

From Vienna to horse guards now living on Rockwood farm

by Lorraine

The growth of today's cities tells us that countless numbers of people prefer the excitement of city life but statistics show also that, more and more, past-dedicated city dwellers are looking toward country living as their preferred life style.

The Ernest Kirschner of Rockwood's Fourth Line are two of these.

Born and married in Vienna, Austria, they took up their present abode last January, after having lived in Toronto for their 16 years of Canadian living.

What brought them to Canada in the first place and why a farm-life after so many years of urban residence? It is an exciting story and Lilo has to prod her husband to remind him of what did prompt emigration to their new country.

It's a capsule narration dealing with an old flying school taken over by the Russians during the last war and left in skeleton condition. With the assistance of the Austrian government sponsoring political recreation the field and buildings are restored through the enthusiasm of young men interested in the art of flying. Although little actual flying was conducted at the station it became famous as a Glider Club and a sportsmen's habitat.

In 1955, five close members of the original group came to America to take up residence in Chicago and Montreal. A year later Ernest and his wife Lilo decided to also take the big step

and came over to live in Toronto, Canada.

Unable to speak a word of English, the ambitious Austrian took a job with the Hertz Rent-a-Car Company where he was forced to meet the public and pick up the language. Lilo applied herself to employment with an advertising agency, gradually bridging the language barrier along with her husband and countless other European counterparts.

As ever industrious, two years later in Canada found Ernest Kirschner bored and looking for a glider plane hobby replacement. A past-Austrian armour corps veteran he contacted an army unit in Toronto proposing his interest in part-time soldiering in Canada and was referred to the Governor General's Horse Guards which, during World War II had been converted from a regiment famous for its equestrian specialization to a unit of armoured tank mobility, with motorcycles replacing the horses.

Much to offer The Senior Canadian Military Militia had much to offer the Austrian born aspirant as the regiment was, at that time, in process of reverting to its original mode of transportation and weekly riding and drill sessions were being established as part of its extra curriculum training.

Horsemanship and providing mounted escorts for visiting dignitaries had long been a duty of

the Horse Guards and its antecedents, but raising a mounted escort in the post-war mechanized age days was not an easy task.

Fortunately, however, the love of horses and riding which had been passed down through generations of Horse Guard officers and men was being restored for the avid equestrian-minded members of the Governor General's Horse Guards.

When Ernest Kirschner joined the riding classes had already begun and he threw himself into the new accomplishment with fervour, tempered along with his love of animals.

History shows that an amalgamation had brought the Body Guard and the Mississauga Horse together as the Governor General's Horse Guards in 1936 and that that regiment had seen service in the Rebellion of 1837, Riel Rebellion, South African

War, the First Great War (as the 4th and 8th Canadian Mounted Rifles) as well as World War II where, after its conversion to armour, saw service in Italy and North West Europe.

The newly enlisted part-time soldier applied his energies toward horsemanship adaptation and soon he had become proficient at riding having learned to train, discipline, and put his steed through difficult military manoeuvres as required by G.G.H.G. standards. Since enlisting he has served as escort in many governmental affairs including the annual Parliamentary openings at Queen's Park in Toronto, the regular running of the Queen's Plate and other formal functions, as military guard, involving the Governor General.

Retires, moves

Kirschner's retirement from the regiment has coincided with his move to his Rockwood farm. The trained equestrian is not new to the way of the land as he and his wife, together with Lilo's parents had adapted easily to one they had owned conjunctively in Northern Ontario. Mr. and Mrs. E. Helwig had managed their former acreage until Mr. Helwig's death in 1970 with Ernest and Lilo assisting on the weekends.

Now, however, they look forward to fulltime farming as their new career with a hope of developing a riding school for seekers of English riding training.

"Want to learn to ride English horseman style?" says the expert. He offers his establishment as a place to begin.

At the present time the couple are dependent on the initiative of local customers to make appointments via visits to their farm situated two farms above the Eden Mills Road on the 4th Line, near the Conservation Park. Eventually they intend to have a well organized riding club where both formal and recreational English riding will be part of their program.

Right now they busy themselves with getting their house and farm in order, and raising feed crop for their horses. Their affinity to animals is reflected in the affectionate friendliness of their German Shepherd and part Timber Wolf dogs which they have raised from puppies, the feline attentiveness of their house kittens, and the nuzzling of their favourite horse Jasper which is also the one Ernest takes with him to Toronto when on display.

As a retired member of the Governor General's Horse Guards, Ernest looks with mixed pride and pleasure to his next assignment as a member of the Honour Guard at the C.N.E.'s Warrior's Day Parade.



Jasper nuzzles his owner.



Ernest Kirschner as a member of the Governor General's Horse Guards.

The Acton Free Press

ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2, 1972

Highway crash

Rockwood youth killed girl critically injured



A birthday visit last Sunday ended in tragedy for two Rockwood families when the 1972 Datsun, driven by Kenneth Allan, 21, R.R. 1 Rockwood and a 1970 Ford Torino, driven by Alan Trafford, 20, of Hanover were in collision. After the crash, the Datsun hit a fence post, rolling over twice before coming to a stop in a field. Kenneth Allan was killed.

