

Milton Then and Now

Saturday Nights on Main Street

By Mel Robinson
Occasionally I go to the downtown area between five and six o'clock on a Saturday evening. There are few cars, hardly any light trucks to be seen. The occasional person can be seen moving from store to store, doing some last minute shopping. Clerks in the stores are getting ready to close shop for the weekend. Everything seems so quiet—so different from the scene downtown 50 or 60 years ago.

Nowadays Thursday and Friday evenings are the highlights of the week for storekeepers. In those days industrial workers went to bed as early on those evenings as they did during the rest of the week. They worked from 7 a.m. until 12 or one o'clock Saturdays. Some of them did not receive their weekly wages until that morning. Friday night was for rest, not recreation. There was little money available for partying.

Saturday afternoon brought the first wave of weekend shopping on Main St. As things died down somewhat toward supper time, there was still an air of expectation in the stores. Shelves and

counters were kept stocked for the evening rush.

It was a rush, too. Early in the evening the farm families began to reach town in their cars and buggies. Chores were hurried a little to get away to town in the early evening. Most families could make the trip to town by car in about 15 minutes.

Many farm women had regular customers in town for their eggs and butter. They made their deliveries as soon as they reached town. Others took their butter and eggs to the local retail stores for credits on their weekly shopping for groceries. The shopping expedition was the most important reason for the weekly visit to town.

As the farm families arrived on Main St. they parked their cars, or tied up their horses. Townspeople, too, began to arrive and mix with them along the street. Meetings were pleasant because of common interests at church, high school, in lodges, business, athletics, and entertainment. There was much to talk about.

The favorite subject, of course, was

the weather. Town people shared the concerns of farmers about the vagaries of the weather. They wanted to know how things were coming along at the farms, not only because of food costs but also because prosperity for farmers was accepted as necessary for local and national prosperity. Health problems were also important in conversations. More people had health problems to worry about in those days before the wonder drugs. Then there were mutual friends, sporting events, church and Institute affairs to discuss.

Older people sat in the cars to visit, or they talked in clusters in stores and along the crowded sidewalks. Younger people walked up and down the street, stopping here and there to greet friends.

Sometime during the evening most farm families moved as a unit to one of the ice cream parlors for a dish of ice cream, a soda or a sundae. This was the highlight of the week for the youngsters. A few were given a 25 cent piece to spend where they chose. They were fortunate indeed.

After the ice cream came the family purchase of a Saturday night treat of candies. Mostly these were bought at Mackenzie's Drug Store or at the store operated at different times by Arthur Norrington, Thomas Moorehead, Louis Polakoff, and W. T. Barnard. Show

cases had long, shiny trays of candies and chocolates which were sold by the pound in white paper bags. Peanut brittle, toffee with nuts, peanut clusters, raisin clusters, turkish delight, and coconut covered marshmallows were all popular.

After 10.30 farm families started leaving for the country, and town people started walking home—a few at a time. Storekeepers knew from experience that certain of their customers were sure to come in just before, or after their regular hour for Saturday night closing. It was often approaching midnight before the barber shops and the retail stores were able to close their doors and the merchants and their clerks could start wearily for home.

With the stormy weather of fall and winter, the shopping pattern on Main St. changed. Many farm families came to town to shop on Saturday afternoon. Townspeople still kept the street busy on Saturday nights. There was a more noticeable difference between age groups. Parents met and talked with parents. Very young children tagged along with their parents, but at an early age many were allowed to wander along the street with their own friends. Young couples walked up and down the street, or they went to the Princess Theatre—at which there was both an early and a late show.



LINDA BERTOLI of Milton got the sloppiest kiss in North America on her visit to Canada's huge Marineland complex at Niagara Falls. Linda, a 26 year old from Milton was chosen from the crowd in Marineland's 5,000 seat Aqua Theater to be kissed by Kandou, a 7,500 pound Killer Whale. Kandou and his 8,000 pound female counterpart, Nootka, "Star", in the two-hour Marineland show. It also features dolphins, elephant seals, sea lions, bears, elephants and Bengal tigers.

