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## SECTION

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# Candidates discuss backgrounds

## Election '84 Campaign report

**By ANI PEDERIAN**  
 Herald Staff

Being a minister's son wasn't always an easy role to play, but it was one that left a heavy mark on John McDermid's life.

The 44-year old Progressive Conservative candidate for Brampton-Georgetown riding said his dad's occupation of United Church minister influenced his life.

"It was a little difficult because people set you up as a role model, which was a little tough," Mr. McDermid told The Herald.

In church, it wasn't unusual that he got cuffed for fooling around or playing

X's and O's. But that was typical boy stuff that was eventually outgrown.

Born and raised in Georgetown, the senior McDermid was ministering to a three-point charge in Mount Forest when John, an only child, was born.

Some time was spent in Grand Valley before the family moved to Brampton and settled in for a lengthy 27-year spell at St. Paul's United Church on Main Street South.

John was three when the family moved to Brampton, but he can still remember the parsonage across the church in Grand Valley, and that he man next door had a black horse.

"I guess that's where I got my first love of horses," Mr. McDermid, a medium built man with thinning brown hair, said with a smile.

**HORSES**

In the 1960s, he used to own quarter horses and was involved in the Ontario



**John McDermid**  
 P.C.  
 Brampton-Georgetown

rodeo circuit. Mr. McDermid said he used to take part in timed events like barrel work, in which a horse is ridden around three barrels.

"I've fallen off horses many times in my life, sure. But I don't have the horses anymore. I sold them," he said. "It was either my horses or my wife."

With the money saved when he gave up the horses, Mr. McDermid and

his wife Elayfie bought a home in Brampton.

From Deep River, Elayfie came into John's life when he was working for the Pembroke television station in the north east of the province.

They met in 1962 when she came down for an interview on the Deep River waterfront program.

"I thought she was nice looking,"

Mr. McDermid recalled.

Ten months later, the couple married. Mrs. McDermid is currently a Grades 6, 7 and 8 teacher with the Peel board of education.

**JOURNALISM**

From a career in journalism and public relations that took him to Pembroke, Kitchener, Brampton and Toronto, how did John swing into politics, especially since politics was never a family interest?

John says his involvement began when he was 12, thanks to Brampton MP Gordon Graydon, a family friend Mr. McDermid was fond of.

In the 1953 election, Mr. Graydon's daughter asked John to join the young people helping his campaign. Although Mr. Graydon won the election, he died of cancer before taking his seat in the House of Commons.

Politics is much like the ministering work of his father, Mr. McDermid said.

"I feel I have followed in his footsteps. This job is service to the community, helping people out with their problems," he said. "I often think, 'how would dad handle a situation like this?'"

Coming from a church background, Mr. McDermid said he doesn't hesitate to chat with the ministers in his riding.

"Ministers have a pulse on the community and I value their opinion. They're a very good group of people to let you know what are the social problems in the community."

One piece of advice from his dad that Mr. McDermid still carries around under his freckled brow: never trust a man without a sense of humor.



**Ross Milne**  
 LIBERAL  
 Brampton-Georgetown

**By ANI PEDERIAN**  
 Herald Staff

Farming and politics have been in Ross Milne's blood for a long time.

The 50-year old candidate for Brampton-Georgetown was born and

raised on a farm near Mount Forest, about 70 miles north of Georgetown.

Growing up on the farm originally bought by his grandfather, Mr. Milne was involved in 4-H programs and carried his interest to Guelph's Agricultural College, then later to a Master's degree in engineering and environmental science.

"I certainly relate to rural people," Mr. Milne said. "We didn't have a lot of money. I had to work to put myself through high school, driving a school bus, so I know what the value of a dollar is, and of really having to work for it."

His dad was a general farmer, raising beef cattle and hogs, as well as a farm supply business which dealt largely with fertilizer, feed and seed.

Today, Mr. Milne's older brother runs the 300-acre farm and Mr. Milne lives in Brampton.

Although the senior Milne put all his energies into farming and farm organizations, and his wife into the local Women's Institute and church, there was always lots of political talk at the dinner table.

"My father's cousin was Agnes McPhail, the first woman elected to the House of Commons," Mr. Milne said.

