

MERRITTON MATTERS

FALL 2012 • Volume 8, Issue 2 • www.merrittonmatters.ca



MERRITTON'S 2012 TRILLIUM AWARD RECIPIENTS

Overall City Commercial Property Winners

1st place – Stone Mill, 3rd place (tie) Niagara Battery and Tire

Photos by Susan Fluellon

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Mailing Merritton Matters

Do you know people who live out of town who might like to receive the Merritton Matters?

If so, please call Sheila at 905-227-8988 to arrange for mailing.

CHECK OUT THE MERRITTON MATTERS WEBSITE AT WWW.MERRITTONMATTERS.CA

THE MERRITTON COMMUNITY GROUP

The Merritton Community Group (MCG) is dedicated to the development and enhancement of the distinctive heritage community that is Merritton. Our group is open to anybody who subscribes to this mission and wants to contribute to the community and economic betterment of Merritton.

Merritton Community Group Executive

Chair – Carolyn Damiano

Vice Chair – Morag Enright

Secretary & Treasurer – Sheila Morra

Who writes the MM articles?

The Editor/Writer is Lorraine Giroux. Photos were provided by Glenn Connell, HUGs Niagara, Susan Fluellon, Cuyler Morra and Arwyn Workman-Youmans. Contributions were received from: Lisa Aceti, Nick Altmayer, Tom Barwell, MAA, A.G. Rapattoni, Karen Tiffney, Ruth Troughton and Phyllis Thomson.

If you have an article or suggestions for articles, please send an email to merrittonmatters@hotmail.com or mail to 19 Wanda Rd, St. Catharines, ON L2T 1S5. Lana Pesant is our graphic designer. Pat Durocher and Tony Morra handle the advertising for this paper. You can call Tony at 905-227-8988 or email the editor for more information.

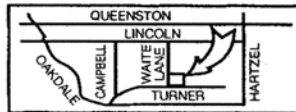
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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I was reflecting this morning about Labour Days in my past and especially Merritton Labour Days so as I was working the internet, there you are ... a blast from the past.

I grew up in Merritton many, many years ago. My Dad did signal maintenance for the CN and I spent many hours at the station as a kid. He rode one of the little gas cars as far as Port Colborne and did signal maintenance on all CN lift bridges on the Canal. Many times he was called out in the middle of the night for a signal out.

We lived at 22 Chestnut St. and the biggest event of the year as a kid was the Labour Day parade. Marching bands were a major attraction especially from New York State and the Band Tattoo. Memories!

I lived in Merritton from 1944 - 1960. The Milk Maid was around then and I remember Granny's Pond and mooning passenger trains of my youth.

Please put me on your mailing list, the old photos are great. Keep up the good work
Sincerely

Bob Moore
Kelowna, B.C.

Editor's Note: Thanks Bob for your shared memories and the positive feedback. We've included a picture of this year's Labour Day Celebration.



Dear Editor

It was nice to see the photograph of the train station on the cover of this issue. My father worked for the CNR and I remember visiting the station with him when I was a child, when he had to pick up his pay cheque. It brought back many nice memories, since my father passed many years ago.

Thank you.

Mary Jane Wilks

Editor's Note: We received many emails from readers who enjoyed the picture on the front cover of the last issue. One email was asking for permission to use the picture for a student's school project. (See page 4 for more details on this project.)

I'm hoping someone there may be able to answer a question for me, please. Does anyone remember the ice cream place that used to be in the middle of Hartzel Road, right beside the former Pizza Delight store? It wasn't a Dairy Queen. I remember going there for choc/vanilla soft serve ice cream when I was young(er)....that means back in the late 70's and early 80's. The name was something like Twirls and Tips....something along that line? Does this ring any bells? Thanks for trying for me.

Cheers,
Patricia

Hello

I attended Maplecrest Public School. I lived at 26 St Peters Street, right across the road, at the time and loved the school very much. My family moved out after the house fire around 1985. I returned with my own family to show them the area where I lived, where my friends and I played and attended school, but the school was gone. I was shocked as I had heard nothing, I just assumed it was still there. I have looked on the internet for any information, but I have found nothing. Do you have any pictures, information on the school and what happened to it?

Thank you so much

Sabrina Davis

Editor's Note: Can anyone help?



