



ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.com

Vol. 45 No.2

May - June 2020

THE SPANISH FLU IN GEORGETOWN

Written by Dawn Livingstone in December 2009

Only six months ago our world seemed pre-occupied with the outbreak of the H1N1 flu, and how it would affect our lives. Thankfully, at the moment at least, that threat seems much less. But I thought it a fitting time to tell you about a flu outbreak that really and truly did play a big part in the lives of the world, of our town, and how it affected the people here at Knox [Presbyterian Church]. I am talking about the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918.

The fall and winter of 1918/1919 was a bad time in... our town and in fact the whole world. Over that period, some 50,000 Canadians died¹ from what we labelled The Spanish Flu.

The Christmas of 1918 was both a happy and a sorrowful one. The war was over and there was much rejoicing, but the flu was taking a toll on our population, and life was far from normal... There were no thanksgiving services in any town churches that fall, everything being closed for several weeks in October by the department of health. And then schools, churches and public events were closed again in December through to mid January.²

The [Knox] Sunday School had prepared for a Christmas entertainment and tea to be held in December but it could not be held until February 21 of 1919.

¹ National Archives of Canada, Internet Info on the Spanish Flu

² Georgetown Herald, December 1918

At that affair, tea was served at 6:30, followed by a programme, and it was advertised that “Santa Claus, having recovered from the flu will be present.” Admission was charged to that Christmas entertainment – 25¢ for adults, children other than those of the Sabbath School were 10¢.³



Knox Presbyterian Church, Georgetown EHS00318

The annual [Knox Presbyterian] congregational meeting for the year was held on Monday evening, January 27th, with a good attendance. It was reported that all the organizations of the church were doing well. The total income for the year 1918 had been \$8,907.00 and \$1,513 was given to missions, but it was stated that “The financial report would have been much better than it was had it not been for the fact that the Church was closed all of October, our anniversary month, and then part of December and January, the months for getting in all arrears, we were partially closed again. But on the whole, it was a very good year, and we have good reason to thank God and take courage.”⁴ I also see that despite the hardships of 1918, Knox was still able to send 16 boxes overseas to soldiers, and to pack 25 Christmas boxes for the needy.⁵

So as we enter into the time of Christmas Celebrations once again, it wouldn’t hurt to pause and remember the hardships of Christmas’s past, and that the flu really and truly can do us all a lot of harm – but we are a resilient people, and we can bounce back.

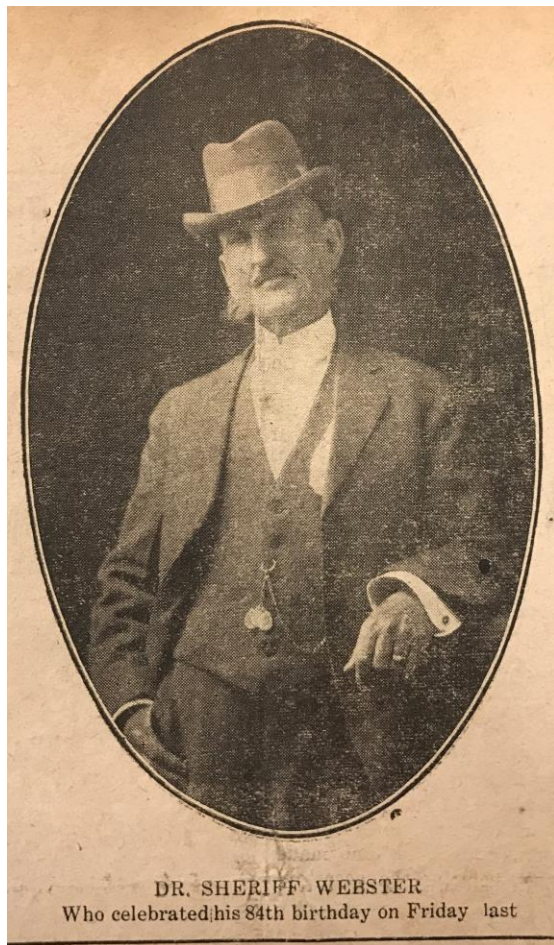
*We **are** a resilient people and as Dawn has illustrated, we can follow orders designed to save our community from disaster. Stay safe everyone but remembering the distancing rules and hopefully this will be the last pandemic in our lifetime! -This article was edited.*

³ Georgetown Herald, 12 February 1919

⁴ Georgetown Herald, 5 February 1919

⁵ Copy of Financial Statement Knox Church, 1918 (original in Esquesing Historical Archives.)

