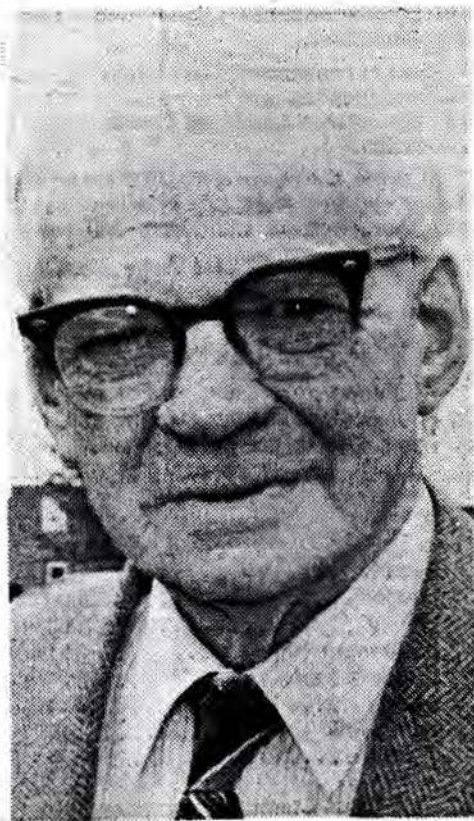




Do you recognize anyone?

Ed Meckevech supplied this photo of the 1933 class at #15 Chestnut Grove School, located on the corner of Blacks Lane and Hog Street in Aldborough Township. Pictured are, front row left to right: Coleman, Coleman, Donna Streib Langley, Bob Knight and Jensen. Middle row: Coleman, Lena Campbell, Katie Rice, Mary Spandenberg, Garnet Schweitzer and Floyd Campbell. Back row: Florence Campbell, Mike Ingratta, Mark Knight, Jean Campbell, teacher Mrs. McCallum and Lela Schweitzer Eastlake. Not all of the students were included in the photo as children at that time did not always regularly attend school.

FEB 19, 2001



RAY LEMON
--- honored by Ontario teachers

Even in retirement Ray still cares for kids

By Bob Massecar
St. Thomas Bureau

WEST LORNE — He has a shy, almost bashful grin that spreads across a slightly freckled face, ending with a dimple on his left cheek and a noticeable sparkle in his eyes.

Those same eyes suddenly fill with tears and he dabs at his nose with a handkerchief as he talks about the 40 foster children that have slept under his roof in the past 21 years. He still feels, and can't forget, the misery many of them have been forced to endure.

But the twinkle returns as Ray Lemon recalls his 25 years as chief custodian at West Elgin Secondary School and 14 years of driving a school bus, surrounded by young, fun-loving and often-mischievous minds.

For all of that time, he was father confessor, a quiet disciplinarian and just plain friend to countless numbers of students who have passed through the high school's halls on their way to adulthood.

Students — all children, for that matter — make up the most important part of his life, next to that of his wife of 42 years, Doris. Both have hearts as big as their five-bedroom ranch house on the village outskirts, complimenting each other's generous character.

Even in retirement, the 67-year-old Lemon continues his caring for kids as an elected trustee with the Elgin County board of education.

At home, the rooms are still filled with six foster children from two families that the St. Thomas-Elgin Children's Aid Society

● See Page A2, Col. 2

Even in retirement, Ray still cares for kids

● From Page A1

didn't want parted and the Lemons couldn't bear to see yanked apart.

That's the way it has always been for this couple. Everyone in the village of 1,200 and the surrounding district is well aware of their life-long contribution to youth in general and Lemon's on-going dedication to their education.

But the gentle-mannered Lemon today is no longer just a popular contributor to this west Elgin community — his reputation has spread across the province and bounced off the office walls of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation in Toronto.

The 35,000-member association was so impressed with the tidal wave of tributes that poured in for Lemon, they recently honored him with their prestigious Lamp of Learning award, the highest honor the group can bestow upon a non-teacher.