Dear Editor,

I really enjoyed your article about the Calvert's Cosy Corner and it sure brought back lots of memories. My first recollection is going with my Mom as a very little girl (maybe 1946) and my Grandma was our waitress. Fast forward 13 years and I'm being interviewed (and hired) by Marie Calvert in their apartment above the restaurant. My job that summer was primarily as the dishwasher but idleness was frowned upon so I was also called upon to bus tables during busy times. Occasionally I was allowed to wait table, usually to serve the potato salad I made. I also learned how to cook and then peel shrimp, LOTS of shrimp, which wasn't the easiest smell to eliminate or the best one on a date night. All the staff was expected to come in once a week during off hours to fill the salt, pepper and sugar containers and to strain the cider vinegar when it had formed mother (that nasty slimy substance). Everything in the restaurant (including windows) was given a good cleaning but if anything (even an ashtray) was accidentally broken, you could expect a deduction from your pay!! By 1959 the "little old man" had been replaced by a much younger version but the potatoes were still peeled and cut in the basement. Ted Calvert still manned the fryers at the front of the store but the batter was mixed behind a closed curtain in a little area in the kitchen.....maybe his secret recipe??? Certainly they were the best fish and chips ever!!

Thanks for opening the memory bank.

Gail (Irvine) Price

Canada's History for Kids

Three local school students were among the 200 students selected from across the country to participate in the new Canada's History Young Citizens online historical fair program. Each student was given an opportunity to record a summary of their project and to reflect on the process. Two of these students, Janeya Lyew and Olivia Noun, were from Applewood, and the third student, Ridley College student Arwyn Workman-Youmans, wrote about possibly one of the first war brides in Merritton.

Arwyn completed a project entitled 'Merritton War Bride' which was about the journey of her Great Grandmother Kate Florence Youmans and her children to Canada, and the struggles of being a war bride at that time. She had discovered the interesting fact that 43,454 War Brides and their 20,997 children arrived in Canada during the Second World War while on a trip to Pier 21 in Halifax, Nova Scotia a couple of years ago. Her great grandmother was one of these young women. Despite a difficult genealogy task, she managed to involve scanning history books, following her family tree through genealogy, and conducting first-person interviews with other war brides, including one who came to Canada on the same boat as her great grandmother. Arwyn developed a real appreciation for these women who left behind everything that they knew to start a new life in Canada. Back then, they would have been embarking on a new life, with little knowledge of what to expect. They were losing almost all contact with everyone and everything back home to start a new life. She found their bravery and courage inspiring and she hopes that it will inspire others.

Olivia documented aspects of Craig Kielburger's Free the Children organization, which was a fitting topic for a student already involved in social justice at her school. In 1995, 12-year-old Craig Kielburger



founded Free the Children along with 11 of his classmates and today, Free the Children is the world's largest network of children helping children through education, with more than one million young people involved in programs in more than 45 countries. Applewood School has accomplished great charitable work through their own Gators Help program and Olivia featured this in her project along with staff and student reflections on how Kielburger had inspired them to make a difference. She found it especially interesting that no one on the Board of Directors of Free the Children was over the age of eighteen which reinforced for her it's not only adults that could take charge, it could be children as well.



Merritton War Bride Kate Florence Sparks and Husband Clarence Douglas Youmans

Janeya's project was about aboriginal contributions during the War of 1812, entitled 'The Forgotten Warriors of 1812.' She highlighted the valuable contributions that aboriginal warriors made to the British and the War of 1812, specifically in the Battle of Queenston Heights and the surrender of Fort Detroit. Janeya wrote about Tecumseh, a Shawnee warrior who rallied an aboriginal alliance with the British against American expansion. Her video included a person from the Friends of Fort George, in period costume at Queenston Heights and the executive director of the Niagara Regional Native Centre.

You can still read each student's reflections and view these videos on www.canadashistory.ca/Kids/YoungCitizens.aspx. Use the search tool and the student's first name. The Top 30 finalists have been voted on across the country and now will be viewed by a panel of judges who will choose 6 recipients to travel to Ottawa in December to show their film at the National History Forum. All these young citizens are to be commended for their creativity and passion and we are especially proud of our 3 local students for their interest in history.



