

# YESTERDAY

## News from the Tavistock and District Historical Society

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**W**hat does the term “family farm” mean to you? For some, it’s the textbook definition of a farm that has been in the same family for generations. For others, it’s a birthright issue. Which child stays on the “home farm” and where will the other children call home? For still others, including many who have never lived on a farm, the term suggests many good things ... a big kitchen always full of good smells and good food, lots of company and visiting on the front porch, chores that had to be done rain or shine, quilting in the winter, flypaper in the summer, cackling chickens, fat little pigs and so much more.

The Wagler farm on Lots 35 and 36 (east half) Concession 16 of East Zorra Township has all of those elements. The Wagler story also speaks of sorrow and hardship and perseverance.

The story starts in 1854 when Joseph and Maria Zehr of Wilmot purchased the

## The Family Farm



Herb and Cecil Wagler on the manure spreader

land. Son Joseph L. Zehr and wife, Lydia, built the house and barn with lumber harvested from clearing the land. When Joseph L. died, Lydia stayed on the farm. Their daughter, Mary, married Christian L. Wagler who sadly died just five years later. Mary, a young widow, also stayed

on the farm, managing with the help of young son, Joe, and hired men. When Joe married Druscilla Ruby he, quite naturally, brought her to the farm to live. Joe and Druscilla had a large family and for many years there were 4 generations all under the same roof. Next in line was son Leander and wife, Beatrice. Today the farm is owned by their son, Mark and his wife, Angela.

Over the years 23 children were born and raised on this family farm. The largest family belonged to Joe and Druscilla .... 10 children -- Doris (Seranus Kropf), Berniece (Floyd Brenneman), Leander (Beatrice Yantzi), Betty (Wallace Roth), Delphine (Lorne Zehr), Lester (Laura Ann Schwartz), Cecil (Reta Bender), Herb (Shirley Roth), Marlene (Ed Schwartzentruber) and Keith (Ruth Ann Morrison).

Will the Wagler family farm stay in the family for more generations? Only time will tell.

*(more photos on page 3)*

**2012 Fair Theme: Business and Farm Heritage**

www.tavistockhistory.ca • e-mail: info@tavistockhistory.ca

**Tavistock & District  
Historical Society**

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**Tavistock  
& District  
Historical  
Society**

37 Maria Street,  
Box 280,  
Tavistock, Ontario,  
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**MUSEUM  
HOURS:**

*Saturdays  
10am-12 noon*

*Closed months of  
January & February*

*Other times  
by appointment:  
call 519-655-9915*

**SUPPORT THE  
WORK OF THE  
MUSEUM/ARCHIVES**  
Annual membership  
\$10.00 per annum

# God Save the Queen

## Royalty display celebrates Jubilees

Sixty years on the job is definitely reason to celebrate. When you're Queen Elizabeth celebrating 60 years on the throne, the celebrations are world-wide and world-class. Our Tavistock museum was part of the Diamond Jubilee festivities in June and July. We featured an impressive display of royalty memorabilia with special focus on Queen Elizabeth II and her great great grandmother, Queen Victoria, the only monarchs in British history to have reigned for 60 years.

Items on display ranged from specially-commissioned china and portraits to published history books and personal scrapbooks to souvenir biscuit tins and so much more. Every piece told a story. Since many visitors were royalists at heart, the stories were often well known and always well received.

If there was ever a display to wave the flag about, this one was it. Union Jack - of course.



Busts and china relating to Queen Elizabeth II (above) and her grandmother, Queen Victoria (below)



More Queen Victoria memorabilia on display at the museum this past summer.

## Did you know?

Robert Rudy Sr. was secretary-treasurer of the Tavistock Agricultural Society for 34 years (1937-1971) while his son, Robert G. Rudy served in the same capacity for 35 years (1972-2007).

# VETERANS' DISPLAY

**LEST WE FORGET**

**Killed in Action - WWI**  
 Milton L. Gapping  
 Herbert J. Jarvis  
 George Holmes  
 Herbert S. Weston  
 Clarence E. Bryan  
 George T. Crerar  
 Joseph C. Luffenz

**We Will Remember**

**In Flanders Fields**

For more information contact the Tavistock & District Historical Society

Beginning this September.

**LEST WE FORGET**

**Killed in Action - WWI**  
 Maurice H. Bell  
 Wilfred G. Berger  
 Frank S. Fisher  
 Alfred S.R. Kingsley  
 John W. Rotherham  
 Fred F. Sappwell  
 Stanley G. Winkley  
 Carlton H. Woulfe  
 Wilfred S. Bell  
 George T. Crerar  
 Clarence E. Kuffelbach  
 Duncan M. Low  
 Herbert A. Martin  
 Kenneth L. Ricks  
 Ward R. Waddie  
 Francis J. Westcott  
 Lloyd H. Woulfe

**Killed in Service - WWII**  
 Robert D. Gaultier  
 Frederick W. Hutz  
 Franklin J. Holby

**We Will Remember**

For more information contact the Tavistock & District Historical Society

# The Family Farm *(continued from page one)*



**FOUR GENERATIONS:** Left to right: Leander Wagler, Joe Wagler, Mary Wagler, and Lydia Zehr.



**WAGLER FAMILY:** Joe and Druscilla Wagler with baby Doris. By the time her last child was born Druscilla's arthritis confined her to a wheelchair.

