

# ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

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



Kay's -Guelph Street Georgetown, 1990

EHS10566

## GENERAL STORES & CONVENIENCE STORES

### *Country Stores Survive as Friendly Oases*

by Jennifer Barr

It's wonder how the little corner store survives... What's their secret? Is it their convenient hours? Most of them are open seven days

a week, including holidays, and even stay open late in the evening. That's one of the ways they compete. They certainly can't offer the prices or variety offered by the chains with their powerful buying ability.

When this reporter visited several of the surrounding country stores recently, the common denominator of them all was a slow, easy friendliness. Neighbours popped in, rapped a little, exchanged news, had their health and that of their family inquired after, gathered a few groceries, the newspaper, a couple of bolts for the manure spreader, some candles for the kids, and sauntered out.

Is this the secret? A return to personal service where you feel like somebody instead of number three in the check out lineup. Is it the fact that somebody cares why you're buying aspirin?

Perhaps.

The Knapton family at Speyside have run their store

Hanging out at Mrs. Black's store, Norval are Bill Pomeroy (front) and Gordie Brown (holding the Coke) in the 1930s.

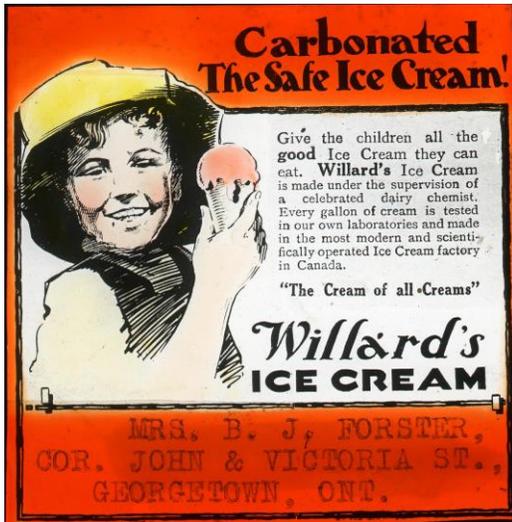
EHS20690



and gas bar for three years and are proud they deal in general service of all kinds...

Limehouse General Store is a 19<sup>th</sup> century building and has always been a general store. Vi Turner says it used to be a “real general store” of the old-fashioned kind and she can still smell the coal oil at the back...

One of the largest corner stores is Shortill’s at Ballinafad. The store, dating back to 1909, has been in the Shortill family for nine years and has been run by Morley Shortill for the past eight years. He’s assisted by his mother Viola, Marie Cocklin, Jeannie Levesque and Maureen Buston...



Brookville General Store is 130 years old and has been owed by Peter DesRoches for the past year... The most recent family of corner store owners are Tom and Donna Manes, well-known Actonites who have bought a

wee store, house and gas bar south of Brookville...

Cecile and George Crocker have run Ospringe store and garage for the past two years. It had previously been known as Robertsons for many years...

At Strattons Corners on Highway 24 north of Rockwood, the store was run by Ken Stratton and his son-in-law Dick Dupuis for many years. The name “Stratton’s” is still up there but it’s owned by Penny and Ed Griffin who love it...

Perhaps that’s the secret of the country stores – willingness to help. Maybe it’s just a nice change of pace from the battle of the supermarket. Whatever it is, it works – and how nice that it still does.

*-Acton Free Press, 26 January 1978*

Halton Hills Today, 10 July 2024

## Halton Hills convenience stores, gas stations approved to sell alcohol

Thirteen Halton Hills convenience stores and gas stations have been issued licences to begin alcohol sales in September (2024). They are:

### GEORGETOWN

Moore Park Convenience, 68 Main St. N.  
Hasty Market, 136 Guelph St.  
Family Plus Convenience, 160 Guelph St.  
Hasty Market, 360 Guelph St.  
Main Video and Variety, 64 Main St. S.  
Quik Pick Variety, 221 Miller Dr.  
Friendz Convenience, 324 Guelph St.  
Canadian Tire Gas+, 311 Guelph St.