WELCOME BACK RICK HODGE

On the first morning that Rick Hodge was on air for EZ Rock, he mentioned that he had attended Consolidated School and Merritton High. Despite the fact that he closed both of those schools, we still welcome him back! (Well, to be truthful, he didn't actually cause the closure and lots of other people attended both of those now defunct institutions of learning.)

We've long pointed out to anyone who would listen that he is a Merrittonian. We adored him as part of the Roger, Rick and Marilyn on CHUM and we're really glad to have the opportunity to listen to him back in our neighbourhood.

Remembering Jim Smith

By Phyllis Thomson



Merritton students and residents who remember Jim Smith, a former Principal at Merritton High School, were saddened to learn that Jim had passed away during the summer. Jim came to Merritton High in 1954 and remained there as Principal until 1966 when he left to go to the newly-built Laura Secord High School as their first Principal.

Students of that era will happily recall their high school years with Jim at the helm. He made an effort to get to know each student by name and was always very approachable and willing to listen – a big man, with a big smile!

I visited Jim and his wife Florence in their home in the Spring of 2009, several years after he retired, and was happy to find him in reasonably good health and enjoying his retirement. We shared some memories of Merritton High School and he told me that he had an especially warm place in his heart for the Merritton community and all of the students who had passed through Merritton High while he was Principal there.


A service of remembrance for Jim was planned for September.



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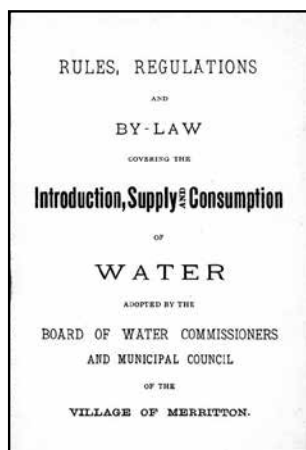


Merritton's Water

This summer Merritton's water in the local pool was compromised because of a chemical leak. Contained only at Lion Dunc Schooley Pool, our drinking water supply was not at any time affected. Merritton, as part of the City of St. Catharines water distribution network, is supplied by the Decew Water Treatment Plant operated by the Regional Municipality of Niagara. The source of water for this plant is surface water from Lake Erie via an intake from the Welland Canal located near Allanburg. The City of St. Catharines drinking water continually meets the Drinking Water Quality Standards set out by the Province of Ontario.

What about public drinking water historically in the village of Merritton? Public water systems were not that common in Ontario. The Municipal Waterworks Act was introduced in Ontario in 1882 to create municipal water utilities. At the time there were only 13 water systems operating, including one in St. Catharines. Outside of these 13 cities, people used wells, cisterns, springs, community pumps, private water carriers and other ways to make water available. The Municipal Act gave the provincial government a way to increase infrastructure spending without increasing debt as the debt was to be incurred by municipalities through municipal taxes. Despite the act, municipalities did not have to provide water and many didn't until they were forced to by local disasters. In Ontario the first piped

Water is an important component of any historical examination of our community's initial growth. Merritton's industry depended on the water in the Welland Canal which provided sufficient connections to water power generation for the industries in the village. Check out the next issue for more on this topic.



water supply began in 1837 in Toronto as a private operation, drawing from Lake Ontario and delivered to customers untreated. Then other communities around Ontario began based on population growth and the need to fight fires. Often the water systems were owned by private citizens until the Baldwin Act (Municipal Act) in 1849. Between the period of 1880 and 1930, Ontario increased its legislation covering water supply and water quality. In a chart of filtration plants of the early 20th Century, Merritton is listed as having a water filtration plant in 1927 serving approximately 2,800 people.

On October 15th, 1889, the Office of the Water Commissioners in Merritton passed rules and regulations about the use of water in the community.

An excerpt of the rules from 1889 is printed below.

To whom it may concern:

The Water Commissioners of the Village of Merritton by authority conferred upon them by section 38, and other sections, of the Water Works Act, do hereby ordain and establish the following rules and regulations relating to the protection, control and management of the Merritton Water Works, and the uses of water supplied there from, and do also establish the annexed schedule of rates as provided, to be paid for the uses of water therein indicated, when supplied from said Water Works. The said rules and regulations shall become operative on the 14th of October, 1889, and so continue until changed by the Water Commissioners.

