

# PROFILES

with Jennifer Barr



An Acton institution is coming to an end as Mrs. C.K. Browne plans to close up her store in July. The little tobacconist's shop on Main Street North has been a source of milk, pop, cigarettes, and candy for more years than anyone can remember.

Doris Browne has been behind the counter for 22 years, the last seven in sole charge since her husband "C.K." passed on. The building at the corner of Main and School Lane housing the shop is being sold so the store has to close. Mrs. Browne isn't happy about it. "I'll miss my kids," she says.

The 'kids' are several hundred school students from nearby Robert Little and St. Joseph schools who traipse through Mrs. Browne's doors several times a day for penny candy. In these days of 30 cent chocolate bars there it's still possible for a wee mite to have a pennyworth of this and two cents worth of that.

According to her friends, when the school children come there's no room in the store for anyone else. It must take infinite patience and love to sort out all the orders, because there's a not much profit.

"I never figured the profit," Mrs. Browne smiles, she just loves the kids. She hasn't any sons and daughters but she has "200 children that don't belong to me," she says.

Meeting people is the joy of the job, the part that makes keeping a store open seven days a week from nine to eight worthwhile. Even in supposedly quiet times in mid-morning, spending an hour in Mrs. Browne's store is like witnessing an old English music hall.

People keep popping in and out swapping wisecracks and getting told to "get stuffed." The truckers and delivery men bring her jokes, flatter her, pass the time of day and Mrs. Browne grins her snappy repartee.

"She's always happy," comments a friend but "you can hear her down Main Street when she gets going," warns one trucker feigning fear.

Candy, cigs, pop and jokes. The store is a cosy mixture of bits and pieces, some left over from previous times. Seven toilet rolls sit in solitary splendor near a Canadian flag—they're both there if you need them. Plastic flowers and little tea figurines brighten up shelves stocked with cigarettes and candy. Pop, bread and milk form the nucleus of the grocery supplies. Browne's is also headquarters for any neighbourhood collections going on.

An oil stove is surrounded by kitchen chairs, well used, for visitors who pop in for a chat—Mrs. Browne's 'social club' she calls it. Wall plaques remind you of human failings.

"When I'm right no-one remembers. When I'm wrong no-one forgets." An old picture of former Princess Elizabeth and the Duke shares wall space with a citation for C.K.'s 93rd birthday.

When she needs relief help, Mrs. Browne's neighbors and friends pop in to mind the store. Elyon Van Der Hayden and Florence Rocher are special assistants and visit frequently to chat and help out.

Suppliers keep the linoleum warm in the morning—"here comes that silly old baker and that Halton-over-the-Hills guy," quips Mrs. Browne. They twig her and stop to buy a little of this or that. One driver is short two cents change—"give it to me later," "no, I'll forget,"—"I won't!" she laughs.

"He'll be back," she comments aside to me. "They always come back."

Nowhere to shoot the guff. Children have changed over the years, Mrs. Browne thinks. The children of today are more self confident (she hesitates over the word "cheeky" and decides some of them are just that). She has no qualms about sorting out the smart alecks but also has many a story about helping out a wee one or protecting a little girl from teasing boys.

Youngsters now have much more money to spend and she doesn't know where they get it all, she says. When she suggests they save some of it, she encounters a blank stare and a puzzled, "Why?"

But Doris Browne will miss her store and Acton will miss it, too.

"It's a tradition going out of Acton," remarks a friend.

Mrs. Browne won't be far away. She hopes to reside in the senior citizens' apartments and will have more time to visit family in Niagara, Sarnia and London. She'll also be able to devote more time to her activities with the Orange Lodge, True Blues and Crystal Chapter.

She has "millions of friends," she says but come July she'll have "nowhere to shoot the guff."



Mrs. "C.K."



Decorating the graves of loved ones in cemeteries is an annual event, once observed more widely. Now only a few individuals and the Acton Legion and IOOE take part. Joan McKnight, left gets some help from Mary Daigle, both of the IOOE Sunday as they observed the day.

## Approve rural area office

Halton Hills planning board overruled a planning staff recommendation, this week, and approved a real estate office with a 4 by 6 foot sign for Mrs. Katherine Kelly, at her home on Highway 25, half a mile south of Acton.

The approval will go to the Niagara Escarpment Commission to whom the application was made.

Mrs. Kelly wants to set up an office in the front of her house and a sign to show the location of her real estate business, in off-hours, but the planning staff contended the request does not conform to the Official Plan.

The planning report contended commercial development, other than agriculturally related uses, should be encouraged to locate in urban and hamlet areas. It stated they did not wish to see more accesses on to the highway.

