

# the HERALD Features

## Woodchuck sends chain saw safety through the mail

By CHRIS AAGAARD  
Herald Staff Writer

With so many people caught up in the "back to nature" and "do it yourself" lifestyles, chainsaws are taking their place in the farm and residential garden inventory, next to spades, hoes and rakes.

But safety is being left behind in the sawdust, often from a lack of outlets in southern Ontario where chainsaw safety equipment is sold.

Realizing that market gap for such timely and necessary equipment, an Acton couple has

built a growing mail order business, dispatching head-to-toe protection for wise and wary woodcutters.

David and Wendy Dautovich were greenhorns in the mail order business when they went into it three years ago, with their company "Woodchuck of Halton Hills Inc."

**OWN EXPERIENCE**

Mr. Dautovich was clearing trees around their home. While stepping over a fence to approach a tree from another angle, his chainsaw bounced off the fence and the blade sheared into his pant

leg. He was lucky. The blade ruined his pants but barely missed his leg.

"Half an inch more, and I could have been seriously injured," Mr. Dautovich said.

The incident set the Dautovichs on a search for safety equipment. Local hardware outlets didn't have what they wanted and suppliers were looking for

### Battery stolen

A 1977 Ford left out front with a "For Sale" sign had its battery removed over the week- end from an RR2 Georgetown property. The battery is valued at \$70.

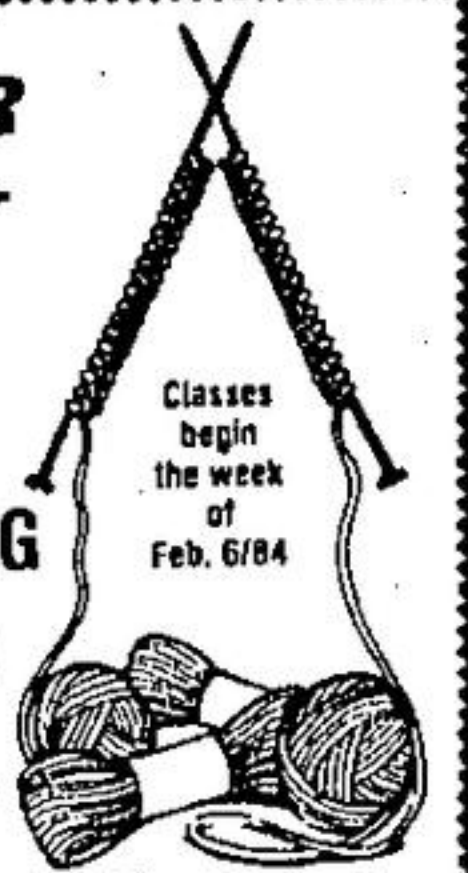
**REGISTER TODAY!**  
For Classes In:

- KNITTING
- CROCHETING
- SMOCKING

Register in person please at:

**Col-Craft**  
GUELPHVIEW SQUARE  
(Off Mountainview Road)

Georgetown 877-1521



The Norval flour mill was for many years the focal point of the village. (Photo submitted)



GORD BROWNE

## Norval's flour mill suffered through fire, Hurricane Hazel

By ANI PEDERIAN  
Herald Staff Writer

Bakeries all over Canada knew where the village of Norval was back in the 1860s. It was where the flour that made their breads and pastries was milled.

A booming spot in the 1800s, Norval had five hotels, including the present day Hollywood Tavern, a woolen mill, a knitting mill, a broom factory, a coopershop for making barrels, a buggy shop and countless blacksmiths.

Prior to the days of railroads, Norval was often a stopover for travellers heading west.

For farmers who grew grain, Norval was the spot to bring their wheat and barley for milling.

In the area where Highway 7 and Winston Churchill Boulevard now intersect, Robert Noble, the great-grandfather of Halton MPP Julian Roed, erected a mill.

