

Robots sharing more shop floors

by PAUL SANDERSON

Midland and area factory workers have been sharing the shop floor with robots for seven and a half years.

It was in January 1977 that Kindred Industries Limited (KIL), now Waltec Sinkware, installed its first "Unimate" full function manufacturing robot.

A handful of local factories have followed Waltec's lead, and the interest in robotics is still growing.

Last Wednesday, at the Highland Motel, the manufacturer's committee of Midland Chamber of Commerce met to hear a talk by Ian Barrie, vice-president and general

manager of the Ontario Robotic Centre in Peterborough.

Sixteen representatives from Midland / Penetang Manufacturing Industries joined Don Limoges, head of the technical division at Penetanguishene Secondary School, and Jack Gregory, from the Ontario Ministry of Industry and Trade, to hear Barrie describe the services of the new robotics centre.

Robots have become economically attractive to any mass production manufacturer, says Barrie.

Their efficient speed and improved quality control will normally lower the cost of a

product, making it more competitive in the marketplace.

The demand for manufacturing robots is there, reports Barrie, but a small industry is unlikely to have someone on staff who understands the technology.

The 15 government sponsored Robotics Centres across Ontario are designed to fill that gap. They sell no product.

On the invitation of a business interested in robots, Robotics Centre staff complete a free survey of the manufacturing operation.

If the use of robots is warranted, a contract may be signed with the Robotics Centre to assist and oversee the design, evaluation, and

installation of a robot system.

Although robots are generally built in Japan and the United States, Barrie says most firms have distributors in Toronto.

Questions following Barrie's half-hour talk showed only a cautious interest in the services of the Robotics Centre.

But Wally Cunningham, development commissioner for the Town of Midland, says, some members of the manufacturer's committee intend to learn more about robots at "Tech Talk", an exposition of the Ontario Robotics Centre's services, at the Barrie Holiday Inn, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Nov. 21 to 22.

Slain officer's funeral draws 800 policemen

An estimated 800 policemen from across Canada and the Northern U.S., including six constables from the Midland detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police attended Monday's funeral in Matheson of OPP Const. Vern Leslie Miller.

The officer was gunned down early

Friday morning at a highway truck stop while having coffee with his partner.

Const. Miller, a 16-year veteran, was killed instantly after being hit in the head with the blast from a 12-gauge shotgun.

He's the sixth policeman to be killed in

the line of duty in Ontario in the past three months.

The death of Const. Miller and the other policemen has prompted a call for the return of capital punishment in Canada.

Const. Miller, 38, leaves his wife and three children.

Two men have been

charged with first-degree murder in connection with the incident.

Gregg Herbert Prevost, 22, and Randall Joseph Lepage, 21, appeared briefly in a Timmins court on Monday and were remanded in custody to Jan. 8.

Main Poyntz intersection will look different soon

In the next week or so, the corner of Main Street and Poyntz Street in Penetanguishene is going to look dramatically different: the large garage located on the southeast corner

of the intersection is going to be torn down. The garage, which is now being vacated by Martin's Equipment Centre, is coming down to make way for added parking for the

Penetang I.G.A. store. A second entrance for the I.G.A. parking lot, with access from Main Street, should be in place some time in spring. The garage lot will be excavated so that it is on the same level as the parking lot, I.G.A. owner Jerry Light said yesterday. Light, who owns the garage, also said that some landscaping will be done on the lot. He said the changes at the corner will provide a Main Street exposure for his store.

Light said demolition

progress will depend on the weather. The rear portion of the garage is already down. "If the weather holds, (the rest will come down) soon," he said.

Light is also expanding his store into the High Point mall, adjacent to the I.G.A. He said May, 1985 is the target date for completion of work on the store expansion.

The garage, which has also been an outlet for Handy Andy's, once housed Stoneleigh Motors and Gropp Motors.

McLaughlin makes it official - plans to leave council, Dec. 24

Midland's Ward 2 alderman Robert McLaughlin made it official on Monday; he plans to step down from council, Dec. 24.

