

Milton man's cartoon characters set mood for Baby-Centre centre

By Roy Downs

The boy, a cute four-year-old with reddish hair and a face full of freckles, picked up a miniature car from a boxful in the corner of the room. Cautiously, he advanced toward the miniature town drawn on the wall and, with a furtive look around to make sure no one was watching, held the car up to the main roadway winding through the picturesque town and started rolling it down the "street".

"That's fine, Billy, just make sure you don't run down any pedestrians," said a woman's friendly voice behind him. The surprised look on Billy's freckled face was more the result of being ALLOWED to run the car up and down the wall, than from being caught at it. Smiling, he turned back to the task at hand, rounded a couple of curves with his sporty car, climbed the winding road up the mountain then down into the plain, and headed off on his imaginary trip toward the large blue lake and the sprawling airport complex on the outskirts of the "city". Soon two others joined him in the fun and before long there was practically a line-up of children waiting to get their cars and trucks rolling up and down the broad streets of the artist's city.

The place? Baby-Care centre at the new Burlington Mall, where babies and toddlers aged six months to six years can stay for up to three hours while their mothers shop, unhampered, in the Mall's 60 new stores. The lady who encouraged Billy to run his car along the wall (something he would probably have been spanked for back home) was Mrs. Pauline Faull, the proprietor.

And the cartooned townsite, 30 feet long and four feet high and positioned on the wall in just the right spot for pre-schoolers to have fun with, came from the talented brush of a Milton man, Brian Hatfield.

Brian, a process operator at Shell Canada in Oakville by day, turns into a gifted cartoonist by night. "I really enjoy it as a hobby," he claims. Everybody has their "thing" and his is cartooning. "I started it while I was in school, used to do the cartoons for the school paper, and it just grew from there," says Brian.

To date the majority of his talent has been spent in entertaining the three young Hatfield children at their 310 Elmwood Cresc. home. Brian's wife Carol is afternoon supervisor of nurses at Milton District Hospital.

When his friend and co-worker Bill Faull told him his wife Pauline had decided to open a children's babysitting service at the new Mall in Burlington, they pleaded with Brian to do some cartoons on the walls. "We really had to push him into it, Brian won't believe what a talent he has," says Mrs. Faull.

Then it was a rush to get it ready for opening day Oct. 16, and the artist had to work side by side with carpenters, electricians and other laborers. His cartooning was about half done by opening day but he slips down to Burlington any free evenings to continue his large and colorful murals.

The sprawling townsite is the largest picture adorning Baby-Care's walls. Nearby is a maze which the children love trying to master, and there's a

reclining, flower-sniffing bear up high in one corner Brian calls "my spring fever bear".

A 10 foot giraffe smiles down on young visitors, and there's a colorful carousel and an elephant wearing pink pyjamas. Topping it off is a banner proclaiming "Genius at work" over a large blackboard where the children are invited to draw or scribble. "The genius means them, not me," says the modest cartoonist.

While he had intended to do

the artwork at Baby-Care strictly as a favor to the owner, Hatfield has been amply rewarded—the designer at the nearby Young Canada Shop at the Mall liked his work so well he has hired him to do some special cartoon signs for the store, and he is being considered for some work by another store in the Mall.

Hatfield explains there is more drawing and painting to be done at Baby-Care, but he's awaiting copyright releases from Walt Disney Productions and the

Doctor Doolittle people. You just can't go around caricaturing Mickey Mouse without the necessary papers these days, especially when the famous Mouse is connected with a commercial establishment!

Baby-Care itself is an interesting project. It has been doing a booming business since it opened, and one typical "customer" was a boy who spent the morning there while mommy shopped, and refused to leave at noon until his mother promised to bring him back to play for the afternoon. Mrs. Faull has outfitted it with hundreds of toys and games, junior size tables, a separate area for creepers, and even a "quiet room" for mothers to nurse or change their babies.

Each child is left at the reception area in the front of the shop, when mother leaves for shopping or a trip to the dentist or beauty parlor. Once inside the playroom, the boy or girl is greeted by a horde of happy children engaged in a variety of games and playtime fun. Children are encouraged to build things with cardboard boxes, smoothed pieces of lumber, or just plain glue and paper.

And they don't say "don't touch the walls" at Baby-Care. The walls are painted with a flat paint that wipes easily, and Hatfield's cartoon characters are done in an enamel and will last for years despite repeated washings with a mild soap. In fact, the children are encouraged to play at the walls—a habit the proprietors hope they won't carry home with them.

Baby-Care is open during Mall hours. It charges 75 cents for the first hour and 35 cents each additional half hour. The only stipulation is that children cannot be left longer than three hours, for there is no feeding facility and after three hours even the busiest of youngsters can get pretty hungry.

Mother of four young ones herself, the Irish-born Mrs. Faull knows the problems a mother can have in dragging a covey of youngsters around the stores with her. She feels her rates are quite reasonable and the point



HAPPY CHILDREN and an attendant play a game in the foreground while Miltonian Brian Hatfield, whose hobby is cartoon characters, finishes working on an elephant in pink pyjamas in the background. (Staff Photo)



A BIG GIRAFFE is one of the many colorful cartoons gracing the walls at Baby-Care centre in Burlington Mall. Artist Brian Hatfield puts the finishing touches on the animal. (Staff Photo)

was brought home one day last week when she saw a distraught mother and a screaming child in one of the Mall's stores. The mother had purchased a \$3.25 toy ("the price tag was still on it") to keep the child happy—and junior still screamed at the top of his lungs. For two-thirds that price, junior could have done his screaming (or more probably, had a whale of a good time) at Baby-Care while mommy shopped unhampered for three full hours. And he might have enjoyed Hatfield's mini-town more than the obviously unappreciated \$3.25 toy.

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NOTICE
To the Ratepayers of the Township of Nassagaweya

You are hereby advised the following question will be placed on a ballot to be voted on by the Electors of the Township of Nassagaweya, at the same time as the Municipal Election, December 2nd, 1968, and at the same polling places as the election for the Municipal Council. Polls open 10:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.

"Are you in favor of a By-Law being passed by the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the Township of Nassagaweya to permit horse racing after 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon on Sundays in the Township of Nassagaweya?"

YES () NO ()

Certified a true copy of the question to be placed on ballot.

J. C. McINTYRE, Clerk

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