

Colin McQuirk - The Artist

The pen and ink reproductions illustrating this guide to the Stonetown have all been contributed by Colin McQuirk who, with his wife, Peggy, runs the Perth County Gallery in the heart of St. Marys.

Mr. McQuirk, 42, is a commercial artist by training. But since he moved to St. Marys from Toronto four years ago he's been churning out pen and inks of the town's more prominent buildings - including a number of privately commissioned drawings of local resident's homes.

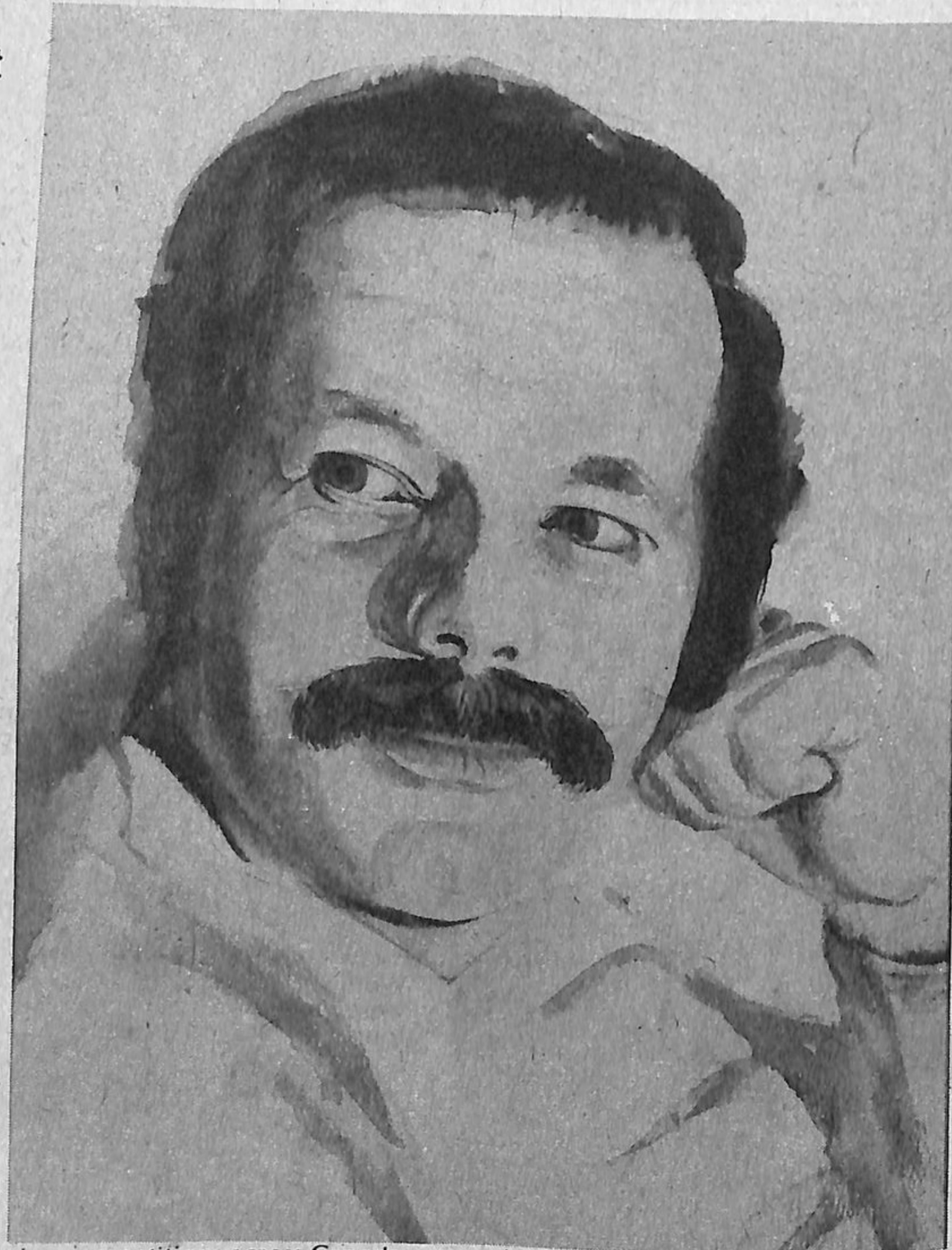
The first of his approximately 15 non-commissioned St. Marys drawings was of the Water Tower at the intersection of Queen and James Streets. Mr. McQuirk's most recent is the Opera House, a reproduction of which graces the front cover of this magazine.

