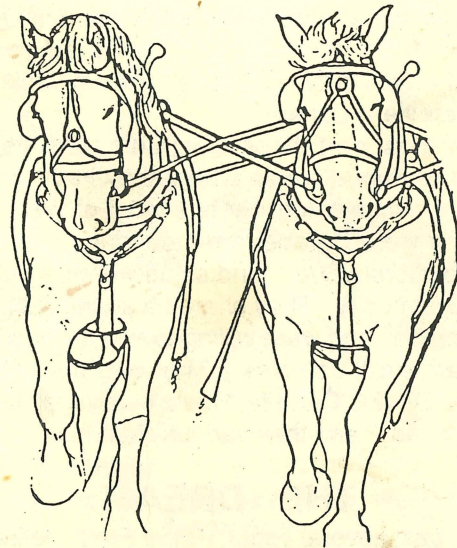


**FAITH AND
HERITAGE
CONESTOGA TREK**



**From Lancaster Pennsylvania----
----to Fort Erie Ontario, Canada**

June/July, 1997

PURPOSE

To honour our heritage by celebrating the 200th anniversary of our Forefathers' and Formothers' conestoga trek from Pennsylvania to Ontario by retracing their approximate route, in period decor and equipment - as much as practical. Our purpose is to call attention to their courage and faith; our goal is to establish a fitting memorial, in the Fort Erie area, to commemorate their values and courage in making such a trek.

THE BACKGROUND

The unrest that followed the conclusion of the American Revolution in 1776 contributed to several waves of emigration. Persons living in the former colonies who had some lingering affection for former ties to Europe were uneasy about their future in the new United States.

This uneasiness was most keenly felt among the German-speaking people of Pennsylvania. During the last years of the 18th century several waves of emigrants left Pennsylvania by conestoga to establish a new life in Canada.

For the most part these emigrants were from the greater Lancaster area of Pennsylvania where they had firmly established themselves in community life. While most of them were German speaking, some were European mercenaries hired by the British during the Revolutionary War, and some were pacifists in search of a less violent community. They shared a strong desire to retain ties to the British Empire, and were willing to endure significant hardship in order to maintain those ties. The long trek, from Lancaster Pennsylvania to Ontario Canada, was a costly trip: it meant leaving family, farms, friends, and their various churches.

THE DREAM

For the past several years, Girve Fretz, retired M.P. for the Erie Riding of Ontario, has had a dream. This dream is summarized in the following paragraphs.

The year 2000 will mark the 200th anniversary of what is commonly referred to as the immigration of German-speaking people--the Pennsylvania Dutch--to Ontario, Canada.

To celebrate this 200th anniversary, several direct descendants (and their friends) of the immigrants described above are planning to retrace their journey, by horse-drawn conestoga wagons, during June and July of 1997. It is hoped that this anniversary trek will raise funds toward a fitting memorial to those early immigrants to Canada, and that the trek will end with a fitting celebration in Fort Erie--perhaps in connection with other community events--in July of 1997.

PROPOSED TREK ROUTE

