

Neighbourhood News & Views

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AINSLIE WOOD / WESTDALE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
OF RESIDENT HOMEOWNERS INC.
Spring 2005

*"Building community
block by block"*



**Share in the
Harvest**

2



**This is Our
Neighbourhood**

5



**Highlights from
Our Annual
General Meeting**

16



Rob Payne presenting cheque from the CTA to MSU president Shano Mohan.
Photo: Lauren Payne

Campus Town Association Supports Tsunami Relief Efforts

The CTA donated \$2,000 on Jan. 10 to support the tsunami relief effort. The AWWCA, Westdale BIA, and McMaster congratulated the McMaster Students Union and other student organizations for their leadership. We can be proud of the AWWCA's support of this cause.

Campus Town Association Formed

ROB PAYNE

Your AWWCA board of directors is pleased to announce that our organization entered into formal partnership with McMaster University and the Westdale Village Business Improvement Area to form the Campus Town Association (CTA). Members on e-mail received notice of the partnership in mid-December, when the agreement was signed.

This is a not-for-profit organization that will focus on improving the quality of life for all residents, since we recognize that we share a common goal to maintain and enhance our special neighbourhood.

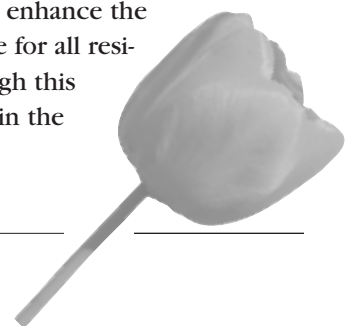
The CTA has applied for provincial funding and in the first year will focus

on developing the background research and structure needed for sustainable long-term improvements.

Our strategy will be to find ways to combine McMaster's international reputation for innovation with the many skills of the people living in our community.

Our vision will be to develop our neighbourhood as the model for campus towns in Canada.

The AWWCA is thrilled that we have the opportunity to pursue our vision to "protect and enhance the quality of life for all residents" through this partnership in the CTA.



community NEWS



Belleville Lawn Bowling Club, summer 1914.

Share In The Harvest!

Plan B Organic Farm was established in 1997 by **Melanie Golba**, **Alvaro Venturelli**, and **Rodrigo Venturelli**. They will be selling vegetables for the second year outside St. Cuthbert's Presbyterian Church from May to the end of October, on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. You can contact Plan B at 905-659-2572 or planbof@execulink.com and view their website at www.planborganicfarms.ca.



Rodrigo Venturelli and Chris MacLuc serving customers last fall.

Photo: Janet Woodward

Join us for Fun and Friendship

EFFIE YORK

The Westdale/West Hamilton seniors and retirees have been meeting on the third Wednesday of each month at Grace Hall, Grace Lutheran Church, 1107 Main St. West, since Sept. 25, 2002.

Board games such as Scrabble, Boggle, checkers, and chess are enjoyed, while card games remain the most popular. Travelogues, musical presentations, and guest speakers precede the games on occasion. A well-

equipped shuffleboard court is waiting for competitors.

Potluck luncheons at Christmas and at the end of our season in June are popular. We hope to expand our programs and appreciate suggestions.

New members are most welcome. Join us for a relaxing afternoon and excellent refreshments with a friendly, considerate group. Contacts: Pat Barton, 905-527-5137, and Effie York, 905-522-6256.

Pat and Effie are AWWCA members.

Come Join Churchill Fields Lawn Bowling Club

DAVE BURROWS

Lawn bowling offers the whole family both recreational and competitive sport in the West Hamilton area. For the **novice lawn bowler**, we offer free lessons and the use of the club bowls throughout the summer. For **all lawn bowlers**, we offer club jitneys, friendly members, the use of our clubhouse, and a social atmosphere. For the **experienced lawn bowler**, we offer seven different open tournaments throughout the season.

How much is this going to cost me, you might ask? For the entire season, May to October, the fees are: junior, \$50; novice, \$75; experienced, \$100. Where else can you have this much fun and this much value for so little?

Come to the Get Acquainted night on Friday, May 13, at 7 p.m. We are situated at the corner of Cline Avenue North and Marion Avenue North in Westdale Village. On May 14 at 1:30 p.m. we are having a special jitney and barbeque for just \$5. Mark your calendar today!

Don't miss your opportunity to enjoy one of the oldest sports in the world, with the Southampton Lawn Bowling Club of England using its green since the year 1299.

For more information:

Dave Burrows, president, 905-643-0281, or jdavidburrows@hotmail.com.

Millie Fair, membership chair, 905-523-5199.

Clubhouse, 905-529-0621 (in season).

legislature NEWS

MPPs Asked to Support Sustainability of Our Community

Thanks to Councillors **Brian McHattie** and **Terry Whitehead** for arranging a meeting on Feb. 8 with **Judy Marsales**, Member of Provincial Parliament for Hamilton West, and **Marie Bountrogianni**, MPP for Hamilton Mountain. Ms. Bountrogianni was represented by her office manager.

Invited were representatives of the **AWWCA**, the **Westdale Village Business Improvement Area**, **McMaster**

University, **McMaster Students Union**, and the **Mohawk College Neighbourhood Committee**. Nine of the 25 attendees represented the AWWCA.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss quality-of-life and safety issues for near-campus residents, provincial legislative changes needed to give municipalities and postsecondary institutions the tools they need to develop "best " campus towns, and the need for our MPPs' support to ensure the sustainability of near-campus neighbourhoods.

In response, Ms. Marsales explained



Front: MPP Marsales; back row, L to R: Councillor McHattie, Councillor Whitehead, and Rob Payne,
Photo: Loreen Jerome

provincial procedures and offered to arrange a meeting at Queen's Park with the appropriate ministers to present requests for legislative changes. It is expected that Mr. McHattie and Mr. Whitehead will represent their constituents at the meeting at Queen's Park.

CITY HALL *news*

Making Good Things Happen in 2005

BRIAN MCHATTIE

With one year under my belt as your Ward 1, Chedoke-Cootes, councillor, I am looking forward to making things happen in 2005!

The new Ainslie Wood Westdale Secondary Plan will soon be passed by city council and will include mixed-use designations to enable more residential units above the commercial units along Main Street West. The city is able to offer incentives to encourage new residential rental units along Main Street West, including the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program and

the Community Rental Housing Program. Imagine the commercial strip mall across from the university with one to two storeys on top of the stores, housing students just steps from the university but with little impact on the neighbourhood!

In the Ward 1 office we are working on a number of other Ainslie Wood/Westdale projects such as:

- A possible splash pad for Churchill Park
- Community-policing-office projects
- Differential tax assessment for student lodging homes
- McMaster's new front entrance: construction on Main Street West, including an improved Cootes Drive pedestrian crossing at Sanders Boulevard
- The Canadian Pacific Railway liaison committee: investigating construction of a rail trail, litter issues, and other issues

In addition, I am working to establish an Arbor Day (May 1) tree-planting event for parks and ravines, tentatively known as Trees Across Hamilton (patterned on Toronto's Tree Advocacy model). We continue to provide city support for McMaster's successful bid to acquire the Camco lands.

I am in the early stages of establishing a Ward 1 Vision 2020 task force charged with implementing sustainability on a street-by-street basis, as well as a participatory budgeting committee to investigate ways to improve the 2006 city budget process. Last but not least, I am working with the student political-action committee at Westdale High School to involve youth in local decision making.

Here at City Hall, in addition to my position on the Planning and Economic Development Committee, I am now chairing the city's Social Services and Public Health Committee and sit on the Strategic Planning and Budgets Committee. Please visit my website at www.brianmchattie.ca for more details on my committee work and projects listed above. Note, too, that we are now describing every meeting so you know in detail what I am doing on your behalf.

I am committed to involving you in municipal decision making on an ongoing basis; I invite you to communicate with me at City Hall at bmchattie@hamilton.ca or 905-546-2416. Have a great spring, and bring on the spring peepers and bird migration!

The Future of the Royal Botanical Gardens

Following is a slightly modified version of Carolyn Kinsley's letter sent on behalf of the AWWCA on Jan. 18 to **David Carter** and **Robert Wade**, co-chairs of the RBC Review Committee, with copies to **Mayor Larry Di Ianni**, **Councillor Brian McHattie**, **Premier Dalton McGuinty**, **Minister of Culture Madeleine Meilleur**, and **MPP Judy Marsales**:

Dear Mr. Carter and Mr. Wade:

The president and four members of the board of the Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association of Resident Homeowners Inc. attended the Jan. 12 and 13 round-table discussions about the future of the RBG on behalf of our 450 members.

We were impressed by the participants' support for the RBG's mandate but in this letter would like to focus on Churchill Park.

The green space owned by the RBG adjacent to the Ainslie Wood/Westdale area is very important to residents of the area. It is one of the reasons we choose to live here.

We not only enjoy the natural lands, and the birds and wildlife they support, but the developed park. Churchill Park is well used year round, by people of all ages—toddlers, girls, boys, teenagers, men, women, seniors. The City of Hamilton apparently recognizes this, since it has been maintaining the park following a previous budget crunch for the RBG. But ownership remains with the RBG.

The playing fields of Churchill Park are used for everything from dog-walking to jogging, soccer, baseball, cricket, hockey, and ice skating; Hamilton schools use it for field-day events; Temple Anshe Sholom runs programs for children in the park; various festivals are held there, as well as the children's "Soupee," run by the city in the summer. The Teaching Garden plots are all in use as soon as the weather permits and are charmingly and beautifully maintained. The park is home to the Aviary (moved there from Dundurn Castle) and the Lawn Bowling Club. The children's playground was funded by the city with enhancements through community fundraising.

As we were looking at the aerial map of the RBG's holdings on display in the registration area, a man approached us and said that Churchill Park is going to be sold and developed for housing like the survey across the street from the park. We were too appalled to ask him his source, but it seemed a credible rumour. Immediately afterward, two of our board members repeated it to you, Mr. Wade, and you denied any land will be sold.

