

YESTERDAY

News from the Tavistock and District Historical Society

VOLUME 30

FALL 2016

HICKSON HISTORY



Hickson Station



T.S. Russell, Blacksmith



Grist Mill

This issue: A Community 4-H Project - 2016

With assistance from the Tavistock & District Historical Society



The Tavistock & District Historical Society invites you to a very special musical evening!

“Till We Meet Again”

An evening of wartime songs

featuring Ted Comiskey and Jim Gonder (famous for their “Music At The Mess Hall” concerts)

Wednesday, October 19, 2016 at 7 pm

Tavistock Legion Hall, 223 Hope Street West, Tavistock

Accompanying display ... Goodwill Donation. Everyone welcome. Please come, enjoy and sing along.

WWW.TAVISTOCKHISTORY.CA • E-MAIL: INFO@TAVISTOCKHISTORY.CA

Servicing the Township

Council, fire department, post office, library, park, railway

Township Office

The first East Zorra Township Hall and shed was in Strathallan. In 1890, T.J. Loveys offered free land if the Council would move the township hall and shed to Hickson. It apparently was voted down because in the Tavistock book of "Fact and Fantasy", we read that Council met at the Township Hall in Strathallan on March 13, 1905 at 10 a.m. Petitions were received not to move the township hall, but the Hickson delegation offered a free site and the sum of \$400 to have it moved to Hickson. Council decided to look into it. T.J. Loveys granted land to the Municipal Corporation of East Zorra in 1905 and built the new Township Office about 1905 or 1906. Council meetings were held there. This was the centre of the social life of the community for some time. In 1957, this building was put up for sale and was bought by the Hickson Community Library. The council of East Zorra Township bought the property at the junction of Oxford Road 8 and Highway 59 on the southeast corner from Thomas A. Morris which had a building on it (now being the current Hickson Veterinary Service). The business of the township and some of the social life of the community was carried on in this building until 1970. It was then sold to Dick Tenbergen for the veterinary services. In 1970, the township hall and offices moved to 90 Loveys Street which they built for the Township Office. There have been changes over the years as the Council Chambers were originally upstairs then moved downstairs and then moved back upstairs as currently and the basement made into offices. The hall downstairs was used for community activities when not in use by council. This building is situated such that if the railway were to come to life, it would pass through the middle of this building from north to south.



Elaine Todd served as postmaster in Hickson for 40 years from 1971 to 2002.



50 YEARS - FIREFIGHTERS REMEMBER ... *Tavistock Gazette - October 18, 2006*
Members of the original Hickson fire department pose with the first firetruck, a 1956 Ford, on Sunday, October 15. They include, left to right: Bob Ross, Henry Fullick, Bob McLaren, Bob Loveys, James Hostetler, Bruce Allardyce, Gord Irwin, and Floyd Sippel. Unable to attend were Wilfed Weber and Don Hyndman.



40 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ... *Tavistock Gazette - August 6, 2014*
Hickson Lions Charter Member Jim Butt (right) stands with the club's charter. Looking at one of the scrapbooks are, from the left, Murray Pink of Thorndale, Lion Governor Denis Vinette, and current Hickson Lion President Darrell Ford.

Hickson Lions Club

The Hickson Lions started in 1974 by John Tipping. Men in the Hickson area were asked to join. 28 men became a charter member which means they were the first members in the club when it was formed. Ever since then they have been helping people and fundraising for many things and events through the years. Today the Hickson Lions club has 12 members, both men and

women. There is still one charter member, and they are all making a difference in Oxford County.

There are two awards given out by the Hickson Lions, the John Tipping Memorial award and the Melvin Jones award. The John Tipping award was named because he was the very first President of Hickson Lions. The Melvin Jones was named because he was the man who created the Lions Club International in 1917. (see list next page)

Hickson Lions Awards

Melvin Jones Award:

- John Tipping
- Jim Harmer
- Dave Riach
- Frank McKay
- Fred & Elaine Todd
- Murray Ross
- Helen Harmer
- Heather Lovie
- Lawrence Clark
- Darrell Ford

John Tipping Award:

- Henry Fullick
- Margaret King
- Betty Murray
- Laverne McBurney
- James Butt
- John A. King
- Shonna Ward
- Dave McLaren

Membership dues are still \$10.00.

Simply complete the Renewal form found at <http://tavistockhistory.ca/membership>.

Payment can be sent by mail at Box 280 or dropped off at the museum at 37 Maria Street, Tavistock.

Boys Scouts and Cubs

**Information from the Hickson Women's Institute Tweedsmuir Book 2 Volume 2 page 226 - written 1988*

A Scout movement was started in Hickson by Rev J.P. Cooke when he was minister on the Hickson Hebron Charge from 1948 to 1954. He asked Floyd Sippel to become his assistant. Later these responsibilities were reversed.

