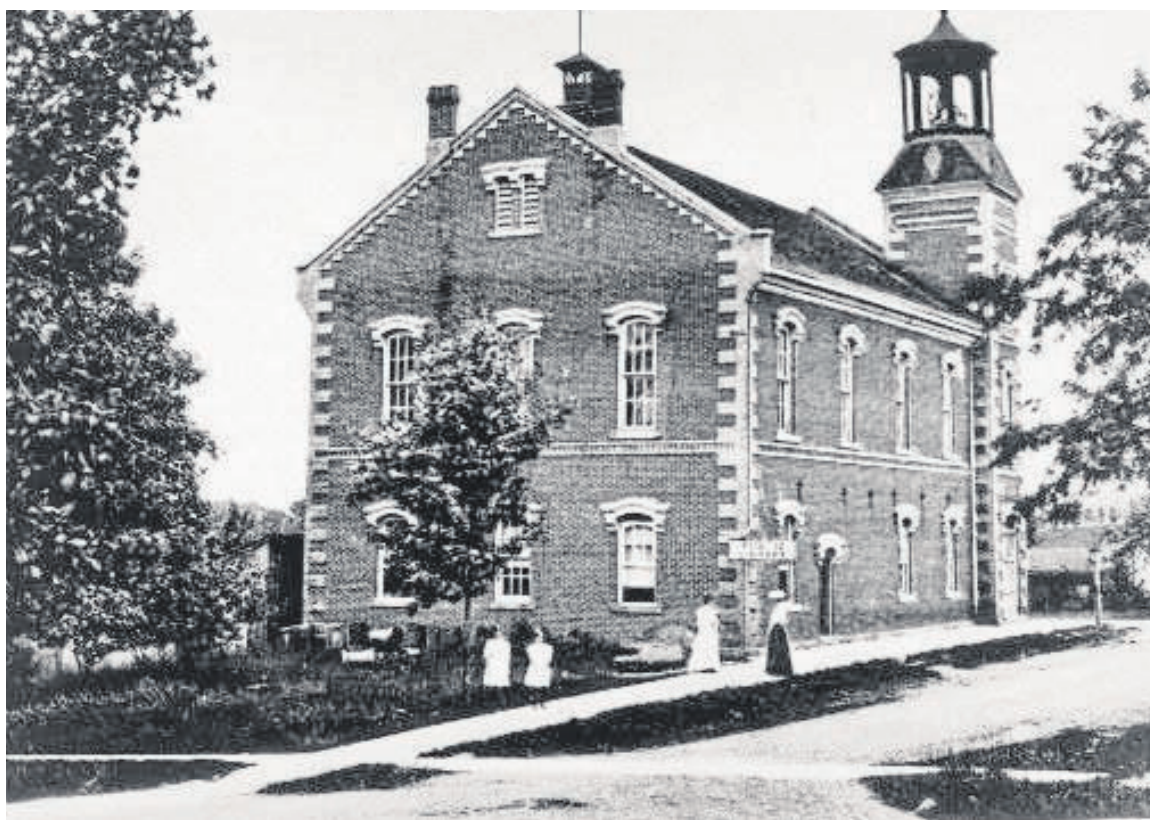


THE WAY WE WERE

Standing at the corner of Guelph and Cross streets for 90 years, Georgetown Town Hall was built in an amazing eight months back in 1878. The majestic two-storey building with bell tower stood almost directly across the street from the structure it replaced. It quickly became the centre of municipal life in Georgetown. The constable had a real jail and an office in the Town Hall, as did the clerk of the village. This 1880 photo shows the entrance to the public library. Unfortunately, it was destroyed by fire in 1968, and demolished three weeks later. - Submitted by Heritage Halton Hills

EHS photo



OPINION

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NEGOTIATING THAT 'SLIPPERY SLOPE' BETWEEN ME AND THE BARN

TRYING TO AVOID CHARLIE BROWN FALL, WRITES BROWN



TED BROWN
Column

I think it's a pretty safe bet to say most of us were caught off-guard with the recent dump of snow.

The tire people were inundated with requests to install snow tires, the snowplows and sanders were out in full force, and we were all slowed down to a snail's pace with that heavy, wet snow.

Every year, as winter ar-

rives, I find myself becoming more and more cautious about the ice and snow around me.

I just don't wanna do another Charlie Brown fall, and end up on my backside.

The walk from the house to the barn at my place is truly a "slippery slope," featuring a precarious downhill angle to the barn.

And I make that trek at least twice a day, to bring the dog to and from the house.

On more than one occasion, I've found myself on my back after stepping on an icy spot.

I've bruised my tailbone more times than I want to recall, so I have a respect for ice that borders on paranoia.

The Sidekick is even more conscious of the ice

around us. We make a great pair as we slowly walk to the barn and back, retrieving Hamish the dog in the morning, or putting him to bed at night.

After some extreme storms, I have gone to the point of driving to the barn in the F-150 pickup, as it is oblivious to the ice.

Years ago, I wrote a story about icy streets and interviewed a couple of postal carriers who deal with slippery sidewalks and walkways on a daily basis.

They both used crampons, which are traction devices that are strapped onto their winter boots. The crampons have spikes on the bottom to better grip the ice.

They sort of work on the same principal as studded snow tires.

We usually see heavy-duty crampons used in doc-

umentaries where someone is climbing Mount Everest or in another equally snowy and slippery environment.

I picked up a set of the smaller crampons a few years ago, and I found that once they're strapped to my winter workboots, I have a considerably better chance of NOT ending up on my backside.

But the only thing I have against those ones is the fact that putting them on and off my boots isn't an easy process. I also have to be careful because they're incredibly slippery on a dry floor inside the house and can mark a wood floor.

A couple weeks back, I went shopping for a new pair of winter boots, as my old ones were showing their age and had a few cracks around the soles.

Browsing around, I found a pair that were unique.

The heel on the sole of each of the boots features a small red circular disk, with a little "hinge" of sorts, which folds out. One swivels the disk, revealing a set of spikes on the underside. One simply has to twist the disk, exposing the spikes, and fold it flat again, giving pretty incredible traction.

It's not anywhere as aggressive as full-blown Mount Everest crampons, but it sure makes a difference.

Once back inside, I just walk on my toes until I can sit down and reverse the red disk (and spikes) so they don't mark the floor.

There is even a little red tool in a pocket on the side of the boot to pry the disks out to swivel them.

Totally impressed, I bought a pair.

I admit, a smile crossed my face the morning we woke up to that storm, and I wasn't disappointed.

And even though that slippery slope still remains between me and the barn on icy mornings, one thing is abundantly certain: I've dramatically lowered the odds of bruising my tailbone.

Ted Brown is a freelance journalist for the IFP. He can be reached at tedbit@hotmail.com.

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