O.J.PHELPS, JOHN CONLON,
JOHN PILLING, JOHN MCLEAN,
Water Commissioners
R. CLARK, Superintendent

Rules, Regulations and By-laws Covering the Introduction, Supply and Consumption of Water Adopted by the Board of Water Commissioners and Municipal Council of the Village of Merritton

TARIFF OF WATER RATES

The annual rates for the use of water shall be paid quarterly in advance on the first days of January, April, July and October at the office of the Water Works Commission.

Private Dwellings and Tenement Houses:

Not exceeding six rooms,
from hydrant or tap.....\$4.00
Exceeding six rooms,
from hydrant or tap.....5.00

SPECIAL AND ADDITIONAL RATES

(All conveniences in connection with dwelling houses buildings are chargeable, in addition to the foregoing rates.)
Bath Tubs, each..... .5
Barber Shops - One chair2.00
Each additional chair 1.00
Butcher and Fish Stalls, each.....4.00
Hose Attachments for street sprinkling and window washing (where water is taken for inside use) for not over 100 feet front or less, for each premises.....2.00
**Hose under this rate shall only be used on the street fronting the premises of the person paying for such use, and shall not be used*

for sprinkling streets, sidewalk and window washing, except one hour before 9 a.m., one hour at noon and one hour after 5 p.m.

Schools

Public 5.00 to 8.00
Boarding, (in addition to dwelling house rates) 4.00 to 6.00

Stables

Livery and sale, each horse,
with privilege of washing carriages.....2.50
Private, each horse, with privilege of washing carriages.....2.00
Hotel stables, each stall, (hose \$7 extra)..... 50
Dray horses and cows, each 1.00

Urinals

Private dwellings.....2.00
Each additional one..... 1.00
Other private dwellings 3.00
Each additional one.....2.00

R. CLARK,
Secretary
O. J. PHELPS,
Chairman

AN ACCESSIBLE MERRITTON LEGION

Great news for the members and visitors at the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 138. As of this spring, the Legion was renovated to include accessibility features, including a commercial handicap lift and washroom upgrade. All of this was made possible through the financial support of the members and a \$75,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The Ontario Trillium Foundation provides monies to many Legions and community halls throughout the province. Niagara legions have received \$262,000 over the last three years with \$155,000 going to accessibility renovations.

A ribbon cutting celebration that took place at the Legion on Saturday April 28th included special guest St. Catharines MPP Jim Bradley as well as Norma and Donald MacKay, a Second World War veteran and Branch 138 past-president, who helped precipitate the renovations.



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Interlake Indians Team Reunion - 50 Years Later

by A.G. Rapattoni

On Wednesday, Sept. 26th, members of the 1962 Championship Interlake Indians softball team converged at Johnny Rocco's Italian Grill from as far away as Bass River and Nova Scotia to celebrate "old times."

The Interlake Indians were employees of the former Interlake Tissue Mills and played in the six-team Thorold/St. Catharines Industrial Softball League during the 1950-1960's era. It may have taken them five years to win their first pennant and league championship, but their pride, love of the game and desire to win made them league leaders by 1962. In that year they finished handily in first place with a league record total of 16 wins, one tie and two losses. In the play-offs they breezed through to the title with two straight wins over Provincial Paper in the semi-finals, then three successive wins over Thorold Legion in the finals. Plagued with ankle and knee injuries throughout the 1963 season, they still managed to win the league pennant and the Lloyd T. Bradley Memorial League championship trophy for their first place finish.

Unfortunately the team was dispersed in 1964 when a major lay-off affecting 160 employees was implemented by Kimberly-Clark Canada Ltd. who acquired Interlake Tissue Mills in 1961. The reunion was a very memorable experience for everyone in attendance.



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GEORGE KORINCE

Congratulations to George Korince who was recently inducted into the St. Catharines Sports Hall of Fame. A Merritton native, George was a skilled pitcher who, among his other accomplishments, helped four Ontario peewee, bantam and midget teams earn provincial titles between 1958 and 1962. George was scouted by the Detroit Tigers. He agreed to a contract, signed as an amateur free agent and started his career with Jamestown, Detroit's New York/Penn League farm team in 1965. He had several call-ups to the Tigers and became part of their pitching staff in 1966. In his last game in the Major Leagues, he earned a win at Fenway Park against the Boston Red Sox. He spent several years pitching in the AA Southern League and the International League. His pro career ended in 1970 due to injuries. George returned to the area and continued playing senior baseball. He retired from General Motors and moved to Florida several years ago.

