

COMMENT

Now and Then...



Original photo was taken around 1949 of Arthur Scott Motors Ltd. Chevrolet Oldsmobile dealer at the corner of Queen and Guelph Sts., Georgetown. Today the site sits vacant. The building still looks nearly identical more than 65 years later both in shape and form, except for one bay window in the bottom left of the image, which has been filled in over the years.

Then Photo Credit Esquesing Historical Society
Now Photo Credit Amy Douglas

From our readers



Judy Adam from Georgetown caught this glimpse of a Blue Jay holding two peanuts.

Have a photo you want to share?

Email with details please to cvernon@metroland.com

Crossing those rails, to and from town

One night last week, The Sidekick and I had to wait at a train crossing as we drove home.

Watching the train pass by, she asked Who do you suppose came up with the idea of a train running on tracks?

I sat there a minute, and a related question came to me: Good question. And how exactly did he manage to sell that concept to a bunch of investors, laying two rails of perfectly good steel on the ground, running for miles across the countryside?

I figured the first guy with the idea must have had quite a challenge. Let's face it, pitching the idea to a bunch of cynical investors. So we're going to mount them on wood posts set the same distance apart to extend for a few hundred miles to the next town

Right...

He was probably laughed out of town.

But obviously someone convinced someone else to invest some money into the idea, and now we have railroad crossings.

Back to The Sidekick's question, Who thought of it?

I wondered if the concept originated in the coal mines of the United Kingdom, when someone realized they could get a lot more productivity out of their child labor by loading the material in a bunch of little cars, and then letting the child laborers load and push them.

We continued on our way home as the crossing lights stopped flashing and the arms went back up.

Once home, The Sidekick researched the topic and learned the first railroad is attributed to some guy in England in the early 1800s.

Whenever I drive over that crossing I think of the numerous times I've crossed it.

One icy winter night when I was a teen, I had to drive my cousin home from visiting my sisters.

It was icy, and as we approached the crossing, the crossing lights started flashing and the arms came down.

I touched the brakes but the car wouldn't stop.

I pumped the brakes, doing all those things my driver training instructor had told me.

The car spun around 360 degrees before coming to rest in a perfect position in front of the arms.

My cousin told me I was a great driver.

It was hard to acknowledge her compliment with my heart still lodged in my throat.

Other thoughts were those days when my three oldest daughters were in their teens and all had part-time jobs. (At the time, my youngest daughter was too little to have a job, but the other three kept me busy enough.)

You see, I was their chauffer.

And they all worked at different places with different start and finish times.

One worked at McDonald's and loved to work the breakfast shift, which started at 6 a.m. Another worked retail in the mall, and started at 9 a.m. While another was at KFC and started work around noon.

Oh, and to make it worse, they all finished work at different times too.

So with three daughters going to and from work both Saturday and Sunday, I had three trips to and fro and the same when they finished work, which totalled 12 trips.

Factor in two days a weekend and I sometimes made up to 24 trips over that crossing in a weekend.

My all-time record for being stopped by a train on my way to or from was six times in one day.

That was the exception. Most days it was one, maybe two.

But those days are gone. I don't go to town nearly as much as I did before I retired.

However, whenever I cross them, I still have a warm fuzzy feeling thinking of the role that railroad crossing has played in my life.

But I'll admit one thing, I'm grateful my kids now drive themselves to work.



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