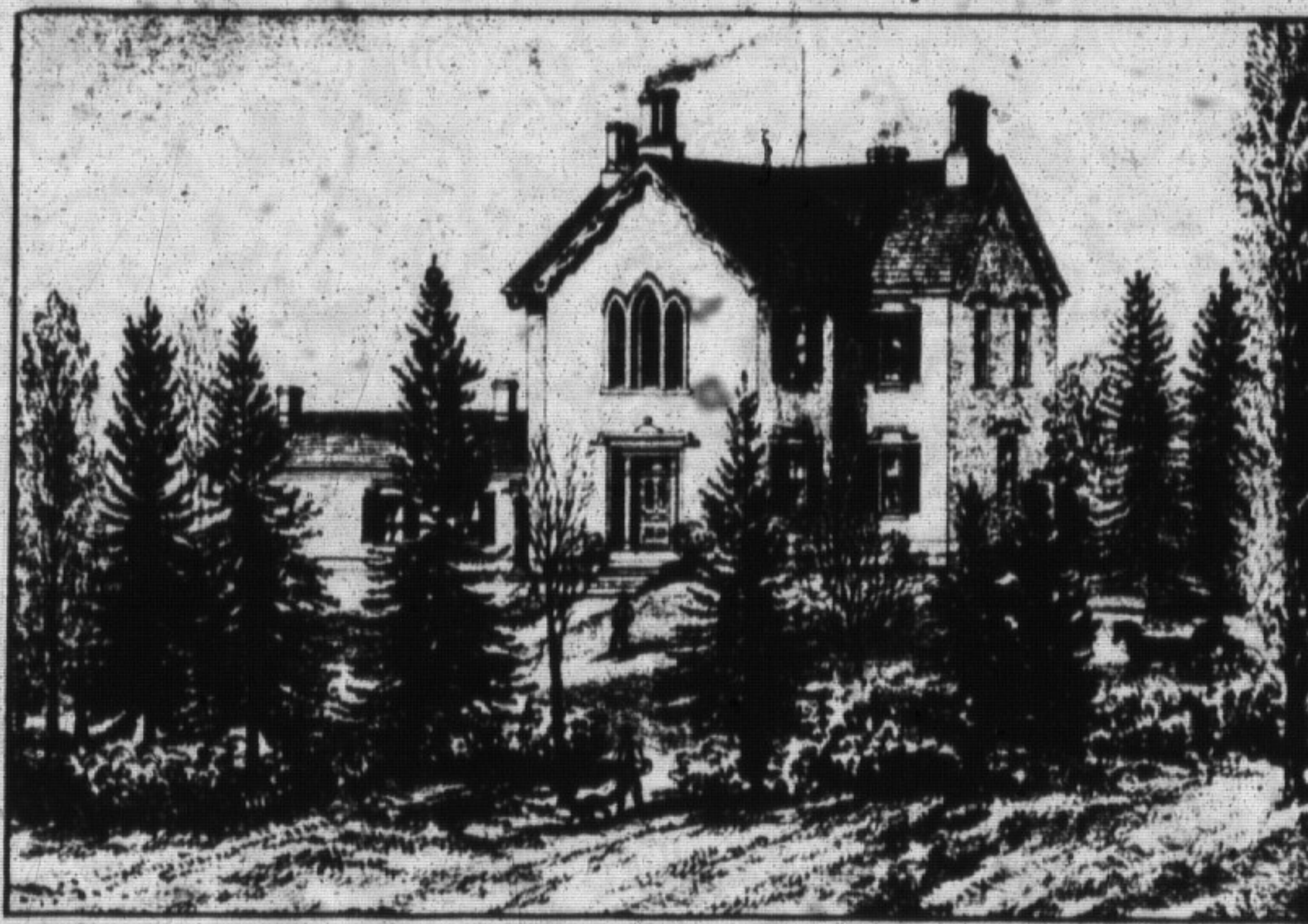
Many thanks to Ella Patterson and Rob Kelly for writing about the Dixon family farmhouse (Sprucedale).

