

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

### Co-operative Effort

Start of a comprehensive plan to provide adequate parking in the downtown commercial area is evident from the activity going on behind one block of Main Street stores.

The area, which runs from the McGibbon Hotel to the Norton building, has been hard surfaced, and when it is completed will have directional markings to include many more cars than currently use it in a helter-skelter fashion.

Georgetown Parking Authority, which is heading the project, has a long-range project of providing parking behind all four sections of Main Street, with this as the first stage.

Unfortunately, a by-law which would have imposed a compulsory tax on land owners in the defined area, has run into technical obstacles.

The Parking Authority has now decided to campaign for funds on a voluntary basis, with the hope that it will receive one hundred percent co-operation from those involved.

Each property owner has been assessed a

percentage of his business assessment, with the idea that this is the fairest way, for all businesses will benefit from the parking.

It is obvious that, with shopping plazas providing free parking, that the downtown area cannot continue to prosper without similar facilities.

The Parking Authority is quite aware that there can be jealousies among individuals, and that some may say one section of the downtown is deriving more benefit than another.

However, it would be impossible to plunge into a full-scale scheme for equal facilities at one time, and the Authority is confident that all merchants, when they assess the advantages, will pay their share of the assessment. The "half a loaf" adage holds true in this case for merchants in the other three Main Street sections, and with the guarantee that the other half will come later, only a very short-sighted person would turn down the plan.

### Good Switch

The weatherman may have done Georgetown a favour when the planned May 24 celebration was rained out.

So successful was the delayed program on July 1, that consideration is now being given to making this a permanent change.

The idea has much merit.

Even so august a personage as Queen Victoria cannot be publicly remembered forever, and Victoria Day has lost much of its significance with each passing generation.

Dominion Day, or Canada Day as it has come to be known, is a much more suitable time for celebration. Once a special holiday, with special attractions, it has fallen into

limbo for several years. This year's fireworks and festivities have done much to put it back in perspective.

There is still one factor which could be easily remedied by the federal government.

July 1 is the only holiday which still is officially proclaimed on the actual day.

Modern technology does not easily allow factories to cease production in mid-week, and most switch to a Friday or Monday for the day off.

We suggest that, like other national holidays, July 1 be proclaimed on the nearest Friday or Monday to the date.

But, whatever the date, let's replace our May 24 with July 1 for our celebration.

### Better Remembrance

While on the subject of switching days, we have thought, as we shivered outdoors on a cold November 11, that a much more suitable time of year could be chosen for Remembrance Day.

Here again, when this was first instituted, November 11 had a very special significance, marking the end of a world holocaust in which thousands of Canadians died and were maimed for life.

With those who lost their lives in a second World War and in Korea, now included in the remembrance, there is no particular reason now to stick to the November date.

The solemnity of a parade and service at the cenotaph would be that much greater if those on parade and those attending as participants could be under warm, sunny skies.

The Canadian Legion, which includes a large majority of ex-service men and women would be the logical group to campaign for a change.

The Legion, which is interested in the welfare of its members, will realize that, on a cold, blustery day, there is every possibility of a marcher's health suffering. It would be no slur on veterans of World War I if a better season were chosen as a memorial.

### SAFETY TIPS

Here are some automotive statistics for 1970 in Canada quoted by the Ontario Safety League. There is now a licensed motor vehicle for every 2.5 persons. Imports totalled 404,863 automobiles exports, 733,218.

Tests by Goodyear have shown that tires operating under adverse conditions can reach temperatures substantially hotter than boiling water. The Ontario Safety League says that at high speed, under-inflated tires can top 121 degrees centigrade.

Good drivers keep in the middle of their driving lane say to Safety League. It is a sign of careless or inconsiderate driving to crowd or straddle the centre line of a highway.



#### STONE WALL GOING UP

Glen stone mason Gerry Inglis selects the next stone for a retaining wall being built at the north end of the downtown parking lot.

The building of the wall is part of an extensive improvement program which has seen the

lot bordered by Main, Mill, and Back Street hardscoped. White markings will be added to designate the parking spaces.



### PORTRAIT OF SOMEONE PLANNING A HOLIDAY AFTER READING THE NEWS

## Blind Girl Doesn't Want People's Pity

A feature story in the Edmonton Journal tells about Patti Wilson, 18, who is the daughter of Capt. and Mrs. John Wilson, The Wilsons are former town residents and now live in Sherwood Park, Alberta where he is stationed with the Canadian armed forces.

The story, by staff writer Drake McHugh appears below:

Patti Wilson can shatter anyone's pre-conceived ideas about blind people.

Patti, 18, who was born blind, is a Grade 11 student (she calls herself average) at Salsbury Composite High School in Sherwood Park — and, she doesn't want anyone's pity.

Five days a week Patti, like thousands of other Canadian students, wait for a school bus outside her parents' home at East Whitecroft near Sherwood Park. The only thing to distinguish her from the other students is a white cane she carries folded in her pocket in the palm of her hand and perhaps the hesitation when she feels for the first step of the bus with her cane.

