

## **MAIN STREET HISTORY**

### **MAIN STREET-EAST SIDE-HEADING NORTH:**

Huron Motor Products

Wm. Hodgert Farm

Garfield Thompson Trailer Park

C. D. Hector Taylor Farm

Furniture Upholstering Building

Larry Snyder Ford Dealership

Frayne Chev-Olds Dealership

South End Service Garage (Russ & Chuck Snell)

Saxon Fitton House (Main Street jeweller)

Two Stone Pillars situated at the south highway entrance to Exeter now located at the entrance to McNaughton Park

South of Simcoe Street:

1. Red brick house belonged to Dr. Roulston-dentist. His dental office was located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Isaac Carling's law office (west side of Main Street) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.
2. William Melville house-plumbing shop in the rear
3. Both the houses were torn down and the ESSO gas station is now located at the site

### **SIMCOE STREET TO HURON STREET:**

4. Graham Arthur's "Red Indian" Gas Station and Snack Bar-located right behind the gas station was the original homestead of James and Jane Willis-1<sup>st</sup> house to be built in Exeter-still there today. Mr. Willis walked to London to buy a hoe but did not have enough money-had to walk back home
5. Ed Bradley Dry Cleaners
6. Mr. Vit's Cold Storage and food lockers  
Morley Hall-Exeter Frozen Foods

7. William Kuntz-Blacksmith Shop and house-which is still there. When the blacksmith shop was torn down, Dr. Frank Butson built a new structure which served as an office for his medical practice and lived in the house. In later years, Dr. Don Ecker took over Dr. Butson's practice. When Dr. Ecker retired, Dr. J. Jadd took over the practice and moved it a larger location on William St. across from South Huron Hospital
8. Next was the Ed Treble house with a big garden surrounded by a high board fence with a big wooden gate that allowed entry for working in the garden  
House removed and was replaced with a new building for Bardecki & Kline Optometrists

### **HURON STREET TO JAMES STREET:**

9. On the north east corner there was a 2-story barn. At the front was Ed Treble's Wood Working Shop where he made wagon wheels and anything else that a horse might pull. In the front of his Shop was his car garage complete a ramp on the inside. He drove a 1930 Buick with wooden spoke wheels. The back of the building was Ed Dignan's Blacksmith Shop with a horse shoe pitch outside at the east end. Mr. Hillroy Horton then took over the business followed by Tom Jolley who ran the Blacksmith Shop and Don Jolley had a radio shop where Ed Treble used to park his car. The building was eventually torn down and the Devon Building was built and contained multiple offices available. Dr. John Corbett relocated to the building having taken over Dr. Roulston's dental practice
10. Clare Snell house that is now Huron Dental practice location
11. Sam Ross house-for many years it was the medical office of Dr. Mike Gans
12. Next to the Ross house was a red brick home where Jim Lawson lived-his jewellery store was located across the west side of Main Street
13. Big 2-storey house of Lee Wilson-wife took in expectant mothers
14. Snell Brothers-Milo & Ulrich-Garage and Chevrolet-Pontiac-Oldsmobile and Buick Car Dealership which became Frayne's Chev-Olds. Today it is a big parking lot with a vacant warehouse at the back of the property
15. Sandy Elliott Ford Dealership which became Larry Snyder Ford Dealership. Andy Johnston Huron Apothecary and then Huron apothecary Jerry Cook. Sandy Elliott Garage- Bagshaw trucking was located in the building where Exeter Furniture is now located. Canadian Tire also operated in the building until a larger facility was built on the same property but set back from Main Street
16. Milt Robbins Automobile and then Gerry Webb Chiropractic Offices

17. Thorne Baker Garage-Studebaker Dealership-in behind was Sam Sanders' woodworking shop-located in the large brick "barn" building on James St-which over the years was home to a variety of businesses-Helge Jensen Construction-Seth Winer Turnip Produce and currently Exeter Furniture specializing in church furnishings

### **JAMES STREET TO JOHN STREET:**

18. William Beer Harness Shop with Maurice Quance –the corner of the building was cut off To allow for a canopy to be placed over the doorway. Earl Russell took over the building to open an appliance and electrical appliance store. Today, South Huron Window and Doors operates its business from this location
19. Lee Wilson Ice Cream shop-Hair Dressing shop-butcher store and variety store
20. Vera Essery Millinery Shop
21. Exeter Times-Advocate relocated to this location and remained until it moved further north on Main Street in 2012-Jennard Cheese store and coffee shop-now closed
22. Dr. M. Fletcher's office and small hospital which was on the upper level-building-a bit of a history note:  
The first Dr. in Exeter was Dr. John Hyndman. His house was on the north east corner of Huron and Albert Street and still remains. Dr. Malcolm Fletcher took over his practice. Mr. Appleton look after the property and drove both men in the cutter in the winter time when they had to make a house call
23. Along with the old Chainway Store- became part of the Centre Mall in the 1970s with boutique shops, restaurant and hair salon-in later years The Ranch House Inn-an Independent Motel-opened
24. Traquair Hardware-Harold Gunn Home Hardware-now Excelsior Insurance
25. Former Federal Building-Exeter Post Office-Municipal Offices located there after Post Office moved to its present location-building torn down and a picturesque Parkette was developed.
26. Building first built to house the Imperial Bank of Commerce-Bank of Montreal moved to the site In the 1940s when the Imperial Bank moved out of Exeter

