

Books on the move

"Coming a long way" would be an understatement when talking about the Georgetown Terminal Warehouse located on 34 Armstrong Avenue.

The warehouse is well-known for supplying paperback books from several publishing companies to bookstores all across Canada. A few of the publishers they represent include Berkley, Warner, Barrons, and Childcraft.

The two managers, Lois Fraser and Branda Sissett work for the owner, who is also their mother, Norma Elliott.

Georgetown has been an excellent location for this business because all of the management live in Georgetown. This helps many of the workers who don't have to commute out of Georgetown for another job in the Toronto area.

Georgetown has all of the advantages being so close to Toronto including a good labor market in the immediate area and a "small town atmosphere" which Ms. Fraser says is good for the Terminal Warehouse and other businesses in the area.

There are several reasons why Ms. Fraser believes Georgetown is turning into such an industrial

town. The first is that there is always very good co-operation from other businesses in Halton Hills.

The Terminal Warehouse is not able to sell the books in their possession to the public. The warehouse does not own the books they handle because it is an order fulfillment business in the book industry, which helps the publisher supply their product across Canada.

Georgetown Terminal Warehouse has been in the business for 30 years but 1988 was their biggest year yet. There was extremely significant growth and change within the company which included an expansion of employees which grew from 90 to 130 in the past year alone, and 10,000 orders are now being processed per month. That equals a tractor-trailer load of books every day. During 1988 three new publishers were added to the clientele which was responsible for the majority of last year's growth.

The warehouse area hasn't expanded and Ms. Fraser said that it is unlikely that any new expansion will be added. A new work shift is likely to come into effect to meet the demand.

One Million people take in silver screen stars every year

Shane Murphy has been managing the Georgetown Cinemas for the past three years. He started in the theatre business back in 1976, in North Bay, where he was living at the time. A native of Orillia, Shane is the son of an Armed Forces family and has lived all around Ontario.

Shane was drawn into the cinemas by the glamor of the North Bay theatre. Built in 1929, it had a 1,400 seat auditorium, an orchestra pit, and three floors of dressing rooms. It is now the local art centre. Shane worked there as a teenager and was attracted by the prestige of the manager's job. However, managing Georgetown's cinemas isn't quite the same thing.

"That was a real theatre. I like a movie screen to be 20x35 ft. You couldn't see Lawrence of Arabia on these screens; they wouldn't do it justice."

However, Shane loves Georgetown and likes meeting people. He has nearly one million customers passing through the theatres every year; he meets a lot of people. He is proud that he has maintained a family atmosphere in his cinema. "Families come from Milton and Brampton to see our movies; they don't want their kids in the local cinemas in those towns. I'll never let druggies and skinheads take over in here."

Originally a Cineplex, the Georgetown Cinema is now part of the Ontario Cinemas chain, a series of nine movie houses, with the head office in Toronto. The chain is owned by Norman Stern. While Shane may suggest movies to play in Georgetown, he has no real control over what comes here. There are various distributing contracts that regulate what we see. He knows what will and won't sell in town; restricted films are always a bad bet for Georgetown;

the main audience is in the 13-22 year old group.

There is a staff of 20 for the 960 seat theatre. Mr. Murphy hires mostly teenagers, and tries to make the cinema "a fun place to work. The pay is about minimum wage, so I want to do my best to keep the staff happy." The theatre is 10 years old, and Shane would like to see a lot of renovations made. So far he has had the seats reupholstered, but there has been some problems with vandalism.

Due to the commissions paid to movie distributors, the bulk of the profits come from the confection stand. "Candy is our bread and butter. Drinks are our biggest seller. Popcorn is a real impulse item. People come in and smell it and want to have some. But we find a lot of nearly full bags at the end of the show; people just buy it on impulse, because it smells so good."

However, the popcorn doesn't just smell good; it tastes good. They use only real butter, and Shane has a special way of using his expensive popper to create lighter, airier popcorn. "I have always tried to sell the best popcorn of any cinema in town. I think I sell the best popcorn in the area. The popcorn is always fresh and there will never be any pre-bagged

popcorn sold here."

