

Acton native Cam McNab administers one of government's biggest departments



CAM McNAB

Cam McNab, Acton native who's now deputy minister of highways for Ontario, is the subject of an article in "Topical", the little newspaper published by the Department of Civil Service. The story reads:

Archibald Thomas Cameron (Cam) McNab, deputy minister of Highways, puts up with plenty of needling as a greenhorn. "Clumsy as a cub bear with a sore paw," a kibitzing farmer said as he saw the rangy city feller, with the sharp blue eyes, pounding stakes back in October, 1933. He wielded a sledge hammer with more enthusiasm than accuracy.

It was Mr. McNab's first day as a member of a DHO survey party on a Glanford Township road at Ryckman's Corners, south of Hamilton. It had yet to become part of Highway 53 at the intersection of Highway 6. Cam McNab, the zero man at the end of a 100-foot drag chain, had yet to graduate to rodman, draughtsman and party chief and to put up with more ribbing and screaming over his field notes. But he could read them, even if others couldn't, and they made sense.

By 1954, thanks to dictating devices and aides with electric typewriters, his memoranda and instructions came clearly, firmly and politely through as

superintendent of the engineering audit section. This was a real watchdog's job and then some.

A lawyer at heart

The department was expanding rapidly. It was essential that engineers and other skilled staff men keep up to date. A full blown course was provided at a DHO employees' training centre. As Mr. McNab came to grips with internal problems and found the answers, his opportunities and influence spread.

When on July 4, 1962, he became deputy minister, Mr. McNab had served in every branch but one—the legal. In his heart the Acton-born glove-maker's boy aspired to be a lawyer. After the family moved to Toronto where he, the youngest of three, sprouted rapidly at Clinton Street Public School, the depression cut off a college career.

Plugging for a diploma at Western Tech he caught a place with the Junior Argos' football squad—the one that boomed on to win the Canadian championship without Cam McNab. The DHO couldn't spare him from the chairman's chore on Highway 53, or, to be more accurate, he couldn't afford to leave it for football.

His responsibilities

Today as Cam McNab administers one of the government's largest departments with 10,000 persons on the payroll and a half-billion dollar budget, he also discharges a key responsibility as vice-chairman of the Civil Service Commission, being appointed commissioner in 1968. He served for a time as its acting chairman during a transition period before the appointment of Chairman William A. B. Anderson.

Mr. McNab was senior government representative on the Ontario Joint Council when the government recognized the Civil Service Association as the bargaining agent. He is the member of the Collective Bargaining Review Committee—a board of deputy ministers advisory to the Treasurer of Ontario.

His opinions

When Cam McNab speaks, he is frank and to the point: "People don't seem to enjoy their work as in years gone by. They appear to be pre-occupied with the idea that they are hard done by. They don't get together and engender enthusiasm for the job. They complain of feeling frustrated. There are exceptions, but as a rule we develop most of our frustrations within ourselves."

No regrets

Putting the right man or woman in the right job—Mr. McNab describes that as his main role. "Next is to give them the support they need to carry out the work and not to interfere by getting involved in details. I've had a free hand in selecting and developing directors. If there is a failure I must shoulder the responsibility."

Yes, Mr. McNab would have been happy to go to law school or to have earned an engineering degree before joining the DHO. "Being acutely aware of my educational background I've had to work that much harder. I didn't want anyone to be making excuses for me. Yet I have no regrets."

"I've learned that administrators are where you find them—a scarce commodity; you have to have a flair. Individuals with that flair and some educational background are to be jealously guarded and their talents must be wisely distributed. That is why we have lawyers in top administrative posts and engineers in charge of the property branch."

Keeping fit

Mr. McNab summed up his own "trade secrets" this way: "It may sound hackneyed but I love my work."