"It was considered a fair-sized mill when Robert Noble built it. By today's standards, it would be considered little," Gord Browne of Norval said.

Mr. Browne's grandfather owned the mill at one time and it passed to grandson Gord when his father died.

**WATER WHEEL**

Robert Noble's mill was fed by the power of the Credit River and the oxen that were harnessed to a water wheel. For the animals, there was a shed next to the mill.

Built by contractors Lairds and Grains, the mill used to make wheat, pastry and hard wheat bread flours. Locally grown wheat was suitable for pastry flour and teams of horses would come to Norval, hauling grain.

Business thrived and the original small mill was enlarged. In those days, farmers bargained for the mill's services, using the old barter system.

In 1916, Colonel Alec Noble, the son of Robert Noble built the Credit River dam which still stands today.

From the Noble family, the mill passed to another family in 1913, until Gord Browne's grandfather W.B. Browne took it over in 1921.

May Cleave, retired and living in Brampton now, used to farm near Norval and remembers her husband going to the mill with his grain.

"I've seen lines of horses and wagons delivering wheat," Mrs. Cleave said. "We all had a field of wheat and we'd come there to chop it."

**HITCHING RIDES**

Lifelong Norval resident Dorothy McLean remembers hitching rides to the mill with the farmers who would then come to her dad Robert Watson's sweet smelling bake shop for fresh

bread. "It was a very flourishing business," she said of the mill.

However, a fire Jan. 30, 1930 slowed down the milling operation.

"Although the cause of the fire was never determined, my father always said it was spontaneous combustion," Mr. Browne said.

Full of grain, the mill burnt for months and months.

"It was a fierce, fierce fire, it was," Mrs. McLean said. "The heat from the fire melted the snow on the roofs in the centre of the village even."

"Remember thinking

how terrible it was that they couldn't do something to stop it," she said.

Born in Norval, Mary Couper Maxwell can remember the fire that took the mill.

"It hit the whole countryside here. If you've ever burnt a pot of porridge, that's what the whole area smelled like for weeks and weeks," she said. "The smoke was still coming out from the heart of the mill even on Easter Sunday."

People driving through Norval in the middle of the night

would ring the alarm "Fire, fire, fire!" and it was just the wheat that was smoldering away and had been for weeks, Mrs. McLean said.

Mr. Browne remembers his dad broke a window and went into the burning building with township person Johnny Shepard to get the books. The mill was full of wheat at the time of the fire and the senior Mr. Browne wanted to be able to show farmers they'd already been paid. The senior Mr. Browne lost a lot of blood and was unconscious for a time after.

**UPSET**

"My dad was upset

because there wasn't enough insurance to pay for the mill and all the wheat in it," Mr. Browne said. By the time everyone was paid off, there wasn't enough money left over to pay for the erection of another mill comparable in size, he said.

There was only enough money left to put up a 50-barrel-a-day mill for specialty diastatic flours and Carmel Malt. The Canadian Malt Company of Toronto used to buy from them.

Although the large mill was lost, the grit mill was saved and operated until 1954 when Hurricane Hazel took a chunk out of it and washed the waves of the Credit River into it.

Mr. Browne has fond memories of the mill, and even when he joined the army at 18, although he was exempt as were all farmers and millers, Mr. Browne took with him a picture of the mill as it once stood.

He still has the picture in a photo album, a little worn at the edges, and on his wall, he has a painting of the mill by a local artist.



In specially-constructed boots, pants, gloves and helmet David Dautovich is ready to use a chainsaw - safely. The Acton man and his wife, Wendy, own a mail order business dealing in chainsaw safety equipment.

DO YOU HAVE A NEWS TIP? CALL OUR STAFF AT 877-2201.

### REFLECTIONS:

A series of historical articles on Halton's heritage



**Snowmobile stolen**

A 1981 Arctic Cat snowmobile worth \$3,400 was stolen from an Acton residence on Willow Street North sometime between 2:30 and 6 a.m. Saturday. The snowmobile had been out at the rear of the home. Halton regional police have since recovered the vehicle and are investigating its disappearance.