A developer would not be a suitable partner for the RBG. This land was assembled over 60 years by civic-minded people with foresight for future generations. We need open, green parks where we can exercise, play, and socialize, as well as formal gardens and land left in a natural state. This is the only such park in the area, and it will be needed more than ever as our population increases.

We anxiously await the outcome of your deliberations. Please keep us informed.

FUN Update

Past AWWCA president **Liz Millar** reports: "As the AWWCA representative to the Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods of Ontario, I receive a significant amount of information from FUN and organizations which it is linked with. The three top priorities for FUN in 2005 are: Ontario Municipal Board reform, postsecondary-housing issues, and municipal-election reform. For those who wish to follow FUN's activities, go to www.urbanneighbourhoods.ca or contact me at 905-527-2203."

This Is Our Neighbourhood

Positively Delightful

Help Us Select Our Most Popular Asset

ALICE SABOURIN
VICE-PRESIDENT, AWWCA

The Westdale and Ainslie Wood area is unlike any other Hamilton neighbourhood. I marvel at the well-planned pattern and arrangement of our streets, the aesthetic and charm of Westdale Village, the snippets of intellectual conversations I hear in our cafés. A favourite evening is a romantic dinner at 1010 Bistro followed by a movie date at our historic art-deco movie theatre. We debate the plot and characters as we window shop and get two



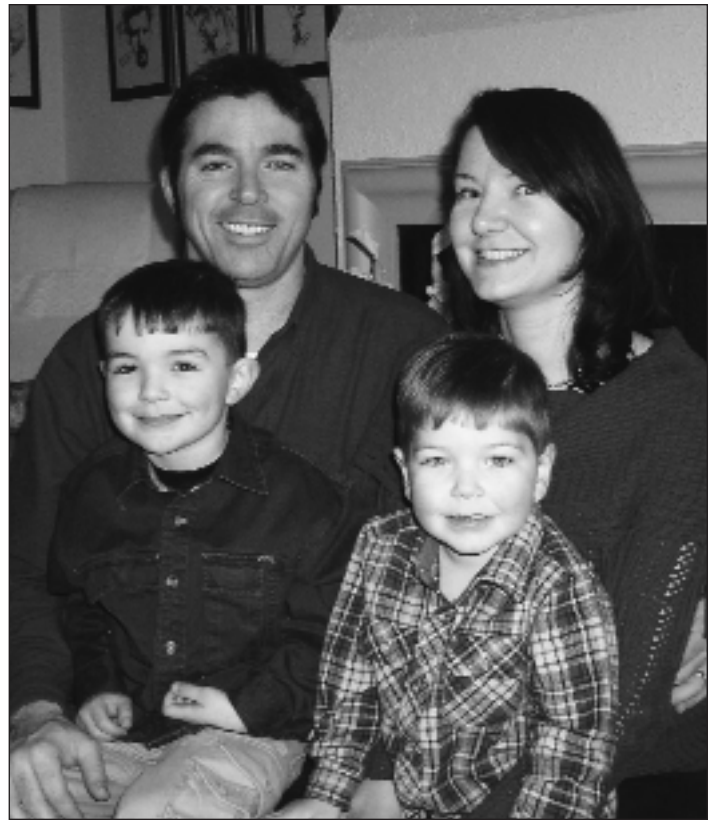
steamy drinks to go. My favourite server makes the vanilla-bean lattes, and I eye a new teapot on the shelf.

I savour the chocolate croissants at Weil's and specialty cheeses and Ace baguettes at the Global Village Market. I adore the challah and cream cheese at the Westdale Delicatessen. I walk to The Barn with my new stroller cart and pack away our weekly groceries. I love the Barn's fresh produce and the perfectly sane size of the store. I pick books for my wish list at Bryan Prince and order my husband's *Fast Food Nation*. We dream of summer as we visit Adventure Attic and are pleasantly

distracted by the woolly sweaters and smart parkas. Errands are quickly completed at the pharmacy, bank, and post office.

Yes, we relish our Westdale traditions. The kids joyfully select their "cool" footwear every season at Jack Carruth Shoe Store. We are thrilled by the McMaster Students Union and George R.Allan pumpkin-night hike at Halloween, and our kids enjoy the parade through the village. We can skate at Churchill Park in the winter because our community has volunteers dedicated to our winter cheer. We toboggan at Cootes and picnic at the park. We visit the neighbourhood plots at the Teaching Garden. We have ice cream and frozen yoghurt on our stroll home from dance lessons at St. Paul's Church. We order panzerotti from Valentino's and falafels from Basiliq on busy week-nights.

My kids skate and play hockey at Coronation and swim at Dalewood. We love the rail trail and the fish count at the Desjardin trail. We hike at Cootes Paradise, walk through the Mac campus, and visit the birds at the Aviary in the same afternoon. We meet new friends in the library as we select our books and play with the train set. My children will learn French through the schools' immersion program, and we appreciate the convenient day-care arrangement. I love to see my children thriving in a caring community that will



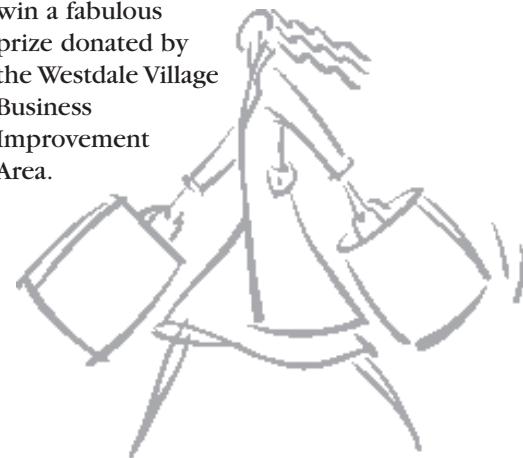
Mark, Alice, Bennett, and Max Sabourin.

Photo: Janet Woodward

cater to their needs at every age and stage. I catch myself feeling nostalgic over yesterday.

I can walk everywhere, and I do. I love Westdale's greenscape and parks, the old trees, the diversity, the amazing schools, the caring community. Can I pick one thing I love above all others? Not really . . . and this is where you come in. Help us select Westdale's most popular asset—the reason you choose Westdale or Ainslie Wood above all other communities. It's a wonderful time to reflect on the village's greatness. See page 6.

All entries will be placed in a draw to win a fabulous prize donated by the Westdale Village Business Improvement Area.



Why I Moved to Westdale

VALERIE MINDEN



Valerie Minden Photo: Lifetouch

Why did I move to Westdale? After living in Dundas 17 years, virtually my entire married life, I needed to find an affordable home that would accommodate my two teenaged boys and me. Their dad had chosen an apartment in the east part of Dundas, and I wished to disrupt their lives as little as possible. My older boy attended Westmount Secondary School and needed good access to city buses. My younger son, who attended Dundas District Middle School, needed to be near friends.

Dundas homes that met these requirements were selling above the asking price even before the "For Sale" signs were put up, so my agent directed me to the listings in the west end of Hamilton. The house we chose certainly turned out to be ideal. The street is home to a mixture of young families, those with teens, "empty-nesters," and student houses. Having chosen to live close to Princess Point, not exactly next door to campus, the students seem to be mostly in their later years, as opposed to "frosh," and are usually quiet and studious. In fact, they have been friendly, courteous, and helpful. Oh, there have been a few occasions of less-desirable behaviour, but these incidents can and do happen in any neighbourhood.

I grew up in the southwest part of the city and had friends who lived in Westdale. One of my sisters had spent most of her child-rearing years in a house on Bond Street, so I was familiar with the area. Once here, I was pleased to exchange my walks through the Carolinian forest of the Dundas Conservation Area near my former home for trails of the Royal Botanical

Gardens and my strolls or bike rides along the Rail Trail in Dundas for the Bayfront Trail, which is well lit at night and much more used. Best of all, these former haunts, as well as the friends and neighbours of my former home, are just a short distance away.

I love being able to walk easily into the "village" and visit the library, coffee shops, cafés, pubs, the theatre, all the stores and services—so convenient!

Churchill Fields is one of the best park facilities to be found anywhere, and we love to skate on the rinks in the winter. My hockey-loving son can always find some buddies to join in friendly competition. Then, of course, there's nature's rink at Princess Point, with toboggan hills too! In addition to all this free activity, we have the Dalewood Recreation Centre and Coronation Rink and Pool in easy proximity.

My younger son is now enjoying new friends at Westdale Secondary School, where he has the advantage of access to wonderful, unique, and diverse programs. There is also a great diversity of cultures and religions, in an atmosphere of learning, acceptance, and understanding. My older son is now enjoying his first year at McMaster and has been making good use of the transit system to get around from our house to the Mountain, to Dundas, and to campus—it is all close and convenient. Our neighbours have made us feel welcome and safe—what more could we want?

Valerie Minden lives in Westdale North. She joined the AWWCA at the Westitalia event last September.

Positively Delightful Contest Entry form

The reason I choose Westdale or Ainslie Wood is



AWWCA Member Name

Phone Number

One lucky AWWCA member will win a gift certificate for \$50 for a Westdale shop of their choice.

All entries received by June 30 will be included in the draw, which will take place on July 4. The winner will be notified by telephone the week of July 4 and is required to answer a skill-testing question. Contest is open to all AWWCA members. The name of the winner will be published in the AWWCA newsletter with permission.

Mail your entry (or drop off in person, postage free) to AWWCA Positively Delightful Contest, 1063 King St. West, Suite 221, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4S3.

“It is hard to imagine living anywhere else.”

MICHAEL BORDIN

Five years ago, my wife and I began looking for a house to buy. We had lived for two years in the Strathcona neighbourhood and for another two years in the Locke Street neighbourhood. We were looking for somewhere we could put down roots, be active members in the community, and raise our family.

