

# HERALD FOCUS '86

Got a problem?

## They've got the answer

Acton has its own 'everything you want to know about' social services centre which is answering more questions to people's problems every year.

Because the Acton Social Services and Information Centre moved into the Town Hall on Willow Street recently, they are able to do more for the people of North Halton. Their main efforts are in community development.

Community development means improving the community by offering needed services to them. Sometimes they are services only available in the south. The centre helps bring them to the north.

Community development is also helping residents with welfare and other government forms. It is providing transportation to the south of Halton and putting people with problems in touch with people who can help them. The Acton Social Services and Information Centre does all this and more.

The centre was responsible for starting the Block Parent program and Meals on Wheels. In addition to being the creator of programs, they assist established social agencies who need a place to work from in Acton.

When the centre opened 10 years ago, it was a place for people to meet, Peggie Balkind said. Mrs. Balkind is the executive director of the centre. "People were meeting in cars before the centre opened," she said.

People working with welfare, public health, children's aid needed somewhere to talk with clients. The first meeting place was renovated room in the back of Acton's YMCA.

In 1982 the centre moved to a store front on Mill Street and business went up 49 per cent. The hidden office at the Y, which the centre had rent free in return for staff working as receptionists for the Y, was not in a prominent enough place to attract visitors. Nor was the Y office space large enough to achieve what the centre wanted.

Being in the Town Hall is a high profile location. The publicity surrounding the opening of the hall makes the staff confident that everyone knows about it, Mrs. Balkind said.

The bigger building is perhaps too big for the staff of three. "We are at a catch-up stage," Mrs. Balkind said.

The building may be too big for the present staff of one full-time worker and two part-time workers, but it is not too large for the needs of North Halton. The centre is a very active place.

So active, Mrs. Balkind needs her

part-time staff on full-time, she said. "We're hoping to get provincial funding. We really need more man-hours," she said.

The centre is funded mainly by the region, community donations and rent paid by the agencies who use it. Peggie Balkind has been with the centre for five years and is the only full-time employee. Eileen Dix and Carol Clark are part-time employees and have been with the centre for less than three years.

The greatest need in North Halton and everywhere is housing, Mrs. Balkind said. "If we had that problem solved it would look after a lot of other problems," she said.

There are shortages of affordable housing. Eileen Dix represents the centre on the Task Force for Emergency Shelter. The task force feels there is an urgent need for an emergency shelter as well as short term and long term affordable housing.

The need is there and the centre is working to solve that need. That is the mandate of the three staff members and over 60 volunteers of the centre.

Hours of the centre are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Once a week the staff closes for lunch if they can afford the time off, Mrs. Balkind said. The centre is also used in the evenings by appointment.

## Just settlement once

The man after whom Georgetown is named George Kennedy, was one of a group of settlers who came to Esqueping Township from the Niagara region. George's father, like many others in that neighborhood, had been a United Empire Loyalist and George, along with several brothers, had participated in the War of 1812. George's legacy of a stint in the Artillery was partial blindness in both eyes.

After the war, older brother Charles Kennedy was hired to survey part of one of the new townships the government had purchased from the Indians. In the process he identified some of the best land and shortly before the survey was completed, about 1819 - 1820, five Kennedy brothers claimed land in the neighborhood of Georgetown: George, Morris, Charles, Samuel and John. In addition, their brother-in-law, Banajah Williams came to settle in the area now known as Glen Williams.

As the community grew up around the Kennedy settlement, George expanded his activities to include not just farming but milling, using power provided by Silver Creek, subsidiary of the Credit River. He is reputed to have run one of the first grist mills in the area and in the 1840's was complimented for some prize-winning wool produced at his local factory.

When Georgetown was booming in the 1850's George had much of his land surveyed into town lots and named the streets after his children. He died in 1870 having seen the community grow from a wilderness into a thriving centre of farming and commerce.

