



ESQUESING
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 51, Georgetown, Ontario, Canada L7G 4T1
www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca

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January- February 2017

New Library Acton's Choice Centennial Project Completed

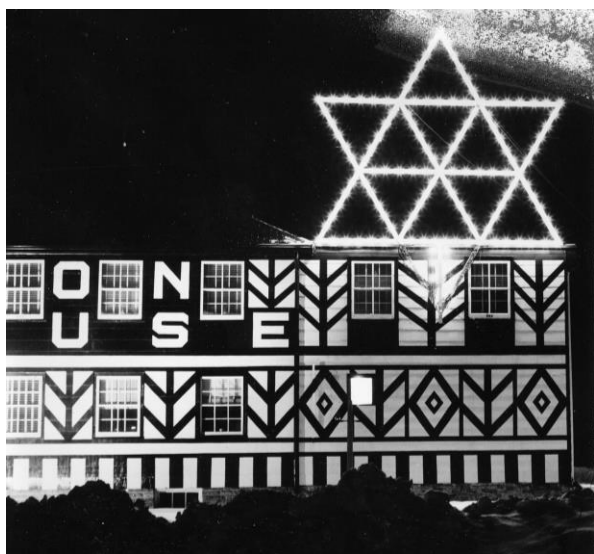
With a crowd of about 250 joining in formal dedicatory responses, Acton Centennial Library was officially opened under summer blue skies on Saturday afternoon. The happy occasion, culmination of three years of hopes and planning, brought townspeople and special guests to cluster around the fine new building for the ceremonies... -*Acton Free Press*, 7 June 1967



Acton Mayor Les Duby speaks at the official opening of Acton's Centennial Library on Saturday 3 June 1967. EHS23381

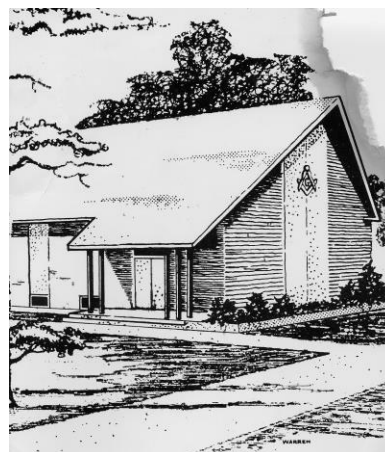


Mayor J Joseph Gibbons cuts a ribbon across the wooden bridge on the lane into Cedarvale Community Park marking the opening of Georgetown's Centennial project on Saturday 4 June 1966. EHS02508



The Centennial Maple Leaf lights up the Dominion Seed House in January 1967. EHS02821

A sketch of the planned Masonic Temple to be built (on Lindsay Court). March 1967 EHS02873



Bands, Beards, Bonfire – A Big Start to A Big Year

Flames licked at the black sky, the band struck up O Canada, and the thousand or more citizens ringing the burning mountain of Christmas trees hushed and stood at attention. It was about then Georgetown's first public celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Confederation made its point. Arranged by the Lions Club and Georgetown Council the razing of the trees Saturday evening was symbolically the raising of a curtain...



Town "Fathers" light the torch at Cedarvale Community Park for the first of 14 High School runners who carried the torch to Mayor Joseph Gibbons, who applied the flame to a tower of Christmas trees. Jan. 1967 EHS02819



Arthur and Isabel Benton sold the Limehouse store in April 1967, after over 35 years as proprietors. EHS05129



Beatrice Hilts, aged 86, helps prepare the Ballinafad United Church turkey supper in November 1967. EHS03062



Railroad warning lights installed on 4th Line in March 1967. EHS02867

‘Quiet Revolution’ Changing Face of Esquesing Twp.

For the first time in the history of Esquesing Township, the residential assessment outstripped the farming assessment, during 1966. The changing nature of the township was shown in the assessment roll for 1966 at last week’s meeting of Esquesing council, with 40.81 percent residential; 40.27 percent farming; and 18.92 percent industrial and commercial. *Herald*, 26 January 1967

Is Library Near Saturation Point?

