

Downtown King Street the real winner

by Murray Moore

Improving the look of downtown Midland "will never be finished, should never be finished, but it has got to get started; it's got to get started tonight." A majority of the voting Business Improvement Area members who attended Monday's meeting to vote on the proposal to spend \$205,000 on Midland's King Street supported BIA Chairman Peter Palmer's call.

Before the vote, Palmer also said that the BIA was "on the threshold of putting the downtown (of Midland) back on the area map." The audience of 70 in the Watson Gallery was told that it was the renewal spirit that makes a successful downtown, not trees and benches and the other physical trappings.

Thirty-four of the 44 BIA members to vote Monday evening gave the BIA permission to apply to the provincial Ministry of Housing for a low-interest loan of \$150,000.

Approval of the improvement program Monday also ensured that \$55,000 will be donated by the town. Last month council agreed to give \$55,000 conditional on the BIA membership approving the proposal.

The interest rate on the \$150,000 loan is a flat one percent per annum.

The BIA will have 10 years to repay the \$150,000 principal, and the \$15,000 interest. The first payment is not due until 30 days after the project is completed.

Previous proposals had failed, Palmer said, because of lack of support from the council of the day and a lack of unity among downtown businessmen.

The results of the expenditure of \$205,000 on Midland's King Street could be concrete by this time next year, if approval from the Ministry of Housing for a \$150,000 loan to the Midland Business Improvement Area is forthcoming by September or October, and tendering and construction go without a hitch.

Nearly half of the money will be spent to widen the sidewalks by five feet, and to construct

"pedestrian nodes", or built-up pedestrian crossways, between Elizabeth Street and Bay Street.

The remainder of the money is budgeted for items such as benches, garbage cans and a lighting system for trees.

But beside and beyond the present, approved, project, more improvements have been recommended for the future, such as:

- a bus that would travel a short route down King Street to the town dock and back again, for the benefit of tourists;

- the replacement of the fountain by the public library with a tree;

- the replacement of the large, competing advertising signs on both sides of King Street with smaller, less obtruding signs;

- the painting in rainbow colours of the shed at the town dock;

- the forced improvement of the appearance of some of the main street's less well-kept buildings through strict enforcement of the town's 1976 use and occupancy bylaw.

Bud Lewis, chairman of the town's parking authority, said Monday during the Business Improvement Area meeting that free parking of some sort in the downtown was possible next year. The parking authority will be meeting with the town council soon to discuss the idea, he said.



Question answered by BIA official

BIA board of management member Dan Herbert, left, points out a detail for former King Street, Midland, businessman Mac Perrin, right, before the start of the BIA meeting Monday, at the end of which approval was given to spend \$205,000 to improve King Street.

Now comes paper work

An application for a \$150,000 loan to the Ministry of Housing from the Midland Business Improvement Area could be completed by the end of this month, the BIA's chairman says.

Peter Palmer also said he understood that approval for the loan would come within 90 days of receipt of the application, if the money was still available.

Money from the ministry's fund for use by the province's BIA's is limited. The first applications from BIA's to gain approval in a year to get money.

As recently as last week, three or four \$150,000 loans were still available for this year, Palmer said.

The BIA chairman was "gratified" at the outcome of the vote Monday, in which 34 of 44 BIA members approved Palmer's making an application for the \$150,000 loan.

And council's unanimous decision the previous week to give \$55,000 towards the improvement of King Street, subject to the BIA's membership approving the project this past Monday, "made it so much easier to sell the concept (of an altered downtown) to the BIA," Palmer said.

Palmer was surprised that only 44 of the 113 member businesses of the Midland BIA were represented at Monday's meeting. But the fact that more than three-quarters of those eligible voters present approved of the project with a yes vote Monday evening was, he said, a vote of confidence.

If all goes well, King Street between Elizabeth Street and Bay Street will be transformed by this time next year.



Solemn ceremony

The swearing-in ceremony for Penetanguishene's new chief of police, Dennis Player, right, was held Monday morning. Mayor Ron Bellisle, left, led Player through the oath in the council chamber.

