

# ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

[www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.com](http://www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.com)

Vol. 46 No. 3

September - October 2021



PHOTO: Bill Davis was elected PC party leader and premier designate in February 1971. The silhouette



## Former Premier Bill Davis Died August 8<sup>th</sup>

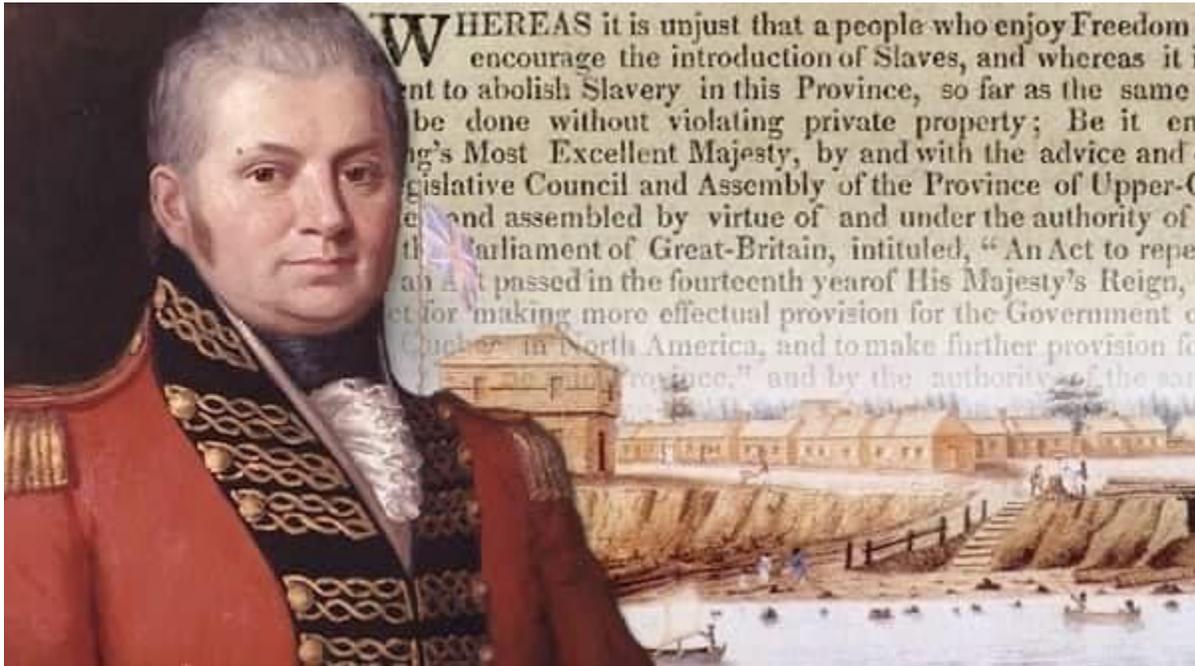
William Grenville Davis (1929-2021), the Progressive Conservative premier of Ontario for 14 years, died at his home in Brampton. He was 92.

PHOTO: Provincial Ministers Bill Davis (left) and George Kerr confer at the *Riviera* in Norval during a public meeting to explain the concept of regional government. The meeting was Thursday 14 August 1969. EHS03733



of Davis appeared on page 1 of the *Georgetown Herald* on 18 Feb. 1971. EHS03798

PHOTO: Georgetown District High School Principal J. L. Lambert shakes hands with Bill Davis after being introduced by Board chair Douglas Latimer, at the official opening of the technical wing on 12 Feb. 1963. EHS06343



## EMANCIPATION DAY – AUGUST 1<sup>st</sup>

On March 24, 2021, the House of Commons voted unanimously to officially designate August 1 Emancipation Day. It marks the actual day in 1834 that the *Slavery Abolition Act* of 1833 came into effect across the British Empire.

Simcoe was a known supporter of abolition.

"His bill was brought about by an incident — the Chloe Clooey incident," said Natasha Henry, a curriculum consultant specializing in African Canadian history.

Simcoe received word of a slave owner violently abusing his slave, a girl by the name of Chloe Clooey, on his way across the Niagara River where he went to sell her into the United States. It was said that her screams were heard by many and the matter was brought to Simcoe's attention by Peter Martin, a former slave.

