

Preserving the past

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Iler gave about 30 members of the public a presentation at the Essex Community Centre about the history of the town and how the group plans to work on preserving it.

Records and artifacts dating back well into the 19th century were on display,

and Iler's presentation included photos from an era that few Essex residents would still remember.

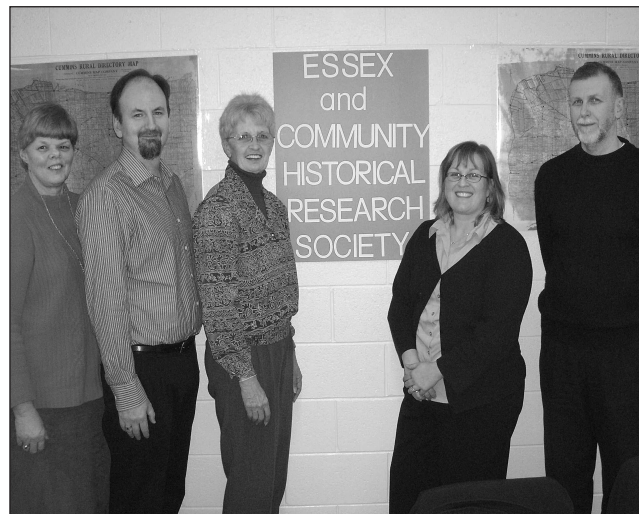
Examples of old-time farming, historic buildings and churches were a few of the items preserved in black and white photos that showed the roots of the town.

"Showing you just a few

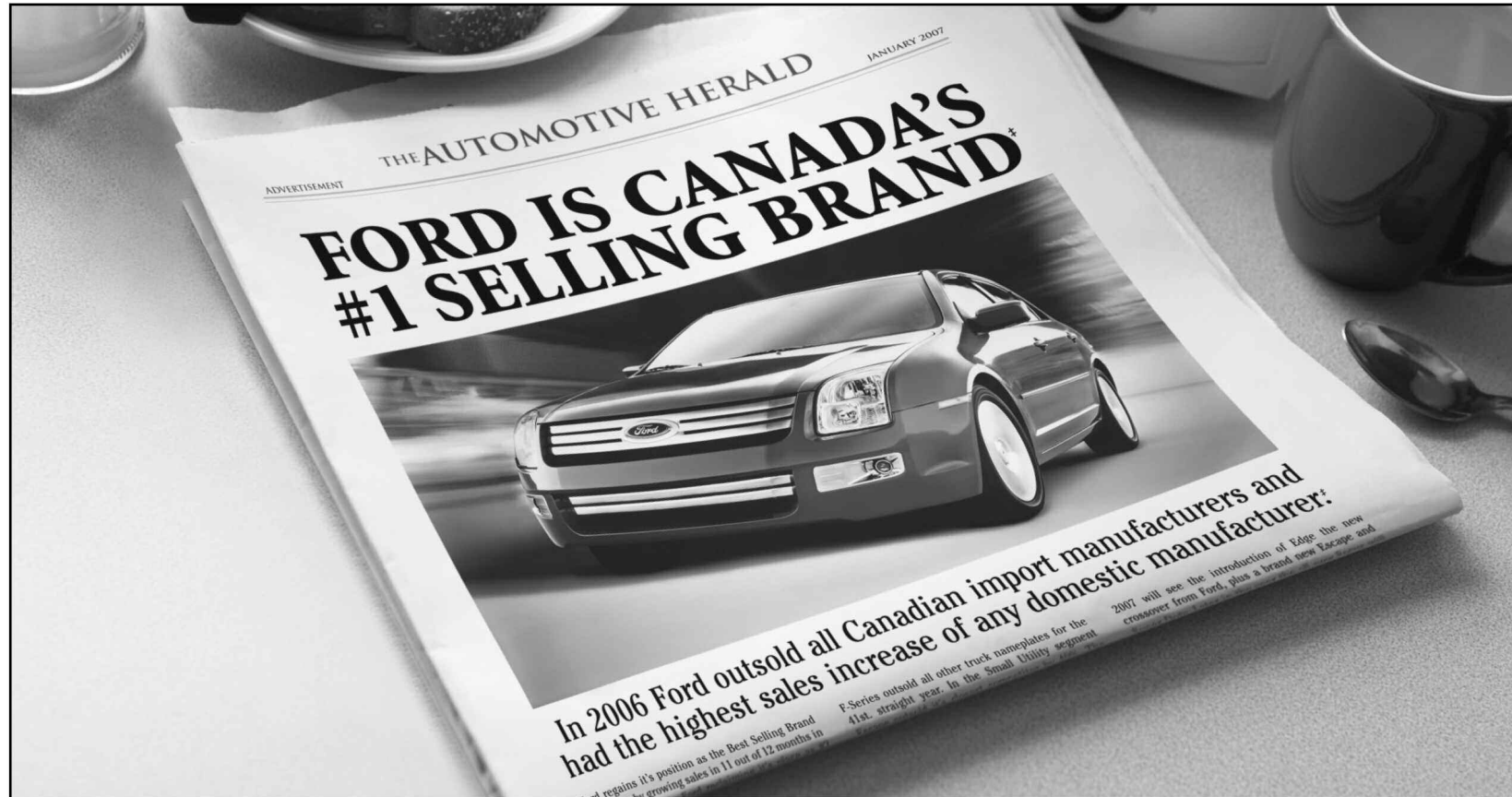
old pictures, you can see a reason why we need this type of group," Iler told the audience. "To help preserve our roots for future generations to follow."

OHS vice president Ken Turner said Essex is long overdue to have a central repository for historic documents and artifacts.

"This would be a good



Essex and Community Historical Research Society members take a minute to pose for photos during their inaugural meeting last week. The group applied for membership to the Ontario Historical Society, which will pave the way for grant and funding opportunities to better serve the researchers. From left: ECHRS vice president Judy Ward, director Arthur Rhyno, president Linda Iler, secretary Laurie Brett and treasurer Brian Sweetman.



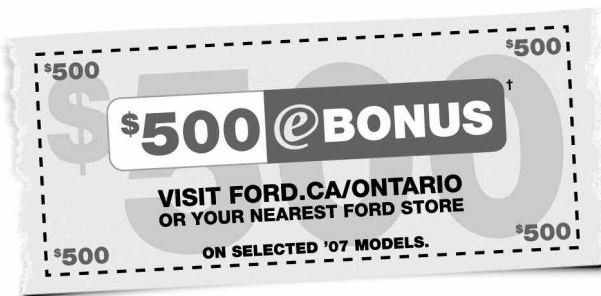
starting point," he said. "So many times I've seen an elderly person die and they have an attic full of wonderful pictures and documents that their family might not be interested in. If there's a place like this someone could take them to, it's better than being in an attic or thrown away."

The ECHRS is looking for old artifacts and records about the town of Essex and surrounding area, as well as new members. The annual membership fee is \$25.

So far, Iler said the group has received donations of old books from both local families and the South Western Ontario Historical Council.

"The drive is there and people are letting us know the stuff is available," Iler said. "I think we're heading in the right direction."

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Cost kills name change debate

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In November 2005, the previous council was advised that it would cost about \$50,000 to change the legal name, road signs and town stationery.

Still, Voakes maintained that there is a division between the north and south ends of the municipality and his initiative to look at changing the name was an attempt to unify the area.

"I still wrestle with how we initiate council to extinguish that divide," Voakes said. "I put it forward and it did stimulate some conversation. I don't know if it would've helped the problem, but as a whole we looked at it."

Innes said people he spoke with in Harrow told him the name change "is not going to change anything" regarding a rift in the municipality.

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