



'We must build'

Without costumes and with few props, the members of Les Crefins brought the history of the area's French speaking people to vivid life last week. Here

members of the cast kneel in prayer while the central figure of many an old French community, the priest, offers guidance.

Staff photo

Planners do not want Wyebridge development

No further development should occur in Wyebridge because of severe environmental constraints in the area. That is the major recommendation of the Wyebridge Secondary Plan recently released and the subject of a public meeting in that hamlet tomorrow.

Wyebridge residents will have the opportunity to discuss with planners Ainley and Associates their recommendations for the future of the area. The public meeting gets underway at 8 p.m. at the Wyebridge Community Centre.

According to Susan Robillard, who assisted on the preparation of the secondary plan, all existing land uses have been recognized in the secondary plan but the existence of the Wye River and the Wye Marsh, both environmentally sensitive areas, necessitated the imposition of development restrictions on the east side of Hwy. 27.

In this area, says the report, soils drain poorly and remain wet most of the year because of an impervious layer of clay located a mere two feet beneath the surface. Septic tanks drain poorly in this area and extensive soil and water testing is a pre-requisite to considering any further

development. Because such testing is costly, it would have to be undertaken by the developer as Tiny Township has not the resources to undertake this project.

Similarly, the fact that Wyebridge sits on the Wye River floodplain poses possible flooding problems. The Ministry of Natural Resources has insisted that extensive floodplain mapping be done before any development gets its approval.

Again it's a costly venture which few developers would undertake because the development possible doesn't warrant the extensive costs.

Pollution of water possible

Flooding of the river, the poorly drained soils and the possible existence of a high water table could at sometime result in pollution of the groundwater, as all establishments in the town use septic systems. This in turn could have serious effects on the marsh into which the Wye River drains. Again the various government ministries insist on a study of the impacts of any development on the marsh before they give their approval.

Then too, population projections forecast a

minimal growth in population to approximately 300 by 1991 from the present 190. The empty lots now available and the possibility of 14 lots in a subdivision which has been approved in principle for the southern edge of the hamlet would accommodate any future growth. Development in excess of what is predicted should be channelled into areas as Wyevale and Perkinsfield which have a surplus of land suitable for development.

"Wyebridge will likely remain a small hamlet - it isn't really suitable for further development," summarized Ms. Robillard.

A commercial establishment, already approved in principle by Tiny Council, has been recognized in the northwest part of Wyebridge. A ten acre park, which may house a new ball diamond will be located across the road from the community centre and only one subdivision, on Concession One will be developed.

Although soils west of the highway could stand development, Robillard points out strip development along Hwy. 27 has cut these lands off from access and a major bridge at great expense would have to be constructed.

Les Crefins examine Penetanguishene history

by Bill Schiller

Les Crefins, a group of French student actors from both Ontario and Quebec brought Penetanguishene's history to life on the stage last week.

The group's name, Les Crefins, loosely translates as "the show-offs"—and the troupe had lots of talent and insight to "show-off" to appreciative audiences with their play, "D'une Concession A L'autre" (From One Concession to Another).

The theatrical presentation traced the story of North Simcoe from its settling to the modern era, and was coloured throughout with entertaining vignettes gathered during 14 days of intense research during July.

"The play just didn't exist a short while ago," said Crefins director John Van Burek, a teacher at York University's Glendon College. "We researched, wrote and staged it within five and a half weeks."

The apparent haste of the production should not be misleading—the play was polished from beginning to end, the result of 12-14 hours of work every day until the job was done. In fact the final touches were put on the production within three hours of curtain time on opening night.

"It was pretty wild," Van Burek confided. This is the second year Glendon College has embarked on a summer theatre course, but the first time efforts have been directed towards the production of a play.

The seven players were selected after responding to advertisements for the course. Van Burek interviewed the respondents himself and made the selection.

"I wasn't looking for a n y c o m m o n denominator," he said. "Actually I was looking for a good mixture of personalities."

As a result, the individual members of the troupe had not met each other until they converged on Penetanguishene. It was a learning experience of both personal and dramatic proportions.

Van Burek called the entire enterprise a "collective creation." "We simply started without a play—with nothing—and were faced with the problem of making our own."

