

Community

MALTON

*It's just a plane,
old community*

By ALANA PERKINS
Times staff writer

When the first planes landed at Malton airport in 1950, most residents of the town put their hands to their ears. They knew their quiet farming community would never be the same.

But in the next 30 years Malton residents have come to appreciate the airport and accept it as the area's largest employer.

In fact, the airport is responsible for the face of Malton today.

The McCausland family, of Morning Star Drive, like many others, moved to Malton because of the aircraft industry. They stayed because they liked it.

"I love Malton," says Marg McCausland, a mother of three. "It's a friendly place and we've made a lot of good friends."

One of the features she likes most about Malton is its ethnic flavor. Over half of Malton's 30,000 residents were not born in Canada.

"I've learned so much about other countries," she says.

Marg McCausland likes Malton the way it is today, a residential community with a distinct ethnic flavor. It's a community almost divided in two. There's old Malton, west of Airport Road, which is mainly Anglo-Saxon and almost exclusively single family homes. Then there's new Malton, comprised mostly of immigrants and dotted with townhouse developments and high rises.

But there are those who prefer Malton the way it was and remember it best that way.

Fifty-eight-year-old Keith Shaw is one of the few Malton old-timers to still occupy original land on

Goreway Drive, settled by his ancestors in 1897.

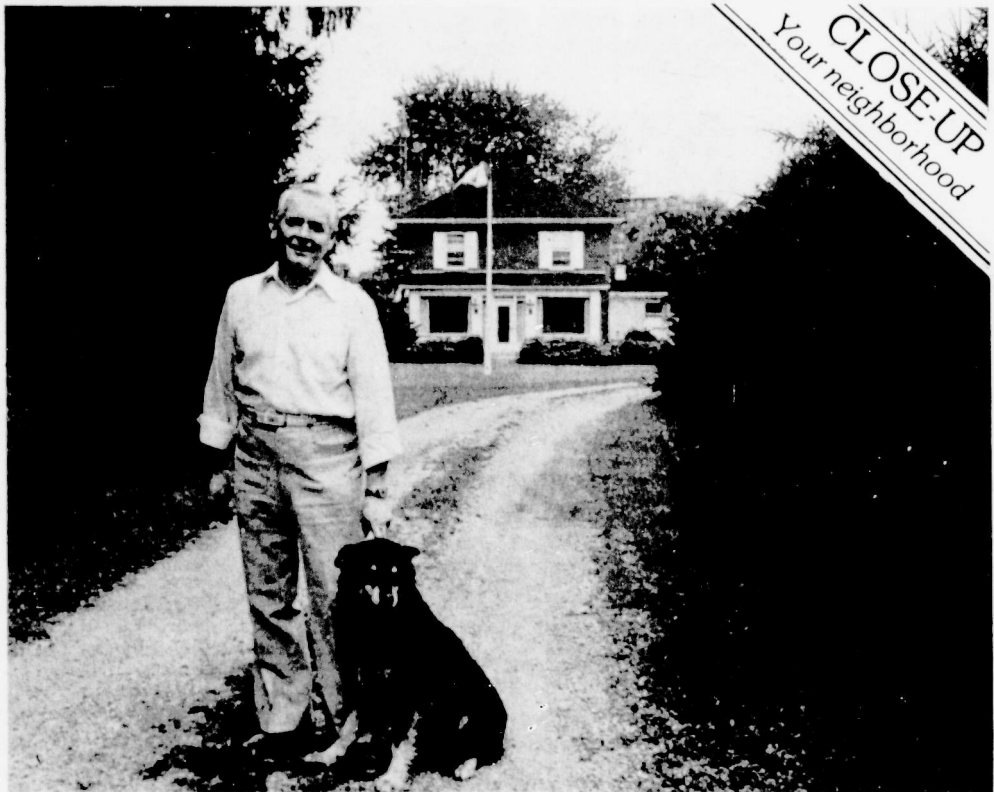
"All that land that the airport now sits on was once farms and this airport represented an intrusion," he says. "It was the first wedge of destruction in the farming community because when the farms were sold the original people had to move from the area. It was not like moving across the street and buying another house in the area because there were none."

