
From: Adelaide Hoodless [mailto:]
Sent: August 30, 2012 11:39 PM
To: Gallagher, Mary
Cc: Office of the Mayor; Pasuta, Robert
Subject: Endorsement of Nomination of Clayton Barker for the 'Heritage Community Recognition Program'

Mary Gallagher
Deputy City Clerk
City of Hamilton

Dear Ms. Gallagher and the City of Hamilton Council Members;

My name is Catherine Stevenson and I am the Curator of the Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead.

My purpose in writing is to initiate a nomination of Clayton Barker for Ontario Heritage Trust's 'Heritage Community Recognition Program - Built Heritage' (<http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/Programs/Recognition-programs/Heritage-Community-Recognition-Program.aspx>) for due to his extraordinary work in saving the 'Westbrook House' - a unique and important structure which was witness to the last battle fought on Canadian soil against a foreign power - from demolition. (It now stands, reconstructed, at Westfield Heritage Village as a testament to his efforts.)

In order to be considered for this honour, his nomination must be endorsed by a municipal council. Given that Westfield is managed by the Hamilton Conservation Authority, I believe that the municipal council for the City of Hamilton is the only appropriate nominating body. See more about nomination requirements through this link: <http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/Programs/Recognition-programs/Heritage-Community-Recognition-Program/Program-guidelines.aspx>

In late summer 2004, Clayton Barker learned that an old hired-hand house at the Chary Produce farm (south of the main intersection at the village of Oakland, Ontario) was on the demolition list for Brant County. Mr. Chary had granted him permission to observe the building and photograph it for posterity. As its representative, Clayton prodded and poked at walls in an effort to determine the date of the cabin's construction. He came to realize that the house's date of construction was very early. Gerald Ripley, a heritage building specialist and long-time volunteer at Westfield, was able to identify details that supported Clayton's estimate that the building was constructed in about 1810. (Gerald's letter of recommendation is included in this application package.)

The Westbrook Farm (now the Chary Produce Farm) is part of the site of the last land battle fought against a foreign power on Canadian soil, on November 6th, 1814. With an estimated date of construction of 1810, the cabin therefore was standing during this important event, when local militia forces attempted to stop McArthur from further penetrating Upper Canada. In fact, information gathered through research has since shown that a member of the Westbrook family was actually watching the battle from an upper (and still existing) window in the cabin!

Having determined the building's significance, Clayton sought to prevent its destruction. First, the building had to be moved. This process took about two weeks. As the deconstruction occurred, Clayton studied all of the components of the building. He marked each one with an identification number and took photographs, measurements and sketches.

In about March 2010, the materials were moved to a public place, which necessitated round-the-clock visits in order to prevent theft or vandalism. Clayton often kept vigil in the middle of the night to ensure the safety of the components of the rare and important building!

At this point, the Hamilton-Wentworth Conservation Authority agreed to re-erect the cabin, incorporating it into the Westfield Heritage Village. Clayton assisted with the transport of the historic components to Westfield. He also facilitated the salvage of approximately 700 square foot of c1880's clapboarding, to be utilized as replacement exterior cladding, from the soon-to-be-demolished Northfield Hall (about five miles south of Burford, ON) in May, 2010

His work did not end there. Clayton is also in the process of creating two intricately detailed table-top replica models as well as architectural drawings to provide all the necessary information for re-construction. He has also been on hand at Westfield to assist with the work of rebuilding the cabin.

Clayton's involvement in saving the Westbrook House, the last known building which was witness to the last battle fought on Canadian soil against a foreign power, has spanned seven years and counting. He was the first to assess the building and to recognize its significance, and has overseen all aspects of the project since. He has taken extraordinary measures to safeguard the structure, making tens of calls to seek out a permanent home and initiating a round-the-clock vigil when it was housed in a public place. He has put in countless hours of volunteer work on salvaging the structure itself, on cataloguing every ancient timber and on creating architectural drawings and finely detailed models. The significance of his devotion to the project cannot be overstated; the Westbrook House would not have survived but for his tireless work and advocacy.

