



The Crossland General Store is located on the southwest corner of Crossland Road (Simcoe County Road 29) and Flos Road Seven West. Its prominent location encroaching onto the crossroads is typical of the many general stores which were once a common feature of the rural Ontario landscape.

Built in 1874, the General Store was originally constructed on the northeast corner, being the North Part of Lot 15, Concession 6. This "A" frame wood structure was erected by Henry Crossland for his wife Martha Webster and their family.

The hamlet of Crossland bears the name of Henry Crossland even though he only remained in the community for a dozen years or so. In 1904, Mr. T. Martin moved the building to the southwest corner for the new owner Mr. W.E. Graham. That same year a house was added immediately to the south west of the store together with a large framed garage.

The Crossland General Store acted as the centre of the community for many years. In addition to the usual assortment of dry goods, the store also served as the local post office, gas station and gathering place for local news and information. As well, the store also served as a stopping off point for travelers heading to the beaches of Georgian Bay. Next door to the store was Dow's and later Allen's blacksmith shop. With one stop to the southwest corner, travelers could do their shopping, barter any goods they might have, pick up their mail, fill their tank with gas, get their horses shod and their wagons fixed, and catch up on neighbourhood information with a good dose of political debate as well.

The original house tragically burned in 1914 and was replaced with a large 3 story structure which remained attached to the general store. Undamaged material salvaged from the first house was incorporated into the interior of the store. The store was added on to and bricked during the 1930's.

## **Postmasters and Owners**

Being a postmaster in rural Ontario in the 1800's and early 1900's was a position of distinction. What follows is a list of owners and operators of the Crossland General Store and Post Office - "The People's Store".

### **William Henry Crossland (October 1874 - April 1887)**

First postmaster in the community that still bears his name. Built the building originally on the south east corner of Concession Road 7 (Flos) and then Sideroad 15 (now Crossland Road - County Road 29). The building was a 2 storey wood frame structure and Crossland's descendants claim he lived on the second floor.

### **Jeremiah Mahony (June 1887 - December 1893)**

There is evidence Mahony lived in the first farm south of the crossroads, later lived in for many years by Joe and Viola Strath. One daughter named Praxedes attended the Crossland School.

### **Patrick Ryther (February 1894 - December 1897)**

### **James Dow (June 1899 - November 1903)**

Opened a store, office and implement shed. He was also known to have done some blacksmithing out of the implement shed.

### **W. E. Graham (March 1904 - February 1906)**

Moved the store and buildings from the south east corner of Concession Road 7 to the south west corner with the assistance of Mr. T. Martin.

### **Silas Locke Anderson (October 1907 - July 1910)**

Bought the building from W.E. Graham soon after Graham had married Silas' sister Minnie. Anderson, unmarried at the time, ran the store with his sister Kate and gave it the name "The Peoples Store". After marrying Isabelle Paterson in 1909, Anderson sold the store to George E. Roe and moved to Toronto to open a general store at Runnymede and Dundas in Toronto's west end.

### **George E. Roe (July 1910 - December 1911)**

### **George W. Martin (January 1912 - December 1912)**

**Silas Locke Anderson (April 1913 - July 1961)**

Anderson returned to Crossland in 1913 and met with immediate tragedy. After giving birth to a stillborn child, Isabelle and Silas gave birth to George Grenville Anderson. They lived in a house immediately behind and attached to the store. In 1914, the house burned, severely injuring Isabelle and baby George. Baby George died within 3 days and Isabelle was left terribly scarred for the rest of her life.

Crossland Post Office closed in 1961 and Anderson continued to operate "The Peoples Store" until 1974 when a closing out auction sale was held in March of that year. The Simcoe County Museum secured the contents of the store and re-created it as part of their Main Street display. Silas Anderson passed away in February of 1975.

The current owner, Greig Stewart, acquired the property in November of 1989. For a brief time in the 1970's and 1980's, the store functioned as an antique store.

The Crossland General Store is one of only a few remaining in both Springwater and the County of Simcoe.

**Designated Features**

The important characteristics and features worthy of designation and protection are:

- Location and elevation of the building;
- Original room layout and building perimeter plan;
- Location, size and design of front veranda (reconstructed in 1995), double doors (circa 1900) and two display windows with angled sills to allow for rain run-off (circa 1900);
- Exterior brick façade;
- Interior tongue and groove wood floors, walls and ceilings;
- Unobstructed views of the east, south and north sides of the building.

It is recognized that minor future changes to the room layout may be required and allowed to provide for plumbing and heating facilities.