

**ANECDOTES
OF EARLIER DAYS**
By EVELYN CRICKMORE

"Some woman's gone off half-cocked and thinks she can put on a Variety Show."

So said the District Girl Guide Commissioner who lived in Erindale, when she learned the Guide Captain, Ida Sproule, had asked me, a comparative newcomer to Erindale in 1951, to produce a Variety Show similar to the ones I'd put on in Clarkson. She wanted to raise money for the Guides and start a Brownie Pack.

Half-cocked or not, we went ahead. Rosie O'Neil, now Mrs. Garn Croxon, helped us get the ball rolling by having a meeting in her home of a representative invited from every organization, church and school in Erindale. I outlined a plan, using sure-fire acts used in early Clarkson Shows, and, full of enthusiasm, we were away.

As in Clarkson, whole fa-

milies got into the act including the Wally Oughtreds, the Collinsons, the Bullpens, the Sproules.

For the first show Delia Olsen, now Mrs. T. O'Dwyer, was the pianist. For subsequent shows, Delia was too busy, we had the great good fortune of enlisting Mrs. W. H. "Breeze" Tait as pianist and musical director.

Breeze, a former professional, had marvellous talent and training, and could play anything from classical to ragtime in any key, bring out the best in any singer or dancer was a joy to work with.

When we wanted an old out-of-print song, my husband, who has an uncanny memory for lyrics and tunes, would sing it. Breeze'd pick up the tune, play it perfectly, and the next rehearsal the cast would be singing it.

In one number we promoted international rapport.

Even Chief Tecumseh helped

In "Coming Home from a Dutch Market" we invited 17 new Dutch Canadians, men, women and children, to take part with 17 long-time Canadians.

The Dutch Canadians had wooden shoes, two girls had authentic Holland dresses. We made other Dutch costumes, wooden shoes from yellow oilcloth. Ted Thompson made a handsome windmill with turning sails. We had tulips galore.

Frieda and Zigger de Wilde (he was Expo's landscape architect) had been given a parting gift when coming to Canada of a large Dutch flag. They used it when the 17 Hollanders sang their national anthem.

The finale was the stirring Dutch Hymn of Thanksgiving with the lead song by Mrs. Margaret Lambert of Sheridan, a Toronto church soloist.

Our Dutch members sent pictures of this colorful act to their families in Holland. We received many messages of appreciation from Holland through our Dutch friends.

Another well-remembered act was the Indian Page from the Story of Canada. Acted by a Clarkson group,

it was directed by Isobel Wendabense, a very fair Scottish girl, married to a pure blood Indian, Dane Wandabense, a Port Credit surveyor and valued member of the Clarkson-Lorne Park Kiwanis, whom he had represented at International conventions.

Dane not only rented for this act the magnificent feathered bonnets for the two Indian chiefs but enlisted the aid of Chief White Owl, editor of the Native Voice, the magazine of the Indians of North America.

Chief White Owl lent Isobel a 100-year-old Indian dress. The clever cast made authentic-looking costumes using the interlining for fur coats for deerskin and copying the decorations from the old dress. The Chief also lent a real pipe of peace and several real Indian accessories.

While the Indian women, busy around their fire sang the harmony, Isobel, who was training at the Toronto Conservatory to be a concert singer when she married, sang haunting Indian songs.

From the Book, the Story

of Canada in the background stepped Deputy Minister Guy Moore as Tecumseh, resplendent with feathered headdress and Indian dress.

To the Indians he spoke, giving the famous address of the brave chief.

"Brothers, we all belong to one family. We are all children of the Great Spirit. We walk in the same path, slake our thirst at the same spring, and now affairs of the greatest moment lead us to smoke the pipe around the same council fire. Brothers the

Long Knives (the Americans) are not friends to the Indians. At first they asked only for land sufficient for a wigwag; now nothing will satisfy them but the whole of hunting grounds, from rising to the setting sun.

"The white man have strove many nations red men, because they were not united, because they were not friends to each other. Brothers, we must be united; we must fight each other's battles; more than all, we must love the Great Spirit."

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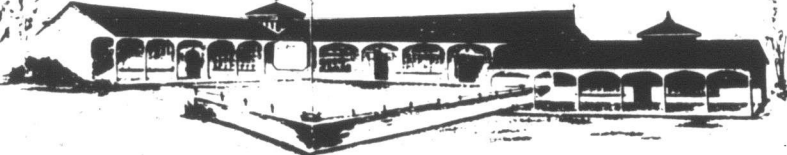
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