I ask that Hamilton City Council endorse this nomination of Clayton Barker for the Ontario Heritage Trust's 'Heritage Community Recognition Program - Built Heritage'. I am attaching the supporting documents for the nomination package, which includes letters of support, photographs and press articles. If the Hamilton City Council is willing to make a motion endorsing this nomination, I could add the record of that motion to the nomination package and forward it to the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Please contact me with any questions that you might have. I look forward to hearing from you.

Very sincerely,

Catherine Stevenson
Curator

Adelaide Hunter Hoodless Homestead
A National Historic Site
359 Blue Lake Road, St. George

Open Tuesday - Friday 10 am - 2 pm
And Sundays 2 - 4 pm
Or call us for an appointment at 519.448.1130

August, 2012

Dear Sir/Madam:

Please accept this letter of reference in support of the nomination of Clayton Barker, of Burford for the Ontario Heritage Trust's Heritage Community Recognition Program in the area of 'Built Heritage'.

Mr. Barker is an unsung hero in the battle to preserve local history. For decades he has documented the pioneer history of Brant County through a massive amount of written work as well as architectural drawings of masterful artistry.

His most recent accomplishment, in 2010, resulted in the rescue of a physical reminder of our storied past that is of significant importance given the upcoming bicentennial of an epic chapter in Canadian history – the War of 1812.

Mr. Barker single-handedly saw to the salvage of the oldest surviving pioneer home in Brant County -- the circa-1810 house of Haggai Westbrook -- which was in situ overlooking the Battle of Malcolm's Mills – the final land battle of the war in Upper Canada.

The saga of saving the home began in 2005 when Mr. Barker discovered the architectural gem hiding inside an ugly tarpaper wrapper, being used as a bunkhouse for farm workers. Mr. Barker engaged the co-operation of the landowner, and then oversaw and took part in the careful dismantling of the home, stripping it of 20th-century cladding and roofing to reveal its well-preserved original skeleton, comprised of massive cedar timbers bearing the marks of pioneer pitsaw manufacture.

Mr. Barker meticulously documented, numbered and diagrammed each piece of timber, including location and size and how the pieces fit together. He then negotiated the storage of the timbers for years. Mr. Barker's passion and know-how were pivotal in consultations with Westfield Heritage Village, near Rockton, Ont., that culminated, in 2010, in the pioneer village transporting the timbers to their site where they will be carefully and lovingly re-erected as a testament to pioneer craftsmanship.

I have known Mr. Barker for a decade in conjunction with our mutual passion for local history and genealogy, and I was privileged to interview him in my professional capacity as a journalist to record the story of his remarkable find and his indefatigable efforts to salvage this endangered relic of architectural Canadiana.

I believe that Mr. Barker's exceptional and successful efforts make him a most deserving recipient of the Ontario Heritage Trust's Heritage Community Recognition Program in the area of 'Built Heritage'. Thank you for your consideration.

Heather Ibbotson

Reporter, Brantford Expositor
195 Henry St.
Brantford, Ontario
519-756-2020, ext. 2292

Marie Ripley

To: adelaidehoodless@gmail.com

August, 2012

To whom it may concern,

Clayton Barker is a remarkable Canadian. At the age of 10 he began to record the history of the people and architecture of his village. From the age of 15 he has published a regular column in the *Burford Advance* and produced remarkably accurate drawings of the historic buildings in his community. He is the author of *Historically Yours* a compilation of 32 years of articles in the *Burford Advance*, *The Life Story of Luther Barker*, and *The Burford Congregational Cemetery 1834-1996*.

Only someone with Clayton's knowledge of architecture would have recognized that beneath the chameleon-like skin of a tiny building on the southern border of the village of Oakland hid the 1810 timber frame home of Haggai Westbrook. A member of the Norfolk Militia and the builder of the home, Haggai Westbrook and his home partook in the last battle with a foreign nation on Canadian soil. With the assistance of a team of unskilled labourers, Clayton deconstructed this building, recording every aspect of its structure with photographs, sketches, and detailed drawings. The disassembled building was then stored and watched-over by Clayton for five years. On some occasions it was even moved by him and hidden from those who would have sold or destroyed it. Thanks in no small part to him, it is now safely stored at the Westfield Heritage Village where it will be reconstructed under his supervision for the two hundredth anniversary of the War of 1812.

