

PROFILES

with JENNIFER BARR



Colie MacColl may be small but he's a scrapper. He was suspended from soccer (he played excellent soccer in his youth) at the age of 18 for being too rough. At 72 years old he's still a scrapping Scot—but he's got the biggest heart in Acton.

In the days when Colie was custodian for Dills Printing and Publishing and I worked in the Georgetown Independent office, we'd pass the time yacking about pigeons—he raises homers—while I typed the odd word and he waited his duster around my head.

You either love Colie or you don't—and I do! He's one of the most alive people I know, the kind who takes life by the scruff of the neck and makes it behave.

Never sits still

Colie had some knocks in recent years. Lost his wife and son. Put him down pretty bad, but not quite. There's a second Mrs. MacColl now to share the lovely lakefront cottage that Colie bought in 1936.

Colie retired this spring after 60 years of hard work. He doesn't like it a bit, says he doesn't know what to do with himself although Mrs. MacColl says he never sits still five minutes. There's the large garden to tend, 250 some-odd pigeons to care for, a couple of hives of bees, and Colie's always doing something with the house. This week it's extra insulation.

Scot by birth

Colin MacColl was born in Scotland on the edge of the Highlands in 1906. He was brought to Guelph at the age of eight and has lived in the area ever since. After losing his mother at age 10, Colie went to work at Taylor-Forbes at the tender age of 13. He was foreman there for 22 years. He says he used to leave his house in Acton at 4.15 a.m. and not punch out till 10 at night, six and seven days a week.

"When I broke my hip," he says, "they had to put four men on my job," he says with a twinkle in the eyes.

In his teen years he took up soccer and remarks he often wished he were bigger. But an old team-mate comments, "he may not have been too big but he was the roughest player and the dirtiest." Colie's proud of that.

He also got into racing pigeons at age 13 and has had a dovecote ever since.

When he left Taylor-Forbes, Colie became custodian for local schools, first Robert Little, then M.Z.



Colie MacColl displays locks of hair kept carefully in his antique clock.

Bennett, and also a spell at Limehouse School. These were the years he loved best, talking about the kids with shining eyes.

He has an old pendulum clock from Taylor-Forbes days and still keeps it full of treasures—ribbon-tied locks of hair the little girls used to bring him.

But Colie got to be 65 and "they kicked me ass out." He helped Bert Do-da with his apiary business for a bit and then Dave Dills asked him to look after Dills' as custodian.

"Dave Dills? One of the best fellows around," Colie states firmly speaking of his respect for the whole Dills family.

Spell it right

Now that retirement has finally forced Colie to stop and smell the roses, he's taking time to travel. He and his wife just returned from Scotland where the MacColl clan got together.

"Don't spell MacColl without an 'a,'" dictates Colie.

Family ties are strong. Colie came from a large family.

"I had nine brothers and sisters—maybe ten"—and he raised three sons. Bill is in St. Jacobs, Colin in Northern Saskatchewan and Ken lived at home until his death. There are six MacColl grandchildren.

Pigeon racing is still a major interest with birds flying upwards of 5 to 600 miles a race. Colie has been a member of the Wellington-Waterloo Homing Pigeon Club 'forever'.

Birds are trucked by the club to outlying clubs the required race distance away from home. When released they (hopefully) fly for home, travelling 45 to 60 miles an hour. On arrival at the home loft the breeder removes a special elastic band from the bird's leg and drops it into a time clock.

It's a dangerous business for the birds, only half of them come home on time, others drift in over several days, some never come home. Which is why it's necessary to maintain quite a number of birds but 250 is "too damn many", says Colie. He never sells a bird—just gives away the excess.

Can't keep a good man down

But pigeon-tending and gardening is not Colie's idea of how to spend a day. He's itching to work. He says he'd like to go back to the foundry (Taylor-Forbes) but Mrs. MacColl chuckles "Do you want to be carried out?"

It's hard to keep a lively man down and Colie MacColl (with an 'a') won't stand for this leisure business long. I fully expect to see him back at some kind of work before long—if he ever gets finished his list of things to do around the house!