**Tape deck stolen**

An AM-FM cassette stereo valued at \$150 was taken from a 1976 AMC Hornet parked in a driveway on Acton's Main Street North Thursday to Friday. It's believed a coat hanger was used to unlock the door, Halton regional police said.

**Jacket swiped**

A Georgetown District High School student was literally left in the cold when he found his \$100 bomber style jacket stolen from his locker Friday. Halton regional police reported the lock on the locker had been forced.

**Considering request for drunk driving committee**

Halton region is considering a request from provincial attorney general Roy McMurtry to establish a drunk-driving committee.

In a letter to Ontario's municipal councils, Mr. McMurtry commented, "While our courts can play a punitive role, our citizens must be involved in the preventative role experts and citizens alike as so necessary."

The attorney general added that the individual committees would work with the ministry's own, newly-established Drinking-Driving Countermeasures Unit.

Councillors last week agreed to circulate the letter to local municipalities, the Halton Police Commission and the Halton Safety Council.

They want comments from the groups on whether Halton wants its own committee to curb drunk driving,

**Refused to leave**

An Edith Street woman who refused to leave the taxi stand on Georgetown's Mill Street was charged with being intoxicated in a public place Saturday at 11:40 p.m.

**BUSINESS DIRECTORY**

**SURVEYORS**

**R.E. Clipsham Limited**  
Surveyors • Consulting Engineers

16 Mountainview Road South, Suite 101,  
HALTON HILLS (Georgetown) Ontario L7G 4K1  
(416) 877-2211 437-2083

**OPTOMETRISTS**

**Dr. Robert R. Hamilton**  
OPTOMETRIST  
18 Mountainview Rd. S., Georgetown  
877-3971

**The "Cut"...**

It can mean the difference between good looking hair... and great looking hair... and you can have it! Our expert stylists will show you what's new in hair shapes today, then help you choose a look that's most flattering to you! For men and women.

**Joseph's and Sam's** UNISEX HAIRSTYLING  
150 GUELPH ST.  
877-0322

**CHURCH DIRECTORY**

**HOLY CROSS ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
224 Maple Ave.  
PASTOR: Father Dave Cole  
ASST. PASTOR: Father Con O'Mahony  
MASSES: Saturday 7:00 p.m., Sunday 8 a.m., 10 a.m., and 12:00 Noon  
For information call: 877-3983

**MAPLE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
PASTOR: Edwin H. Mitchell  
877-8885 - 877-0320  
EVERY SUNDAY: 9:45 a.m. Family Bible School 11 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. Biblical Preaching Worship - Praise  
WEEKDAYS: Prayer & Bible Study Youth Recreation Boys - Girls Club Little Cherub Nursery MONTHLY: Ladies Coffee hour, Ladies Missions Senior Adults  
Visitors Welcome

**GEORGETOWN ALLIANCE CHURCH**  
14 Main St. S., Georgetown  
PASTOR: Rev. Peter Ralph, B.A., M.Div.  
CALL: 877-9818 853-3923  
Morning Service 11:00 a.m. Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Evening Service 6:30 p.m. Wednesday Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.

This Sunday 29th 11 a.m. Missions Teaching Capsule

A CHURCH OF THE CHRISTIAN & MISSIONARY ALLIANCE IN CANADA

**BROWN'S FURNITURE**

**MATTRESS AND BOX SPRING COMBINATION**

**1/2 PRICE SALE**

**KING KOIL MATTRESS & BOX SPRING WITH 15 YEAR GUARANTEE**

54" MATTRESS AND BOX SPRING \$579.  
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE

OUR PRICE ... **\$289<sup>00</sup>**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Brown's FURNITURE WAREHOUSE LIMITED**

334 GUELPH ST. 877-2828

VISA MasterCard

