William Harrison

a tribute to a local businessman and father

It was probably the ready quick smile, the warm greeting the eager exchange of ideas, the French accent, and his never ending zeal to be successful amongst friends and family that set him apart as one of our early "entrepreneurial spirits" which we seem to see less of today...that special quality in a fellow human which very few of us possess, but we all recognize it when we see it.

He arrived in Midland some 40 years ago as a weaver, became a respected industrialist manufacturer. raised a fine family, and retired in the area in which he succeeded.

Married to Edna (Lalumiere) in 1941 in Galt, Ontario, they moved to Windsor, and under Chrysler and further education. "Willie" studied metallurgy and welding, only to be uprooted by his father's health and moved back to his native town of Cowansville in Quebec, which was short-lived since the Silk Mill (Bay Mills) opened again in Midland. The road was always up!!

From weaving to shipyard welding (all the while raising what was to become a family of seven children) to his first private enterprise, Harrison Iron Works, specializing in wrought iron standard and custom-design for inside and cut...the time was right and "Willie" and Edna and family took this product to a host of people in within the Georgian Bay area.

There was to be another era to develop with the purchase of the



old Circle "B" Dance Hall, remodelled to become Harrison Metal Works, the home of excellent quality windows and doors, supplemented by the distributorship for aluminum siding and awnings.

He worked and sold hard, was a thoughtful employer and retired from business in 1978 when his illness became too great a burden.

We say our heart-felt good-byes to an "early entrepreneur" who was within Midland's business community for 25 years and a citizen for more than 40 years. His was a somewhat storming happy existence, very successful and he will always have the respect of those who knew him well.

Part of the legacy which is shared by his loving wife Edna, is his family of seven children and seven grandchildren. His family was always dear to him and although he was misunderstood, as all parents are at times, he

loved them dearly and supported them in a fashion rarely seen in our society of today.

Their energy, undedetermination, rstanding and love for their families is a tribute to him as a family man ... but tributes are not enough.

We must take his lead as a champion of small beginnings, and strive for things better thereby creating self-esteem, respect from our peers (be it business or friends) and fulfill the need in our children to "go one better" into a future which has changed dramatically and will continue to change dramatically. To take that spark when it is there and build a wild-fire of happiness for oneself and those

around. Yes, he had that "Willie" quality; always smiled and extended a welcome hand.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above was written by Andy Giesbrecht, a friend who became a son-in-law.

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