"It was his impetus to introduce the bill, but it was then met by objection from a number of the members of his government," Henry said.

Many members of the legislative assembly at the time owned slaves of their own and so resisted Simcoe's urge to abolish slavery in Canada.

The resulting law was a compromise that would gradually lead to the end of enslavement. The act allowed slave owners to maintain the workforce they already had — who would remain enslaved until their death.

Owners were not allowed to purchase new slaves from the United States and any children of female slaves that were born after the act was passed would become free at the age of 25.

Simcoe's anti-slavery act was the first to pass in a British colony and remained in effect until August 24, 1833, when Britain's Slavery Abolition Act put an end to slavery in most of the empire.

Alexandra Kazia, "Simcoe Day: Canada's roots in slavery and the historic abolition," *CBC News*, 5 August 2013

## SLAVERY IN CANADA

The following advertisement appeared in a Montreal paper of June 3, 1778: "Ran away on the 14<sup>th</sup> inst., a slave belonging to the widow Duffy Desaulniers, aged about 35 years, dressed in striped calico of the ordinary cut, of tolerable stoutness. Whoever will bring her back will receive a reward of \$4 and will be repaid any costs." The importation of slaves into Canada was forbidden in 1793. In 1805 there were 142 slaves in the Montreal district. In 1811 the slave trade was forbidden under the Union Jack. In 1832 the last slavery was abolished when the British Government voted \$150,000,000 to buy out the slaves in the British West Indies after seven years further apprenticeship.  
-*Acton Free Press*, 19 July 1923 p.3



It was in the spirit of non-partisan co-operation that I introduced the very first Private Member's Bill in Ontario's history that was co-sponsored by an MPP from another party. The bill was

symbolic. It recognized August 1 as Emancipation Day in Ontario, the day when slavery was abolished in the British Empire in 1834. Passed into law, it showed that MPPs from different parties could successfully work together on legislation. -Ted Arnott, MPP, "Politicians Can Work Together," *Independent & Free Press*, 12 May 2011 p.7

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## 17<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of West India Emancipation

The first of August this year, occurring on Sunday; Monday the second day, was set apart for the celebration of this glorious Jubilee of freedom in Windsor, Canada West... *Voice of the Fugitive*, 12 Aug. 1852 p.2

Montreal, Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> – To-night the colored inhabitants celebrate the anniversary of emancipation by a grand concert in St. Patrick's Hall. -*Ottawa Times*, 2 Aug. 1872

-To-day is Emancipation Day. -*Acton Free Press*, 1 August 1878

-Emancipation Day will be observed by our coloured friends next Monday. -*AFP*, 28 July 1898

Once the Civil War was over Oakville, for a number of years, was the chosen spot of the coloured people for the annual Emancipation Day celebrations. Most of the Negroes in the Oakville district proved themselves to be honest, industrious God-fearing men and women, and made good citizens. But not all of them stayed in the busy harbour town. Some of them preferred the backwoods and wandered to the northern sections of the county, as far distant as Nassagaweya. -Gwen Clarke, "Travelling Mississauga Tribes ...," *Acton Free Press*, 24 Feb. 1955, p.3.