### ACTON

Lakeview Convenience Store, 126 Main St. N.  
Royal Jug City Convenience, 294 Queen St. E.  
Acton Town Milk, 99 Main St. N.

### NORVAL

Norval Convenience, 525 Guelph St.

### HORNBY

Shell, 7975 Trafalgar Rd.

*Interior of Terra Cotta General Store showing proprietors Elsie and Harvey Puckering about 1958.  
EHS01375*



*The west side of Guelph Street showing Mac's Milk, British-Petroleum and Dairy Queen in 1973.  
EHS01903*

*Wheeler's General Store and post office, from an unidentified magazine, page 704, October 29, 1950.*

*EHS01020*





## **ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

2025

- Wed. 12 March     **RUN AND GET A QUART OF MILK!**  
If you've heard that before, you know about corner stores or the village shop. Join us for an interactive meeting about convenience stores throughout Esquesing over the years. The EHS photo collection will be used to prompt memories of Becker's, Mac's Milk, Speyside store, Wheeler's store, C.K. Browne's, King Variety... The list goes on! Bring along any memorabilia you'd like to share.  
***Knox Presbyterian Church, 116 Main St. S., Georgetown, ON 7:00***
- Wed. 9 April     **THE BICENTENNIAL OF LEATHERTOWN**  
**- Celebrating 200 years of history since Acton's Settlement**  
Be sure to join Scott Brooks of Vintage Acton as he takes you on a historical journey back in time to when the Adams Brothers settled the area of Acton in 1825. Historic photos of the past will accompany the presentation. A perfect way to celebrate and honour Acton's bicentennial!  
***Acton Town Hall Centre, 19 Willow Street, Acton, ON, 7:00***
- Wed. 14 May     **HERITAGE HALTON HILLS**  
Heritage Halton Hills has continued their designation work throughout Halton Hills. Heritage Halton Hills members John Mark Rowe and Ray Denny will provide updates on the 2024 designated buildings in Halton Hills. This topic was carried forward from the February 12<sup>th</sup> snowstorm.  
***Knox Presbyterian Church, 116 Main St. S., Georgetown, ON 7:00***
- Wed. 11 June     **WALKING TOUR OF NORVAL**  
Local historian Kathy Gastle will highlight the Lucy Maud Montgomery Garden for the Senses and the LMM Museum cottage as we wander through the village.  
***Norval Park, 477 Guelph Street, Norval, ON 7:00***

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

- All Meetings are FREE to attend -

## Society Notes

### EHS EXECUTIVE

Stephen Blake	President
Steve McNamara	Treasurer
Karen Hunter	Secretary
J. Mark Rowe	Archivist
David Borrett	Membership
Ray Denny	Publications
Charles Veale	Social Media

Send all inquiries to: [esquesinghs@gmail.com](mailto:esquesinghs@gmail.com)  
<http://esquesinghistoricalsociety.com>



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### EHS NEWSLETTER

John Mark Rowe prepared this newsletter with assistance from Karen Hunter. 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 51 paid 2025 members. Our membership year runs from February. The individual membership rate is \$20. The family or institution rate is \$25. Payment can be made via Interac transfer to [EHS.etransfer@gmail.com](mailto:EHS.etransfer@gmail.com)

The EHS will accept personal cheques from our members. Please note that all cheques must be made payable to "Esquesing Historical Society", fully spelled out. Cheques can be mailed to our post box, dropped off at the home of any executive member or at one of our meetings. Exact change can be accepted at meetings.

### EHS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM for the EHS takes place at the beginning of our March meeting, since the snowstorm cancelled our February night. The financial statement will be presented as well as an Archival report. Elections for executive members will be held. If you're interested in being on the executive, contact one of the current members before the meeting.

Membership dues are now overdue.

### EHS ARCHIVES

Austin Foster has continued to devote some time each week to the Archives and has been scanning the Ashgrove Tweedsmuir Histories.

The Archives now has six volumes scanned.

Local History & Digital Archive Coordinator, Cheryl Cousins-Reid arranged for archivist Mark Rowe to be filmed telling three different vignettes based on items in our archives. Watch for them on the library website.