TOPPS 72

1967 TIGERS' ROOKIE STAR

GEORGE KORINCE—PITCHER
 George is a twenty-one year old right-hander from Canada. Standing 6 feet 2 inches tall, the fireballer struck out 183 batters for his farm club in '66. A can't miss prospect.

MINOR LEAGUE LIFETIME PITCHING RECORD					
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PICTURE CREDIT: www.metrobaseball.ca



Reunion of Merritton Softball Champs from 1956

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARY

Congratulations seem rather inadequate on an occasion such as this but we do want to congratulate **Mary Legue**, a remarkable lady who still remembers the Merritton she grew up in. Mary recently celebrated her 102nd birthday at Tufford Nursing Home where she has resided for the past several years. 102 years -- that really is something to celebrate!

Remembrance Day Poem

Here's a poem Karen Tiffney wrote for Remembrance Day, 2012. Her son Josh, aged 23, is coming up to four years in the military but is still a true Merrittonian at heart!! Josh's grandfather, Sam Tiffney is a member of the Merritton Lions Club and has been for many years. The entire family is proud to attend the Merritton Remembrance Day service each year. Unfortunately last year, Josh was at a service close to base and was unable to be here. The year prior to that he proudly carried the Canadian flag in the Legion parade.



We're hoping that it will work out this year for Josh to be home with his family and friends as we remember those who sacrificed everything.

REMEMBERING A SOLDIER WITHOUT A NAME

I might not remember your name, but I do remember you paid the ultimate price and died.

I might not remember what city you called home, but I do remember that I fell to my knees and cried.

Your company, your rank or your regiment does not matter to me, Whether you are a full-time soldier or a reservist is not important, most would agree.

You fought your war in hell and now in heaven abide, Heaven's gates burst open wide as God wrapped his loving arms around you and ushered you inside.

Personal and political opinions about whether war is right or wrong,

Can be debated all night and all day long.

I might not remember if you were someone's husband, father or son,

But I do remember...a greater hero, there quite simply is none. The 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month...still some ask, what is it all for?

And wonder if all the fuss and publicity is still really that important anymore?

Wreaths that are placed on each grave...is just one way of remembering on Remembrance Day,

And we also remember in a moment of silence as we stand united to pray.

I might not remember your name, oh soldier, who fought so valiantly,

But I will always remember your sacrifices...sacrifices that were made so unselfishly.

Karen Tiffney



Welcome to Merritton

On July 1st, 2012, the Merritton Community Group held a sign dedication ceremony to thank everyone who had helped raise funds for the new Merritton Community sign. The sign is located west of the entrance to The Keg restaurant on Glendale Avenue in the heart of Merritton. The planting at the site was done by the city and paid for by the Green Committee. A recognition of the donors and unveiling of the sign had taken place previously but this was a good opportunity to celebrate all the efforts that had to come together to make this sign happen.

We were thrilled to see many of the donors in attendance including Doreen England, one of our original members and one of the first to donate. Along with the donors, the Lions, Lioness, Green Committee and members of the Merritton Community Group were all in attendance. City of St. Catharines Mayor Brian McMullan was also in attendance for this excellent occasion (as he is for most of our events) and offered words of congratulations.

Next time you are at The Keg or hiking in Mountain Locks Park, why not check out the names on the sign?

LIONESS RAFFLE WINNERS

50/50 winner Doug McLean Ticket # 1782
TV winner Dave Murray Ticket # 1225

BOOKS ON MERRITTON'S HISTORY

MM reader Scott Bradley is seeking books on the history of Merritton. Please email us at merrittonmatters@hotmail.com if you have any recommendations.

The Railway Bridge

By Ruth Troughton

'Remarkable piece of concrete work carried out by N.St.C.&T Ry Engineers', the St. Catharine Standard shouted on Thursday June 27, 1907 followed by this paragraph:

Few, if any, of the residents of St. Catharines and vicinity have any conception of the magnitude of the project which will, when completed, be constructed in their midst. It will be one of the largest in the Dominion and positively without comparison in Ontario.

