

Halton's new M.P. anxious to use Works committee lengthy meeting

By Gordon Murray
With his first session of Parliament looming on the horizon newly elected M.P. for Halton, Dr. Frank Philbrook, is looking forward to the time in his political career when he will be able to put to use his experiences in Kashmir and Pakistan in either the realm of foreign affairs or health services.

After several futile attempts to receive an overseas posting Philbrook jumped at the chance to be the Doctor at an Anglican mission in Kashmir, in northern India, in 1961.

He first began looking into the possibilities of working overseas while he was still at the University of Toronto from which he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in 1954 and a General Practitioner's certificate in 1958.

"Both my wife and I wanted to go overseas, see a bit of the world, broaden ourselves, and help some people who really needed it," he said. Midge Philbrook is a nurse and currently works at Toronto Western Hospital.

They had a friend who had just returned from Tanganyika and they found his stories very interesting and so started looking into methods of going to East Africa. When that didn't pan out they started contacting construction firms working in various parts of the world and the Canadian Ministry of External Affairs but to no avail.

There were lots of jobs later but this way just at the start of the era of foreign aid," he explained.

The Philbrooks were later recommended to John Bothwell, the Bishop of Niagara, as likely prospects for overseas work with the Church. In 1961 they were sent off to work with Dr. Jim Wilkes, who was a friend of the recently elected M.P., in Kashmir.

Just before their departure they were informed that Wilkes was in fact not going to be staying on and Philbrook would be in charge of the mission hospital. It was arranged that Wilky would stay on a short time to allow Philbrook to become more adjusted.

He stayed at the mission hospital for two years before moving over to West Pakistan where he became the doctor on a construction project backed by the World Bank.

"Kashmir was sort of a tourist region for that part of the world. A lot of people from the dam project used to come there for vacations and we got to meet a lot of them. Our friendships enabled me to snag the job at the project," Philbrook stated. He spent nearly five years

with the construction project in Mangla, West Pakistan, returning to Canada in the centennial year.

Of his two years in Kashmir, he said, "There weren't a lot of financial benefits; they came later when I joined the construction project, but it was certainly a tremendous medical experience. I must have come across everything in the book over there. I came across diseases and medical problems I probably wouldn't have ever seen in Canada."

He found the situation in Kashmir particularly unique in that it was one of the most fertile parts of all India. Water was plentiful, and so everyone should have been well fed. There was also a thriving tourist trade and there were many beautiful country areas.

Yet with the possibility of a good life evident everywhere the people were very poor, undernourished, and disease was rampant.

The reasons for this situation were numerous including primitive farming techniques, difficulty in adapting to winter conditions and the fact they were Moslems in a Hindu country. The religious difference resulted in a loss of considerable stocks of food each year to other areas of India.

"It was simply a socio-economic condition. They should have been well fed but weren't. There was just no logical reason for the situation," Philbrook said.

Throughout most of their lives they received very little medical attention and rarely got proper medicine.

"The women and children took a real beating as compared to the men. Everybody ended up having a life expectancy of about 30 years," Philbrook said.

Many of the women ended up anaemic, he said, because of the large numbers of children they bear and the fact the children were breast fed until they were three or four years old. In many cases they were forced to have caesarean sections and experienced permanent pelvic damage.

Other problems included meningitis, tuberculosis, malaria, typhoid, worms, broken bones, fractures and, especially in men, bone cancer.

One incident Philbrook often relates was pretty much typical of the entire situation there during his two year stay. "The first night I was there all alone after Dr. Wilkes had left I had to perform three caesarean sections out of a possible six

lives I was able to save only one of the mothers and none of the babies. I was naturally shocked and disappointed but as a nurse from England, who had been there for many years, pointed out to me I had to be thankful there weren't six people dead and would have to just keep plugging," he said.

Although the filth, poverty, and disease often depressed and frustrated him he said he never lost hope. He was continually fascinated by the medical experience. "I had the opportunity to tackle new things every day and handle problems I would never encounter in the Western world," Philbrook remarked.

The hospital was very large, old, designed along Tudor styles, and had 80 beds. They frequently had heating and water supply problems during the winter. The medical facilities, equipment, and supplies were very rudimentary and greatly

hampered his work, he said. "We had virtually no blood supply, a little serum once in a while and a dangerous lack of drugs," Philbrook said.

"They were very simple living, happy people. I guess compared to us you could say they didn't have much of a life but then they didn't expect a lot. By not expecting a lot they were able to enjoy what they had," he added.

He is quick to note that there were considerable differences between his job in Kashmir and the one he held in West Pakistan. "The two jobs as a total overseas experience complimented each other quite well. I was able to make what I feel was a valuable contribution on each job," he said.