The Town of Halton Hills is preparing, a plaque for the Barnes Family Cemetery on the Halton Hills' Town Hall property. The site will be identified with a bench, the plaque and plantings.

The archives had 28 donations last year. The donors are recognized in the annual archival report, to be presented at the March meeting.

### HERITAGE HALTON HILLS

Heritage Halton Hills continues to work towards designating as many heritage buildings as possible before a government-imposed deadline.

### HALTON HILLS SPORTS MUSEUM

<http://haltonhillssportsmuseum.blogspot.ca/> The Sports Museum are currently working on plans for a virtual museum in the lobby of the MoldMasters SportsPlex.

### L.M. MONTGOMERY MUSEUM

<https://lmmontgomerynorval.com/>

### CANADIANA ON-LINE

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

### ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

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

### HALTON-PEEL OGS

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

### STREETSVILLE HIST. SOCIETY

Leslie Log House, 4415 Mississauga Rd. Streetsville

May 31 -Tour of Oakville Museum

### BRAMPTON HIST. SOCIETY

20 March Charleton Carscallen *Current Heritage Initiatives at the City of Brampton*

April 17 Meagan Gilpin, *The Evolution of Brampton's Libraries*

Meetings are at Heart Lake Presbyterian Church at 7 p.m. \$5 fee for non-members.

### MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

20 March Scott Brooks, *The History of Acton's Bicentennial*, 7:30 p.m.

17 April Jane Mulkewich, *Sophia's Journey* - story of Sophia Pooley, a local slave.

Waldie Blacksmith Shop at 16 James, Milton at 7:15 p.m.

#### **OAKVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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

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

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

March 18 -Irish Stew Dinner \$15 @ 6p.m.

April 8 -Annual Meeting @ 7:30 p.m.

#### **TRAFALGAR HIST. SOCIETY**

March.21 -Open Archives at Palermo

Schoolhouse 1:30-3:30

April 1<sup>st</sup> AGM at Palermo Schoolhouse 7 p.m.

April 18 -Open Archives at Palermo

Schoolhouse 1:30-3:30

#### **LORNE SCOTS REGIMENTAL MUSEUM**

55 Queen St E, Brampton.

April 27 -AGM @ Brampton Armoury

#### **GLEN WILLIAMS' 200th**

Feb. 23 -Sales open for one of 200 native tree species.

March 15 – St. Alban's Bell Ringing & St. Patrick's dinner & Dance

April 10 -Easter Egg Hunt Historical tour

March 1 – May 31 -On-line Heritage Quilt

auction -donated by The Hobby Horse

Sept. 1 -Glen Photo contest closes

Visit:

<https://glenwilliams200.godaddysites.com/>

#### **EHS 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

Librarian Betsy Cornwall organized the first meeting of the Esquesing Historical Society.

Her notes say, "A meeting of people interested in Georgetown's past will be held in the Public Library on Monday January 20, 1975 at 8 pm."

The first president was John McDoanld, who is still a member of the Society.

#### **JOSEPH RACINSKY WINS ELECTION**

Town of Halton Hills Ward II councilor, Joseph Racinsky ran in the provincial election to replace retiring MPP Ted Arnott. He was elected MPP for Wellington – Halton Hills. Council will offer the vacant seat to Matt

Kindbom of Glen Williams, third place finisher in the last Municipal election. He has accepted the offer. This saves Council from mounting an expensive by-election.

#### **ARCHIVES ACQUIRES DATE STONE**

The Town of Halton Hills salvaged the datestone from a house built in 1911 as part of the College View survey. The house was built on the property formerly housing the Georgetown Academy, which was demolished in May 1911, after 54 years educating the youth of Georgetown and area.



#### **DAWN ELIZABETH LIVINGSTONE**

Dawn Livingstone died peacefully, on Sunday January 12, 2025, at the Georgetown Hospital. Dawn in her 84th year, beloved wife of Jack for 63 years. Loving mother of Michael and David. Loved grandma of Keith. Loved daughter of the late Dovie and Wes Fiebig. Dawn was also predeceased by her brother Wayne Fiebig. Dawn enjoyed camping and canoeing and was a volunteer for the Knox Presbyterian Church, Esquesing Historical Society and Scouts Canada for Halton Hills and Milton for many years. Memorial contributions to the Knox Presbyterian Church, Georgetown or the Esquesing Historical Society would be appreciated.

