

Port McNicoll's 'flying' reeve looks to more industry, recreation facilities

by Shirley Whittington
Sometimes when Robin Talbot takes a coffee break down at the Simcoe County Building in Midhurst, people mistake him for a student or a wandering visitor, and they ask him what he's doing there.

What he's doing is representing Port McNicoll, as its Reeve. But somehow, he just doesn't fit the traditional good guy image of reeveship.

At 24, he's the youngest reeve in the County, maybe in Ontario.

Being reeve of the community of 1600 on the shores of Georgian Bay has changed his life. "My

timetable's full these days," he says. "And I've developed interests and awareness in so many directions. Public Utilities, water supplies - these are things I never thought I'd be interested in."

As well as the highest elected public office in town, Talbot also holds down another job. He's a flying instructor at Base Borden. He's single, and lives with his parents in Port McNicoll.

The race for Reeve last December was his first venture into politics, although as a Political Science grad from Trent University, he's always had an interest in politics.

"A couple of weeks prior to the close of nominations," he says "I noticed that there was no opposition to the incumbent reeve. I talked to some of the older politicians in town. They supported me. I ran, and I made it."

He's especially interested in politics at the county level and is delighted to have been made chairman of the Tourism and Industry Committee. He confesses that he wondered how he'd be received at County Council, "but those guys down there were really good to me."

Talbot has only been reeve for a month, and

it's been an eventful one. "Council meetings have been well attended," he says, "and we get a fair amount of dialogue going in them. And I notice that there are a lot of younger people taking an interest."

Talbot feels strongly that there ought to be more for the youth in the small community, and he's currently organizing hockey and baseball leagues. "The Recreation Committee has really come together and is working very hard."

There is talk of possible construction of an arena, cooperatively built by Tay, Victoria Harbour and Port McNicoll. "This kind of cooperation is unprecedented in our area," says Talbot. "It represents a certain amount of maturity. Before, municipalities tended to concentrate only on development within their own boundaries."

In days gone by, Port McNicoll was a booming town. Then the CPR left, and life slowed down considerably. "These days," says Talbot, "the town's going through a psychological transition. Now that the CPR's gone, our tax base is limited and there aren't enough jobs. We've got to get some industries in here. We have the land,

water and rail access, docks, manpower, and it's a nice place to live. We are actively working for new industries, and if we get them, it will make a big difference to Port McNicoll."

Talbot also feels that in the past, Port McNicoll has been a land developer's paradise. "Those days are gone too. Now we are going to approach developers with a more cautious attitude."

Because of one recent development, Port McNicoll is to get an additional water main, something the town needs

desperately, but couldn't afford.

New homes for native people
"We've got 36 houses going up here, which will be available for purchase to native people, Metis and low income families. It's the best deal the town ever got because the developer's putting in the water main. Also, local people will be involved in building the homes, and that will employ about 60."

In a sense, Talbot, in his first month of office, laid his political future on the line during the debate over that project. He cast the deciding vote in

favour of the development and although it may have been a politically unpopular move, Talbot's convinced it was the right thing for the town.

"Maybe I won't be reeve in two years, but I had to stand up for what I thought was right. Most of these prospective buyers live in our area now, a lot of them in standard housing. Everyone has a right to a decent place to live, and an opportunity to own a home."

It isn't an informed opinion. At Trent, as part of his Political Science studies, Talbot wrote a paper on the urbanization of Native people.

Although he is

president of the Simcoe County East NDP Association, and says he enjoys politics ("I like the challenge and the campaigning") Talbot says he doesn't have any other political goals at the moment. "If the oppor-

tunity ever arose, it would be great to run for the New Democratic Party, but there are so many other competent people, and we already have two excellent candidates in the area, so that's not a realistic ambition for me

at the moment." In the meantime, the energetic young reeve of Port McNicoll is determined to revitalize his town. And that's what Robin Talbot's doing down at County Council.

Community nurses form alumni

Mrs. Pat Hook was appointed President of the new Community Registered Nurses' Alumni which was formed at a meeting held in Huronia District Hospital, Tuesday February 8.

The new Community Registered Nurses' Alumni is an extension of St. Andrew's Registered Nurses' Alumni and will include all registered nurses in the area.

Other members of the

executive are Isabelle Jones, vice president, Margaret O'Beirne, secretary, her assistant Julie Desroches, Treasurer is Olive Weeks, and her assistant will be Judy Wright.

The alumni was formed to provide educational seminars to the nurses in the community, to look into fund-raising programs and to look after all social activities.

Meetings will be held every second Monday of

the month at the Huronia District Hospital.

The new president Pat Hook presented outgoing president Rita Bell with an engraved charm for her bracelet. The alumni will also be sending a member to the Huronia Hospital Board.

Mrs. Hook is hoping that the membership will increase and that all registered nurses in the community will support the new alumni.

Johnny Cash film at Vasey United Church February 18

Last Tuesday evening, Mr. and Mrs. Alvah Stewart, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Edwards, Mrs. Leslie Jones of Midland, and Mrs. Angus Rawn of Wyebridge visited Mr. and Mrs. Cleve Long of Toronto.

The Vasey U.C.W. will meet at the home of Mrs. Fred Edwards on Wednesday, February 23, 1977 at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. and Mrs. Ed Wismer of Barrie visited with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Brown on Tuesday and Mr. Lorne Webb of Garden City spent the weekend with the Browns.

