

# PROFILES

with JENNIFER BARR



This is the profile of a horse and his owner. Not only is this horse a gentleman of the first degree, well-bred, kind, and a credit to his family, but he is one of the best all-round jumpers this country will ever see.

Bally Murphy ("Murph" to his friends) lives south of Rockwood under the care and guidance of Dr. Ray Skoropad who imported him from Ireland in 1972.

Ray remembers describing to Dr. Sam Wilke (both men were vets, Ray still is) the kind of competition horse he wished to buy - large and athletic with a good intelligent mind. He was told he'd not find such a horse in Canada but would have to go to Ireland, the home of the Irish hunter.

He did, and found Murphy, all 17 1/4 hands of him. Murphy was only a brood of a boy then, being a mere four year old. Now he's a strapping 11 years, 18 hands and 1500 lbs. of sheer muscle.

The horse's name was quite a problem to Ray and was on his mind as he flew to New York to meet the "Irish Poplar," the ship carrying its precious cargo.

Being a great admirer of author Brendan Behan and favoring the play "Borstal Boy" by the same author, Ray was delighted to be able to attend a showing of the play in New York. He decided to name his new horse "Borstal Boy."

However, Murph named himself. When Ray leapt on deck to greet his big gelding, he found plaited in his mane a shipping label stating he was from BALLYMURPHY in no uncertain terms.

"How could you argue with that?" comments Ray. Slow and sure training.

Dr. Skoropad is a strong believer in the European method of training horses, particularly jumpers. As a veterinary surgeon he is well aware that a horse is far from mature until age five or so, mentally or physically. Bones aren't set, knees aren't closed and brains aren't grown up until several years after most North American horses are broken to saddle.

With this in mind, Ray took the training of the barely saddle broken Murphy very slowly.

"Jumping shouldn't be started until five years old" says Dr. Skoropad emphatically. "The larger horse needs longer to develop. So many people mistake cartilage for bone."

So Ray and Murph got to know each other. They did a lot of road work, "played around a lot", went to schooling shows, and at the age of five Ray started to enter Murph in a few hunter-jumper classes for experience.

It was then that Ray's belief in the big horse started to pay off. Murph astounded everyone, except himself, by winning the "prestigious" First Year Green Hunter class at Sutton and it was only the third show of his short life.

From this auspicious start Murph has never looked back, winning class after class in show after show - all major ones.

It would be impossible to list all Murph's credits here but one of the ones Ray remembers with pride is the time Murph came second in the largest

Canadian Grand Prix at Papiniere, Quebec, beating the all-time greatest money winner, Idle Dice from the States.

In his early days of his career, Murph was taken on the Florida circuit, the toughest show circuit in the business. Ray proudly remembers Murph coming sixth out of an unbelievable class of 92 jumpers and then turning around and also coming sixth out of the same number of entries in Amateur-Owner Working Hunter class. Both classes require a totally different type of jumping and very few horses can do both well, let alone beat 85 horses to do it.

"How many horses have that kind of mentality?" inquires Ray.

It's that kind of jumping mentality that won Murph and Ray the Owner Jumper Championship at Samson Farms; The Speed Derby in Bromont against top horses and riders in North America; a third, second and a third in the Grand Prix at Quebec; and second in the Gold Cup at Cheltenham recently, beating all other top Canadian horses.

In fact, Ray has turned down an offer of \$50,000 for Bally Murphy, whom he says is a "100,000 horse", for the simple reason that he and his wife Linda love the horse just like one of the family.

Ray talks about the special bond between him and Murph, an uncanny bond he's never felt before. He describes Murph as "the perfect all-round horse".

When he's through playing fancy horses on the show circuit, Murph comes home to the farm to give the kids rides, pull the bob-sled at Christmas, canter round with his other equine pals, the three long-horned Highland cattle and the numerous dogs, on the Skoropad property.