A Few Local **Essential Workers** from the Archives – To honour those working through this pandemic. Thank You



Dr. Samuel Webster (1843-1928) was a local doctor and Halton County Sheriff. *Herald* clipping 1926

Dr. Hugh Allen McCullough (1866-1956). EHS00171

Volunteer Bill Moore and the new ambulance for Georgetown -July 1970. EHS05384



Dr. Alistair Macintosh arrives at his office in May 1971. EHS04130



Georgetown Director of Nursing Mrs. C. Doupagne, Oct. 1968 EHS03410

Lenie Lenz, R.T. shows cancer therapy in operation in 1967. EHS03025



Georgetown Constable Arnold Vancief demonstrates a breathalyzer in Dec. 1970. EHS05745





ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

2020

May -June 2020 **COVID-19** -We don't have a presentation on this remarkable episode in world history because as this newsletter is published, history is still being made. Consequently, as you may have surmised, the May and June meetings for the EHS have been cancelled.

Wed. 9 Sept. 2020 **HALTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE AND GAOL**
John McDonald, local historian, returns to share his latest research. His PowerPoint presentation will tell the fascinating story about the people and events involving Halton County's Courthouse and Gaol. Some of the major trials held in Halton, and public hangings that took place, will also be discussed.
KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 116 Main St., S., Georgetown, 7:30 p.m.

Wed. 14 Oct. 2020 **PLAYGROUNDS OF HALTON**
Bill McIlveen will explore the myriad entertainment choices open to residents of Halton over the years. From swimming and dancing to drag racing and the steam era, Halton has offered many diverse and entertaining options for residents.
KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 116 Main St., S., Georgetown, 7:30 p.m.

Wed. 11 Nov. 2020 **MEMORIALS TO MILITARY SERVICE**
Richard Ruggle, local historian will attend our Remembrance Day meeting to share with us examples and stories connected with the memorials dedicated to those in our military who served our country.
KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 116 Main St., S., Georgetown, 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 2020 The Esquesing Historical Society does not have a public meeting in December.

Stephen Blake	905 877-8251	President
Steve McNamara	519 856-1242	Treasurer
Karen Hunter	905 877-7363	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
Dawn Livingstone	905 877-6506	Consultant

**INVITE YOUR
NEIGHBOUR TO
BECOME A
MEMBER!**

**Refreshments
served at 7 p.m.**

Society Notes

INTERNET CONNECTIONS

<http://esquesinghistoricalsociety.com/> Note the new website address. Send your e-mail to esquesinghs@gmail.com

EHS NEWSLETTER

John Mark Rowe prepared this newsletter. 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

It is time to renew your membership for 2020. We currently have 51 members for 2020. Our membership year runs from February. The individual membership rate is \$20. The family or institution rate is \$25. The EHS is still very happy to accept personal cheques from our members. Please note that all cheques must be made payable to "Esquesing Historical Society", fully spelled out. Membership fees can be mailed to our post box or payable by cash or cheque to our membership secretary, David Borrett at a public meeting.

CANADIANA ON-LINE

<http://online.canadiana.ca/search>

ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

www.archives.gov.on.ca

EHS ARCHIVES

Well, Covid-19 put a full stop to work in the Archives! Luckily, our digital photo collection is still accessible and some of the shelf list has been updated and a few more pictures added to Halton Images. A number of pictures were donated of Acton and some stills from the recent Netflix movie "Let it Snow," filmed in Limehouse and Glen Williams. If you've been spring cleaning during your isolation, be sure to consider the EHS as a home for your local documents and snapshots over the years.

HALTON-PEEL OGS

<https://haltonpeel.ogs.on.ca/>

The first OGS on-line meeting was held on April 26th. Check the website for details on the May meeting.

DEVEREAUX HOUSE

Ann Lawlor at ann@devereauxhouse.ca

HALTON HILLS SPORTS MUSEUM

<http://haltonhillssportsmuseum.blogspot.ca/>

The Executive members of the Halton Hills Sports Museum have decided that the 2020 Sports Hall of Fame Gala will be cancelled. *John Boyce* has been named the *Georgetown Hockey Heritage Award* winner for 2020.