Public and High School students take advantage of the study benefits offered by Georgetown Public Library at the corner of Market and Church Streets. The Library’s popularity has increased to such an extent recently that for the first time in its history the demand for books is threatening to overtake the supply. The board made a plea for more financial

support in a letter to Council Monday... *Herald*, 26 January 1967

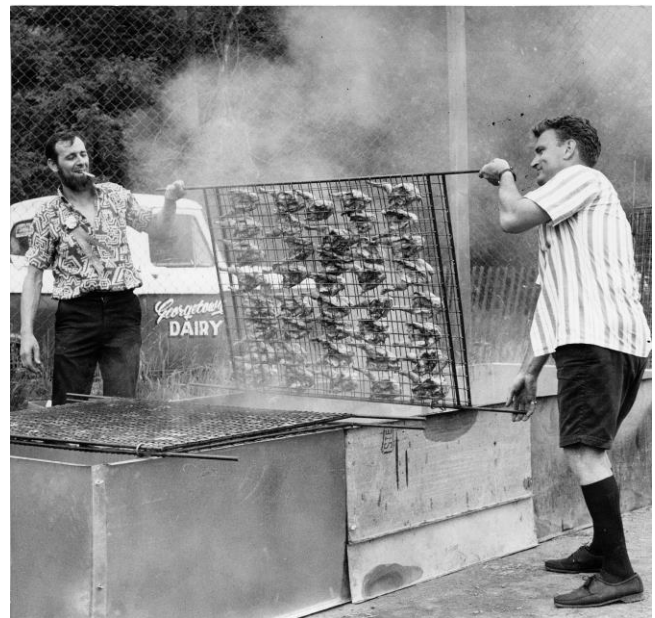
Library Opening June 3

Official opening date for Acton’s centennial library has been set for Saturday June 3rd – the day before Decoration Day. Actually, the library will open as soon as possible. The big move from the present crowded quarters in the Y.M.C.A. building, probably early in March. Presently shelving is being awaited before progress toward the move can be made. Meantime, the librarians are continuing to “pack ‘em in” at the old site. -*Acton Free Press*, 1 Feb. 1967

Jersey in Norval is “ton of gold” Producer

Rosegate Castor Charm 2, 336018, Very Good, a Jersey cow in the herd of Mac Alexander, Norval, has just been awarded a Ton of Gold certificate. In 1361 days, she produced 2035 lbs of fat. -*Acton Free Press*, 8 Feb. 1967

Halton’s County Museum at Kelso -June Official Opening for History Showcase - Canadian Champion, 8 Feb. 1967



Norval’s Centennial Day (June 24th) featured a giant barbecue where 850 people enjoyed dinner. Ross Hamilton and Trevor Moores turn the chicken. EHS03071



ESQUERING HISTORICAL SOCIETY

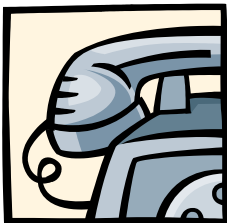
SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

2017

- Wed. 11th **CANADA'S CENTENNIAL YEAR**
 Jan. 2017 Travel back 50 years and enjoy pictures from the EHS collection from 1967, Canada's centennial year. As Centennial projects, Georgetown opened Cedarvale Park and Acton opened a brand new Library. We have images of them all!
 KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Main Street, Georgetown, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed. 8th **BOMBERS, FLYING SAUCERS AND THE AVRO ARROW**
 Feb. 2017 Dave Cook, who worked as a radio news announcer, reporter and Mississauga councillor will be presenting a variety of stories of historical interest. The exciting title of his talk alludes to the range of topics he will cover. He will have his books available for purchase.
 KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Main Street, Georgetown, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed. 8th To Be Announced
 Mar. 2017
- Wed. 12th **THE RESULT OF REBELLION: North American Political Prisoners in Van**
 April 2017 **Diemen's Land**
 Dr. John Carter will investigate the 1837-1838 Upper Canadian Rebellion/Patriot War, and their consequences and aftermath. He will reflect upon the 92 English speaking rebels who were transported to Van Diemen's Land as political prisoners, and speak about their lives in this faraway penal colony.

INVITE YOUR NEIGHBOUR TO BECOME A MEMBER!