Just as significant, it is the first time in Ontario — possibly the whole continent — federation officials say, that a school janitor has been named for the award.

Lemon's name was secretly submitted for nomination by principal Jerry Prince, but it wasn't long before everyone who

heard of the move wanted to get in on the act. The federation office was flooded with testimonies from friends, educators and words of praise from Elgin-Kent Liberal MPP Jim McGuigan and Elgin Tory MPP Ron McNeil.

OSSTF president Malcolm Buchanan said it was impossible to read the nomination without being moved by the impact that one individual can have on the lives of others in a small community. Ray Lemon, he said, had an influence on successive generations of both students and teachers.

For school guidance counsellor Audrey Miller, Lemon's time at the high school was spent more in molding characters than in janitorial sweat.

"His position went far beyond that of a custodian. He was similar to a patriarch, surrounded by his large 'family.' His interest was in the welfare of the students and staff of West Elgin Secondary School. He dealt with the students like a wise parent . . . rejoiced in their successes, but disciplined them when necessary."

Lemon never appeared at the head of a classroom, but retired vice-principal Wilfred Johnston says "he was one of the best teachers we ever had. He taught us to care, to be interested in people. He had words of commendation for students and teachers alike and his stern remarks car-

ried weight. His motto was: 'I like giving what I would like to receive.'"

Fond memories flood back for jeweller Rosalie Krebsz who first met Lemon "when I was a shy and insecure student in Grade 9. He was so friendly, always taking the time to say hello, but I was especially fond of that twinkle in his eye."

"As the years went by and I became involved in school activities, I used to wonder if Mr. Lemon lived at the school — he was always there. It seemed as though anything you asked for was not too much effort and was on time. When we cleaned up the day after the prom, he was there to help us. There were times when I had to stay after school to help with the yearbook. Mr. Lemon would kindly drive me home."

Lemon, she said, "showed me friendship, stability, compassion, community spirit and last but not least, a sense of humor."

Typically, Lemon was embarrassed at the fuss and "flabbergasted" in winning the award.

The only important thing he can recall doing to help the young students was "maybe giving somebody an assist out a side door when I caught them drinking at a school dance. I never told their parents. . . . I handled it myself the next day with a good verbal spanking." Usually it did the trick, he said.

But the pride swells as he recalls many of the 650 annual enrolment of students over the years who graduated and went on in careers and professions in all walks of life. Names trip off his tongue of former students who are doctors, lawyers and skilled tradesmen — many of whom are still in Elgin County and greet him warmly when they meet on the street.

His values, he feels, stem back to lessons learned while growing up during the Depression. His father died when he was only 12 years old, leaving his mother with three children to raise.

It wasn't long before he was out to work, moving through a string of jobs including a canning factory, sawmill, farm helper, grain elevator laborer, milkman, custodian and school bus driver.

"That's where you really get to know the kids, behind the wheel of a school bus," he smiles. "You get to know where they live, how they act, what makes them tick."

His custodian's job, he notes, started out as a mistake. Lemon says he only intended to work at the school for a year but stayed on for 25 "and the time went too fast."

It's not in any textbook, but ask anyone today in West Lorne or the teachers' federation and they'll say that in Ray Lemon's case, it was one time where a wrong was definitely a right.

SUBMITTED BY NORMA McMILLAN

Looking back.. historic submissions



This 40 year old photo comes to us from Tex Tobias of West Lorne. It is of the Rodney Little Sods PeeWee team who were champions that year. Pictured are back row: Coaches George Hanley, Andy Dienesch, and Munroe McMillan. Mid row: Bob Padfield, Ron Hanley, Bob Pascu, Glen DeGraw and Bob Menzies. Front row: Larry McGahan, Bud Miller, Dave Giles, Dave McMillan, Bob DeGraw, Don Kraus, Greg Taylor and Tex Tobias.