We looked at houses in the southwest, Dundas, and Westdale, preferring the features, lifestyle, and amenities of these lower-city neighbourhoods to the sprawling suburbs on the Mountain. We appreciated all that Dundas and the southwest had to offer, but we chose Westdale.

My wife and I are not from Hamilton. We met at McMaster University in 1990. During our time at McMaster, we enjoyed walks through Westdale's wonderful neighbourhood and occasionally visited Westdale Village to attend the Westdale Theatre or to shop and eat. I remember thinking then what a beautiful neighbourhood it was.

Seven years later, when we were considering our options, we came to appreciate even more the jewel that Westdale is. We had heard about the strong community and the excellent schools within walking distance. Most importantly, we found that Westdale provided what we valued in a community: a mix in size, form, and cost of housing; a huge park, hiking trails, and Cootes Paradise within walking distance; a true village

Giant Snowmen on Arkell Street

These giant snowmen were impossible to miss for anyone passing by Arkell Street near Paisley Avenue South the week of Feb. 21, when these McMaster students started building them: “We built one . . . and then it just snowballed.” Three of the students are in the humanities faculty, and Mike is in the faculty of social sciences. Well done guys; you put smiles on our faces during the long winter.



L to R: Michael Bordin and Heather Waters with Hannah and Emily (on Heather's lap).

centre where we could shop, go to the library, eat, get a haircut, do our banking and dry cleaning, as well as spend time with friends—all without getting into a car. We also appreciated the energy and vitality brought to the area by the university students, and the various amenities offered by McMaster.

Over the 4 ½ years during which we have lived in Westdale, we have discovered many more things about the neighbourhood and the people who live here that have added to the list of reasons why Westdale is a model community. It is hard to imagine living anywhere else.

Michael Bordin is an AWWCA board member.



Snowmen creators, L to R: Matt Wilson, Jordan Vechsler, Patrick Dwyer, and Mike Kucan.
Photo: Janet Woodward

green NEWS

Join the Tree Challenge Now

SUSAN WHITESIDE

The Westdale Tree Committee has made good progress since coming together last spring. It was formed as a result of the Westdale Trees Count program and is now a subcommittee of the AWWCA. The committee has set out a number of goals for our community, one of which is to replace the Barclay oak tree that was taken down several years ago. It was reputed to be one of Hamilton's oldest oak trees (estimates range from 200 to 600 years of age) and had a circumference of 17 feet! Unfortunately, due to disease, this revered, monumental tree had to be taken down by the city.

Of the estimated \$700 required to plant a new tree, \$300 was raised through donations collected at our booth at Westitalia last fall, and in February the AWWCA and the Westdale Village Business Improvement Area each contributed \$200. It may be surprising to many people that one tree could cost \$700 to plant. The committee wants to ensure that the tree is of a substantial size. A large portion of the cost comes from the many years a nursery needs to invest in nurturing young saplings. A large tree also requires heavy equipment to deliver it and dig the hole to plant it. The nursery also provides a three-year guarantee if it plants the tree.

There are many benefits of planting trees around our houses: they reduce air-conditioning costs, improve air quality, provide protection from the sun's ultraviolet rays, reduce storm-water runoff, provide wildlife habitat, reduce noise levels, and increase prop-



Westdale Tree Committee members, L to R: Diane Whitmore, Karen Poyner, and Mary Louise Pigott at Westitalia, September 2004.
Photo: Linda Bryant

erty values. Approximately 15-25 per cent of the house and lot price may be related to tree value. Trees are a long-term investment. Spending \$300 on a tree may seem a lot at the time, but if the tree lives 50-100 years or more, this is very inexpensive. Many of us may spend that on daily coffees every year! Also keep in mind that a new car costs between \$20,000 and \$50,000 and may only last 10 years.

The Barclay Street Tree Challenge is another event to participate in this spring and summer. Some Barclay residents are challenging other streets in our area to meet or exceed their goal to plant at least 10 new native trees in back and front gardens on their street this year. Why not get together with your neighbours and meet the challenge? The Westdale Tree Committee has available to homeowners in the neighbourhood a tree-planting coupon from Connon Nurseries. These coupons allow the holder to purchase up to \$300 worth of trees or conifers at 35 per cent off marked prices. Enjoy the benefits of trees and leave a legacy for the future.

If you would like to make a donation toward planting more trees in Westdale, join in the Barclay Street Tree Challenge, or obtain the Connon Nurseries' coupon, please contact

Linda Bryant at 905-526-9779 or dwbryant@attglobal.net.

My thanks to Ken Ockenden and Linda Bryant for their assistance with this article.

Congratulations to Our White-Trillium Award Winners

Congratulations to AWWCA members **Carol Davids, Shelli and Mark Eisenberg, Alan McArthur, Bob McGall and Jennifer Wilson, Liz Millar and**

Mary Najev, who won white-trillium awards in 2004.

The Trillium Awards Program promotes and encourages community pride through the recognition of excellence in property beautification. The specific criteria for judging a property include landscape design, harmony of colour, and maintenance.



White Trillium Copyright City of Hamilton 2001

Let's Give Mother Earth a Helping Hand

KENNETH SHERMAN

It's time for the third annual cleanup of Canadian Pacific Rail's abandoned line between Rifle Range Road (at the new Fortino's) and Stroud Road (at the entrance of the CP rail yard). If we have enough workers this year we will also clean the Stroud Park regeneration area at Royal Avenue and Stroud Road. As in past years, the cleanup is planned for Mother's Day weekend, Saturday, May 7, from 9:30 a.m. Meet at the Rifle Range entrance of Fortino's. Bring gloves; we will supply the rest. Our theme is: "Let's give Mother Earth a helping hand."

This year's cleanup has the co-operation of CP Rail, Hamilton's Department of Public Works, Councillor Brian McHattie, the AWWCA, St. Mary's Secondary School's

Recycling Environmental Assessment Program, McMaster's President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations, the Westdale Community Policing Centre, and Fortino's. We look forward to everyone's co-operation again this year and welcome more volunteers.

For further information contact me at 905-524-2898 or k_e_sherman@yahoo.ca.

3RD ANNUAL CLEAN UP Saturday, May 7

Meet at the Rifle Range entrance to Fortino's
9:30 a.m.

Turning Tonnes into Trees

JULIA KOLLEK
PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

Environment Hamilton has launched a new program in Ainslie Wood/Westdale called Tonnes for Trees.

This is a local initiative that builds on the federal government's One Tonne Challenge, which invites us to reduce our annual greenhouse-gas emissions by one tonne per person. By heating our homes and driving our cars, each of us produces about 5 ½ tonnes of greenhouse gasses a year.

Tonnes for Trees will plant two new trees in the AWWCA community in the fall for every tonne of GHG emissions we and our neighbours can eliminate. All we have to do is record the steps we take.

GHGs include carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide. Producing excessive amounts is causing global climate change because the gases trap heat and increase the average temperature. Since the industrial revolution about 200 years ago, fossil fuels such as oil, coal, and natural gas have been burnt to create energy, producing GHGs well beyond the amount nature would normally produce.

Here are some examples of how you can lose a tonne of those GHG emissions. For more information, go to www.climatechange.gc.ca/onetonne/english.

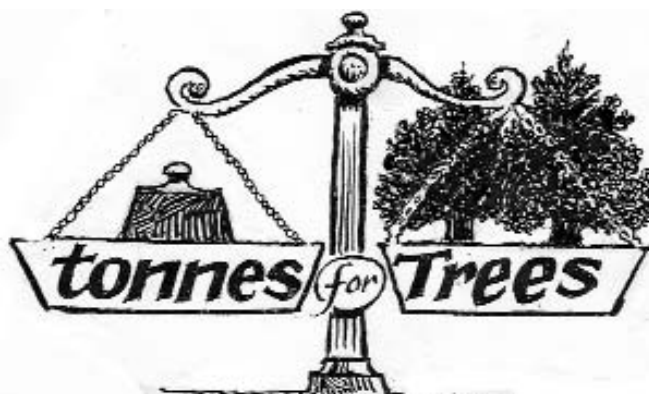
1. Don't idle your car. Idling for 10 minutes a day can produce about a quarter tonne of CO2 emissions each year and cost you about \$70 in wasted fuel.
2. Check your tire pressure once a month. Did you know that 70 per cent of vehicles have at least one tire that is over- or underinflated? Maintaining the correct tire pressure could reduce your GHGs by at least one-eighth of a tonne each year and save \$50 in fuel costs.
3. Use compact fluorescent light bulbs. They last up to 10 times longer and use one-quarter of the electricity of a regular incandescent light bulb. Replacing five regular light bulbs in your home with compact fluorescent light bulbs will reduce your GHG emissions by one-

eighth of a tonne.

4. Install a programmable thermostat. For every degree Celsius you lower your thermostat, you can save two per cent on your heating bill. A reduction of three degrees Celsius at night or when you are away during the day provides optimal savings and can reduce your GHGs by half a tonne.

You can register by going to the Tonnes for Trees website at www.environmenthamilton.org/tonnes/index.htm or by calling me at 905-627-7177.

This is an exciting opportunity to make a difference both globally and locally!



Green Yards – Healthy Neighbourhoods

Peer Gardeners and Transition Gardens Needed

CHRISTINE BROWN AND ALISON HEALING

The Green Yards—Healthy Neighbourhoods project has been developed to help citizens of Hamilton change their gardens so they can be maintained without pesticides.

The AWWCA supports this program and encourages you to participate in it. Partners in the program are the **Hamilton Coalition on Pesticide Issues** and the **Conserver Society of Hamilton and District**, which have received a Hamilton Community Foundation grant to hire a co-ordinator to run this three-year project in conjunction with Green Venture.

With training provided through the project, volunteer peer gardeners will work with people in their own neighbourhoods. If you are interested in helping your neighbours make the transition from pesticide use to pesti-

cide-free gardening practices, please contact one of the following resources to find out what is involved and how you will be trained and supported in the project. You will become one of five peer gardeners in Ainslie Wood and Westdale.

