

Milton enjoys fastest growth in Halton

Milton continues to be the fastest growing community in Halton.

Between 1977 and 1978 the population of the town went from 22,095 to 22,706, a percentage increase of 2.8.

In a report submitted to the Halton Planning Committee by region planning director E. R. Cumming, he said, "Milton for the past four years has had the distinction of growing at a faster rate than other municipalities in this region."

The increase means 611 people are living within the town that weren't here last year.

"However," said Cumming, "the absolute growth experienced this year is the lowest (since 1973-1974 when it was 314)."

He said, "This is a result of the temporary shortage of sewage treatment capacity. The plant expansion will allow the Timberlea Community, currently under

construction, to proceed to an early completion." Timberlea is projected to have 1,500 units when it is finished, or roughly 5,000 people.

Milton has actually grown 35 per cent compared to 1971 when the population was 14,838.

The statistics are based on regional boundaries if they had been in effect in 1971.

Between 1971 and 1972, the population increased by 692 to 15,530. From 1972 to 1973, the number of people increased a further 588 to 16,068 and 314 between 1973 and 1974 to 16,382.

The community underwent major growth in the three years between 1974 to 1977. Between 1973 and 1974 the population went from 16,382 to 18,431 an increase of 2,049.

It went up another 2,078 in the next year to 20,509.

In 1977 the population tallied 22,095, an increase of 1,586.

And this last year the growth has actually dropped to 611.

However, from the percentage point, the increase is more than the other Halton communities.

Burlington's population rose to 108,354 from 105,714, a percentage of 2.4.

Oakville's went up to 69,881 from 68,572, a percentage rise of 1.9.

Halton Hills was the smallest of all, registering no more than 0.01 per cent increase or 33,993 people to 34,051.

Halton Hills' lack of growth sparked Cumming to report, "Halton Hills causes the most concern with an absolute increase of only 58 people between 1977 and 1978."

"It may actually be losing population," he said, "given that a municipality should grow by a minimum of its natural increase, presuming in-migration and out-migration balance."

"In Halton Hills, this should represent a minimum growth of 300-400 people."

"Since 1975 population of the Georgetown Urban Area has declined from 17,599 in 1975 and to 17,393 this year," he said. Between 1977 and 1978, Georgetown has lost a further 41 people.

"As with Milton, the lack of available sewage capacity and resulting restriction on growth are responsible for the delay of growth in the Georgetown Urban Area."

Cumming said the increase in Burlington can be largely attributed to the continuing development of the Brant Hills community while Oakville's growth can be traced to the erection of more units in Sheridan Hills and the occupancy of many units which had hitherto remained empty.

Between 1971 and 1978, Halton Hills' population has gone from 29,676 to 34,051, an increase of 13 per cent.

This last year has been its smallest increase.

Most of the community's growth had been in the early '70s when the population went from 29,676 in 1971 to 31,060 in 1972 and 32,178 in 1973, a net increase of 2,502 or 8.0 per cent.

Since then the increases have dwindled. Only 1,873 people moved between the five-year period of 1973-78 according to statistics submitted in Cumming's report.

Between 1971 and 1978, Burlington's population has risen from 86,745 to 108,254 an increase of 21,509 for a percentage of 20.

Most of the city's growth has been constant at roughly 2,000 people a year, with the big spurges coming between 1971 and 1972 and 1973 and 1974 where it increased 4,017 and 6,060 respectively.

Between 1974 and 1975, it went up 3,964 from 97,972 to 101,936. Oakville's population has increased to 69,881 this year, a difference of 58,910 in 1971, an increase of 16 per cent.

Although the main increases were 2,752 and 2,928 in the years between 1971 and

1972 and 1973 to 1974 respectively, they declined to 482 between 1975 and 1976. However, this last year saw the population rise by 1,309.

Halton's total population at this point in time is 234,892 almost a quarter of a million people.

Seven years ago in 1971, it had 190,230 people, a difference of 44,662. Thus the percentage increase in the region is 19 per cent.

The region's growth coincides with those experienced in the neighboring regions around Metro Toronto of Peel, York and Durham, by 174,404 citizens.

Peel, Halton's neighbor to the east, has a population of 421,618. Most of these, 397,304

or 94 per cent, reside in the Mississauga-Brampton area. Peel increased 27 per cent or 90,985 people from 1974. The year 1974 was the time when regional government was instituted.