OCT 21, 2002

Looking back...historic submissions



This Remembrance picture comes to us from Ron Payne of Eagle. It is of the Mens Bible Class, of Church of Christ (Disciples) of winter 1915-1916, with the first row of men gathered on the day they left to serve overseas in the Great War. Front row: Harold Becker, Hugh Turner, Earl Lemon, Lloyd McPhee and Taylor Wanless. Second row: Gordon McPhee, Fred Webber, Vern McKillop and Earl Fowler. Third row John B. Ferguson (teacher), Roy Evans and Norm Haviland. Back row: Fred Becker, Charlie Wilson, Herb Hailey, Lorne Hill and Joe Wiley. It is reported all five men returned from the war. Anyone interested in sharing their photos with the public can drop them off with additional information at *The Chronicle*. You will get your photo back.

NOV. 18/02

Looking back - historic submissions



This week's Looking back- historic submission comes to us from Ron Payne of Eagle. This is the 1949 class of the Aldborough/Dunwich Townline Public School. Do you know all the names of the students? Contact Payne at 768-1288.

Looking back... historic submissions



This picture comes to us from the collection of Ron Payne of Eagle. It is of the former Eagle's Nest restaurant-service station and bus stop. Originally it was a blacksmith shop, until the new Highway 3 was built that became known and experienced as the major route from Detroit to Buffalo. The Eagle's Nest, among many other many businesses along Highway 3 could not thrive once the 401 was built which took away a huge chunk of tourist and commuter traffic. The Eagle's Nest was closed and torn down in 1972.

DEC. 16, 2002



Looking Back: This weeks submission comes from Ron Payne of Eagle. It is of the Rodney Ladies (hardball) Baseball Team of 1915-16. Their uniforms consisted of black bloomers, white middies and black stockings. Games were played against neighbours like West Lorne, Ridgetown and Blenheim. Left to right: chaperone Effie Shaw, and players Etta Schrub (field), Myrtle "Avey" Thayer (short-stop), Lill McPherson (field), Edith Messerschmid (catcher), Ada "Johnson" Murray, Mildred Eggert (1st base), Mary "Brad" Woodend (3rd base), Florence Morris (2nd base). Other players listed in S. Dorlands book "Rodney, but not pictured are: Bessie Mitchell, Frances Mahon, Janet Bullick, Beatrice Morlock, Etta Harris, Mrs Alf Branton, Liddy Bake and Mary Johnson.

OCT. 2002

Looking back... historic submissions



This picture comes to us from Ron Payne of West Lorne. It is of historic West Lorne taken sometime between 1900 and the early 1920's. The names of the people (and the horse) are unknown. Anyone with more information of this picture is asked to contact Payne or call us of *The Chronicle* at 768-2220. Keep those history submissions coming!

APR. 2002

The Chronicle

Looking back... historic submissions



This picture comes to from Ron Payne's collection. It is a picture of the 1908 West Lorne Champion Baseball Team, from the cover of the banquet invitation at season end in October '08. Pictured in the back row standing, from left to right are F.J. Cullen, 2nd base and center-field; Doctor Webster, official scorer; J.A. Fuller, Treasurer; J.N. Kennedy, President; D.M. Leitch, 3rd base; T. Kirkpatrick, 2nd base. Second row: J.C. Lozar Captain and 1st base; J.A. McColl Manager and right-field; Reverend T.P. Hussey Vice President; C. Cunliffe, short-stop. Third row: Alf. Cullen mascot; W. Campbell pitcher and left field; R.E. Clark, catcher and Charles Neal pitcher, 1-field.

Looking back... historic submissions



This picture comes to us from the Ron Payne collection. It is of the old White Rose gas station in Eagle. The owner of the White Rose at the time this picture (early 1950's) was Harvey Bechard. In this picture are Ernie Payne, Earl Staddon, Richard Staddon, Gimmy Payne, Ken Perger, Herbec Conway, Jimmy Bechard, Billy Bechard and Harvey Bechard.