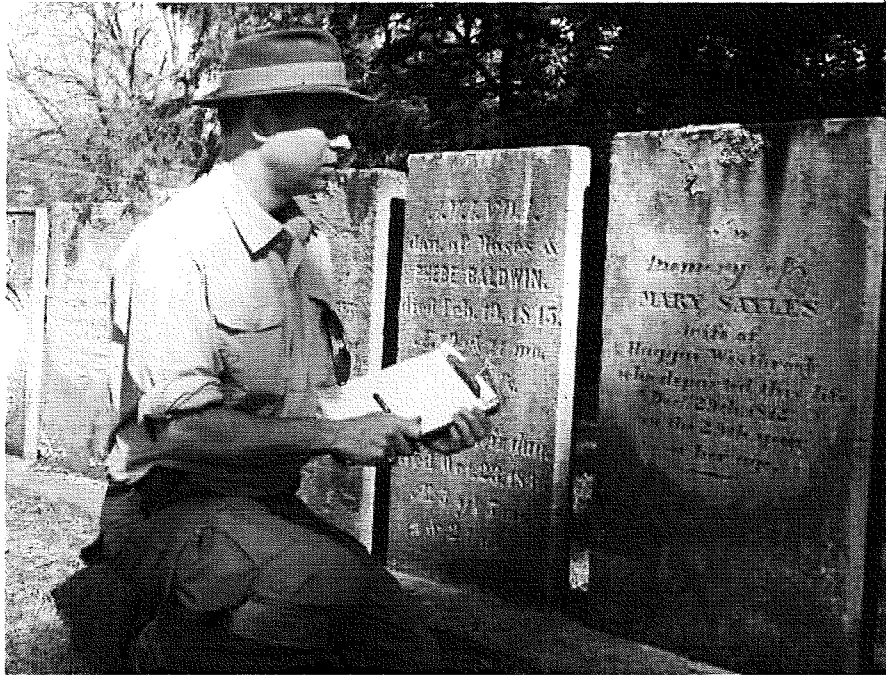
Gerald W.J. Ripley

Ryerson Architecture 1964
Volunteer, Westfield Heritage Village since 1976
Past President, The Friends of Westfield
Building Parent of the; (circa.) 1900
Daniel J. Spring Planing Mill

Brant history moving to heritage village

Posted By HEATHER IBBOTSON

Updated 2 days ago



Clayton Barker beside grave stone for the wife of Haggai Westbrook, who built the Westbrook home about 200 years ago. Corrie Williams for the Expositor.

The pile of dark weathered timbers that sat for several weeks in an Oakland park didn't look like anything special, but appearances can be deceiving.

It was actually the carefully deconstructed, diagrammed and documented skeleton of perhaps the oldest surviving pioneer home in Brant County.

Thanks to Burford historian Clayton Barker, the rare example of local pioneer history, dating to about 1810, was spared destruction and has found a welcoming home at Westfield Heritage Village, near Rockton, Ont.

The lumber was carefully loaded onto a trailer by Hamilton Conservation Authority employees and trucked to the pioneer village on April 26.

"We felt (the house) had a lot of significance," said Westfield manager Rondalyn Brown.

The house was originally built by Haggai Westbrook some 200 years ago in what was later called the Township of Oakland. The Westbrook family was among the first settlers in Brant County, arriving in the 1790s from New York State. Haggai died on July 17, 1821, at age 49 and is buried in Oakland pioneer cemetery.

As for the house, "It was there during the War of 1812 and

As for the house, "It was there during the War of 1812 and would have been looking down on the battle (of Malcolm's Mills) itself," Brown said.

The skirmish, on Nov. 6, 1814, was the final land battle of the war in Upper Canada and saw about 700 Americans overwhelm and scatter a valliant body of 150 Canadian militiamen.

The addition of the Westbrook House to the heritage village is an exciting and timely coup given the upcoming bicentennial of the War of 1812, Brown said.

Plans call for the house to be re-erected by the end of 2011, in time for provincewide events recognizing the milestone in Canada-U. S. history.

