

# Arrow fiasco hit Georgetown, Acton hard

Continued from pg. 1

ment of the religious and educational institutions of the town. As a result, Georgetown achieved the distinction of being a modern and progressive town with all the attractions and advantages which make it a desirable place of residence. In consequence, it has become known as a beautiful town of comfortable and commodious homes."

Between the 1930s and the 1950s, there was relatively slow growth in both communities, but after the mid-1950s the relocation of several new national and international companies to the area, plus the construction of Hwy. 401, "brought a new wave of economic prosperity and citizens," writes McDonald.

It's during this time when developer Rex Heslop— responsible for the "Rexdale" area of Toronto, expanded Georgetown's residential and commercial areas on a large tract of land east of Georgetown— known as the Delrex subdivisions and Armstrong Ave. industrial area.

According to *The Herald* issue of Oct. 6, 1954, "Rumor became fact when it was learned this week that Mayor Jack Armstrong and clerk-treasurer John D. Kelly after council endorsement signed an agreement on the town's behalf with Delrex Developments Ltd. which may lead to an unprecedented industrial and commercial growth and a house building program which could double the town's pop-

ulation within a few years. ... The man behind Delrex is Rex Heslop, whose Rexdale subdivision in Etobicoke is one of the most fabulous planned communities in Ontario. While Georgetown's possible addition will be on a smaller scale than this, it will surpass anything previous in Georgetown's history."

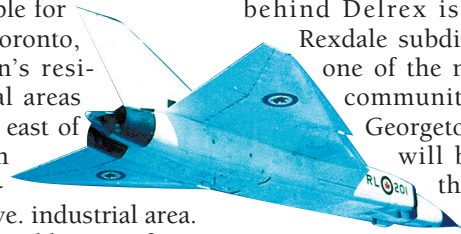
When the infamous Avro Arrow project was cancelled 600 Georgetown residents found themselves unemployed.

Reids (3), Cleave, Sinclair, Emslie, and McClures and that a new feature of the subdivision, "which may set the pattern for the future locally is the company's agreement to provide their own sewers, water lines and roads within the property."

More than 2,000 homes were built, as well as the Delrex Plaza (now known as the Georgetown Market Place). Heslop named many of the streets after relatives— his wife was Edith Delma Heslop— friends and local councillors and businessmen.

Some of these new homes were purchased by workers at the new Avro Arrow plant in Malton, but when the federal government canceled the Arrow in 1959, more than 600 Georgetown people became unemployed virtually overnight. Some oldtimers say that some Avro employees just walked away from their homes.

Similarly in Acton, in the 1950s,



Former Georgetown Mayor Jack Armstrong and developer Rex Heslop pose at the official opening of the Delrex subdivision in Georgetown in the late 1950s. Construction on the Delrex development began in January 1955 and the Delrex Plaza (now the Georgetown Market Place) was opened in 1959. Original prices for homes in the Delrex subdivision were \$11,300 to \$11,600.

returning veterans from the Second World War moved into wartime housing in the Glen Lea and Lakeview subdivisions. On July 1, 1950, Acton became an official town with a population of 2,500. However, Acton too, was affected by the Avro cancellation with many residents losing their homes.

By 1961, Georgetown had reached a population of 10,000, had its own hospital and building began on a new development, Moore Park, on the old Moore farm in west Georgetown.

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The Syndicate Homes on Bower Street in Acton were named the town's first Heritage Conservation District in 2005.

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