



# PIONEER DAYS DOWNTOWN GEORGETOWN

## Taxi started in 1937-38

Whitmee's Taxi was the first one in Georgetown. It began in 1937 or 1938 although neither Ray nor Frank are exactly sure of the year.

Walter Whitmee began with a black, four-door Ford, with a soft, rubberized top and curtain to let down over the windows when it rained. Fare was 15 cents.

"Nobody wanted a taxi in those days," Ray chuckles. "Everybody walked. You'd get half way up Norval hill and wonder if you'd make it to the top."

Mr. Whitmee met all the trains hoping for passengers but his sons feel he'd have had more customers if he'd cruised the streets the way taxis do now.

He charged a quarter to go to Norval or Glen Williams and they were his big money-making runs.

"It was a long walk," Ray explains, "so more people are willing to pay for a ride."

In a good day they guess he'd have earned \$1.50.

When Walter Whitmee and his wife arrived from England in 1911 they had four children. They lived in a stone house on the Fourth Line in Esqueping while Walter worked for Fred Brown.

Two or three days later he moved to Georgetown and bought out Barber's Dairy, cows, buildings, equipment, and wagons. That dairy was over on the Barber farm opposite the paper mill dam, Frank says.

They ran the dairy for about 25 years but when Georgetown passed the bylaw requiring pasteurization, Mr. Whitmee decided to get out of the business.

Ray had returned to England by this time, but Frank was with his father and recalls the end of their dairy.

"We bought milk already pasteurized, bottled and in the cases ready for delivery from Peel Dairy," he says. "It was too expensive to get the equipment ourselves, so we tried buying it for a year or less. I went down every day and got it and delivered it."

"One funny thing regarding the pasteurization was that Dr. McAllister wouldn't let his kids have pasteurized milk," Frank says. "He seemed to think it was a fad that would pass. So long as the herds had been tested for tuberculosis he thought that was good enough. He used to go up to Cleaves to get his milk rather than have it pasteurized."

The taxi business followed the closing of the dairy even if no one is sure of the exact date.



When they arrived from England the Whitmee family consisted of Walter and his wife Sussannah, and four of their six children, (l. to r.) Dalay Conole, Frank and Ray.

There was no insurance on passengers when Whitmee's taxi began running. Nor was there any service on Sunday except for special occasions like taking the minister to church in Limehouse. Taxis didn't run on Christmas Day, although they would have gone on New Year's Ray says.

Mr. Whitmee had competition from Palmer McEnery in those days but it was always friendly.

Ray took over his father's business at the end of the Second World War and sold it to Mr. Lelder in Glen Williams. The service is now Glen Taxi.

## 1,600 to 1,700 PEOPLE IN GEORGETOWN IN 1893

Georgetown to-day, contains between sixteen and seventeen hundred inhabitants. Its assessable property is valued at \$300,000; its liabilities are said to be \$52,000; and its assets, including school buildings, water works, town hall and fire apparatus, are given at

\$73,000. The village officers are: messrs. Daniel McKenzie, reeve; George S. Goodwille, clerk and treasurer; Joseph Barber, William Barclay, Daniel Cook and William H. Kahrs, councillors; and Edwin Search, chief constable.

## Heritage series makes community aware

By FRAN NIBLOCK  
The resources available to communities concerned with saving their cultural heritage was discussed at the second of the Barber lecture series.

The Barber series, presented by the Esqueping Historical Society, is geared to making the community aware of its historical culture.

Anthony Adamson, chairman of the architectural conservation committee of the Ontario Heritage Foundation, explained that before a community can preserve what they have they must accurately determine what is historically and culturally worth saving.

In order to do this, municipal council must pass a bylaw to allow the formation of a local architectural conservation advisory committee (LACAC). Once this has been done a community can start to catalogue and designate buildings they feel have architectural or historical importance. Halton Hills is now in the planning stage of forming a LACAC.

Adamson said the protection and enhancement of individual buildings entire blocks and sometimes special areas or districts are tangible ways to respect the past.

Buildings which could be considered for historical designation might include those that show the work of an architect or known master builder, or a building that is an example of a particular style.

First on the list of buildings to be considered once Halton Hills has a LACAC are the Barber dynamo ruins, Berwick Hall, and the Acton town hall.

John McDonald, president of the Esqueping Historical Society, explained that before a building can be designated historical and repairs and renovations carried out, it must be determined what the building will be used for when the work is done.

tain a municipal tie.

Once a LACAC has been

established in Halton Hills the

preservation and renovation of

historically and culturally im-

portant buildings will begin.



In this photo taken about 1912, Mary Lawson and Edith Josie Hodson stroll through the town.

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