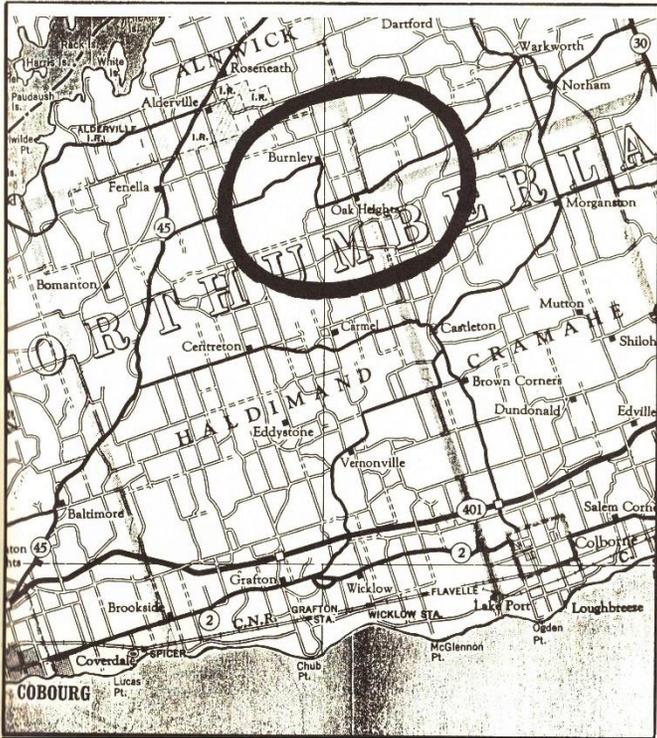


The Hamlet of Oak Heights

In recent years, the last visual marker of the hamlet of Oak Heights was a small plywood sign at the corner of County Road 29 and Covert Hill Road in Alnwick-Haldimand Township. This location, affording one of the most beautiful vistas in the area, was once the "town square".

THE CIRCLED AREA CONTAINS THE COMMUNITIES
OF OAK HEIGHTS AND NEIGHBOURS



The Oak Heights community is the centre of Northumberland County, Ontario and includes:

- the northwest corner of Cramahe Township
- the northeast corner of Haldimand Township
- the southwest corner of Percy Township

Source: "Oak Heights Neighbours, 1800-1950" by Allan N. Birney (p. ii-iii)

Here stood a Methodist Church (later becoming United), a blacksmith shop and, briefly (1900-1912) a post office. The Church itself was built in 1891, with the manse located in Castleton. At the time, it served the communities of Oak Heights, Castleton and Morganston. In 1951, Warkworth and Dartford joined in. In 1891, a trustees' meeting began plans for a new church, and pledges ranging from \$2.00 to \$150.00 were subsequently received. The lot was purchased for \$20.00 from Ferrington Ferguson. By October 18 of the same year, the new church was dedicated.

Children from the area attended nearby Russ School to the south. There was a very large Sunday school attendance at the church. A special Sunday each summer was known as "Children's Day", in which the children were the choir. For this special event, the church was decorated with flowers and live canaries. These birds belonged to the minister's wife, who brought a few cages of the tuneful birds to grace the tables, from where they happily sang throughout the service. Other needs were met in nearby settlements of Burnley, Warkworth, Centreton and Castleton. Farming was done in the primarily heavy clay loam soil.

Ice cream socials, with ice cream that had been made that very afternoon, were always popular. It was kept cold with ice that had been harvested the previous winter from a local pond, and preserved in sawdust. Autumn was when the annual fowl supper was held, followed by a variety concert in the church. This included both humorous readings and

musical numbers. Other events included strawberry suppers on the church lawn, and quilting bees and Halloween parties held in people's homes. The Ladies Aid were most helpful when someone was in need, and made wreaths from cedar boughs, cut flowers and houseplants to present to a family in bereavement.

In 1940, hydro was installed, illuminating the homes as progress began to move the community forward. One particularly wide-reaching and heart-warming venture was the partnership between Oak Heights and nearby Burnley in the form of the Red Cross. During World War II, the members actively made and shipped quilts and clothing overseas to Holland and Germany, according to the 1946 meeting records.

Early family names are still represented in the area, such as Ferguson, Pratt, Covert, Mitchell and Sayles. Present day businesses located in or near Oak Heights are the Oak Heights Estate Winery, Oak Heights art gallery, and Gallery-by-the-Grove art gallery.

Library resources:

Township Tales: the intangible tales of Alnwick/Haldimand Township (page 152)

Compiled by Raquel Devison

971.357 Tow, REF 971.357 Tow LH

Oak Heights Neighbours, 1800-1950

By Allan N. Birney

929.4 Bir, REF 929.4 Bir LH

From Horses to Mopeds: Morganston 1830-1975

REF 287.92 Fro LH

Winnifred Platt, Mrytle Hardy, Shirley McComb, Alex McComb; Van Darling and Rev. George H. Lavery.

"The Six Shall Become One 1995" – Archival Folder “United Church 08-11”

Cobourg and District Images article - (<https://images.ourontario.ca/Cobourg/53777/data?n=2>)