The saga of saving the house began in 2005, when Barker discovered the architectural treasure hiding inside an ugly tarpaper wrapper. At first, he had only suspicions, given its location and word-of-mouth suggestions of extreme age.

On a farm property near Oakland, beneath layers of 1940s tarpaper insulation and wood sheathing, was the skeleton of a one-and-a-half-storey pioneer frame house constructed in about 1810 from cedar timbers.

The timbers, likely hewn from massive trees whose stumps remain in the Oakland Swamp, bear the scoring of pioneer pitsaw manufactura.

"It was awesome," Barker said.

For many years, the 16-foot by 30-foot building on Steve Chary's property had been used as a bunkhouse for seasonal workers but, in 2005, the building was slated to be demolished by a controlled burn.

Barker said he was told that if he could haul the building away, it was his. He scrambled to document the home's architectural details while seeking a way to save the structure.

Westfield could not take the building at that time, but its experts viewed it and agreed it was of the 1812-era, Barker said.

Having no luck enlisting help from other organizations, Barker went to work himself, with help from Chary's Jamaican workers. The house was gutted of cladding, roofing and interior walls and floors, which dated to renovations in 1929 and 1945, Barker said.

Several empty mason jars and a hand pump from the 1920s were found beneath the floorboards, and layers of whitewash were plastered with newspapers from the mid-1940s, but no early relics were found.

The deconstruction revealed the bare bones of the original structure, still sound after two centuries.

Barker meticulously documented and numbered each piece of timber, including location, size and how they all fit together.

County Coun. Joan Gatward enlisted members of the Brant Heritage Committee to help lower the large beams and also acquired a flatbed trailer on which to pile the lumber, Barker said.

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The wood then sat untouched for nearly five years. Barker had been left with the understanding that the timbers were to be completely sheltered, but that did not happen, he said.

Gatward recently resurrected the project and, with help from the Oakland Lions Club, the timbers were transferred to Lions Park in Oakland while attempts were made to rekindle interest from Westfield Heritage Village.

Despite the weathering, the timber survived in a remarkable state.

"It's in very good condition," Brown said, adding that experts in pioneer structures are confident the moisture level of the wood is acceptable and that all the parts are there. Several pieces may need replacing, but overall the main sections are solid, she said.

Brown credits Barker with recognizing the building's historic significance and for going to great lengths to ensure its rescue, including overseeing its proper deconstruction and taking extensive notes, diagrams and photographs.

"If not for his passion and diligence," the Westbrook House would have been lost, Brown said.

hibbotson@theexpositor.com

Other Westfield buildings

Other Westfield Heritage Village buildings that originated in Brantford or Brant County:

- * TH & B railway station built in Jerseyville in 1896
- * Gillen House, which originally sat at 100 Wellington St., Brantford
- * Cathcart School built in 1845
- * D'Aubigny's Inn built in 1820 on the southwestern outskirts of Brantford
- * Small barn built in Brant County in 1840
- * Native log chapel used as a church on Six Nations until 1854
- * Native log house built on Six Nations in 1911

Article ID# 2560772

War of 1812-14 Relic Discovered:

by Catherine Stevenson, 2011:

At first glance, the old Westbrook house didn't look like anything more than a "tar-papered shack." Its deconstruction had been overseen by local built heritage specialist Clayton Barker, who was the first to recognize it as a structure that had witnessed the last battle of the War of 1812. Seven years ago, when Clayton Barker, of Burford, Ontario, had learned that an old hired-hand house on a farm near the village of Oakland, Ontario, was on the demolition list for Brant County, he drew upon his background in Urban Design and Architectural Conservation coupled with 24 years of experience as an Architectural and Civil technician to document and salvage the building.

On a very cold and blustery January day in 2005, as a member of the Municipal Heritage Committee, Clayton was granted permission to observe the building and photograph it for posterity, as it was situated in the middle of a planning application which would involve its having to be demolished or control-burned by the fire department. Under normal circumstances, this would have been the end of the story however, as he poked and prodded, photographed and sketched the old building, which had been converted into a hired hand's house for the produce farm, he had hopes that he would find evidence to support local legend and speculation that it had been constructed prior to the War of 1812-14.