#### **MEMBERSHIP FEE IS OVERDUE**

Membership fees are due in February. Be sure to pay so that your subscription to this newsletter continues uninterrupted. The fee is \$20 individual or \$25 for a family or corporation. This will be the final newsletter for those that do not renew.

## THE FOUNDING OF ACTON

The history of Acton begins with the sound of creaking leather of the saddle of a Methodist preacher and his family. The Rev. Ezra Adams was a “saddlebag preacher”, a circuit rider, for the Wesleyan Methodist Church, in Upper Canada. In 1823, he settled on the east half of Lot 28, Concession 2, Esquesing. The property with a stream running through it became the cradle of Acton.

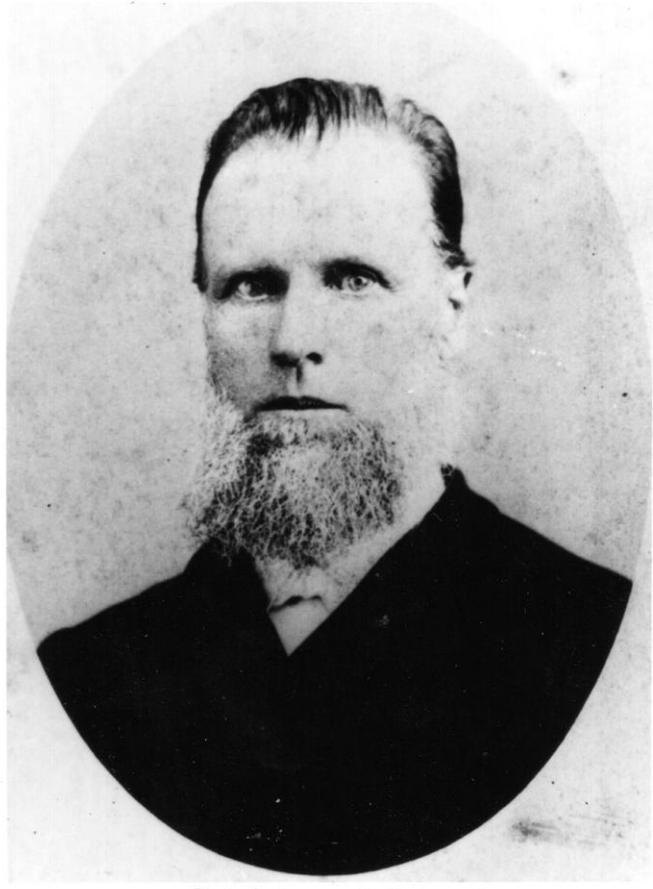
Ezra Adams was part of a large family who moved to Lower Canada in 1798 from New York State. Eliphalet Adams was a soldier in the Revolutionary War who served under American General John Stark. After the war he married Patience Rice and settled in Cambridge, New York where Rufus was born in 1783, followed by Ezra in 1788, Phineas, Zenas in 1792 and six others ending with Ransom Adams. When the Eastern

Townships were opened in Lower Canada, good land was available so the Adams family decided to move to Canada in 1798 to receive some 1200 acres.

Ezra Adams received his call to the ministry in Canada... Ezra was “born of the spirit” on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 1811...

Seeking an easier life, Ezra Adams travelled with his wife Isa Proctor and children to the wilds of Esquesing. Ezra worked hard to clear land to build a cabin in which to live. He was likely employed by Silas Emes who claimed lot 28 in 1822, to complete the settlement duties. These were completed in January 1829, when Emes resided in West Gwilliambury, county York. The Crown granted the lot to Emes on January 29<sup>th</sup>. Five days later he sold the property to Ezra Adams.