**Greta and William Ashenhurst in front of the fountain topped by a bell at Belfountain, in 1927. EHS12293**

## Restoring Belfountain Conservation Area

Thursday, August 26, 2021

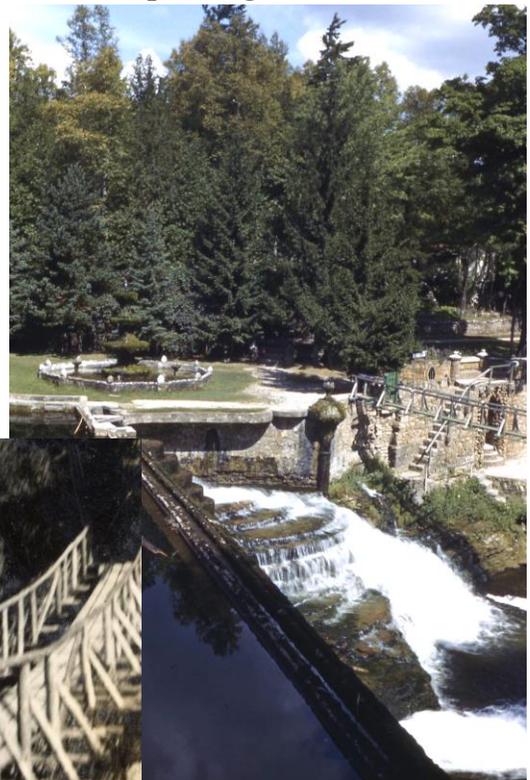
Belfountain Conservation Area was closed this year to restore a 180-metre section of the West Credit River by removing the park’s headpond and replacing it with a new river channel. The dam will also be lowered by one metre to improve structural stability. These changes will improve the overall health of the river by increasing flow and cooling the water, which improves habitat for native brook trout...

Over the next few months, we’ll be focusing on improvements to the park’s pond loop boardwalk and building the new heritage gardens and fox folly sculpture. Restoration work will also begin on the iconic “belle” fountain and a new pedestrian bridge will be installed to connect the parking area to the heritage gardens.

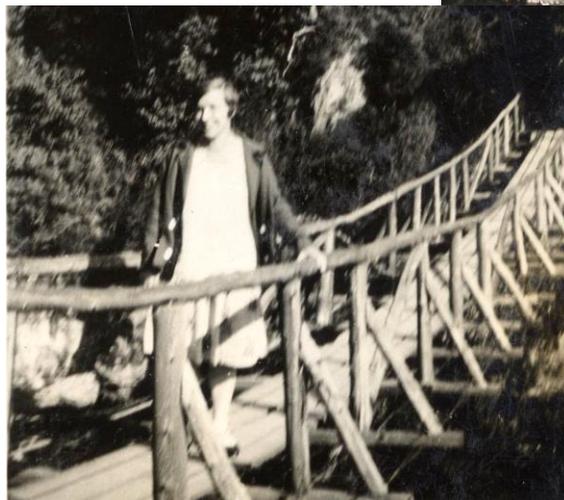
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from <https://cvc.ca/conversations/restoring-belfountain-conservation-area> Modern pictures are available at the CVC website.

Charles W. Mack (1858 – 1943) built his summer property which he began opening to summer visitors from 1914 until it became a commercial operation in 1946. It has been the Belfountain Conservation Area since 1959.



**A view of Belfountain park and waterfalls on 2 August 1943. EHS23969**



**Greta Ashenhurst on the foot bridge at Belfountain, in 1927. EHS12292**



# ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

AUTUMN 2021

Wed. 8 Sept./21

## WALKING TOUR OF GEORGETOWN

Join local historian Mark Rowe on a walking tour of downtown Georgetown. We will gather in the new public square at the Georgetown Library. A speaker system will allow for greater distancing between walkers.

*Georgetown Library, 9 Church Street at 7 p.m.*

Wed. 13 Oct./21

## TRAINING HOMES FOR JUVENILES

Local historian Mark Rowe will provide an introduction to the philosophy of training homes for young people, that were established in Georgetown. Beginning with the unique experiment of bringing Armenian refugees to Cedarvale, the talk will also explore the Bernardo Boys, Cedarvale School for Girls, Notre Dame de Beauregard and the Canadian Jewish Farm School. Bring your lawn chair, blanket and umbrella?? as we gather in the new Library Plaza. A speaker system will be used.

*Georgetown Library. 9 Church Street at 6:30 p.m.*

Wed. 10 Nov./21

## RECENTLY POSTED LOCAL HISTORY

The November newsletter will feature links to several on-line presentations featuring local history. You may, of course, view these items at your leisure or on our usual meeting date! We will not meet in person. *Your place!*

December 2021

The EHS does not hold a meeting this month.

### Your EHS Executive:

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

All inquiries can be sent to: <a href="mailto:esquesinghs@gmail.com">esquesinghs@gmail.com</a>
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**INVITE YOUR NEIGHBOUR TO BECOME A MEMBER!**

## Society Notes

### INTERNET CONNECTIONS

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

### EHS NEWSLETTER

John Mark Rowe prepared this newsletter. 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 currently have 56 paid 2021 members. This is the lowest number ever! You know what to do! Ask a friend, neighbour or family member about their interest in history! 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, dropped off at the home of any executive member or at one of our meetings.

