



"OUTLOOK" is published each Saturday by the HALTON HILLS HERALD, Home Newspaper of Halton Hills, A Division of Canadian Newspapers Company Limited, at 45 Guelph Street, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 3Z6.

Second Class Mail - Registered Number 0943.

877-2201 877-8822

PUBLISHER
David A. Beattie
EDITOR
Brian MacLeod
AD MANAGER
Dan Taylor

STAFF WRITERS
Ben Dummett Donna Kell
SPORTS WRITER
Paul Svoboda
ACCOUNTING
June Glendenning Joan Mannall
CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING
Tammy Salt

ADVERTISING SALES
Jeannine Valois Craig Teeter
Stacie Roberts

PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT
Dave Hastings, Supt. Annie Olsen
Myles Gilson Susanne Wilson

CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT
Marie Shadbolt

PRESSROOM FOREMAN
Brian Aikman

PRESS ASSISTANT
Lee Bittner

Military bases close

By GIL HARDY
Ottawa Bureau
Thomson News Service

OTTAWA-The people of Gimli, Man., know exactly what several communities are going through as they reel from the announced closing of the local military base.

The April 27 federal budget contained the startling news that bases in Summerside, P.E.I., Portage La Prairie, Man., and London, Ont., would be closed. Smaller stations in Sydney and Barrington, N.S., Mont Apica, Que., and on Vancouver Island also will close.

Seven other bases and stations will be scaled down. The cutbacks are expected to save the Defence Department \$3.14 billion over the next 15 years.

Gimli residents recall what it was like to lose an important piece of the community.

They, too, were shocked when the federal government decided to close CFB Gimli in 1971. They, too, formed committees and went to Ottawa to fight for their town's survival.

Despite their protests, the base and the money it poured into the local economy were lost. But the town survived and prospers today, thanks to the determination of the residents and a massive injection of government funds.

"My indication is that the town actually prospered, maybe even as a result of the closure because people were forced to do other things," says Jim Dunlop, who was base commander when Gimli closed. "The town is quite healthy now."

Dunlop is manager of Gimli Properties, the provincially owned company that took over the base after the military moved out. He is in the process of selling off the remainder of the property, which has been in Manitoba's hands since 1971.

Gimli, located on the southwestern shores of Lake Winnipeg, was a NATO flight-training base and dated back to the Second World War. Dunlop isn't sure, but estimates that there were some 300 military and civilian personnel employed there.

The Town of Gimli and the adjacent rural municipality of Gimli have a combined population of about 4,000, roughly the same as

1971. The base was the area's largest industry.

'QUITE A SHOCK'
"It was (a) tremendous (blow) at that time," says Danny Sigmundson, who was Gimli's mayor in 1971. He estimated the base contributed \$10 million annually to the local economy.

"It's quite a shock when your only industry shuts down," says Sigmundson.

He recalls it took at least six years for the community to recover.

Gimli politicians and residents formed a committee to fight the closing. The local MP was deeply involved and when the committee went to Ottawa it was accompanied by Edward Schreyer, then premier of Manitoba.

Despite the high-powered help, the committee ran into a brick wall, Sigmundson says. "It was no use even talking to them. They wouldn't even listen."

The federal government gave Gimli \$1.4 million in compensation. The money was used to revamp the waterfront, buy a trailer park and make improvements to the town's infrastructure to attract tourists and new businesses.

The base was turned over to the province, with Ottawa providing another \$1.5 million over five years for maintenance. Manitoba was responsible for operating costs.

Part of CFB Gimli was converted into an industrial park and attracted a few new industries within a year. Sigurdson estimates that Manitoba poured well over \$30 million into the park and most of that went to Saunders Aircraft.

Saunders was going to manufacture aircraft in Gimli but went bankrupt in 1975, says Dunlop. A number of other early ventures went "belly-up," but there have been some successes.

CN SCHOOL
Canadian National Railways established a training school for train crews and the province financed a \$2.5-million complex for them. CN leases the complex from the province.

"We've been reasonable successful," says Dunlop, who retired from the military and returned to manage his base in its new role as the Gimli Industrial Park. "We

keep an average of about 25 tenants and of those 25, about 10 are industries.

"I'm the permanent base commander," he says with a laugh.

Most of the companies are small "cottage-type" operations, although some are larger. They include a flying school, a fiberglass manufacturer and a boat repair business.

Dunlop estimates the industrial park is operating at about 80-per-cent capacity.

"The province has done a fair amount to attract outsiders. We've had promises of big outfits but they never came to fruition so the small ones have kept us going."

However, other industries arrived to help fill the vacuum left by the base closing, including a Seagram's distillery.

Dunlop says it helped that farming and fishing jobs existed as alternatives. People "had things to do" until new industrial jobs arrived.

About two dozen base personnel took early retirement and settled in Gimli with their families, says Diane Hall, who works at the town hall. Her husband was an electronics technician at the base. He left the armed forces, went to college and opened his own business in Gimli.

Base houses were at first rented out; then converted to condominiums and sold off by the provincial housing department. The barracks occasionally house people attending seminars.

They have also served as temporary homes for flood and forest fire victims from Manitoba and Northern Ontario.

The property has run a deficit since Manitoba took it over, says Dunlop. In 1985, it was decided to sell it off to tenants.

Dunlop was as shocked as anyone when Gimli's closing was announced. Today, as he presides over the final dismemberment of his old base, he is more philosophical.

"There was the usual hue and cry anytime any of us get something taken away by government. I guess if you're vocal enough and have enough pull, you can get something back, but normally, it's already done."

