

**Corbett Tavern  
Original Building  
McGillivray Township, 1843**

The Corbett Log House was built by John Corbett who immigrated on the Brunswick from Borrisokane, Tipperary, in 1819 as a member of the Richard Talbot group. In 1843, John and his wife Jane moved from the Ottawa Valley to Middlesex County and settled on Lot 19, Concession 10, McGillivray Township. There they built a home, farmed, and raised ten children. In 1874, John purchased a sawmill where it is thought he produced the clapboard to cover the original elm log exterior of the house. The Corbetts used this structure as a family home until the 1940s, and then as a summer cottage until it was moved to Fanshawe Pioneer Village in 2008. Although the building never functioned as a tavern in its original location, hospitality was always a feature of the Corbett home and the Sunday table was often overflowing with relatives and guests invited home from church service.

When preparing the original layout for Fanshawe Pioneer Village in the 1960s, founding curator Wilfrid Jury identified the need for a tavern on the corner opposite the blacksmith shop. Taverns in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century functioned as meeting places for the community, offered a venue for municipal council and Masonic meetings, and provided food, lodging and hospitality to weary travelers. The Corbett Tavern was moved to Fanshawe Pioneer Village in 2008 through the generosity of Charles Corbett, great grandson of John Corbett, and his wife Elizabeth, effectively completing Jury's original vision and interpretation of the Village Crossroads.

Most taverns in Middlesex County would have also had a carriage shed in close proximity to house patrons' horses and buggies. In 2009, Fanshawe Pioneer Village plans to renovate the Fire Hall building to represent the Corbett Tavern Carriage Shed. Although early sketches of the Village illustrate that a fire hall was always part of Jury's

vision for the site, rural communities did not establish professional fire departments until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Jury's plan to add a fire hall to the Village was more likely connected to a 1963 artifact donation from the City of London's Fire Department rather than with an authentic historical village representation.

Construction of the replica Fire Hall commenced in 1964 and the building opened to the public in 1966. The structure was built using rough sawn logs, cut from UTRCA lands during previous winters. The building's defining feature is its tower, which in the 19<sup>th</sup> century would have been used for draining and drying canvas hoses. In preparation for the Fire Hall building's re-interpretation as the Corbett Carriage Shed, Fanshawe Pioneer Village's firefighting collection was transferred to Museum London in 2004. The building will be renovated as part of the 2009 Capital Campaign Project and the tower removed. Once restored, the Carriage Shed will display the Village's collection of horse drawn equipment.