

# An early pathmaster: Esquesing's Christian Barnes

By RICHARD E. RUGGLE  
Herald Special

At Esquesing's first town meeting, in 1821, six pathmasters were elected: John McTavish (east half of lot 5, concession 5); Donald McClinton (east half of lot 6, concession 8); James Hume (west half of lot 12, concession 4); Christopher Cooke (west half of lot 14, concession 8); William Meiklejohn (east half of lot 26, concession 2) and Christian Barnes (lot 18, concession 8).

The last of these pathmasters, Christian Barnes (1771-1868), was the son of a loyalist officer in New York state, Lieutenant George Barnes.

In April 1778, the father was shot at his door by the American patriots, and his wife is said to have died of shock not long afterwards.

Young Christian was placed in the care of neighbours; and in June 1797 he arrived as a loyalist in Grantham township, in the Niagara area. There he farmed for 22 years. His wife Margaret, who died in 1854 at the age of

74, bore him seven children. Barnes served during the war of 1812, fighting at the battle of Queenston Heights, and perhaps attaining the rank of major. In 1819 he petitioned for land, stating that his father had been 'murdered by the Rebels'; and was granted the west half of lot 18, concession 8.

In June he petitioned for another hundred acres, offering to pay if necessary, and his petition was granted. It was not until 1844 that he received the patent for his land, though in 1829 he obtained a patent for lot 28 west, concession 6.

He remained active in township affairs, and in 1823 the town meeting was held at his home.

The pathmaster's job was to see that settlers cleared and maintained the roads adjoining their farms. In a newly-opened township this was an onerous responsibility for the settler. And it was made more difficult by the fact that some of the land was not yet occupied, or was set aside as crown or

clergy reserves, though some of these reserves were rented.

Visitors, especially itinerant clergy, were very conscious of the sad state of the roads. Kenard Smith, who travelled through the 'new settlements' of Esquesing and neighboring townships in 1821-2, toured on foot, and found he had to carry a pocket

Queen's Own Rangers in 1793 at Governor Simcoe's request:

'At a certain point on this road...we turned to the north, along what was called a concession line. The land had been laid out in farms extending half a mile in breadth, along the main road. Every purchaser of a farm was obliged to cut down or clear a narrow strip of

country was settled.

'As they had no choice of location, neither turning to the right nor left to avoid rough places, creeks, or marshes; (the roads in the northern corner of the Scotch Block did not, however, follow the straight and narrow course Beveridge suggested, because of the rough terrain) and as the farmers were too busy in clearing out, fencing, and cultivating their fields, to do more than fulfill the letter of the law by felling the timber and suffering it to lie where it had been pleased to fall, we found these roads anything but comfortable for travellers. Where they were in the best condition, we had to be continually making a zigzag track to get around the fallen timber.

'In many places we had to turn aside into the woods, and sometimes to turn back to avoid marshes and impassable places. We entered the concession line early in the morning; and having travelled diligently till late in the afternoon, we arrived at the house of Mr. Laidlaw, sixteen miles from the

main road.'

In theory, local roads were to be built under the direction of District officials, particularly the Justices of the peace, relying heavily on statute labour.

Although hard-surfaced roads were becoming common in Britain and in the older parts of the United States, the roads of Upper Canada were usually hard only when frozen over in the winter. In the spring they were a sea of mud, and in low-lying stretches they did not dry out even in the summer, although a bone-shaking corduroy of rough-hewn logs might get vehicles across.

District officials claimed they lacked the resources to assist in building, and eventually the provincial legislature made some grants to build local roads, though few were satisfied with the results. In practice, it was the pathmaster's unpopular task to insist that the settlers transform the straight lines of the surveyor's map into passable roads.

**'The pathmaster's job was to see that settlers cleared and maintained the roads adjoining their farms.'**

compass to guide him through the forests where there was no path.

The most graphic description is from Thomas Beveridge, a minister of the American Associate Presbyterian church, who visited the Scotch Block in 1822.

He and Thomas Hanna came on horseback along Dundas Street, the military highway opened by the

timber, something like two rods, on the one side of his farm.

'His neighbour, who joined him on that side, was obliged to do the same, so that between them there would be a road, or rather an opening of about four rods in breadth. These concession lines, of course, occurred regularly at the interval of a mile, and extended up from the main road as far as the

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### Local government week

## Those that govern us

Ever sit through a town council or committee meeting? Likely not. There usually isn't much of an audience at these weekly get-togethers.