Between the Willows

I quit splitting

By Don Byers
I saw a most unusual axe while thumbing through a catalog today. It had "unique side arms which create splitting action and permit easy withdrawal of the blade."

After all these years of frantic frustration while trying to master the demanding art of splitting firewood, now they tell me.

No matter what technique I employed with my swing, I nearly always wound up with the axehead firmly implanted in the log, while shock waves travelled up the shaft, practically ripping my arms out of their sockets.

I've watched other people do it—successfully splitting with a single, deft blow. Of course, like most things, practice makes perfect. Not, unfortunately, in my case.

I guess I'll have to stick to splitting infinitives.

In the same catalog was a handsome array of hockey skates. I don't know where I've been during the past few years, but I hadn't the foggiest notion that the design had changed so much. The pair that caught my eye had beautiful, moulded boots, and strange-looking blades. The price popped my eyebrows somewhat—over \$100.

My first pair of skates were hand-me-downs which looked as if they had been worn in the very first Stanley Cup Game.

The leather boots were stiff and scuffed. The blades were like goal-keeper's, and had as about as much edge as a butter knife.

I would lace them on at home, then walk a block to the rink. After about 20 minutes on the ice, I would be over on my ankles so badly I was practically skating on the sides of my boots. The walk back home was a tedious and most painful experience. But, I'd be back at it the next day.

Within a couple of seasons, I received my first pair of tube skates. What a difference!

But compared with today's beauties, they look ancient, too.

October, and the leaves in the woods are being repainted by Mother Nature in autumn colors that will soon be so brilliant as to be almost blinding.

The valley below has also been transformed. And, one of the most breathtaking drives you'll ever enjoy is from Appleby Line to Walker's Line, on No. 2 Sideroad.

Through much of the way, you pass through a tunnel of eye-boggling hues, as the branches of the trees on both sides of the road, meet overhead.

To many of us, this is a favorite time of the year. And, I suspect one of the reasons is, fall's last fling precedes gloomy November, and the rigors of the foggy months ahead.

Let's enjoy while we can.

University club makes plans for book sale

The first meeting of the University Women's Club of Milton and District was held recently at the home of Margaret Day in Milton.

Summer joys and back-to-school laments were relieved over wine and cheese.

This year's executive council was introduced, as were new members.

Plans were discussed for a book sale to be held at the Milton Mall on Oct. 12 and 13.

Any donations can be placed in the book depots that have been set up in the Mall.

Proceeds from the sale go towards scholarship fund.

Billie Marshall, program convener, presented an impressive program for the year.

Planned presentations include talks or panel discussions on Ontario's energy, Canada's immigration policy, fashions and fine arts.

The club meets on the first Thursday of every month at Martin St. Junior School. As well as monthly meetings, there are several ongoing interest groups like bridge and a reading club.

New members are welcome.

Any woman university graduate interested in joining is asked to call 878-5450.

The next meeting is Thursday, Oct. 4 at 8 p.m. at Martin St. Junior School.

Mrs. Janet Armstrong, a former assistant professor at the University of Toronto will talk about physical education.

Police apprehend Guelph escapee

A ward of the Guelph Children's Aid Society will face charges of stealing a car after he was apprehended by Halton Regional Police.

Constable Gary Parsons was on regular patrol Sunday at 9:30 a.m. when he noticed a car on Appleby Line, north of Steeles Ave.

Cst. Parsons tried to stop the car but the driver ignored the siren and flashing lights.

The car was eventually pulled over several miles later, with the assistance of another officer.

The driver was found to be a 15-year-old juvenile missing from Guelph.

A check showed the car had been stolen from there.

He was handed over to the Guelph OPP by police.

