



THE CAR THAT FLEW Susan Frawley and Colin Gibson, Herald Sports editor, view the side of a parked car. Susan was unhurt car the tornado picked up six feet into the air, spun around three times and smashed into the side of a parked car. Susan was unhurt and Colin escaped with minor injuries.

TORNADO STRIKES !

Couple uninjured during the ride of a lifetime

A tornado Saturday lifted up a sports car with Herald sports editor Colin Gibson and his fiancée Susan Frawley in it and flung the car 12 feet across Main Street.

Witnesses said the car was swung twice around about six feet in the air before it was flung into an unoccupied parked car across the street.

Gibson, who is getting married Thursday, was treated for cuts to his face, elbow and knee. Miss Frawley was shaken but otherwise unharmed.

"We were mesmerized," Gibson said, recalling the incident that took from three to four seconds.

Reel Ranjit, 8 Noble Cres., was an eyewitness ten feet away from the Gibson's sports car, he said.

"When I looked, the car was in mid air," Ranjit said, "about three feet high. I saw it turn around about three times—round and round."

Ranjit said that at the time he did not know anyone was in the car.

He said that he and his wife and small child were huddling in a doorway next to a plate glass window. "We got worried. Luckey the window didn't break," Ranjit said.

The tornado touched down at approximately 3:30 p.m. in the vicinity of Ann and Ontario Streets and travelled in a south westerly direction to the area of Maple Avenue and Parkview Boulevard before it disappeared, leaving damages in its wake estimated at up to \$100,000, police say.

Gibson said he had parked his sports car in the centre of Main Street to buy a paper and he and Miss Frawley were on the way back to the car "when the sky got very, very dark."

"STORM COMING"
"Susan said, 'We'd better hurry,'" Gibson said, "...there's a storm coming." Once inside the convertible, which had its top up, a heavy downpour



THIS UTILITY POLE was sheared off by the tornado when it struck downtown Georgetown at 3:30 p.m. Saturday.

started, "and I thought, we're lucky," Gibson said. "Then we heard the wind pick up and saw birds and leaves going up in it."

"It was really strange," Gibson said, describing his first sight of the tornado about halfway down the hill between Main Street South and Guelph Street. "There was a blackness in it," he said.

"It was funnel-shaped, just like you see on TV," he said.

"We saw a big tree pulled straight up in the air a few feet, then a woman thrown

"I figured at first when the roof went off that we were going to get hit by something, or by glass, but luckily we didn't," Miss Frawley said.

At the top of Main Street hill the birds were blown "straight up into the air", she added.

FINE DIRT
An odd after effect of the brush with the tornado was fine black dust which covered both him and Susan, Gibson said. "We had to wash our ears out three or four times to get them clean."

Stories and Photos

by
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across the street," he said. Then a telephone pole "snapped" and "then next thing we heard was the sound of crashing glass. The funnel shaped thing was there."

The car began vibrating and then there was a feeling of weightlessness, Gibson said.

LOOKED UP AND SAW WHITE
"I looked up and all I could see was white," he said. "The next thing—bang, we hit the other car." The unoccupied car is owned by Bill Kavanagh.

On their way to cover, after leaving the car, said Gibson, "we were blown off our feet into a doorway. Then someone pushed open the door of Towne Sewing and pulled us in."

"We didn't think we had been in the air," Gibson said. It was only later after talking to an eyewitness that he and Sue learned their car had been about six feet off the ground and had spun around twice.

"It happened so fast," Gibson said. "You had a feeling of utter helplessness. There was nothing you could do."

He said if the sports car had not hit the parked car, owned by Bill Kavanagh, it would have gone through a plate glass window.

Damage to the Gibson car is estimated at between \$800 and \$1,000.

The soft top of the sports car was torn off and found 200 feet down Main Street, Gibson said. His guitar, with its neck broken and the case "completely torn open," was found 100 feet up Main Street, he said. Two vegetable crispets that were in the car simply vanished.

Also lost was a baseball score book. "It could be in Cuba," Gibson said.

When the tornado struck there were few people on the street. "It was practically deserted although afterward they came out of the woodwork."

The street being deserted saved people from being cut to ribbons by flying glass, he said. "If anybody had been standing out there, they would have been cut by so much glass that was flying around."

The tornado was "the weirdest thing I've seen in my life," he said.

"I wouldn't want to see a thing like that again."

On Saturday night "we were shook up," he said. It really hit us then as to what we'd gone through...the utter helplessness, the bang, then the quiet."

"Susan said she's not going to the Ex for a roller coaster ride this year," he said.

"If it had been 20 feet away, it would have missed us."

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

In-Sight a conference exploring alternative lifestyles for women, will be held Oct. 2 at Sheridan College's Oakville campus. One of the special guest speakers is Laura Sabia, former chairman of the Ontario Status of Women Council. This week Miss Sabia meets with other conference organizers to plan the day-long program.



INDIAN PAINT is being splashed on Andy Timleck by friends at Park playground (left to right) Laura Everett, leader-in-training Sue Doernback and Kathy Wates during Indian theme week.