The making of a play The project began with research, largely interviews of various Penetanguishene and Lafontaine residents.

"We did upwards of 40 interviews," the director noted, "and then came the work of listening to tapes, transcribing them and discussing them. We've all got a stack of

notes about four inches thick."

After that, Van Burek explained, the group spent night and day together, exchanging their impressions and insights on the multitude of information—and trying to put it together, trying to weave a single, unified piece out of so many different facts and remembrances.

The fact finding could not have been done without the valuable assistance of many local people, the Glendon teacher explained.

"One Sunday we spent hours in the old museum with Madame Picotte," he said, "looking at odds and ends, and all kinds of artifacts relating to the period of the Beck and Payette families, who, along with the Davidsons and the McGibbons, owned the big lumber mills that had such an influence on the evolution of the town. But during the depression the mills

collapsed and were never revived."

Besides focussing on these families, the play looks into the effects of Bill 17, passed in the earlier part of this century, which prohibited the teaching of French in provincial schools.

"It was a big factor in eventual assimilation," the director said.

"From what we have read and heard, it would seem that Monsignor Castex was also a big factor in the assimilation of the French in the area," Van Burek stated.

"He apparently made one famous statement about the language issue: something along the lines of, 'You only need one language to get to heaven—and that's English.' But many people still have very strong feelings about Castex. He only died in the late 60s."

The director stressed that the students always tried to be objective in

assembling the play.

No comment

"We weren't in a position to comment on the facts," he said. "We tried to accurately record our observations and render them into dramatic language. We are not from this region and do not pretend to know more about the area than those who live here."

"But I will say that there is a great deal of assimilation here, and that the bilingual schools are a contributing factor to that assimilation. Let's face it—you get the

feeling that it takes a lot for the young people here to keep up their French."

The title of the play is talking about more than just "concession" roads and the growth of a settlement—but about the string of cultural concessions throughout the years that have reduced the "French-factor" in Penetanguishene.

"It's a real concern here, as you know," Van Burek said, "especially among the schools."

Van Burek attributed the success of the production to a number of

factors: the energy and enthusiasm of the students themselves, le Bureau des Affaires Franco-Ontariennes who financially supported the venture, and the helpful people of Penetanguishene and Lafontaine.

"Yvonne Gagnier, the people at All Saints Parish who donated their hall. Le Centre d'Activites Francaises, and the helpful people at Penetanguishene's town hall—they all gave us valuable assistance," the Glendon teacher said.

In simple and direct language, without costumes and with few props, Les Crefins depended upon their own expressive gestures and imagination to bring the area's rich heritage alive.

If you missed Les Crefins, you missed a memorable experience. (Members of the troupe included: Paulette Beaulieu, Roger Besner, Suzanne Champagne, Victor Dupuis, Paulette Gagnon, Vincente Graton, Louis-Simon Lussier, Diane Picard, Marye Tanguay, and Robert Paquette.)

Blue Cross Announces

THE MOVE OF ITS KITCHENER AND AREA OFFICE

To

659 King Street East
Suite 208
Kitchener N2G 2M4
Tel: (519) 578-4700



Graeme Hingston
District Supervisor
... will be pleased to show you or your employee group the health plan, or combination of plans, which provide the most complete coverage for your extra health care requirements.

ONTARIO BLUE CROSS

"It's Fashions"

presents

Back to School Savings

10% OFF

With Students Card plus

Our "TwoFer" Sale

Levi Denim (reg. & slim) 8 - 12
\$14.95 2 For \$28.

Levi Cords (reg. or slim) 8 - 12
\$15.95 2 For \$30.

Prewashed Levi's Sr. boys'
\$19.95 2 For \$38.

Lee Shirts (8 - 20)
\$11.95 2 For \$22.

"It's Fashions"

40 Queen St. W., Elmvale. 322-3031



TRUCKS! TRUCKS! TRUCKS!

We've got 17 New Ford Pickups in Stock

and we've got to move them. Now is the time to make the deal you've been waiting for on the pickup you want. Drop in today.

BOURGEOIS MOTORS LTD.

CORNER OF HUGEL AVE. & MIDLAND AVE., MIDLAND
526-2278