### CANADIANA ON-LINE

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

### ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

[www.archives.gov.on.ca](http://www.archives.gov.on.ca)

### EHS ARCHIVES

The Archives in the Halton Hills Public Library are open during regular library hours.

Our accessible photos from our collection have been growing thanks to the students at Mohawk College. They undertook to add photos from our collection in lieu of a placement for their Library Technician course. The students have been Mary Baxter, Sarah Hughes, Krista Harkins, Kate Sims and Christine McLean. Before Mary began, we had 5016 photos posted to Halton Hills Images (1 July 2020). On 1 January 2021 we had 5374 images and as of 1 August 2021 there are 6171 photos available to view.

We still have more to post since photo donations continue and as of August our collection stands at 27489 photos.

### EHS HISTORY PRIZE

The EHS will once again awarded a \$200 prize for outstanding history results to local graduates. The prize was awarded to Nolan Lake of Georgetown District High School and Angelika Klich of Acton District High School. Christ the King Secondary School nominated Hunter McNair this year.

### SOCIAL ASSISTANT WANTED

Jan Raymond, our faithful refreshment coordinator is looking for an assistant next season. Let her know if you're available.

### HERITAGE HALTON HILLS

Heritage Halton Hills currently has three properties being considered for designation. First is the Ford house and Kirkpatrick blacksmith shop in Limehouse. Secondly is the former Wheeler Store on Kirkpatrick Lane in Limehouse and thirdly is the Georgetown Lawn Bowling Clubhouse.

HHH has posted two narrated presentations on "Let's Talk Halton Hills" page of the Town website. Charig Patney created the first on one the Congregational Church/Library and Kylie Robin has completed one on The Williams Mill. Alison Walker is the narrator of both.

The EHS is pleased to continue our partnership in providing images for use in the *Independent Free Press*.

### HALTON-PEEL OGS

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

Sept. 12 – Finding Your Female Ancestors -2p.m. virtual presentation.

### DEVEREAUX HOUSE

Ann Lawlor at [ann@devereauxhouse.ca](mailto:ann@devereauxhouse.ca)

### HALTON HILLS SPORTS MUSEUM

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

The Museum is currently closed. The Museum has cancelled the 2021 Hall of Fame Awards and Gala.

### L.M. MONTGOMERY MUSEUM

The L.M. Montgomery Museum & Literary Centre, Norval, has completed a feasibility study on constructing a visitors' centre next to Manse in Norval.

### CULTURAL SECTOR REOPENINGS

Visitation by pre-registration is now available for the **Art Gallery of Burlington**, the **Joseph Brant Museum**, Oakville's **Erchless Estate** and the **Halton County Radial Museum**.

#### **DOORS OPEN**

**Digital Doors Open** has begun and features sites throughout Oakville, Burlington and Halton Hills. Halton Hills features a video on Scotsdale Farm and an invitation to visit since it is on a hiking trail.

#### **STREETSVILLE HIST. SOCIETY**

The Leslie Log Cabin at 4415 Mississauga Road is closed until further notice.

#### **BRAMPTON HIST. SOCIETY**

Sept. 16 -Steafan Hannigan -*History of Irish and European Bagpipes*. -a webinar

Oct. 21 – Randy Barber -*History of Barbering and Shaving* – a webinar

#### **MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Waldie Blacksmith Shop at 16 James Street, Milton. They offer monthly YouTube videos available on their website. A walking tour of Milton is held each Sunday in September at 2:00 p.m. Pre-register at

[www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca](http://www.miltonhistoricalsociety.ca)

#### **OAKVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Pre-booked tours of the Erchless Estate are available.

#### **NASAGIWEYA HIST. SOCIETY**

[info@nasagiweyahistoricalsociety.com](mailto:info@nasagiweyahistoricalsociety.com)

Check the website.

