

People on the On The Inside

'Let's see Doc Williams'

By Gerry Landsborough

It's a Saturday night, and you've hitched up the buggy and arrived in town to do your weekly shopping and take in the picture show. It's 11:30 the show's out and perhaps someone ought to take a look at Billy's sore throat.

"Let's go see Doc" and away you go. Chances are that the "Doc" in question might just happen to be Dr. Claude V. Williams who practised in Georgetown for 44 years beginning in 1922. Those were the days when a doctor was expected to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including Sunday.

Claude Williams is a distinguished, handsome looking man. His hair is silver gray with a matching moustache. His appearance is as neat as a pin with that certain air of dignity. His carriage would make many a younger man look twice with a twinge of envy. He has a smooth almost peaches and cream complexion with nary a wrinkle, sparked by bright, twinkling eyes filled with merriment, with a quick wit to match; all of which belie the fact he is just two years away from his eightieth birthday.

"Both the times and medicine have changed a lot since the early days," said Dr. Williams. Back then a doctor might spend a whole afternoon making one or two housecalls. People didn't make appointments, the doctor posted his hours and would see patients until the waiting room was emptied.

"Why I recall one time in the winter when I had to make a house call out in Terra Cotta. I was driving the old Model 'T'. I made it up Stirrat's Hill (the steep hill on the 22nd Sideroad) with the old car slipping and sliding and I thought I was well on my way till I arrived at the steep hill leading down to Terra Cotta. It appeared to be a solid sheet of ice.

"I went into the old Rutledge farm and asked for a board large enough for me and my little black bag. That's right, I was going to slide to the bottom. That was the only way I could think of to get there."

"Well Wes Rutledge wouldn't hear of it. He had a horse with corked shoes and we started off in the buggy. The horse would go a few feet and the buggy would jack-knife right up beside the horse's ears. The old horse didn't seem to mind though, and believe it or not that's how we got to the bottom."

Like most doctors back then Dr. Williams bottled many of his own stock medicines. People would ask for the "red medicine" (which was probably cough syrup) and the doctor would pour some out from a big gallon jug and cork it. "People often believed that the 'Doc's' medicine was better than what you got at the drugstore," he said with a wide grin.

Dr. Williams was known for his love of children and is remembered as a kind and knowledgeable man. He always kept up on the latest methods and yet he still found time to teach courses as the Medical Officer of Health, a post he held for 30 years that paid the sum of \$100 per year.

He recalled that many babies were born at home though he preferred hospital delivery. The fee for an obstetric case was

about \$15. "I often picked up the expectant mother and drove them into Brampton Hospital which was then only a converted two-storey house."

"The case room was on the second floor and there were no elevators. The patient was taken up on a stretcher," he recalled.

Dr. Williams always had a secret wish to be a pediatrician, the chosen field of two of his brothers. The Williams were an exceptional family, though Dr. Williams modestly insists that they just did what was expected of them.

"Father was a clergyman who was very scholarly and it was just expected that we would be the same," he said. Of the seven children in the Williams family Dr. Williams has two brothers who are pediatricians, one a dentist, another is an accountant and a sister is a school teacher.

"I remember one time when the family was sitting at the dinner table and a knock came at the door and the chap wanted to speak to Dr. Williams. Father—a quick wit—asked if he wanted 'Soul, feet or teeth?' We've got them all," he said with a hearty laugh.

Of his recollections of the "old days" he remembers a close-knit town. Billy Marshall was the Chief of Police of a force of one, Bill Marshall.

"There wasn't any crime," Dr. Williams recalled. "About the worst thing that would happen was someone might take a beer too many on a Saturday night." The Chief would just pat him on the back and suggest that he go home and sleep it off, and the whole incident would be overlooked. "I don't recall that he ever put anyone in jail," he said.

All the emergency medical cases or the very serious ones were sent to Guelph or to Toronto to the large hospitals. Guelph was the more popular because it was the closest. Patients were bundled up and sent away in the baggage car, after signing a sheet absolving the railroad of any responsibility.

Dr. Williams recalled he sometimes sent patients to Toronto on the "radial car". This was an electric rail-system that is remembered to have run one time which looked and felt like the old streetcars.

The radial station was where Canada Trust are now, and there are still bits of track to be seen along the old routes.

Though medicine has changed to this age of the specialist, Dr. Williams is glad to see the return of importance to the practice of family medicine.

"Though I appreciate the need of the specialist, I am glad to see the return of interest in a good family practitioner who knows the patient's background and medical history," he said.

Dr. Williams is remembered by many as a humble man, kind, and distinguished, a man who practised medicine tirelessly, and with a deep sense of dedication.

Since his retirement he and his wife Audrey spend much of their time working on the beautiful gardens that surround their home.

A much deserved rest for a man who is highly respected, and warmly remembered by so many.



Field trip

URBAN STUDY students Jennifer Elliot, Carol Mertens, Cathy Boase, Ann McLellan, Susan Warecki and Mark Alexander from George Vanier Secondary School in North York spent a day studying the town, its development and growth pattern with teacher Barrie Humphreys.

Registration

The Girl Guides of Canada—Georgetown East will be holding registration for the 6th Girl Guide Company on Monday, September 29 at George Kennedy School.

Registration fees are to be paid at that time and all girls must be accompanied by a parent.

