



The Downtown Advocate

THE GENUINE
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218 Main St.
Downtown Milton
875-2999

One of Milton's oldest companies turn 50!

Forty-four years ago his father's death forced an 18 year old Bill Rowney to choose between taking over the business his father started downtown Milton in 1946, or selling it off. Now the Milton Machine Shop is celebrating its fiftieth year of business and Rowney is still at the helm.

The Mill Street shop has grown, changed and evolved over the years to keep up with the pace of technology, but the nature of it's business has remained the same.

"We still do what we did 50 years ago," says Rowney proudly, "it's just that we do work farther afield now, not just in Milton but in northern Ontario and northern Quebec."

Rowney says the machine shop still does metal working functions it did when it opened; milling, turning, grinding, and drilling, but over the years the machinery that does the work has become smaller and lighter and the metals they work with more exotic.

"We used to have great big machines to do things that weighted a tremendous amount, now we have smaller lighter machines that do the job faster," he reports.

The location itself has undergone the most changes over the years. According to Rowney there has been either a foundry or a machine shop on the Mill Street site for nearly 100 years except for the period during the wars.

The original building was built by Rowney's father in 1946 and added onto in 1949. Rowney himself expanded the shop in 1964 building over and around the original structure to make it into what it is now.

The number of employees at the Milton Machine Shop has also grown from one to eight, although at one time there were 13 people on the payroll.

As for what the future holds in store for the Milton Machine Shop, Bill Rowney leaves that for advancements in technology to dictate. But Rowney's own future will follow the same path it took almost 50 years ago when he decided to make the machine shop his life's work.

"I'm going to stay around," Rowney says. "Technology has changed so fast. The way it's changed in the last 10 years has been so great. It's really interesting."

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