How have time's changes affected the deputy? Instead of

playing football he curls, bowls and golfs, being rather belligerent and outspoken as he swings his clubs. He also keeps fit with morning calisthenics before breakfast. Toes hooked under the chestfield, 25 sit ups; two sets of five to 10 push-ups 100 stride jumps—a combination of 5-BX and his own muscle stretchers. Breakfast is confined to a single large glass of unsweetened grapefruit juice, skim milk and a mug of coffee. Perhaps an egg. When Mrs. McNab, the former

Jean Denne, once secretary to Highways Minister George E. Gomme, serves bacon and eggs that's a great treat, coming no more than once a week.

In other respects there have been few changes. Mrs. L. J. Mitchell, the deputy's secretary, still has trouble with the "field notes". Otherwise he remains a confirmed enthusiast, loyal to the staff he has developed and to old associates who have come up through the ranks with him.



TWO local ardent fishermen Ken and Paul Elliott latched on to this pike in Fairy Lake, last week.—(Staff Photo)

Tri-county Atom

GP	W	L	T	PTS
Ponsonby	6	5	1	13
Glen Williams	6	4	2	12
Moffat	6	4	2	12
Rockwood	6	4	2	12
Limehouse	6	3	3	9
Hillsburgh	6	3	3	9
Belwood	6	3	3	9

RESULTS OF GAMES PLAYED
 May 21, Rockwood 22, Hillsburgh 11
 May 21, Limehouse 7, Ponsonby 4
 May 27, Belwood 0, Moffat 31

Leaders prepare for playground opening

Playground leaders are busy this week preparing for the opening of this summer's program, scheduled to begin Monday July 6. Initial registration was held Saturday and a second registration is planned for the community centre this Saturday.

from 10 in the morning until 1 in the afternoon.

Playground supervisor Don Price, Bruce Andrews and Bob Hart, along with senior leaders instructed intermediate leaders and leaders in training in general leadership and first aid at special

sessions, held in the park last week. Leaders have attended out of town camps in previous years.

Assisting Mr. Price with the program this summer will be assistant supervisor Mary Ann Freuler, senior leaders Cathy Dunn, Ellen Wissen, Susan McGiloway and Sharon Ellerby, intermediate leaders David Lee, Larry Quinn, Jeff Cooper and Mary Fran Marcoux and leaders in training Jannet Waites, Ricky Rocher, Ken Withers, Debbie Drinkwater, Diane Timbers and Russell Coultrup.

Minor Soccer

Acton Angel squirts placed to, an exciting 1-1 tie with Georgetown Thunderbirds, here Wednesday night.

Stephen Mitchell scored the Acton goal in the first half, following a fine save by the Acton goalie.

Eddie Blanchard and Martin Collerton shone for Angela in the second half, but Thunderbirds scored the equalizer in the dying moments of the game.

Angels turned in their best performance of the year in this game. All players played their positions well.

The team's performance was very encouraging.

Acton: S. Oakley, W. Romanovitch, S. Scott, S. Withers, R. Stewart, B. Buchanan, S. Buchanan, D. Drinkwater, B. Legate, J. Ancker, J. Turnbull, R. Jackson, T. Williams.

Acton Civero Hawks shut out Georgetown Jets 4-0 in an exhibition game, last Thursday night.

Scott Somerville and Steve Brunelle scored two goals apiece

Louise McElroy of Guelph will return as swimming instructor.

Leaders raised \$63 on a car wash, held in the community centre parking lot Saturday. The money will be used to finance bus trips for children.

Besides bus trips to Riverdale Zoo and High Park in Toronto, arrangements are being made to take children in the five to eight year old age group to visit Storybook Gardens in London.

A bicycle rodeo, hobo day, penny carnival, hayrides and sleepouts are also planned.

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GRADING ON THE NORTH shore of Fairy Lake is continuing this week and it is expected the work will be finished this week. Sometimes the going was sticky and heavy equipment from Nellis Construction walled deep in

the silt. The area around the community centre is now almost completely level. The bank has been graded for a gradual descent to the waters of the lake.—(Staff Photo)

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