### **LANEWAY**

27. Herb Walter's residence and Shoe Repair-Jim Bowey-coal dealer- Town of Exeter Clerks office. - Gerry Smith Barber Shop
28. J. Jones Seed & Feed Store-Buswell Shoe Store-Smythe Shoes
29. Beavers Hardware Store
30. Hubert Jones Food & Shoe Store  
A&H Superior Grocery Store
31. Fred May Ladies 'and Men's Clothing-corner where Coffee Culture was recently located  
On John St E. immediately behind Fred May's store was the Jones & MacNaughton Seed building which at one time was a livery stable that held about 15 Horses. The drivers would meet the 4 daily trains and bring the travellers to the centre of town. Some years later Gib Dow Sr. bought the building to auction off horses. He would jog the horses in front of the building and then Frank Taylor would auction the horses to the highest bidder. Mr. Dow bought and sold horses all over and would ship the horses by train to their new owners

#### **JOHN STREET TO SANDERS STREET:**

32. Rolly Motz Red & White grocery store-Harvey's Grocery Store-Anstett Jewellers –currently-The Jewellery Box
33. Joe Senior Photography-Jimmy Grieves Restaurant-Exeter Band held practices above the restaurant –subsequent owners were Gordon Lamport -George Rether-“Rethers” -Mike and Obeida Osman-“The 4-Way Inn” and most recently The Canton Chinese Food restaurant
34. Former Royal Hotel-Lindenfield Hardware Store- Statton Pool Room-Scott's Pool Room
35. C.F. Hooper egg grading station  
Canada Packer's egg grading station  
Bank of Nova scotia  
Len McKnight's Men's wear  
Jason Bourne chiropractor offices
36. B.M. Frances Residence  
Edgar Squire Residence  
John Norris accounting  
Dan Sceli accounting
37. Grigg Stationary Store-school books, etc.  
Howard Tyndall Stationary  
Tom McMillan Stationary  
Livingstone's Stationary  
Gerry Smith Barber Shop

38. Vacant Lot-new building

Jack Smith jewellery  
Bogart RSD Sport Den  
Exeter Times Advocate

### **LANEWAY**

39. Peter Frayne Harness Maker  
Exeter PUC  
Clarence Fairburn Egg Station  
Pat's Pet Shop  
Co-operators Insurance

40. Original Building-Mr. Severn's Shoe Repair shop

Replacement building-Dr. Harvey Cowen Dental offices  
Spinning Jenny Fabric Store  
Mane Event Hairdressing Salon  
Garnet Flynn Barber Shop  
Brad's Music Store

41. Supertest Gas Station-Ken Hockey  
Supertest Gas Station-Hilt Lange  
Supertest Gas Station-Les McDonald  
Building torn down and replaced with new build  
Drycleaners and Laundromat

### **SANDERS STREET TO GIDLEY STREET:**

42. Original Carnegie Library built in 1915-torn down late 1990s-  
New library opened in 2002
43. Olde Town Hall-built in 1887  
Jail at one time located in basement

### **LANEWAY**

44. Meeting Building-Scout Hall  
Lloyd Ford Men's wear  
Walter McBride Building  
Burkley Restaurant  
Building torn down-now a parking lot for Municipal Offices

45. Exeter Lawn Bowling Greens
  
46. Gord Brooks Residence  
Simpson Residence  
Goodalt Landscaping Offices
  
47. Location of the offices for the following family doctors who practised over several decades in Exeter:  
Dr. Graham  
Dr. Dunlop  
Dr. Millner  
Dr. Read  
Dr. Hodder
  
48. Mr. & Mrs. Christy Residence ...set to the back of the lot with a huge grassed front yard  
Replaced with new building-Gaiser-Kneale Insurance-Scotia Bank

#### **GIDLEY STREET TO VICTORIA STREET:**

49. Trivitt Memorial Anglican Church-the corner stone for this church was laid in 1887 with the first service taking place in December of 1888-the building was financed through the generosity of Thomas Trivitt and his wife Elizabeth. Upon their deaths, their remains were interred beneath church property. Sunday services have continued at this site for 132 years!!!
  
50. Baldwin Street  
On the north east corner of Main & Baldwin street there used to be a house where Mr. Thompson lived and the Anglican Church (located across the street) shed\* was behind it to the east. Today the property remains a vacant lot.
  
