

Worst Season I've Had in 32 Years' Beekeeper Ed Robertson Calls It

Who could wish for a sweeter neighbour than Ed Robertson, a beekeeper who ships almost 90 tons of honey in a peak year from his Hornby honey house.

Robertson's Hornby Apiaries is one of the largest of Halton County's four commercial honey operations. His 22 beeyards, 20 of them scattered around Halton County and two outside, have a total of 1,900 hives.

And tending the hives keeps Robertson busy as a bee himself, inspecting each hive every ten days and mounting a massive collection operation twice a year.

He hires occasional help but most of the work is done by Robertson and his 14 year old son, Jack. (The sign says Ed Robertson and Sons, but his other son, age 4, is still too young to brave the stings and arrows of the business).

Each hive must be fitted with an average of 10 wooden frames enclosing a starter comb strung on wires. Two crops per year from 1,000 hives requires about 20,000 frames, many of which Robertson makes himself, and all of which must be brought to the honey house and placed in the central extractor.

"This is the most expensive piece of equipment in the honey house. It whirls the frames around, 80 at once, extracting honey by centrifugal force. Pumped Upstairs

From here the honey is pumped upstairs for straining, back down into 1½ ton settling tanks, and then into 650-pound barrels for shipping.

Except for a few pails sold to people who come to his door, Robertson sells his honey by the barrel to large producers like Kraft, Billy Bee and Land O Clover.

An alternative would be to join the honey co-op in Toronto, a central marketing agency to which most Ontario beekeepers belong, but Robertson prefers to sell to the highest bidder.

Large Producers
The large producers put the honey through further straining, pasteurize and homogenize it, and pack it for sale to food stores.

The top price goes to white honey, produced by the bees in early summer when the clover is in blossom. But some buyers, particularly bake shops, prefer dark honey, made from the nectar of goldenrod, wildflowers, basswood and sumac. Robertson has already sold 5,000 pounds to a bake shop this year.

A sideline is beeswax, a honey byproduct, which the bees use to plug the cells to keep the honey from spilling and which must be scraped from the combs with a hot knife before they are placed in the extractor.

Robertson produces about a ton of beeswax per year, which he sells for about 55 cents per

pound. It is used as a base for women's cosmetics, for waxes and polishes, as a coating for thread, and to make beekeepers' supplies, such as starter combs for new frames.

Many of his friends also drop by for a small piece of wax each year, because it makes an excellent ski wax, and keeps snow from sticking to snow shovels.

For the last five years area beekeepers have been blessed by a good demand and a very steady market, with a barrel bringing about \$110 on the wholesale market.

Bad Weather

But life is not totally sweet for a beekeeper, because bad weather can reduce his crop even more drastically than farm crops. And the weather this year has been particularly bad.

It doesn't take much to make a bee decide to stay home and eat stored up honey instead of hustling out to work. Rain or the threat of rain will do it, or even an East Wind.

June and July this year were so changeable that the bees had eaten all their own honey before Robertson arrived for his August gathering.

"There will be no light honey at all this year," Robertson said. "I've worked with bees 32 years and this is the worst year I've ever had."

Total crop this year, all taken in the fall gathering, will be well below his average of 75,000 pounds. "But I've had years as high as 170,000, so I'm not too concerned," he said. "I'm happy as long as I can maintain the average."

Maintaining a high average requires constant attention to ensure each hive is operating at top efficiency. Key to efficiency is the queen, and since their egg-laying capability drops by one-third after two years, the beekeeper must know the age of every queen in his yards.

Busy Bee
Robertson replaces washed up queens at the rate of 250 per year. He buys queens from suppliers in the Southern United States, and usually orders the Italian variety, rather than Caucasians.

But he keeps a careful eye on the catalogues, because disease-resistant hybrids are constantly being developed. He knows the strain of each of his queens and keeps records of the success of different combinations of breeds.

Another reason to record the ages of his queens is the fact that eight days before a new queen hatches the old one swarms away with about one-quarter of the hive.

To prevent this, Robertson keeps his queens wings clipped and removes the large queen eggs from the colonies.

Once a queen is past her egg-laying peak, Robertson kills her and replaces her with an im-

port. "But often the bees will sense she is not producing, and will finish her off themselves," he said.

The longest Robertson ever kept a queen was nine years. "I kept her just to see how long she would last," he said, "and she produced near top capacity all that time. But she was an exception."

