

## Jim Forbes turns scrap into sculpture

# His "found art" takes on strange shapes

By Janet Braida

Bullwinkle, an elephant, a cat, several swans and numerous other "found objects" grace the Georgetown home of Jim Forbes and his family, at 76 Ewing St. Made mainly of odds and ends of farm equipment, these old "relics" sell for anywhere from \$10 to \$100, and are in constant demand throughout the year as birthday, anniversary or Christmas presents.

An avid fan of found objects, Mr. Forbes gets most of his supplies from neighborhood farmers and pays more for his materials than they are worth as scrap. "Really it's a very inexpensive hobby," Mr. Forbes explained.

Drenters influence

A so called "master" at this hobby, Jim Forbes says he became interested in found objects after he came to know area sculptor Joseph Drenters of

Rockwood. "I guess you could say he had some kind of an influence on my work," he said. "Now that was over four years ago."

Old wrenches, horseshoes, mower links, stirrups and chains have taken on numerous odd shapes and designs in the Forbes home. A matching set of sailboats made from plough shares, a man pushing a wheelbarrow made of old wrenches and nails or an alligator made from a former hand saw are scattered along shelves, tables and the buffet. Several hand artifacts also grace the outdoor rock gardens of the home.

The idea of "beauty is in the eyes of the beholder" is certainly true when one studies the found objects. Several items could be mistaken for any number of animals or objects, depending on who is looking at the art. "The final object depends on what

materials are used," Jim Forbes noted. "I see an old piece of equipment, visualize the completed object and work from there," he said.

They call him

Mr. Forbes gathers old equipment after work or on weekends. A housepainter by trade, he says he has come to know many area farmers through working on his hobby. "They find old junk around their home or fields and call me about it now," Forbes said. "It's better than chasing them for supplies."

All of Forbes' "found objects" are built at his home, his creations visualized the materials gathered and moulded to shape then each object is placed in a separate box for finishing touches. "When I have several objects on the go I take them in boxes to a welding shop downtown. I pay the owner for an hour's time on the welder and

complete several projects in one evening," he quipped.

An exhibitor at this year's Steam-Era reunion in Milton, Mr. Forbes pointed out that he likes to display his work as much as possible. "I try to get them to show as often as I can," he replied. His first opening displaying of his art was at the Tall House in Georgetown in November 1969. He has also been guest artist at the Norval Arts and Crafts Show, has displayed at an open air show sponsored annually by a brewery, a craft show at Streetsville and another at Bramalea Library.

300 in four years

Originally from Milton, Jim Forbes has made an estimated 300 objects over the four year period he has taken found object art as a hobby. Presently he has 40 pieces of his work on hand, the rest having been sold to friends and neighbors or interested persons attending art shows and "picking up" his work.

A modest, jovial man, Mr. Forbes noted how pleased he was when officials at Georgetown High School asked him to attend an open house at the school and instruct students in the techniques behind found art. "It just made my day," Forbes recalled.

As well as the found art hobby, he also enjoys working with sculpturing. Several clay masks are also recognizable when looking around the Forbes home. "I like the sculpturing as well," he laughed. "It is abstract in design yet offers form."

All Jim Forbes' "works of art" are signed with a special insignia, F over J, for his complete name. Articles in his collection have sold for up to \$100 and several items he was commissioned to do. Many of his found objects have made their way (with owners) through Canada and the United States and one particular item was an eight foot unicorn, especially made for friends of the Forbes family.

Some are natural

"I like to use paint on my work to bring attention to one focal

spot," Forbes said. "The eye area is especially important in several of my works." He also explained that black paint or shoe polish is used to add finished touches to the completed found object. "Yet some still prefer them in their natural form and coloring," he explained.