There followed a detailed description of how the bridge was to be built, and concluded with this – *the one critical point to be considered in the erection of the trestle is strength and sustaining power and with that idea foremost in their minds, the engineers have sought to make it overly strong in case anything should at any time bring too much strain to bear; the more than necessary reinforcements would counteract any tendency to break away. There is enough strength stored up in the small steel girders, used as supports, to sustain the largest locomotive used on any railroad.*

Call it the Arch, the Bridge, the Trestle - I had only seen the twenty foot wide arch and a few feet of concrete on each side as I drove up and down Oakdale. I had no idea of the beautiful arches hidden by the trees on either side.

The day I heard the Arch was to be demolished I took several snapshots. I knew nothing of its history, its age, or what it might have meant to the community, but being a bit of an artist I could recognize a work of art. Soon I had an 18 x 24 inch drawing completed. I had grown more interested in its history as I shaded in the arches and began to wonder how old it was. It seemed too large for a branch line.

Having lived in this area for the last 13 years, I saw The Keg in its ruined state and its proud reconstruction. Then came tearing down of the bricks that surrounded the Lybster Mill but still, I couldn't quite imagine quiet Merritton as a busy manufacturing center back at the turn-of-the-century – horses and wagons trotting down the streets and into the lanes on the way to their stables – the banging and crashing from Hayes Steel mill day and night. Then there would be the early morning subdued talk and shuffling feet of the women who had



risen early to take care of their families before heading out to Interlake or Alliance Paper or one of the several other mills up and down the track.

I figured the older men of the community could satisfy my curiosity. There were stories upon stories but I couldn't seem to pin anyone down to a definite story on The Arch. Arnold Hartnett suggested Mike Johnson, a walking encyclopedia on all matters of early Merritton. Mike's name wasn't in the telephone directory. I gave up that route and headed for the Central Library.

I had barely spoken two sentences in the historical section when someone said, "Why don't you ask Mike Johnson—he's sitting right over there."

I hesitated at least a half second before I spoke to him. What a treasure trove of information! We talked for quite a while. He told me of playing on the trestle and around it when he was just a boy – how he and his friends walked over the Arch on the way to school and sometimes slipped into the side arches for an illicit cigarette.

When next we met he had gathered information from the old newspaper and a book about the railways that carried the raw materials, many over the arch, to the many factories and carried away the finished products – steel and paper and auto parts– jobs for men and women.

The Arch carried millions of tons of goods over its hundred plus years and I, for one, am sorry it is gone.

Ruth has several drawings of the bridge for sale. Phone 905 684 1331

Railway Bridge Gone

The railway bridge near the former Hayes plant was demolished along with the berms from the CN's line to Abbott Street. The rail line on this bridge was part of the St. Catharines & Niagara Central Railway that expanded into this area in 1888. The railway was sold to the NS&T (Niagara, St. Catharines & Toronto) railway in 1899. In 1960, this railway amalgamated with Canadian National Railway (CNR). Acquired by Trillium in 1999, it has been abandoned for the last few years.

Just across the street will be the new fire hall and a new housing development on land that is owned by Merritton Mills Redevelopment Corporation.



Johansson Bar Site Proposal

It is unfortunate that one of our historical artifacts is placed in a very inconspicuous and unassuming location. The Johansson Bar is located on Glendale Avenue by the entrance to the Sobey's parking lot. The tool is an example of the type of tools needed to build the canal. The bar was used to lift and lower the large stones used in the building of the locks of the Second Welland Canal. It was used sometime between 1842 to 1845 and has been on display since 1983. The Walker Brothers Quarries Ltd. donated the bar to our community.