Most people probably don't know they're held each Monday night.

And what about regional council meetings? They're held every other Wednesday afternoon in Oakville. Halton Cable televises the meetings at 6 p.m. every Friday.

Or board of education meetings? They're on the second and fourth Thursday of the month, in Burlington.

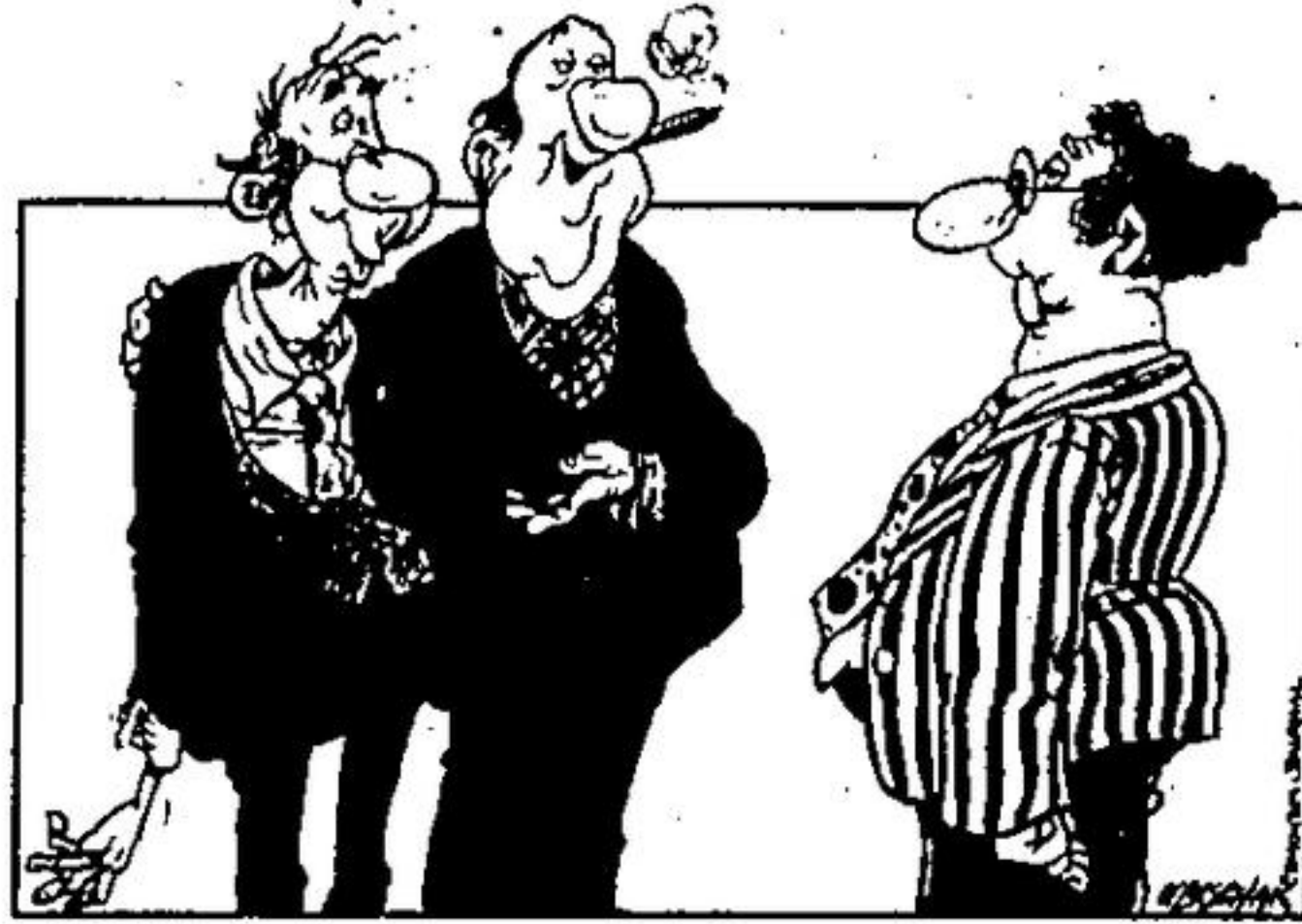
If you've never been to any of these public meetings, you should set aside some time for the experience.