The demolition of this grand old home was greeted with sadness by the descendants of the Dixon family living in the Milton area — now in its seventh generation. The house was completed in 1861 by John Dixon Sr., and his sons William, Jacob, and Elijah. The house was known, along with the 200-acre farm, as Sprucedale and was featured in the 1877 Halton County Atlas.

This fine old home was unequalled in the Milton area. The elegant home contained 11 rooms; included a winding black walnut staircase, pine and butternut woodwork, 13-foot ceilings, detailed plaster moldings — many pictures of which, fortunately still remain. The home was completely restored in 1962 by Glen and Mary Wilson, the only change to the original interior being the addition of a fireplace, which was adjacent to the kitchen.

The house remained in perfect condition until the winter of 1990/1991 when hydro was turned off by the owners, the house boarded up, and the inevitable vandalism began. LACAC (Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee) and the Town of Milton made many attempts to control the destruction.

John Dixon, a native of Alnwick,



SPRUCEDALE, RESIDENCE OF WILLIAM DIXON ESQ. NEAR MILTON HALTON CO. CAN. N.S. LOT 19 TRAFALGAR

Northumberland, England, was a pioneer, settling in Trafalgar Township, on this same farm, in 1821. John Dixon worked with Jasper Martin to clear the land for the Bronte Street cemetery, and the town site which was to become Milton. The Dixons and the Martins remained in business together until the latter part of the century when the Dixons sold the Hillsdale Mill (near Barrie) to Jasper Martin Jr.

In addition to their involvement in the lumber industry, the Dixon family also manufactured farm machinery at Sprucedale and acted as agents for other farm machinery companies.

John married Jane Bell (her family donated the land for Bell School at Derry Road and Bell School Line — the road later named for her family. John and Jane had seven sons, and three daughters.

The eldest son, William, (bachelor) born in 1825 took over the farm in 1872. A nephew of William (Jacob's son), Harvey Dixon, inherited the farm in 1925. Unfortunately, Sprucedale was sold out of the Dixon family in an estate sale after Harvey's death in 1960.

John Dixon was a school trustee on the first Milton School Board which led to the building of Milton's first log school. Sons Thomas and Elijah practiced law in Milton, (Bastedo & Dixon, and Matheson & Dixon); Thomas later moving to Walkerton, Elijah (bachelor) served as a founding trustee of the Methodist Church, now St. Paul's United Church; was president of Milton Fair; Past Master of the Masonic Lodge; and served as president of Milton Fair in the '50s. Many of Halton's finest farms were developed and farmed

by the Dixon family. Some descendants still live on and operate family farms in Milton.

Children of John and Jane married into families by the names of Ford, Forrest, Alton, Storey, Featherstone, and MacKay. Many of their descendants still live in the Milton area.

As Ella Patterson noted, land was given by the Dixon family to the Township of Trafalgar as the Given Road (now Main Street East) between the Third and Fourth Lines (now Thompson Road and James Snow Parkway).

John Dixon Jr. married Matilda Ford and farmed on the fourth and fifth Lines of Trafalgar Township, and later (1885) purchased Limestone Hall on Walker's Line in Nelson Township for his son, William A. Dixon. William's sons, Lorne and Guy, along with Lorne's family, farmed at Limestone Hall until 1961. Lorne's descendants live on land overlooking Limestone Hall farm.

The Dixon family sincerely thank LACAC, especially Doug Griggs, Colin Best, Bruce Attenborough, and Tom Crozier for their tireless efforts to have the old home designated and preserved as a historical landmark. Also thanks to the Town of Milton for their efforts to have Sprucedale saved from demolition.

Perhaps Sprucedale's loss was not in vain — let's all get behind our LACAC committee with adequate funding and encouragement to ensure that Milton does not lose anymore of its historical landmarks.

**Isobel Ruth Dixon Taylor**  
**William Robert Dixon**  
(Children of Lorne Dixon)  
R R 2 Milton



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