

**HALTON'S PEOPLE**

# Patterson's steam cars

By MAGGIE HANNAH  
Herald reporter

In a day when ecologists are advocating fuel conservation and consumers are balking at the price of gasoline, long time Limehouse resident A.C. Patterson can talk about one of our early automotive experiments that would have solved the problem had it survived.

Mr. Patterson worked for Brooks Steam Motors in Stratford for five years, first in the factory, then later in the sales and service department of their Toronto outlet and finally as branch manager of their Montreal outlet until the company went broke in 1930.

Brooks was a Canadian company and Mr. Patterson says they got investment capital in Canada. He even demonstrated a steamer up the steps of the legislative buildings in Winnipeg in 1928 or 1929 when the company was seeking support from the Manitoba government.

Newer members of the community may not be aware of the fact that it was Mr. Patterson who built the original garage and gas bar at Silvercreek which is now in the process of being converted into apartments.

**BOUGHT PROPERTY**

When Mr. Patterson bought the property from his uncle Robert Carlyle there were only two other houses in the area besides the little cabin Mr. Carlyle had on the five acres he purchased from George Graham some years before. One was the insubrick farm house on the east side of Halton Road 3 and the other was the Graham farm house on the west side of Highway 7 almost opposite the present cut-off to Ballinacrad.

Mr. Patterson bought the land on July 12, 1932. His two-car garage was completed and he sold his first gasoline on August 17, 1932. It was the only garage between Acton and Georgetown at that time and

he was affiliated with Imperial Oil.

His first customer was a trucker from Eden Mills who ran out of gas on the hill and they had to take gas down to start the truck and get it to the pumps to be filled up. Prices were quite different then. Mr. Patterson says he sold gas at four gallons for a dollar and oil at 15 cents a quart. He set up the entire operation including stocking the candy, pop, cigarettes and so forth for his business on \$475.

One of his funnier memories centres around that first winter when he was batching it in a small room at the side of the garage. A large truck with a pup trailer on the back went off the highway enroute from Guelph reformatory with a load of licence plates for sale in Toronto following an ice storm. The only tow-truck big enough to pull such a vehicle belonged to Robson Motors in Guelph. It was called and got the truck back on the road with no problems. However, when it hooked onto the pup trailer the driver couldn't get stopped on the icy road. He wound up headed straight for Mr. Patterson's gas pumps, managed to miss them but stopped in his flower bed instead.

**LIVING QUARTERS**

Mr. Patterson built living quarters on the garage in 1936 and married Eva Sinclair the following year.

Through the pre-war years he often had to get up in the middle of the night to sell a quarter's worth of gas, so some one could get home to Erin or Hillsburgh.

"The boys would be down to Georgetown to the hotels," he chuckles, "and get kicked out at midnight. Then on the way home they'd need gas and I was their last hope."

Erin township was dry at that time.

Mr. Patterson belonged to the Halton branch of the Ontario Garage Operators Association for many years and was their president in 1939. The association met once a

month and had about 50 members at that time.

"Can you imagine that being all the garages in Ontario," he chuckles.

Rationing and other problems drove Mr. Patterson to close up his garage in 1942 and he worked at Massey Harris as an inspector while they were making trailers for radar for the signals branch of the air force. He returned in 1945 and re-opened the business. Then health problems related to carbon monoxide poisoning made him sell out to Cash McCloskey in 1947.

During their days at the Silvercreek service station the Pattersons also built two overnight cabins which they rented out.

"Cabins were the thing then," Mrs. Patterson says. "There were no motels and I think you had to get down almost to Brampton before there were any other cabins. We did a good business considering there were only the two of them, a single and a double cabin."

**GYPSIES WENT**

The Pattersons both recall the time they rented the cabins to some gypsies. There were five or six adults and a "whole slew of kids" in the group. The men were working at Acton fair and the women stayed in the cabins. One of them offered to tell Mrs. Patterson's fortune free if she would do a "little bit of washing" for her. The little bit turned out to be a couple of bags full and included the voluminous skirts one associates with gypsy attire. Needless to say the Pattersons feel they got the short end of that deal.

Mr. Patterson built their present house beside the Limehouse public school in 1948 and he began working for Thompson Motors at their original location on Mill Street in 1950. In 1956 he became a member of the firm when Bill and Ray Thompson formed a limited partnership and moved with them to their new location at the corner of St. Alban's Drive and Main Street in 1957. He retired when the company was sold six years ago.

When asked how he prepared for a career that extended to more than 60 years of working with automobiles when the automobile was still a relatively new invention, Mr. Patterson says he began apprenticing with Watson's Garage in Rockwood in April 1919 and left them in 1925 to go to Brooks.

**NO TESTS**

"You didn't have to pass any tests like today," he says. "You just worked by Gosh and by God."

Mr. Patterson was the eldest of six boys and grew up on a farm in Erin near Mimosa. He left home to join the army in 1917 even though he was not old enough to enlist and spent his first year as a stretcher bearer in the Army Medical Corps in London. He then transferred to the 6th Battery in Guelph. Since there was a surplus of Canadian Field Artillery in 1918 the force was split up into a Siberian Expeditionary Force and the second Canadian Tank Corps. He chose the tank corps and went to England in September 1918. By the time he was out of quarantine the war was over.