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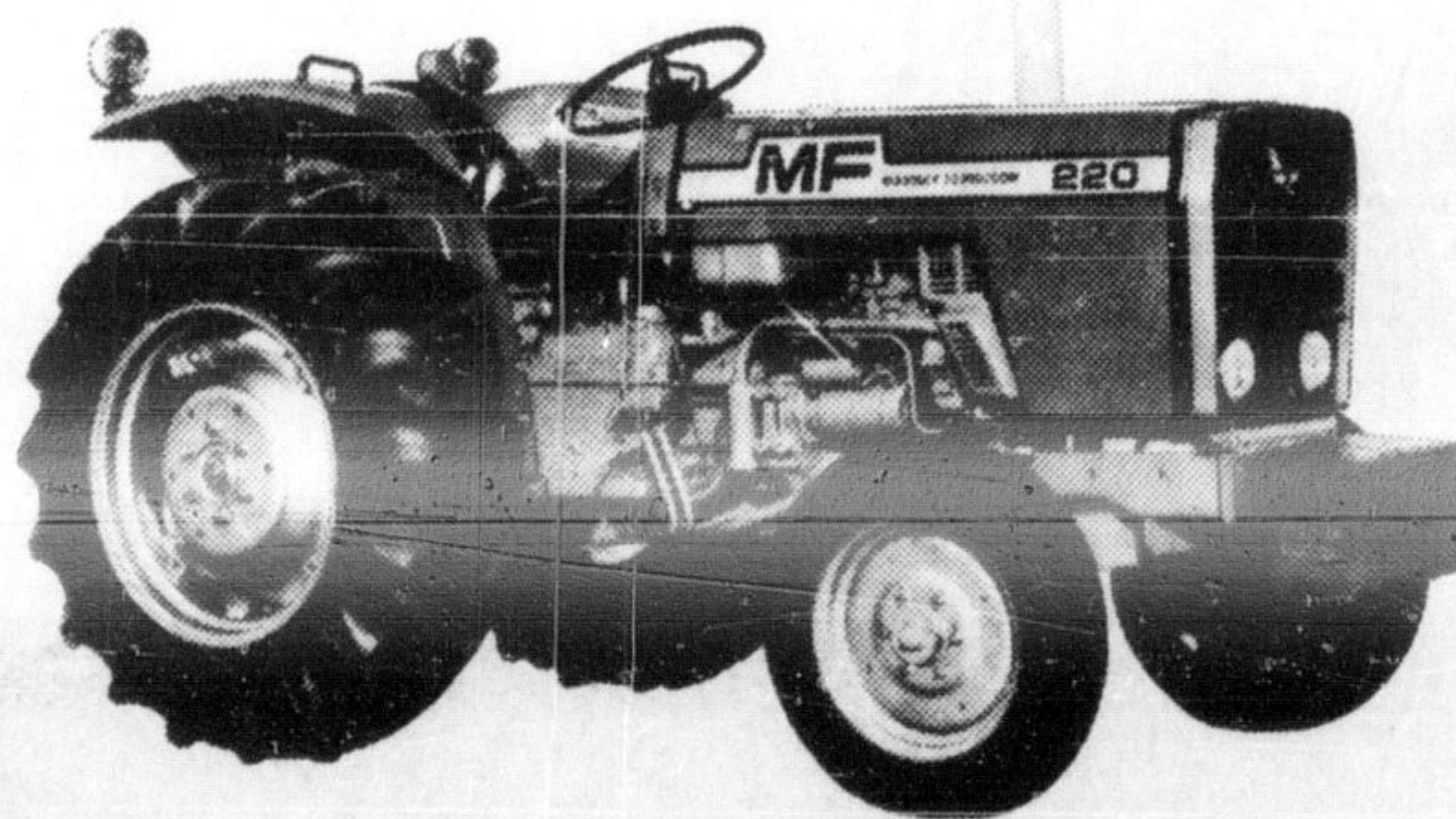
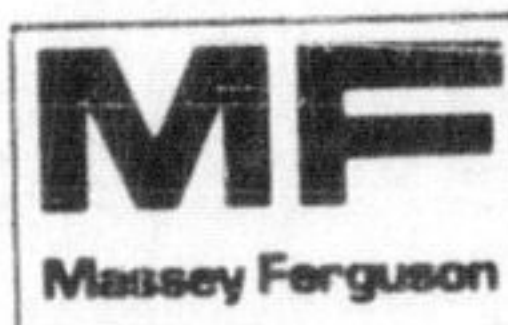


