

# Life's little coincidences

Every once in a while, I run into someone who tips me off to an interesting story. Such was the case a month ago when I talked to Marlene Switzer of Georgetown.

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Ted Brown

recruiting mission, I'm sure the sole purpose of this expedition was to garner more support for the war effort. The Canadians were right in the thick of

She had an old newspaper she wanted to give me, because it contained an interesting story and an even more interesting photograph.

The newspaper came to me through Marlene's daughter Robin, who lives in Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia, where her husband Michael Patrick works as a carpenter.

While renovating a Halifax house, Michael tore up the floor in the kitchen, and found a pile of old newspapers under the floor covering. One issue caught his eye, for obvious reasons.

It was the February 28, 1942 issue of The Montreal Standard, the Maritime edition, and it featured a large photo on its front page of a group of school kids surrounding a train, loaded with \$3 million in new Canadian war armaments — a 800 million candlepower searchlight, a 22-ton tank, an 80 mph jeep — all sorts of interesting pieces of equipment. Most intriguing of all — the photo was taken at Georgetown train station.

It struck me as a huge coincidence that Michael, who was married to a girl who grew up in Georgetown, should come across an old Montreal newspaper, under the linoleum of a kitchen in a house in Halifax, with a wartime photo of the Georgetown station on page one.

"If anyone else working in that house had found it," said Marlene, "They wouldn't have had a clue where Georgetown was located."

According to the story, the government sent this "Army Train, travelling through small Ontario towns as it neared Toronto."

Although the story denies it was a

things in 1942, so morale and support at home would certainly be of paramount value.

The Ontario trip was only a small part of the excursion. The accompanying story told of "the Canadian Army Train visiting Quebec, the Maritimes" and later "sweeping through western Canada."

When I looked at the photo, I was struck how the young people, who appeared to be school kids in their early teens or younger could very well be still around Georgetown today. They would probably be in their mid to late 60s today.

The story, which had a Toronto dateline, told of the "lads, 14 or 15 are keenest about the Signal Corps," while the "older boys stop beside the

22 ton Valentine tank, the 25 pound field gun and the Lewises and Tommy guns..."

And the "men in mechanic's overalls stop to question the soldiers..."

I can only imagine the

excitement this train must have created, as school kids, paper mill workers and housewives flocked to the station, to see what their fighting boys were using overseas to secure our freedom.

The photo is reproduced above, for those who may have been at the station that cold winter day in 1942 to look at the equipment Canada's soldiers were fighting their war with.

Chances are the kids in the picture didn't even notice they were being photographed. And they'd certainly never know they appeared on page one of a Montreal daily, sold in Halifax and stored under the floor covering for 54 years.

That is, of course, until now.



The front page of the Feb. 28, 1942 maritime edition of The Montreal Standard.



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