To the untrained eye, it appeared to only date from the 1940's yet, there was something about the proportions of the building, the slope of its gable ends, versus the height of its walls and overall width that seemed to speak of a much older structure. In fact, local anecdotal evidence recorded in the 1920's, and in a local history book, published in the mid-20th century, proclaim that this old one and a half-storey frame constructed building was considered to be more than 100 years old back 90 years ago!!

Back in the days of the original settlers, the road through Oakland was the main route to Lake Erie from the historic settlement of "Brant's Ford," (now City of Brantford). Oakland Township was surveyed in the late 1700's and in 1800 became part of Burford Township, known as "The Burford Gore." The village of Oakland was laid out by a surveyor in 1810. Haggai Westbrook settled on this site and constructed a log house there and married Mary Sayles in 1797 in Oakland. Haggai was born at Machackemeck, Orange County, New York State in 1775, was the second youngest of eight children of Anthony and Sarah (Dekker) Westbrook (Westbroek). His father was Anthony Westbrook, a U.E. Loyalist, who served as a Volunteer with Captain Joseph Brant during the American Revolutionary War. Haggai and Mary (called "Polly") had three children: Haggai Jr., Abraham and Mordecai. Sometime between about c1807 and c1811, when the earliest cut iron nails started coming into this area and after the sawmill had been established at Oakland, the Westbrook family replaced their original log cabin with this timber frame building. A short time later, in 1812, Haggai's wife died and only lived in the new house a couple years.

Haggai joined the local Militia and served during the war of 1812 and two years later, the Westbrook Farm was part of the site of the last land battle fought against a foreign power on Canadian soil, November 6th, 1814 when brigadier General Duncan McArthur led nearly 800 men on a raiding expedition through Upper Canada. With an estimated date of construction of 1810, the cabin therefore was standing during this important event, when local militia forces attempted to stop the Americans from further penetrating Upper Canada. In fact, information gathered through research has since shown that a member of the Westbrook family was actually watching the battle from an upper (and still existing) window in the cabin!

At the time the building was documented by Clayton, it had a random-rubble foundation, and the building was orientated east-west. It is Clayton's theory that it had been moved to that location from its original position closer to the road. The existing primary residence on the farm was a red-bricked Regency dwelling constructed about 1855 and situated about one hundred feet to the north of the old house. It is likely that the Westbrook family was becoming quite crowded in this little one-and-a-half-storey 16' x 24' frame building by the 1850's, as it is noted in the 1851 Census for the year 1851, that there were three families living in it. When the new house was constructed, the old house was moved and the rubble from its stone and brick chimney incorporated into the foundation walls.

Over the course of the documentation process, he managed to discover some evidence that the building was at least a pre-1830's dwelling. The stairs to the second floor had been retrofit into an opening possibly left from there being a fireplace and chimney in the centre of the building. The fact that large hand-hewn timbers, which delineated the outer bounds of the rooms of the building, protruded into the living space and had a layer of old lime-based whitewash paint then covered over with modern wall panelling, indicated that the building was constructed in a very old post and beam technique, which was used in frame constructed buildings prior to 1830 in this region.

It wasn't much to "hang my hat on," he said, but later on, during the deconstruction process of the building, further pieces of crucial evidence came to light: The roof was constructed with tapered rafters and without a ridge board; The original stair to the second floor was "ship's ladder" style, in the corner of the building; the entire structure, excluding finish materials, was built using a mortise and tenon technique, and the heavy timbers fastened with wooden dowels called

“trunnels” (from the term “tree-nails); Most of the nails found in the original finish materials were early (type ‘A’) cut nails and some blacksmith’s wrought or “rose-head” nails.

