

Party lights are dimming

By STEAMER EMMERSON

Last Saturday, Art Scott celebrated his 80th birthday. Gosh I wish I hadn't dozed off and forgotten about it. I had it marked on the calendar, had every intention of going but after supper my party lights went out.

Why, at one time when Art and my father-in-law were big in the car business, my party lights glowed.

Edna St. Vincent Millay wrote:

My candle burns at both ends,

It will not last the night,

But oh my foes and oh my friends,

It gives a lovely light.

Art should have invited Edna. Sounds to me like a real party-type.

Art and Myrt were the Chev-Olds/G.M. dealers at the corner of Guelph and Queen St. just across from St. George's Anglican Church.

This was a time right after the war, and companies were changing from manufacturing tanks to trucks, cars, convertibles and tractors.

You lined up to place an order, you bought sight unseen over the phone. Sometimes extra cash was offered to speed up an order. It was wheeling-dealing time.

Benjamin Franklin wrote "There are three things in life; a good wife, a good dog and ready cash! Ben was right. Why, Art and I have seen wonders worked when large rolls of cash were thrown on the table.

Let me tell you what happened to me at my father-in-law's place of business.

This story deals with Art in a way and he certainly was the motivating factor in us accepting a deal which was just a little different than most. No trade, cash, quick and out the showroom door.

At the south end of Main Street today, Young's Restaurant was owned by Freddie Lee. No bigger than a Chinese fortune cookie, Freddie poured coffee each morning for the business moguls of the day. Every local political problem was solved, deals were made, insurance was sold and what the Herald couldn't print you heard it in Freddie's. It was the happy hour in those days.

The fun really started one morning when Freddie whispered above the gaggle of gossip that he was in the market for a new car.

I felt it was my duty to tell him about the long wait at the other dealerships (Arts) but if he hurried right over after the coffee break I had a beauty I might be able to drive his way.

On the showroom floor was a brand new Meteor, light blue sedan with overdrive. Before we had half toured the town (we bypassed Art's dealership) Freddie announced "Me buy, me buy."

Naturally, I was delighted that he was a buyer and not a shopper.

In a matter of minutes I had the order written up, new plates put on, gas in the tank and politely asked for Freddie's cheque.

With a flurry he signed his signature in Chinese and handed over the cheque. God, I was thunderstruck. It was \$500 short

of what I told him the price was.

When I pointed out this slight oversight he replied "You teach me drive, you teach me drive, I get licence you get \$500. Oh my goodness my father-in-law wasn't going to buy this deal, and guess who examined and issued drivers licences, you got it none other than Art Scott himself.

After my father-in-law came down to earth he said "You can teach him to drive but just make sure he can pass the test."

It was awful. Freddie couldn't steer, he couldn't back up, he was a disaster. Every night after he closed the restaurant at 11 p.m. I drove him up and down the Main drag because it had centre lights, then would ease him in behind the wheel.

I just closed my eyes and prayed whenever he wanted to slip it into overdrive.

The police were complaining about me teaching him to drive at midnight and later with no lights on, my father-in-law was complaining because my progress getting him licensed was so slow.

Oh, how I wished that morning he had whispered in Art's ear,

"Me buy new car, me buy new car."

One morning I went over to Al Zeravlev's body shop to check on some work Al was doing for us. His body shop was J.N. O'Neill's former blacksmith shop beside the Rebekah lodge today.

Chinese checkers, there was Freddie's lovely, lively pale blue Meteor massacred. A pile of junk. At first I was genuinely concerned but when Al told me Freddie was okay, I shouted with glee.

Freddie decided on his own to drive solo and under the stars and centre street lighting with no lights on and when he forgot how to brake correctly he hit the big maple in front of Knox Presbyterian Church kitty-corner from his restaurant.

Everything worked out well. My father-in-law got his \$500. I was released from my obligation and Freddie, well he went out and bought a red Chev Bel Aire.

I never asked him where he bought it or if he passed his driving examination.

I was going to ask Art at the party but like I say I couldn't get into overdrive.



Village Constable

No, Georgetown Village Constable isn't English. And no, he's not attempting to scare the "bloody 'ell" out of local residents. Instead, Constable Nick Leoni donned this turn-of-the-century English bobby's uniform to see how it fit since he'll be wearing the costume during Georgetown's downtown Pioneer Days festivities June 13-15. (Herald photo by Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot)

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