

# No opera graced the stage at Campellville Emporium

August 31 was the 20th anniversary of a major \$250,000 renovation to The Opera Emporium. The building was given its new name at that time. It doesn't appear that there was opera performed there at any time, but there was entertainment provided upstairs in the early years. The stage and lighting bar still remains.

In the early years, the 1920s and 1930s, The Campellville Athletic Association scheduled basketball games upstairs for a short time in the winter months.

A dentist also carried on a business for a period of time. It was used as a public gathering place for meetings and sessions of court and hosted travelling minstrel, theatre and medicine shows.

This building was constructed by Fred Garrett and Colin McPhail in 1920. Prior to this these two men operated a small shop in the building located immediately north, 12 Main Street, also owned by Fred Garrett, and now known as Cranberry Hill Kitchen. This store is thought to have been on the corner property prior to the construction of the new building, and then moved.

The foundation stone, as well as the beams and lumber for the new store, came from the Abrey Mill, which was dismantled for this purpose. The mill was located just west of the Fourth Line on the north side of the Third Sideroad near the creek. This property is now owned by John and Catherine Moore.

The Opera Emporium property was

## Around Campellville

with GERRY BROOKS



originally owned by the John Campbell Family, and sold to the Wheelihans before being purchased by Messieurs Garrett and McPhail, who were brothers in law. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Norrish bought the building in 1935, with his brother Cliff, and operated the business until 1946.

Arnold Cantelon then purchased the building for \$7,000 and sold it in 1948 for \$9,500 to John Kingshott, who in turn sold it the same year to Luella Purdy for \$10,500. The Purdy family operated the business until 1965, selling to Anna and George Goldstraw, who sold in 1968 to Curtis and Shirley Baker.

It was Shirley Baker who first introduced the ice cream shop which has been so popular for tourists over these past 20 five years.

After the Bakers, the store was owned by Alexander Hacker, who with his partner Anna Spencer, were responsible for the renovations 20 years ago. Munro Smith bought the store in 1978. The property is now owned by Lou DeFabrizio of Campellville, who purchased it in 1989.

The building has served mainly as

a general store and gift shop for many years. In recent years there has also been a tea room, which is currently operated by Campellville residents Geoff and June Megretton.

An interesting innovation has been the bake shop located on the main floor, which has developed a steady business supported by tourists and local residents alike who enjoy a variety of fresh home made breads, pies and pastries.

This business is owned and operated by John Glasgow, who also owns Long Lane Orchards. There continue to be antiques for sale downstairs, and a beautiful gift shop on the top floor. For many years Phyllis Moore sold antiques here. She was the first dealer in the village. There are now close to 30 antiques shops in Campellville.

Once again the Campellville Opera Emporium is for sale.

We have a new post mistress in the village. I was pleased to attend the reception welcoming Ann Gervais to town. Mrs. Gervais has been with Canada Post since 1987, and most recently located in the Rockwood Post Office, where she held the position of part-time assistant post mistress. Mrs. Gervais lives in Rockwood with her husband and is expecting her fourth child in early November.

The present post office was opened in 1965, in the midst of a postal strike. For the first 10 years there was no phone in this building,

which kept Mrs. Agnew running back and forth with messages from her home at 73 Campbell Avenue East. Her husband Doug was the postmaster at the time.

The property had previously been owned by Bob Early's garage, and cars were parked on this lot. During the First World War there was a drill shed there. They drilled the troops, not for oil.

The first post office was located in William Campbell's house, at 37 Campbell Avenue West, in 1850. This home is now owned by Andrew and Audrey Mead. Another location was Robena Garrett's home, at 16 Main Street North, from 1912 until 1958.

Mary Norrish (nee McPhedran) passed away peacefully at home in her 91st year after a brief illness on Thursday, Aug. 11.

Mrs. Norrish and her twin sister Kathryn McPhedran lived together, and were born on the McPhedran family farm just north of Brookville School. This house was built by their grandfather, whose father bought the property as Crown land. The farm is now owned by Mark and Gaille Lieberthal.

Mrs. Norrish, as a young lady, taught at S.S. 3 Nassagaweya from 1925 to 1928, the school the twins attended as young girls. She then taught at S.S. 9 School for seven years before her marriage to Stanley Norrish. They lived on the Norrish farm, located on the west side of the

Second Line just north of the Twentieth Sideroad.

Here they farmed for many years and raised their two children, Ian and Kathryn. Mrs. Norrish sold the farm in 1976 to Peter Broadhurst, after the death of her husband.

The farm is now owned by Connie Nicholls, who has lived there since 1987. The Norrish family was one of the most prominent in early Nassagaweya.

