

1986 a Year in Review

Midland boy starts year on top of charts

The Town of Midland started off the new year making news not only locally, but nationally, with an album of original music composed by Midland's Doug Cameron which was on the list of Toronto CHUM FM's top 85 recordings for 1985.

Cameron, 30, a native of the town, and a graduate of Midland Secondary School, wrote the music and the lyrics, and performed each tune on the LP "Mona and the Children".

As of Jan. 1, 1986, 275 centimetres of snow had fallen on Midland starting off what was to be one long cold winter for the area.

Early in the month, the Midland Chamber of Commerce moved into their new home at the foot of King Street. A Chamber fund raising campaign in previous years had raised \$120,000 with the town donating \$25,000.

On Jan. 10, with the exception of one doctor in Oak Ridge and one doctor in the Regional Hospital, approximately 20 Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre psychiatrists and doctors with psychiatric training walked out, in a contract dispute with the provincial government. The walkout of Ontario Psychiatric Hospital Medical Staff Association members took place across the province.

On Jan. 14, the new Midland Chamber of Commerce building was opened officially, with the help

of Midland Mayor Al Roach and Simcoe East MPP Al McLean.

During debate in the Ontario Legislature, Simcoe East MPP Al McLean asked that his riding not be touched by the Ontario Electoral Boundaries Commission that was proposing changes across the board including Simcoe East.

Boundary changes of a different sort were also criticized by Tiny Township residents. On Jan. 1, 1986, the border of the areas patrolled by the Midland and Elmvalle detachments of the OPP was moved. The Balm Beach area previously patrolled by both detachments became the Midland detachment's exclusive territory.

In mid-January, Simcoe North MP Doug Lewis, calling attention to the 10 per cent unemployment rate in Canada, said, "I won't be satisfied until it goes down. Until there's a trend from nine per cent, to eight per cent, to seven per cent..." Lewis said that he was encouraged by the fact that only one or two stores were closed in downtown Orillia and none in Midland.

Former Midland Chief of Police William George Nicholas died at age 81 on Jan. 4. He retired in 1964. He was a member of the town's police force for 27 years.

During January, Halley's Comet was passing through the Earth's area of the solar system.

An investigation into complaints about six Oak Ridge employees made by two Oak Ridge patients was concluded in January. No charges were laid. The men, suspended with pay from their work since the previous Dec. 20, returned to work.

Midland customers of the Public Utilities Commission did not pay more for electricity in 1986 than in 1985. The Midland PUC received a \$369,000 refund from Ontario Hydro. The refund covered the years from 1969 to 1986.

The first Midland Winterfest was held in January.

National attention was brought to the area again later in the month when Andrew Markle of Midland and Bill Player of Elmvalle were two of seven men charged with criminal fraud during the week of Jan. 19-25. The charges stemmed from investigation and analysis of numerous property transactions in Ontario, but not including the November 1982 sale of 26 apartment complexes by the Cadillac-Fairview Corporation. Markle was charged with 23 counts of fraud, Player, 33 counts of fraud.

The new year was the start of court battle for Midland Mayor Al Roach who appeared in court on Jan. 31, in connection with the charge of assault laid against him in November, 1984, by a fellow council member, Patrick Kearns. Following an extensive

tour of the Oak Ridge division of the Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre, Minister of Health Murray Elston said he had not heard a reason to move the Oak Ridge division. A committee which studied Oak Ridge favoured demolishing the existing building, moving half of the patients into a new building on the same site, and transferring the other patients to a location near a large urban centre.

Dr. Herman Jilesen was named Huronia District Hospital Chief of Staff.

Jim Blackwell was the choice of the Midland Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors as Citizen of the Year.

January 27 was the beginning of a long and somewhat ugly battle for the Midland Town Council when they placed Commissioner of Works Percy Ehler on a paid leave of absence until after a hearing, the purpose of which, was to dismiss Ehler. The council said it was acting to dismiss the 21-year employee as a cost cutting measure. The council vote was 6-3.

January was a relatively quiet month in Penetanguishene, as compared with that involving Tiny Township. But that's not to say Penetanguishene was living a mundane existence.

Winterama countdowns often topped the headlines on page 3. The Winterama Committee began submitting articles to try to tan-

talize Penetanguishene residents' appetite for the oldest Winter frolic in Ontario. As the winter blahs set in, the Winterama Committee's writers, Pat Forget, began to release some of the details of the events and later, Queen Contest Contestants.

But on a more serious note, Penetanguishene politicians grappled with increased insurance costs. The town's treasurer, Shirley Bellehumeur estimated the town's premium, which would change in May, would jump from \$43,138 to \$90,577.

As well, Penetanguishene's federal and provincial politicians were not too enthusiastic about the riding boundary change which would move Penetanguishene, Tiny and Flos townships from Simcoe Centre to the new riding called Simcoe North.

Tiny Township was the setting for a lot of hot news this month. Topping the list was the moving of dump mediation talks to Toronto with arbitrator Michel Picher. Picher hoped to bring the two sides closer together, he said, but the dispute over the North Simcoe Waste Management Association (NSWMA)'s Site 41 as the preferred site later saw the township split from the organization. Throughout the battle, the township favoured the use of the 80 acres adjacent to the present dump site.



We all win

Wintario's Faye Dance came to Midland's Winterfest, and she brought the fun and excitement of the lottery with her. Here, Faye gets ready to announce the January 16 winning number: A477805.

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