Antique Market: Its 16th season

The Auxiliary to Huronia District Hospital will host its 16th annual Antique Market at the Country Mill, July 14 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. and again on July 15 and 16 from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Doug Lewis, MP for Simcoe North will be the special guest.

The Antique Market will attract approximately 19 dealers from various parts of the province. It is one of the most established shows in Southern Ontario.

Market Convenor and Auxiliary President, Jennifer Chalmers and her committee have been working on this project since early

spring. The Country Craft Shop will display and sell the crafts, made and donated by the Auxiliaries.

Although the Gift Shop is the largest source of revenue for the Auxiliary, the Antique Market is the largest project of the group.

The annual dinner dance and the fashion show also continue to aid the hospital financially through the Auxiliary which hosts these events on a volunteer basis.

This is also the 75th anniversary of the Auxiliary being in service to the community. Admission 1.50 Students .75

Trinidad, Tobago...

...comes to Huronia

Dominion Day bash crowd-pleaser

by Doug Reed

It was indelibly illustrated again Wednesday, Dominion Day and the Midland Rotary Club are made for each other.

For the umpteenth year in a row the local service club played host to its annual bar-b-que extravaganza at the foot of King Street at the town docks.

The 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. fun-filled and often zany affair was by far the biggest and best of all the fund-raisers Midland Rotarians have fostered to date.

This time around club members diverted a bit from their traditional bar-b-que avec cheer garden by adding the world's largest dockside garage sale to the day's jammed packed program.

And although there was no way to count noses, it was estimated that several thousand people from far and near flocked to the "do" throughout the day.

Some well known "biggies" from the world of television and politics also popped in to

make a day of it.

CBC-TV's Bob McLean was there as was CKVR-TV's anchorman Terry Thomas.

From Ottawa via Orillia looking fit as a fiddle was Simcoe North's Doug Lewis, MP, while Simcoe East MPP Al McLean was spotted gingerly mingling amongst the faithful as both politicians hit the hamburger hustings.

For Rotarians the day couldn't have been a better way to mark this nation's 114th birthday.

While tons of hamburgers and gallons of pop and other liquid refreshments were being dispatched and downed, visitors had a chance to pick over bargains at the garage sale and still find time to visit displays of antique cars and boats, etc.

A jaunt along the wharf usually resulted in old friends meeting each other but the very zenith of the day, the coup de grace for connoisseurs of sensational steel band music was yet to come.

The hypnotic music of the nine-member

Rhapsody Pan Groove steel band even caused the sun to shine during their afternoon and early evening performances.

Thanks to local Rotarians, British West Indies Airlines and Huronia Travel Service one didn't have to leave the Gateway to the 30,000 Islands to take a trip down memory lane to Trinidad or Tobago.

According to the band's manager and congo drummer Dennis O'Connor the band is actually 14 players strong with three managers but because of work schedules not all performers can get off for a particular gig.

Nevertheless those in Pan Groove who did arrive in the Heart of Huronia on Wednesday delighted their audience with steel band music from the Caribbean.

According to O'Connor the steel drums are made and tuned in Tobago where the music is also arranged.

It usually takes the group about eight hours to prepare one number "so we can get it right."

When the band isn't playing its members

work for banks, stock brokerage firms, etc.

"We play for the fun of it...as a matter of fact we'll be playing for the second year in a row at miss nude world," a smiling O'Connor adds, "and that's fun."

For those who have never been to Trinidad and Tobago, the band provided the carnival spirit of the islands where the calypso and limbo were born and band members did it with a great deal of zeal and professionalism.

Rotarians did themselves proud on Dominion Day. To the uninitiated it may have appeared the incredibly successful bash was pulled together by magic.

Fact is it took hundreds of man hours of planning and labour to get the event off the ground.

Wednesday's pot-pourri of sights and sounds, of good things to eat and drink was a dazzling fund-raiser by a magnificent group of people.

Local Rotarians should take a bow...their efforts were unparalleled in the world of bar-b-ques and garage sales.