It'll give you a better understanding of local government and how it's working for you.

After all, this is the year for municipal elections, and you'll be voting for representatives at each of these levels in November.

Now's the time to do your homework and make sure that 'yahoo' doesn't get elected. Make your X on the ballot a knowledgeable one.

Remember, it's local government that's looking after policing, roadwork, sewers, watermains, schools, planning, firefighting, and parks and recreation. Or did you know?



"Meet Mortimer, main cog in our utility company — he dreams up reasons for rate increases."

### Letter to the editor

## Sidewalks cleared

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following letter was submitted to us for publication.

Dear Mayor and Councilors:

What a pleasant surprise Jan. 6, to find the sidewalk on Guelph St. through the village of Norval cleared of ice and snow! Instead of having to dodge the traffic on the highway while at the same time keeping watch for the many icy spots under foot, the walk was a pleasure and I enjoyed the church service without worrying if I would make it safely home again.

When sidewalks in the village are impassable (which they are most of the winter) I have to depend on the kindness

of neighbors for my mail. Thank goodness I do have good neighbors!

Health authorities tell us that walking is the best exercise but how can you go for a daily walk when there is no where to walk safely? Dodging traffic on the highway may be good exercise but the survival rate is zero even for the young and active children.

Walking on sidewalks brings to mind the fact that we need new sidewalks on some streets in Norval. Old age has taken over and the cement has deteriorated, broken into pieces and heaved, making it much safer to walk on the road rather than the sidewalk

on the sidestreets that is, not on the highway.

But new sidewalks can wait until spring - for the winter we will be happy with one side of Guelph St. being cleared of ice and snow.

So I want to say a very special thank you to Halton Hills council, and to whatever department is responsible for this new service, from a grateful senior citizen of Norval. A Happy New Year to you too.

Now I can walk to the post office to mail this letter and enjoy the exercise and fresh air! Thanks again. Oh, oh, it's snowing outside!

Dorothy C. McLean,  
Draper St., Norval

## Picture wasn't printed

Dear Sir,  
I am writing this letter to you to express my concerns as both a mother of a new Brownie and as a former Girl Guide leader and presently Halton Division Commissioner for Girl Guides of Canada.

Dec. 3, 1984 was a special date for fourteen six-year old girls. They were enrolled as Brownies that day. Your newspaper photographer came to their meeting and took several pictures of these new Brownies.

As of yet, over two weeks later, their pictures have not appeared in the paper. Maybe becoming a Brownie is not considered important to some people who read your paper, but it is extremely important to these girls. My daughter (who was enrolled on that night) has asked me several times when the picture will be in the paper and I am sure the other Brownies are also.

I realize that not all pictures can be printed, but in the past two weeks there have been pictures printed of other children in the community getting skating awards, playing hockey, etc.

I have been involved in many levels of Guiding over the past 15 years, and I feel that good public relations with the community through the newspaper benefits both the community and Girl Guides of Canada from the youngest Brownies through to their Guiders. Please print their pictures when taken - it means a great deal to many people.

Yours sincerely,  
Diane Crawford,  
Halton Division,  
Commissioner

Dear Mrs. Crawford,  
I'd like to answer your letter, then expand on the same motif about pictures in the paper - it's so crucial to our existence!

Your points are well taken and we apologize for not running your picture. There was a good reason - the film jammed and the pictures never came out.

I can't blame my staff because it was me who took that picture. To top it off, I was late and just managed to catch everyone leaving.

That's my excuse, but as I've said before, "don't give up on us; don't shoot the messenger."

Pictures are a big part of the paper. They record special events with a flare that photos only can. It's no coincidence that we find it harder to manage our photos than to handle our daily story assignments.

Here's a photographer's list that can make things easier for those requesting pictures and for the photographer. It could make our job just a bit easier.