51. H. Ellworthy House-adjacent to vacant Lot-Milt Robbins Used Cars  
Bonnie Sitter house
  
52. Goldie Cochrane House
  
53. Sunoco Gas station and Tom Coates Garage  
Fred Dobbs Dodge Dealership  
Replaced by new Royal Bank Building
  
54. Main Street Methodist Church -later Main Street United Church-when the United Church of Canada was established in 1925.

In 1969, Main Street and James Street congregations amalgamated –to the James Street site to become one church known as Exeter United Church. Several of the Main Street Church stained glass windows were installed at the back of Exeter United in memory of that former congregation. The Main Street United church building was purchased by the Pentecostal church where services were held until a new church was built at the south end of Exeter.

The church was eventually torn down and replaced with a small retail plaza.

Variety Store-Donut Shop

Rogers Communications Dairy Queen Restaurant

55-58 Residential houses

59. Verity Plow Works Foundry

1920 Sylvannus Cann bought the apple cider and butter production equipment from its previous owner Ambrose Cottle-who was located in “Cottle Town” on Anne St. Operations were then moved to the site of the old Verity Plow works which was vacated when the foundry relocated to Brantford, Ontario. A blacksmith shop was located behind the cider house. Mr. Cann also sold gas and operated a variety store.

Currently, the L.C.B.O. is located on this site.

### **\*CHURCH SHEDS:**

All of the churches in Exeter had their own sheds. These buildings were for the farmers when they came to church on Sunday to tie up their horses. In addition, the sheds were also used through the week for the same purpose-allowing their owners to come in to town and shop. During the winter time this was a very busy spot. The farmers would fill their grain bags and load them on the sleigh along with the family and head to town. Grain would be delivered to the grist mill to be made into chop for their livestock. The family would then be dropped off down town and the farmers would then go to a church shed and tie the horses up. The James Street church shed was the largest and could hold about 30 teams & sleighs. At the mill the workers would let the farmer know when to return to pick up their chop. They would load up the sleigh and go home through the pitch holes on the road because roads were not ploughed as they are today. The big day in town was Saturday. The south east entrance way at Exeter United church is still referred to as “the farmers’ entrance” ...a nostalgic tribute to the horse and buggy days and to our town’s early history.

According to Joe Wooden's book, "A History of Exeter", written for the 1973 Centennial celebrations of the community, there were a number of hotels and hostleries scattered along the London Road which provided respite for the weary travellers making their way along the dusty trail from London to points north.

The first to be built was McConnell's Inn in 1833 and was located at the north end of the fledgling community near the AuxSable River, close to where Caven Presbyterian Church now stands.

In the late 1850s, the Royal Hotel was built on the east side of Main Street just south of Sanders street. According to Wooden's book, "the Donnelly's used the Royal as their Exeter headquarters for their stage operation". It ceased operations as a hotel in 1883 when it became Senior's photographic studio until it was torn down in 1922.

The Commercial Hotel was built by William Drew in the late 1850s as well and was located at the corner of Ann and Main streets at the south end of the community. The property had several owners during the years it operated as a Hotel. In 1916 it was purchased by C.B. Snell who converted the upper floors into private apartments while the main floor became a variety of retail outlets.

The Metropolitan Hotel located at the corner of Main and Station Street (now Wellington Street) was built in 1876 to accommodate travellers who arrived in the Village on the newly opened train service. When the hotel closed it became a chicken hatchery in 1937 and was eventually torn down in 1970.

The Mansion House was built in 1874 and was situated on the south west corner of Main and Huron Street. It had a variety of owners in the ensuing 38 years and was torn down in 1912 to make way for three new homes that still stand today.

The Exeter Station Hotel, as its name implies, was located near the Grand Trunk Railway station on the west side of the village to accommodate both passengers and grain shipments arriving in Exeter. In 1906 the building which was then named Mitchell's Temperance House, was sold to the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company and was subsequently torn down to make way for construction of the new canning factory.

The Central Hotel, was thought to be built in the mid-1860s, and was a presence on the west side of Exeter's Main Street for the better part of a century. Eventually the building fell to the wrecker's ball and was demolished-with the exception one small section-to make way for a new structure, The British Mortgage and Trust Company-a forerunner to Victoria and Gray trust which occupied the building until the mid-nineties when that financial company merged with the Bank of Nova Scotia. The remaining section of the Central Hotel that escaped the wrecker's ball still stands today and remains "open for business" on Main Street, one hundred and fifty-five years after it was built.

Over the river in Francistown, the Walper Hotel-or the Exeter North Hotel- was thought to be built sometime in the 1860s, and was located at the corner of the London and Lake Roads. For many years the Walper Hotel had a reputation for being a "wild place" and was referred to as "a noisy saloon." However, in its final years of existence, the Walper Hotel became a temperance house.