

# Black Creek Pioneer Christmas Excitement For All

Preparations for Christmas now taking place at Black Creek Pioneer Village illustrate for visitors the considerable differences in life styles which existed between the early pioneers and the established settlers of the 1867 period.



Four of the village houses, as well as the school, inn and church, will be used to point out the differences in preparations and decorations which resulted from the settlers' varied ethnic origins, religions, and varying degrees

of social status and prosperity. In order to put these Christmas activities in perspective, visitors should remember that the modern day conception of a "pioneer-style" Christmas — complete with a lavish "grooming board" — applied to only a few wealthy city residents and did not become commonplace until late Victorian times. This concept does not apply to the simpler lives of the Black Creek residents.

For example, in the settler's first log cabin, Christmas was merely a break in the struggle for survival through the long cold winter. The settlers who were of Pennsylvania-German origin, did all their cooking on the open hearth of the fireplace, and meat — hopefully a wild goose for Christmas — was cut and stewed up in the large, iron, "gypsy" pot.

Corn bread was baked daily in an iron bake pot and cookies were made on an iron griddle. Gifts were practical and homemade, such as warm mittens and socks,

and the father might whittle a small toy for his children. Probably the only Christmas decoration was a small tree hung with apples, following the old German custom.

The settler's second house at Black Creek shows the tremendous progress made by the settlers by the period of 1832. The Christmas Tree stood in the kitchen—the heart of the home—and was decorated with sugar cookies, dried apple rings and brightly dyed bits of wool. Filling the room was the aroma of mince-meat, fancy breads, puddings and a turkey which was being roasted in a reflector oven.

Gifts included a new towel for mother, skates for the boys and father, and a doll and fancy handkerchief for the girls.

An entirely different atmosphere prevails in the Burwick, or gentleman's house at the village. Set in 1844, its furniture includes imported items and reflects English styles as do the

tasteful Christmas Decorations.

Wreaths and swags of evergreens are brightened with high bush cranberries and adorn the mantels and stair railing, while a kissing ball of evergreen wrapped around a cluster of apples provides the "mistletoe." A large variety of foods including turkey, duck, roast beef, and many types of vegetables were prepared to be served in the gracious dining room.

Homemade gifts of pomanders and fancy cakes accompany store-bought presents such as dolls, a rocking horse and silk yard goods. No Christmas Tree is present in the English home since this custom was not adopted from the Germans until 1849 when Albert Queen Victoria's consort, introduced it and English newspapers spread the story.

Christmas in an artisan's home is represented at the village by the home of the shoemaker, Daniel Flynn, which is set in the period of 1858. A single candle burns in the window in hopes that a priest will come by to

celebrate a Mass, and a small, homemade creche adorns the parlour of the home. Across the village, the pulpit of the Presbyterian Church is framed with boughs, ready for the service marking the holy holiday.



This Saturday and Sunday a mixed group of carolers from St. Phillips Lutheran Church in Islington will appear from time to time at the Half Way House Inn, as they stroll through the village singing Christmas tunes. Black Creek is administered by the Metro Conservation Authority, and is being developed as a crossroads community typical of those which existed in Upper Canada in the 1867 period.

## Your Legion Reports

Branch 375, Royal Canadian Legion  
By Chris Ratchford — 884-5260

### "375 Happy Gang" Performs Friday Evening

News is among the rare things for the past week. Guess everyone is beginning to hibernate for the winter and we don't blame them. One thing don't forget. There is plenty doing at ye olde Legion. Like November 17, a crew from Branch 375 took off for the wild environs of Newmarket and Branch 426. The idea was to win any and all games that we could. So what happened? We won at euchre and cribbage. Shuffleboard was a narrow win for Newmarket. The dart team just got bombed with those feathered missiles. Wednesday, November 24, starting at 2000 hours — it would be nice to see if we can take the lot. All you members, come on out and support your branch — cheer us on or just watch — it is an entertaining evening.

Friday evening socials just keep on coming and everyone has a good time. This past Friday the entertainment was in the lounge. Good crowd. The mystery winner for the evening was Bill Clow. Congratulations Bill!

Monday, November 15, was the regular general meeting. Pretty fair turnout. Let's see if we can't do better for the month of December. The members have elected a slate of officers to run the branch business. They cannot do their job if they don't get the support of all the membership. So come on fellows; pitch in and give a helping hand. See you December 20 at 2000 hours.

