

Chief Wilson's two sons were trapped in a cave-in at the sandpit that is now Tannery St. West and a companion ran to get help. Reggie White, a local youth, responded to his cry for help and dug the boys out. Hailed as a local hero by the townsfolk at the time, he later committed a double axe murder of a farmer and his sister out St. George way. Arrested by Chief Wilson at the local pool hall and taken back to the police station, he confessed to the crime. Reggie, who was considered mentally slow, explained that he was engaged to be married and needed the money he had earned working for the farmer. The farmer refused to pay and he lost his temper, hitting him with an axe that was near the wood box. He killed the farmer's sister when she entered and witnessed what had happened. He then stole their car, returned to Hespeler and dumped it in the Bechtel farm bush where the high school now sits. Chief Wilson was required to testify at Reggie's trial and witness his hanging at the Waterloo County Goal. Chief Wilson took his own life with his service pistol on August 23, 1942.

Harry Noble was named Chief on October 14, 1942. He had served as an OPP officer in Elk Lake, Ont. for over 15 years, three years with the Guelph City Police and two years as Kitchener High Constable. He organized the Hespeler School Safety Patrol, a new police call system and made important contributions to the town's traffic bylaws while in office. He retired in 1944.



Saturday July 5th
10 am ~ 10:30 pm
Admission is FREE

LETTERS

Dear Lary:

My brother, Frank, recently sent me a copy of the Spring 2008 issue of *Hespeler Happenings*. I always enjoy reading it. In reading the article about the Military Centre I noted the reference to Ellis' flats. This reminded me of the times my Uncle, John Wildman, took me, my brothers, his son Jack to Ellis's creek to snare suckers and to swim. I was never sure about the name of the creek; as to whether it was Alice's or Ellis's Creek. I recall too how we would await the opening of the flood gates at the Mill dye house late in the afternoon. The water would come rushing down the creek and we would have a really good ride on the waves. My brothers, cousin and I often hiked from my Grandmother's home -located on the site of the current chiropractic clinic -wading the river and creek and through the fields to Fisher's Mill to swim or fish. We would stop at my great-grandparent's farm located directly across from Wanner's Mennonite church. They are buried in the church cemetery.

Keep up the good publishing and please keep me on your mailing list. Sincerely yours,
Rev. Fred Speckeen, Ph.D.

Elmer Simmen took over as Hespeler Chief at that time. He had been a member of the Northwest Mounted Police for two years and a senior sergeant with the Guelph City Police. He was assisted by Sergeant Harold Dolson and Constable Duff Shaver. He resigned in October 1951 due to ill health. **Cyril L. Dale** was then hired as Hespeler Police Chief. He was a veteran of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and served until his retirement December 1, 1961. **Ernest Levitt**, a Hespeler resident since 1928, veteran of the Second World War having served four years overseas with the Highland Light Infantry, and a member of the Hespeler Police Dept. since June 1954 was promoted to the Chief's position in May 1962. He passed away from a heart attack August 29, 1964.

Albert K. (Bud) Snyder, a sergeant, was promoted to Chief but suffered a stroke on February 6, 1966 and was forced to step down. At the time Hespeler's force was made up of six members: Acting Chief Fred Stewart, Corporal Ralph Eagle, First Class Constable William Cutting, Third Class Constable John Westbrook and Probationary Constables Harold Saddler and Murray Stahlbaum.

Hespeler's last Police Chief was **Fred Stewart** who had joined the force in December 1957. A veteran of the Royal Canadian Navy from Cape Breton, Mr. Stewart served as Acting Chief for several months before being confirmed to the

position in 1967. With the creation of Waterloo Region in 1973, the Hespeler Police Department ceased to exist. Chief Stewart became a member of the Waterloo Regional Police Service and retired as a Staff Inspector in 1986.

While this article focuses on Hespeler's Police Chiefs, it is important to note that many other police constables faithfully served our community over the years, but that is for another time. ■

Hespeler Happenings

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER
 Published by The Company of Neighbours

Hespeler Happenings is published four times a year by The Company of Neighbours. It is available at *Zehrs, Food Basics, Hespeler Library, W.G. Johnson Centre, many local businesses* and our store at 7 Queen St. East. Deadline for the next issue is Friday, Sept 12 2008. Please contact editor Lary Turner at 519-658-9290 or email lary_turner@msn.com to submit an article or place an advertisement.

Hespeler Happenings is a newsletter devoted to the promotion of information and activities, in and around the village of Hespeler, for the greater good of the people of our community.



SUMMER
2008

*It's people
that make
communities
what they are.*

Hespeler Happenings

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER
 Published by The Company of Neighbours



DOWNTOWN UPDATES

by Lary Turner

The new and long awaited **City Parking Lot** has been paved and the finishing touches are being completed. The downtown lot was held up because of renovation delays at the Hespeler Library. With the opening of the new Library, the old Zoom Video building was demolished and the site cleaned up and graded. In early December, the snows came and ended all hope of finishing the project last year. After a two year wait, it is finally set to open. I can hardly wait to get my first ticket in the new lot!