In characteristic understatement, Mr. McQuirk says the drawings came about "just through an idea that came to mind. We wanted something local for the gallery."

In spite of his current reputation in the area for his fine drawings of local landmarks, Colin McQuirk baulks at being referred to as an artist. He's a commercial artist, he says. It's his wife Peggy who is the real artist.

The fact is, they're both artists. Mrs. McQuirk studied art at a Toronto art school and is an accomplished water-colour painter. Recently she has been working a bit with clay modelling as well.

Perhaps what is less known about Colin McQuirk is that he is an automobile enthusiast of long standing. He's the owner of a bright red 1947 MG sports car, drives a Saab (a Swedish car) as well as a Rover, and is a veteran of numerous touring and



racing competitions across Canada.

Though a relative newcomer to St. Marys, Colin McQuirk has without

doubt already contributed much to the town's appreciation of its architecture.

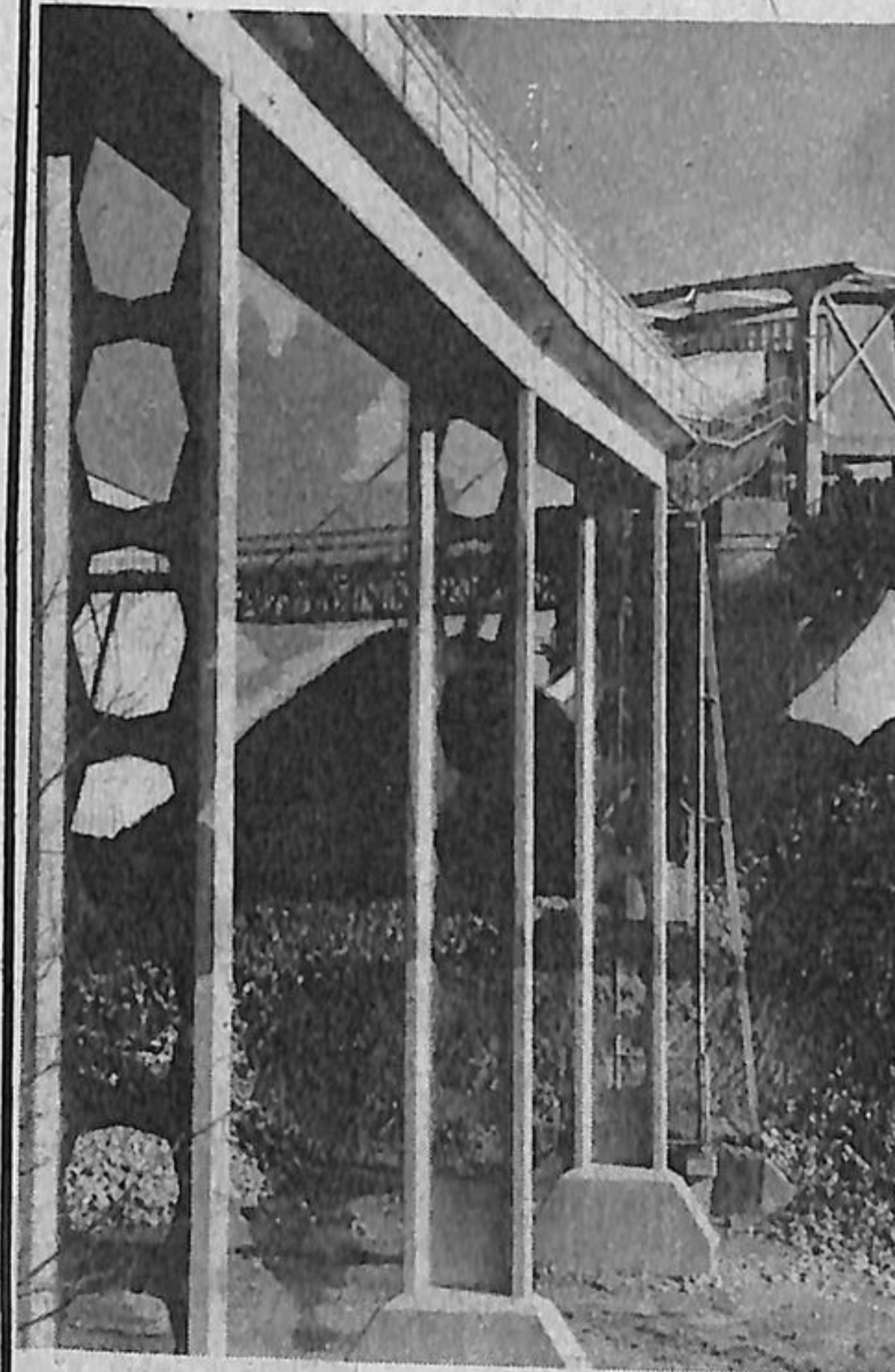


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- BESIDES CUSTOM PICTURE FRAMING, WE HAVE ORIGINAL PAINTINGS (TORONTO'S WALTER COUCILL R.C.A., LOCAL ARTISTS JIM MCGORMAN, TED PAYNE, TILDE PEDERSEN, AND OTHERS).
- LOCAL PEN & INK DRAWINGS BY COLIN MCQUIRK (AS SEEN THROUGHOUT BROCHURE).
- LIMITED EDITION PRINTS.

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St. Marys Cement Company



Perhaps the greatest single influence on the community of St. Marys during the 20th century has been the St. Marys Cement Company. Over the years, the town's economy has remained strong as the payroll from the cement plant augmented the agricultural economy of the area.

Located on Water Street South, the plant is the town's largest employer with 180 jobs provided. The operation of the plant continues 24 hours per day, seven days a week.

The plant produces 2,000 metric tons of cement per day using a dry process which uses less energy than the wet process used in the past. A large conveyor belt extending over Water Street brings raw material from across the Thames River to the main part of the plant for processing.

A returning Klondiker, John Lind, came to St. Marys in 1910 to investigate the possibility of a rock cement mill. He evidently liked what he saw, moved down from his Owen Sound home and with some financial assistance built the plant which opened in 1912.