1. Give us ample warning for photo assignments. We have to plan our week, in order to give our staff some time off. Contrary to popular belief, reporters (who are also photographers) are not on call 24 hours a day.
2. If we can't make the assigned time for your photo session, plan an alternative date. If we can't accommodate you, maybe you'll help us out by accommodating us.
3. Avoid calling us for Monday nights or Tuesday nights if at all possible. We're busy putting the paper together and most of the time deadlines force us to make hard decisions.
4. If you're planning a dinner meeting with awards afterwards, please try and schedule it so our photographers don't have to wait through the entire dinner. Sometimes the awards pictures can be taken before the dinner. Or please try to time it so our wait is limited to 20 minutes.
5. If our pictures don't come out, take pity. It happens to us occasionally. We're willing to try again, so give us a call and we'll re-schedule the picture.
6. Let the photographer arrange the photo. He/she is the professional and knows what type of shot to look for based on the event, the surroundings and the newspaper's style.
7. Don't expect to see the photos we take in the paper 100 per cent of the time. We take about 30 different pictures of events per week, but only about two thirds of them make the paper. It depends on the amount of space in the paper, the clarity of the picture, and the priority the picture has over others. We can't offer iron-clad guarantees, but we very rarely refuse an invitation to take a photo.
8. Please try and realize that we try to accommodate your group, but also the community and the newspaper we work for.
9. Smile, and we'll smile back.
10. Please us if you see something interesting in town. Phone us if you have a complaint or write us a letter. We're always happy to talk about how we do what we do.

And that's fine. Who has all the answers?

**FRASER INSTITUTE**  
The glory is that, after 50 years of stifling liberal-social democratic-Marxist orthodoxy, other intellectual avenues are actually opening up for exploration in this country.

The Fraser Institute is a part of this change. It doesn't let the argument for a free market fall by default any more. Those who believe in Government-as-God no longer go unchallenged.

Call it libertarianism, conservatism, neo-liberalism, or whatever, it all advances the frontiers of freedom, of choice and of options.

Watching Block and his audience one has hope for our future.

— DAVE ROWNEY

## Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

## Fourth Place Party

Dr. Walter Block is senior economist with the Fraser Institute, the B.C. think-tank that advocates an expansion of the free market economy.

In this country, with its love of government-is-good-for-us, that makes him a rarity.

Even more unorthodox, he's also a political libertarian, a believer in a free society of free individuals. He's written a book defending such unpopular - but non-aggressive - individuals as pimps, prostitutes and slum landlords.

He subscribes to the non-aggression axiom in all his beliefs, the theory that one should be able to do anything one wants as long as physical aggression is not initiated against another human being.

He was here recently, wearing his libertarian hat, at a gathering of the Ontario Libertarian Party. He took centre stage to trade quips, ideas and theories with the audience.

**MUCH DISAGREEMENT**  
It was not that there was much agreement among those present. There wasn't. On almost every single issue discussed, whether it be government subsidy for space flight, or whether libertarians could support the death penalty, there was discussion and dissension.

And when it came to abortion, of course, not only did the debate become heated, but people in the room, like those almost anywhere in Canada, split down the middle in their opinions.

What was important here, though, at least from this observer's perspective, was the very fact that intellectual ferment from a libertarian perspective was taking place at all.

The Ontario Libertarian Party itself is only a small fourth-place party in this province. But there are many libertarians outside the party, either political independents or even, in some cases, members of the Progressive Conservatives and Liberals.

**MANY PEOPLE**  
And such libertarians are part-and-parcel of new ways of thinking, and new approaches, to the so-called problems of society. It has, elsewhere, been called the "conservative counter-revolution."

Ideological purity among such disparate groupings would not only be impossible, but actually undesirable.

Block said libertarians tend to be united on economic matters, less so on foreign policy, and are all over the map on social concerns.

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Watching Block and his audience one has hope for our future.

## Halton's History

Kranendonk and Bert Carney managed to save the girl.

Douglas Wood was chosen chairman of the Halton Board of Education, Thursday evening.

Local 1421 United Autoworkers voted overwhelmingly in favor of taking strike action against Smith and Stone Ltd. if current contract negotiations reach an impasse.

On a 13 to one vote Reeve Alan Day of Oakville became the warden of Halton County with Deputy Reeve Ted Tyler of Acton, receiving the solitary vote.

Peter McWilliams, former Halton County crown attorney, believes drivers forced to take a breathalyzer test should be given a sample of their breath to have it tested independently. TEN YEARS AGO - Mr. Dressup, alias Ernie Coombs, will perform two shows at Holy Cross auditorium Feb. 1.

Hugh McFarlane has accepted nomination as chairman of the newly formed Norval Community Association.