The Kennedy family would not build Georgetown on their own. In 1837 the Barber brothers moved to the area from Dundas, the first of several generations who would contribute to the history of the community. In the 1850's the Barber Mills produced more wallpaper than any other place in the province, and by the late 1880's the Barbours may have been the first to harness hydro electric power for manufacturing in North America. Other pioneers included James Young, grain and general merchant (the village's first reeve), and Philo Dayfoot, founder of the local leather industry.

Georgetown became the railroad centre of the area after the opening of the Grand Trunk Railway in 1856 and the Hamilton and Northwestern Railway some 20 years later. A third rail connection was the Toronto Suburban Railway inaugurated in 1917. These brought plenty of business to hotels like the Railroad Exchange, and the Clark and Bennett Houses, where travelling salesmen would rub elbows at the bar with local farmers who came to town to sell their produce and pick up supplies.

From the days of the pioneers, Georgetown grew rapidly into an important community. Nearly 700 had arrived by 1845 and when Georgetown was finally incorporated as a village in 1864, there were about 1,400 people, rivalling Oakville as the largest community in Halton County. Over the following century the community grew steadily, becoming a town in 1922.

By the end of World War II, almost 4,000 people called Georgetown 'home'. This rapidly changed in the next few years after the arrival of Rex Heslop and the transformation of the farms on the eastern edge of town into the Delrex subdivision. A second population boom followed, with many residents now commuting to jobs in Malton and Toronto. By the time regional government was introduced in 1974, Georgetown had expanded into a sizable centre and today, Georgetown, Acton, Norval and surrounding Esqueping Township make up the larger corporation, the Town of Halton Hills.

—By Walter Lewis, Esqueping Historical Society.

## Society 11 years old

The Esqueping Historical Society was founded in 1975. It encourages the appreciation of the past in the area encompassing the former Township of Esqueping, including Georgetown and Acton. Activities include regular meetings, walking tours, publications, contests, and the development of a local archives with the Halton Hills Public Libraries. For membership or historical reference, write to the society at P.O. Box 51, Georgetown, Ontario, L7G 4T1.

## No complaints about dollar

The poor shape of the Canadian dollar is turning out to be a boon for at least one Georgetown company.

Pacline Overhead Conveyor Corporation on Armstrong Avenue is finding it's doing a lot more business in the United States thanks to the declining Canadian dollar relative to the U.S. dollar.

The company's general manager Paul Geddes said the firm will be going to 12 trade shows this year, many of them in the States.

Pacline manufactures overhead conveyors for use by other manufacturers. Mr. Geddes said the overhead conveyors carry products differently from the typical conveyor belt seen in assembly lines. Instead of the product sitting on the conveyor, it hangs from above.

This is great for a company involved in painting products like furniture or auto parts. A small hole built in the item to be painted allows for it to be hooked onto the Pacline overhead conveyor.

Started up in 1979, the company moved shortly thereafter to Georgetown from Toronto. "We moved here because it was away from the main bustle and it was a nicer place to be," Mr. Geddes said.

Although they've installed systems in Europe, Pakistan and Russia, much of the market is in the industrial parts of Canada and the U.S. for Pacline.

Among their customers can be counted the Ford Motor Company, the Chrysler Company, the St. Catharines foundry C.A.E. and Bell Helicopter of Montreal.

"We have quite a few installations in Brampton, with most of them in southern Ontario," Mr. Geddes said.

Because this is a competitive business, it makes it hard for Pacline to export its product, but the favorable

exchange rate is helping the company export into the U.S.

The trend is to more autonomy, and big companies prefer computers and robots, Mr. Geddes said. The overhead conveyors support that trend.

"The good thing about overhead conveyors is they free up the floor space and relieve the congestion," Mr. Geddes said. "That's one of the main pluses."

Each customer gets an individually designed conveyor system, made for the layout of their company, varying from 50 feet long to 1,000 feet long.

Pacline employs six staff in Georgetown and a two-person installation crew which is on the road. The company has distributors across Canada and in parts of the U.S.

Pacline was started up by Paul Geddes and his father Lorne. The older Geddes had been working with conveyor systems all his life and owned a similar company in Montreal before selling it. The company has since gone out of business, Paul said.