The Scouts were sponsored by the Hickson United Church under the following committee – Lorne C. Currah, Henry Fullick and Gordon Bruce. The Scouts and Cubs were not a large group so could not compete with other similar groups. Each spring and fall, a paper drive was held in order to raise money. The use of trucks to gather paper on the country roads and the village was donated as well as a truck to take the gathered paper to Brantford where it was sold. After Rev Cooke left, the movement was continued for a while with various leaders such as Gerald King and Don Hyndman and possibly others. The real highlight of this

group came in August of 1955 when the 8th World Boy Scout Jamboree was held at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. On a historic site where General Brock camped during the War of 1812, a mile square of rolling park land, over 11,000 Scouters from 71 countries and colonies pitched their tents. The Hickson group attended one day of this Jamboree, travelling by train and bus. It was very impressive to see so many different camp settings from so many countries and to feel the comradeship and understanding of the various groups even though they did not have a common language – an experience each one will always remember.

1st Hickson Scout Group

The current 1st Hickson Scout Group began with a Beaver Colony. An information night was held October 22, 1981 at the Hickson United Church, chaired by the Woodstock District Beaver Co-ordinator Mr. Brad Cott. Twelve interested parents attended. A fund for the Beavers was established when the Hickson Lions Club donated \$200 to the Group.

At the first registration night 24 boys joined. Nineteen were new Beavers and 5 were transfers from the colony at Knox Presbyterian Church in Woodstock. The first meeting was held at the Hickson United Church's basement on November 12, 1981. The Wolf Cub Pack began in 1982 with



HICKSON BEAVERS SWIM UP TO CUBS ... *Tavistock Gazette - October 28, 1987*
Left to right, the boys include Michael Bond, Dale Campbell, John Burrill, Trevor Smith and Chad Chilvers. The leaders are, left to right, Gail Fishback, Rainbow; James Bond, Akela; Markley Bond, Raksha; and Helen Whitehead, Rusty.

the first "Swim-Up" of Beavers to Cubs on October 7. The 1st Investiture was held October 12 when Dr. Halliday, M.P. for Oxford, presented the 1st Hickson Group with a Canadian flag. At this time 10 Cubs were registered.

During the Scouting year 1983-84 the Beaver Colony got their badly needed supply cupboard. This was built at a cost of \$80 by Jim Weicker.

The 1st Hickson Boy Scout Group Committee held an information night on June 7, 1984 for parents interested in getting a Brownie Pack started in Hickson. Eleven potential members were noted and the Pack began meeting that fall, but operated separately from the Boy Scout Group Committee.

The Hickson Group has taken part in many fundraising ventures such as peanut sales, District Apple Days, Trees for Canada projects, selling leather key tags and chocolate bars.

The Wolf Pack has attended Winter Camps and District Summer camps. They have built and competed with Kub Kars and earned their own money to buy toys for the Salvation Army's collection at Christmas time.

The Scout Troop has had many camps including attending the "International" at Camp Shegardaynou each May. They have also travelled to a hockey game in Buffalo.



Hickson 4-H Volunteer Club Leaders

Mrs. Flossie Pullen
Mrs. W. Burton
Mrs. Eileen Wharram
Mrs. Debbie Smith
Mrs. Gwen King
Mrs. Marilyn Lichti

Mrs. Clarence King
Mrs. Lydon Harwood
Mrs. Kathy Chilvers
Mrs. Kathy Kaufmann
Mrs. Karen Witmer
Mrs. Linda Humphrey

Mrs. F. Symons
Mrs. Fenton Symons
Mrs. Brenda Hartley
Mrs. Vicki Chambers
Mrs. Shonna Ward

The railroad comes to town

**Information from Hickson Women's Institute Tweedsmuir Book 2 Volume 2 page 292 written 1988*

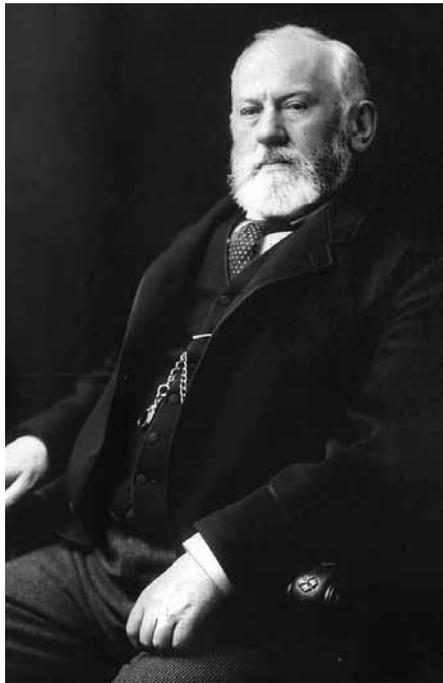
The Grand Trunk Railway came here in 1876. It was thought that this place should have a name. A suggested name was Harwood's Corners as most of the property at the corner was owned by Harwoods. However, Sir Joseph Hickson, General Manager of the Grand Trunk Railway, requested that this place be named Hickson in his honour. He was at that time touring Southwestern Ontario and as far as is known he never visited here nor had any further connection with Hickson. According to the late Gordon King, on the opening of this rail line, an excursion was organized to Port Burwell, the ladies riding in luxury on slat seats in the coaches, while the men and boys rode on flat cars. His father was one of the flat car riders.

