



## Bombs away

Parachute jumping is a booming sport kind of North America, as people find a unique kind of freedom in plunging headlong towards earth after bailing out of a small plane. Recently Markle staffer David McCausland screwed up his courage and strapped himself into a Cessna 185 to photograph a few jumpers and get a first-hand glimpse of what the sport is all about. He adamantly refused, however, to leave the plane himself until it had come to a complete stop back on the ground. Shown above is Robin Talbot, an organizer with the Huronia Parachute Club, which uses a field east of Coldwater as jump headquarters.

Photo by David McCausland

## Hurononia Happenings

### Leacock Festival

The second annual Leacock Festival of Humour opens Friday in Orillia at the Opera House, with Theatre Five, a group of eight Kingston comedians headlining the festival's first two nights.

Barbara Hamilton and Sandra O'Neill will do their Lib and Let Lib revue on July 27, with The Best of the Jest Society appearing August 1 and 2, to be followed by the Second City company's Alterations While You Wait.

The CBC will do a special taping of its radio comedy programs Inside from the Outside and Royal Canadian Air Farce as a tribute to radio comedy July 28.

If you're planning to attend, one word of advice. Get tickets early. Last summer, all three evening performances were sellouts, as were repeat shows in February at Ottawa's National Arts Centre.

### Gryphon Theatre in Barrie

Live theatre is also on again this week in Barrie, as the Gryphon Theatre Company stages Playbill, a series of three one-act plays at the Georgian College Theatre in Barrie.

### Here come the dogs

Canada's largest dog show is coming to Barrie August 2, 3 and 4, with close to 3,000 dogs expected to be entered. The Barrie Kennel Club is the host, and obedience trials will be held along with the shows themselves.

Last year, 1,700 breeders and exhibitors came from as far away as Australia, Alaska and Great Britain to match their animals against tough competition.

There are six groups of dogs classified according to the dog's original use. These are sporting, hounds, working, terriers, toy and non-sporting. In all, an estimated 117 breeds will be on display at Molson's in Barrie over the three days. Spectators are welcome.

### Winter games possible

Hurononia could be the site for this year's Central Ontario Regional Winter Games according to Sport Huronia News, the publication of the Greater Huronia Sports Council.

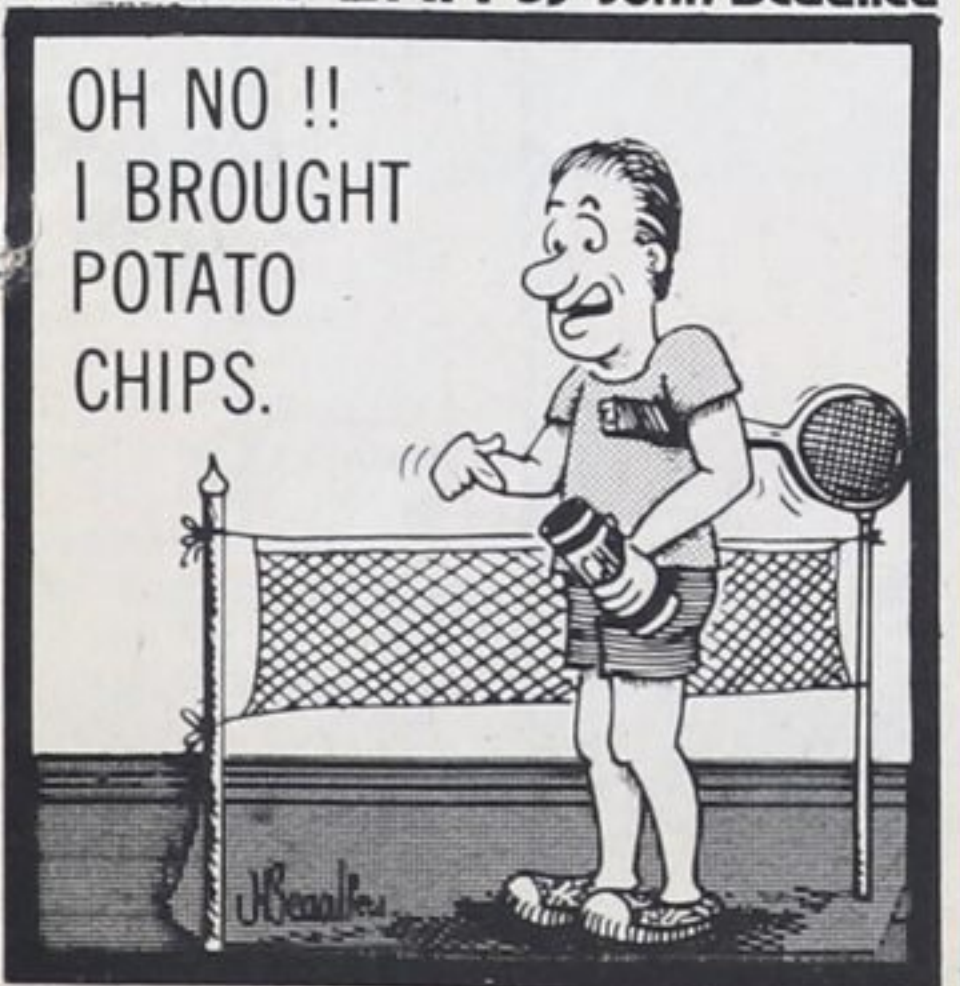
The provincial Ministry of Culture and Recreation is looking for a host, and the council is thinking the matter over. There's just one possible hitch — the council wants assurances that Metro Toronto will be removed from the central region, as proposed, to make Metro a sport region on its own. Says the publication: "We feel that Toronto athletes would dominate the games both in numbers and caliber and leave little room or opportunity for the athletes of Huronia."