APR. 2002

May 2002

Looking back... historic submissions



This week's submission comes to us from Ron Payne. It is of the old Argyle House which was the scene of a shooting on September 9, 1918. Back then David Smith of West Lorne was sent to Kingston Penitentiary for five years in the shooting of Mrs. Melissa Taylor, wife of the proprietor of the Argyle House. This picture of the Argyle was taken in 1910. The men in front of the building (where the Bank of Montreal now stands) are unknown.

Looking back... historic submissions



This week's submission comes from Ron Payne of West Lorne. It is a picture of the former Eagle's Nest Restaurant in Eagle. The restaurant was situated in the northeast corner of the hamlet. Also pictured is Helen Morrish in the foreground. In 1975 the store celebrated 101 years of business. It was finally closed two years ago.

Page 10- June 10, 2002

Looking back... historic submissions



This week's submission comes from Ann Cruickshank of West Lorne. It is of the students of S.S. 15 taken in 1949. It was also known as Chestnut grove school.

Back row is l-r, Jenny Buttinger, Sara Varga, Mary Izgarran, Joanne Knight, Mary Lupson and Jim Buttinger.

Third row: Margaret Bea, Helen Varga, Pat Knight, Mary K (last name unknown), Elaine Buttinger, Amy Ingratta and Calvin Brown.

Second row: Tony M (last name unknown), Carol Seperga, Helen M. Varga, Carolyn Schweitzer, Jean Varga, unknown, Vera Izgherion, Suzen K (last name unknown), Joyce A (last name unknown), Steve Fodor, Peter M (last name unknown), John Ingratta, Gasen G (last name unknown), Jim Varga, Danny Varga, Donald Buttinger and Bob Varga. Behind his students is teacher William G. McKellar.

Looking back... historic submissions



This week's submission comes to us from Ron Payne's collection. It is of 1936's students of Eagle School No 4. First row from left, back to front is Peter Ulche, Edward ?, Percy Ripley, Viola Staddon and Marion or Eva Ulche.

Second row, back to front: Mathew Zick, Alma Pettit, Max Munney and Paul Zick. Third row, back to front: Lester Coney, Madeline Pettit, Eileen or Ellen Cosens, Dick or Donald Vowal, Marvin Wann and Hazel Staddon.

