

HORNBY

GATEWAY TO TWO TOWNSHIPS

“Spunky Hornby” was the label applied in 1852 when a strong bid was made to have Hornby named the County Seat for the new County of Halton. As the gateway community, the proud citizens of Hornby felt they were the logical choice! Alas the honour went to Milton.

The village of Hornby straddles two townships -Trafalgar New Survey which opened in 1818 and Esquesing which opened to settlers the following year. The principal northward road was Trafalgar Road, which ran from Oakville to Steeles Ave., turned west and then continued up the 7th Line, Esquesing, all the way to Highway #9 spreading the village into an east and west village. Hornby’s position at Steeles and Trafalgar helped make it a pioneer centre for religion, education and business.

The first church -Methodist, opened in a log cabin in 1823 (directly across from the Premium Outlets). The Presbyterians built at the 8th Line in 1838. Their Church was destroyed by fire in 1976, leaving only the cemetery. The Anglicans built St. Stephen’s Church at the 9th Line in 1842. A Baptist Chapel opened at Farlton, north of Hornby West, in 1852 to serve that small saw-mill community.

Education was always important to the settlers of Upper Canada with the first school being held in a log cabin in Hornby East from 1826, and Hornby West after 1847 until a new brick school was opened in Church at the 9th Line in 1842. A Baptist Chapel opened at Farlton, north of Hornby West, in 1852 to serve that small saw-mill community.

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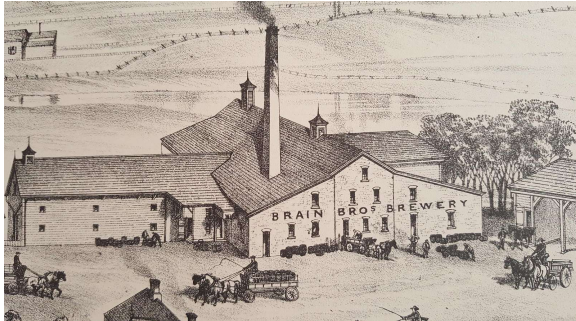
In modern times, recreation became an important part of village life. Outdoor ice rinks provided skating for the community and gave rise to winning hockey teams in the rural league, until enclosed arenas in nearby towns offered better facilities.

The fame of Hornby ball teams in the rural league began with the purchase of Hornby Ball Park on Steeles Avenue at 6th Line, from Russell King, in 1955. The annual chicken

barbeque became an event the community looked forward to. In 1970, the picnic pavilion was added and named in honour of Samuel and Jane King, the 1830 settlers of this land.

The importance of Trafalgar Road increased when farmers began teaming their excess wheat to Oakville harbour. This regular traffic prompted taverns and hotels to open in both Hornby East (Steeles at Trafalgar) and Hornby West (Hornby Road and Steeles). A plank road with toll gates, after 1850, provided fast transportation.

An early industry was the Brain Family Brewery, built in 1834, which brewed local hops until 1916. So successful were the local taverns they supplied, a chapter of the Sons of Temperance was formed in 1852. Temperance meetings were often held in the Orange Halls – one in Hornby east and the other, in Hornby west, still standing since 1858.



With constant traffic on Trafalgar Road, the opportunity for sales gave rise to a general store, one on each side of Hornby. The post office was established in 1841 and ended up in Hornby West at the general store until 2008 when Bill Cooley, the last postmaster, retired after 40 years of service.

Brain Brewery in 1877 was located on the 9th Line, Esquesing.

Hornby's gateway status was confirmed in other ways. Canadian Pacific Railway once had a station on Trafalgar Road. Bell Telephone built the Hornby Repeater Station on Steeles Ave in 1930 to boost phone signals between Toronto and Windsor. It was decommissioned in 1995. The CBC transmitter station was built at Hornby in 1937, just south of the 401. The 647-foot tower later picked up signals from the CN tower until 1999. The opening of the Highway 401 interchange at Trafalgar Road is another example.

John Coulson, a Hornby farmer was very interested in reforestation. He had seven acres in hardwoods and evergreens at his death in 1956. He left his 92 acres to the County of Halton for reforestation. Coulson's legacy is obvious when driving the Trafalgar Road by-pass north of Steeles.

This Trafalgar Road extension passes by Pineland Farm, the home of James Snow and family for 46 years. Snow served as MPP for this area for 18 years, was Minister of Transportation and is honoured for his work with the James Snow Parkway in Milton.

Hornby Road has three modern businesses operating there -Town and Country Meats at the Steeles Avenue corner, Hornby Apiaries operated by the Robertson family since 1937 and Hornby Glen Golf Club, an 18-hole public course founded in 1964.

Toronto Premium Outlet Mall gives Hornby the best shopping choice of any village in Esquesing and in a way, spunky Hornby's desire for recognition as the gateway to the township has been realised.



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