Durham has a population of 265,538, 30,646 more than Halton.

There are 213,657 people living in York which is 21,235 less than Halton.

The growth has been at the expense of Metro whose population grew only 0.1 per cent in the last five years while the four regions went up by 18.

Provincial statistics show Metro's population actually declined 53,681 from last year to the current 2,094,171.

Mink farm loss: \$16,273

Night raid by dogs leaves costly toll

By Peter Mills

Just how much David Yemm will lose has yet to be fully determined, but the attack on his mink farm by a pack of wild dogs last May will be a definite setback, despite the compensation he will receive from the Town of Milton.

It was May 20 when Mr. Yemm was returning to his home on McNiven Rd., Kilbride at about 2 a.m. He said he heard mink running up and down their wire cages, which are located toward the rear of his property, some 50 metres away from his house.

"I went over towards the cages to investigate and I was able to see several dogs running away. The next morning, I went out to the cages and saw a bloody mess. I didn't know what to think."

His loss: over 600 mink, including breeding females and their young.

Although it was dark when Mr. Yemm saw the dogs run away, he said he was able to get a fair idea of what they looked like. He said they were scruffy and rough-looking. He also estimated they weighed in the neighborhood of 30 pounds.

Mr. Yemm has owned the mink ranch since 1975 when he bought it from his father, at age 22. He said his father had owned some of the best "darks" (dark-colored mink) in Canada. He also noted there had been some trouble a few days before the night of the attack.

For a couple of nights before the attack, Mr. Yemm said there were apparently dogs roaming in the area of the cages. The next day, he said, when he went out to the cages, he found some of the mothers had killed their young. He said at the time, he didn't know why, but it was clear the mothers were agitated over something.

Mr. Yemm will be receiving \$16,273.52 in compensation for the losses from the town, and he dismisses suggestions that it will cover the loss adequately because his expenses, including feeding his herd, are great.

The loss is compounded by the fact that the pelts of those animals that were killed are worthless. The animals were wearing their "summer fur", which is practically worthless.

In an effort to replace the stock, Mr. Yemm bought 200 new breeders. Each year, he replaces roughly 70 per cent of his stock. This year, he said he would be keeping roughly 1,500 breeder females and 300 breeder males of his herd of about 5,000. This leaves roughly 3,200 mink to be pelted and put up for auction.

He said it would be difficult to estimate what a pelt would bring in, because the prices are fluctuating. One example he cited was a pelt bringing in \$123 at an auction, though a more reasonable figure would be \$30 per pelt.

Mr. Yemm said that the dogs caused the mother mink, who are nervous and unpredictable creatures by nature, to go on a rampage, slaughtering their young. He cited one case in which a row of 40 cages was virtually decimated. Of the 40, 31 cages of kits (small mink) had been obliterated. Each cage contains a litter of kits, and there are an average 4.1 kits in a normal litter.

Mr. Yemm said there were more kits in the cages than an average litter because they were a special cross-breed kit known as demi-buffs, which are said to be more prolific.

Dogs have been a problem in that area for several years. Several residents of Kilbride have occasionally had their garbage scattered by dogs which apparently subsist on the scraps, and also from what they can forage at the dump nearby. A pack of up to 11 dogs was spotted there recently.

Mr. Yemm said when he saw the dogs running away from the cages where he keeps the mink, he would have shot them if he had a gun at hand. He agreed that killing them is probably the only way to get rid of them, adding there wouldn't be much likelihood of mistaking them for ordinary household pets—because a pet is usually well groomed and cared for, whereas these dogs were unkempt and scruffy.

He also noted they were roaming at large, but a pet is usually either kept indoors or put on a rope at night.

Mr. Yemm's own dogs were not on guard duty the night of

the attack. One of them was at Mr. Yemm's mother's house, and the other two were in the building, unable to get at the dogs rampaging through the mink cages.

The problem with pack dogs, according to Mr. Yemm, is that they kill merely for the fun of it. He said there have been several other complaints from area farmers about dogs attacking sheep and cattle—but nothing has been done about it.



POUND FOR POUND, mink are possibly the most dangerous creature there is, according to mink farmer David Yemm, who lost quite a few young mink in May when a pack of dogs ravaged his farm. Many of the young were killed by the

older mink, who became excited when the dogs attacked. Yemm was compensated by Milton Council for the loss, but there is no assurance that the money he received will cover all his losses.

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