Garbage pickup

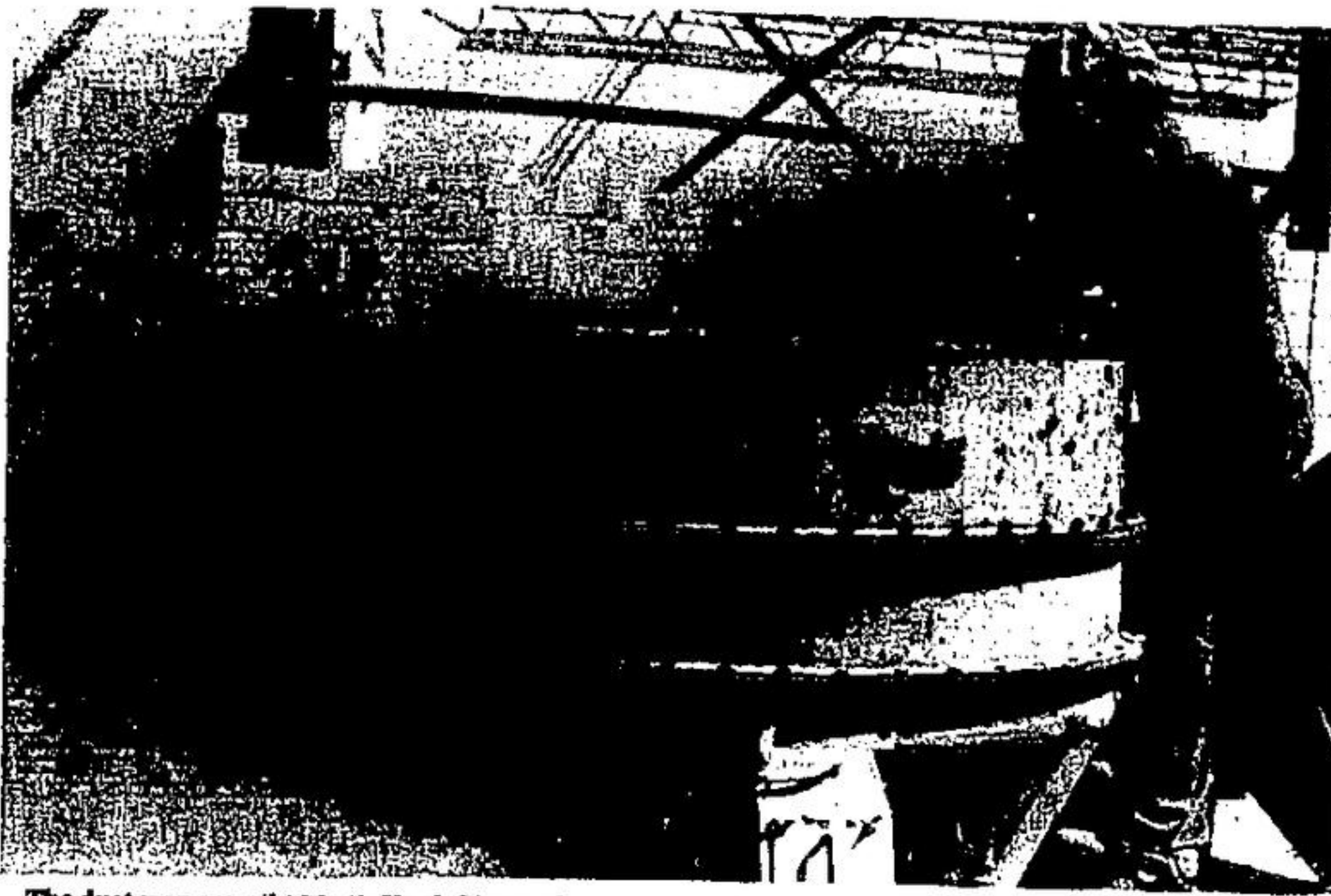
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The new day will affect all municipal garbage collections, but do not include municipal commercial collections.

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The dust man cometh! That's Hank Steunenberg using a pressurized hose and silicone sand to clean up some of the equipment that is to be used at Holly Industries on Eastern Ave. Holly Industries will be processing sulphur at the plant, once construction finishes. Mr. Steunenberg works for Alco General Painting of Guelph. A neighbor of the plant called The Free Press to determine if the company had started handling sulphur.

Teachers settle...

(Continued from Page 1)

The teacher negotiator also said the wage package could be more or less than last year's six per cent increase.

The elementary school teachers signed a two-year agreement which left open the wage question for next year.

High school teachers and the Hallon board are also in negotiations.

English visitors...

(Continued from Page 1) Mr. Davis said he could not quite believe the straightness of the roads. He said he thought the "maps" were schematic drawings. "I think we'd always been fascinated by the straightness of the roads." In England a straight road runs about as far as three miles. Those are usually the Roman roads, Mr. Davis said.

Mr. Davis went on to comment on the closing of the Disston Saw plant. He said he had been told in England by a salesman that the best saw one can buy is the Disston product. When informed the plant was moving to Montreal, Mr. Davis said, "As far as tools are concerned, I always think it's the quality of the people who make it, not the tool itself."

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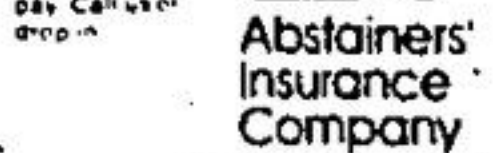
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Peter Hurley, the son of Anthony and Louise Hurley, Acton, recently graduated from University College, University of Toronto, with a B.Sc. in geophysics, four years distinction. He will return on a scholarship to do his Masters at U of T in September.

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