About 1830 the Adams’ neighbours from the Eramosa line would be Morgan Crewson at Lot 32, Concession 1 (Crewson’s Corners) an 1822 settler, George Pettit, on Lot 32,



Rev. Ezra Adams (1787-1871), a co-founder of Acton and a Methodist preacher. EHS14915

Concession 2 from 1819, John Teetzel at Lot 31, Concession 3 from 1821, and Joseph Zimmerman on Lot 29, Con. 2 since 1819.

In 1825, Ezra convinced his brother and sister-in-law, Rufus and Maria Adams to bring their family from Westbury, Lower Canada to Lot 28, Concession 3, across the road (now Main Street) from Ezra. St. Alban's Drive was the laneway to Rufus Adams' home which stood where 39 Willow Street now stands. The orchard lane behind the farm house is now Bower Avenue.

Maria Adams, classically educated in Vermont, required a school house in which to educate her children. In 1826, a school house was built opposite her laneway, where Knox Church is today. This building would later double as a chapel for Sunday prayers...

The family soon had their own minister to lead prayer on Sundays, when the Rev. Zenas Adams, also a circuit preacher, decided to join his brothers in Esquesing. He too suffered from broken health after years on the circuit. He acquired Lot 27, Concession 2, south of brother Ezra in 1827. Zenas' built his log cabin and in 1828, the first Wesleyan Methodist service was held in the kitchen of that cabin.

In 1828, the official York to Guelph Road was opened which ran along 27 Sideroad (Queen Street), Second Line (Main Street) up to 32 Sideroad, through Crewson's Corners and onto Guelph. This promised travellers for the fledgling community, ensuring a bright future.

More settlers arrived in 1829, the parents of the Adams brothers, Eliphalet and Patience, along with two brothers, Phineas and Ransom. Zenas took the opportunity to saw the pine trees on his property into boards and he built a large frame house across from his property on what would become Church and Main Streets. The



The memorial stone for Eliphalet Adams in the pioneer cemetery. The inscription reads, "Eliphalet Adams died July 2, 1844 aged 78 years. Patience, wife of Eliphalet Adams, died June 11, 1832, aged ...years. Phineas R. Adams,..." (1933 photo) EHS27829



## 1925 News

02 April           The Acton Boy Scouts held a successful church parade on Sunday morning to Knox Church. Scouts from Toronto came – bugle band of the 26<sup>th</sup> Toronto Troop came. The Toronto contingent arrived in town on the 9:43 electric car. There were 100 Scouts under SM Ferris and Rev. A. C. Stewart -*Acton Free Press*

08 April           **Concert at Ashgrove** A concert and social will be held at Ashgrove Methodist Church on Tuesday April 14<sup>th</sup>. -*Herald*

It is quite time to lock up your hens. The Hydro office will be closed on Easter Monday. A meeting of the Georgetown Tennis Club will be held in Mr. Minn's office on Tuesday evening.

Mr. Thomas Eason has disposed of his house on John St. to Mr. John Davidson of town. C. Thornton, proprietor of the Georgetown Fish and Chip store will peddle a choice assortment of wet and dry fish in Glenwilliams on Thursday morning and in Terra Cotta on Thursday afternoon. -*Herald*

**Rex Theatre:** Saturday April 11, matinee at 3; night at 7 and 9:15 – “Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall,” starring Mary Pickford, directed by Marshall Neilan from the historic novel by Charles Major. Don't Miss It! -*Herald*

17 May           Acton Scouts gathered at the Methodist Church to have awards presented. Awards went to R. Watson, Robert McArthur, Arthur Henderson, Arthur Lawson, Alfred Bishop, Joseph Woods, E. Patrick, S. Malcolm, W. Babcock, George Mason and Harold Reid. -*Acton Free Press*

21 May           **CREWSONS CORNERS** – Mr. John Dickie, of Toronto, has leased Suburban Park, and he and his family are living on the premises. He intends to operate the place as an amusement park and will aim to give it a better reputation than it bore the last season it was in commission.

Both the Ryder & Mowat factory, formerly the Dominion Hotel, and the Sunderland House were visited this week by people who are considering the opening of a hotel in Acton. -*Acton Free Press*

*Georgetown Herald*, 16 September 1925

