

**District of Ross Mills**

# Ross Mills Newsletter

## April 2017

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How is your wood pile?  
We are over the hump!

Out on the Farm  
—An old saying —  
“By groundhogs day, half  
the wood pile and half the  
hay stack should be left”

How is your hay  
stack?



## Heat ~ Energy

We here a lot about Solar Energy now-a-days - but we have been using it forever.

Up until the last 150 years about the only way we had to get heat was from wood. The trees that we get wood from is made up of the energy from the sun and is stored up over time. The heat is released when we burn it. So we have been using solar energy right along in the form of fire.

Years ago when we lived out in the country with some work we would haul wood to the city. They had to acquire it, just think how much wood it would take to heat the home and do the cooking for a year. What kind was needed - the lady when cooking had to be skilled in being able to operate her stove - she might need a hotter fire, then she used a little finer wood, some soft wood. Many homes had a wood shed and a chopping block (used to make finer wood, to adjust the size of the pieces to make kindling wood to build up the fire). The wood burning range had control levers for the oven and a thermometer on the oven door. Some people had an oven that you get on top of the burner, an on wash day they had wash boiler that could set on top made of copper. Bath water was also heated on there too. Later coal started to be used for fuel use again. coal is the suns making. Many, many, years ago and then gas and electric.

It had to be a big job supplying wood that was needed in the early days. It was all hand work. The axe was the main cutting tool and a maul with wedges. The cross cut saw was a necessary tool for lumbering. Mostly for two men to work with. Then came more power tools - such as a drag saw and buzz saws. It wasn't until around the nineteen forty's that chain saws were made and then they got better as time went on. After the chain saw came the splitter. ~written by Emory

**The Ross Mills bridge is going to be worked on. Hopefully it won't be an extensive amount of time it is out.**

## Ross Mills Grange News

The charter of Ross Grange was draped in memory of Jeanne Houston, with a Resolution of Respect read by Betty Wakefield.

A thank you was received from Falconer and Sinclairville libraries for inviting their representatives to a meeting and giving them a monetary donation.

Mrs Wakefield served refreshments and presented a program, asking each to tell of a naughty thing they remember doing, as well as a nice thing they do. Readings were given by Velma Jones and Mrs. Wakefield, and a game was shared.

Plans were made for the annual Awards Night program. It will be April 10 at the Falcon's Nest Banquet Hall with dinner served at 6:30 PM. Meat, potatoes and beverages will be furnished with those attending asked to bring a side dish.

The Community Citizen Award will be given, as well as several Ross Grange membership awards.

**Cemetery Meeting** is scheduled for April 3rd, it's a little early this year. A lot came out of last year's meeting, it led Emory to how to make the marker located in Ross Mills.



### Sister's Restaurant

Falconer Kimballstand Road

**716-487-3278**

Daily Lunch Specials

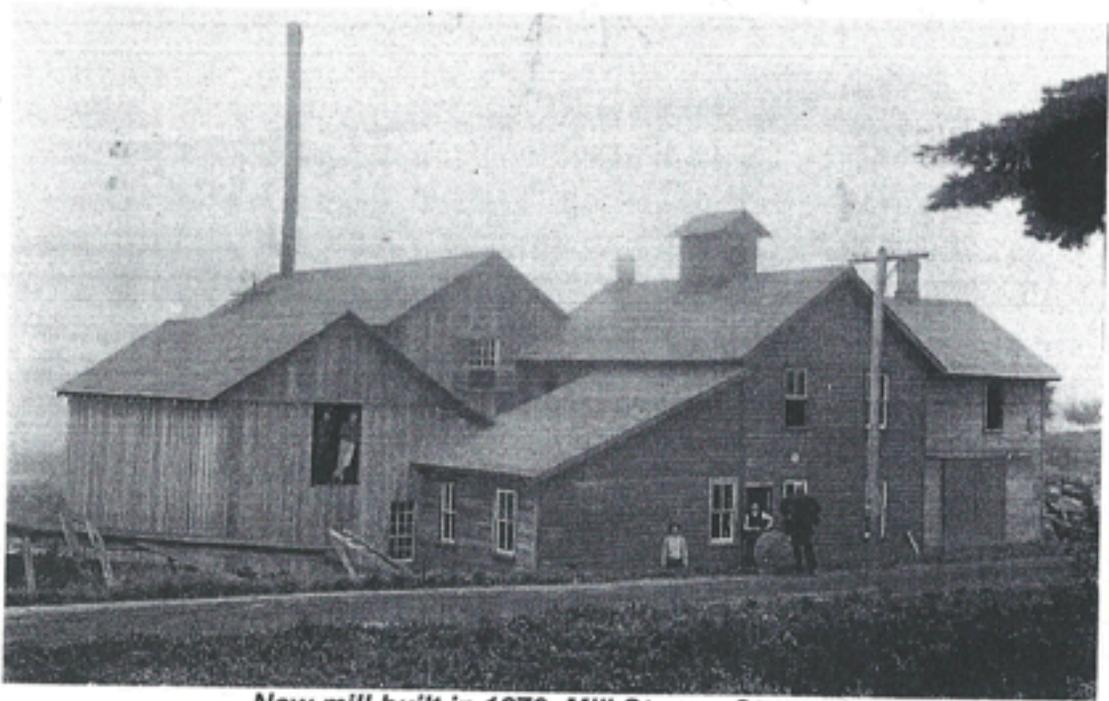
Breakfast & Lunch Served

**Monday - Friday 6am - 2pm**

**Saturday & Sunday 7am - 2pm**

**Dinner served Friday Night 4pm -**

### Strong Veneer Mill



*New mill built in 1873, Mill St. now Strong Ave.*

***In 1845, John Strong started the largest and most productive veneer mill in the United States and possibly the world. The first mill had a slicing machine of a primitive type. As a boy, Burdette Strong helped his father by driving the horse that powered the slicing machine.***

***Each village had cabinetmakers that were the larger portion of their market for the first few years. They often took payment in the form of raccoon skins, labor for cutting more veneer and money when they could get it. About 1855 they added the first lathe and it also was powered by a horse.***

***On January 1, 1873, John and Burdette Strong opened a new mill with new machinery (not sure of first mill's location). Several additions were added as the business grew. The new mill could produce 20,000 feet of veneer per day.***

***The Strong Veneer Mill, being the largest in the United States, had offices in London, England; Buenos Aires, Argentina; and Hamburg, Germany. On August 28, 1893 it was destroyed by fire and John Strong built a new plant across the railroad tracks from Strong Ave. This new plant utilized the very first veneer lathe built by Riley Greenleaf. This lathe weighed 18 tons and had the capacity to cut an eight-foot log.***

*This is a work in progress. With the Lord's help, it will go on for a number of years.*

**Richard W. Holley**

**Contact the Town Hall.**

***This only highlights a few items and moments in the history of Gerry. There is much more history available from the town historian and the Fire Dept.***

**September 2008**