Cass sees it much as the old

will have enough for life."

them in developing them.

find something else in which the

student can best express

Cass speaks highly of

attendance officer Bill Coon. "He

this year. He is worth his weight

in gold. Because of him and the

other attendance officers

attendance is much better this

Usual tricks

The students are not stupid

Cass says, and try the usual

tricks to avoid the classrooms.

confidence until they are relaxed.

willing to go ahead, and not

afraid to make mistakes. When

the change in attitude is easily

Progress of the student is not

evaluated in the traditional way,

rather on an independent

Is the school worth the \$1,400 a

Cass answers that with another

query. It costs double that to keep

a member of society in prison

plus the missing producer. Which

Cass also admits some parents

resist enrolling their children in

General Brock — that is until he

invites them there to see the

school at work. Like this writer,

most of them were impressed.

Biggest boosters are parents who

see the change in their children

Plenty of problems

and Cass says one of the big ones

for he and the teachers is to resist

becoming social workers. He

feels the social services of the

county are gradually offering

integrated services which also

Rural students? How do they fit

Rural students are more

independent and can spend their

time advantageously. "They

don't have time to hang around

General Brock is suited for its

Principal Cass says he wishes

more parents from North Halton

could spare the time to see what

they are trying to do there. He

feels they have come a long way

in county vocational education

but there is still much to be done.

Classrom inspections revealed

students immersed in the

refinements of operating a

restaurant, baking, preparing

food, doing upholstery, auto body

work, printing, art, beauty cultue

culture, painting and decorating

Food in the cafeteria is

prepared and served by the

students who also handle the

General Brock may be part

experiment -part experience

but it obviously is blazing new

trails for county educators.

and several other skills.

role in the county system but only

a visit will clear up miscon-

the plaza," he said.

fit into the picture at General

assists the schools in its task.

There are plenty of problems

after they enrol at the school.

is more important? he enquires.

year it costs for each student?

seen and attendance climbs.

analysis of their worth.

themselves."

themselves."

Absenteeism?

By Hartley Coles

One of Canada's heroic figures, a giant among men, General Brock was fatally wounded as he scaled Queenston Heights, repulsing an American invasion.

General Brock School in Burlington, a vocational unit of the Halton county board of Education, is aptly named for the Canadian hero. It too, is scaling heights for 114 students of this area and over 400 more from the south of the county, not suited for academic courses in other schools.

The program at General Brock is geared to meet the needs of these students, some of them with high IQs or with various learning disabilities.

This writer was invited to inspect the school, meet the principal, accompanying the Acton-Nassagaweya Board member Tom Watson on the tour. Preconceived notions of General Brock school were knocked flat by the visitation.

### Not dum-dums

Somehow the idea vocational schools are the "dum-dum" schools students taunt others with, managed to seep into the unconscious. Prior impressions are all wrong.

As Principal W. G. Cass states with conviction, the first priority is to make students feel comfortable at the school. They may not have fit in with the conventional school, felt uncomfortable in a classroom.

"We gear our programs to meet their needs," Mr. Cass explained. And he thinks he is succeeding.

Next priority is to open lines of communication with students, emphasizing that everyone benefits when self discipline is exercised and ideas are freely expressed.

"No idea is a bad idea," Cass says frankly. Often slight refinements can turn it into a good idea.

Sometimes, Cass admits they fail to get through. "We can't serve every student," he admits candidly. At the same time he has never "kicked" anyone out of the school. Every student who drops out has the right to come back

and request to return. "When they do return most of them are much better students," he said. "More and more students are leaving at 16 and coming back at 18 or 19."

The school necessarily has periods when students learning a skill are out on work experiences. The school encourages it, knowing that they are experiencing actual conditions

they'll meet in the outside world. The work experience creates confidence as well as supplying students with pocket money. It builds up their self-esteem, often a problem with students at the

"A 15 year-old looks on life as hopeless, sometimes," says Cass, and the teachers are hopeless to help. "Their peers are most

imortant at that time in life." Although there are 585 students at General Brock only about a

dozen fall by the wayside. Develop confidence

"Ten years ago only a small would percentage anything," said Cass' "and leave amazing number are getting jobs today because of the assistance they received at the school and above all the self confidence they developed themselves.

