

Arts & Entertainment

Local author set to release third crime novel

Holds signing for Killing Kind today at Coles

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**
The Champion

It's not everyone who can pull off a murder — especially one that sends the brightest of investigators scampering.

David Wickes should know. This is his third one — literary murder, that is. Contained within the pages of this Milton-area author's murder mysteries are tales capable of producing the prickliest of goose bumps.

When it comes to creating suspense, this Moffat resident knows just what he's doing, weaving yarns with expertise equal to that of his main character, detective Jack Petersen.

Mr. Wickes' third and latest book, *Killing Kind*, is set to hit store shelves later this month. He's currently preparing for a book signing tour that'll include 53 appearances at 20 different stores.

Of course, Miltonians will get the first crack at the new book, with an appearance today at Coles at Milton Mall from 4 to 7 p.m.

Killing Kind has been in the works for the past eight months.

"A demented serial killer is on the loose, and our hero Jack is after him," Mr. Wickes explained.

The first two of Mr. Wickes' novels also feature the affable Jack Petersen, and a fourth novel in the series is set to be released this time next year.

Surprisingly, Mr. Wickes said each time he sees one of his books in print, it's more exciting than the last because each book is better

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DAVID WICKES

written than the one before.

The retired 70 year old said his biggest challenge is character development. The action scenes come easily, he said.

But he's not kidding anyone — least of all himself. This isn't fine Shakespeare. His highest priority with each book is to make it enjoyable for the reader. "This genre is meant to entertain people."

Becoming an author is something Mr. Wickes decided to do just recently. He wrote his first novel six years ago, after devouring scores of crime novels and deciding he wanted to try his hand at writing them.

The process is similar when it comes to writing each book, he said. He figures out the beginning and end, does his research, and then begins writing, allowing the plot to twist and turn as he goes.

"I've always had a pretty vivid imagination," Mr. Wickes said. "You need that to create a story."

He said research is a huge part of each book, and he relies heavily on his police contacts in the United States and Canada for an inside look into the real world of law

enforcement.

"You can't cheat the reader. Even though it's crime fiction, it's got to make sense and be believable," he said, explaining the police and medical procedures — for example — have to be accurate.

Crime fighting isn't a world he'd want to be too familiar with, Mr. Wickes said. "My admiration for police has gone up immensely. Most (of my contacts) have said, 'David, you don't want to know how bad it is out there.'"

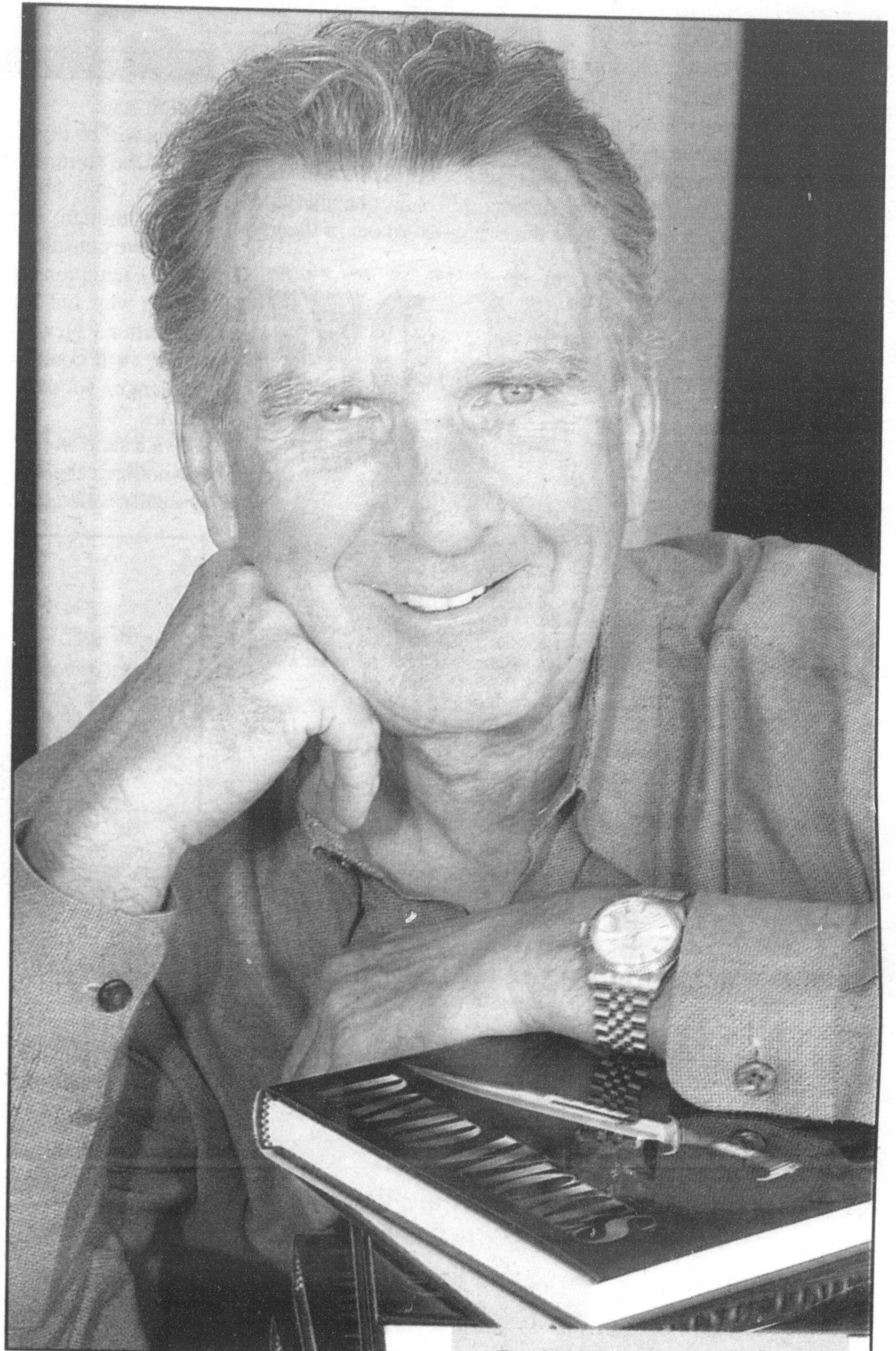
Mr. Wickes' stories are set in Minneapolis, Minn. He said he was told his books wouldn't sell in the United States if they took place in Canada. "When I'm famous, I want to locate them in Canada. Then they'll take place here in Ontario."