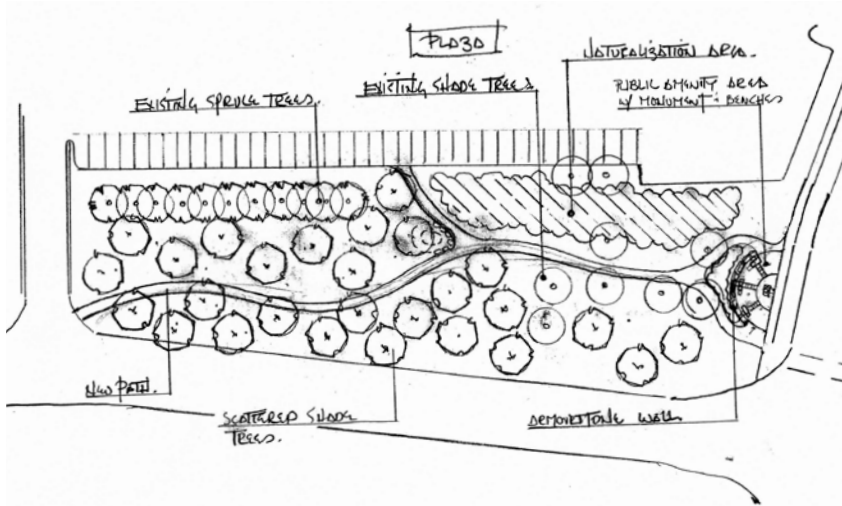
A while ago, we asked Rene Ressler, a canal advocate, if the Bar should be moved. He responded by first reminding us that Lock 14 is buried adjacent to the west wall of Sobey's. One thought then was that this lock should be partially excavated, similar to Lock 15 in Mountain Locks Park, and the Johansson Bar placed at the north end where it would serve as a great rest area for the Merritt Trail. The Merritton Community Group applied to The Keg Grant Foundation for money to make some of this happen but was not successful.

A proposal is being made by the City of St. Catharines' Green Committee as indicated in the drawing shown here. But the Committee

will only be able to complete this with financial contributions from the community at large. Should anyone wish to contribute you can contact Green committee member Dave Haywood through his website Merritton.com.

Councillor Bruce Timms has some additional ideas he would like to add to the existing proposal. He would suggest upgrading this site, using the model of what has been done at Thorold's Beaverdams Park. Basically the plan would involve clearing and excavating 18 to 24 inches from the top layer of stone. The only maintenance would be grass cover. A sign board would be placed close to Sobey's driveway and a smart phone App would explain the Lock including the larger context of the Lybster Mill, The Keg and Mountain Locks Park.

We need to devote more attention to this integral canal building tool as it is worth appreciating by future generations.



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COMIC BOOKS

By Tom Barwell

When I was a kid, comic books were a great source of entertainment. Who could forget titles like Archie, Mighty Mouse, Superman and Uncle Scrooge? Or the famous yell of “Shazam” that turned Captain Marvel back and forth between a mere mortal and a mighty magic figure. The list went on and on.

Costing only a nickel, which was sometimes an allowance, they were traded, loaned out, borrowed and treated like gold. It was always more of a challenge to deal than to just buy. And, of course, because of our limited buying power, we were forced to be dealers. The one with the largest collection was treated like royalty but he had to be pretty shrewd to hold his position.

For a while we had heard rumours that some of the many paper mills in the area were using unsold comic books and magazines in the pulp making process. In our minds this was such a waste. We were determined to find this mother lode, so plans for a raid were discussed.

There were many mills in the area. The strongest comic rumour singled out the Beaverboard in Thorold. This was ruled out because of distance, so we turned our attention to the Garden City paper complex. It was just a short walk away. The best route was straight down the NS&T tracks heading north from Merritt Street. Early one Saturday morning we headed out. We passed the Domtar Company with its huge mountain of logs. It seemed to be completely shut down for the day. A tempting target so it was put into the memory banks for future exploration.

The mill wasn't far and when we arrived it looked to be in a shutdown mode as well. There was only one car in the parking lot. A piece of cake! With visions of comic books in our heads we approached, trying to make it look like an innocent walk. When the coast was clear, we quickly darted around to the rear of the building. Luckily there was a door unlocked beside a large truck that was backed up to a loading bay. We silently entered. Except for the sound of hissing steam pipes and gurgling noises, all was still. There was a maze of machinery and conveyors that seemed to go on forever. We immediately lucked out as there was a magazine on the floor just below a large overhead bin. Could it be?

Very conveniently, there was an outside ladder that was quickly scaled. Although the light was very dim, we could make out shredded cardboard. How disappointing! But climbing down inside it turned out that there was a treasure trove of comic books and magazines mixed in. What a find! Paper bags were brought out of our pockets and stuffed with as many books as possible.