"My mother used to campaign for her. She's intensely interested in politics; my whole family has always been. I guess that's where I come across my political interest."

**A HERO**

Agnes McPhail who ran for the United Farmers of Ontario party was Mr. Milne's hero when he was a lad.

"I always admired her and thought she was a good politician," Mr. Milne said, noting it wasn't easy to get elected in the rural areas where the distances were vast.

Politics was a keen interest for Mr. Milne's wife also. Lorna Milne, 49, is the daughter of a former mayor of Toronto, William Dennison. Mayor Dennison was involved in politics for 35 years, from serving on the Toronto School Board to being a Toronto alderman, a controller, a member of the Ontario Legislature to being mayor

from 1966 to 1972.

Mrs. Milne herself isn't shy of politics. She served as a trustee for the Peel board of education for eight years, including a stint as vice-chairman.

The couple met while studying at Guelph University. How they met, Mr. Milne couldn't recall, however, guessing it may have been through student activities.

**INTEREST**

Like her husband, Mrs. Milne also harbors an interest in farming. Her dad was born in the Ottawa Valley, and summers were always spent on uncle's farm. Her farming interest led her to study agricultural science at Guelph.

"My dad used to have very good horses; he kept some of them around almost as pets when he was semi-retired," Mr. Milne said. "I like being around them and the type of people

who show horses."

Occasionally, his dad would farm with his draft horses, like he used to in the early days before the farm had tractors, Mr. Milne said.

Although Mr. Milne is into antique cars now, and owns a 1929 Model A Ford which he has restored, he still gets pleasure out of collecting what he calls "rural Ontario" - harnesses, blacksmith tools and other antiques which were important to the farming life.

Currently, Mr. Milne is on leave from Trans Canada Pipelines where he works as an engineer managing their environmental affairs. He's been with the company since 1979, when he lost his bid to keep his seat in the House of Commons.

He had been elected in 1974 for the Peel-Dufferin-Simcoe riding which has since become Brampton-Georgetown

**By ROBIN BAKEWELL**  
 Herald Staff

When the NDP was formed in 1962, Brampton-Georgetown NDP candidate, John Deamer, joined right off the bat.

Asked about his involvement with the party over the years, Mr. Deamer said, "You name it, I've done it."

Mr. Deamer, 46, was born in Toronto and has now lived in the Brampton-Georgetown area for about 25 years.

His father was a unionist with the Ontario Stock Yards and an avid CCF

supporter. Mr. Deamer said there had always been good political conversation in the household which provided him with an interest in politics and a political awareness.

At the age of 16, Mr. Deamer had started his political career by helping the CCF party erect their campaign signs.

Mr. Deamer said that one of the similarities between the old CCF and the NDP is the representation of the average men and women. The NDP is broader than the CCF and has supporters ranging from millionaires to paupers, he said.

While living in Georgetown in 1959, Mr. Deamer formed a CCF club in his basement. The members, which numbered about 30, would hold

meetings and be as politically involved as possible.

"We were not overly strong in those days but we were a very credible third party," Mr. Deamer said.

At this point in time Mr. Deamer was working for AVRO Incorporated. When Prime Minister Diefenbaker closed the plant down by stopping the aircraft engine production, Mr. Deamer was out of a job.

"Dief the thief not only took away jobs but people's homes," he said, adding that he lost his home from the incident.

Mr. Deamer had a variety of jobs after the AVRO closure, including milkman, baker and gas station attendant.

Reflecting back on the AVRO incident Mr. Deamer said it convinced

him not to vote PC. "Everything that has happened has reinforced my commitment to the NDP," he said.

**SIGNIFICANT**

One significant issue which helped Mr. Deamer lean towards the NDP was when Tommy Douglas introduced the Medicare program which he said was the first such program in all of North America.

In 1966 Mr. Deamer ran for city councillor in Brampton but was defeated. In 1975 he ran for a provincial seat and came within 3,000 votes of defeating Bill Davis, finishing well ahead of the Liberals. His second campaign for a provincial seat in 1977 saw Mr. Deamer finish a distant second behind Mr. Davis.