Hickson was a flag station until 1904 1905, when the station was built. Until that time tickets were sold in the nearby general store and there was also a waiting room there.

The railway served the businesses of Hickson as well as the community well. There were at least 2 passenger trains each day as well as 2 freight trains. The last station agent, Wm. Lambourne, closed the station in 1962. In 1963 it was sold to Fred Alexander who moved it to the Braemar Sideroad between the 10th and 11th on the north side of the road. He converted it into a residence. It can be identified by the circular part on the south-west corner of the house. As a station, this part was used as the telegraph office and also the station agents could see the train coming from either direction. About 1966 the railway was closed between Woodstock and Hickson.

There were 2 granaries situated on the east side of the tracks and south of the station. One became the original portion of Fred Todd's house (81 Loveys Street). We don't know what became of the other granary. There was another building nearby where apples had been packed into barrels and usually sent to England. However in Sept. 1902, R.A. Webber shipped a car of apples out to Winnipeg. Later, the Canadian Milk Products used this building as a warehouse for their barrels of skim milk powder and later for whole milk powder. It was easier to load it onto the train here. Sometime a barrel would get broken, and if the young lads of the village found it, they had a lunch of milk powder. One day, they found a broken barrel and "Oh Goody", they grabbed the powder up by the handful only to find that it was soda!! When the C.M.P. made skim milk powder, the cream was shipped on the train as sweet cream to the New York and Philadelphia market.

There were 2 section houses where the section men (men who kept the tracks etc. in good



Sir Joseph Hickson, General Manager
Grand Trunk Railway of Canada 1874-1890

condition) lived. One was south east of the station and its last occupant was John Mutch who died in 1964 and shortly afterwards this house was torn down. Some of the other families who lived here were Benson's, Brickwood's and from mid 1920's to mid 1930's White's. There is a well north of where this house was and it supplied water to the station, the section houses, etc. The other house was between the station and the street with a driveway between the house and the station and one between the house and the train tracks. Andrew Dawson, the section Foreman, occupied this house from 1911 to 1923 along with Mrs. Dawson and their family - Jack, George, Adam, Bill

and Jean. They had wanted to buy a house of their own but the ruling was that section men had to live in section houses. In 1923, this ruling changed so the Dawson family were able to buy a house of their own (95 Loveys Street). Shortly afterward this house was bought by William Bothwell, cheesemaker and manager of Canadian Milk Products, and he moved it across the street and further to the east (104 Loveys Street). It is now occupied by Ronald Bray. Mr. Bothwell never lived in it - just rented it to others.

The stockyards were north of the road and on the west side of the tracks. Tuesday was shipping day when 3 drovers vied for cattle, sheep, pigs, fowl, etc. to send to Toronto market. Along the north side of the stockyards there was a set of covered weigh scales. After World War II, the stockyards were rebuilt with considerable new lumber and expense. However they were used very, very little and in due time, they were dismantled, loaded on a train car and taken elsewhere.

The line from Hickson to Tavistock Junction was closed in 1932 and the tracks were removed in 1935. During that time, empty box cars were stored on the tracks. It was the duty of the station agent, R.J. Campbell, (agent from 1914 to Feb. 1934) to check on these cars on a regular basis - not a pleasant task.

There was a siding that went to the granaries, the warehouse and Loveys' coal shed. Another was along the east side of the grist mill. Another one went to the stockyards and by using this siding, trains could meet in Hickson.

When the railway was discontinued from Hickson to Tavistock Junction, a large "stop" block consisting of railway ties and cinders was built on the tracks south of the road to stop the train cars from crossing the road. One day, somehow a train car got an extra shove and went halfway over the block onto the road. This caused considerable excitement and a problem to get it back on the track. A winch from London was brought in and it picked up the car, placing it back on the track.

4-H HICKSON HISTORY DISPLAYS

Sports Teams in Hickson
Hickson Township Bank Library
Hickson Railroad
Hickson United Church
Hickson Post Office
Hickson Park (1924)
Star Struck Hickson - Bothwell, Gildner, Killing, Plaskett

Hickson 4-H 1960-2016
Hickson Fire Department
Hickson Central Public School
Hickson Lions Club
Businesses in Hickson
Hickson Scouting, Guiding

Tavistock & District Historical Society

37 Maria Street,
Box 280, Tavistock,
Ontario, Canada
N0B 2R0

Executive:
Secretary - Mary Nicklas
Treasurer - Bob Rudy

Membership: \$10/year

Directors:
Paul Bartlett
Brian Bennett
Harry Lawry
Barb Matthies
Denise McLachlin

Ed Pellow

Volunteers:
Bill Gladding
Sherrill Calder
Tim Mosher

MUSEUM HOURS:

Now Open third Saturday of the month 1-4 p.m. Closed months of January & February
Other times by appointment:
call 519-655-9915 or 519-655-3342