#### **TRAFALGAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Sept. 17 – Open Archives @ 1:30 p.m.

Sept. 25 -Heritage Fall Fair @ 10 a.m.

Oct. 15 -Open Archives @ 1:30 p.m.

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

#### **TERRA COTTA HALL**

Terra Cotta Community Hall rentals: Contact Kathy Atkinson at

[terracottaeventbooking@gmail.com](mailto:terracottaeventbooking@gmail.com)

#### **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/>

#### **REQUEST FOR ARBOR DAY INFO**

By the 1920s, Arbor Days seemed to be a

common action for Ontario Public Schools each April. Although the details of what happened at each school are no longer available, a small bit of the impact of those activities may still remain. If any of the EHS members can recall spending an April school day involving Arbor Day, we would like to hear about that. We would like to know what places were involved and the year(s) if possible. Please contact Bill McIlveen at

[wmcilveen@sympatico.ca](mailto:wmcilveen@sympatico.ca) if you can add any information.

#### **WALKING TOUR OF THE GLEN**

As part of Halton Hills Cultural Days, local historian John Mark Rowe will be conducting a walking tour of Glen Williams on Sunday 3 October at 2 p.m. It will begin at the Williams Mill parking lot. You must pre-register for the event at the Culture Days website.

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

The EHS has the lowest number of members in our memory and we'd like to boost the numbers. Encourage friends and neighbours to join. Past newsletters are available on our site and you're welcome to share your copy of this newsletter with him or her.

#### **LOCAL NEWS – 1871**

Alfred Fry fell from the roof of a house in Georgetown last week and broke two ribs. Camp Meeting - on 11<sup>th</sup> Sept. In the Pine Grove near Norval in connection with the Wesleyan Methodist Church. Tents, 3¢ each from T. Foster, Norval.

Conveyances from the Station at 15¢ each. (*Cdn. Champion* 7 Sept. 1871)

Base Ball - Pastimes of Acton defeated the Sycamores of Milton. (CC 14 Sept. 1871)

Teachers Wanted by Hornby Union School - apply R. S. Hall, Sec.- treas. (CC 21 Sept 1871)

WHAT'S IN A NAME? The Georgetown head detective rejoices in the very appropriate name of "Search." (*Cdn Champion* 28 Sept. 1871)

## TRAINING HOMES FOR JUVENILES

### ARMENIAN BOYS' FARM HOME

In 1915, the Ottoman Empire attempted to wipe out its Armenian population. This created refugees and many orphans. In the early 1920s the Armenian Relief Association of Canada was formed to raise awareness and to ask for the government to allow 5000 children to immigrate. Initially they refused, preferring financial relief sent abroad, as Canada had always done. But eventually \$25,000 was granted by the Canadian government, as long as they followed the same rules laid out for Barnardo Boys, ensuring their welfare until they reached the age of 18. This was the first Canadian large-scale humanitarian effort to bring those in need to reside in our country.



EHS13022

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*Historians have suggested that the arrival of the Georgetown boys and girls in Canada constituted the nation's first large-scale humanitarian effort, referring to the settlement scheme as "Canada's Noble Experiment."*

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They chose the Bradley farm on the 8<sup>th</sup> Line, known as Cedar Vale Farm and built the dormitory for the boys that began arriving here on 1 July 1923. The agricultural training school operated until 1927.