Get ready to study

GDHS Report

by MICHELLE ROUILLARD

Hello fellow students, and how are you? I'm fine, thanks for asking.

There is a question on everybody's mind: "Just how soon should I start studying for this year's exams?" Am I right? Well, let me tell you, you should have started at the beginning of the semester sorting your notes; putting them in the correct order; going through the notes and highlighting the "main points"; asking your teacher about everything and anything that isn't really clear to you; memorizing and rewriting those notes which cause you any problems; and then finally, totally prepared for the exams, receive a 98 per cent. Does anybody actually do this? Let's face it, the majority of students wait until the night before the actual exam (but not until Knot's Landing is over) to start studying. Am I speaking from personal experience? Um... no, of course not!

Yes, there is less than a month of school before exams start, but if you think that you have it bad, think again. Thirty years ago, students just like us (except for the poodle skirts) dreaded the end of the year, and getting their report cards. This was because this newspaper printed every last mark they had gotten for everyone to see. But, they rallied together and had it changed so that we, the students of the eighties and nineties, don't have to worry.

I'd like to ask a question: what is the reason for our SADD group had to change its name to OSAD (Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving)? I've heard that the United States members of the group had a court injunction saying that we couldn't use their slogan. This doesn't make any sense to me. Isn't SADD, in Canada or the U.S., supposed to be working towards the same goal no matter what country they're in. I think that the U.S. should be spending their time on more practical work instead of making a big deal over a little name.

Have an incredible weekend and don't forget to go to Bang-O-Rama.

'Wonderful sport, darts'



Weir's View

By Ian Weir
Thomson News Service

who can look down and see his feet. It's almost enough to make you think there's some justice in this world.

The plain fact is that every Canadian male cherishes the belief that he was once a promising athlete, and that he could excel once again were he only able to find the right niche.

Put any group of old friends together, and the talk will sooner or later turn to the grand old days when they all played hockey. There'll be misty-eyed reminiscences about that bygone championship game when such brilliant feats were performed.

Somehow or other, no one will get round to mentioning that this was back in pee-wees.

I had a fascinating experience with this phenomenon a few months ago, when I spent an evening in the pub with some old team-mates from a bantam second all-star team.

By 10 o'clock, it had become a juvenile first all-star team. By midnight, we were playing junior. If they hadn't shut down the bar, we'd have made it to the NHL.

Once you've finally admitted that you peaked as a hockey player at the age of 11, you try to pin your hopes on another sport. Like (shudder) golf.

I've tried hard to become a brilliant golfer. I've spent weekend after weekend on the course - or, at least, in the adjacent woods.

And years of dedication have resulted in nothing but a 22-handicap and a certain small expertise as a forest ranger.

But finally, the blessed truth emerges. I am not - as our fitness-crazed society would have me believe - just an overweight and out-of-shape ex-would-be-athlete.

On the contrary: I am a man whose long and close association with the Molsons Corporation has led to the sort of physique which distinguishes the world's finest darts players.

And make no mistake - those long years of training were hard. But they've paid off in the end.

And also in the middle, which is more to the point.

Wonderful sport, darts. Wonderful, wonderful sport.

Kinda wish I knew how to play it.

Canadians need to read and write

To look at the numbers, you would think we're a nation of dunces, incapable of being trained or educated. Perhaps the racial theorists are right: we're not as smart as the Japanese.

That's nonsense, of course. Yet, nearly a quarter of us - 4.5-million Canadians - are functionally illiterate. Our skills are weak, too. All over the country, businesses are looking for skilled workers and not finding them.

Thousands of people with insufficient job skills languish on the unemployment rolls, adding to the national debt burden. Government training programs do not seem to work.

The problems are manifold. As a nation, we do not put enough emphasis on higher education. Even our public school system is weak and disorganized, with a few heartening examples. In all schools in Canada, students are taught reading, writing and arithmetic. In the best schools, they actually learn it.

The best schools also teach critical thinking, problem solving and analysis. They teach kids to use all the fancy new high-tech work aids, from computers to videos. Most children, though, are short-changed by the system.



Your Business

Diane Maley
Thomson News Service

DEFINE ROLES

Federal government spending on training programs has contracted - in inflation-adjusted terms - throughout the 1980s. What training there is is often inappropriate, ill-conceived or otherwise inadequate.

The number of students in government-sponsored training programs tumbled to 133,300 in 1987 from 236,500 in 1978, according to the Quarterly Labor Market and Productivity Review. The number of students in skill-training courses shrank from 125,100 to 42,100.

That's not a bad thing. A recent report by the Organization of Economic Co-Operation and Development shows that Canadian productivity was among the worst in the industrial world last year. Rather than turning to the federal government to solve the problem, we should look to the people who need workers.

Education is the realm of government; job training belongs to business. Ottawa and the provinces should pull out of apprenticeship and skill-training courses entirely, devoting what money they have to basic education. Once everyone can read, write, add a column of numbers and think, government can shift its focus to higher education.

FREE SCHOOL

Imagine a country where university education was free. There's no reason why it should not be.

Government would continue to help train doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects and scientists through the university grant system. But the trades would fall to craft guilds and business.

As it stands now, business people complain that schools are not teaching kids how to be entrepreneurs. Why should they? What would the kids have to give up to find time to practise capitalism?

The country would be better served if schools stuck to theory and left the practice for the real world, as business likes to think of itself. Skill training is narrowly focused. Liberal arts education is useful for everyone.