In addition to these discoveries, Clayton noted that the floor boards were nearly 20 inches wide in places and ran the full width of the building and the walls were sheathed on the interior side with boards as wide as 24 inches but only 1 ¼” thick. The mill-carriage of most early water-powered sawmills in those days, was only capable of cutting boards from logs up to 16 foot in length; this is why many of the buildings in those days were no wider than 16 foot. Regardless of whether buildings throughout Upper Canada were constructed utilizing a similar technique as this right up until the early 20th century, the most diagnostic piece of evidence found as Clayton examined and documented each and every piece of this building came when he discovered that all the wide sheathing boards and even the edges of wall studs and the back-sides of floor boards and frieze boards had scars of their being cut by an “up and down” sash saw from a water-powered sawmill. The sawmill in Oakland was built by the Malcolm family sometime between 1802 and 1806, which was water-powered with an over-shot wheel and was destroyed during McArthur’s raid, November 6th, 1814 and never re-built.

Months went by and with summer, came the opportunity of a lifetime for Clayton. He had booked his vacation for two weeks in the month of June to enjoy time off with his children when they were finished school for the summer break. However, when he received word from the municipality that the building was actually going to be set to flames, he approached the owner of the building and requested permission to dismantle the building to be moved to perhaps a heritage theme park. He was granted permission and told that if he could remove the building then he could have it, and for the most part of two weeks, he monitored and marked all the components of the building as the finish materials were removed by the owner’s off-shore workers. Meanwhile Clayton continued to send out a plea to all heritage theme parks and museums and even the Mennonite community in hopes that someone could take the building someplace where it could be reconstructed. At one point, things looked hopeful when members of the Westfield Heritage Village at Rockton, Ontario, visited the project to look at the building. Though they confirmed that indeed they thought the building to date from the first part of the 19th century, they were not able to take it at that time.

After all potential “avenues” had been exhausted, and all the finish materials removed, it seemed that after all that work, the building could still meet its fiery fate. His plea was answered by a local councillor and members of the heritage committee who offered to assist in dismantling the main timber skeleton structure of the building and to provide a trailer to place the materials on. The components of the cabin were placed on a flat-bed trailer, which in turn was parked in a field on a farm in Oakland about a mile and a half distant from the Chary farm. Clayton had understood that the trailer with the wood was stored in a barn; in fact, it was in an open field without a tarp. And so it remained for about five years.

In the early spring of 2010, Clayton had to address two key events: First, a local organization who had agreed to sponsor the reconstruction of the cabin on behalf of a sub-committee of the Municipal Heritage Committee had backed out of the project; Second, the materials were moved to the pavilion in the park where it was to be re-constructed on the grounds. This latter event saw the centuries-old wooden timbers moved to a public place, which necessitated round-the-clock visits in order to protect the materials from theft or vandalism. Clayton often kept vigil in the middle of the night to ensure the safety of the components of the rare and important building! At this point, since the project had been abandoned, Clayton approached the Westfield Heritage Village again and this time they were quite excited to learn that the building had survived. The Municipality signed the materials over to Westfield through a meeting of council and the members of Westfield came on April 26th 2010 and removed the materials from the park and transported them to Westfield village until the building can be re-constructed, possibly sometime in 2012 in time for the bicentennial of the War of 1812-14.

His work did not end there. Clayton is also in the process of creating architectural drawings to provide all the necessary information for re-construction as well as two intricately detailed table-top replica models. He also plans to be on hand during the summer of 2012 to assist with the work of rebuilding the cabin. [At time of writing, the Friends of Westfield has raised nearly \$80,000 for the reconstruction of the Westbrook House and the footings poured and main floor framing completed]

Clayton’s involvement in saving the Westbrook House, perhaps that last building which was witness to the last battle fought on Canadian soil against a foreign power, has spanned eight years and counting. He was the first to assess the building and to recognize its significance, and has overseen all aspects of the project since. He has taken extraordinary measures to safeguard the structure, making tons of calls to seek out a permanent home and initiating a round-the-clock vigil when it was housed in a public place. He has put in countless hours of volunteer work on salvaging the structure itself, on cataloguing every ancient timber and on creating architectural drawings and finely detailed models. The significance of his devotion to the project cannot be overstated; the Westbrook House would not have survived but for his tireless work and advocacy.

It takes a village to save heritage

By Ruth Lefler

Two teachers at Pauline Johnson Collegiate, Glenn Kilmer and Golden (Goldie) Macdonell, had a passion to preserve history through its heritage buildings.

They made their dream come true by creating a field of dreams at Westfield Heritage Village.