"I can only think of one or two who didn't get jobs," says Cass. Some don't wait for graduation to get a job, he says, but notes the students are better than if they had not had the use of the school for two or three years.

General Brock tries to create a a learning environment that is interesting' challenging-, and rewarding. Teachers no longer teach in the old sense. The teacher to Cass is a director of

the learning environment. One of the most satisfying developments for the Brock principal is the constant use made of the resource centre at the school. In many cases reading and math levels are below what they should be. He envisions that by next year every student will be at the same

reading level. This creates some problems for the Board of Education. The library end of the resource centre is congested and will require enlargement.

criticized for his liberal policy on lending books but feels the loss of a few books a year is a small price to pay for upgrading reading standards.

"Package course"

First year students at General Brock take a "package" course in which the boys see 18 of the well-equipped shops in the school and the girls see nine. They are exposed to the different skills in the shops and in the second year each student chooses six shop skills he would like to take. The third year is spent specializing in two, three or four of the shops, depending on the individual.

"We don't teach trades," insists the principal — "we teach

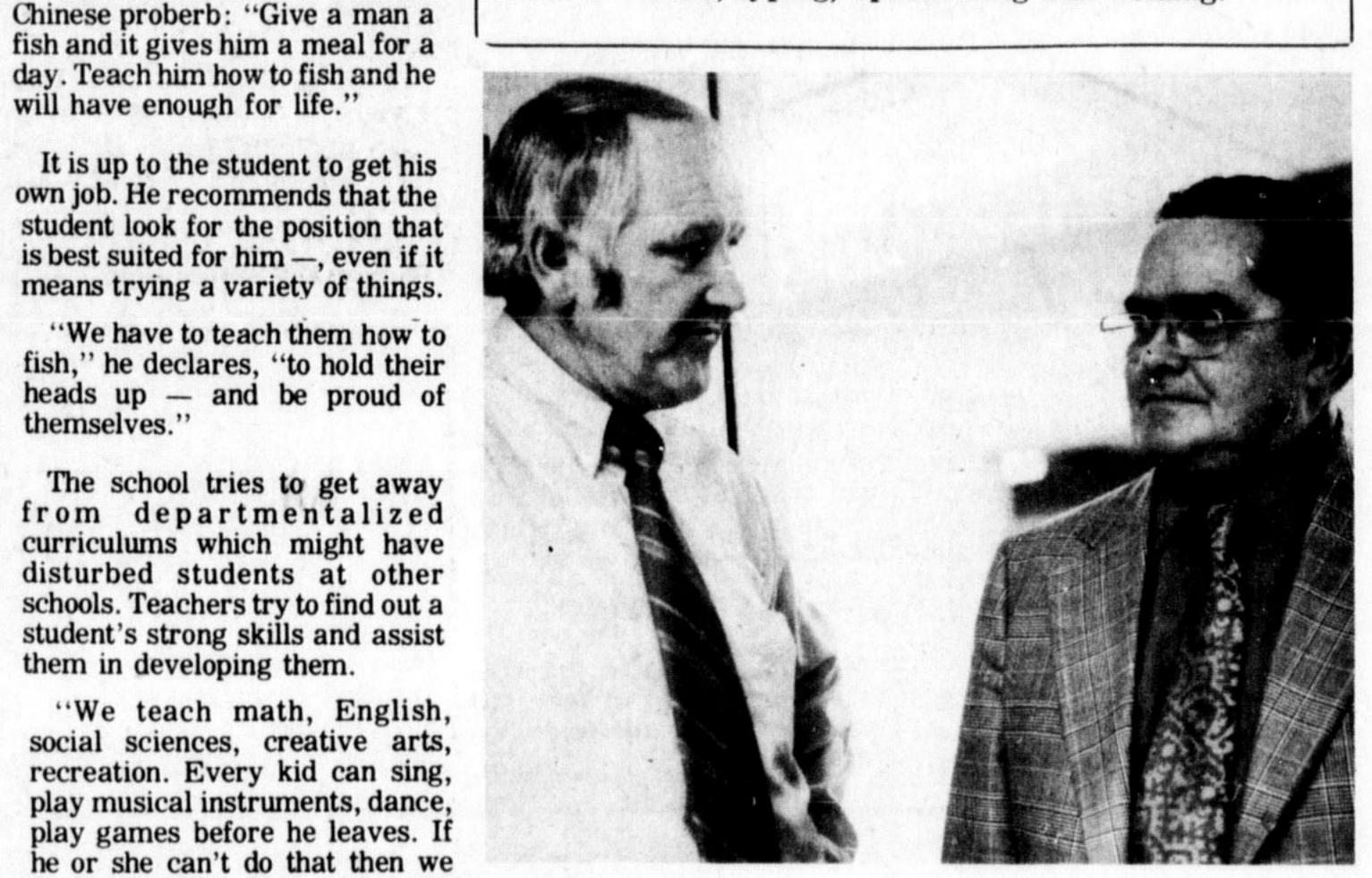
Getting jobs is not high on the priority.