On the bus Patti daydreams — there are many young children whose conversations she finds of no concern. It's a good pastime on the bus when there's nothing interesting," she said. Later she expressed reservations about it because, "I feel so ridiculous because they can tell by the look on your face that you're daydreaming."

Patti's no super-girl. She knows it and wouldn't have it any other way. "I don't see any difference between myself and someone who can see," she said. "Some things I can't do, but I don't want anyone thinking I'm really different."

She gives a lot of credit to her mother for not offering her the protection she might so easily have given a blind child. "My mom had me do as much as possible. When I was younger the family tried to keep things off the floor, but I'm not so sure they even do that anymore," she said. However she does have metal measuring spoons at home because when baking she must be able to measure exactly, and measuring a half cup of flour, for instance, in a cup measure is difficult.

Patti is a class representative at her school and writes for the school newspaper but just the way she tells you about these accomplishments, makes you realize that she doesn't consider them outstanding.

Patti is a rock music fan who occasionally listens to classical music. Soul music by The Four Tops and The Supremes head her list of favorite entertainers.

She talks lucidly about her scrap book on American space flights and how she is considered "the boy of the family" because of her passion for double A dragsters and Can-Am series cars.

Patti takes these pastimes seriously. "I take what people tell me about something and add my conception of what it should look like. It's hard to imagine a rocket 365 feet high," she says. In addition she plays the piano and knits.

She tells about her dog Taffy and two horses she has at home. "If someone goes with me I can be convinced to go riding," she said, but basically she prefers the dog. "I throw things for him and he brings them back."

Patti's best subject is typing. She has taken physical education although not this year. She wants to be a secretary and claims there are no disadvantages to being blind. "You

just have to learn to cope in a different way." She types with the rest of her class but uses ear phones plugged to a tape-recorder to listen to dictation rather than reading from a book as the other students do.

Patti impresses you with her buoyant spirit. She came to the school two years ago when it opened. "It was a bit hard in the halls (moving between classes) when I didn't know the school but I wasn't alone thank goodness. The school was new and nobody knew their way around."

She does become discouraged at times. "Not in public, but sometimes when someone starts showing sympathy." (She never uses the word "pity".)

There's no harm in someone offering you assistance. If you

need it and refuse it you might look foolish. It bothers me that people think I am helpless. Sometimes people want to help with something you can do. The problem is how to tell them what you can do without hurting their feelings."

Patti says she does not base her view on the sound of a person's voice "only by their remarks. I don't like sarcasm at all," she said.

Patti has worked as a packager for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind in the summer months. Although last year she couldn't find a job, she leaves you with the impression that this year will be different — better.

The Black Forest is in Germany.

### THE DISTRICT AT A GLANCE

**MILTON VEToes FLUORIDATION**  
MILTON — Fluoridation of the town's water supply has been rejected by council. The move to fluoridate was suggested by Dr. J.H. Chamberlain, medical officer of health for Halton County and Dr. S.M. Green, dental director for the Halton County Health Unit. "We shouldn't add anything to our water," said Councillor Art Melanson and other councillors agreed. "I wonder why they don't insist that milk be fluoridated," Councillor Charles Johnson said.

**STILL NO POST OFFICE**  
BRAMALEA — Residents of Bramalea are still without their own post office and so far no definite announcement has been made as to when they will get one. "There is a definite need in Bramalea for wicket services," said James Martin, assistant postmaster for Brampton. Liberal member of Parliament for Peel North, Bruce Beer, promised a post office for Bramalea in his campaign preceding the last federal election.

**TRUCK BAN COMING**  
BRAMPTON — Mayor James Archdekin said this week that truck traffic will be legislated off Main Street of Brampton even if a special session of council has to be called. Following up on a bomb shell he dropped at a committee meeting Wednesday night he said he aims to see that heavy truck traffic is "definitely" banned from Main Street. He said the steel structures of the old creek bed running under Main Street have deteriorated seriously.

**WILL DISPLAY OLD PLANES**  
VICTORIA — Members of the Brampton Flying Club hope to establish the first aircraft museum of First World War aircraft in Ontario. There will be 20 air-craft involved, said Roy Sage, vice-president of the club. The proposed museum would be at the site of the present club facilities. A 35 acre site west of the airstrip has been set aside. Initial cost of the museum is expected to be \$300,000.

**VOLUNTEERS RUN COUNTRY CLUB**  
OAKVILLE — Operation of Oakville Country Club has been taken over by volunteers after the club manager and owner of the downtown property skipped out. The big social club which has been having difficulties since it was started 12 years ago, has two large mortgages outstanding and two are in default. It is estimated that membership in the club is between 2,500 and 3,000. It is expected the club's directors will now sell the property.