Refreshments served from 7:00 p.m.



Stephen Blake	905 877-8251	President
Karen Hunter	905 877-7363	Treasurer
Dawn Livingstone	905 877-6506	Secretary
J. Mark Rowe	905 877-9510	Archivist
Jan Raymond	905 877-9172	Social
David Borrett	905 702-0737	Membership
Ray Denny	905 877-3890	Publications

Society Notes

INTERNET CONNECTIONS

<www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.ca>

Send your e-mail to mrowe6@sympatico.ca

EHS NEWSLETTER

John Mark Rowe prepared this newsletter with assistance from Karen Hunter and Dawn Livingstone. Submissions welcome. Please consider an electronic newsletter sent to your e-mail address. Not only will you save the Society postage, you get to see the colour pictures!

MEMBERSHIP

We had 85 members for 2016. Your membership expires in February and we are accepting your renewal now. The individual membership rate is \$20. The family or institution rate is \$25. Cheques payable to the Society can be mailed to our post box or payable by cash or cheque to our membership secretary, David Borrett at a public meeting.

ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

www.archives.gov.on.ca

EHS ARCHIVES

Executive members have been busy with many inquiries while Karen and Mark have been processing several archival donations. A McNab family history has been added to the Archives. We are looking for pictures of the former drive shed, located at the back of the Acton Baptist Church.

WEBMASTER WANTED

The EHS needs a webmaster to replace the late Ron Raffan. Our site is hosted on the Halinet system which also supports our libraries, Halton Images and Halton Hills newspapers. Speak to Mark Rowe.

HALTON-PEEL OGS

Jan. 24 – Dorothy Kew, on how to research your family history at Brampton Library.

Feb. 28th – Marian Press on Putting Your Family Tree Online at Oakville Library.

DEVEREAUX HOUSE

Open Thursdays 1-6 p.m. at 11494 Trafalgar Road, Georgetown.

STREETSVILLE HIST. SOCIETY

Feb. 09 -AGM, 7: 30 p.m.; Streetsville United Church, 274 Queen St. South.

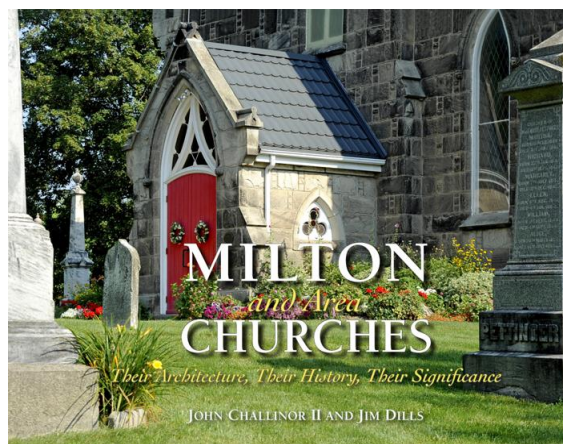
Archives are open Sundays and Wednesdays from 1 to 4 p.m. at 4415 Mississauga Road, Streetsville.

BRAMPTON HIST. SOCIETY

Heart Lake Presbyterian Church at 7:15.

MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MHS has released their latest book, *Milton and Area Churches*. The book includes churches in southern Esquesing township. It was compiled by John Challinor II and Jim Dills. It is available from their HQ at 16 James Street, Milton.



NASAGIWEYA HIST. SOCIETY

info@nasagiweyahistoricalociety.com

Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of March, April (Annual Meeting), May, June, July, August (BBQ), September, October, November (Remembrance Day), December (Christmas Potluck).

TRAFALGAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

All events at former Palermo Schoolhouse, 2431 Dundas Street West, Oakville.

<http://www.tths.ca/events.html>

HALTON HILLS SPORTS MUSEUM

Feb. 15 -Board Meeting

OPEN: Sat. 7-9 p.m. & Sunday 1-4:30 p.m. at Mold-Masters Sportsplex.

TERRA COTTA HALL

Terra Cotta Community Hall rentals:
Contact Jen Lusby at 905-702-1056.