Married in 1959 and now separated, Mr. Deamer feels his political

involvement may have played a part in the break-up. The father of three fully grown girls, he said his children are not politically inclined.

The Bramalea traffic supervisor at the Ford Motor Company, Mr. Deamer has stopped work until after the

election and is putting 100 per cent into his campaign.

Mr. Deamer is hoping to win the election and "do the damnedest to represent Brampton-Georgetown. I want to be the best political representative this area's ever had," he said.

**IMPORTED**

She also operates a company that searches out imported products and challenges Canadian manufacturers to produce them competitively. The company is called Canadian Industrial Network.

Mrs. Currie's mother is of Irish descent while her father's family came from Germany. In the early days of her childhood she spent time in a boarding house and a convent for a year. She was raised "virtually without parents" until she was 11 years old and her father, a superintendent with AVRO, took care of her.

Mrs. Currie said she had to make a lot of decisions early in her life and was exposed to a lot of different environ-

ments which she felt made her self-sufficient.

Mrs. Currie is chairman of the 1983-84 United Way in Milton and she is a member of the Women's Perspective Advisory Committee which is a group that gives advice to provincial Liberal leader David Peterson.

She also speaks to women's groups at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute about her business success.

In her spare time, Mrs. Currie said she likes to read, but she admits there are few free hours in her schedule.

Two years ago she decided to join the federal Liberals after looking at the other party philosophies. She found the Progressive Conservatives too rigid by not encouraging enough debates and the NDP too radical.

**By DAVE ROWNEY**  
 Herald Staff

Travelling to Ottawa in 1971 and lobbying to change a controversial piece of legislation whetted Oriana Currie's appetite for a career in politics.

She helped to bring about a change in the Criminal Code concerning amusement machines by talking to the prime minister's assistants, attorney general's across Canada and staff at the justice department.

Mrs. Currie feels there is a

vacuum in some areas of the government where business acumen is lacking, where injustices need to be rectified.

Business experience is something the Campbellville resident is not shy of. She started her own restaurant after graduating from Oakville Trafalgar High School with just \$200 in her pocket.

Although she admits to "barrelling right in" without knowing how to manage the restaurant, the venture became a success and her father eventually took over her business when she married.

She met her husband through the restaurant when he tried to put a jukebox in the building while she was out. Mrs. Currie phoned to have it removed, but instead they started



**Oriana Currie**  
 LIBERAL  
 Halton

dating.

In 1974 Mr. Currie was electrocuted when he was testing a competitor's product. Mrs. Currie had just begun her first political campaign, running for the Liberal nomination in the provincial riding of Halton-Burlington.

The accident happened three weeks after she began her campaign and she withdrew her name.

Thereafter Mrs. Currie and her three children helped each other cope with their loss. The kids worked on their family amusement business

he also was enrolled in Appleby College.

Cold arenas at 5:30 in the morning and hard work with his partner, sister Maria, eventually paid off for Mr. Jelinek. By the age of 21 he was a world champion in figure skating.

He attained a business degree in Switzerland, then returned to Canada to start his own business. His company, called Canadian Skate Industries, began with Mr. Jelinek providing a mould for a shoemaker to construct.

The former skater would then buy the blade and attach it himself. Later, the company employed more staff and grew to a size of 100 before it was sold when Mr. Jelinek entered politics.

**SUCCESSFUL**

He was asked by then PC leader

Robert Stanfield to run for a seat in Parliament in 1972 which he was successful in doing.

The incumbent is a Big Brother's director and has helped out with the YMCA and United Way in Halton.

In 1980 he received the Vanier award as the outstanding young Canadian for his work with mentally handicapped children.

"I hate to sit around," he said. "There's always time to be a volunteer."

He admits there's isn't much spare time with his schedule, but Mr. Jelinek and his wife Leata enjoy tennis in the summer and alpine skiing in the winter.

Because of political functions on weekends the couple haven't gone



**Otto Jelinek**  
 P.C.  
 Halton

**By DAVE ROWNEY**  
 Herald Staff

Young adults helping with the Otto Jelinek campaign might be able to say they once wore the skates

named after the Olympic skating star.