**NO TOWNSHIP TAX RELIEF**  
NASSAGAWEYA — There is no education tax relief in sight for Nassagaweya ratepayers as talks with Robert Welch, Ontario minister of education fail to bring concessions. Township officials spoke to the minister in June to discuss what they felt to be unjust tax rates. For the second consecutive year, residents will fork out for increased education taxes. The rate, up over seven mills last year, jumps another 5.38 mills this year.

**STORE BYLAW CONTROVERSY**  
ORANGEVILLE — A new closing bylaw passed last week allows Orangeville storekeepers to open their doors until 9 o'clock Thursday and Friday nights with 9 to 6 hours in effect Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday. Monday is a closed day. "I give it 18 months," was one councillor's comment. "The majority of businessmen will then want to be open six days a week." One thing seems certain. The near future will see more demands, more controversies about the closing hours and more changes in the bylaw.

**IT WASN'T MARIJUANA**  
ROCKWOOD — Serious concern was allayed when the Guelph OPP announced its findings on a weed, suspected of being marijuana, which grows heartily in the Rockwood Conservation Park. Several strangers carrying large plastic bags were seen copying great quantities of the plant. Investigation by the RCMP and OPP through the University of Guelph lab technicians revealed however that the foliage was not the narcotic hemp plant but a common weed bearing a strong resemblance to marijuana.

**THREATEN TO REMOVE FENCE**  
ACTON — Residents of Acton's Lakeview subdivision disputing the right of an Elizabeth Street resident to fence off a walkway which connects the subdivision with Prospect Park were involved in two separate incidents with Ted Bankiewicz and police. No charges were laid but some adults and children threatened to tear down the newly erected fence. Ownership of the walkway is in dispute.

## BILL SMILEY

### Pioneers for Kissin' Cousins

By doing a little mathematics, I've come to the conclusion that I must be related to half the population of Canada.

I've just received a small booklet compiled by my uncle, Ivan C. Thomson of Ottawa. It sets forth the genealogy of my maternal ancestors in Canada.

Some people find their ancestors a huge bore. Others are afraid of skeletons in the closet. I find ancestors fascinating, as I try to picture them, think of the incredibly difficult lives they led, and wonder what characteristics I and my children have received from them.

My uncle's booklet is no high-coloured romance. It deals in facts: births, deaths, names, property titles. But among the pages of the occasional laconic comment which makes me wish I could leap back into the 19th century and explore further.

My maternal great-grandparents were certainly not of the aristocracy. He was a ship's carpenter, and that's one reason he, Walter Thomson and she, Margaret Farrell, his new bride, set out from Donegal, Ireland, for St. John, New Brunswick, where there was a ship-building industry. He was 20, she 19. It was 1834.

Within a few years, with three children, they moved to Upper Canada, because Walter had heard of work to be obtained in the building of slides on the Upper Ottawa River.

These slides were built for the lumbering business which was skimming the cream from the stands of wonderful pine in the area. The purpose of the slides was to allow the cribs and rafts of square timber to by-pass rapids. The timber was floated down the river, eventually to reach Quebec. Some of the great rafts were half a mile long.

In 1847, great-grandfather Thomson was appointed Slide Master of Grand Calumet Island in the Ottawa River. He held the position for more than 30 years, to be succeeded by his son William, my grand-father, who was to reign until the last raft of square timber came down the river in 1910.

That's the background. My mother's family attended a one-room school, boarded the teacher for \$45 a year. My uncle Ivan had a good job. He went to the school early in fall and winter, and lit the fire. He got \$3.00 a year. My grand-father got \$1.00 a day for his government position as Slide Master. Pay ceased when the navigation season ended, so the Master had to farm as well. There were ten in the family, and from what I've heard, they had a happy life on the island.

As a child, I saw the old homestead high on a hill overlooking the mighty Ottawa, and was thrilled.

But as I said, while the facts in the book are interesting, it's the little asides that inflame the curiosity.

The original family of Walter Thomson was eight children. They produced, among them, exactly 60 more Thomsons. Today, eight might produce 16. Anna married James Paul. They had four children. "She also raised Johnnie Robertson." Now there's a story in itself. Who was Johnnie? Why did she raise him? What became of him?

John (Mountain Jack) was a lumber cruiser and a real bruiser in the lumber-jack clashes of the times. "He had a terrible temper and was known up and down the Ottawa River as a scraper." He died at 91, a pretty ripe age for a brawler who also sired 15 children in two marriages.

Catherine "married George Kemp who was very fond of the liquor". No other comment, except naming their children, with the last thus: "Jason was drowned at Temiskaming."

Another son, Walter, had nine children. My grand-father William had ten. A son James had eleven. The youngest daughter, Jane, must have realized that even such a good thing as Thomsons could go too far, produced only two.

Anyone who can multiply can see why I have so many relations. The original two had grown to 60 in two generations. Heaven knows how many the 60 produced.

But I'd really like to go back and talk to some of the old-timers. They were virile people in more ways than one.

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