If you are interested in having your garden chosen as one of the 25 to become pesticide free, and possibly to become a model garden for others to learn from, please contact one of the following members of the Green Yards—Healthy Neighbourhoods team: **Christine Brown**, Hamilton Coalition on Pesticide Issues, 905-648-3391, cebrown@cogeco.ca; **Alison Healing**, Conserver Society of Hamilton, 905-648-6964, ahealing@cogeco.ca; **Heather Donison**, director of Green Venture, 905-540-8787, ext. 15, hdonison@greenventure.ca; or **Joyce Killin**, AWWCA liaison, 905-572-6876, joyce-gardens@aol.com.

*"There is no time
like spring, when
life's alive in
everything"*

*Christina Rosetti,
19th-century poet*



The AWWCA's Liaison to Green Yards

AWWCA member **Joyce Killin** is the AWWCA's liaison with the Green Yards—Healthy Neighbourhoods program.

Joyce's formal education includes a bachelor of science degree, the Qualified Plantsman certificate from the University of Guelph, and the Environmental Horticulture certificate from Sheridan College.

She has been sharing her plant and botanical knowledge as an instructor for over 10 years in the Horticulture and Landscape Design Programs at Mohawk College.

Shortly after moving to Hamilton in 1990, she became a founding member of the Canadian Organic Growers. Joyce says, "My gardening life began

under the guidance of my mother, when as a child I was her garden apprentice. Although vegetable gardening was her speciality, she also



Joyce Killin

Photo: Bernardo Lopez

managed the front ornamental garden, growing roses, hydrangeas, hellebores, and rhododendrons, and maintained a large rock garden. Organic growing was just the way it was done then,

The AWWCA welcomes Joyce and thanks her for volunteering her time and expertise as our liaison with the Green Yards—Healthy Neighbourhoods program.

"Think Globally, Recycle Locally"

(Abraham Lincoln)

The worldwide Freecycle™ Network is made up of thousands of individual groups around the globe. It's a grassroots movement of people who are giving (and getting) stuff for free in their own towns. Each local group is run by a local volunteer moderator. Membership is free. The Hamilton group has almost 1,000 members. Check it out at www.freecycle.org/.



AWWCA supports STUDENTS

A New Campus for a New Century:

"A Near-Campus Experience"

ROB PAYNE

McMaster's recent submission to the Rae Review on Postsecondary Education developed a vision of A New Campus for a New Century.

This vision stated that: "One of the overarching aims of our planning process has been dissolving boundaries—between college and university, between undergraduate and graduate education, between learning and working, and between campus and community" (Rae Review, p. 11).

Unfortunately the university was referring only to its proposed Burlington campus.

McMaster has a tremendous opportunity to reach its vision more quickly by dissolving some boundaries between the existing campus and near-campus neighbourhoods. This will require a recognition by the university, the student union, and the municipal and provincial governments that our near-campus neighbourhoods have unique characteristics that distinguish them from the rest of the city.

Near-campus neighbourhoods house a large percentage of the student population, in densities approaching that of the campus. They absorb all of the university's incoming and outgoing pedestrian and vehicular traffic and therefore give visitors their first impression of the university. They also house the largest density of university staff and faculty, allowing many to enjoy a "walk to work" location.

Unfortunately the control structures set up by McMaster University to run its on-campus community are not applied to near-campus neighbourhoods, despite the similar environment we share.

Speed limits are much lower; health, property, and safety standards for student accommodation are much higher; and enforcement of student conduct is much stricter on campus than in the near-campus neighbourhoods. Campus has its own security force, emergency-response unit, property management and maintenance, and a defined code of student conduct that includes academic sanctions.

The growth of McMaster by over 50 per cent in the last six years, combined with the younger age of incoming students, has caused many of these regulations to be tightened on campus, which has increased the disparity in the management of these issues on campus and in the near-campus neighbourhoods. It is time for all parties to recognize that such neighbourhoods have needs different from areas farther removed from campus pressures.

It is time to remove the boundaries and close the widening gap between the on-campus and near-campus communities with regard to student conduct; health, property, and safety standards; parking; and traffic. Let's create A New Campus for a New Century with our existing near-campus neighbourhoods in Hamilton.

A Real-World Learning Experience



Students in Mohawk's Postgraduate Public Relations Program with instructor Jay Robb in back row, second from right.

JAY ROBB

The challenges and opportunities facing our community found their way into a Mohawk College classroom Nov. 23.

Students with the college's new Postgraduate Public Relations Program proposed a host of innovative strategies for sustaining a safe, dynamic, and healthy community for homeowners and students alike.

The students, working in three teams, delivered their reports and presentations as the final assignment in a 13-week issues-management course. **Rob**

Payne, AWWCA president, and **Jennifer Kleven**, co-ordinator of McMaster's Off-Campus Resource Centre, met with students, gave presentations, and answered questions. The teams also did online research, visited our community, and talked with students, landlords, and homeowners.

Rob and Jennifer gave the students a goldmine of information and helped make this project a real-world learning experience. And the students did a great job in applying what they had learned thus far in the program and drawing on their own experiences and perspectives as students.

A collaborative approach to making our community an even better place to call home was a consistent theme running through the proposed strategies. While the students quickly discovered that there's no quick fix or easy solution, they did find real opportunities for everyone who has a stake in our community to work together.

Homeowners, the university, students, and landlords all have a vested interest in making our community Canada's best campus town.

Recognizing responsible students and landlords, leveraging community pride, and applying political pressure to change bylaws and secure funding for on-campus housing were among the strategies proposed. For a copy of the presentations, e-mail me at jay_robb@dofasco.ca.

Jay Robb is the instructor for the above program and an AWWCA member.

A Delightful Encounter with Thai Students

BETTY BECHTEL

Early one evening last September, I returned home to find four young women standing on the front sidewalk, admiring our garden. I wondered if they were students. We learned they are public school teachers from Thailand, learning English as a second language at Columbia College. They eagerly accepted my invitation to meet my husband, Jim, and to see our house. Jim, the resi-

dent woodworker, gave each of them one of his little hand-made wooden boxes and a wooden key chain.

They were delightful to meet, full of laughter, very polite, and grateful for the gifts. One woman noticed our 1985 poster advertising a concert with Jim as the featured baritone soloist: "Is that you?" She was delighted when I gave her one of Jim's records, remarking "Cool," and asked him to autograph it.

They wrote out their names in English, and again in the pretty Thai alphabet. It has 45 consonants and more than 32 vowels.

The women asked to come back the next day to show us pictures of Thailand. We readily agreed.

As they departed they showed us the Thai way of greeting: bowing with hands held in a prayerful manner. We gave them Canadian hugs and kisses, which they enthusiastically returned. They said: "At home it's too hot to hug."

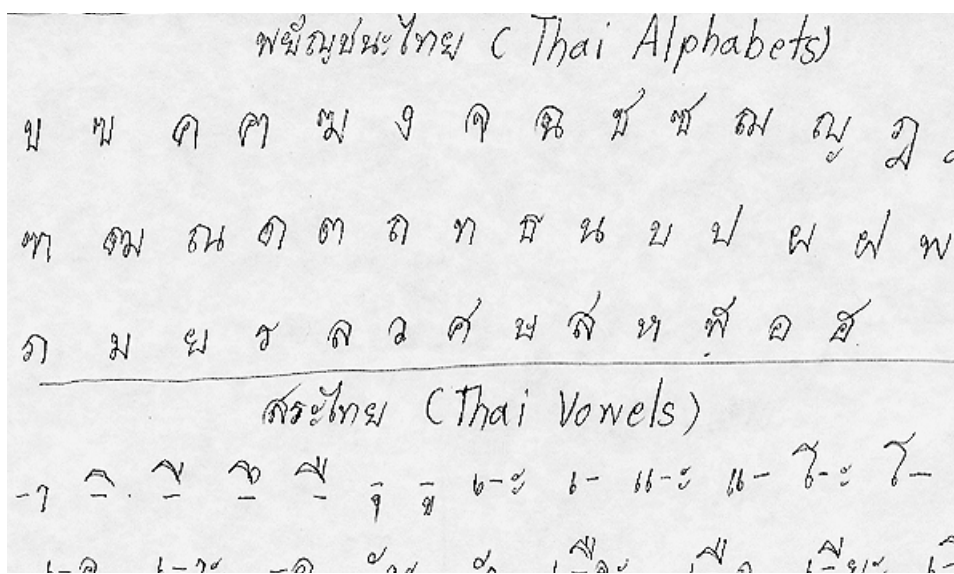
The next day they brought two male Thai students/teachers with them. One had made a doll house and was curious about the 1930s doll house that my dad had made for me.

We had a coffee break on our back patio. Then we were presented with gifts: a door chime made of three cloth elephants (their national emblem), a long silk scarf for me (which one girl draped artistically over my shoulder), and for Jim a pewter key chain depicting elephants and a colourful Thai toque. We were also presented with pictures and a map of the estate of the king of Thailand.

Our Thai friends have returned to northern Thailand but keep in touch by e-mail and recently sent the above picture. A chance encounter turned into a delightful friendship.



Suwat Wiwatchanon, Jim Bechtel (wearing a handmade toque from Thailand), and Betty Bechel (wearing a silk scarf from Thailand).



Thoughtful Students

BETTY BECHTEL

Last November, while I was raking leaves on our front lawn, two delightful, young, and enthusiastic male students approached me and offered to do the rest of the raking. They said they would be doing theirs tomorrow and could easily do ours as well. I thanked them and said that was very kind of them but that I would decline because I needed the exercise. They went on their way and I did not get their names, but I was quite touched by their spontaneous gesture of neighbourliness.