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS NEEDED

Please consider running for election to the executive of the EHS. We need a webmaster, and a couple of extra members. Let any executive member listed on page 4, know your intentions before our February meeting.

CENTURY FARMS

The EHS would like to gather together a list of Esquesing and area farms that were recognized in 1967 as century farms.

While the *Georgetown Herald* reported 89 farms in Halton County in their September 14th edition, no list of farms has been found. Century farms were defined as being in the same family since Confederation.

To compliment this endeavour, the Society would like to know i) which original Century farms continue in the same family in 2017 and ii) to compile a new list of farms that have been held by the same family for at least 100 consecutive years up to 2017.

Here are three newspaper excerpts to get us started:

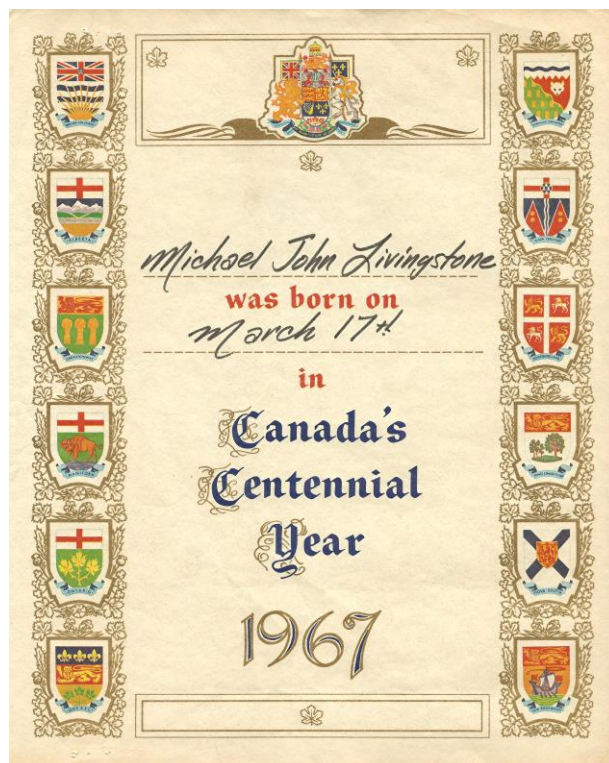
Mr. Donald Lindsay has erected a sign on No. 7 Highway at Silverwood. A “Century” sign outside his farm lane tells the story of a century in the Lindsay name. - *AFP*, 16 Aug. 1967

George Henderson is displaying his “century farm” sign outside his farm on No. 7 Highway near Silverwood. The signs have been presented to farms still in the family name after one hundred years. - *Herald*, 12 Jan. 1967

The Swackhamers have lived on the century farm on the side of Churchill’s heights long before Canada was a nation. - *AFP*, 21 June 1967

HYMN TO CANADA

Swiss-born Acton resident Herman Freuler composed “Hymn to Canada” as a tribute to his adopted country. The song was a hit at Montreal’s Expo 1967 where it was performed by the Acton Legion Choraliers.



CENTENNIAL MEMORABILIA

Dig out those 50-year old souvenirs and add them to our table of memorabilia at the January meeting!

The logo is composed of a series of diamonds, or “celebratory gems”, arranged in the shape of the iconic maple leaf. The four diamonds at the base represent the four original provinces that



formed Confederation in 1867: Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Additional diamonds extend out from the base to create nine more points—in total representing the 13 provinces and territories. It was created by Ariana Cuvin from Toronto, Ontario.

Out of the Avro Ashes - Great Expectations for Georgetown

Dawn Livingstone, Esqueing Historical Society May 2004

During the early 1960's, the sight and unique sound of an unusual type of aircraft became a familiar occurrence, and generated much excitement in the skies over Georgetown. The cigar shaped, two-seater little gyroplane had the potential to “put Georgetown on the map” and expectations were great. There were hopes that its eventual success would lead to a major industry for our town, giving possible employment for some 400 people.¹