Hespeler Village Winemaking celebrated their first anniversary on May 1st. Owner Bernie MacCormick is pleased with the steady growth of the business since it opened. I can attest to the large and varied product line and the friendly helpful service! **Nature's Reflexions Pet Emporium** is expanding into the store

formerly occupied by Dalenas Hair Design. Owner Linda Frazao announces her business will have a self-grooming and professional dog grooming spa, expanded pet food line with 17 brands of dog, 13 brands of cat food and a specialty line for pets with allergies. Another specialty line of food is for cats that develop crystals in their organs. Official expansion celebration is scheduled for mid-July with a fundraiser for the Cambridge and Area Humane Society. Meanwhile, drop in and check out the new digs! **Beads & Books** closed at the end of April. The owner had given the business a one year trial and found she did not have the time to operate with regular hours. The **Hespeler Village BIA** will be supporting local businesses and our community through a partnership with Snap Cambridge. Beginning in June the BIA will be sponsoring a page focusing on our downtown core shopping area and monthly featuring a selected business. ■

SUMMER OF FUN

Doon Heritage Crossroads is offering a summer program for playground groups, day camps and general children's groups with fun activities such as: blacksmithing, laundry by hand, butter making, bread dough kneading, telegraphy, fraktur, games such as red rover, breast, bird or fish, and grandmother's trunk. Cost is \$4 per child. Reserve your space by calling 519-748-1914. ■

FORMER INDUSTRIES

by Lary Turner

On a regular basis The Company of Neighbours receives requests for information about Hespeler companies and/or businesses that no longer exist. Be it a customer from New Zealand searching for a replacement part for their Simplicity wringer washing machine, or the curious homeowner who found the control plate for a Hall-Zurd gravity furnace mounted in his basement, they eventually find their way to our office.

As a general rule, we are successful in supplying the information they seek. For this reason, I am starting a new feature in *Hespeler Happenings* focusing on the history of those old companies. The **A. B. Jardine Company** was established in 1870 by Andrew Bell Jardine. It operated out of a frame building on Kribs St., near the present site of the W. G. Johnson Centre, until growth required a much larger space. In 1883, A.B. erected a 32' x 120' stone building on Avenue St. (now Waterboys 54 Guelph Ave.).

Additions were added in 1890, 1894, 1910 and 1911 as the company grew. In 1917 the company was incorporated as a limited company under the banner A. B. Jardine and Company Ltd. Andrew's sons



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eventually followed him into the business. From its earliest days when a horse and Democrat was used to make deliveries, until it closed, the company kept pace with the times by producing specialty products. Originally making wooden spools, shuttles and bobbins for textile companies, A. B. Jardine evolved to produce pipe threading and cutting tools, pipe wrenches, machinery including presses, drilling machines, wrecking and portable floor cranes, back press attachments, forges, and automobile taps and dies. In fact, the company held patents on many of the products it developed and produced.

During the War Years, they also made shell casings for artillery guns. Built in the Speed River floodplain, the company suffered financial losses on a number of occasions due to flooding. By the thirties, the company was being operated by the grandsons of the founder. In the late 1940s the staff numbered around 40 employees who enjoyed the benefits of working at a small family run company. These included wages comparable with much larger industries, sick benefit, life and hospital insurance and a five day work week with annual paid holidays. The A. B. Jardine Company ceased operations in the late 1950s due to the owners' differing views regarding the future direction of the company. The property was acquired in 1963 by Doug Mitten, owner/founder of Provincial Plastics, and used to manufacture vinyl siding. ■

HOME

by Sara Penny

Home; it's what we are all looking for when it is time to relocate. It's that elusive quality that a potential house, Neighbourhood or Community must possess, in order to live up to our expectations. It is, also, the one attribute that is not listed on the sparse real estate description. This was the dilemma facing my family, when we realized that we had out-grown our teeny-tiny house and aging Neighbourhood in Guelph.

We sat down and made up a list of the qualities that we were searching for in our future home. The list was as predictable, as it was unrealistic: - child-friendly, inclusive Neighbourhood, lots more room,

three bedrooms, large useful yard, garage preferably double, more than one bathroom, school within walking distance, lots of local parks and walking trails, indoor Olympic size pool with wave function. Can you guess which criteria the children added? Almost all of our items could be satisfied by a quick perusal through the Real Estate Newspapers, all but the most important one. We asked friends, family and co-workers for recommendations and were given plenty of advice, most often conflicting.

After several months of searching we came to the realization that moving is always a gamble. Even the most highly endorsed community will have its good and bad qualities. We, finally, found a home that fulfilled all of our household and yard criteria, excluding the extravagant pool the kids were dreaming of. The only problem; was its location. It was in this place called "Hespeler" that we had no experience with. We couldn't ask any one about the neighbourhood or community. Would we be happy there? Several car trips around the area showed us plenty of other young families actively using the parks and playing in yards. It seemed to be just the type of community we had been searching for. We decided to take a chance and embrace the unknown.