32 Years

The worst part of Robertson's job is the stinging "and they hurt just as much after 32 years as they did the first time I was stung," he said.

But years in the business have taught him how to spot a "cross hive" and to be careful in bad weather when the bees are idle and cranky. A puff or two from his smoker is usually enough to make the bees fill up with honey and settle down (nobody knows why, although beekeepers have been doing it for centuries); and in good weather, when the bees are busy, he has sometimes worked with his shirt off.

Whole Secret

"The whole secret is just to remember that the bees are the boss," he said.

Robertson is now in the middle of his winter packing — moving the hives into groups of four surrounded by shavings each with its own pail of sugar water to feed the bees through the winter. He uses about 25,000 pounds of sugar per year.

After the packing is done, about a month from now, he will be able to settle down to a winter of cleaning his equipment and building or buying 10,000 new frames for next year's August gathering.

Two Georgetown Accountants Receive Degrees

Two Georgetown men received their degree of Certified General Accountant Saturday evening at a ceremony in New Convention Hall, London.

They are Barry Timleck and Oscar Morgenstern.

Mr. Timleck is a member of the firm of Pope & Goebelle. He is married to the former Sandra Bradley and with their three children, Marci Anne, John Andrew and Jane Margaret, lives at 15 Rexway Dr. Guests attending the ceremony with Mr. and Mrs. Timleck, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Timleck, Mr. and Mrs. James Timleck, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Pope and Mr. and Mrs. Graeme Goebelle.

Mrs. Morgenstern accompanied her husband to London for the ceremony which was followed by a dinner dance. He is comptroller for the Mitchell Construction Company (Canada) at Brampton. Mr. Morgenstern's wife Jean, and their family live at 51 Market Street.

Standard Products Employee William Hayward, 45, Dies

A Standard Products employee, William Harry Hayward, 45, of 36 Henry Street, died in Georgetown hospital on October 14th after a lengthy illness.

Son of Harry and Lilly Dawson Hayward, 60 King St. E., he was born in Terra Cotta and had lived all his life in Georgetown and district. He was employed at Smith & Stone for ten years, at Orenda Engines, Malton for ten years and latterly with Standard Products.

He was a member of Credit Masonic Lodge and Halton Chapter, R.A.M.

He leaves his wife, Elizabeth (Betty) Adamson, two sons, Barry of 74 Stevens Crescent and Paul at home; his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Hayward and a sister, Mrs. Edward Brainard (Margaret) of Youngstown, Ohio.

Rev. Robert Scrivens of St. John's United Church conducted the funeral service on October 17 at the Harold C. McClure Funeral Home and interment was in Greenwood Cemetery, Georgetown. Pallbearers were Lloyd McEachern, Bert Hill, and Melvin Wyse of Beaverton, Allan Hayward, Guelph, Doug Adamson, Minden and Tom Ledwith, Georgetown.

JOHN TODD HEADS A.O.T.S. MEN'S CLUB

At a recent meeting of St. John's United Church A.O.T.S. Men's Club, the new executive for the year's activities was installed by the retiring president, Carl Schenk.

John Todd heads up the club. John Layman is vice president, Garfield McGillivray secretary, and George Armitage, treasurer. Rev. Bob Scrivens is honorary president.

The various committees were appointed, the first named being chairman: Ways and Means — Jack Layman, Reg Broomhead, Carl Schenk, John Nichols, Gordon Gossill, Jim Marsh, Alex McLaren, Doug McLaren, Les Arbuckle, Dave Strudwick.

Program: Bob McMenemy, Dennis Carr, Ken Faulkner. Boys and youth: Jack Hamilton, Harvey Handy, Jim Staden, Sherry Few.

Membership: George Armitage, Ken Faulkner. Publicity: John Todd, G. McGillivray.

During the meeting Jack Hamilton made the presentation of the past president's pin to Carl Schenk.

The club took on the responsibility of organizing a coffee time after the church service on Sunday mornings. As a fund raising project, the club will sell gift packets of nuts for Christmas, and also Christmas trees, if they are obtainable.

The A.O.T.S. club meet the first Tuesday of each month.

Assign Magistrate Ord Peel County Vacancy



MAGISTRATE JOHN ORD

Magistrate John D. Ord, of Maple Avenue W., Georgetown, has been assigned to sit on the bench in Peel County for an 'indefinite' period to fill the vacancy created by the death of Magistrate J.D. Burger, Oct. 12.

