

Oxfam's 3-Time Veteran Still Walks for Health, Happiness

When Georgetown's senior "road runner" Charlie Burns left last year to become a Halton County Centennial Manor resident he took his walking shoes with him. The nimble octogenarian, who frequently takes a stroll back to town was the subject of a news feature by Roy Downs in the Milton Champion recently. It's reprinted below.

Charlie Burns says "I would rather wear out than rust out." And so he walks for a hobby, walks for his health, and walks to keep his mind active.

To a young man, a 15 mile a day walk, seven days a week might be considered some form of penance. But it's not penance to 83 year old Charlie, it's LIFE to him. Sometimes known as "The Happy Wanderer" often dubbed the "Dean of Pedestrians" and frequently scoffed at as a fool, Charlie Burns is a resident of Halton Centennial Manor in Milton. But he doesn't spend much time in the Manor — he spends most of his days walking around the roads of Halton County.

INSIDE IN WINTER

In summer and fall, his favourite seasons, the footloose octogenarian completes a 15 mile walk in about five hours every day of the week, fair weather or foul. During the winter he stays inside and walks up and down the corridors of the expansive Manor complex for hours on end, just to keep himself in shape. There's one long underground tunnel which connects the Pettit and Martin Houses at the Manor and on a cold winter's day you're apt to find Charlie walking up and down that tunnel for hours on end. Walking is a way of life to Charlie Burns. "It's good for a person if they are able to do it," he claims. "When I came here to the Manor nine months ago, my doctor said I was in better shape than the average 50 year old."

"Walking gives you a grand feeling. I tell the ladies it will put a bloom in their cheek if they will only do more walking. When I get up in the morning, I feel like a boy."

DOESN'T SMOKE, DRINK

"I wouldn't take a million dollars for my health," he asserts. And for an 83 year old, Charlie is certainly in excellent health. He doesn't eat very heavily and says he only needs about five hours' sleep at night, and he has never smoked or drunk all his life.

Anyone can cultivate a good habit "if they're not lazy," he says.

Born in England May 11, 1888 he was the son of a man who daily walked five miles to work and once a year took the 80 mile London to Brighton walk which is an old British tradition.

Mr. Burns came to Canada 74 years ago and spent 56 years of his life in North Bay where he operated a catering company. He retired 18 years ago and moved to Georgetown a few years ago to be closer to his sons who live in Bramalea and Georgetown. Nine months ago he moved to the Manor.

ARTHRITIS CURE

A friend told him walking would cure his arthritis about 30 years ago, so he took up the hobby in earnest and claims it rid him of the arthritis. Besides he likes walking — "if I didn't

Jurors' \$10 Fee Too Small

A Halton grand jury report released last week recommends increasing pay for persons serving as jurors for the supreme court and general assizes. They are currently paid \$10 a day and a travel allowance of 10 cents a mile.

The report also made note of poor library and recreation facilities in the county jail in Milton. Fire risks were also pointed out as being a hazard at the jail and the grand jury asked the matter be investigated.

The jury had no suggestions to make concerning improvements at the county buildings.

BRIDGE CLUB

Syd Heller and Tom Warnes topped 3 teams of East-West players last week at Georgetown duplicate bridge club, with Jim Kallil and Bill Wandel heading the north-south division.

In East-West Jim Sargent and Mrs. George Walker were second; Mrs. Nellie Goldham and Mrs. Ern Hyde third and Art Norris and Mrs. Kay Harner fourth.

North-South: 2nd, Mrs. Sue Sullivan & Mrs. Leo Klismakier; 3rd, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Biehn; 4th, Mike Lorusso and Harry Artico.

like it, I wouldn't do it. When you like a thing you can do it much better," he explains.

Although his usual daily average is 15 miles, recent wet weather has kept him down to 13 miles a day. But the better weather ahead means he'll soon be back to his 15 a day clip. "It's a small day when you don't walk 15 miles," he added.

The Manor's happy wanderer has never owned or driven a car. "I always preferred walking." He doesn't exactly hate the automobile, he just never found he needed one.

Modern traffic keeps him on his toes, as he does all his walking on highways and sidewalks. "I walk on the left side, facing the traffic at all times," says Charlie. "I walk with safety, speed and splendour."

ONE STEP AWAY

He tries to be as careful as he can when he's walking along heavily travelled roads. "I keep my head up and my mind in tune with the fact that I'm only a step away from annihilation," he says. And he's never had an accident yet.