Boyce won four Ontario titles with the Georgetown Raiders' intermediate team.

Boyce then helped build a strong old-timers hockey community as the main organizer for the Beaver Lumber/Sports Unlimited tournament for 25 years. At 72, Boyce continues to play three times a week.

L.M. MONTGOMERY MUSEUM

Students taking the University of Guelph course on the history of Norval made their presentations on Zoom on April 7th. They have completed some good preliminary research that can be used on the L.M. Montgomery website.

STREETSVILLE HIST. SOCIETY

The Society has cancelled all events and Archive access until July 3rd.

BRAMPTON HIST. SOCIETY

Heart Lake Presbyterian Church at 7:15. All meetings have been postponed until further notice.

MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society meets in the Waldie Blacksmith Shop at 16 James Street at 7:30 p.m. on the 3rd Thursday of the month.

June 18 - CFUW, The *100 Years, 100 Women Project*.

June 6 and July 11 – Sale of Milton Historical Society book titles – more than 30 available – at Waldie Blacksmith Shop from 9 am until 1 pm.

OAKVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

<https://www.oakvillehistory.org/>

All events are cancelled and facilities closed until July 3rd.

BURLINGTON HIST. SOCIETY

This website was not available.

NASAGIWEYA HIST. SOCIETY

info@nasagiweyahistoricalsociety.com

All events are cancelled and facilities closed until further notice.

TRAFALGAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

May 15th - Open Archives 1:30-3:30

June 19th - Open Archives 1:30-3:30

TERRA COTTA HALL

Terra Cotta Community Hall rentals:

Contact Kathy Atkinson at

terracottaeventbooking@gmail.com

The Hall is closed until further notice.

LOCAL DIGITAL RESOURCES

Our Digital World, host of Halton Hills newspapers, Halton Images and Halton News hosts newspapers from across Ontario.

You can start searching at:

<https://ourdigitalworld.net/>



**ONTARIO
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY** Since 1888

HISTORY DIGITAL ARCHIVE

The Ontario Historical Society (OHS) is excited to announce that, for the first time, the entire run of over 120 years of the Society's *Ontario History* journal is now available online. The OHS has digitized the full text of over 2,000 articles and book reviews, making the archive the largest single collection of stories about Ontario's history.

Ontario History journal, formerly called *Papers & Records*, is one of the oldest history journals in Canada, having been published continuously since 1899. The journal's archive contains a wealth of original documents and new research,

written by a "who's who" of Ontario historians, and comprises one of the most important sources for the history of the province.

Students, teachers, historians, researchers, genealogists, and anyone interested in Canadian history will benefit from digital access to back issues of the journal.

Everything from 1899 to 1915 (13 issues) and 2005 Autumn to 2018 (27 issues) is open access and free to read, the latter through our partnership with not-for-profit digital publisher and scholarly disseminator Érudit.

Please visit the *Ontario History* digital archive at <https://ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/back-issues/>.

ISABELLA PRESTON -HYBRIDIST

Isabella Preston (1881-1964) worked at the University of Guelph where she originated over 200 hybrids. In 1916 she became Canada's first women hybridist with her historic lily cross and major breakthrough in lily hybridization 'George C. Creelman'. Creelman Brothers had a knitting machine business in Georgetown and in 1890 Robertson Creelman moved to Collingwood. His son George C. Creelman later became president of the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph. She lived in Georgetown and has had Preston Street named in her honour.



7717 - Miss Isabella Preston, Horticulturist
Famous for her pioneering work with lilies,

EHS07717

The Development Plans for Peru Road

And Preserving the Socrates Center House

Milton Historical Society published an update on Peru in their Spring 2020 newsletter. Sections of the article have been reprinted here, since Peru stood at Lot 2 on the First Line, Esquesing. With regional government boundary adjustments, it is now part of the Town of Milton.

The planned major subdivision north-west of Milton has been stalled and with it plans to deal with a heritage home on the property. Since 2014, the area of town north of Steeles Avenue, south of Highway 401 between Peru Road and the original Tremaine Road has been approved for a major subdivision involving five separate builders.