## What students take

First year students at General Brock high school study in the art of communications, mathematics, science, social service, creative arts, art, music, and theatre arts.

All courses except those of a remedial nature are credit courses towards a graduation diploma.

The business and technical program includes study of auto body work, auto maintenance, baking, beauty culture, building construction, business machines, chef training, commercial art, dry cleaning, electrical repairs, floraculture, home management, horticulture, merchandising, metal trades, painting and decorating, printing, restaurant services, sewing, trowel trades, typing, upholstering and welding.



PRINCIPAL W. G. Cass clears a point with Acton-Nassagaweya board of education member Tom Watson.

## Ward boundaries

(Continued from Page Two) is doing a tremendous job for us boundaries. No changes will be made at this time.

Gordon pleased Councillor Gordon said he was

pleased with the way the issue turned out. "Council realized there was a difference between the rural and urban areas of the town and voted to retain the rural area. It should be retained," he

The school's job is to build their Gordon said that Joe Willmott ward one. Many of the rural recommended no change. there is a build-up of confidnece

dealer for

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guaranteed used cars.

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people attended the Monday

by the committee but none were committee was formed after a group of West Oakville ratepayers protested and circulated a petition asking for representation by population.

Ratepayers told council they

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FOR VOLKSWAGEN COME TO

meeting, Gordon said. A variety of alternatives were

considered to boundary changes felt to be acceptable. The

would carry their complaints to the Ontario Municipal Board if and Fred Carter appeared as action wasn't taken locally. spokesmen for a delegation from Council studied the matter and

orized dragstrip racing in the vicinity of the Toronto International Dragstrip. Councillors say racing takes place on Wednesday nights just before the opening of the racetrack. Council

**ESQUESING** 

Township Council

BRIEFS

(Continued from Page Two)

solicitor to begin proceedings

against Russell Chessum for

maintaining used cars on his

Esquesing wrecking yard by-law.

property—contravening

also thought it would be a good idea if the operators of the racetrack were informed of this

for 114 students from Acton, Milton, Nassagaweya and

-Agreed

GENERAL BRECK HIGH SCHOOL

GOOD ADVICE

Tomorrow was to be the day of Joe's wedding, and he and his father were enjoying a night-cap together before they retired to gather strength for the next day's event. Lifting his glass in a toast -Voted to ask the OPP to to his father, Joe asked: "Any investigate complaints of unauth- advice before I take the big step, Dad?" "Yes," the father said. "Two things. First: insist on having one night out a week with the boys." "Makes sense." said Joe. "And the second?" "Second: don't waste it on the boys."

Insurance Co. appear before French was asked to write the council. Reeve Tom Hill said he company requesting the was "not too pleased" with the insurance adjustor to come to 100 percent jump in premiums, council.

