



Preparing for their trip south

Duck hunting season opened with a flurry at the crack of dawn Saturday and just south of Midland in Tay Township hunters in par-

ticular were out in full force. Meanwhile Canadian geese which feed at Little Lake Park in Midland but nest south of the town in

the townships were pictured heading back into Midland from a near-by mar-

sh...probably to escape being someone's dinner for Thanksgiving.

In today and out tomorrow

Shirley Whittington

I suffered two severe jolts today. The first came when my hairdresser suggested that the next time I wash my hair, I think of my head as a giant, heated roller. I was just getting used to that idea, when I came upon a newspaper article which was devoted to the definition of what was in and what was out.

In and out of what, you may ask. The answer is style, and it must be important because the newspaper devoted half a page to the in and out checklist on a day when a couple of hundred people had died in a flood in India.

As far as I can tell the difference between in and out is the difference between the half sizes in the budget section of the current department store catalogue and what the woman in the next Woody Allen movie will be wearing.

Out is what you just bought to go with what you already have. In is what you threw away ten years ago because it was so impossibly out.

As you may imagine, it is hard for those of us who live in the fashion boondocks to know whether we are really in or out so a guide like this one is read pretty eagerly.

The in and out guide is just full of surprises. Take your white cotton underwear from Marks and Spencer. It's in. You can wear it to the locker room at the "Y" any day of the week, and you won't be stared at.

On the other hand, if your nether parts are encased in tiger striped bikini briefs, you're out, baby.

I can only hope that the folks down at the Salvation Army shop are braced for a barrage of discarded tiger striped bikini briefs.

There's more. Garter belts are in and panty hose are out. Capes are in and cloth coats are out. Cashmere is in; acrylic out.

Sweaters, thank goodness, are in, but not just any old sweater. "Repetitive knits are out," says my guide to in and out. "Witty knits are in."

Witty knits? I'm not sure what they are, but I'd like to get my hands on one. I'd chain it to the typewriter. That should keep everyone in stitches.

Those of you who have given up food in favour of grapefruit and hard boiled eggs will be dismayed to learn that overly thin bodies are out. Healthy looking bodies, on the other hand, are in.

That explains the white underwear from Marks and Spencer. A body that's too healthy looking can look pretty disgusting in tiger striped bikini briefs.

In and out extends to life style. White sheets are in, and patterned sheets are out.

It doesn't say anything about gray sheets with patches at the bottom where people have torn them with their toenails.

For men, clean shaven faces are in and scraggly boards are out. Signet rings, worn on the little finger, are in; wedding rings are out.

It's pretty tough for us ordinary folks to remember what's in and what's out, because everything changes so darn fast.

However I am working on an unfashionable person's guide to what's in and what's out. It's pretty basic and if you memorize it, you'll be in most of the time. My list includes the following:

Ducking stools are out; criminal lawyers are in.

Leeches are out; anti-biotics are in.

Pyramids are out; cremation is in.

Togas are out; three piece suits are in.

The Inquisition is out; ecumenism is in.

Meanwhile you might like to consider the very last item on the newspaper list of what is in and what is out. It says, "Personal style is in; trendy is out."

That means that the only people who will pay any attention at all to what is in and what is out are people who use their heads for giant heated rollers.

Wouldn't that curl your hair?

We've managed to muddle along...

Bill Smiley

ONE OF my father's favorite jokes, before the word "corny" had been invented, was, "It's a long time to be married to a strange woman."

He repeated it once a year, on his wedding anniversary, and I can still remember my mother's eyes rolling up, the way women's eyes roll up when their husband's are telling a story they've heard eleven times before.

But it pops into my head every time I think of my own wedding anniversary, which is usually about two weeks after the event.

This year, I remembered about two weeks before the event, but by the time this appears in print, I'll probably have forgotten completely.

My wife is no better. She can be so sentimental it's downright disgusting, over such trivia as her children, her grandchildren, her father, her house, a particular party twenty years ago, a friend who is in trouble, and, very occasionally, about me.

But when it comes to really important things, she cares not a whit. The first indication of this was when I gave her a flower on Mother's Day many years ago. She said, curtly, "I'm not your mother."

Birthdays, same deal. She was born on Feb.

28, surely easy enough to remember, with its connotations of Leap Year. I forget. She does too, though I'm not sure hers isn't psychological - a year older.

This attitude permeated our family. Our kids certainly knew what Christmas was, little greedy-guts.

And Easter: church with joyous music, hunt for Easter eggs, probably a visit with grandparents.

But I'm quite sure they don't know why the first of July is a holiday, have only the vaguest idea what Remembrance Day and Thanksgiving are all about, and exactly which day is their birthday, though they know the month they were born in, because that ties in with astrology, in which they fairly firmly believe.

But my Dad was right, even though repetitious. "It's a long time to be married to a strange woman." Especially one you didn't even know before you met her, if you follow me.

I met this strange woman at university. when I came home from the wars. I thought she was demure, beautiful, and shy.

And she was. She thought I was brash, swaggering and far too unheeding of the

university's rules, which I was.

After many years of togetherness, we've each retained only one of these adjectives. She is totally lacking in demure, she is still beautiful, and she is about as shy as Muhammed Ali.

I have completely lost my brash, have nothing to swagger about, but am still far too unheeding of the rules of the establishment.

An odd combination, you'll say, to get married. And it was. She thought me boorish and uncouth, especially after I fell sound asleep in the middle of a lecture by the late, great poet, E.J. Pratt.

She didn't realize that I had been at a luncheon reunion with some old Air Force pals who'd just arrived back from overseas, and that it was only great gallantry and iron will that had forced me to make the lecture.

I thought she was prissy, prudish, and dumb, because she never missed a lecture, wouldn't even throw one inviting look at the dashing young ex-fighter pilot in her class, and ventured no opinions on anything.

Oh, well. Chemistry, I guess. I won't go into the details, but a few months later we were exchanging furtive kisses in the library stacks, groping embraces in doorways, and skipping lectures right and left.

And a year later, we were married, with no pomp and little circumstance, poor as churchmice, but head over heels.

It was better to marry than to burn, as Paul told the Ephesians or somebody.

And about ten months later, we had a little

stranger in our midst, and were poorer than churchmice. But still head over heels.

That little stranger is now 33. Now, I'm not going to tell you which anniversary this is. I don't want a flood of mink coats and gold bars and ten-cent cards coming in.

Suffice to say that we won't celebrate it together, but we'll be together.

There's nothing quite so disgusting as the married couple who can't stand each other's guts, but go out for a big dinner, or throw a big party, on their anniversary.

Like most couples, we've grieved and wept together, laughed together, helped each other over some rocky roads, loved together, fought with mutual fury, taken great joy and great heart-aches from our children, idolized and spoiled our grandchildren, and managed to muddle along, day to day, in this peculiar life that throws up road-blocks and rainbows, groans and guffaws, tears and terrors, death and taxes.

We still constantly worry about the welfare, state of mind and health, and golf score of the other.

We still fight frequently, although I have called and asked that my wife be taken off the list of "Husband beaters." She hasn't thrown anything bigger than a glass of water at me in months.

My dad was right. "It's a long time to be married to a strange woman." And may yours be as long, and as strange.

Not your wife; your marriage.