

## Oxbow specializes in rare commodities

By CHARLIE GIBBS  
Herald Special

If it wasn't for Georgetown's Oxbow Books, residents of Halton Hills would have to travel to Guelph or Brampton for their out-of-print book needs.

This is a fact which Norman Holt, manager of the Main Street store for seven years, states with pride.

"There are very few out-of-print bookshops in our area," Mr. Holt said. "People will come many miles for them."

Mr. Holt and his wife, Ruth, have been managing Oxbow Books since they purchased the business in 1980 from Mrs. Zoe Belamy, wife of the former math teacher at Georgetown District High School. At the time, the store was called "The Book Shop", and had been in operation for almost a decade.

The Belamy's are now a retired couple in British Columbia, while the Holt's are continually expanding and revising Georgetown's only new and out-of-print book store.

"I started to deal with out-of-print books because I've always been interested in them," Mr. Holt said. "It's more of a hobby than anything else."

Though primarily a new book store, Mr. Holt plans to expand his collection of old books, which range in subject materials and date back to the 1830's. Oxbow Books is known in the "book circles" as a business specializing in out-of-print Geography texts and references. The collection is exclusively non-fiction.

Other topics in the section include social and military history, Canadiana and outdoor-related topics.

What sort of people buy out-of-print books?

"It's very often a personal whim," Mr. Holt explains. "We had a couple



Norman Holt has been managing Oxbow Books in Georgetown with his wife, Ruth, for nine years. His store on Main Street is one of a very few number of book stores which feature both new and out-of-print merchandise. (Photo by Charlie Gibbs)

from New York State recently looking for particular books".

Mr. Holt also buys out-of-print books from the community, and will search for one in particular if a customer wants it.

The name Oxbow Books comes from the geography term for horseshoe-shaped lakes, caused by a meandering river. Oxbow Book's logo, which is found on all the bookmarks the business distributes

with purchases, is a stylized version of this phenomenon. Mr. Holt has a Geography degree from York University.

Mr. Holt moved to Canada in the mid-60's, after several years of journalism and publishing experience in London, England. He worked in Toronto as a freelance publisher of school texts before establishing in Georgetown. The Holt's have two children: Erica, 18 and Mark, 16.

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## North Star offers vast experience

Experience and same-day service are perhaps the best qualities of North Star Dry Cleaners, Main Street, Georgetown, owned by Bob and Anne O'Neill.

Mr. O'Neill has been in the cleaning business for 23 years and the couple, with their two children, Mark, 12, and Daphne, 5, have lived in Georgetown for 13 years.

North Star Dry Cleaners have a staff of four providing same-day service six days per week if the cleaning reaches the store by 11 a.m. Their services include dry cleaning, shirt laundry, repairs and alterations, suede and leather cleaning and feather pillow cleaning.

A new, up-to-date cleaning machine is being installed this month, which the O'Neills are hoping will contribute to their already growing business.

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