The games would be held over a two or three day period in early December.

### Quote of the week

Our quote of the week this time 'round comes from Penetanguishene businessman Wally Meisinger. "Things like that don't stop us..." he blithely announced as he opened his men's clothing store as usual last Thursday morning. On Wednesday, between 5:30 and 9 p.m. thieves cleaned out his storeroom of an estimated \$14,000 in stock. Police believe the heist took no more than 20 minutes to complete, with the robbers making their haul in green garbage bags loaded onto a waiting truck. Still it wasn't strictly business as usual. Wally used the occasion to hold an impromptu sidewalk sale.

### TERRY PENN by John Beaulieu



## One of a kind

# "Unpretentious" Beaver Valley Museum has display of Canadian military hardware in village of Clarksburg

by Gary Wrathall

The village of Clarksburg, nestled immediately to the south end of the town of Thornbury almost like an extension of its urban neighbour, is not in itself, a particular tourist mecca. It is not a resort community attracting large numbers of visitors per se, simply because by the space of a few miles, it misses being in the middle of the Niagara Escarpment or along the Georgian Bay shoreline.

What Clarksburg does have is an institution no other municipality in Ontario has — a military museum. The only municipally-owned museum of its kind in the province, the Beaver Valley Military

Museum is there because of the dedication of two Clarksburg men, and the grateful assistance and donations of people living anywhere from Wasaga Beach to Owen Sound.

Neither Bob Holmes nor Bob Petch served in the world wars or international conflicts Canada has been involved in. Both, though are former members of the militia. Petch spent two years in the Canadian Forces electrical and mechanical corps, from 1955-57.

But although they have no personal battle recollections to talk of in the local Legion branch, they have a deep interest in Canada's military history.

That interest, call it a passion, led to the two men starting individual collections of military memorabilia — badges, medals, insignia, photographs and books. As their collections grew, they began five years ago displaying them at the annual Beaver Valley Fall Fair in Thornbury.

Interest in the collections made their stock grow larger, and in November, 1972, the collections were moved into the basement of what was then a store in Clarksburg so that the general public might view the exhibits more often.

Other people, both from the Beaver Valley area and around Grey and Simcoe counties, started adding material to the collections, and with the help of the Township of Collingwood, the pieces were moved across the street in Clarksburg to occupy a portion of Haines Mill. The Beaver Valley Military Museum had a home — but not for long.

Just about a year ago the Museum, with Petch and his wife Barbara as curators, moved into permanent quarters in the top floor of the Clarksburg Community Hall on the village's main street.

Now open year round, the museum is attracting more and more visitors since the days when you had to go down into the basement of the store. People have contributed personal items and collections to the museum, adding to the wealth of history that can be viewed.

Most of the military pieces, including various weapons used by both Allied forces and its enemies, cover the period from 1880 to the unification of Canada's Army, Navy and Air forces in the late 1960's. Everything from maps used by Canadian troops during the war as they engaged in various campaigns to the different equipment can be found.

Many of the pieces, about 150 different articles in all, were donated or loaned to the museum by the late Brigadier T.J. (Tommy) Rutherford of Owen Sound, one-time commander of the Grey and Simcoe Foresters regiment.