Councillor Roy Booth, member of the NEC, explained the commission will abide by the municipality's wishes.

Councillor Ross Knechtel argued the sign should be allowed, since he could see no problem.

Councillor George Maltby claimed in the old Esqueping Official Plan professional people were allowed a sign on their property, and could see



Vic Patrick and Jim McKnight represented Acton Legion Sunday at Decoration Day at Fairview Cemetery. The two men planted flowers by the grave of William Nesbitt, a first World War veteran who died in 1958 at the age of 82.

no reason why real estate should be excluded. He pointed out there was a commercial use on the property previously.

Councillor Ed Wood stated there is no sign by-law in Halton Hills. "This sign will simply advertise the business when the main office is closed. She's not opening a hot

## New Peel chairman enjoys Acton links

Frank Bean, who learned many lessons in Acton's Old Stone School, rose to the top of Peel Region's political class with his election as chairman.

Mr. Bean was elected by councillors to replace the first chairman Lou Parsons. Mr. Parsons is retiring to the private sector.

Mr. Bean was active in elections in the Acton area, but it was not until two and a half years ago that he reached office himself as a Mississauga councillor.

He was re-elected in November.

When the former chairman announced his decision to quit, four men announced their bids for the job. Mr. Bean emerged as a compromise choice.

As chairman of Peel Region, Mr. Bean's duties included presiding over council and acting as a main link with Queen's Park.

Though the Bean family left Acton 23 years ago, Mr. Bean still tries to maintain his friendships. He last visited six months ago. Most of the people he grew up with and went to school with have also left.

The one name he did mention is George Elliott's. For years Mr. Bean took the early service organ duties at the United Church and Mr. Elliott managed the evening service.

And Mr. Bean has another continuous connection between Mississauga and his former home town: a Free Press subscription.

The Beans used to live at 260 Mill St. There was Mr. and Mrs. Richard (Dick) Bean, Frank and his two sisters Gwen and Betty. Mr. Bean senior worked at Beardmore's for a time, then opened an insurance business.

Mr. Bean Junior followed along into the insurance business and for a time had his own operation.

The Beans arrived here with Frank from Iroquois Falls in 1943. Mr. Bean attended public and high school in town. The family left 13 years later.

In 1975 circumstances sent a Mississauga councillor to Queen's Park, and an opportunity rose for Mr. Bean to take part directly in the political process.

Peel Region was set up five years ago with the political unification of ten local municipalities into three larger units—City of Mississauga, City of Brampton and the Town of Caledon.

Mr. Bean, 41, and wife Patricia (Tish) have four children: Judi, 20, Cindy, 18, Sharon, 16 and Dave 14.

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## Obituary

### Elton Cole dies May 28

One of Acton's oldest residents, Elton Edwin Cole, died suddenly at his home 22 Cameron Ave, May 28. He was in his 92nd year.

Mr. Cole, an avid horse racing fan, was born

April 19, 1888, in Hornby, son of Walter William Cole and Emily Atherton. He attended school in Hornby, where he was known for his pranks and surprising the teachers.

Lowville United

Church was the setting for the June 17, 1914 wedding of Mr. Cole and Katherine McEachern. They would have celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary next week.

In April, 1918, Mr. Cole moved his family from Scotch Block to the Acton area, where he began his career in threshing. December 14, 1922, he started farming at Lot 3, Conc. 3, Erin township, where he stayed until May 15, 1972. He then retired to 22 Cameron.

Mr. Cole had a sharp eye for a good horse or cattle beast, which benefited his trade. He was an avid hockey fan, and was extremely interested in politics, always reading newspapers back to front daily.

Left to mourn his loss are his wife Katherine, sons Walter, R.R. 2, Acton and Delbert, Guelph, daughters Ruth, (Mrs. Roy Wood), Campbellville, Lena (Mrs.

Doug Mason), 68 Lake Ave., and Doreen (Mrs. Ross Auliffe) Guelph., sister Beatrice Downs, Milton, and one brother Bob, Milton. He was predeceased by his parents, one son Jack, on April 21, 1979, and one brother Fred. He is also survived by 16 grandchildren and 19 great grandchildren.

Funeral service was held May 30 at Shoemaker Funeral Home, with Rev. A. Walter Fosbury officiating. Interment was at Churchill Cemetery. Pallbearers were neighbors, Bruce Leitch, Angus McEachern, Johnny Lightle, Theo Papillon, Colin MacColl, and Sonny Townsley.

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Scott Jeffrey peers at some pop art at the Art Show at the high school last week. Cigarette butts and beer bottle caps, among other garbage was put together to show man's environment.

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