insurance agents-Zurich pay, Township Clerk Delmar

For Quality and Friendly Service

representative of the township's the township was being asked to

The Champion, Milton, Ont., Wednesday, July 19, 1972 3

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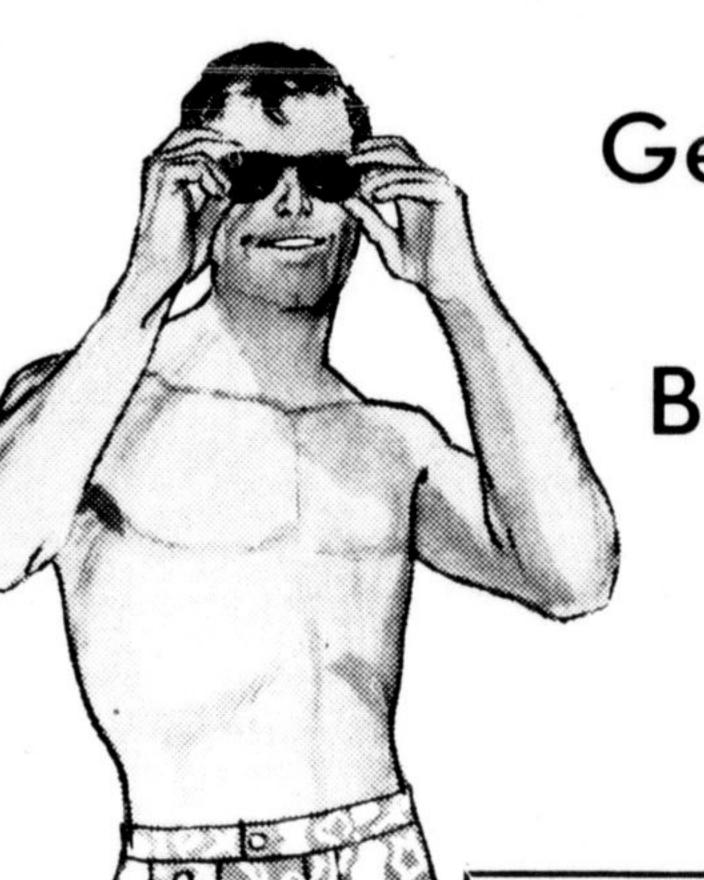
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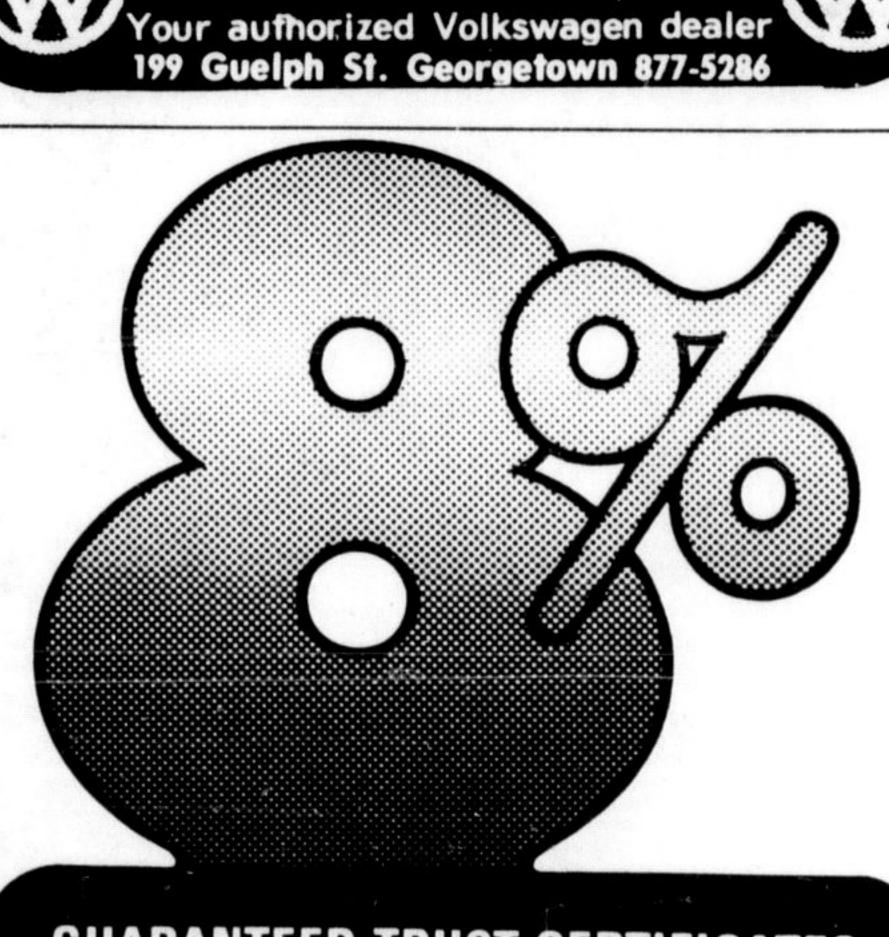
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