Allan Edwards of Wasaga Beach is spending a few days with his grandparents. Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Edwards. Congratulations to Janet Wilson who was

successful in obtaining her Grade eight piano. Good work Janet!

Mr. and Mrs. Brian Jones have returned home after enjoying a holiday in the Bahamas last week.

Friday evening February 18, at 7:30 p.m. there will be a film titled "Gospel Road" produced by Johnny Cash shown in the Vasey United Church. Bernice Vasey commenced work last week at the Georgian College in the Arts Department.

Mrs. John Moriarty and Eddie and Robbie Byers spent the weekend in Sarnia visiting Mr. Moriarty.

The Vasey United Church held their annual meeting on Sunday Feb. 13 with a good attendance and all committees

showing a very successful year.

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Edwards and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Devitt are enjoying a holiday in the Bahamas.

Bob Kidd who is attending Sir Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo is spending this week with Mr. and Mrs. Ken Rummy.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Edwards visited with Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Brown and boys of Dalston on Sunday.

Gwen Faint of Toronto spent the weekend with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ross Faint.

Mr. and Mrs. Craig Painter and Lyle called on Mr. and Mrs. Ron Brewster of Wyevale, Saturday.

Peggy Riddell of Barrie spent the weekend with her friend Janet Wilson and her family.

Saturday, Mr. and Mrs. Ken Robinson visited Mr. and Mrs. Allan Robinson and Adam of Caledon East and also called on Mr. and Mrs. Bill McCrae of Caledon and Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Faint of Hornings Mills. Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Faint of Scarborough visited the Robinsons during the weekend.

Lisa and Laurie Edwards of Barrie spent the weekend with Mr. and Mrs. Roy Edwards.

Visitors during the weekend with Mr. and Mrs. Clare McKeown were Mr. and Mrs. Alex Burnett and Greg of Orillia, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Burnett of Willowdale and Mr. and Mrs. Tom Fisher of Collingwood.

The second meeting of the Vasey 4-H club "The Club Girl Entertains" was held at the home of Mrs. David Jones with five members and two leaders present. The roll call "Why I like to entertain" was well answered. The election of officers was conducted with Sandra Snider - president, Mary Kelly - vice president, Secretary - rotating and Laurie Graham - press reporter. The correct way to set the table and the proper manners were discussed then Ann Snider demonstrated table setting.

Last weeks assignment sheets were discussed and plans for the next meeting to be held on February 21st, at the home of Mrs. David Jones.

Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Woods visited relatives in Sarnia during the past week.

Last Wednesday Mr. and Mrs. Don Chapman attended the funeral of Mr. Chapman's grandmother, Mrs. Fred Chapman of Aurora.



Contemplative Reeve Robin Talbot

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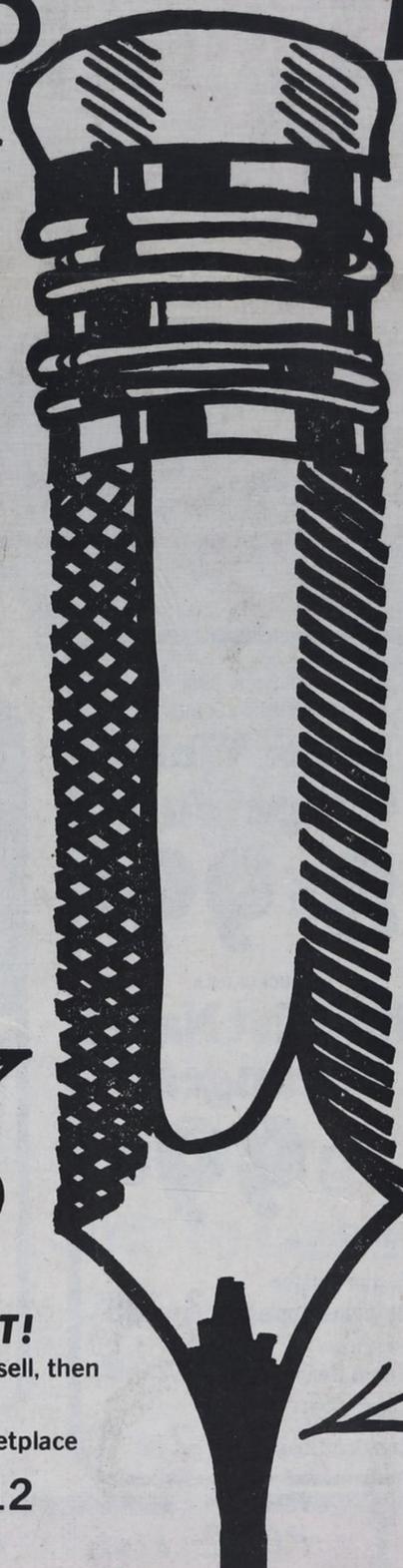
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'Live-in' participant

Bundled to the ears but still keen to work in the carpentry shop is a student from Cambridge who, along with his Grade seven class "lived-in" at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons last week. The educational "live-in" program, operated for the past six years, has been so popular as a teaching tool that schools have booked into 1978. This year 15 schools from as far away as Belleville and as close as Midland will participate. Midland Secondary School "lives-in" February 21, 22 and 23. Like the lad in the photograph, Midland students will have to adjust to 17th century conditions with as few modern conveniences as possible.

Photo by Odesse.