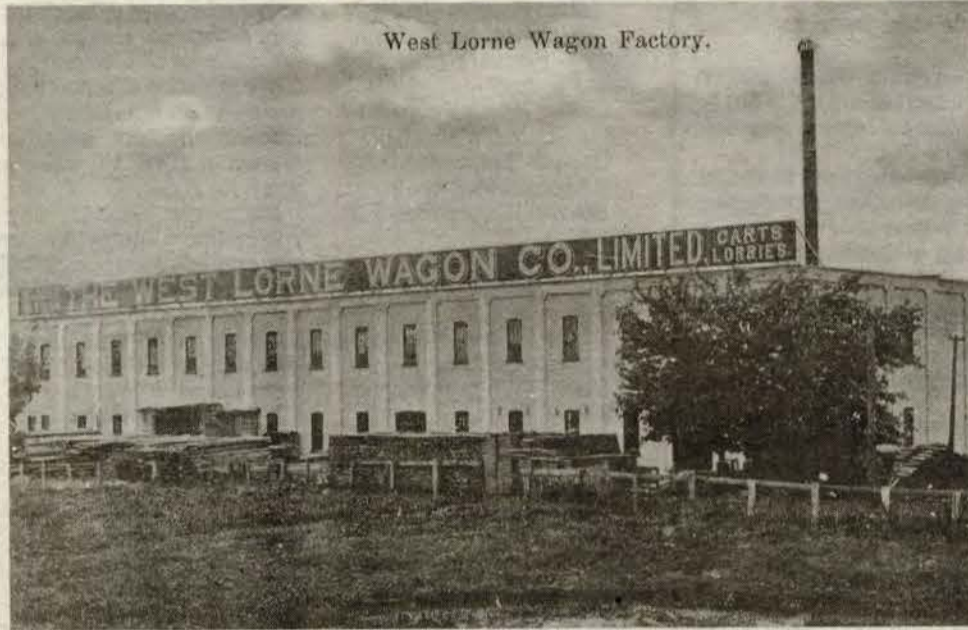
JULY 2002



Looking back... historic submissions

This week's submission comes to us from Ron Payne. This picture is of West Lorne public school. The year and classmates are unknown, but it is estimated to be in the 1950's or 1960's. Anyone with names or information can contact Ron Payne at 768-1288.

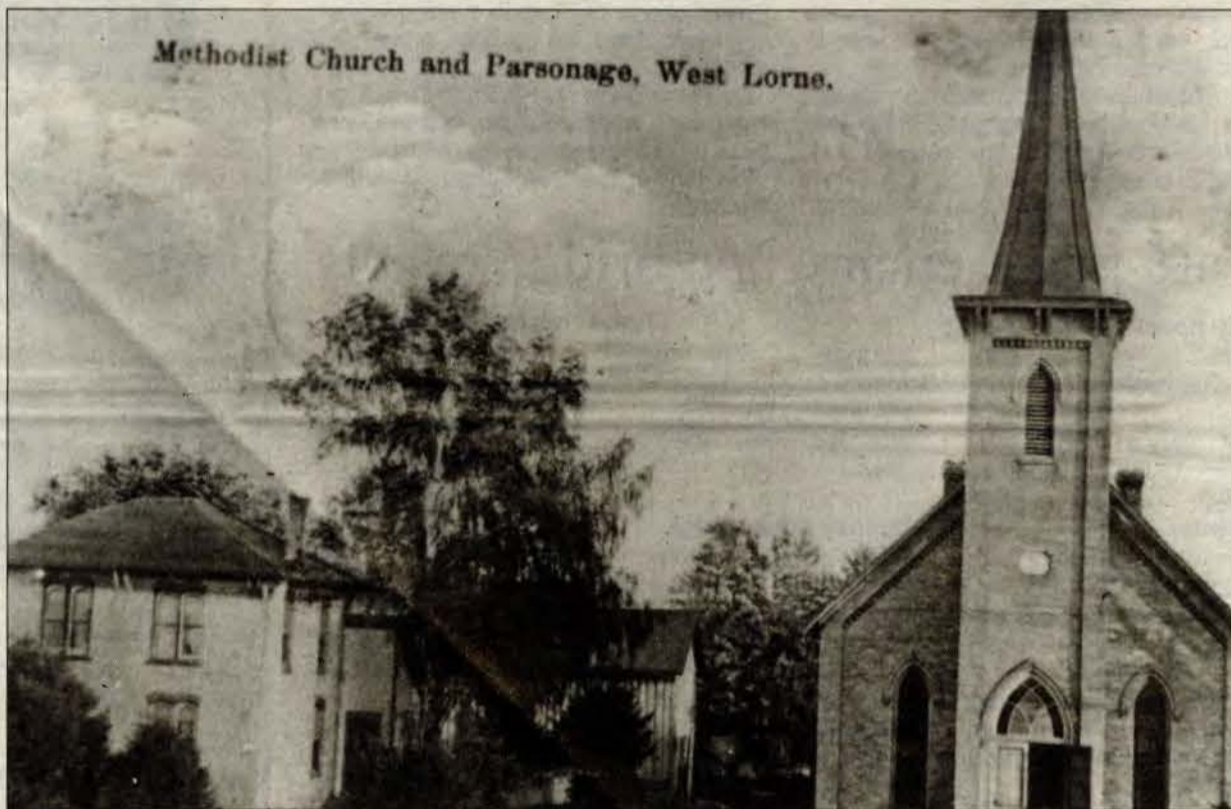
Looking back... photo submissions



This week's submission comes to us from Ron Payne of Eagle. It is a picture of the West Lorne Wagon Company at approximately the turn of the last century. The factory was built in 1904. According to Nancy Lashbrook's book, *West Lorne - 90 Years a Village (1907-1997)*, West Lorne was selected as the location for the factory because the area was considered to have the best timber in the country, plus the location to the Michigan Central and Pere Marquette Railways. The factory was sold in 1919 to Seaman Kent and again in 1940 to Erie Flooring.