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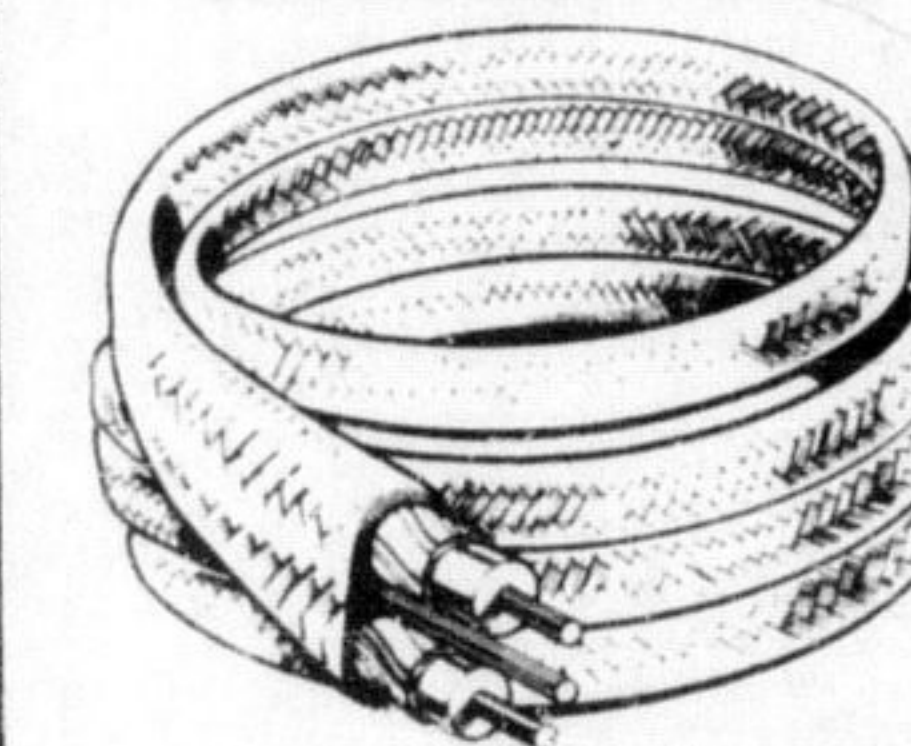
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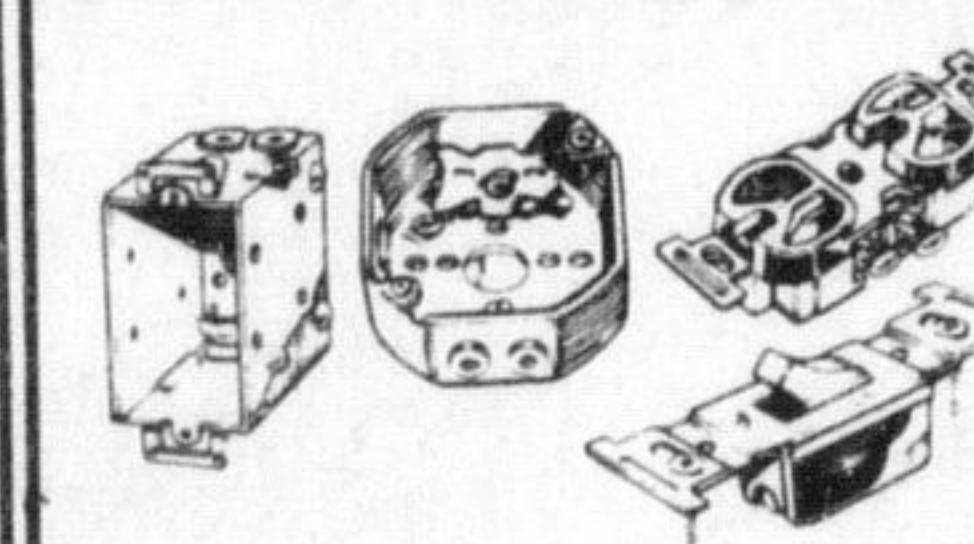