Rental Accommodation Review Program Launched

**JENNIFER KLEVEN, MANAGER,
OFF-CAMPUS RESOURCE
CENTRE**

This is a new, voluntary program for landlords to have their rental accommodations for students accredited according to standards set by McMaster University and reviewed by an independent third party. It is based on a clause in the Tenant Protection Act, 1997, Ontario Regulations 194/98, that allows landlords to enter into an agreement with a postsecondary institution: In exchange for agreeing to certain stipulations put forth by the school, the landlord is permitted to use a termination agreement with student tenants when they sign their leases for rental accommodations. This is a carrot for landlords, because when a standard lease expires, the tenant has the right to remain on a month-to-month basis, potentially moving out at a time when students are not looking for accommodations and leaving the landlord without a tenant. Students will also benefit, because the program will streamline their search for reasonable off-campus accommodations, and it will ensure the property remains part of the student rental market —available at appropriate

times of the year. This program was designed by McMaster University's Off-Campus Resource Centre; the university receives no fee for the program.

The review checklist is simply a basic screening tool for use by tenants to decide whether a more detailed personal inspection of the property is warranted. It is not a safety audit, nor a review of cleanliness of the living accommodation, nor does it address the issue of legal or contractual responsibilities of the landlord, nor is it a reflection of the landlord's integrity.

A landlord who is interested in participating in the program will be referred to the exclusive third-party reviewer. The landlord is required to then pay fees to the reviewer in order to proceed with the property assessment. Upon completion of the review, the property either will be denied participation in the program or will receive one of the following designations: Basic Model or Enhanced Model. If one of these designations is assigned and the landlord signs a special contract with McMaster University, the rental property will be labelled accordingly within the OCRC rental listings, setting

STUDENT HOUSING

it apart from other advertised properties. Those who choose not to participate in the program or whose properties do not meet the standards in the review can list their properties under the General category.

Landlords of accredited properties have several obligations under the agreement they will be signing with McMaster. For instance, beyond maintaining the quality of accommodation as it was when reviewed, they are required to ensure the grass is cut and the property is free from garbage and to monitor the property on a regular basis in an effort to address tenant-behaviour issues (such as large parties or other disruptive behaviour).

For a complete description of the program and to peruse the review checklist and related documents, visit www.macocho.com. The target activation date for the program is April 1, 2005.

Town and Gown Meets with Bob Rae

The working group of Town and Gown Ontario met briefly with **Bob Rae** Nov. 24 in Guelph. **Rob Payne**, co-chair of Town and Gown, and **Liz Millar**, Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods board member, represented our neighbourhood at this meeting.

Mr. Rae, who is heading a review of postsecondary education in Ontario, listened to our concerns about issues that affect near-campus communities and encouraged Town and Gown to continue its work.

This organization has grown out of symposiums held in Waterloo and Hamilton in 2004.

Vision: Town and Gown is dedicated to improving the quality of life in municipalities that are home to postsecondary institutions by promoting and supporting activities that ensure cohesive communities that are safe, healthy, and enjoyable.



L to R: Rob Payne, TGAO co-chair, City of Hamilton; Kaye Crawford, TGAO co-chair, City of Waterloo; and Brad Clarke, Brock University, off-campus-housing officer. Photo: Liz Millar

Mandate:

1. To collect and disseminate information through research, sharing best practices, and education.
2. To identify issues and develop solutions to problems of common interest.
3. To work with all levels of government to effect change.
4. To provide town-and-gown communities with a template for an organizational structure to facilitate communication and action on local issues.

VARITY NEWS



Guelph Symposium Well Attended

Rob Payne reports: **Betty Bechtel, Liz Millar, Alice Sabourin**, and I attended the Guelph Town and Gown symposium Feb. 24-25. There was a good turnout, with approximately 100 attendees from places as far away as Ottawa, Kingston, and Windsor.

Hamilton was well represented, with attendees from McMaster, Hamilton Police, the Mohawk College neighbourhood, and the city (including **Councillors Brian McHattie and Terry Whitehead**).

I am pleased to announce that agreement was made toward formalization of the Town and Gown Association of Ontario (TGAO).

Liz and I will continue to serve on the TGAO interim board, together with city representatives **Dale Brown, Vanessa Grupe, P.C. Scott Moreton, and Doug Rose**. Our short-term goal is to develop a solid membership base, as well as a web page for TGAO.

The AWWCA should be proud of the leadership position it has taken in the formation of this provincial body, and you should know that our neighbourhood association was the first official member of TGAO. Thanks to all of the Hamilton stakeholders for the time you have donated to near-campus issues.

I am excited about the possibilities for TGAO. This development, combined with the innovative work ahead of us with our Campus Town Association, sets the stage for what I hope will be ground-breaking work in the area of near-campus stakeholder collaboration.

Proposed Expansion of Quarters

Quarters, the McMaster Students Union pub on campus, has applied to expand its capacity from 720 to 950 patrons.

Last fall AWWCA president **Rob Payne** met with MSU president **Shano Mohan** regarding the expansion plans, suggesting it be limited to non-licensed seats, given the large number of students who are under the legal drinking age. The MSU did not agree to this idea for economic reasons.

In a conference call last fall, AWWCA honorary board member **Betty Bechtel** and members **Ann McLaughlin** and **Joe Aiello** led the opposition and were successful in convincing the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario to defer the decision and have a public hearing. That decision was one of three options; the others were to agree to the expansion request or to agree to the expansion with conditions. The AWWCA was satisfied that the commission viewed our concerns as valid.

Following are excerpts of Rob's letter published in the *Silhouette* Nov. 25:

I read with interest your recent article "Quarters to face opposition in expansion," and I would like to clarify the concerns of the Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association on this issue.

McMaster University has increased the number of full-time students from roughly 14,000 to 20,000 in the past six years. During this time, it has created just 300 additional residence spaces. The desire of many students to live on or near campus has meant that there has been a very large increase in the number of students who live in neighbourhoods near campus.

Many of these students go to the local bars to have a good time. Quarters has the reputation of being well run, and is also the largest of the area bars, with a capacity of 720 licensed seats. This is more

than the other two major local bars added together.

The double cohort added another dimension, as the average age of the students living off campus has dropped, with many now under the legal drinking age of 19.

The combination of these three elements has led to a dramatic increase in noise and vandalism complaints in the community. These complaints come not only from full-time residents but also from student residents, the majority of whom also want their night's sleep and do not like the bad name students get as a result of a small minority's behaviour.

The AWWCA believes that it is logical to assume that an increase in the number of licensed seats at Quarters to serve primarily off-campus students will only increase the number of noise and vandalism complaints in the neighbourhood.

International Varsity News

Auditing University Courses Advertised to Seniors Living in University Communities

In an article in the Dec. 1, 2004, issue of the student newspaper of the University of Pennsylvania about the popularity of university courses for seniors, Sarah Breger said: "Auditing courses appeals to retired seniors who are searching for intellectual stimulation and activity. It is so popular that retirement communities have begun to advertise nearby college campuses as a benefit to living in the communities." See www.dailypennsylvanian.com/vnews/display.v/ART/2004/12/01/41ad714754df0.

College Towns Offer Retirees Many Benefits

The site www.collegetownlife.com/ highlights the many benefits of living in college towns—benefits like walkability and historic preservation. It outlines a new trend that sees retirees moving to college towns or retirement communities being built near college towns so that residents can enjoy cultural and athletic events, participate in educational opportunities, and be close by the excellent medical facilities tied to educational institutions. Also see Sonia Krishnan's article on the same topic in the Nov. 7, 2004, issue of *The Seattle Times* at http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2002084472_retirement07e.html

What Makes Athens, Ohio, the Best College Town in America?

To find out, go to www.uga.edu/gm/901/FeatTownBody.html.

Deaths from Binge Drinking at Colorado State U.

An editorial about two students from Colorado State University who died from alcohol poisoning was published in *The Coloradoan* Dec. 14, 2004. It speaks of officials debating student-occupied homes owned by absentee landlords and asks: "Do such residences contribute to a lack of accountability or a group mentality on the part of those living in the homes as well as absent property owners?" See <http://vh10228.moc.gbahn.net/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20041214/OPIN-ION01/412140315/1014>.

Improving the Safety of Student Housing

A very interesting approach toward improving the safety of student housing is outlined at www.nihe.gov.uk/news/news.asp?Id=240. It is important to note that Ireland thinks that student rentals are over 10 times more at risk for fire than traditional family houses. Is this something Hamilton needs to consider?

U. of Leeds' Housing Strategy

Following is an excerpt from vice-chancellor Alan Wilson's Forward to the University of Leeds' housing strategy 2003-08: "I believe [the housing strategy] will be seen as a landmark in the development of the university's accommodation and in its relationship with the wider community. We realize that this is not only an important asset in meeting the needs of present and future students at the university, but that our housing stock also has an impact on the social and economic life of the city. That is why the Housing Strategy looks outwards as well as inwards. We are fully committed to building and fostering excellent relationships with the local communities where our students live. We realise that friction can arise between students and local residents." A PDF version of the report is available at www.leeds.ac.uk/about/housing/.

Bringing Life Back to University Ghetto Areas

Last fall students at the two universities in Leeds discovered plans to bring balance back to the areas around the universities by limiting students' takeover of dozens of nearby streets. See www.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,3604,1317955,00.html.

McMaster Provides Mediation Services to Community

McMaster University has retained Community Dispute Resolution Services to provide mediation services to the end of the school year in April. Residents, landlords, students living off campus—anyone in the surrounding community—can take advantage of the services free of charge for issues arising locally.

CDRS of Hamilton is a nonprofit, community-based organization that provides conflict-resolution services in a neutral environment for cross-cultural, landlord-tenant, parent-youth, business-client, and neighbour-neighbour disputes, as well as for community organizations.

Please contact **Tim Cameron**, CDRS co-ordinator, at 905-521-2225 or tim@cdrshamilton.ca.