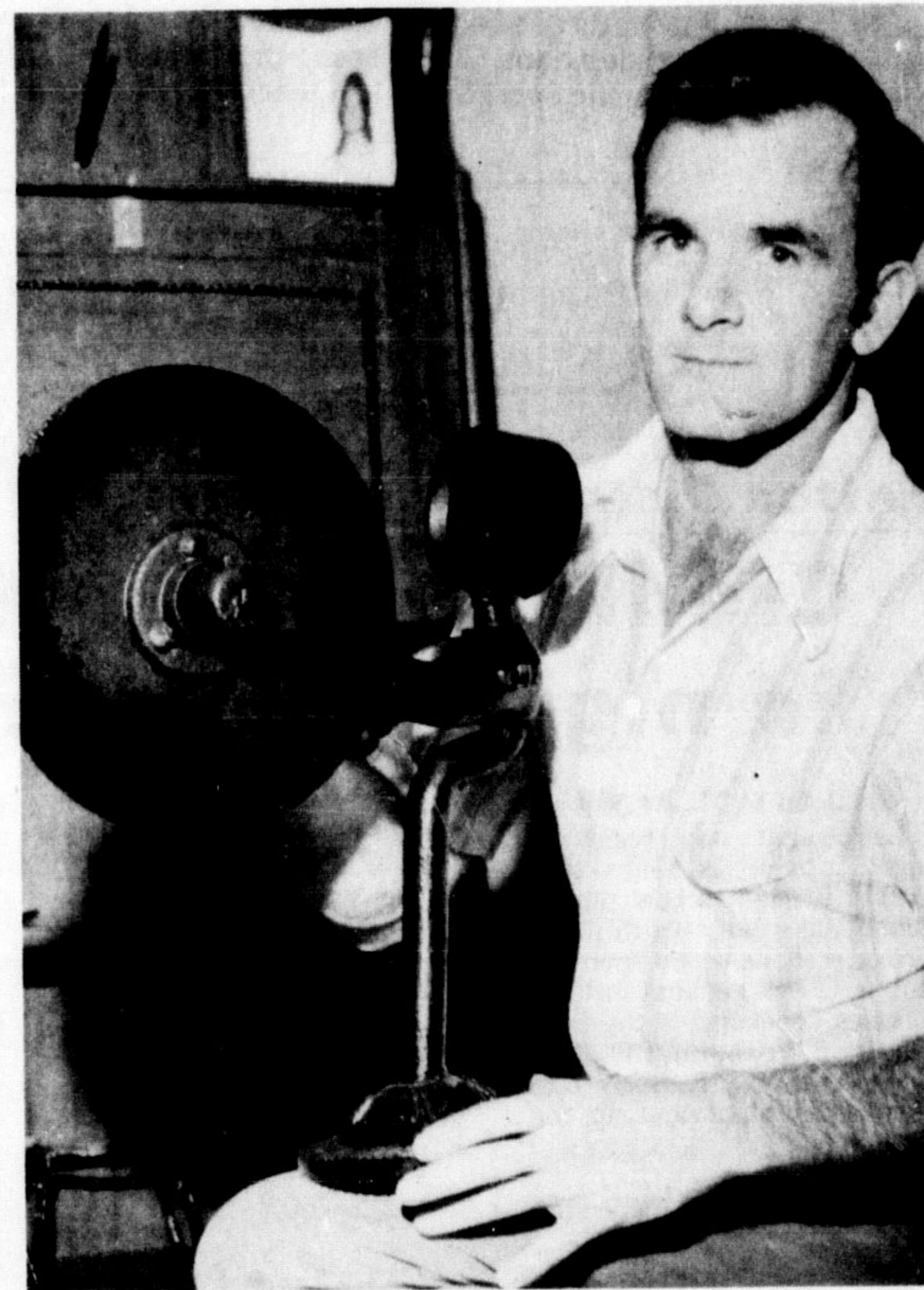
For reference purposes and personal mementos, Jim Forbes now tries to keep record of all his work through the use of pictures. "I've sold several articles during

the Christmas rush and have no record whatsoever of just how many there were," he noted. "So from now on I take pictures of everything and keep them for reference."

Several months after objects have been sold he returns to the cupboard to look at the pictures of his "souvenirs" his wife added. "I still get a kick out of looking at former objects I no longer have. There's a kayak, a dog, an elephant, a . . . . ."



INTERESTED IN FOUND ART as well, 2½-year-old Tammy Forbes holds a large cat made by her daddy. A heavy work of art, Tammy had trouble holding the cat even while seated in her favorite chair. —(Staff Photo).



MAN AND CYMBALS is a prize "found object" amongst Jim Forbes' collection. Made from old farm equipment, the "relic" would sell for anywhere from \$10 to \$100. —(Staff Photo).

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CATS, ALLIGATORS and men in kayaks can be found in the home of Jim Forbes of Georgetown. A part time sculptor, Mr. Forbes moulds old farm equipment into odd shapes and sells them for modest sums. —(Staff Photo).

Collect \$6,682.14

## Cancer fund over quota

Milton Unit of the Canadian Cancer Society resumed their regular monthly meetings in the clinical classroom of Milton District Hospital Tuesday, Sept. 14.

The unit was pleased to learn that they had exceeded their campaign goal of \$6,600 and reported the total amount collected during the campaign was \$6,682.14. They were presented with their certificate from the regional office.

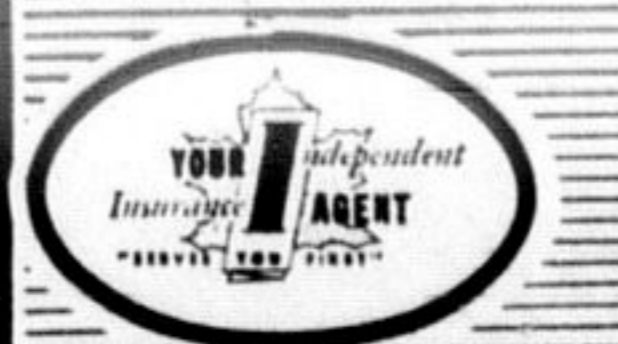
months, 100 dressings were supplied to cancer patients. Mrs. J. McCarron of the Visitation Committee reported she had only a few patients to visit at the present time.

Booth at fair

The Unit will have a booth in the No. Two Building at the fair this year, featuring "Smoking Sam". Literature will be available and members of the Unit will be there to give information on the services provided by the Cancer Society.

Four driven  
The Service to Patients committee reported they had transported four patients to the Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto for treatment, for a total of 486 miles during June and July. At present they have patients requiring a number of treatments and there will be a great need for more volunteer drivers to accommodate these patients.

Members of the Unit will be meeting with their area representative to learn what items will be required by Princess Margaret Hospital to make a patient's stay in hospital more comfortable.



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