He never stays in a paddock - he's constantly jumping out of his paddock and jumping back in when someone is looking. He wanders comfortably about the house yard nosing Linda's flower garden and watching the boys play as if he never was the applauded jumper who cleared 6 foot nine in the Rochester Puissance.

"He never gets flustered" Rays says "He's never dirty. If he quits it's because he feels he's going to hurt himself or the rider. He only quits when it gets dangerous - he's saved my many a time".



Ray Skoropad and Bally Murphy

And Dr. Skoropad ruefully rubs an injured back that's kept him from showing Murph himself lately. Doug Henry, well-known professional horseman has been showing Murph until Ray's back injury subsides. Most horses have some difficulty adjusting to new riders, but Murph just runs it through his quick brain and co-operates fully.

Ray chuckles about the one time he saw Murph thinking of becoming mischievous. Canada's grand old man of jumping Jim Elder took a ride on the big chestnut. Murph though he'd take things into his own hands and approach the jumps as he felt he should without listening to his diminutive rider. Once 'round the paddock with the expert Elder in the saddle quietly indicating to Murph who he had aboard and Murph was practically tipping his hat muttering "Yes, Sir", "no, Sir".

I could go on for several more columns on Bally Murphy, he's one of my favourite horses. However, we all have space limitations. I reached mine several paragraphs ago.

## Dump closes October 31

Georgetown sanitary land fill site will close October 31, and garbage will be trucked to Oakville and Burlington.

The Oakville site will reach capacity in April 1980, and the Burlington site in July 1980.

The closure dates were forecast in a report done by M.M. Dillon Ltd., consulting engineers and planners, from contour mapping derived from aerial photographs.

Councillor Russ Miller

claimed the trucking of garbage to Oakville or Burlington will mean residents with no nearby dump will dump garbage on township roads. He pointed out rural people with no town pick-up will not drive the big items of garbage on a trailer to Oakville.

He suggested a dumping point central to Acton, Milton and Georgetown might be arranged for big items such as chesferfields, and refrigerators.

with Acton cemetery having five headstones knocked over and one broken this week. He said there is constant breakage of the illuminated street signs.

## Ask report on vandalism cost

In response to a request from Councillor Marilyn Serjeantson the town engineer will attempt to put a dollar value on vandalism in town.

Serjeantson told Halton Hills general committee she felt there had been an increase in vandalism. Engineer Bob Austin said the Metcalfe ravine was one of the worst areas, with manhole covers being removed and the gates broken. He pointed out other areas had the same problem.

## OUR APOLOGIES

In the Stone Road Mall Fashionable Fall Supplement in tonight's paper, the dates and times of our Fashion Shows are listed incorrectly.

The correct schedule is:

**Friday, September 7**  
7 p.m. & 8:30 p.m.  
**Saturday, September 8**  
11 a.m. & 2 p.m.  
**Special Children's Show**  
**Thursday, September 6**  
7 p.m. & 8 p.m.  
**stone road mall**

## GIRLS!!!

### If You Like A Challenge, Read On!

Girl Guides of Canada, Acton District will be registering the following groups for the 1979/80 Guiding Season:

**BROWNIES:** 6 to 9 years of age (18 to a Pack) New

**GUIDES:** 9 to 12 years of age (24 to a Company) New

Both the Brownie and Guide programmes have been revised to allow for more individual choice and for the regrouping of ages; the number of girls to a unit has been reduced.

**PATHFINDERS:** 12 to 15 years of age (15 to a unit)

This is a new group with a highly diversified programme.

Please Note: Girls must have reached the minimum age per group by September 5th. It is not necessary to have been a Brownie to join Guides nor a Guide to join Pathfinders. You may join at any age from 6 to 15.

**REGISTRATION:** Wednesday, September 5th  
Acton Scout Hall  
School Lane (behind the Library)  
6:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
Yearly fee is \$6.00

**INFORMATION:** Pat van der Eyken 853-1819 or  
Jean Vaughan 853-0154

## Sheridan enrolment is largest in its history

Sheridan College President John M. Porter says the college will experience its largest growth in enrolment in the history of the college this year.