Ontario Town and Gown on International Websites

Town and Gown, hosted on the City of Hamilton website, is now linked on a Pennsylvania website at www.users.muohio.edu/karrowrs/College/CT_Plans.htm (scroll down to "Ontario").

USC Opens World's Largest "Green" Dorm

Last November the University of South Carolina celebrated the official opening of its "green dorm," the largest residence-hall complex of its kind in the world. It includes the latest technology and environmental features for conserving water and energy and creating a healthier, greener environment for the 500 undergraduate students who reside there. For more detail, go to <http://uscnews.sc.edu/stud280b.html>.

members' NEWS

Highlights of the AWWCA's Sixth Annual General Meeting

The AWWCA's sixth annual general meeting on Sept. 21 had the largest number of attendees ever. More than 250 people braved the very hot Dalewood School auditorium to ask questions of the police, McMaster, and the city.

The format introduced last year was repeated, as residents aired their concerns between 6 and 7 p.m. to **Staff Sergeant Scott Rastin**, **Sgt. George Narozniak**, **Police Constables Bill Anderson** and **Scott Moreton**; **Councillor Brian McHattie**; **Judy Downey**, property standards; **Roger Trull**, vice-president, university advancement, McMaster University; **Shano Mohan**, president, McMaster Students Union; and **Jessica Fedoruk**, director, Student Community-Support Network.

In his summary of the AGM e-mailed to members Sept. 24, AWWCA president **Rob Payne** noted: *Our special guest speaker, Mayor Larry Di Ianni, did a good job tackling the assigned topic of student housing by taking the time to visit our community beforehand (with our councillor and bylaw officer) and was familiar with the challenges faced by our neighbourhoods.*

There is a feeling (which I share) that we are not keeping up with the vandalism and bylaw enforcement needed to handle the double cohort of students moving into our community.



Mayor Dilanni addressing the AGM.

Photo: Janet Woodward

The residents have moved from "simmer" to "boil." This could in part explain our record attendance. Our passion is starting to have some results. Initiatives are being worked on that we hope to see in effect shortly. There is a great desire to have things happen now. It was mentioned many times how frustrating it is to address the same issues year after year. One specific area of concern was the current long process to enforce yard maintenance and property standards. There is an underlying desire to fight for our neighbourhood, as many people pointed out how wonderful it "used to be," and judging by the attendance, they were not ready to give up yet.

This will be the peak year for off-campus housing demand. McMaster will ship out approximately 500 fewer students to the neighbourhood in the coming year. Combined with the new residence for 400 students in 2006, this will most likely free up an additional 200 houses in our community, which have the potential to be con-

verted back to family housing. A key goal for all of us is to make this happen, and to use the natural beauty and convenience of our neighbourhoods, combined with some of the best schools in Ontario, to attract and retain the new families who keep our neighbourhood balanced. Your AWWCA will continue to do its best to make the Ainslie Wood/Westdale neighbourhoods our home in the truest sense of the word.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR 7TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE AWWCA

Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2005

**Dalewood School Auditorium,
1150 Main St. W.**

6:00 p.m. Visit display areas of bylaw, McMaster, and police, and meet with their representatives

7:00 p.m. Annual General Meeting

Guest speaker:

MP Russ Powers on the topic of sustainable communities

Mr. Powers is president of the Federal Sustainable Communities Committee

Newsletter co-ordinator **Janet Woodward** thanked AWWCA members and volunteers **Michelle** and **Bob Edmonds** for their excellent work fashioning our written words into an excellent-looking, award-winning newsletter. She then reported, in her capacity as membership secretary, that the AWWCA welcomed 62 new members in the past year. On Aug. 31, the end of our fiscal year, paid-up membership was 417, including 18 Friends of the AWWCA. She noted that between newsletters we communicate with 59 per cent of our members by e-mail.

Janet called **Betty Bechtel** to the podium to recognize her as having been instrumental in the founding of the AWWCA six years ago. In 1998, Betty began keeping a list of incidents in the



Janet Woodward presenting a corsage to Betty Bechtel.
Photo: Liz Millar

community and wrote to the police chief about the issues. **Sgt. Al Smethurst** then involved Betty and Jim as representatives to whom beat officers could relate. Subsequently, Sgt. Smethurst invited Betty to serve on the Police Superintendent's Advisory Committee. In this way, the position of AWWCA police liaison was born. In addition to providing the community with tremendous support as police liaison, Betty was a charter member and a board member of the AWWCA. Janet moved that Betty be formally recognized by the members of the AWWCA as an honorary nonvoting board member; her motion passed unanimously.

Betty Bechtel introduced **Tracey Lindsay** as the new police liaison for the AWWCA.



Betty Bechtel introducing Tracey Lindsay.

Photo: Liz Millar

Betty then presented **Sgt. Al Smethurst** with a certificate of appreciation for his efforts on behalf of the community and the AWWCA.

Rob Payne adjourned the meeting shortly before 9 p.m. and expressed the hope that we will have cause to celebrate significant improvements in our community at the AGM in September 2005. He stressed the need for help from as many community members as possible if we are to achieve our goals.

*Thanks to
The Barn in
Westdale for
donating bottled
water for our
annual general
meeting last
September*



Betty Bechtel presenting Sgt. Al Smethurst with a certificate of appreciation.

Photo: Janet Woodward

The **AWWCA board of directors** holds its monthly meetings at the Westdale Community Policing Centre, 1045 King St. West, at 7 p.m. on the first Monday of each month. Honorary board member Betty Bechtel says: "I find the board meetings quite exciting with all of the positive initiatives that are happening. Even though I need to get at some of my own projects, going to these board meetings is like reading a mesmerizing book one cannot put down. I hope more people will attend our meetings, as they will be inspired by the wide range of improvements occurring in our community, and by the thought, planning, and actions that make it all happen. We are front-runners in this field." The AWWCA board of directors welcomes all those interested in attending.

Joy James

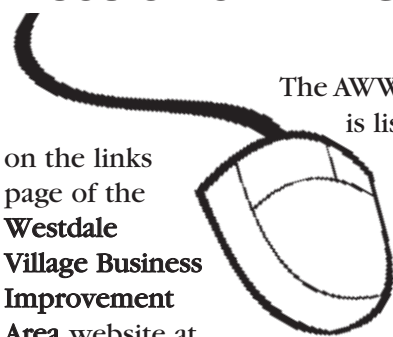
The AWWCA's First President

We were saddened to hear of the death of **Joy James** on Feb. 19. In 1998 she and Linda Grigg initiated the process to start a community association for Ainslie Wood and Westdale. As the first president of the AWWCA, Joy laid the groundwork for the association as we know it today. She and Linda were the driving force behind the "monster home" bylaw that has provided protection for housing stock in the AWWCA area over the past nine years. Today our neighbourhoods are more stable because of Joy's commitment and determination.

Electronic AWWCA

The AWWCA is listed on the links page of the **Westdale Village Business Improvement Area** website at www.westdalevillage.ca/links.htm.

This link takes you to **Councillor Brian McHattie's** website www.brianmchattie.ca/awwca/intro.htm (or you can go to it directly), where you can access the AWWCA's mission statement, contact information, membership forms, and past newsletters.



Welcome Alice



Alice Sabourin

Photo: Janet Woodward

The AWWCA welcomes our newest board member—**Alice Sabourin**. Alice has lived on Bond Street South in Westdale for ten years. She and her husband, Mark, fell in love with the neighbourhood while attending McMaster University as students. "We lived at home with our

parents while attending Mac, and we commuted to the university daily by way of Westdale Village. We always admired the beautiful homes and terrific community feeling and decided we just had to live here when we married." With an MBA in innovation and undergraduate degrees in marketing and psychology, she has managed programs and projects in strategic planning, total customer experience, quality business practices, marketing, and market research in both the private and public sectors. Alice has worked for Siemens and Hewlett Packard and recently gave up a long commute to Mississauga to pursue her goal of working for the community in her home town; she is now a project manager in the City of Hamilton's Public Health and Community Services Department, Strategic Services Division. Alice was appointed vice-president of the AWWCA in January. We are pleased to add Alice to the team and we are already reaping the benefits of her passion for the AWWCA community.

2005 AWWCA Elections

This is our election year, and the board of directors of your association needs nominations to fill several positions. Two members in good standing of the AWWCA are required to nominate a candidate. Any paid-up member may stand for election to one of the following offices of the association: president, first vice-president, second vice-president, treasurer, recording secretary, membership secretary, corresponding secretary, or director (maximum of 5).

- All nominations must be signed and received by Loreen Jerome, the nominations officer, no later than September 6.
- Nominations may be mailed to or dropped off postage free at the AWWCA's box at 1063 King St. West, Suite 221, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4S3.
- Members received nomination forms with their spring newsletter. Please call Loreen Jerome at 905-525-7386 or e-mail loreen.jerome@sympatico.ca if you do not have a nomination form and would like one.

Planning Our Community

MICHAEL BORDIN

The Ainslie Wood Westdale Secondary Plan Executive Committee and Team (ASPECT) planning process continues on. The secondary plan is one of many initiatives in which the AWWCA participates as part of the overall plan to restore balance to our community and to maintain healthy, vibrant neighbourhoods.

This fall, the members of ASPECT reviewed in detail the draft secondary plan and community-policies statement. City staff are now preparing a final draft based on the suggestions proposed during those sessions. A key part of the secondary plan is the planned intensification along major arteries such as Main Street West to allow for three- or four-storey development with commercial use on the ground floor and housing above. The intent is to provide for student housing in appropriate developments and reduce student housing in single-family homes.

The third public meeting regarding the secondary plan was held March 3. The crowd of approximately 120 gave a round of applause to thank **Vanessa Grupe**, the project manager for the Ainslie Wood Westdale Secondary Plan, for guiding the plan over the past three years.

There will be a final public meeting at the Planning and Economic Development Committee on May 3. If the plan is endorsed, it is anticipated that city council will adopt it on May 11.