## 160 Years of the Fair

*(from Fact & Fantasy - page 107)*

Sutherland's Gazetteer of 1867 reports that "the township of East Zorra has a farmers' organization named the East Zorra Agricultural Association." From the account book of this association, we find the first entries in 1852. There is no indication where its first annual fairs were held, but hearsay ... they began at Strathallan and were later transferred to the Adam Mohr farm, just south of Tavistock. It seems that the farmers of South Easthope formed a similar organization, the South

Easthope Agricultural Society, ... used to hold its fairs on the John Mogk farm ... the corner of Oxford and William Streets with entrance along Mogk Street.

From 1879-1884 the South Easthope Agr. Society and the East Zorra Agr. Ass. held a union exhibition. In 1903 a union meeting was held with W.S. Russell secretary to both.

This union became a reality in 1906 when the passage of the Agricultural Society Act forbade the holding of union fairs. The two societies decided to unite and form the Tavistock Agricultural Society and to hold its first fair in 1907 - September 16 and 17.

# 100 Years of Recorded Music

Guest Speaker: Blain McCutchen  
**Wednesday, September 19 at 7:00 p.m.**

\$5 admission • Refreshments provided.  
 AT GRACE UNITED CHURCH HALL  
 116 Woodstock St. S., Tavistock



**SPEAKER SERIES '12**



# Tavistock's first businesses

*Corner block has been home to many entrepreneurs*

Capt. Henry Eckstein has been credited with the founding of Tavistock in 1848 when he built a log tavern on the northeast corner of the intersection. Although early records are still being pieced together, we know that he built a new, brick tavern across the street about 1854, and with the coming of the railway and post office, the early names of Inkerman and Freiburg were replaced with our namesake in Devon, England.

A collection of frame and log buildings made up the corner in its earliest days with many different businesses located there. In the obituary of Henry Eckstein the newspaper account states, "Several men did business in that old building. John Walewski conducted a store in the old building, when it was refitted. His successors were Jacob Wagner, Louis Mohr, John Klein. The store was

vacant for a time, when Louis Mohr and Valentine Gerhardt started business in it, in 1867. In 1868 the historic pile was burned."

About 1870, it is believed Valentine Hansuld built a brick building on the site as a general store. His advertisement in the Oxford Gazetteer and Business Directory states, "general merchant, dealer in dry goods, groceries,

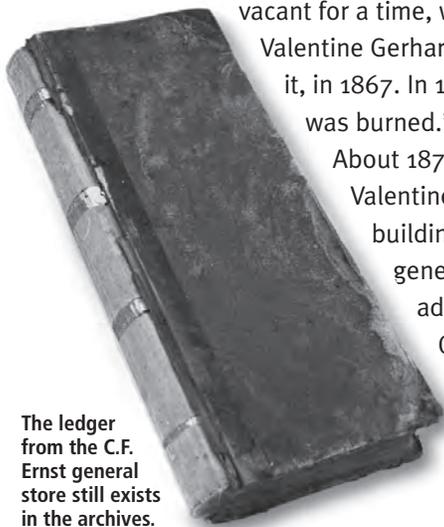
crockery and glass, boots and shoes."

Later owners were Andrew Winhold, C.F. Ernst, E.&L. Morlock, G.G. Pepler, Emerson Weitzel, Ray Waddle, Henry Roth, Henry Breneman and William Appel. In 1901, under the ownership of August Schaefer, who ran a feed store, the entire block was bricked into one building. Early records identify such businessmen as Michael Ryan, boots and shoes; Sam Zehr, barber; M.M. Staebler, jeweller; Wm. Heinmiller, steam laundry; and John W. Ratz, tinsmith. , Emerson Weitzel ran a store at this location and it was later purchased by Oliver Yantzi. Elmer Pletsch purchased the block in 1965 and it then became known as the Pletsch Block.

In 2012, it is currently owned by the partnership of brothers Heinz and Curtis Riedel and houses the offices of Perth Financial Group.



***This turn-of-the-century postcard shows that the five-corners is no stranger to construction.***



The ledger from the C.F. Ernst general store still exists in the archives.

## Stars of the Town Double DVD \$25

**Copies of the Tavistock Movie recorded by Rev. Roy Massecar in 1947-48 are available for order at the Museum and Archives.**

*The 2-disc DVD features the original version of the movie plus a special edition with the names of people added throughout the video to enhance the recording for historic purposes.*