## Clean air a growing concern

By BRIAN MACLEOD  
Herald Special

Few people would compromise the quality of the air in Canada and CJB Associates Inc. has set up shop in Georgetown to supply the information needed to keep the air clean.

Colin Baynes opened his one-man company on RR2, Georgetown in 1982. There proved to be a great need for his services. A long client list has kept him busy since the company's inception. Mr. Baynes' consulting firm provides information about air quality to

government, private industry and public interest groups. His list of clients ranges from the Ontario Waste Management Corporation to Eldonado Resources in Ottawa, and some overseas work. "Most of my clients are in Toronto, out West and in the States," he said.

He explained the reason he set up in Georgetown is because "I live here and it is in close proximity to most of my clients."

Mr. Baynes' work is mostly research oriented. The majority of his work consists of "establishing what the



SIGNING ON—The 1986 executive board of the Acton Social Services and Information Centre met for the first time last Wednesday with Lorne

Dobertshen back at the helm: Joining the chairman are: (sitting, front row, left to right) Nancy Mossip, Rev. Jean Stairs, Marlon Patterson,

(middle) Margaret Tamblin, Elly Tuitman, (back row) Gerald Renne, Hartley Coles, Lorne Dobertshen, David Stuckley, Peter Marks, Ross Knechtel. (Herald photo)

## ParkThermal

### Gets million dollar contract

The trucks are on their way to sunny California, bearing the pieces that will take six people a month to install at Garret Aerospace.

For Park Thermal Ltd. of Georgetown's Todd Road, this is the biggest contract ever, worth \$1.3 million.

The company has designed an automated dip brazing facility for processing waveguides. Waveguides are aluminum parts used by the air research manufacturing division of Garret Aerospace.

A manufacturer of industrial heat treating furnaces, Park Thermal's automated dip brazing facility heats up the waveguides in a special oven. The heat treating makes the aluminum parts stronger and more durable.

The specially designed facility next takes these waveguides along the overhead monorail to a second station where it dips them into a salt bath just as hot as the oven. The aluminum parts then go to the third station where they're air-cooled and quench-washed. Finally, a robot blows the salt off the waveguides.

Company president Brian Reid of Port Credit admits it's a complicated process. He says working with sophisticated computers and creating automated systems have added a new dimension to his company.

Everything Park Thermal produces is custom-made. The basic ideas of heat treating are molded to applications in the plating trade, and the plastics and automotive industries. In fact, 90 per cent of the component parts in your car were processed in a furnace Park Thermal may have made.

A tall, energetic businessman, Mr. Reid has been company president for the past 12 years, ever since his dad, founder of the company, stepped down to become chairman of the board.

Started up in 1968, Park Thermal began by manufacturing industrially used heat-treating furnaces, as well as related metallurgical items like a salt-quenching oil, stop-off points, catalysts and stainless steel foil. There are about 200 items the company sells, which are related to the heat treating of metal, Mr. Reid said.

Most people think of furnaces as having a steel shell and a brick inside.



Brian Reid

Not Park Thermal. They recently built a huge furnace in Cambridge that's the state-of-the-art. Instead of brick, the interior is ceramic fibre insulation, which guarantees a fast heating up and cooling down time. Computer controlled, this furnace is 50 feet long.

The company does all its own electrical work, designing control panels. Its staff of 22 includes three engineers and two draftsmen.

Along with designing and supplying the equipment, Park Thermal also installs it and trains staff on how to use the new facility.

Park Thermal's customers are located across the country and even around the world.

"We're doing a lot of export work to places like the States, Costa Rica, Manila, Bangladesh, West Germany and Jamaica," Mr. Reid said.

They deal with really small tool

and die shops and with huge corporations like General Motors of Canada Ltd., and even with the Winnipeg and Ottawa Royal Canadian Mints. At the mints, Park Thermal has furnaces for the processing of the dies.

"Every time a nickle is struck, it's done with a die," Mr. Reid explained. "The dies must be very hard to be able to do that so many times a day."