Mr. Joe Pentesco, 46 Marilyn Crescent, was named to the "100 Club" by Regal Ware Incorporated for achieving better than 100 per cent of the sales quota for the year.

Action OPP will be leaving town, replaced by the Halton Regional Police Force. The problem is - no one is sure when they go.

Last Sunday, Jim Nicholson, who competes in the Young Adult Bowling League, set a Georgetown Bowling Centre record by rolling a 1,662 triple.

**FIVE YEARS AGO** - Continuing confusion and frustration among town councillors as to what does and does not constitute a conflict of interest has prompted the town's general committee to request town solicitor Ray Steele to report on possible inequities of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed and Mayor Pete Pomeroy were at Jake's Disco Friday evening to support the 29-hour dance-a-thon sponsored by the disco and by Boynton Studios to raise money for a fetal heart monitor for the hospital.



By PAT WOODE  
Herald Columnist

When a couple is confronted with the possibility of their child facing a life of chronic disability, pain, and suffering, the emotional trauma will strain the sinews of the strongest marriage.

The Canadian Osteogenesis Imperfecta Society (COIS) was formed to provide emotional support to victims of osteogenesis imperfecta (OI) and their families and to provide information to the public and the medical profession.

OI is one of several disorders of the connective tissue. It may manifest itself in the skeleton, ear, joints, ligaments, teeth, sclera, and skin. Intelligence is not affected. Severity can range from a pale blue tint to the sclera (white of eyes) to still born.

Although OI is poorly understood, it has been classified into four groups. Diagnosis may come from roentgenograms or excessive and frequent breaking of bones.

Parents may have to overcome suspicions of child abuse first and then after convincing others of the "Brittle Bone Condition", find that groups such as school boards are reluctant to accept their children.

After information and emotional support, what can be done? OI is full of contradictions. Weight bearing stimulates bone growth; yet support may be required in the form of braces, splints, and internal "rods" and "nails". Devices designed to strengthen high stress areas may place undue burden on other areas causing fractures.

Growth, formation, reabsorption, and fractures during the growth years can, if not managed properly, lead to deformation. In later years osteoporosis may become a serious problem.

Research continues on several fronts. Bones are studied for rate of growth and how various drugs affect them. Problems in the transfer of the genetic code and possible sources of metabolic interference are under scrutiny. How should and how long should a bone be splinted? Are external supports as effective as internal?

Despite this rather grim scenario, life with proper treatment and consideration is not without its rewards. As one OI victim explained, "I'm not an egg."

If you wish further information, please contact me for the OI society nearest you.

### 25 year milestone

## Our man Myles has seen it all



Staff  
Comment

By ANI PEDORIAN

Myles Gilson is a rare bird in this day and age. He's been working for The Herald 25 years now, and that's something. I can't imagine being at the same job for that long. It sounds like forever.

When I first started at The Herald, I thought being at the same job a whole year would be something. I'd gone through summer jobs, glad for the last day, unable to imagine having to tolerate co-workers any longer.

Funny thing, eh? And here it is three years that I've been pounding these same typewriter keys and smiling good morning at much the same faces, including Myles.

Time does pass quickly, as they say. I'll bet Myles is surprised he's been working at The Herald for that stretch of time.

Twenty-five years ago, Myles came to Georgetown with a wife and two children, five and two years old. He tells me his hair was blonde then.

Today, it's getting on the white side, and his two daughters are both married and one of them has even made him a grandfather twice.

news copy from the typewriter was set in hot letters of lead which fit into a frame the size of an actual newspaper page.

That's why you had to be strong to work in the paper's composing room, back then, because each page of the paper ended up weighing around three times the weight of your wife, if not more. And there were 16 to 20 such pages to put together.

All these machines were disposed of in 1971 when The Herald switched to the offset system of putting out the paper, Myles said.

It was the end of the molten lead and the heavy frames. The Herald got rid of its three printing presses and eventually bought a half million dollar Goss Community Offset Press which could run off 18,000 copies an hour of a 16-page paper.

It sure made work a lot easier for Myles and the composing room gang.

Today, Myles does a lot of the camera work downstairs, with the Brown 3,000, a black monster that you don't carry around in your back pocket.

If you're interested in the olden days of putting out a paper, pop over and give Myles a tug on his apron strings. You're sure to get his attention. He's the only fellow who wears an apron regularly at work. And, don't forget to say "congratulations".

Back in those days,