The accident occurred on Highway 6, just outside Hanover on the return trip to Rockwood. Joanne Seim of Jackson Street had come home to the village to visit on the occasion of her sister Darlene's 13th birthday. Joanne had been staying in Hanover with an aunt while her parents were away on an Eastern motor trip and she was driven back to Hanover by her friend Kenneth Allan.

Going along for the ride were four other Rockwood young people, Kathie Short, 11, Dennis Mikkelsen, 15, both of Main Street, Debbie Glendenning, 11, of McKenzie Street, and Darlene Seims, 13.

Surrounded to the scene of the accident at 12:01 a.m. Monday morning, the O.P.P.'s had all passengers taken to the Fergus Hospital. With the exception of Kenneth Allan and Darlene Seims who were sent on to the General Hospital in Toronto, they

Kenneth Allan, 21, of R.R. 1, Rockwood, was killed when his car, shown here, collided with another near Hanover Sunday night. Darlene Seims, a passenger in the car, is in critical condition.

—Photo by J. Mikkelsen

were hospitalized, and treated for severe lacerations and bruises.

Kenneth Allan was pronounced dead on arrival and Darlene was immediately operated on for abdominal and brain injury with her condition, according to Tuesday reports, rated critical.

Damage to the Allan vehicle was set at \$1,500 and to the Torino \$1,000. The only person in the Trafford car was the driver. He suffered right hand injuries and a slight whiplash but did not require hospitalization.

At the present time the O.P.P. are continuing their investigation and parents of the injured girl had not been contacted.

News and views

By LORRAINE

The double tragedy of Sunday's accident involving five Rockwood young people has hit home severely. Friends of the car driver, killed almost instantly, are asking themselves why a person so young should be taken.

Tragically enough, all people young and old, who are driving automobiles, are potential statistics and all it takes is minimal negligence on a busy highway for any one of us to have our names added to the records.

Like in all similar tragedies, we never realize their significance until they happen close to home and Sunday's accident has made many of Kenneth Allan's youthful peers consider more personally the responsibility of staying alert while driving, and always driving defensively, prepared for errors of others.

There is never any pat answer to the mournful queries of the whys of such sad occurrences but there is always the prayerful wish that something can be salvaged and meaningfully derived. We should examine more carefully our own driving habits and surely, if we do this, no victims have lost their lives in vain but rather they can act as reminders that, in our mechanized world of automobiles for most transportation, we must treat ourselves and our passengers with the respect and consideration that we have them do unto us.

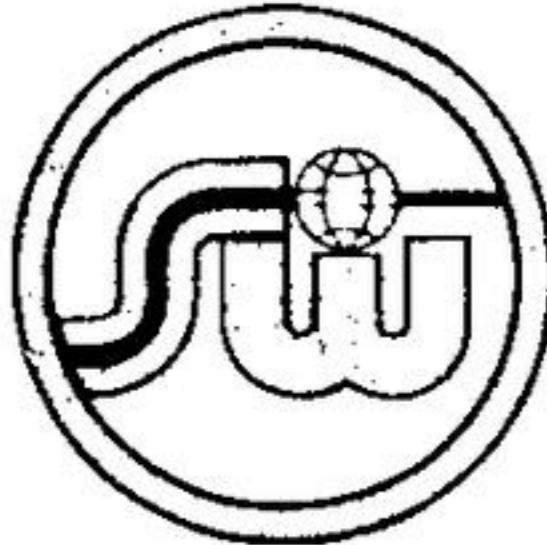
We give prayers for the families and victims of Sunday's mishap. We share with them, our heartfelt sympathy for what has and might, occur.

Hopefully we have learned from the accident to be more careful ourselves when on the highway homeward bound, remembering always that someone is waiting for us and it is our responsibility to see that we reach our destination safely.

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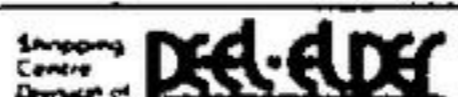
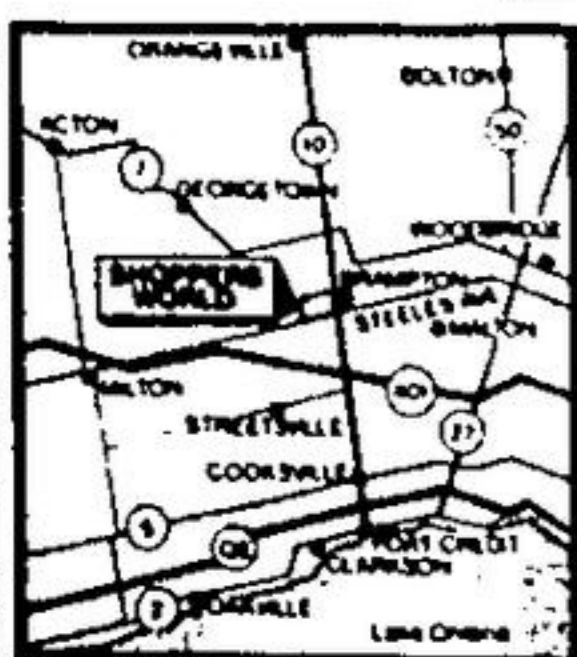
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