The first building the two acquired was the old Jerseyville Railway Station on the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo line but they had no place to put the building.

Their next decision was to purchase some land. Both men sat down with a map of southwestern Ontario and, using a quarter, moved it around until it rested on a location that was in the centre of the major populated areas such as Kitchener, London and the Golden Horseshoe. The Rockton area proved to be the location of choice. In 1960, Macdonell was the partner who discovered land for sale in 10-acre parcels northwest of Rockton. He excitedly phoned Kilmer and they bought 30 acres of trees, rocks and a perfect clearing for a village green.

The next task was to transport the railway station to its final destination. Thirteen permits later, the coordinated march accompanied by police cars, a railway truck and telephone and hydro trucks, reached Westfield. The Jerseyville station formed the cornerstone for the Village.

Westfield received its name through a combination of two names. West was because it was established in Western Ontario and also its relationship with Canada West. Because Westfield was to have a village atmosphere, the name field was added.

Students from Pauline Johnson Collegiate and other volunteers removed old fencing and planted 13,000 trees. Today, it is operated by the Hamilton Conservation Authority.

Brantford, Brant County and Six Nations Buildings

In 1852, Brantford was a town with a population of about 4,000 souls. Robert Gillen, who was born in County Antrim, Ireland, married Mary Daley. The couple emigrated to Brantford to build a white frame house with green trim at 100 Wellington St., where the present city hall parking lot is today. Grandchildren affectionately named the house Old Hundred.

Robert died just after the house was finished but his widow and their three daughters, Margaret Jane, Ellen (Nell) and Catherine (Cassie) lived here for many years. Mary, another daughter, grew up and married Walter Matheson. When he died, she returned to Old Hundred with her three daughters Winnifred, Ruth and Kate. Winnifred became a librarian at the Brantford Public Library and Kate, an artist, moved to California where she became a notable member of the Pacific Art League. Later, in her life, she returned to 100 Wellington St., where she gave art lessons.

Helen Straith, a draftsman at Koehring Waterous Ltd., and a friend of the family, became the last owner of the house in 1932. She lived here until 1961 when the city bought it and all of the other properties on the block, to make way for the new city hall. Nary a man ever lived in the house.

On Oct. 1, 1961, the City of Brantford donated the house to Westfield. When the house arrived, it was minus its roof. And, before it could be attached, it snowed and rained for several days resulting in interior damage. By 1967, Canada's centennial year, it was ready to open.

Today, the interior of the house depicts the 1920s era because of the numerous artifacts in the collection from this time period.

D'Aubigny Inn

Many old buildings keep their secrets until such time as they wish to reveal them. It wasn't until the old house at the corner of Colborne St. West and Oakhill Drive was to be demolished that it revealed its secret. The actual construction of the house rests in the mists of time but it is thought to have been built somewhere prior to 1790 and up to 1820. According to the Robson family, who purchased the property in 1849, the original house burned down and the present building was built in 1820.

If the house was built around 1790, it would have viewed Brigadier General Duncan McArthur and a American force of 700 men making an attempt to cross the Grand River in order to reach Burlington Heights on Nov. 5, 1814, during the War of 1812. He and his men were abruptly stopped by the sunken scow, the river in flood and Major Adam Muir and 50 Indian warriors under the command of Teyonhokarawen who were all across the river on higher ground. McArthur decided it was better to turn around and march towards Malcolm's Mills burning mills and plundering along the way.

William D'Aubigny, arrived about 1835, and acquired 299 acres along the Grand River which included the log building. He opened the house as a stagecoach stop.

By 1963, the descendents of the original Robson family sold the property to the City of Brantford to make way for a bridge over the railway tracks at the intersection. When the demolition began in 1964, the house revealed its secret. As the stucco finish fell away from the walls, the workmen discovered hand hewn oak logs. By 1965, the inn's final resting place was at Westfield where it was restored and still serves as D'Aubigny Inn.

Cathcart School

In 1845, a log school was built in the Village of Cathcart in the former Township of Burford to replace an earlier school. Students, learning at different grade levels, sat on rough hewn benches around the outside of the classroom. Later it became a little more modern with homemade desks and benches that each held two students. Two small slates with the day's work written on them were at the front of the classroom and each student had his own slate upon which to do his work.