Brigadier Rutherford, who died only last Friday (July 18) at the age of 82 and was buried with a full military funeral, in turn, set the stage for other former soldiers from the area donating other collections, either in person, or through their estates. On a less voluminous but equally gracious scale, local veterans have contributed war-time souvenirs, helmets, medals and uniforms.

The Beaver Valley Chamber of Com-

merce, Collingwood Township, the Town of Thornbury, the Village of Clarksburg and Beaver Valley Branch 283 of the Royal Canadian Legion have all contributed financially to the Museum operation.

The Beaver Valley Military Museum is not a museum showpiece, compared to a provincial institution in some place like Toronto. Only a few of the display cases were purchased, with the rest home-made by Petch or others. None are ornately decorated.

Many exhibits, most of them actually, lie simply on top of flat tables, hand-written cards and signs telling people what the pieces are, and where they came from. There are no uniformed tour guides

handing out glossy brochures; most of the time, it will be Mr. Petch or his wife in everyday attire.

The museum reflects the fact that this is a local endeavour, providing something for all to see in an unpretentious, down-home sort of way. It's all been done with a minimum of expense, but a maximum of dedication and work, on the part of the Petches, Bob Holmes, Legionnaires and others.

The museum is open to the public every weekend until Nov. 11 from noon to 5 p.m. It is also open daily, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., until September 5. Admission is \$1 for a family, 50 cents for adults and 25 cents for children.



50-calibre machine gun

Beaver Valley Military Museum curator Robert Petch with one of the many items exhibited in the municipally-owned and operated museum, the only such military museum in Ontario. This 50-calibre Browning machine gun comes from an

airplane but Mr. Petch converted it to resemble a ground weapon. The Museum also boasts several other war-time rifles and sidearms used by Allied and Axis forces, plus a host of armored shells used in war.



Co-curator

Mrs. Barb Petch, co-curator along with her husband Bob of the Beaver Valley Military Museum in Clarksburg. Most of the uniforms, such as the one Mrs. Petch illustrates here, were donated to the Museum by the people who wore them

during the First and Second World Wars. Individual donations, and not expense acquisitions by museum organizers or trustees, has been the key to success behind the Museum.

Staff photo

## columns



by Ray Baker

# Sweat trickled down my cheek in 90 degree heat and I nursed a coke as snowmobiles whizzed past

The sweat trickled regularly off my chin onto my bare chest, and then on down. It would have eventually filled up my running shoes, but it was too hot to wear them.

My right hand nursed a luke-warm can of coke. I was sitting on my left hand on the hood of the Mustang, which was unbearably hot through the thin mini-shorts. Wiping my brow I grinned at my brother-in-law. "Well, how do you like our Canadian Summer so far."

He wriggled uncomfortably and said

"well, I guess you can adapt to it" and went back to his coke.

We were sitting in the middle of a farmer's field near Victoria Harbour with no shade and the temperature around 90 degrees F — watching grass snowmobile racing on a lazy heat-hazed Sunday afternoon.

My wife's brother and sister were over from England for a month's vacation. "We don't want driving all over the place," they had said. "Just continue as normal." So we had drunk beer on the patio, gone to a drive-in movie, and Sunday, away to the races.

A friend of mine 'Crazy' Larry was racing two machines, so we had gone along to cheer.

But racing, at 90 degrees? Wow, we all had to be crazy!

The engines were kept cool by a mixture of spraying and ice packs, or in one case, by spraying iced water over the engine, the machine, and a passing dog. I'll wait for winter from now on. It's as bad as having a bathing beauty contest in

February, on ice, on an over-cast day — in a blizzard. Ah well.

Speaking of going to the races. I have a true story to tell you. Honest. In today's atmosphere of too few jobs for too many students, with the weather too hot and humid to spark any get-up-and-go ideas, this story came to me like a breath of fresh air.

It concerns two young fellows who went to Mosport to watch the racing recently. They enjoyed the racing, then set to with a will and went 'round collecting all the empty beer bottles they could find. And Mosport that weekend had been a real 'lulu' for heat.

So they filled up their van, and I mean filled up. Bringing all the empties back to the Brewer's Retail in Penetanguishene, they grossed one hundred and forty-nine dollars and change.

Pausing only long enough to pile some full ones back into the van, and have a big meal, they took off for Beausoleil Island with a pocket full of money for a well deserved week's holiday. I would

imagine they won't come back from the island empty-handed either.