Suddenly a door slammed and we froze with fear at the noise. That one car. Cautiously three pairs of eyes peered over the edge. To our horror, it was discovered that the bottom of the bin was connected to a large vat. It was filled with grey matter that looked like porridge and was slowly turning as if in a giant mixer. Making it scarier was a wisp of steam drifting upwards towards the ceiling. Clearly the bin's contents emptied into it and if that happened, we could go as well. Beside the vat was a lone workman. If he pulled the lever at the bottom, what a surprise he would get. Along with a torrent of paper would come three screaming kids. His head was turning around as if he sensed our presence. To our relief,

after taking what seemed like a sample, he returned the way he came, slamming the door. In a flash, we gathered the loot and made our way out the back door. We barreled down the tracks to the safety of our hangout.

Later, when our loot was examined, it was discovered that a lot of the covers had sections cut out of them. Apparently this was to prevent resale. Although disappointed, it didn't really matter as we traded amongst ourselves. We were quite satisfied with our venture as we had over a hundred books. Included by accident were a few risqué magazines, gathered up accidentally of course.

The paper mill is now a huge flea market. On a recent visit it was impossible to see where our adventure had taken place. Perhaps some of the old books we had as kids were for sale

there. Perhaps some of the ones we had borrowed were there. And worth a lot more than a nickel!



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LEFT: Wells of Hope's Norm Hauer and New Lions President Jonathan Williams


FIRST FAITH BUILD FOR HABITAT NIAGARA

Habitat Niagara has recently begun construction on an Adopt-a-Home project on Tasker Street. This marks home #36 for Habitat for Humanity in the Niagara Region and the second one for Merrittton. The first full day of construction coincided with World Habitat Day. The United Nations has designated the first Monday of October every year as World Habitat Day. The idea is to reflect on the state of our towns and cities and the basic right of all, to adequate shelter. It is also intended to remind the world of its collective responsibility for the future of the human habitat.

This house is being built in partnership with the Mennonite Faith Community of Niagara. Volunteers will build this 3-bedroom, 1100-square foot, 2-storey home over the next 6-weeks. On the first day, the two storey home was fully framed, windows and doors were installed. This home will likely be complete by early November. The family will move there shortly after. A wood signing ceremony was anticipated for week of October 9th. A home dedication ceremony is yet to be planned.

Families are transformed by the process of owning a Habitat home and so is the community of partners and donors. Even the volunteers and donors from the Mennonite Faith Community will be forever changed by building their first home for Habitat Niagara. Habitat would like to thank other major partners for their generous support and contributions: City of St. Catharines; Niagara Regional Housing; Niagara Region; Niagara College; Cotton Inc.; and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.





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Clark Machine Company

By Phyllis Thomson

Nick Altmayer (a professed Merritton fan now retired and living in Kitchener) sent us the pictures of the 'vice' appearing here, which he had purchased at a garage sale in Kitchener. Of note is that the name Merritton on the vice has only one "t". Nick was interested in finding out when the Clark Machine Company (maker of the vice) operated in Merritton and any other details we could find about them.

The Merritton Newsletter aims to please, so with this in mind we called Dalton Clark to ask if his family was involved in the Clark Machine Company and if so, could he tell us a few things about it.

Well, he is (was)! And was happy to answer our questions. His grandfather began the company in Galt, Ontario in the early 1900's, moving the business to Thorold and then to Merritton in the 1920's. The company has been located on Glendale Ave. East since 1961. Dalton became involved as the owner/manager, along with his father and brother, in 1962 and remained there until the company was sold in 1992.

The vice that Nick purchased was likely produced in the 1930's when the company was making hacksaws and vices – they ceased making them sometime in the 1940's and turned to the production of rolls of machine parts, etc. which were sold to paper mills and steel mills.

The company remains in operation on Glendale Avenue, but under new management.



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49th Annual Merritton/Wissihickon Hockey Exchange



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In order to make the exchange weekend a success, the Merritton Athletic Association is hosting a fundraiser event on Saturday, November 17, 2012, at the Merritton Community Centre, starting at 7 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend! There will be a silent auction and dancing to the live music of Butterface, a Top 40 Dance/Pop band who play a wide variety of top 40 hits.

Tickets are \$5 and can be pre-purchased through the MAA or at the door.

For all the latest news on the Merritton Athletic Association, check out their website at www.maasports.ca.



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