When the inevitable writers' block sets in, Mr. Wickes said his cure is to take his three German shepherds for a long walk. "We enjoy nature. That's my therapy."

To potential authors, Mr. Wickes said it's important to have a passion for writing. There isn't much money in the field, he said, and it's often very difficult to get published. Without stamina, the dream will die, he said. As for becoming a more skilled writer, Mr. Wickes said it's a never-ending goal.

"Critics tell me I'm getting better. It's an onward challenge. I'm more excited with this one (book) than with number one. I'm not where I want to be yet, but I'm getting there."

Stephanie Thiessen can be reached at sthiessen@miltoncanadianchampion.com.



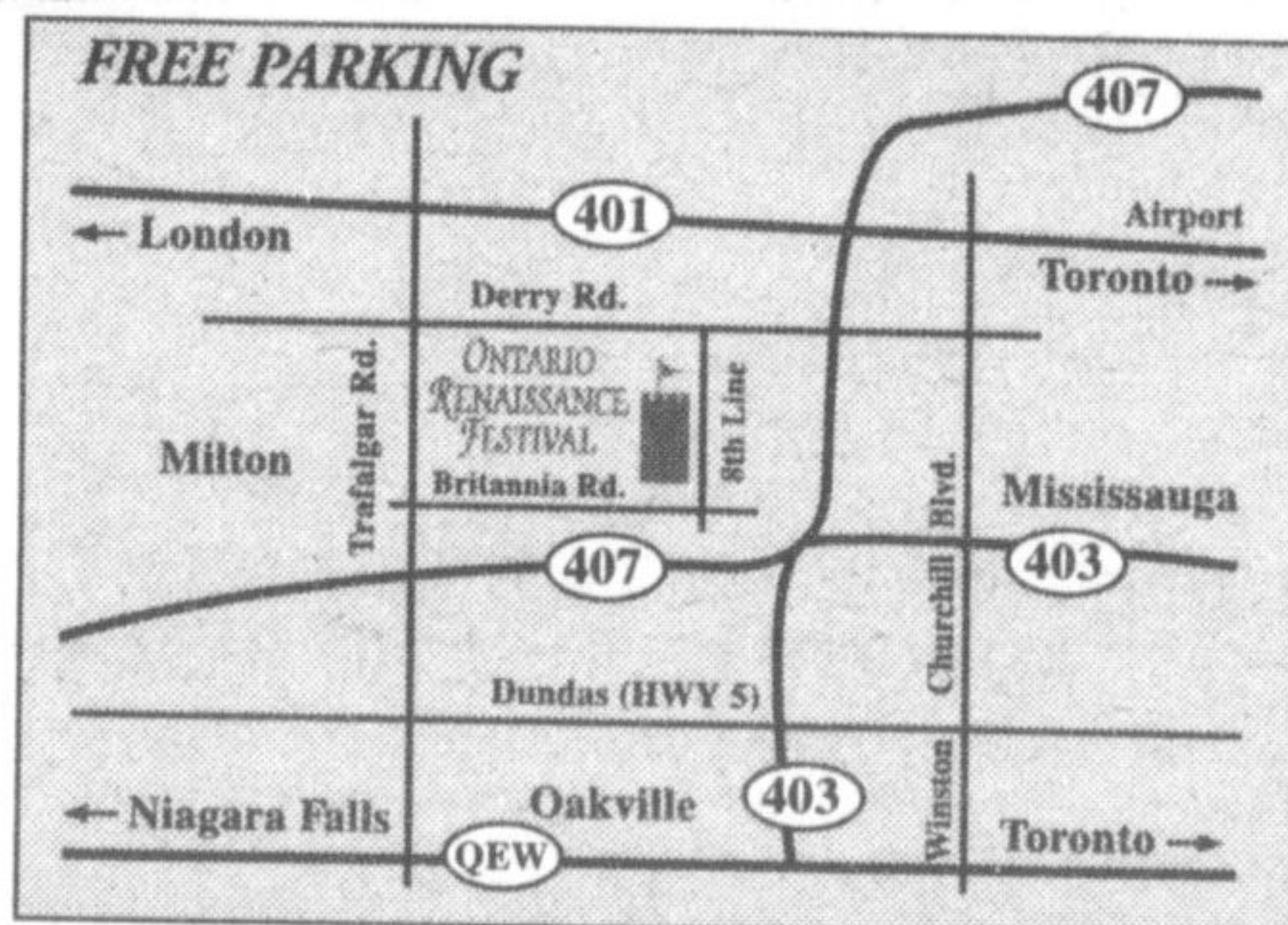
David Wickes has revised crime-fighting character Jack Petersen for his latest novel, *Killing Kind*.

File photo by GRAHAM PAINE

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