Inside that huge land area sits the Socrates Center House, which was designated by the Town of Milton as a heritage building in 2017. It has been uninhabited for some time and been the topic of much discussion by neighbours and interested parties ensuring its survival.

Plans are to maintain the building, perhaps moving it to a different nearby location and making use of it. “However, the development of the area has not reached the point where construction on any homes can begin,” says Maria Smith, the senior planner for the Town of Milton. “Before any residential development can occur in Milton Heights, a number of technical matters must be addressed. This includes the construction of a section of new Tremaine Road, the relocation of a creek and the extension of water and sanitary services among others...



Socrates Center House at 94 Peru Road, Milton.
A Milton Historical Society photo.

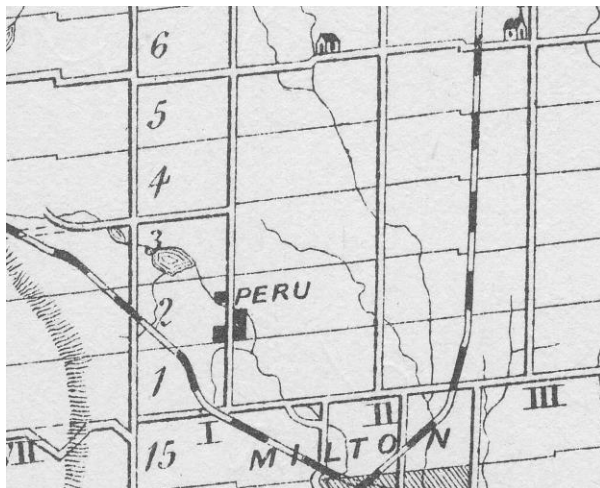
According to the designation proclamation in 2017, this house and the Center family has a number of important attributes. The Socrates Center house is a good representative example of vernacular mid-Victorian domestic architecture. It was built around 1870 and has the “L” shape which became popular in the mid to late

19th Century. Its arched gable window may have originally included detailing to emphasize its peak and its relationship to the then popular Gothic Revival style of architecture. Most of the window and door openings are original. The bay and arched windows, as well as the front entrance doors are also original. Almost all of the original exterior form of this house and many of its original internal features remain.

The Socrates Center House has a direct relationship with the Center family, who were a pioneering industrial and farming family that had a significant influence on the growth and development of the village of Peru. Socrates and his brother, William Centre, owned an ashery that was used to produce charcoal, soap and potash. William also had a tannery in Peru and Socrates was a magistrate and councillor in Milton during the 1860-1881 period. The house was owned (and likely built) by Socrates Center, but was likely occupied by his brother, William.

Various members of the Center family owned and lived at a number of different properties in the village of Peru between 1842 and 1908. Peru is the only village in Milton that grew as a consequence of industrial (and not agricultural) development. The Center brothers made a significant contribution to Peru's industrial character and development.

The Hill family sawmill that initially attracted people into this area in the early half of the 19th Century had ceased operations by the 1870s. With few other reasons for people to congregate here, the village may not have survived if it were not for the Center Brothers' ashery that produced charcoal, soap and potash and William Center's tannery during the mid to late 19th Century. This is the period between the closure of the sawmill and the opening of the brick and limestone industries in Peru and Milton Heights in the early 1880s. The Socrates Center house is the only remaining historical link to the Peru ashery.



The south-west corner of Esquesing in 1877 shows Peru, with Milton well below Steeles Avenue. The Hamilton North-Western Railway tracks still exist. Milton Heights does not yet exist. Three Sideroad heads west to the Alexander farm, now Kelso Conservation Area. On Five Sideroad is SS#1 Ligny, which is now a private residence and beyond the railway crossing on 3rd Line is Mansewood Church, now just a cemetery and plaque.

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

By William Wordsworth -1802

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with
pleasure fills,
And dances with the
daffodils.

250th Anniversary of the Birth of William Wordsworth

102nd Anniversary of Acton Horticultural Society

100th Anniversary of Georgetown Horticultural Society



P9107 - Canadian Cancer Society, Daffodil Tea
Left - Mrs. O.M. Brewster, Miss Marjory Mackenzie,
Mrs. Reg. Broomhead, Mrs. J.P. Panabaker, Mrs. R.F. Wicks
April 12, 1962