In announcing his plans this week to resign from office, Alderman McLaughlin gave as his reasons "health and my

doctor's orders."

McLaughlin has served on council for the past two months having been appointed by council to complete the term of former alderman Miles Blackhurst who himself had resigned earlier this year for personal

reasons.

McLaughlin said, an incident involving Mayor Al Roach and Alderman Patrick Kearns during an in-camera meeting last week "was unfortunate."

However, he said it wasn't instrumental in

his decision to step down since he had been contemplating the move prior to last week's fracas.

It's expected council will not call an election to find a replacement for McLaughlin but will once again opt to appoint someone from the municipality.

Bennett expected to attend Lincoln Court opening

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Claude Bennett is expected to be on hand Wednesday, Nov. 28 when the Lincoln Court apartments in Penetanguishene are officially opened.

Penetanguishene Mayor Ron Bellisle said on Monday that the Bennett's presence at an official opening of the Main Street building had been sought and that the minister's schedule at this point appears to be clear for next Wednesday's scheduled opening. Bellisle is expected to attend, as is Pat Bifolchi, president of Scave Investments,

the company that built Lincoln Court.

Lincoln Court is Penetanguishene's most dramatic example of the application of the Municipal Affairs and Housing Ministry's Convert-to-Rent program. The ministry provides an interest-free loan to individuals who convert space to rental units. It is offered on a unity by unity basis. There are over 40 units in Lincoln Court. Apartments were created out of the shell of what was once a commercial building.



\$1 wins \$14,000 more

Anita French (right, rear) recently traded in her 1979 Camaro, a fact which is not particularly noteworthy until you realize that before she did she won Wintario's mystery draw on September 27. The mystery prize for the week was a four-wheel drive 1985 AMC Eagle wagon, which she and her family are standing in front of at

Penetang Motor Sales where, on Monday night, they picked up the new family car. It is worth nearly \$14,000. The Frenches, from Midland, were watching the draw on TV when their number was drawn. With Anita is husband Ron and their son and daughter.

Fear Christmas lights within reach of passersby

Those new decorative lamp standards on Main Street in downtown Penetanguishene are presenting a problem for the municipal employees who put up the town's Christmas lights. The light standards on Main Street between Robert Street and Water Street are much lower than the ones they replaced, and that means Christmas lights on top of them would be in easy reach of pedestrians who had a

notion to tamper with them.

The standards, which give the one block stretch of Main Street a sort of rustic look, replaced the variety that is still in place on the rest of the street. Those on the rest of the street present no problem. As for the new ones, "We're looking at them right now," Water and Light Commission employee Ernie Lalonde said yesterday. "There's a little

problem with the new standards."

"If we try to hang the lights like we do on the old ones, they'll be in easy reach," Lalonde said. He estimated the height of the new standards to be about 18 to 20 feet. Decorative candles, diamonds and lanterns fit on each light standard with a string of small lights surrounding the motif, Lalonde explained. "It's too late to go shopping for different ones," he commented.

The Water and Light Commission is putting up the lights for the Penetanguishene Chamber of Commerce and expects to have them up, between the waterfront and the south end of town, in about a week.

Sears office open

A Sears order office is scheduled to open in the High Point Mall in Penetanguishene December 10.

Shoppers will be able to order Sears items by going through catalogues in the order office. The Sears office will be located in Village Leisure Wear shop, which is owned jointly by Jerry Light and Grant Lotton. Yesterday, Light said that the Leisure shop will be moving to a new location in the High Point mall.



Moving out

Gil Robillard of Penetanguishene stands in front of Martin's Equipment Centre in Penetanguishene. On Monday, he and other members of the store's staff were busy getting ready to move out of the building to a new location near the bottom of Main Street. The garage at the corner of Main Street and Poyntz Street is to be demolished soon. Robillard is a former mayor of Penetanguishene.