Michael Bordin has served on ASPECT since the spring of 2002.



Councillor McHattie introducing Vanessa Grupe at the March 3 meeting.
Photo: Janet Woodward

Security Update

TRACEY LINDSAY, AWWCA POLICE LIAISON

Increasing Policing

The AWWCA's pleas over the past six years for extra policing in our community were answered on Jan. 14 when we received some very good news—a commitment to provide two additional police officers in our community.

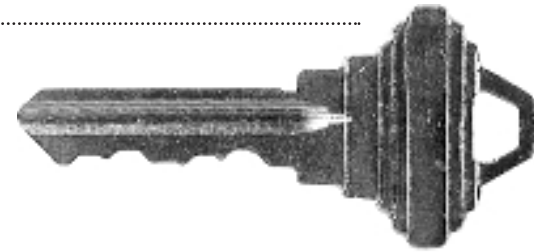
McMaster University, the McMaster Students Union, the City of Hamilton, and the Hamilton Police Service are sponsoring this program. A big thank you to the MSU and McMaster University, which are paying for two off-duty police officers to patrol our community. HPS (which is funded by the city) is providing the patrol vehicles.

One of many steps that can be taken to improve the quality of life for per-

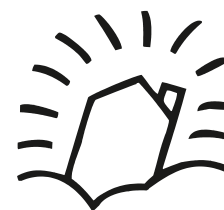
manent residents and students living around the campus, this type of action is much appreciated by the community.

The area around the Sterling Street entrance is being given priority as a first step in the new program. If you are in that area on a Friday or Saturday night between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. you may observe these officers in action. Our regular bylaw and police officers will continue as before.

Shano Mohan, MSU president, commented: "I am pleased that students can be a part of the solution to enhance the community for everyone." **Roger Trull**, vice-president, university advancement, said: "McMaster recognizes that it is a part of the west Hamilton community and, as such, has a responsibility to address issues created by the University's growth and activity."



The additional police support is an initiative of the Campus Town Association, a partnership between McMaster University, the AWWCA, and the Westdale Village Business Improvement Association. The AWWCA thanks **Councillor Brian McHattie**, McMaster University, the MSU, and the police for their efforts in bringing this program to fruition.



Because we care

NEWS *from the* BLUES

Beat 691

Our 2005 Beat 691 officers are **Staff Sergeant Scott Rastin**, **Sergeants Wayne Bennett** and **Petr Ceire**, and **Police Constables Ingrid Boiago**, **Ken Garland**, **Peter Hannon**, **Rob Hardy**, **Doug Lindley**, **Jeff Majik**, **Terry Oliver**, and **Brad Robinson**.

We Have a New Tool

From **Staff Sergeant Scott W. Rastin**: "We have a new tool! Westdale residents can now send messages directly to the beat officer's work file. Beat 691 officers have a common e-mail box. The community can send their concerns, thanks, suggestions, etc., directly to westdale@hamiltonpolice.on.ca. This should improve communication, providing a direct link between the community and the on-duty patrol officer. However, if you need immediate service, please call the police at 905-546-4925."

Description of Graffiti Tagging

Each person or gang that does graffiti has a unique style or signature—known as a tag—that distinguishes them in the graffiti community. Tagging is done anywhere there is space—sidewalks, playground equipment, hydro poles, mailboxes, sides of buildings, and bridges. The longer the tag is up, the more respect the person or gang gets in the graffiti community. The police are especially interested in graffiti that belongs to a gang as a sign that it is operating in the area. Police advised us that gangs are not an issue in our area.



Photo: Dan Edmonds

Police Liaison Changes

In a letter to her police contacts last fall, **Betty Bechtel** said: "The time has come for me to retire as the AWWCA police liaison. It was a difficult decision to make because I enjoy the work, and Jim and I especially enjoy meeting the officers and community members. **Tracey Lindsay**, a very capable person, is the new AWWCA police liaison, and she can be reached at christracey@cogeco.ca. I will still be available to assist Tracey and to attend meetings when Tracey is unable to."

The AWWCA deeply appreciates the six years of excellent work Betty volunteered to our community in the capacity of police liaison, and we welcome Tracey to her new position.



Tracey Lindsay

Photo: Janet Woodward

Police Liaison Report

TRACEY LINDSAY,
AWWCA POLICE LIAISON,
christracey@cogeco.ca

Last summer saw a sharp increase in the number of break-and-enters in our neighbourhoods. Fortunately, police made an arrest in August, and the number of similar incidents has since decreased dramatically. A reminder to lock your cars and homes at all times!

During Frosh Week, the police, along with bylaw officers, operated a proactive enforcement program in an effort to maintain high visibility and educate students moving into the community about

expectations for their behaviour. There are 4,300 first-year students attending McMaster this year, and 67 per cent are under the legal drinking age. Several charges were laid for noise and alcohol offences.

Once again, I would like to remind people that the police have suggested it is a good idea for neighbours to keep each other informed of problems in their area. In addition to reporting crimes to the police at 905-546-4925, please notify the Community Policing Centre at 905-546-8951 and me at christracey@cogeco.ca. This information is then passed along to the membership via e-mail with the hope that it will assist people to protect themselves and their property. Hamilton has a community-based policing system; in order for it to work optimally, it is important that we all work together! Please notify the police even if you feel that the situation may be resolved before they can respond. Police use statistics to justify police personnel in our neighbourhoods. They keep records of complaints by location, which may help them identify trouble spots where they need to focus extra attention.

The citizen advisory committee that I am on is considering starting up a police school for children. It will be run with 20-25 kids deemed to be "at risk." I think it will be quite an innovative program, and we hope it can be expanded in the future.

I have only recently undertaken the role of the AWWCA police liaison, and I am very impressed with the amazing co-operation between the various community partners in trying to solve the difficulties that arise within the community. The collaborative effort between the police, city bylaw officers, the McMaster Students Union, and McMaster Security in putting together a plan for Frosh Week was remarkable.

Police Reports to AWWCA Members

TRACEY LINDSAY, AWWCA POLICE LIAISON

Last summer, **Staff-Sergeant Scott Rastin** initiated sending out police reports to members who are online, with the invaluable assistance of **Janet Woodward**. This service is part of community-based policing: a two-way street between community members and the police. I believe we are the only community organization to have this service. These reports include issues that have been solved, education about how residents can protect themselves and their property, and requests for the public's help in alerting police to suspicious events or people. **Police Chief Brian Mullan's** e-mail report on debit-card fraud is an example of education. These reports also may be valuable at hearings about community difficulties stemming from alcohol abuse. Police confidentiality laws prohibit identifying the perpetrators by name and address. There is a seasonal component to the number of reports sent out—more challenges are noted in good weather. Perhaps we should hope for bad weather!

In the past, people who reported quality-of-life issues to the police were frustrated if they did not receive feedback about the outcome of their calls, but since we have been e-mailing police reports to members, we have been receiving positive feedback about them, including appreciative comments about the police, bylaw officers, and the AWWCA board. Some members tell us about additional issues, which are then passed on to the police and bylaw officers.

Police Report Survey

Because there was some concern that sending members the police reports could have an adverse affect on residents' morale and on potential home buyers, the AWWCA board decided to ask for feedback from members in December 2004.

We received 48 responses from the 220 notices sent by e-mail. The response rate of 22 per cent is very high. Of those who responded to the survey, 44 expressed positive comments about receiving the police reports and recommended that the reports continue. AWWCA member **Dolly Palin** said: "I really enjoy the weekly police reports. I like to know what is going on in my neighbourhood. I don't think that it is negative. It is very good to be informed. Knowledge equals power . . . the power to change the situation and make things better! I am much more aware of my surroundings and what is going on in my neighbourhood. Thank you so much." Suggestions included presenting the information in a more positive framework and reducing the frequency of the reports with the focus on highlighting how the issues were resolved. We have implemented some of these suggestions.

Please forward any comments or suggestions you may have to me at any time at chrstracey@cogeco.ca or 905-546-0934. Thank you for the tremendous response to the survey!

Crime Prevention



SCOTT MORETON, WESTDALE COMMUNITY POLICING CENTRE OFFICER

Last Nov. 10 the Westdale Community Policing Centre held a Crime Prevention Open House at the centre to promote residential security. Auxiliary officers involved in **Project Safeguard** advised homeowners about how to improve security measures to decrease the likelihood a break-and-enter at their residence. **Constable Steve Mahler**, Division One's crime-prevention officer, gave advice on general crime-prevention concepts such as **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** and **Target Hardening**.

The event was sparsely attended but nevertheless seen as a success. Members of the community were able to come in and learn about alternative

services offered by the Hamilton Police Service, and it was important to the volunteers of the Westdale Community Policing Centre as we attempt to build our profile in the Westdale community.

In the coming months, CPC volunteers will be involved in a number of outreach projects that will benefit the community with regard to personal safety and crime prevention. We would like to highlight a program regarding stolen vehicles, a video program with Columbia College, and an initiative called Child Find.

The stolen-auto program allows CPC volunteers to contact citizens who have had their vehicles stolen and provide them with advice on how to prevent any further incidents from occurring. Columbia College has approached us requesting information on different situations they are experiencing. CPC volunteers are going to create videos that will be displayed during Columbia College's announcement periods to address these issues. Finally, the Child Find initiative allows parents to have

their children fingerprinted for identification purposes. A number of CPC volunteers recently graduated from their training and are anxious to help the public.

If you have any questions about any of these programs or about crime prevention, contact the CPC at 905-546-8951 or 905-546-8952. Soon we will have an interactive website where people can express their concerns. If you would like further information about Project Safeguard, or if you would like to have an auxiliary officer conduct an audit of your home, please call 905-546-4929.

The CPC's hours are Monday-Thursday, 3-6 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Since the CPC is staffed by volunteers, these hours are predicated on the ability of people to commit their time to assist at the centre. If you are interested in volunteering, please do not hesitate to contact me at 905-540-6664 or pager 905-312-6062 or at smoreton@hamiltonpolice.on.ca.

