

Landmark destroyed

Planing Mill dated before 1880

On Saturday, April 16, 1983, the Unionville Planing Mill, at the corner of Victoria Avenue and Main Street, burned to the ground. The wooden structure, which has operated as a business for over 105 years, was turned to charcoal and ash in a matter of minutes.

For some of the younger members of the community, the event probably passed with little interest. However, for the older members of Unionville, the fire was indeed a sad event. Not only was the Mill once a place of employment for many families, but it epitomized perhaps better than any other historical site, the origins of Unionville.

In 1870, Robert Harrington, a carpenter by trade, moved to Unionville. Some two years later in 1872, he rented the Mill from Mr. Aiken and eventually purchased the business on Nov. 17, 1881. Both his sons, De and George, worked in the Mill as boys. On April 1, 1897, they leased the Mill from their father. Several years later De bought out George's share and ran the business alone from 1900 to 1932.

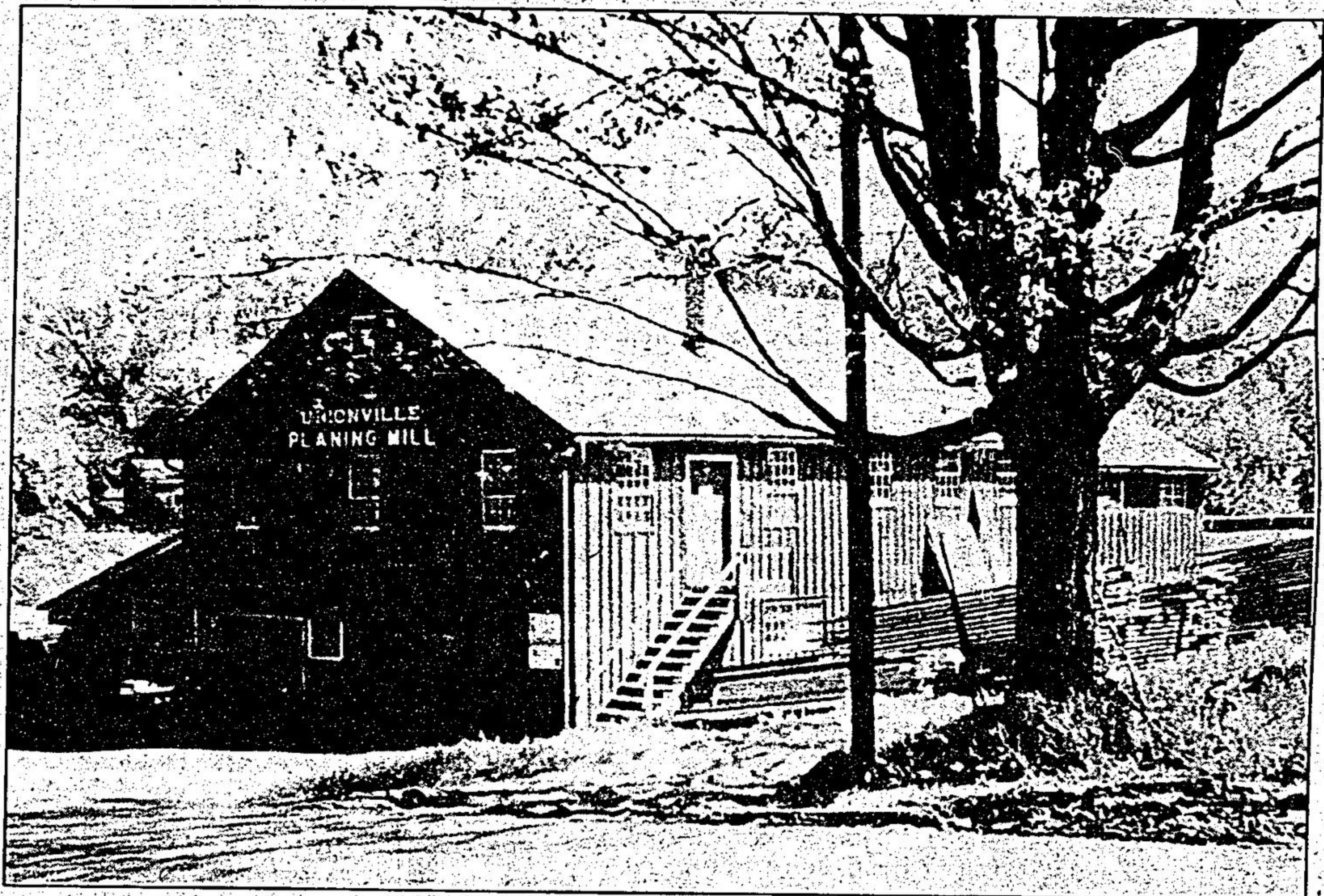
The following description of the Mill at its highest point of activity, was kindly provided by Grace Harrington, granddaughter of Robert Harrington, daughter of De Harrington:

"The Mill was structured in two levels with a stairway running up the outside of the building. The upper level housed the work tables where sash and doors were made. The molding for each door was also done in this area and the planing of lumber. Other activities on the upper level involved splitting the lumber into the required widths and the use of a fine vertical saw to make trim for houses in the area.

Downstairs on the main floor, machinery for cutting veranda pillars and heavy lumber was situated. This was also the location for the steam furnace that ran on sawdust or coal.

To find the lumber, De would make occasional trips to Huntsville and select what he needed. It would be shipped by carload to Unionville and with help of horses provided by Uncle Weatherill, it would be taken down to the Mill."

In 1928 De sold the Mill to his brother's son Arthur, but ran it until 1932. Arthur



A tragic fire earlier this year destroyed the Unionville Planing Mill seen here in its heyday.

continued the tradition until it finally passed out of the Harrington Family in 1965, when it was purchased by Alec Giles.

With the burning of the Planing Mill, a large part of the history of Unionville has been lost. It has become a memory in the minds of those old enough to remember, and a matter of interest for the history books.

Pony contest asks riding skill, ability

An exciting event is taking place north of the road leading to the library just after the parade is over. Gymkhana is a competition for children and their non-thoroughbred ponies combining riding skill and athletic ability on the part of the rider, and speed and a good deal of co-operation from the pony.

Organizer Dave Moores expects 25 to 30 riders competing in two classes: Novice, for children 11 years of age and under, and an Open Category for children 16 years old and under.

Each horse and rider may enter timed events such as the Sock Race, the Barrel Race, Pole Bending and the Keyhole Race. Some of the more "interesting" competitions include: the Barrel Crawl, where the rider must dismount and crawl through a barrel while not letting go of the pony's reins, switch hands, remount and cross the finish line.

In the Apple Bobbing, the rider must dismount, bob for an apple in a tub of water, remount and ride to the finish line while retaining possession of the apple.

The Sack Race provides a different challenge. The contestant must ride to the end of the arena, get into a sack and hop back to the finish line leading his or her pony. These last events usually result in a great many stray ponies and apples. All contestants must enter the Showmanship Competition where the riders and ponies are judged for appearance.

All competitions have ribbons and cash prizes awarded for the first five places. Entry fee is \$1 per event and entries are accepted up to the time of the competition.

For an action-packed time at the festival make sure you attend the Gymkhana Competition at the library.

Child's Eye View

He'd make some changes in running the Festival

IF I RAN THE FESTIVAL

If I ran the festival the whole world would come.

Well, first of all, all the games would be free. Talking about games, some of them are Pin the tail on the Donkey, Fish Pond and Baseball Dunk.

At my festival there would not be so many games because the kids would stay at the games and not go to see the rest of the festival. Well now I have to move on.

Secondly, the rides I would like to have if I ran the festival are Pony rides, float rides and the horse carriage rides. If I put too much rides it would take up all the space.

Thirdly, I would like to talk to you about the food and candy which is going to be free, and also the things that are going to be sold but you are going to have to pay for that.

The food I am going to have is hot-dogs, pop, hamburgers, and ice cream. The candies I am going to have is cottoncandy, toffee and candy apples.

The things that are going to be sold are mugs, plates, and many more things. That is how my festival is going to be run.

Polly Moncada,
Grade 5
Unionville P.



Resident honored

Residents of Unionville and Unionville Festival Committee were deeply saddened last fall with the passing of Clare Ingram, a long-term Unionville resident and one of the original founders of the Festival Committee. Seen in this photo taken at last year's celebration where Clare and Ruth Ingram were honored for their community work, is Glenn Crosby, former Festival Committee Chairman, and MPP Don Cousens (left).