Ironically, Shane rarely sees any of the movies in his own theatre. He finds he is too busy, and can't rely on seeing a movie through its entirety, even on a slow day. Yet he loves movies. Going to other theatres always seems to be a "busman's holiday for me - I'm too aware of what's going on." The solution? Three VCRs of course. And a personal collection of nearly 500 movies. His favorites? "Lawrence of Arabia and The Right Stuff." He rents videos from one of the local stores twice a week and settles down to watch them undisturbed.

The Murphys were a musical family; his father played guitar professionally and his mother was a mezzo-soprano at the Chicago Metropolitan Opera. Shane himself loves movies and aviation. He wants to get back into gliding, a hobby he practised as a teenager. This is the big drawback to his profession: "You have little time for family or social life, you're always busy on the weekends. Friday and Saturday are the busiest nights here and this is where I have to be." He'd like to move into another business eventually, one with regular hours and free weekends. Maybe even something with a little glamor again.



Brenda Sissett and Lois Fraser look after the day-to-day operations of Elliott Custom Brokers and Storage Ltd. at Georgetown Terminal Warehouse. The business moves about a tractor-trailer load of books out of the warehouse every day. (Herald photo)

"How to hire" seminar

The Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the Federal Business Development Bank is pleased to be offering a one-day seminar on Hiring And Recruiting Personnel.

This one-day seminar commencing at 9 a.m. at the North Halton Golf Club is an excellent opportunity for you and your company to improve hiring skills. The

cost of the seminar is \$95 and includes lunch.

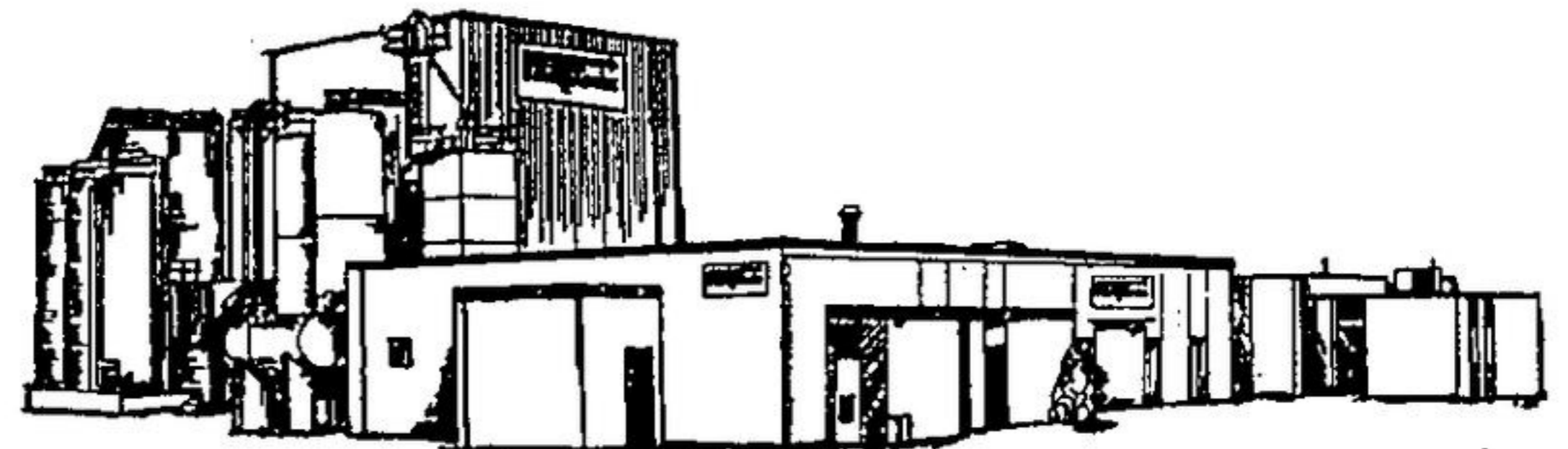
This important seminar will be held May 10, at the North Halton Golf and Country Club located at Maple Avenue. The \$95 cost includes lunch and all course materials. Don't delay as seating is limited to 25 participants. Please call the Chamber at 877-7119 for more information.

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