

## No horsin' round, we deliver

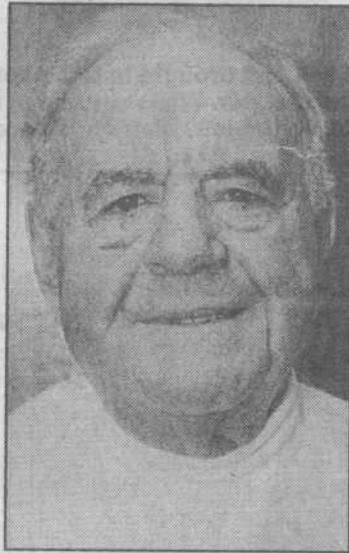
### The horse bit the aerial off the car

Anyone seen a runaway milk wagon?

Cliff Fox's horse had taken off again and he was inquiring at Tweedy's variety store on the corner of Frank and Moira Streets as to its whereabouts. Nobody had seen it. As he left, Fox told the little girl playing outside to go indoors, just to be safe. Seconds later the horse and wagon came barreling around the corner and flattened the tricycle the girl had been riding. "If I hadn't gotten her off the tricycle and inside the store, the horse would have killed her," Fox says. That was the second time in one day his horse had flown the coop.

Earlier the horse took off when a car splashed it. Fox looked for 30 minutes before finding it and the wagon buried in mud in a field on the corner of Sidney and College Street West (where Belleville Utilities is today).

Fortunately most days weren't so eventful. He made his rounds which included the United Cigar Store, Bill Cooke's cigar store, Albert "Toots" Holoway's service sta-



Cliff Fox

tion and many other homes and businesses in Belleville.

Fox began delivering milk for (Reid's Dairy) in 1943. Most of his horses were dependable. For example, Dan was a trustworthy beast that left Fox at one end of the street and met him at the other. The only problem was Dan didn't always wait if Fox was delayed. One day he took longer than usual to collect from a customer. Dan was around the corner and up the street when Fox went in, but he knew Dan would be along soon. When Fox came out of the building, Dan

had come and gone. Fox got a drive back to the dairy and waiting outside the stable was Dan. Fox had to go back and finish his route so his boss, Leonard Reid, who knew the horses as well as Fox, offered advice. "You might better take someone with you, 'cause once he comes home, he's done." Fox took a truck instead.

A problem that transcends eras was one of theft. People regularly left empty milk bottles on their front step for pick up and placed the money for it inside them. The cost of delivery was 10 cents. After a customer complained about paying twice each week (leaving money in the bottle and then paying when Fox asked her for it), he figured something was wrong. Playing sleuth, he made his delivery the next day and then hid across the street. Along came the newspaper boy who promptly emptied the milk bottle's contents into his pocket before leaving a paper. Fox confronted the boy, demanded the money and never had a problem with him again.

Reid's was the last dairy in the Quinte area to use horse-drawn wagons and the mix of cars and horses occasionally clashed. While Fox delivered milk to one customer, his horse stood outside. When Fox came

out the horse had bitten off the car's antenna. "There he stood, proud as a peacock, with the aerial in his mouth." Reid's bought the man a new antenna.

Fox retired from Reid's Dairy in the late 1970s and continues to work with horses at the Quinte Exhibition fairgrounds.