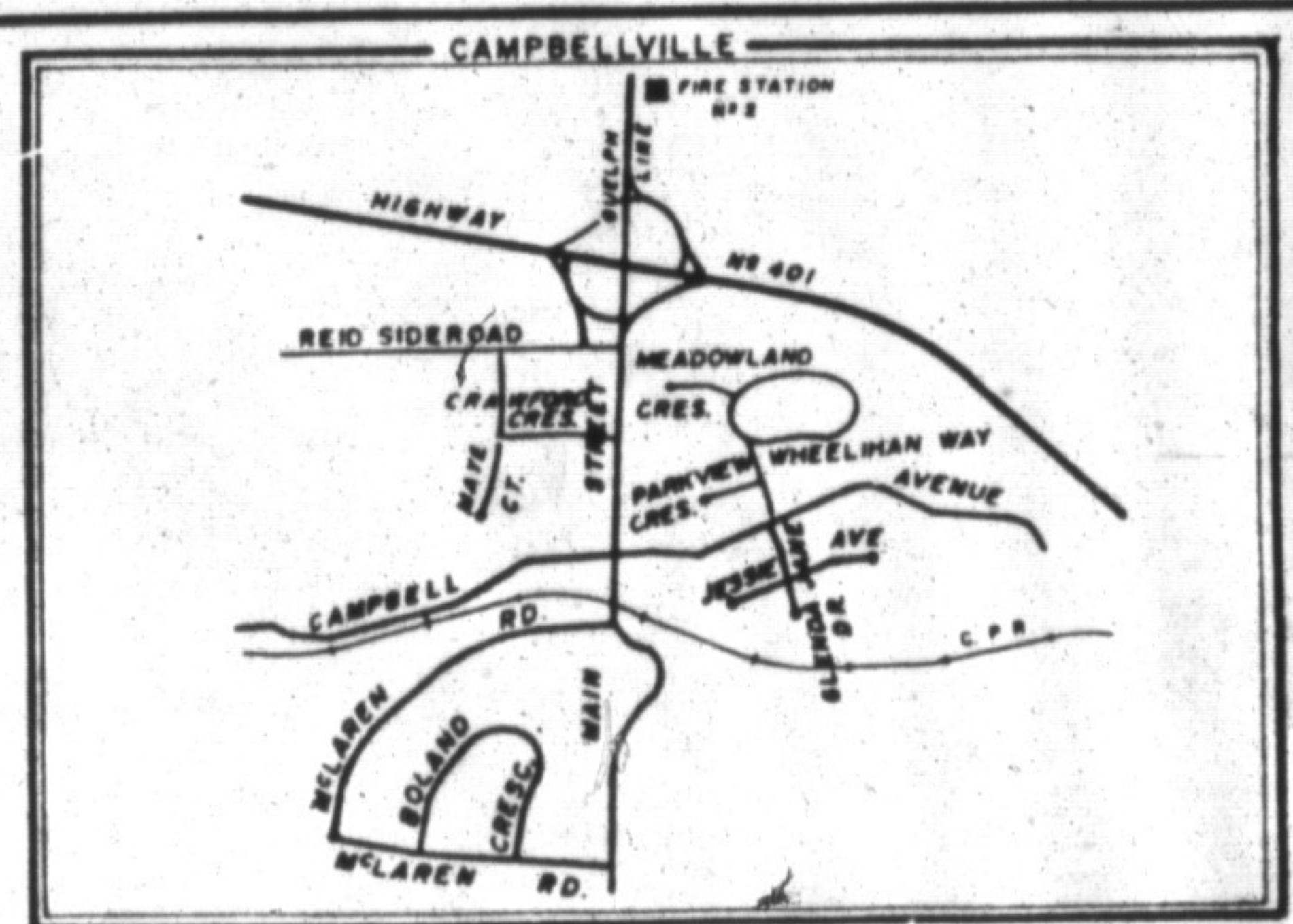
The sisters shared a love of farming. They remained active, up until Mary's death, in the Nassagaweya Women's Institute and Ebenezer United Church. They were volunteers at the senior centre in Guelph, where they would go regularly to comfort the elderly.

Both travelled throughout much of North America. In celebration of their 80th birthday they travelled through the Northwest Territories.

On November 18, 1903 Doctor Letitia Meade from Haltonville attended the birth. Doctor Meade, also known as Doctor Sirrs, was said to be only the second female doctor in Ontario, having graduated from the University of Toronto.

She lived on the east side of the Guelph Line in the second house north of the Fifteenth Sideroad. This home was purchased by her mother Mary Meade in 1881. Doctor Sirrs lived in the house, along with her son Elmer Jefferson Sirrs, until her death. The house was sold by the estate of Elmer Jefferson Sirrs in 1959. The home is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Foster.

# Campbellville



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