On our first tentative walk down the street as official residents, we were befriended by both sets of immediate neighbours, invited to join the Neighbourhood Parents' group, and informed of the upcoming Neighbourhood BBQ and Garage sale. Hespeler was every thing we had hoped to find and so much more. We had, some how, managed to come home. ■

HESPELER POLICE

by Lary Turner

Our community did not have a Police Constable in its early days. The settlement of Bergeytown, and later the hamlet of New Hope, was basically unprotected and relied on the honesty and goodwill of its citizens to be law abiding. With the incorporation of the Village of Hespeler, on January 19, 1859 the first Council meeting passed a motion by David Rife, seconded by C. Nahrgang that **Henry Fields** be appointed constable and "receive such fees as the law provides and only when on actual duty". The motion was carried and Henry Fields became the first police officer in Hespeler.

There was no lockup at the time, and the nearest goal was in Guelph, so anyone unfortunate enough to be incarcerated in the evening had to spend the night locked in a bedroom at the constable's house. There is a report of one such individual who woke Mr. Fields by making too much noise while trying to escape and was dragged back through the bedroom window by his ankles! The window was subsequently nailed shut.

Mr. Fields continued as constable until 1873 and passed away one year later at age 63. The position passed to **William Harvey** who served from 1874 to 1875, **Edward Bolduc** from 1876 until 1877, and **Robert Miles** from 1878 until 1881, **William B. Smith** from 1882 until 1885, and **Henry Winterhalt** from 1885 until 1887. Constable Winterhalt left to become the Chief of Police in Berlin following his capture of the most notorious horse thief in the province. For several years Hespeler area farmers, and others, had been the victims of a skilled crook who would appear

in the district and then vanish along with one of the best young horses, buggies and harness. Suspicion fell on a certain mysterious stranger who seemed to always appear just prior to another horse being snatched. He was seen by so many people, and the timing of his local visits corresponded with the disappearances that he earned the moniker of the "Horse Thief". However, none of the stolen animals had turned up to provide proof of his guilt. Word quickly spread whenever he was spotted in the district, and horse owners would take precautions to watch their best horses. Nevertheless, one would still go missing. The thief sensing easy pickings grew confident and began visiting more often. John Clemens of Fisher Mills had many fine horses and upon hearing the "Horse Thief" was seen in the area, stood watch along with his sons Abram, Isaiah, and Aaron. It began to rain heavily and they turned in thinking nothing would happen, but by morning one of their best was gone. The rain had softened the ground and the missing horse had a one-bar shoe making it easy to track. Mr. Clemens immediately set out and followed the shoe impression through Aberfoyle, Morriston, Puslinch, and Freeton. He inquired at each wayside hotel if anyone had seen a horse and/or rider matching his description. Upon making his inquiry at a hotel in Carlisle, a man sitting in the room quickly left and Mr. Clemens located his horse in the stable. He returned the next day with positive proof of the thief's identity.

Shortly after, a Puslinch farmer spread the word that the "Horse Thief" was again sighted out by the lake. Constable Winterhalt rushed out to the Lake Road and as the man walked past threw his arms around him and placed him under arrest. He was tried and sentenced to 24 years in Kingston Penitentiary. At his trial it was divulged that he was the same person convicted of stealing sheep from James Phin's farm, corner of Guelph Ave. and Poplar Drive. Identified as Mr. Kruger, he had been released after his sentence and Mr. Phin subsequently lost his barn, crops and prized herd of livestock in two mysterious fires. Kruger was released for good behavior after serving 14 years of his sentence and once again returned to this area. He was recognized in the vicinity of Mr. Phin's farm and again arrested and

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convicted of another horse stealing charge. Kruger died in Kingston Penitentiary.

Henry Winterhalt was Berlin Police Chief from 1887 until stepping down in 1902. He remained with the force until 1907. **Thomas McMaster** became Hespeler's Constable in 1888 and Chief Constable in 1893 earning a salary of \$260 per year. Born in Kirkcowan, Wigtonshire, Scotland in 1841 and a veteran of the 4th Battalion, 60th King's Own Rifles, he had served during the American Civil War. Chief McMaster held down nearly every municipal job available: Chief Constable, tax collector, dog catcher and license issuer, caretaker of the Hespeler Public School and Firehall, Town Foreman in charge of street cleaning and grading, and in charge of the fire brigade. To quote one citizen of the time, "He was pretty well everything!" But above all, he was probably the most loved of all Hespeler's constabulary. He was described as a very competent officer, a fine friend to all, a

popular citizen and a genial person. He resigned in 1913 at the age of 71.

He was succeeded by **Thomas Barr Wilson** in 1914 at a salary of \$750 per annum plus an additional \$50 for serving as sanitary inspector. Hespeler did not have a police car at that time, and the Chief responded to calls by taxi! Also born in Scotland, he took a roundabout path to Hespeler. Chief Wilson served with the Scots Greys during the Boer War, immigrated to Canada in 1906 with the intention of joining the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, worked in mining in Cobalt, Ont. and then returned to Scotland. He worked three years with the Lanarkshire Police before returning to Canada and joining the Berlin Police Dept. in 1909.

Later that year, he joined the Sudbury Police as a Sargeant and in 1911; he assumed the duties of Chief of International Nickel Company's Security. In 1914 he became Hespeler's Police Chief. He served this community well and faithfully for 28 years until his death in 1942.




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