He said his work in West Pakistan was no great challenge as compared to Kashmir but at the same time it was more rewarding financially and gave him valuable general medicine

practice. The dam project was unique in that it was only one ever attempted like it anywhere in the world. The project would have normally taken 10 years to complete but because India was going to cut off the headwaters it had to be done, if possible, in five years or the entire north of West Pakistan would have been without water.

The project ended up taking four and a half years to finish. Upon completion, it was the largest dam in the world and priceless in its value to the young nation. The artificial lakes were already in operation when India cut off the water supply.

For the project there was a modern town built, including a well equipped 72 bed hospital. He provided medical attention for the 3,000 population from Western countries and for many of the men from Canada who were part of our peace-keeping

force on the Indian-Pakistan border.

He vividly recalls that on two occasions when war broke out in that part of the world he just happened to be away and his wife and children were left all alone.

"Once the Chinese were on the verge of invading Kashmir and the other time was when the 18 day war broke out between India and Pakistan. Neither crisis really effected us much although construction on the dam at night had to be curtailed," he said.

Because of the race against time the construction project was involved they worked through the night by spotlight. This had to be stopped because the danger of air raids.

"It was funny all our friends and family were worried about us while we were worried about how the Cuban missile crisis would effect their lives," he added.

After seven years overseas they returned to Canada to discover "culture shock really did exist," he said. "Our first year back was very lonely because most of our old friends had moved away and we found life here had changed dramatically."

Philbrook remembered. He said they couldn't believe how fast-paced everything in Canada had become and how much prices had risen.

They were also amazed by the tremendous jump in the standard of living and sophistication of life in Canada, which had taken place in seven years. "What I found really different is we had become a credit society which certainly wasn't the case when we left," he added.

Works committee of Halton Hills meet till near midnight last week.

limbs which were too low. Joe Hurst urged caution and "slashing."

Engineer Peter Morris recommended tendering to accomplish more in the sidewalk program and works committee agreed. No sidewalks had been done in Acton yet, he said.

The committee recommends to council a 60-40 split on cost of installing gabions at the home of Nick Ferraro, No 15 sideroad.

Works committee recommends about \$1650 be spent to replace 12 arms of 40 175 mercury vapor lamps in Acton on Willow Park, Lake and Mill W. Originally 40 arms had been recommended. Others will be replaced later.

Use of a garbage truck, driven by a town employee, was approved for cleaning up after Acton fair.

More changes were recommended in the comprehensive parking bylaw for Halton Hills.

Town men will make repairs to the stone wall at the Halton regional police office, Mill St., Georgetown.

Town men will cut low tree limbs which overhang roadways. Particular problem is on Main N. and Hower, Acton.

There have been a couple of incidents of trucks hitting

posed, councillor Ern Hyde in favor. Mr. Hurst thought four lanes would open it up for speeders and more accidents.

Repair of underground wiring at the Mill-Main traffic lights in Acton will be looked into. The wiring was repaired temporarily in March on instructions of the O.P.P. "Isn't the person who hit the pole responsible?" asked mayor Hill. More information will be sought.



DR. FRANK PHILBROOK husks some corn for visitors at the Liberal corn roast at Hornby Park Sunday.



PART OF THE CROWD at Sunday's Halton Liberal corn roast.

Good crowd

Over 100 people from throughout Halton showed up at the Liberal party corn roast Monday despite unseasonably cool weather and intermittent rain. It was held at the Hornby Community Park.

Most pitched in and helped husk corn, and enjoyed the opportunity to talk to M.P. Dr. Frank Philbrook, who mingled with groups of people.

After the mounds of corn, hot dogs and pop had been consumed they had races and water balloon games. Some young people played with frisbees and soccer balls.

The affair broke up about an hour early because of a downpour.

Reunion

The annual Gilwell reunion will be held this weekend at Blue Springs scout reserve:

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- Crowning of POTATO FEST QUEEN AND PRINCESS (in the Hillsburgh Arena)
- ROCK EXPLOSION DANCE featuring "Pure Dynamite" from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.
- ENTERTAINMENT TENT in PARK

★ **SATURDAY, SEPT. 7**
- SNOWMOBILE GRASS DRAGS (on the grass) according to O.S.R.F. rules
- GRAND PARADE - 12 noon
- RIDES AND GAMES
- TEEN POP SHOW
- FASHION SHOW at 1:30 p.m.
- FARM TOURS
- ENTERTAINMENT TENT
- BAND CONCERT
- DANCING - 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. in the arena

★ **SUNDAY, SEPT. 8**
- SNOWMOBILE GRASS DRAGS
- BEEF BARBECUE - 2:30-6 p.m.
- VARIETY PROGRAM at the Park 2 to 5 p.m.

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