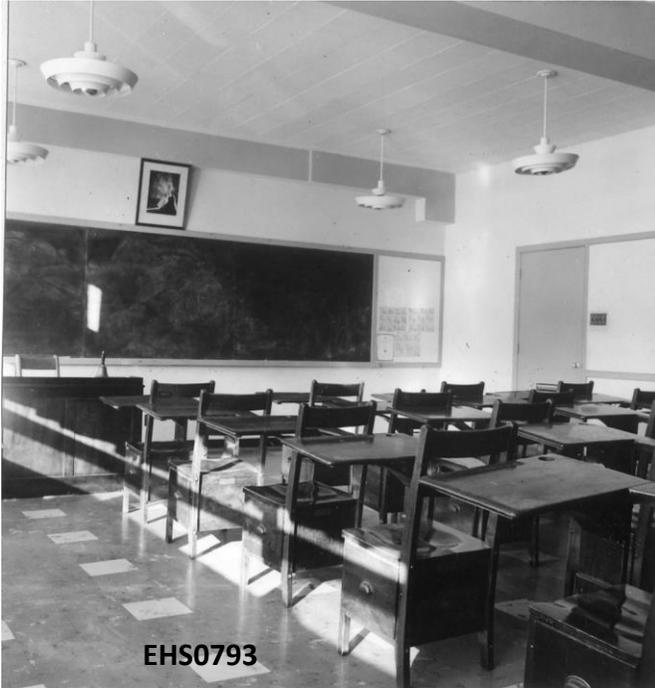
### CANADIAN JEWISH FARM SCHOOL

Morris Saxe was an avid worker at helping Jewish immigrants into Canada. On one of his farms, the old Eaton farm on the Eighth Line south of Georgetown, he established an agricultural school for new immigrants to gain some knowledge about agriculture. Many men left the school to work on Canadian farms when this type of labour was in great demand. Later, the school became the Canadian Jewish Farm School and was used as a training school for orphans from Poland. The first group of 38 young men arrived in the June of 1927. This scheme, however, collapsed during the depression.

-“Morris Saxe: From Kiev to Georgetown Creamery,” John McDonald, *Halton Sketches Revisited*, 1976

**Dora and Morris Saxe**  
EHS21647





## **CEDARVALE SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

On 31 Dec. 1927, the Armenian Relief Association transferred CedarVale Farm to the United Church of Canada. The Church opened the farm as a home for girls who either did not have a home or were removed from their home. Unlike the Armenian boys, they were never indentured as labourers.

The school did not believe in isolating the girls from society, but rather taught them to become contributing members. There were garden parties, musicales and skating. They often joined groups in town like the CGIT, Explorers, YMCA, Guides and Brownies.

After the War, the place expanded with many girls placed there from the Children's Aid. However,

in the 1950s and 60s foster care became more popular so that the number of girls dropped to 14 when plans to close the school were announced in 1963. The empty property was purchased by the Town of Georgetown as an early Centennial project, to provide parkland for the growing town.

## **NOTRE DAME DE BEAUREGARD**

Father Clovis Beaugard, a Quebec Roman Catholic priest, started a training school for francophone orphans in 1935 in St. Catharines. His niece Miss Therese St. Jean joined him as a housekeeper and teacher while the boys learned the orchard business.

In 1947, Father Clovis sold the St. Catharines property and moved with his niece and wards to the Moyer fruit farm at lot 17, Concession 8, Esquesing. They moved into the Main Street South farm directly across from Cedarvale Girls' School.

Tragedy struck the farm in 1950 when Father Clovis suffered a fatal heart attack while driving his car. Therese St. Jean was then in charge of Notre Dame de Beaugard. As the boys graduated from Notre Dame, some stayed here, but their very presence attracted francophone families to live in Georgetown, creating a



**Cistercian Apple Farm**  
**EHS26189**

**Jewish Farm School Opened at Georgetown**

Attended by a gathering of several hundred people from far and near, the Canadian Jewish Farm School was formally opened at Georgetown on Saturday by Edmund Schuer, of Toronto, one of the trustees and Honorary Treasurer of the institution. This movement represents a great constructive effort on the part of the Jewish people in Canada. Its purpose is to train young Jews in agriculture and it is sponsored by the Federated Jewish Farmers of Ontario. The building is a splendid one, with accommodation for 50 persons, a dining-room, reading-room, kitchen, shower bath and auditorium. About 42 young people recently brought out from Poland are now comfortably located at the school and are receiving agricultural training. As soon as possible they will be absorbed into the agricultural life of the country. Following the formal opening the visitors were entertained at dinner,

14 July 1927 Acton Free Press

francophone community here. Miss St. Jean worked tirelessly to have French classes offered at the new Holy Cross School, she pushed for the establishment of a Sacré Coeur parish and then for a separate Sacré Coeur School.

After suffering three strokes, she sold the farm to the Cistercian Monks in 1977. The property is today occupied by the Arbourglen subdivision.



EHS06204

It's Been Done Before...

**PROOF OF VACCINATION**