Who said initiative was dead? Now back to the snowmobile races. When it was all over it was still early afternoon. So bearing in mind what our visitors had said "just carry on normally" we did exactly that.

On the outskirts of Penetanguishene, we have the Red Dock. It's called all kinds of other names, but Red Dock it is, and that's where we headed, straight as an arrow.

On a follow-the-leader basis the rules are simple. Just walk down to the water and keep walking, right up to the neck. Then you stand there for a while grinning at each other with the cool glorious water under your chin. It makes it all worth while. Any number can play.

Then you slowly slide under, and join the world of Jacques Cousteau (or our local equivalent) and swim around under and over the lake. And have an ice cream, and talk to friends, and back in the water again.

Our overseas visitors thought this was

"bloody marvelous" and it is. We accept it as a normal everyday way of life, I guess. We forget how really lucky we are — until somebody reminds us of it.

So you go home for supper, a quiet game of darts on the lawn, a pre-supper beer in the garden and you've cooled off a bit.

Nice shady house, a glass of wine (lonesome Charlie) that goes down like heavenly soda pop, and a hearty meal. An after dinner drink (what the heck, it's Sunday) and pleasant conversation while someone (hopefully) does the dishes.

Back out on the patio and a reasonably early night. The television is ignored. The swims have washed all your cares away. It's Sunday night and you're refreshed and ready for a new week. No rush back to the city, and the lake is two blocks away.

"Just carry on normally," they had said, and that's all we did. Just one day in the long hot summer. The kind of day you and your family will remember forever...

Ray Baker is a manager at Midland's RCA plant and a freelance writer for Markle Community Newspapers. He and his family live in Penetanguishene.



by Shirley Whittington

# Writers are pack rats, and when they clear out their files 'tis a strange collection indeed

The Squire and I were sitting one evening last week, finishing our coffee and listening to the lost and found announcements on the radio. As usual, more things were lost, than found — kittens, wallets, car keys and so on.

One particular announcement had a strange effect on us both. "Lost," said the announcer. "O Somewhere in Midland, a crank." The Squire looked at me, and I looked at him, but neither one of us turned the other in. There was no reward offered.

Ten years ago I taught a grade eight class here in town for a short time. Not long ago, I met one of my ex-students. He's all grown up now, into a handsome young man.

I asked him what he'd been doing in the past ten years. "Well, I spent some time in Europe," he replied, "and a couple of months in Mexico. I was in California all of last summer, surfing, and as soon as I get

some money together, I'm going back to Europe for the winter."

I didn't tell him what I've been doing these last ten years, and I'm glad he didn't ask.

A young friend from Toronto told me "There's a bad boy in my class. He throws stones at people. One day he got the strap. He still throws stones at people. Our teacher said he couldn't go to field day with us. He had to stay at school and do arithmetic."

Now, presumably, he'll be able to count the number of stones he heaves around, that is if he doesn't learn to hate arithmetic as much as he apparently hates people.

Somewhere in the computerized files of the Ministry of Education, there's a strange animal with my husband's name, my maiden name, my birthdate and his salary.

Each year the Squire gets an enormous printed form with his vital and professional statistics printed on it. There's also a notation that says: "If the information on this sheet is not correct, please advise us so that we may bring our files up to date."

For the last three years, his Nibs has told them that he wasn't born on my birthday, and that he doesn't have a maiden name. What do you do when a computer won't believe you?

Air conditioned covered malls seemed to be replacing the neighbourly main street strip in many communities. But maybe people like the cheerful muddle of a crowded main street with a variety of shops. Why else would a suburban shopping mall advertise a "Sidewalk Sale?"

Last week I took a little brown envelope down to our bus terminal. I wanted to get it to a friend in Orillia.

I am five feet tall and weigh approximately 120 pounds. I could have gone to Orillia for \$2. My little envelope was about six inches by twelve and weighed as much as a sparrow.

The charge for sending it on a bus trip was \$2.25. I hope they gave it a seat by the window.

Every time I see a sign advertising a mammoth auction, I wonder what I'd do with my mammoth if I got the winning bid. If nothing else, I suppose I could take him to a Monster Bingo.

A final note to married ladies: The honeymoon is over when you come home from a party and you sit in the car waiting for him to open your door, and you discover that he'll be a long time getting there because he's gone out to the end of the driveway to bring in the garbage tins.

Shirley Whittington is a staff writer with Markle Community Newspapers.