A few days after the “crash” of the Arrow in February 1959, a small group of ex-Avro engineers decided they would work together to design and build a unique version of a VTOL (vertical take off and landing) aircraft, encouraged by research that some of them had previously been doing into the feasibility of such a machine. Georgetown had been hit hard by the closure of Avro, and a group of local businessmen had formed Georgetown Industrial Investments Ltd., an organization whose aim was to help some of the unemployed aircraft workers in the town. A Dominion Charter was quickly granted, initial financing was supplied by the new investment firm, temporary premises were found in a small building belonging to McNally Wood Products, (still located at the end of the GO station parking lot) and the little company was off and running,



The third prototype of the Avian 2-180 with Harold Kroehler as the test pilot, in May 1962. EHS08938

incorporated as a Private Company, under the name Avian Industries Limited. There was no accounting for the long hours and hard work put in by the men associated with the fledgling company, and by the sacrifices in their personal lives, made by the families of these spirited men. They were working towards reviving a very old concept in aviation, which had great possibilities for all kinds of uses literally around the whole world.

By the summer of that year, 1959, construction of their own building, one of the very first to be built on Armstrong Avenue, was well under way (now the home of Riteway Auto Collision) and by the fall, with great fanfare, the first odd looking prototype aircraft was taxied down Highway

#7 to the new Loblaw's parking lot, for its first ground trial. The aircraft was then ferried, almost secretly, in the dead of night, well covered on a flat bed truck, to a small airfield at Breslau, Ontario, from which many flight trials would take place.

There were several major hurdles to be overcome along the way, including the crash of the early prototype during an unplanned for initial flight, and the always looming

shortage of operating cash. However, the future looked positive and bright, and progress was swift. Before long, word spread, the world media were intrigued, aviation history was made and people were coming from all over the globe for a look at this new phenomenon. Seven progressive prototypes were built and always caused a stir of pride in Georgetown folk as they would watch the little aircraft fly back and forth between Armstrong Avenue and Breslau airport. Flight of the aircraft was included as part of the promotional film shown in the Ontario pavilion at Expo '67.

Individual inquiries, dealership inquiries and offers of purchase, poured in from places all around the world. The craft would be excellent for all kinds of operations, combining features of fixed wing aircraft and helicopters. Simple to fly, cheaper to operate than an automobile, capable of travelling virtually everywhere at a speed of 150 mph, the company claimed it "would open up revolutionary prospects in the world of business" and "make pleasure flying truly practical for the average man."² The Financial Post called it a "Car Plane"³ and The Weekend Magazine referred to it as "The Air Buggy."⁴ In the 1968, the purchase price was estimated to be approximately \$20,000.⁵

Things did look especially rosy after the company obtained Department of Transport Certification, in November 1968.⁶ Plans for full scale production were getting underway and the company, now known as Avian Aircraft Limited, had 119 firm orders from places like the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. After nine years of striving to produce, the work of finding financing and backing for this project was an extremely difficult one, and in the end proved impossible. Even the offering of public shares in the company failed to produce the initial \$3 million required to start up, and once again, we lost out on yet another great Canadian enterprise. In the end, in 1972, the remaining aircraft, and all the company assets were sold to businessmen from Listowel, Ontario. They then went to a company



in Alberta, and at last word, the one remaining aircraft lies in bits and pieces in the warehouse of a company in California, a broken reminder of the broken hopes and dreams of a once small Ontario town which had such great expectations.



The Avian CF-NWS-X.

References

1. Georgetown Herald, 25 March 1959
2. First company sales brochure.
3. Financial Post, 7 November 1959
4. Weekend Magazine, Vol.12, No.22, 1962.
5. Financial Post, 16 November 16, 1968
6. Georgetown Herald, 14 November 1968.

EXPECT AVIAN AUTOGYRO IN PRODUCTION SOON

Following an eight-year research and work on mini-budgets, several former A.V. Roe Canada Ltd. employees are now on the last lap to produce Canada's only flying autogyro – a plane almost forgotten in aeronautical circles. The work is being done at the Avian Aircraft plant on Armstrong Ave., Georgetown.

The plane, officially dubbed the Avian 2-180, flies with both rotors and a rear-mounted propeller. It can fly as slow as 30 mph, cruise at 100 and reach 120, although the prototype has been clocked at 147 mph.... *Georgetown Herald*, 29 June 1967