Freak "baby" tornado a rarity: Weatherman

The tornado which ripped through Georgetown Saturday was "just a baby compared to real tornado," says Michael Newark, a supervising meteorologist with the Environment Canada at Malton.

He said wind speeds for tornadoes travel from 250 to 600 miles per hour but he could not say what the wind speed was in Saturday's because "it would only be a guess."

"It's not often a tornado passes over a win measuring device," Newark said. "If it does, it usually knocks it out."

The mechanics of Saturday's tornado are, not typical, he said.

The motion was from north

east to south west and tornadoes "usually travel in the other direction," he said. It was a "left-handed rather than a right-handed tornado," an uncommon occurrence he added.

Newark who came to Georgetown Saturday evening to view the tornado's damage, will write a report on the unusual tornado for a meteorologists journal.

Newark interviewed Herald sports editor, Colin Gibson who while in the eye of the tornado glanced up and saw the streaked white interior. Newark said people who have survived the eye of a tornado are rare.

"It's like somebody coming back from the dead," Newark said. He said there is no ex-

planation why the tornado is white in the centre.

Newark said it is usually impossible to warn individual places of the onset of a tornado. Predictions of tornadoes or severe storms are made on a county-sized area, he said.

A severe storm tornado warning was out that day for the Niagara Peninsula, Newark said. Radar was monitoring a cold front from Haliburton to Lake Simcoe to the Malton weather station.

"The top of the storm was quite low," Newark said. "On that particular day we did not have warnings out."

"The cause of the one you had was the way the wind was behaving in the upper atmosphere," Newark explained. At a lower level the

air was circulating in a north easterly direction and above that it was circulating in a north westerly direction, he said. Higher still it was going in a south westerly direction.

"It just seemed to optimize over your part of the squall," Newark said.

He said the tornado formed about three miles outside of Georgetown and its total path was about four miles before it lifted off and blew away.

Newark said that compared to the United States, tornadoes are infrequent in southwest Ontario because of the cool water of the Great Lakes. "But you can usually expect a few."

Environment Canada does not keep official records of tornadoes, he said.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Ford dealer comments on Herald news story

To the editor of The Herald:

I have never known a disagreement which didn't have two sides. Mr. Beoney of the Rusty Ford Association has skillfully publicized his. However, as the Ford Dealer in Georgetown and a former employee of Ford of Canada, I believe it is time for a little perspective to be brought to bear on the rusting of cars which is of interest to all motorists.

I will trade in facts rather than emotion because facts are stubborn things.

Fact one is that nobody as yet has invented a car that won't rust. The more salt which is spread on the highways, the sooner that process is likely to occur. Yet the amount of salt we put on Canadian roads has almost tripled in the last 10 years. Calcium Chloride, which is used liberally on secondary roads during the summer to control dust, is considerably more damaging than salt. Therefore, we have little relief from the chemicals which aggravate this rust situation.

Fact two comes from a Federal Ministry of Transport study by Mr. Roger H. Poltras which calculated that corrosion caused by salt cost the average Canadian car owner \$100.00 per year. If that is true, all motorists are facing the same problem as Mr. Beoney—not just Ford owners.

So do some cars rust faster than others? For fact three let me quote an article from The Toronto Star relative to rust. Len Coates, their Automotive Writer, said in his column on July 24th, 1978 "A consumer magazine survey of almost 250,000 readers indicates, that Fords are no worse—perhaps even a bit better—than other North American cars." The magazine was the April issue of Consumer Reports and I have a copy in my office for any caller to examine.

Or let me quote from the July 20th, 1978 issue of "Wheelspin" the specialist newspaper for dedicated auto enthusiasts: "Ford has been taking a real kicking with claims of premature rusting and thanks to an

automotive illiterate press, is in the rust doghouse right now. Chevs, Apsens and Volvos rust just as quickly folks."

Of course some cars rust more quickly than others but it isn't a matter of make, it is a matter of care. Fact four is that the owner who looks after his vehicle will have a better chance of keeping it rust-free.

My advice to anyone, whatever car they have, is to wash it frequently, taking care to hose down the underside as well as the exterior; keep it polished; touch up paint chips from flying stones and make sure the drain holes are not blocked. Automobiles are exposed to the environment continually, a little care will add years to their life expectancy.

Having now traded some facts, permit me to add one opinion. This is the age of the Pressure Groups and I worry sometimes about the way in which this New Found Power is used. Mr. Beoney and his consumers group have performed at least one useful social service. They have helped to get some Government attention to the damage which salt causes, not just to cars, but to bridges, highways, vegetation—even fresh water.

I am sorry that to achieve this, Mr. Beoney and his fellow consumer activists picked Ford as a target and in fact have ridden roughshod over the reputation of a Company which I am proud to represent here in Georgetown. It is a pity that their actions could risk lowering the Resale Value of cars, if they continue their publicity campaign as they threaten.

I believe, that the great majority of people are still fair minded enough to judge for themselves, based upon their own experience and will do so in this case.

I am grateful that The Georgetown Herald was prepared to publish a letter which isn't dramatic, abrasive or controversial, but just seeks to put the record a little straighter.

Yours Sincerely,
North Halton Motor Sales Limited,
J. M. Gordon,
President.

MERCURY

Ford

JAMES GORDON