

## Downtown core's improvements provide new shopping adventures

"I think we definitely have a future. A lot has happened in the first four years and I think we're more politically aware and we have a greater voice in making people aware of what we have to offer downtown."

From Georgetown Business Improvement Area president Lynn Barnard, that statement is indicative of the kind of optimism shared by the approximately 90 profes-

sional members of the area. Working in close conjunction with the town planning department, the BIA is hoping to receive a \$15,000 subsidy from the province next year to carry out a much-needed study into the downtown core and ways in which the BIA membership can bolster its marketing potential. The BIA hopes that a 1980 year-end report will already prepare for the study by giving some indication on the business viability of the area. At the moment, Mrs. Barnard said, there is no

marketing research available to determine whether or not average sales in the area have increased since the BIA was formed in 1976. Meanwhile, the group continues to benefit from guest speakers featured at its bi-annual general meetings. Through group advertising in the community's newspapers, merchants have identified the downtown core as a unique shopping adventure and promoted the merchandise in their stores.

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LYNN BARNARD  
als, merchants and restaurateurs who make up the group, which is so interested in refurbishing Georgetown's historical downtown business core.

Mrs. Barnard, owner of Main Street's "Penniesworth" shop, explained that the last four years since the BIA was formed has been a period of growth in which membership has gradually come to realize the marketing potential and uniqueness of character downtown Georgetown has to offer.

"It's just a beginning," Mrs. Barnard told The Herald Sunday. "The last four years have been difficult, but I think we are working well with (the town) planning board, council and the rest of the staff."

The BIA is not an idea peculiar to Georgetown. In fact, many smaller communities have had established improvement areas since the early seventies, making full use of whatever government assistance there was to restore the historical character of their Main Streets and attract shoppers to a more personalized, refreshing shopping experience.

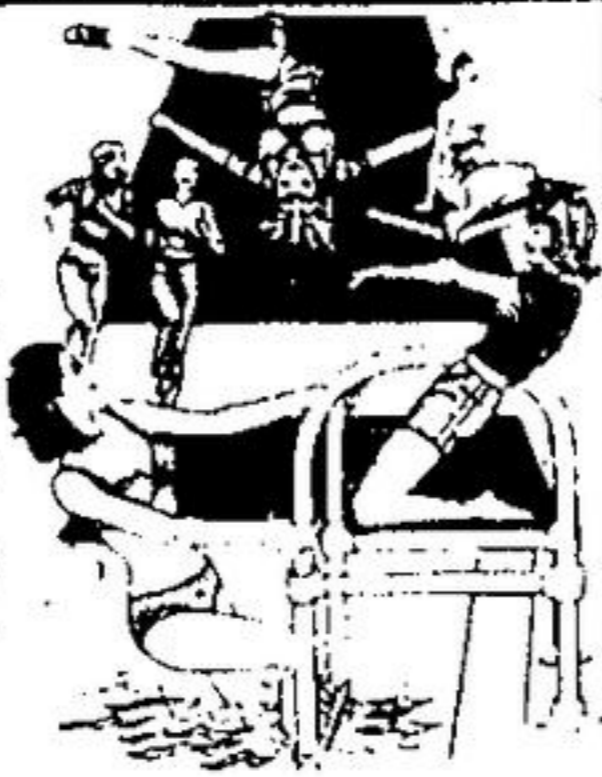
NOTE: The quiet, historical character of Georgetown's downtown core (it's not a Kleinburg or an Elora, town Coun. John McDonald points out) has

drawn a number of refreshing-ly different businesses to the area recently, including Oxbow Books, The Village Shoppe dress boutique and Mirroline Designs, a unique store specializing in mirror-art by Kees Kuitje.

In the immediate future, the BIA board will turn its attention to Mill Street, burying overhead wiring and replacing existing lamp standards with traditionally-styled street lighting. Eighteen colorful, vertical banners will be stuck on the lamp posts to advertise

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