The company is also getting into the rubber curing business in a big way now, selling a lot of salt to companies like Tridon. Park Thermal also sells salt to the eye glass lens manufacturers who use it to temper the lenses and improve the shatterability of them.

The company blends its own salt formulas for tempering purposes.

In the course of a year, Park Thermal does about 50 systems, Mr. Reid said and they range from \$2,000 orders to \$100,000 ones, and now \$1.3 million jobs.

The company deals with many aircraft manufacturing companies like Bristol Aerospace in Winnipeg, de Havilland, Douglas Aircraft, Air Canada.

Four years ago the company expanded its building on Todd Road, and Mr. Reid says there'll be another expansion in the works this year, possibly doubling the size of the operation, and increasing staff by eight.

"So the future is exciting for us," he exclaimed. "We have gained the industrial acceptance of the marketplace. That's really a key statement."

## Kids on the Block may have friends

Halton Hills may be buying some lifeseize dolls come budget time.

The dolls aren't intended to entertain children but to entertain children in North Halton.

Three local women made a plea for whatever funds council could spare towards the "Kids on the Block" troupe of puppets.

Benny MacLeod, Darlowe Balsille and Cathy Hawkins said the puppets are used to teach children about the needs and problems of the handicapped. Through their dialogue with each other and the children in the audience, they answer questions and calm the fears often felt by children towards those with disabilities.

So far, the one-year-old "Kids on the Block" Committee in North Halton has two of these dolls, who wear children's clothes, in their kit. They need at least one more puppet to be able to put on educational programs, which they intend to stage in classrooms this September.

January, the Committee learned the Spina Bifida Association was donating "Valerie", and the Kiwanis

Club have said they'll donate "Joanne", two dolls with a handicap. Now, a normal doll is needed to react on stage with Joanne and Valerie.

The puppets don't come cheap. According to Mrs. MacLeod, these three foot tall puppets cost about \$1,000 U.S. each. The North Halton Committee has raised \$1,000 and hopes to raise even more so that they can have a troupe of five to six puppets out of a possible 28.

"I think this would be a worthwhile project for the Halton boards of education to get involved in because it's educational," Coun. Betty Fisher said Monday night.

Cathy Hawkins, a teacher of the deaf at E.C. Drury, said they weren't able to get any funding from the boards although the boards acknowledged the benefit of the Kids on the Block program.

Part of the reason is that the puppets aren't just to be used in classrooms, but are also to speak to children in libraries, parks, fairs and churches, Ms. Hawkins said.

The puppets speak in a language children can understand.

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## Fibre optics: a staple in the communications diet



Mike Waterstrat is a drafting engineer with Rockwell in Georgetown. Here, he's seen busy at his

computer terminal putting his ideas and concept onto the screen. (Herald photo)

The Georgetown facility of Rockwell is a part of the Rockwell Telecom group. We design and manufacture telecommunication products. We ship across Canada and export into the US and UK. A wide variety of systems and modules for various telephone companies are manufactured in Georgetown. One example of the type of product produced and designed in Georgetown is an Air-to-Ground system that enables telephone calls to be made from aircraft in flight.

The Georgetown location opened in 1977 with a total staff of 25. Through the years we have expanded our facility and now have a total staff of 106. Our General Manager, Mike Pascoe, has both marketing and engineering background, which has enabled us to move quickly in the telecommunications industry. The telecommunications indus-

try's major trend today is the rapid move towards fibre optics transmission. With the recent advent of cost effective fibre cable and electronics, every telephone company in Canada has already installed many fibre networks, and future plans are already in place to install more and more fibre. Also, customer's networks will evolve so that products not on the market today will also be in demand.

The future of our business in Canada will be greatly impacted by the installation of fibre optics. We can see the day when we are manufacturing fibre optics electronic terminals at our Georgetown facility. Customer's requirements which are not yet on the market, will also allow us to develop and manufacture new products. We estimate that almost 70% of our business three (3) years from now will be for products that do not exist today.



Jean Puckering is a systems assembler, seen here at work putting

together one of the many products made at Rockwell in Georgetown. (Herald photo)