The Deserted Village
A Black Horse Corner Mystery

By Rachel Morgan Redshaw, Historical Researcher of the North Dumfries Municipal Heritage Committee

One day in June I was making my way down Wellington Regional Road 50 approaching Highway 97. I glanced at the sign that read this intersection. Familiar with its presence I had not put much thought towards it as many other reasons to. As I continued down the street I began pondering about what it was all about. I could envision the thick black font in my mind Black Horse Corner. Approaching Highway 97 a black horse stands on an open field, a make-shift fence and an old stone building. As a historical researcher I became curious to research it under the North Dumfries Municipal Heritage Committee. A brief sketch on the heritage website led to others claiming the area to be a ‘historical ghost town’ under listings of abandoned places in Ontario. Mysteries as it was I became determined to know why, as many others, a place such as this became abandoned. Was it a terrify catastrophe? A loss of fortune? Evidently, it was. As much as I had researched the area of Black Horse Corner, it was in fact a thriving village.

So, with further curiosity and admiration for the subject I tried to investigate why such a name was chosen. I found that the same led to various explanations. One variation claims that it was not only named so as the owner of the Black Horse inn supposedly owed black horses, the inn was situated on the north side of the road. Along with the north side of the road there was a one storey and a small blacksmith shop. I found that the name itself had been painted over the entranceway. The one I found most fascinating was said by Harley Stager that once the inn burned down after serving the community. ’I have a sign that Harley Stager proudly placed into the soft soil. It remains as an epigraph to a village that once lived quite an industrious and preserving village that once was and still is in our thoughts.

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The Inn was located on the northeast corner of the Black Horse Inn, facing south.