Shaw can point to few original Malton landmarks that are still standing. The new McDonald's restaurant on the corner of Goreway Drive and Derry Road sits on land settled by Malton's first families. Joseph Thomlinson built the homestead in 1821, complete with the family's own burial grounds. During that time Malton was used as an Indian thoroughfare to Georgian Bay (hence Indian Line). During the construction of Dunrankin Road School, the land was cleared and arrowheads were ploughed up.

Shaw can remember his grandfather telling how the Thomlinsons got an early morning visit by an Indian. The visitor begged them to help his sick baby and following the child's subsequent recovery, the Thomlinsons periodically found gifts on their doorsteps.

The Indian family was so grateful they would leave wild game or handmade trinkets, as tokens of appreciation when they made any trips up north.

To many Malton residents the old part of the area is still embodied in the farmhouses standing on Scarboro Road. Annie Johnson came to the Johnson homestead in



CLOSE-UP
Your neighborhood

MORRIS LAMONT/THE TIMES

Keith Shaw prefers to remember the Malton he grew up in — a farm area

Brampton in 1914 as a young bride and has watched Malton grow from rural farmland with dirt roads and outhouses to an industrial boomtown with airplanes soaring overhead and trucks bustling along Derry and Airport Roads.

"We owned 150 acres of good farmland and now it's paved over with concrete," says Johnson, 91. "Peel County was once renowned for its wonderful farmland. What will happen if all land is treated like this? There's no housing, it's all industry. I don't like Malton, it's no longer the quiet simple life that I remember."

Many smalltown advantages were forfeited in the name of progress and expansion. When Shaw was attending school eight miles away and routinely walking

to Malton's centre at Four Corners (Derry Road and Airport Road), he rarely saw a stranger.

"Everyone knew each other and neighborliness was important," says Shaw. "During harvest time our neighbors would pitch in and help. But people are no longer dependent on one another in that same way. I guess that's part of urbanization."

As a former president of the Canadian Cancer Society and member of Meals on Wheels, Shaw notes that community services were not necessary in the past because of this "neighborliness." The rapid rise in Malton's population meant not only an increase in the area's medical needs (the closest doctor was in Brampton) but an expansion of residential housing.

"Residential Malton didn't grow until the last war," says Shaw, "and there are still houses in old Malton that were originally built on cedar posts as temporary housing for the recruits. When the war was over people liked the houses and just finished them off by building basements."

Reminders of a country at war are still evident in the names of Malton's streets — Victory, Churchill, Britannia and Lancaster (after the man who built the Lancaster bomber).

Despite his disappointment that Malton's old landmarks have quickly disappeared and he feels some yearning for the area's old "neighborliness" Shaw has no intentions of leaving.

It's the only home he has ever known.



MORRIS LAMONT/THE TIMES

Newcomers Colin and Sandra like Malton's friendly atmosphere

Newcomers like conveniences and friendly neighbors

Sandra Gore has seen the good and the bad in Malton. The Red Cross employee recently moved to Canada from Australia to live in an apartment on Derry Road with her two sons, Cuban, 9, and Neil, 6.

"I like my work in Malton. I meet a lot of residents," says Gore. "Many people have been really helpful. One woman lent me furniture and another gave us a fan. In return I took her husband shopping."

Gore enjoys her job as a homemaker for the old and a companion for the ill. It gives her an opportunity to meet fellow Malton residents and also get a quick course in acquainting herself with the area.

Gore chose Malton to be near her sister and her family and decided to stay because she liked living near her work. During the first months of a Canadian winter, Gore was discouraged with Malton's transit system, complain-

ing "the buses were so slow" that it took her 1½ hours to reach Sheridan campus for her Red Cross training course.

But she likes Malton's features. "Malton is a quiet place. I've been over to the airport strip. There's a good variety of entertainment there," she says.

Sandra immigrated to Canada with her fiance Colin, who works for Airport Truck Services in Malton as a mechanic.

"We found many newcomers to Canada come to Malton," says Colin, "but I can't see how they manage without a car in this area. It would take a long wait to get anywhere in Mississauga or downtown Toronto."

After deciding apartment living was hard on her sons, Gore has decided to move to a townhouse on Goreway Drive. She says she's happy to make the move inside Malton.

— PERKINS