Jan 27/03

Looking back...historic submissions



This photo shows the former West Lorne's Wesley Methodist Church that was built in 1874 and faced the railroad on Monroe Street at the Ridge Street corner. The manse was situated next to the church. The belfry, which was installed after the steeple, was removed in 1889. The church closed in 1934 after celebrating a 60th anniversary service. The first immigrants to land in the area at what is now Port Glasgow, belonged to the Presbyterian church and as they moved closer to West Lorne, a need for a Presbyterian church grew.

(This photo was submitted by Ron Payne and information was taken from "West Lorne, 90 Years a Village" by Nancy Lashbrook. Please send your historic photos to our office or they can be dropped off at Marg's Variety in Rodney or the Village Crier in Dutton. Your photos will be returned after they appear.)

FEB. 17, 2003

Anvil Music Quieter Now

West Lorne Blacksmith Recalls Early Days

By MICHAEL VICKERS

The village 'smith, once one of the most active members in local industry, particularly in rural areas, is passing rapidly from the scene.

Teodor Holotiuk, who has labored in the business for 34 years, remembers well the early days before the "horseless carriage" had made its appearance in numbers.

Teodor, or "Fred," as he is better known to residents of the West Lorne district, recalls the children who chattered and scampered out of the way of mighty teams of horses which clattered into the yard to wait their turn at the blacksmith's hand.

Inside the shop the smith worked his magic, now stooping over the fire glowing hot orange at the forge and now with shoulder and fierce art putting his brute strength to bending the red hot iron bars held firm in the grip of his tongs.

There was the musical clang of his hammer on anvil. Always the sound of industry.

Now Fred, at 75, has quit any heavy work which comes his way.

There are still the knives, the axes and the occasional blunted blade from a power mower to be worked on. These light jobs still keep Fred active and with modest income.

Fred, who came to West Lorne from his native Rumania in 1930 started in the shop which stood on the ruins of a hotel burned out in the early years of the 1900's.

At that time, he explained, there were two other blacksmiths in town. Shortly, though, one died and the other left to ply his trade in Aylmer.

Then it was busy, said Fred, gesticulating with his still thickly muscled arms, "I had work too much."

It was common, he said, to shoe three or four teams of horses a day. In his lifetime he has shod thousands of horses.

Nor were horses the only recipients of his art. Many were the hobbled carriages restored to smooth running form by his ministrations.

Massive machinery, including band saws and broad planes, connected to their power sources with a compli-

cated maze of thick leather drive belts, gave Fred the means to fashion almost any wooden piece required in such repairs.

He pointed out two giant spoke wheels about five feet in diameter. "To make those you've got to have guts."

Fred explained that before

the steel wheel was set in its wooden frame he had to bend the steel runner, three inches wide by 5/8 inch thick, little by little with only his tongs and great muscle power to work with.

Fred, with a little effort tried to remember whether it

was seven or maybe ten years since he had shod his last horse.

Things are slow now, he said, but with the odd small jobs that come his way, and the shop, the house and grounds to look to, there was plenty for a man of his years to busy himself with.



Teodor "Fred" Holotiuk, veteran West Lorne blacksmith, makes the sparks fly as he puts an edge on this axe with his grindstone.

THIS WAS SUBMITTED BY
FOR THE TWEEDSMUIR BOOK → MRS. NORMA M^cGILL