"I'm a magistrate for the Province of Ontario and I'm close by so I've been named to fill in for the time being," said Magistrate Ord. "The appointment is only temporary but I imagine it could last for quite some time. I'll be sitting in Peel until a permanent appointment is made. This will be done by the Attorney-General's department and sometimes these things require considerable time."

Magistrate Ord had been serving in the Lindsay area. He presided over Chinguacousy Township Police court Wednesday morning.

District Masons Attend Church Service

Members of Wellington district Royal Arch Masons, attended a worship service Sunday evening in St. George's Anglican Church.

The service was arranged by Irwin Noble, who is grand superintendent of the district this year. Joining Georgetown Masons were members from Galt, Guelph, Palmerston, Orangeville, Durham and Oakville. Among distinguished guests was Rt. Ex Comp. F.W.D. Wehman, Toronto who is Grand J of the Grand Council.

The Masons heard an excellent address by the Rev'd Eric Mills, rector of the church. Lessons were read by Mr. Noble and John T. Armstrong and Bob Borland and Michael Armstrong were sidesmen.

Lodge members and others attending the service were invited afterwards to a social hour in the parish hall.

Review Fall Fair Business At Meeting of Directors

The directors of Georgetown Agricultural Society met at the home of the secretary, Mrs. George Ironside on Thursday evening last. There was a good attendance.

Reports were given by the various committees on the different phases of the fair, and the treasurer's report was gratifying.

The secretary reported that the prize money would be completely tabulated this week, and cheques going out to the prize winners. The prize money paid this year will be considerably in excess of previous years.

Letters of thanks will be mailed to Cr. 'Steamer' Emmerson and Jack Armstrong for their part in organizing the parade and Friday evening's entertainment.

It was decided to put corru-

gated steel siding on the building in the park, in order to stop the vandalism which has seen the aluminum siding punctured with holes and torn off.

The secretary's and treasurer's honorarium were increased, due to the increasing work load of these offices.

The midway had asked for a renewal of their contract for 1968, and this will be done after clarification of one of the points in the contract.

Directors felt that some classes in the prize list should have the prize money graded upward in order to attract more exhibitors.

A committee comprising of the president Keith Webb, the lady president, Mrs. Graydon Chester, Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Hall and Mr. and Mrs. Delmer French were appointed to arrange for the annual banquet to

be held the latter part of November.

A euchre party committee was also appointed to look after a euchre in Stewarttown Hall next month.

The district meeting will be held this year in Schomberg, on Tuesday, October 31st, and the directors were asked to make a point to attend.

St. Paul's Baptist Church
Mountainview Rd. South
Minister: Rev. G. S. Gammon
9.45 a.m.: Morning Worship Service
11.00 a.m.: Sunday School

ADAMS PHOTOGRAPHY

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24 Queen Street East — Brampton, Ontario

Applications also accepted Monday through Friday from 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. at the Court of Canadian Citizenship, 150 Main St. West, Hamilton, Ont.

For information regarding documents required, fees, etc. — Phone

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TIME TABLE CHANGE
Effective October 29th, 1967

NEW COMMUTER TRIP ADDED TO TORONTO VIA BRAMPTON EXPRESS VIA Q.E. WAY

Lv. Georgetown - 7.18 a.m. Ar. Toronto - 8.25 a.m.

SATURDAY EXPRESS TRIP TO TORONTO VIA YORKDALE CENTRE

Read Down	Georgetown	Read Up
9.07 a.m.	Yorkeville Centre	6.48 p.m.
9.55 a.m.	Toronto	6.00 p.m.
10.25 a.m.		5.30 p.m.

COMPLETE DAILY SERVICE TO TORONTO

8.25 a.m. — exc. Sat., Sun. and Hol.	2.23 p.m.
6.48 a.m. — exc. Sun. and Hol.	5.23 p.m.
7.18 a.m. — exc. Sat., Sun. and Hol.	6.38 p.m.
9.07 a.m. — Sat.	10.23 p.m. Sun. & Hol.
9.13 a.m.	
11.48 a.m.	

For Holiday Service See Time Table No. 3

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHT TRIP
11.30 p.m. — TORONTO — GEORGETOWN — GUELPH

For Complete Service to Guelph - Kitchener - London - See Time Table No. 3

Tickets and Information at

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