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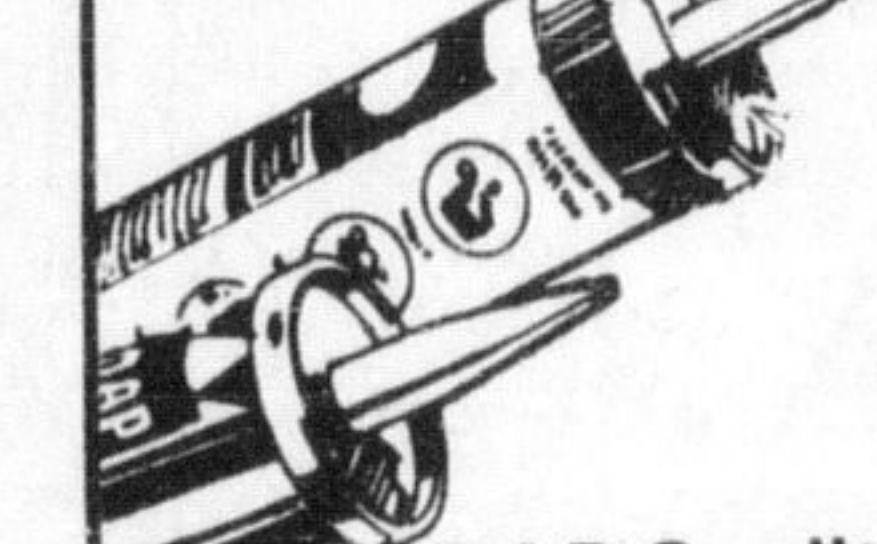
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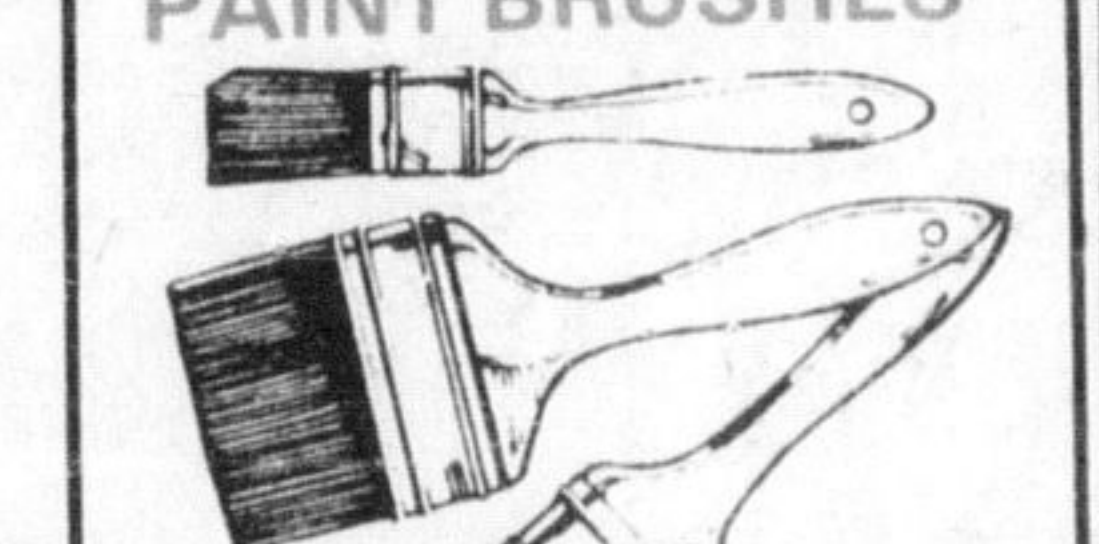
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