

# *King's Colourful History*

## **The Famous Crossley Hall**



An early centre for social events in King City was the famous Crossley Hall, built in 1899, of pine lumber with seating for 280 people. It was located on what is now King Road.

Operated by its owner William James Crossley who officially opened it on Jan. 1, 1900. As the only hall available in the vicinity, it naturally became a popular meeting place, attracting the area's young people who arrived with horse and buggies for noisy evenings of music and dancing.

Crossley Hall was also the focal point for political campaigns. Visiting public figures were heralded and escorted by booming bands to the crowded community centre. The Hon. A.B. Aylesworth, Hon. Clifford Sifton, Hon. E.J. Davis and Col. Herbert Lennox were some of the notables who greeted their friends from the platform at the south end of the hall.

Beneath the platform were kitchen facilities used for get-togethers, particularly oyster suppers. Many social events took place there, including community concerts and the Masonic Lodge annual social. The final social event was held there until the middle of the First World War in 1917, for by that time other halls and meeting places had been constructed.

Crossley Hall became commercial for a while: pickling onions, grown on the Crossley property, were stored in the building, and for one season it was rented for storage of ice cut four miles east at Lake Wilcox. For many years it lay vacant; then later it was used to store lumber and furnace equipment.

In June 1963 the building was finally demolished, marking the end of an era!

*Adapted from the records of the King City Cemetery, courtesy of Jim Wemyss.*