Mr. and Mrs. Patterson's only daughter, Joy, is living in Elsa, a Yukon mining town where her husband Bill Henry is employed by a subsidiary of Falconbridge Mines. The Henrys have a daughter Tanya and a son Todd.



A.C. PATTERSON

# Halton W.I. District Day

Halton District Women's Institute District Day was held in Ligny Hall, Nov. 9 1978 at 12:30 p.m. in the form of a Dessert Luncheon followed by Court Whist.

Nelson Branch, acting as hostess welcomed approximately 65 members who enjoyed a bountiful and delicious buffet followed by tea and coffee.

Mrs. J. McNabb, District President presided for the Court Whist games - Prizes donated by Dublin Branch and won by High score - Mrs. Mabel Hadley, second high - Mrs. E. Carter. Low score - Mrs. J. McLean, second low - Mrs. Edna Nelles. Hidden score (even 100) - Mrs. Laura Dixon. Travelling prizes - Mrs. A. Hase, Mrs. E. Carter, both of Nelson Branch.

Mrs. J. McNabb announced a few tickets still available to Miss H. McKecher dinner Nov. 12 at Seaway Towers, Toronto, also there are still Halton W.I. plates.

Mrs. H. Wilson, secretary treasurer presented a gavel made in 1920 by her late father, Mr. Ernest Henderson, for her mother who was then president of Palermo W.I. - this gavel was then presented by Mrs. J. McNabb to Campbellville branch who had the highest percentage ratio attendance at District Day - this to be retained by Campbellville until 1979 Fall Board meeting. Mrs. B. Lindsay, third vice president, conveyed sincere thanks to all who had in any way contributed toward such an enjoyable District Day.

**CLEAN SWEEP**  
PROFESSIONAL CLEANING OF

- \*fireplaces
- \*wood stoves
- \*franklin heaters

We Are Fully Insured  
Call 877-0551



## LAKESIDE I.O.D.E. BAZAAR

A friendly smile and moment to chat are among the attractions at most bazaars and customers took advantage of that fact as they discussed home crafts like this macrame owl on sale at the Lakeside Chapter of the IODE in the Acton Legion Hall on Saturday.

# 9 1/4%

MINIMUM MONTHLY BALANCE

SAVINGS ACCOUNT

**Members of Ontario Share & Deposit Insurance Corporation.**

**HALTON COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION**  
877-8926  
80 MAIN ST. N. IN MOORE PARK PLAZA  
...where people help each other.

"If you're not happy with your savings, ask for me and let me give you satisfaction."

**stuarts Deal Maker**

*Harold Greve Jr.*

7-piece Colonial dining room suite: mellow, warm and inviting. Like the colonial's unfaltering spirit, this 7-piece suite combines robust beauty and sturdiness. It's durable enough for everyday family living, spacious enough for dining. Fourteen seats include oval table and 4 allwood comfortable chairs. Allowed cherry base and oak finished in oak maple. This suite adds timeless beauty that never goes out of style.

# 546.

7-piece suite Free Delivery

# Save 50%.

**Broyhill 9pc. dining room suite...elegant**

This beautiful suite is the ultimate in dining pleasure! The oval pedestal table with its bold turnings and a-matched granite top is charming enough for an intimate family gathering... spacious enough for a banquet with friends. Velvet and cane highlighting the oak turnings of the 2 arm chairs and 4 side chairs join the tasteful cabinetry of the ample 8' x 12" china desk and base to create this beautiful setting! The stuarts price is beautiful too!

reg. \$2,499. complete Free Delivery

# 1996.

For 3 days only!

Order now for guaranteed Christmas delivery.

Troydon Mediterranean 9-pc. dining room... lends atmosphere. Even the simplest meals takes on party proportions. Dining room includes china desk with lighted glass shelves to show off fine china and crystal, china base with four doors and a shelf, table with a 1 1/2" apron leaf, and 6 chairs designed for comfort as well as style, including two arm chairs. Finished in antique pecan finish veneers and selected hardwoods.

# 1299.

9 piece complete Free Delivery

Troydon 6-pc. dining room... perfect good taste. All you have to add is candlelight! Mediterranean-inspired suite includes china cabinet with lighted shelves, table that extends with a 1 1/2" apron leaf and 3 comfortable side chairs and 1 arm chair. Finished in pecan finish veneers and selected hardwoods. Perfect good taste in dining... from stuarts.

# 796.

6 piece complete Free Delivery

# stuarts

**For quality furniture & appliances, stuarts lets you save.**

No interest charges for 6 months and you get stuarts 100 day price guarantee.

Free delivery and set up. Free Parking. Open daily 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Ask for details at any stuarts location.

|   |                                      |                                     |  |  |  |  |        |
|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--------|
| Lawrence E.                             | Lawrence                             | Kennedy                             | Clarence                                     | Clarence                               | Eglinton                                 | Finch                                    | Dundas |
| 565 MARKHAM RD. at Lawrence E. 431-2333 | 116 KENNEDY RD. at Lawrence 752-8960 | 158 CLARENCE AVE. Brampton 857-6710 | 2780 HUFFERIN ST. South of Clarence 789-1829 | 1045 YONGE ST. Below Eglinton 447-2194 | 1255 FINCH AVE. East of Kipling 638-2400 | 2525 DUNDAS RD. South of Dundas 279-8900 |        |