Among the first teachers here were Joseph Chant, William Flanigan and W. Costain who received an average annual salary of \$200. The school was built to hold 20 students but, by 1861, the total enrolment was 107 students. One would hope that the students didn't all come on the same day. By 1865, it had been converted to a house and a new school was built.

In 1967, Alex Sombati, upon whose land the building was located, donated the school to Westfield. It now sits comfortably near the village green. The bell calls all visiting children and adults to step back in time to sit in old fashioned desks, write on slates and be taught as students were 165 years ago.

The Edmondson House

The Edmondson name is familiar in the area around Lynden Park Mall and the former Massey Ferguson factory because much of their property was purchased for this expansion. Christopher Edmondson, born in 1800 in Yorkshire, was a weaver but, because of the Industrial Revolution, he and his family came to this area and built their first home here. In order for the children to reach their sleeping areas in the loft, they had to go outside and climb the ladder. Wouldn't this be a bone-chilling experience in the middle of winter? In the last quarter of the 19th century, a new brick house replaced the original dwelling, which was sawed in half with one section housing a forge and the other half used for storage.

When William Ewart Edmondson sold the farm to the City of Brantford, the city donated one half of the original house and a barn to Westfield. The house is now a wee tailor shop and, on weekends, the barn now holds interesting farm animals such as sheep, baby goats and chickens.

One Sunday, while visiting Westfield, a rooster was on the loose. Clusters of visitors and staff gathered to try to catch the cocky fellow but to no avail. Staff came up with a brilliant idea - go back to the barn and bring a couple of hens. The rooster just fell in line and followed the hens back into the barnyard.

The Native Church

The oldest existing log church in Ontario now rests at Westfield. Once located on the Six Nations Reserve, the Wesleyan Methodist Church at Kanyengah, also known as Martin's Corners, was built entirely of hand-hewn logs and assembled without nails. The pews now polished from wear, were built of different sizes to suit the members of the congregation.

Around 1854, the building was no longer used for church services but for meetings of the Silver Star Temperance Society. The last recorded use was by the Six Nations Benevolent Society in 1925. By the 1960s the building was no longer being used and, in 1964, the church was donated to Westfield, dismantled and moved to the village. The official dedication ceremony and hymns were in the Mohawk language. The Wesleyan Methodist Church today still welcomes all who stop by for a quiet rest.

The Native House

A log house was built around 1911 or possibly earlier for William Jacket Hill and his wife, Sophia Smoke Johnson, on the Six Nations Reserve, off Second Line or Sour Springs Road. Welby Jacket Hill was the last person to live in the house.

In Westfield Heritage Village's minutes of Oct. 29, 1969, it was noted that a log house on the reserve was available to be purchased and purchase it they did. The house captures the atmosphere of life in a log dwelling with the cook stove heating the whole building and all of the children sleeping in single beds in the loft.

The Westbrook House

The old hired-hand house that was on the east side of the of the hill travelling south through the Village of Oakland revealed some interesting stories. This 1-1/2 storey house, built by Haggai Westbrook in 1810, is believed to be the oldest house in Brant County.

After stripping off the modern coverings, Clayton Barker took the building apart board by board documenting each one. The building needed a home and it was Westfield Heritage Village that came to the rescue. The reconstruction is going on right now and it's most interesting to see the old house go up in the old fashioned way.

There is one more secret that was kept by this house. It was here on this farm on Nov. 6, 1812, that the last battle was fought on Canadian soil against a foreign power. The Battle of Malcolm's Mills was fought on this hill between some 400 local militia and Brigadier-General McArthur's large American mounted force. The poorly equipped, outnumbered militia hastily retreated.

Westfield Heritage Village is open from March to October. Enjoy a stroll through its inviting living history and partake in one of the many special events.

In the article printed on March 31, entitled "A Look at Mills in Brant County," the wrong name was given in the photo showing the gentleman smoking a pipe. The name should be Albert Apps. I regret the error.

Sources: Archives at Westfield Heritage Village; Lisa Hunter at Westfield Heritage Village; Brantford Expositor