"Mentally" Charlie rambles on, "I can enjoy many things when I am walking. My feet beat out some old melody of a tune. People ask me what I see in walking, well, I say it isn't given to you to see what I see. The birds pay me tribute and I watch the wheat, the corn and the barley swaying in the summer breeze." He also sees mail boxes, hundreds of them, and he pays attention to the names on them. On one district road he can rhyme off the names of the owners of the mailboxes, a dozen in a row, while sitting in a chair in the Manor's lounge.

"I'm great on observations," he adds, "I have almost an indelible memory and I make it a point to observe these things."

NO MORE OXFAM

Charlie's a veteran of three OXFAM "miles for millions" walks from the Brampton district, and he completed all three 30 mile walks in about nine hours. His feat three years in succession raised over \$700 for the fund. But he's not going back this year. Seems the OXFAM committee promised to give him an award after his third time around, but they never showed up with it. Charlie tries to be modest, but he feels that an 80 year old should be recognized for going the whole OXFAM route three years in a row, while many younger men dropped out before the finish.

One year he even went the walkabout route twice. He struck out on the Saturday before the big walk and went the 30 mile distance, "just to see where the walk was going to take me." He liked the scenery.

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so he went back the next Saturday and walked it again, this time for money.

OUT BY 8:30 A.M.

Normal daily schedule sees the Manor's most active resident up at 6:30 or 7 and out on the roads by 8:30 a.m. His morning jaunts usually take him to places like Hornby, Campellville, Lowville, Ashgrove or Kelso. In the summer months he likes to walk to Acton or Georgetown. Sometimes he returns to the Manor for lunch, sometimes he just keeps walking. If he's back for lunch he might have a little snooze after his meal, then strike out for a short walk before supper.

After supper his daily routine is a four mile jaunt around the concession — down Ontario St. west on Derry Road, to the hospital, north on Bronte St. east on Main St., and back home down Ontario St. That's a four mile route and it takes him a little more than an hour. Charlie says he always walks at the same speed, three miles an hour. "I can tell how far I've walked by the time," he smiles.

People often stop and offer him a ride, but he never accepts unless the weather is too foul for walking.

FAVOURITE SHOES

He always wears his "wallabies" Irish-made shoes with a sponge sole. His favourite socks are nylon. He makes sure he



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dresses for the weather and in summer usually carries a nylon jacket in case of a squall. On his head, which is covered by a full crop of white hair, he plunks a light cap like a golfer's cap.

A friend once asked him to go walking on the Bruce Trail, but Mr. Burns refused. He prefers good hard-packed gravel on the shoulders of the road, to the rough and uneven ground of a country trail through the bush.

There are a few doubters who don't believe the octogenarian can walk 15 or 30 miles in a day. But Charlie just smiles at them and invites them to follow him around the next day. Needless to say, he doesn't get any takers on such an offer.

Jack Charlton, assistant superintendent at the Manor, sums up Charlie's walking hobby with one final tribute: "Burns walks 15 miles a day, and when he gets tired, he runs."

\$10,000 In, Army Hopes To Reach \$18,000 Goal

Between 500 and 600 canvassers blitzed Brampton, Georgetown and Bramalea last week to collect funds for the Salvation Army's Red Shield Appeal. Captain K. D. Moore of the Salvation Army said the overall campaign has brought in some \$10,000 as of Monday. He said that fewer than half of the canvassers from the blitz had turned in their money.

OPTIMISTIC

He said he is optimistic about reaching the campaign's target figure of \$18,000, the amount the army say it needs to carry on its services to the people of this area.

Workers involved in the blitz have already turned in \$4,000 and Capt. Moore expects to receive at least that much from the remainder of the canvassers. The remaining \$4,000 will come, he says, from the mail-out campaign to the rural areas and apartments and from solicitations from business and industry in the area.

The campaign was to have ended at the end of May but Capt. Moore says it always ends early in June when the last of the donations come in.

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SWISS CHOCOLATE CHIP 15 OZ. DIGESTIVE 16 OZ. SHORTCAKE 16 OZ. **45¢**

SUPER BUY

LOBLAWS KITCHEN PRIDE RAISIN BREAD 2 16 OZ. 49¢

SUPER BUY

WESTON'S FROST 'N SERVE SHORTCAKE 9 OZ. PKG. **41¢**

SUPER BUY

ORANGE OR ASSORTED PKG OF 12 POPSICLES **69¢**

SUPER BUY

HOSTESS CUSTARD SQUARES 12 OZ. PKG. **35¢**

SUPER BUY

LOBLAWS KITCHEN PRIDE APPLE PIE 24 OZ. PKG. **39¢**

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VILLAGE PURE VEGETABLE OIL 32 FL. OZ. BTL. **69¢**

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