The veteran Progressive Conservative MP is widely known for his athletic achievements at the 1962

**By ROBIN BAKEWELL**  
 Herald Staff

NDP candidate for Halton riding, Kevin Flynn, had an early introduction to the economic and social structure.

While growing up in Liverpool, England and attending a local school, his teachers became aware that he had the potential to attend a preparatory school and gave him the required exams.

On completing the exams, Mr. Flynn placed within the top ten in the county and was referred to St. Mary's Preparatory School.

This was the early 1960's, fees were expensive at the school but Kevin's

father, a working class marine engineer, wanted a better life for his son and footed the bill.

The school was run by an elite group of Christian brothers and most of the students attending were from upper class backgrounds. Kevin Flynn was immediately treated differently by both the students and the teachers.

Writing style was a big factor at the school at that time and Mr. Flynn commented, "While the teachers would say they didn't like the way I wrote and show me the correct style they would praise the student next to me for the same thing, calling it artistic."

It was through this definite class difference and his father's strong involvement with the British Labour Party which sparked Mr. Flynn's political interests.

In 1966 the Flynns moved from England to the York south riding and became involved with David Lewis and the NDP's.

"I was greatly impressed with David Lewis. He was a great man who could have done anything and made a great life for himself but opted to help ordinary men and women."

"I had a lot of respect for him and my involvement with him provided me with a firmer commitment to the

party."

Mr. Flynn helped the NDP all through his high school years and was not afraid to question anyone during his schooling. He led a small revolt against his student council in high school and although the matter was quite trivial, he learned that "if you can talk common sense to people they'll respect you more than if you've got some fancy title."

After high school Mr. Flynn entered a job with Chemical Distributors and became supervisor within a year. In charge of eight fully grown men, Mr. Flynn was only 19 at the time.

The next five years were spent working as a freelance photographer, an involvement with minor soccer and meeting and marrying his wife, Janice.

For a few years Mr. Flynn worked for Shell Canada on shift work but didn't like how it affected his family life and opened three clothing stores in the Toronto area.

The stores ended up taking more time away from his family life and were sold. Mr. Flynn is now an employee with Mississauga Hydro.

"I'm just not trying to feed my pockets, I feel I'm contributing to the community through the job," he said.

During his working career Mr. Flynn has always been helping out in NDP campaigns and feels his experience with the world is now well rounded.

In 1982 Mr. Flynn entered the municipal elections in Oakville as a candidate in the Oakville East riding, but he was unsuccessful.

## Green party Peace, the issue

**By ANI PEDERIAN**  
 Herald Staff

With only 59 candidates running in the federal election, the Green Party isn't naive enough to think they'll be making up the new government after Sept. 4.

"We probably won't win the election, but one of our main goals is to get people thinking," Brampton-Georgetown candidate Steven Kaasgaard, 25, of Brampton, told The Herald.

Dropping by the office Thursday before beginning his door-knocking in Georgetown with party member Dave Duquette, 23, of Brampton, Mr. Kaasgaard said his party wants people to think about waste and appreciate that natural

resources are finite.

He was surprised to learn Halton Hills already has a garbage recycling program in which local residents participate, and said he would like Brampton residents to take part in source separation also.

"We'd offer tax rebates for them to do it," Mr. Kaasgaard said, describing residents would have a card punched on each garbage pick-up day, recording the weight of tins or bottles collected for recycling. At the end of the year, the card would be sent in with a citizen's tax return for a rebate according to what they had contributed to the recycling program, Mr. Kaasgaard said.

One of the founding

members of the Green Party, he said it's two years old now in Canada and plans to have members running in provincial and municipal elections as well.

Supporters of alternative energy sources to oil and gas, the Green Party wants more money put into research of wind and solar power for energy.

Billions spent to upgrade nuclear energy plants could be diverted to develop other energy sources, Mr. Kaasgaard said.

A tall lean man with blonde hair and gold-rimmed granny glasses, Mr. Kaasgaard is a politics and human geography student at Kingston's Queen's University.

**NEXT WEEK:**  
 The candidates speak on the issues.

**Kevin Flynn**  
 N.D.P.  
 Halton

party."

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