PROPERTY STANDARDS

It's the Noise Law

Any person who contravenes any provision of the City of Hamilton Noise Control Bylaw 03-020 and is found guilty of an offence is subject to the minimum set fine of \$130. Subsequent charges may be laid pursuant to Part III of the Provincial Offences Act, which provides for a maximum fine of \$5,000. The noise bylaw is in effect 24 hours a day.



Farewell, Judy Downey

At the annual general meeting of the AWWCA last September, we bid a sad farewell to **Judy Downey**. Judy has been transferred to the Stoney Creek office to do similar work. In presenting Judy with flowers and a certificate, AWWCA treasurer **Loreen Jerome** said: "It comes with our sincere thanks on behalf of all the residents for your tremendous effort in effectively enforcing property standards and bylaws. While there is still much to do to keep your successor very busy, your work has given us a safer, better groomed, and quieter neighbourhood."



Loreen Jerome making presentation to Judy Downey.
Photo: Janet Woodward

City of Hamilton Bylaws

Most City of Hamilton bylaws can be found at:

www.hamilton.ca/Clerk/by-laws/default.asp.

New Co-ordinator of Standards and Licensing

Randy Charlton Is Kept Busy by the AWWCA from First Day on the Job

In an e-mail to AWWCA members Dec. 14, **Councillor Brian McHattie** notified members that **Randy Charlton** has been assigned as the new co-ordinator of standards and licensing for our area, replacing **Judy Downey**:

As you may be aware, there has been a lot of discussion in the community about the proposed rotation of the Co-ordinators of Standards and Licensing. Many of you expressed your concerns to me personally about losing Judy Downey, who has been the co-ordinator assigned to our Ward for nearly four years.

It is the practice of the Building and Licensing Division to rotate staff at all levels into different areas of the City as a part of the staff development process in order to expose them to new issues and so that they get the experience of supervising different staff. This exposure gives them a greater sensitivity to and understanding of the issues and concerns facing the City and better positions them for promotion to the next level.

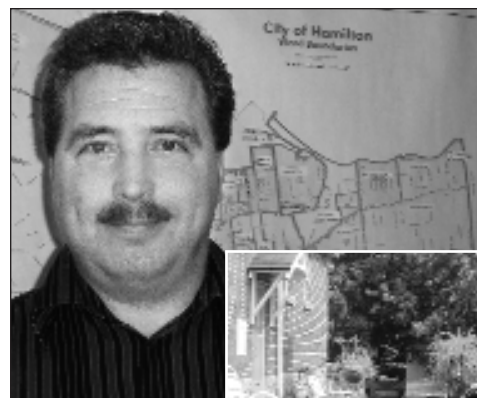
I met with both the City Manager and the Director of Standards and Licensing to discuss these concerns. After a thorough discussion about Ward 1 issues (and Ainslie Wood

Westdale issues in particular), I achieved a strong commitment to ensure that bylaw service levels remain the same or increase. With that commitment, we decided together to rotate staff.

Loreen Jerome, AWWCA treasurer, reported to the AWWCA board: "From his first day on the job, Mr. Charlton was extremely busy fielding complaints by residents. This local property's driveway (shown at right), front veranda, and general appearance had been in violation of property standards for some time.

Immediately after it was reported to Mr. Charlton, someone cleaned up most of the debris.

Forty-nine properties with unshovelled snow were reported to Mr. Charlton and Mr. McHattie on Feb. 22. Both responded promptly. Approximately 99 per cent of these houses were owned by absentee landlords. On Feb. 23, municipal law-enforcement officer **Stephen Bailey** acknowledged receipt of the complaint and also reported that he had issued notices to delinquent property owners on Hollywood Street North, Cottrill Street, Norfolk Street North, and Thorndale Street North. On Feb. 24 Mr.



Randy Charlton



Condition of property on Haddon Avenue South when complaint was lodged.

Bailey reported: "15 properties had been cleared and 25 'Notices'

were sent." On Feb. 25 he reported: "Approximately 15 properties did not comply with the 'Notice.' An order was issued to our Roads Department in Districts 1 and 2 to clear and bill those properties." The neighbour who reported the properties expressed appreciation to all the city employees who assisted, including Mr. Bailey, Mr. Charlton, and Mr. McHattie.

Complaints for garbage, snow removal, long grass, weeds, and debris are handled by Mr. Charlton. His office is on the third floor of City Hall. He can be reached at 905-546-2424, ext. 1314, or at rcharlto@hamilton.ca.

Useful Numbers

Abandoned shopping carts

- Barn: 905-523-5044
- Fortino's (Rifle Range store): 905-308-9045 and press 0

Barking dogs

- 905-546-CITY (2489); after hours call Animal Control, 905-574-3433

City Hall: 905-546-CITY (2489)*

Crime Stoppers

(to report a crime anonymously)

- 1-800-222-8477*

Garbage, waste management

- 905-546-CITY (2489)*

Graffiti

- Hot Line: 905-546-4723*
- Graffiti on Canada Post boxes: 1-800-267-1177 and press 0.
- Graffiti on street signs: 905-546-4376*
- Graffiti on public property: 905-546-CITY (2489)*
- Graffiti on private property: 905-546-4925*

McMaster University

Office of Public Relations, Community Help Line

- 905-525-9140, ext. 27305

Noise infractions

- 905-546-2782; after hours 905-546-4925 or 905-546-CITY (2489)*

Parking infractions

- 905-540-6000*

Police (non-emergency)

- 905-546-4925;* a person will answer after the taped message.
- If you need further assistance: police reception desk, 905-546-4771*
- To report keg deliveries (ask to have the Beat 691 officer call you): 905-546-4771*

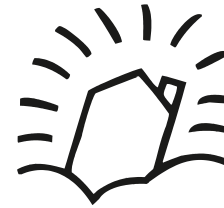
Property-standards infractions

- 905-546-2782 or Randy Charlton, co-ordinator, standards and licensing,
- 905-546-2424, ext. 1314 (8 a.m.-5 p.m.), or charlto@hamilton.ca

Street signs missing or damaged, traffic lights not working

- 905-546-4376*

* Hours are 24/7



Because we care

The AWWCA is a volunteer, nonprofit association whose mission is to preserve, protect, and enhance the Ainslie Wood/Westdale community environment and the quality of life for all residents, and to organize, communicate, lobby, and pursue the needs of the members of the association. The AWWCA newsletter, *Neighbourhood News & Views*, is distributed to members. The opinions expressed within the newsletter are those of the writers unless otherwise specified and do not necessarily represent the views of the AWWCA.

Submissions welcomed. Please send all news, story ideas, and photographs (no Polaroids please) to:

AWWCA

1063 King Street West, Suite 221
Hamilton, Ontario
L8S 4S3

GENERAL INQUIRIES

905-525-7338

905-526-9101

NEWSLETTER CO-ORDINATOR

Janet Woodward

COPY EDITOR

Carolyn Kinsley

DESIGN & LAYOUT

Michelle Edmonds, Bob Edmonds

EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

Malcolm Horsnell

Spring 2005



*"Building community
block by block"*



The Way We Were

The House That Jacob Built

Part 2:

The Binkley Legacy

LOREEN JEROME

Circa 1856 a stone school was built on the north side of what is now Main Street West, opposite Rifle Range Road. School Section 4, Ancaster and Barton served the area until about 1880, when a brick building replaced it on the same site and was renamed **Binkley**

School. In 1965 that one was demolished, and the present Binkley School was built with the main entrance facing Sanders Boulevard. Since 2000 it has been known as the Colin MacDonald Community School.

The Marks Binkley Family Cemetery is at the end of Lakelet Drive off Binkley Crescent, in a fenced, tree-shrouded enclosure. In addition to the weathered headstone of Marks Binkley, who died in 1805, it contains many subsequent generations of Binkleys and their relatives. The subdivision known as University Gardens, Dundas, is the home of the **Binkley Hollow Cemetery**, with burials dating back to 1851.

The first Binkley home was situated on the present site of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. East of the CNIB, on a 50-by-100-foot lot donated by **J. Allan Binkley** and his sister, Mrs. M. Rasberry, **Binkley United Church** opened Sept. 30, 1912, replacing the former **Binkley Union Church**.



Binkley Hollow Cemetery, University Gardens.

Photo: Lorean Jerome

The past is frequently forgotten. To all descendants of the Binkleys in the area today, we thank you for your ancestors' generosity and foresight in providing future generations with a lasting legacy.

Sources: David N.

As church membership expanded, Binkley United Church was in turn torn down and replaced by the present-day church and its "singing towers"; it opened Jan. 17, 1960. The original cornerstone of Binkley Union Church, dated 1911, is on display in the Memorial Chapel of Binkley United Church.

The wooden house on the hill (in the foreground of the picture of **Binkley Hollow Hill**) is most likely **John Binkley's**. Binkley Hollow Road was built in 1847 and paved in 1851. Until 1898, bylaws provided for the collections of tolls. The road's only toll-gate, located on top of **Binkley's Hollow**, remained there until the University Gardens housing development began. At the very top of the hill on the left side now stands University Plaza. The intersection visible at the top of the hill is Osler Drive and Grant Boulevard. **Henry Binkley's** land ran through Binkley's Hollow, and a piece of his farm is now part of University Plaza.

Jardine, *West Hamilton, a Village and a Church* (1990); Hamilton Municipal Cemeteries, www.city.hamilton.on.ca/Parks/Cemeteries/; Special Collections, Hamilton Public Library; *The Hamiltonians*, 100 *Fascinating Lives*, ed. Margaret Houghton (James Lorimer & Co. Ltd., 2003); Olive Newcombe, *Picturesque Dundas Revisited* (Seldon Printing Ltd., 1997).



Binkley Hollow Hill
Courtesy M.P. Russ Powers' Dundas postcard collection

Mailing Label