Saturday, November 20, members of Branch 375 sponsored a spaghetti and meatball dinner. This was followed by a evening of fun, games. Golly what a bunch of gamblers we have. Some really big time spenders. If you were a little shy about the games of chance there was music to listen to or dance — whichever your inclination. Good company. Winners for the evening were: Door prizes, Gord White, and Mr. Legion himself, Jack Sanders. These lucky people won AM-FM radios.

D. McKenzie was the lucky winner of a TV lamp. His ticket was drawn by Paul White. That Italian impresario of the kitchen, Gord Mills, then had the pleasure of drawing the next winning ticket. This was held by Lucille O'Keefe of Peterboro.

Now we were down to the serious business of auctioning off four pictures painted by George McGill. Comrade George is one of our World War I vets. Painting is his hobby and a darn good job he does of it too. Lucky claimants to these pictures were: Don Franklin, Gord Mills, Bob Walker and Maureen Mills. The auctioneer was Gord Kettledge. It has been a long time since Gord has done this kind of thing but he did a fine job. Congratulations to all winners. To anyone that couldn't come out — well you missed a fine time. Gosh we nearly forgot to tell you that there was another big winner. This time on the hockey pool. Congratulations to Marsh Thompson.

Don't forget ladies and gentlemen that Friday is a great night for members of Branch 375 Ladies Auxiliary. With great expense we have been fortunate to get "375 Happy Gang" for an NEWMARKET — Two World War I comrades-in-arms, who lived within 30 miles of each other for 55 years but met last in a military hospital in Aldershot, England, in 1918, met again last week in hospital here. Bob Bunn of Newmarket and Ross Peters of Georgina Island both served in the 127th Battalion overseas in that conflict. NOBLETON — Albert Archibald, 51, of Bond Head, was killed November 8 when he was thrown from his car during a head-on collision on Highway 27 near here and was run over by a passing automobile.

## ELGIN MILLS - JEFFERSON

CORRESPONDENT, LEONARD LOMAS  
Telephone 884-3000

**Church News**  
The service at 10:30 am at St. John's Anglican Church on Sunday will be a celebration of Holy Communion. The "Togetherness Session" at 7:30 will feature the film "Canaan In Germany", which presents the story of the sisters of a Lutheran convent. The Mixed Blessings will sing along with the groups from St. Paul's, Newmarket and the Church of the Transfiguration.

### Reduce Speed Elgin Mills East

Monday, September 27, Richmond Hill Council reduced the speed limit on Elgin Mills Road between Yonge and Bathurst Streets to 30 miles per hour, in response to a request from residents on that road, who were concerned about the safety of themselves and their children, as well as about the noise of heavy trucks. Trucks were banned except for local deliveries.

At its November 15 meeting, council accepted the recommendation of its transportation committee, after it had examined the speed limit and truck traffic on Elgin Mills Road east of Yonge, that the 30 mph speed limit be continued eastward from Yonge to Bayview Avenue. In both cases the speed limit has been 35 mph.

## Alfred LeMasurier Scares Off Thieves

Two would-be thieves received a startling reception from Alfred LeMasurier, a resident of Jane Street north of the Aurora Sideroad in King Township, when they attempted a daylight break-in at his home November 11.

When Mr. LeMasurier saw the men approaching the back of the house at about 10:30 am, he called police and stood waiting with revolver in hand. As the men broke in, they found themselves looking down the barrel of Mr. LeMasurier's gun. They fled as the home owner fired several shots in their general direction and were apprehended within minutes by York Regional Police Sgt. William Langman and Constable Mike Moran.

Arrested and charged with three counts of break, enter and theft were Stanley Richard Davison, 30, Queensdale Avenue, Toronto, and Roderick Ewen Slessor, 24, Huron Street, Toronto. Two of the charges involve break-ins at Mr. LeMasurier's and the other at Unionville.

Mr. LeMasurier served as reeve of Markham Township in the 1950's, on King Township's planning board for eight years and also on the township's committee of adjustment.

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297	887-5877
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438	887-5877
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476	722-3223
478	895-1221
499	887-5877
594	939-2222
640	887-5877
674	893-1131
722	722-3223
727	727-3114
749	893-1131
773	884-9151
775	895-1221
832	884-9151
833	727-3114
851	893-1131
857	893-1131
859	727-3114
881	884-9151
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