The operation began with two small kilns, each producing 100 tons of cement clinker a day. Another small kiln was added a few years later. Not until 1929 did the first large kiln appear, adding 400 tons to daily production.

The next change occurred after World War Two when the small kilns were demolished and in successive four-year intervals, three more large kilns were installed. A final one appeared in 1964, bringing total plant capacity to 650,000 tons per year. All this production was in the wet process, meaning that water was added when grinding the raw materials, and the resulting slurry was pumped into the kilns.

In 1973 the price of fuel took a dramatic increase, and a change to the more economical dry process of

making cement was considered. One problem involved the drying of local clay, for no plant in North America was using as much clay in the dry process as St. Marys would have to use. A solution was reached and all five wet kilns were replaced in 1977 by one large dry kiln. This new kiln is rated at 700,000 tons a year, and provision is made for future kilns of this size whenever needed.

St. Marys Cement established a second cement plant in Bowmanville, Ontario, in 1968. The installation of a second kiln there in 1974 made it equal in production capacity to the St. Marys plant. In 1978 the company expanded into the U.S. market with the purchase of Wyandotte Cement Co. of Detroit, Michigan.

St. Marys Cement Limited employs 1,700 people throughout Ontario and markets concrete brick, block, precast products and aggregates, in addition to cement.

Hey! Look Us Over!

St. Marys residents are very proud of their new St. Marys and Area Arena and Community Centre opened early in 1978.

It is located on James Street South opposite Domtar Packaging and is worth a visit. It serves a host of needs from skating, hockey to dances and weddings.

A Short Paddle

If you've got your canoe along, drop it in Trout Creek near the C.N.R. station, paddle down to the Thames (watch out you don't go over the dam) and head up stream.

You'll see herons and kingfishers, come face-to-face with a Holstein and have a quiet hour getting a completely different view of the area.



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