

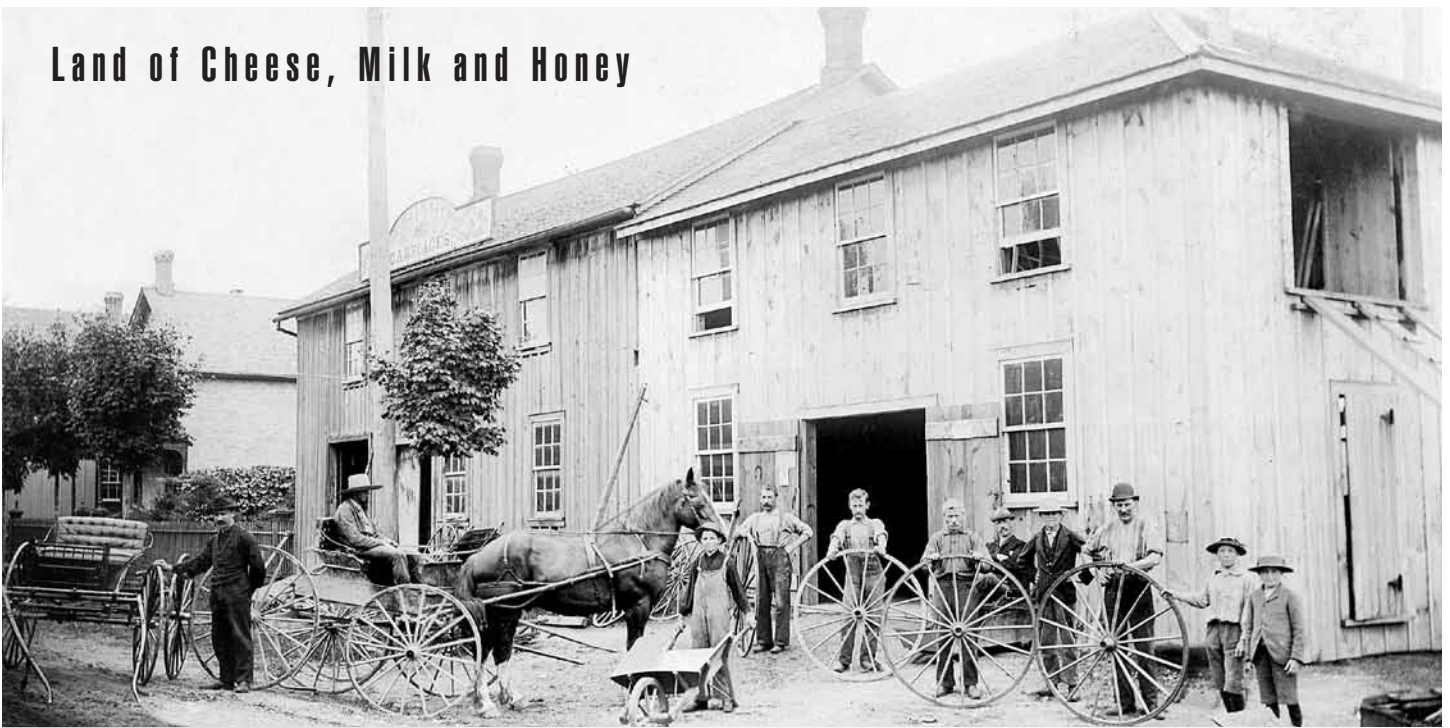
# YESTERDAY

News from the Tavistock and District Historical Society

VOLUME 7

FALL 2007

Land of Cheese, Milk and Honey



The Mystery of the Red Bridge

## WAGONS AND TRAINS

Join us at our booth at the Tavistock Fall Fair - September 7, 8, and 9, 2007

**Tavistock & District  
Historical Society Inc.**

**Executive:**

Chair – Sherrill Calder  
Secretary – Mary Nicklas  
Treasurer – Bob Rudy

**Directors:**

Paul Bartlett  
Roy Erb  
Bill Gladding  
Bruce Halliday  
Barb Matthies  
Blain McCutchen  
Ed Pellow  
Ron Saunders

# Strike up the band

If you heard old-time music on Saturday morning, it was likely coming from the museum. Craig Wilker's many wonderful pieces of band memorabilia, including original band music, were showcased at the museum in July and August. What fun to read the history of the Tavistock bands, reminisce about the tattoos and the many other parades and events that featured our local band, check out the old pictures and chat with band members from days gone by. Thank you to Craig and Dorothea Wilker, and to former band members and majorettes for sharing their memories and memorabilia with the community.



*Craig Wilker displays a Tavistock Band recording from 1946.*



# Marking time

Quehl's Restaurant patrons from far and wide have enjoyed the display set up by the Tavistock & Area Historical Society in Quehl's atrium. The jewellery store theme including local clocks has drawn rave reviews. In fact, we're told that sometimes people need to be reminded that their food is ready or it's time to close. Thank you to Brian and Cindy Larsen for making this central space available and to the generous individuals who contributed to the display.

## Tavistock & District Historical Society Inc.

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

**MUSEUM  
HOURS:**  
Saturdays  
10am-12 noon

*Other times  
by appointment*

## Honouring Our Veterans

2005 was the "Year of the Veteran." The Tavistock & District Historical Society Year of the Veteran Committee has devoted many hours to a project to honour our veterans. We have assembled six volumes containing 350 photos, informative write ups and over 500 names of area Veterans. We have also produced, for sale with this information. The official unveiling of the Veterans Project DVD will take place coincident with the "Honouring Our Veterans" museum display.