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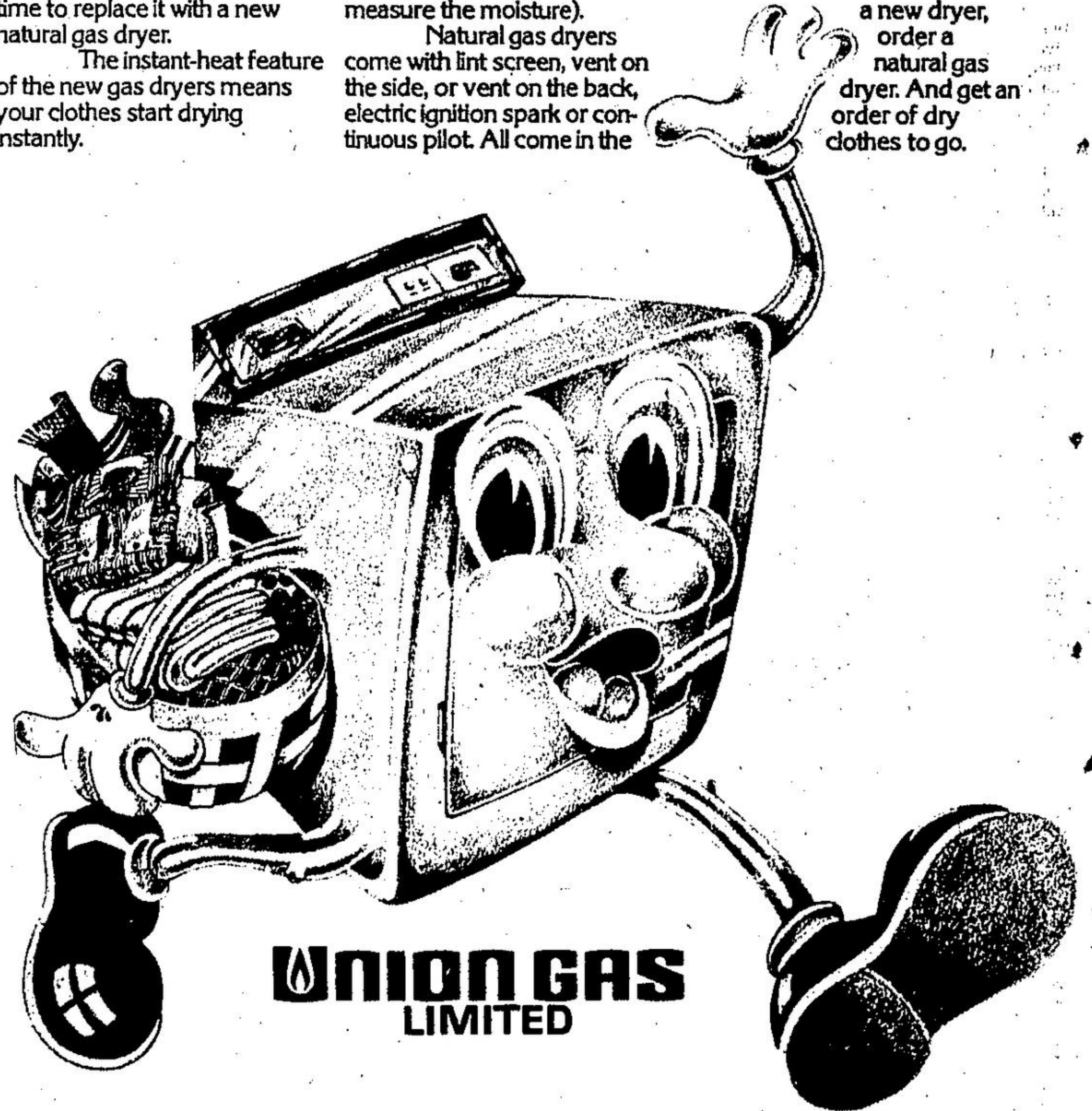
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UNION GAS LIMITED

Ready for October sale

Thirty members attended the September meeting of the Arts and Crafts of Georgetown at the home of Mrs. Evelyn Charles on Thursday afternoon.

President Dorothy Goodwin paid tribute to Mrs. Bea Clark, recently named a Justice of the Peace, to Mrs. Charlotte Ironside, first lady chosen to officially open Georgetown Fall Fair, and to Mrs. Ruth Camplin for being invited to participate in a gallery exhibition in Brampton.

Regret was expressed at the July passing of Mrs. Lee Gillis, a former member and an ardent weaver. The departure of the past president, Mrs. Helen Agg, for her new home at Qualicum Beach, V.I., is deemed a great loss to the group. Sympathy was extended to several members in whose homes there is illness.

The outdoor luncheon in June at the home of Mrs. Pat Beer proved to be such an enjoyable occasion that by unanimous approval it is to become an annual event.

Plans were finalized for the October exhibition and sale with demonstrations scheduled for enamelling on steel, macramé, mobiles, sand

painting and illuminating.

A dainty but bounteous lunch was served by the hostess assisted by Mrs. Dorothy Brandford, Mrs. Ann Lidbury,

Mrs. Pat Beer and Miss Laura Treble. President, Dorothy Goodwin, expressed the group's pleasure for the hospitality enjoyed.

THE ANNUAL MUNICIPAL ENUMERATION IS UNDER WAY

The annual municipal enumeration began on Friday, September 19, 1975 and will continue this week. This municipal enumeration is separate and distinct from the recent provincial enumeration which was conducted for the provincial election. During the week, an enumerator, carrying a proper identification card, will call at your residence for a few minutes to check basic information required in determining:

- the allocation of education property taxes between the public and separate school systems;
- the distribution of provincial grants to local governments to help reduce local tax bills;
- the preparation of jurors' lists; and
- population information needed for other municipal programs.

The enumerator must record such information as the name, age, property status (e.g. owner or tenant), school support and residency of all members of the household.

When the enumerator visits, please check that the information on the Enumeration Notice is correct. If it is not, revise it and verify the changes.

If you are not home, a Notice will be left for you. If changes are necessary, please make them and mail the Enumeration Notice in the self addressed postage prepaid envelope accompanying the Notice. For any additional information, please contact the local assessment office.



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