Porter said enrolment is expected to increase by 10 per cent over last year, bringing post-secondary enrolment to 5,120.

The most recent figures show that approximately 3,220 freshmen students will register for classes in September and approximately 1,800 will return to complete the second and third year of pro-

grams. The college is able to discuss enrolment increases at this time of the year due to a new practice instituted two years ago asking that all first-year students accepted for admittance pay their full fees by August 1.

Porter noted there are only two areas in the college where growth has been lower than antici-

pated, the crafts and design enrolment is down over last year as is enrolment in the technology programs.

HEAVY SAVERS  
The Canadian Bankers' Association says there are more than 24 million personal savings accounts at the Canadian chartered banks.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SPECIALS CONTINUE!!



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Swift Premium 6 oz. Pkg. Cooked Ham 1.19

Devon 1 lb. Pkg. Side Bacon 1.29

Schneider's 1 lb. Pkg. Bologna 1.59

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## LABOUR DAY SALE

Date of sale August 29, 30, 31, Sept. 1/79  
We reserve the right to limit quantities

Bright's Tomato Juice 48 fl. oz. .69	Clover Leaf Solid White Tuna 7 oz. 1.49	Liquid Javex Bleach 64 fl. oz. .59
Assorted Jello Powder 85 g. 4/99	Ground coffee Maxwell House 1 lb. 3.19	Family pack Coca Cola 6x750 ml. 1.89 Plus deposit

FROZEN FOODS	
Mrs. Smith Apple Crumb or Apple Pie 26 oz.	1.39
Bluewater thrift pack Fish Sticks 32 oz.	3.19
Carnation hash brown (4 lb. + 1 lb. bonus) Potatoes 5 lb.	.89

Weston white Sandwich Loaf 24 oz.	3/1.59
Weston Hot Dog or Hamburg Rolls 8's	2/99¢

Reynolds 18" Foil Wrap 25' Glad small (6x10) Freezer Bags 25's Glad med. (11x14) or large (15x15) Freezer Bags 20' or 10's Glad Sandwich Bags 50's Assorted Flavours Reg. envelopes Freshie Bick's plain, garlic, Patskie Ogorkie Dill Pickles 32 fl. oz. Assorted Flavours Quench Drink Crystals 4x3.5 oz. Delmonte fancy cut green or Wax Beans 14 fl. oz. Delmonte fancy Cream Corn 14 fl. oz.	1.48 .55 .69 .59 .59 10/99 .99 1.09 2/79 2/89	Delmonte fancy sweet Peas 14 fl. oz. Delmonte Peas & Carrots 14 fl. oz. Fluffo Shortening 1 lb. Cartridges Altra Razor Blades 5's Gillette Trac II reg. or lime (200 ml. 450 ml. bonus) Shave Cream 250 ml. Scope Mouthwash 750 ml. 4 varieties Dr. Ballard Dog Food 14-15 oz. Red Rosa Tea Bags 60's York smooth Peanut Butter 15 kg.	2/89 2/79 .79 1.59 1.39 2.49 2/89 1.89 2.98	Soft plastic 11 1/2" Saran Wrap 50' Powder for unbleachables Javex 44 oz. Javex trigger bottle Stain-Away 500 ml. Fleecy liquid (prepriced 2.69) Fabric Softener 176 fl. oz. Sealtest Regular 500 g Cottage Cheese Kleenex 2 Roll Pkg. Paper Towels Clover Cream 2 lit. Carton 6 Flavours Ice Cream	.68 2.89 1.49 2.59 .99 1.09 1.19
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### SIGNAL AND CHECK

Signaling a move from one lane to another doesn't guarantee your safety, the Ontario Safety League warns drivers. Check your mirrors to see if the driver behind is heading your signal before you make that lane change or turn.

J. Kohari D.T. J. Novak D.T.

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