We extend an invitation to all Veterans, their families, friends and anyone interested in viewing this Project - October 27, November 3, 10, and 17 from 10 a.m. until noon, each Saturday in the Museum at 37 Maria Street, Tavistock. Please come and enjoy refreshments and view this project.



**MUSEUM CALENDAR:**

July 7 – August 25  
Strike Up The Band!  
Tavistock's Tattoos

Sept. 1 – October 20  
Land of Milk,  
Cheese and Honey

October 27 – Nov. 17  
Honouring Our Veterans

Nov. 24 – Jan 5/08  
Bless This House –  
Our Churches

**ANNUAL MEETING:**

March 2008 – date and  
theme to be announced.

**SPEAKER SERIES:**

Wed., Sept. 19, 2007  
Impact of the railroad  
with Ian Taylor, Stratford

**OXFORD BRANCH:**

Dr. Paul Bartlett will be the  
feature speaker at the  
Oxford Historical Society  
meeting on Wednesday,  
October 31 at 7:30 p.m.  
at 466 Dundas Street in  
Woodstock.  
Dr. Bartlett's theme is the  
history of Tavistock.

# Land of Milk, Cheese & Honey

## *The Matthies Family - Pioneers and Mainstays In Tavistock*

When Wilhelm Matthies, then age 26, left his native Germany to emigrate to Canada he had great hopes for a new life in a new land. That was in 1870. He undoubtedly didn't foresee that his obituary in the Tavistock Gazette would class him as "one of the old pioneers with a disposition that made him popular with everyone". He certainly wouldn't have known that his descendants would be mainstays in the Tavistock community, providing essential services in village life for over 12 decades.

Wilhelm Matthies was a wagon maker. He worked with other wagon makers and subsequently established a thriving business on what is now Woodstock Street in Tavistock. Wilhelm (later known as William) married Julianna Mogk, a lady who "believed in and lived the gospel of kindness and Christian charity". Together they raised a large family.

Sons Henry, William and Conrad worked in the wagon shop. Henry and William were carpenters by trade. Conrad was a blacksmith, both at the wagon shop and at Zimmerman's Factory. Charlie ran the local dairy and was a familiar sight delivering milk each day. Milt worked at the German Union Cheese Factory. Later he was at Zimmerman's fox and mink operations and had a ranch of his own. The sons along with the daughters ...Hanna, Minnie, Emma, Clara and Alma ...

were active in the social and sports life in Tavistock at the time.

William and Julianna's grandchildren, (by then starting to be known as Matthies pronounced as math-ees and not the more Germanic mut-hies) established businesses and careers of their own and contributed in large measure to the Tavistock community. As but a few examples ...Wilma married Bill Seltzer and worked with him at Pepler's General Store and later at Seltzer's Dry Goods. Gordon and Carl "Punch" became school teachers. Gord kept bees and sold honey. Minnie taught music. Bill worked at various local businesses, did his duty during WW2 for king and country and retired as Tavistock's PostMaster. Bob established an excavation business. If you wanted a new "do" you went to see Eileen, the hairdresser. Church and sport and community activities invariably saw a Matthies descendant or two or three featured on the playbill.

The museum display "Land of Milk and Cheese and Honey" provides a more in-depth look at the Matthies family. Please drop by to see items from the wagon shop; to learn about dairy and honey operations: and, in addition, discover the tremendous cheesemaking tradition in our community. This display runs from September 1 through October 20.



*Above, the original carriage works established by William Matthies in 1874.  
The cover photo shows the Matthies Carriage Works with the new addition added in 1888.*



*This photo shows the Wm. Matthies family c. 1885.*

Quilts Galore! featured well over fifty quilts, comforters and coverlets ... some dating back to the early 1900's as well as modern day creations. Handicrafts such as smocking, crocheting, tatting and hairpin lace were on display along with the quilts.

In the family history room a "Black History" wallhanging depicted the quilt blocks which directed escaping slaves to take a particular action on their road to freedom.

Quilts Galore! enjoyed record attendance. A special thank you to the community men and women who lent their quilts and handicrafts for this show.



## Remember when?

What's more fun than a stroll down memory lane? Not much. The Historical Society's permanent collection of memorabilia brings back countless memories of businesses and sports and social life. Items recall names that were once prominent in our community and those that continue to make an impact on life in our community. We have inscribed plates and pitchers, calendars and coffee mugs, pens and pencils, invoices from businesses, trophies from sports teams ... and more. Every piece is a treasure that tells its own unique story. If you have Tavistock and area memorabilia to donate to the museum, please let us know. We would very much appreciate adding it to our permanent collection for everyone to see and enjoy.

## Quilts Galore!



## At the station...

*Speaker Series - Impact of the Railroad  
with Ian Taylor, Stratford*

Please join us to hear Ian Taylor speak about the impact of the railroad, from the early glory days to the present. As an added bonus Ian will solve the mystery of how Red Bridge got its name. This mystery has stumped local people for decades.

Wednesday, September 19, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. at the Tavistock Men's Club Hall  
Members free! Guests \$5.00

## Museum Themes

Our monthly displays feature items related to the theme as well as artifacts from the Historical Society's permanent collection of Tavistock and area memorabilia.