

GEOPHYSICAL INSTRUMENTS

This building holds keys to world treasure hunts

BY JOHN STEWART

Behind the neatly-lettered, provocative sign on Wolfedale Road sits a key to treasure hunts all over the world.

The small brown building containing Crone Geophysics Ltd. is immediately suspect as you go north along the row of industrial sites on Wolfedale. It is too compact and uncluttered and it rests suspiciously far back from the road, as if it has important industrial secrets to conceal.

And in a way it does. For the Crone company is one of only eight or nine companies in Canada who are fiercely competing for the mining equipment business, and becoming world leaders in geophysical instrumentation in the process.

"Looking for ore bodies is just like a treasure hunt," says company president Duncan Crone, standing in the midst of a most atypical executive office.

Pieces of mining equipment being prepared for a display at a Montreal trade fair clutter half the room.

Crone patiently points out the vertical loops and the induced polarization equipment for the puzzled visitor.

BUSH TREASURES

"People think of treasure hunting in the Caribbean," the company president continues, "but there's a much bigger treasure hunt in the bush."

"A small mine might be worth \$50 million dollars and a large one will be worth \$500 million."

Crone began his own geophysical business about 10 years ago, after he had discovered and patented an electromagnetic method of finding large ore bodies while he was working for Noranda Mines.

The University of Toronto graduate was faced with the problem of devising a method to test the ground in some tall timber land in the British Columbia interior.

"There was no method suitable at the time," Crone explains. "I came up with something very, very simple. It's called the shootback method. One man

used to send signals and another man just received them. I got them to reverse the process and this eliminated the topographical difficulties."

"Noranda has the Canadian rights, but I have the world rights."

The Wolfedale Road company, which has about 10 employees, is busily expanding overseas after developing to its fullest potential in Canada.

Crone, who was scheduled to visit the Canadian products trade fair in Peking but had to cancel, is currently selling "treasure hunting" equipment for finding mines in Ireland, Norway, France, Spain, Argentina, Australia and New Zealand, among others.

FRIENDLY
The relationship among the Canadian companies who are pioneering in geophysical work is uncommonly friendly.

"We're mostly based in Toronto and Ottawa and we all know each other. We're competitive but we're good friends," Duncan Crone

says. "If you have problems you can sit down and have a few beers with your competitors and they'll probably help you out."

The Crone company is also helped out by naval stations around the world who broadcast strong radio signals. American stations in Cutler, Maine, Seattle, Hawaii and Panama send signals that must penetrate sea water to reach submerged atomic submarines.

The geophysicists merely tap a field that is already there.

Researching new instruments desired for the mining market is a crucial necessity for the company's growth. Crone has a full-time electronic engineer, Heinz Grunenberg, who has the frustrating job of producing one or two new instruments every year.

The task is a trying one and sometimes a lot of capital can be sunk into an "Edsel."

"I had one a few years back where the instrument just didn't work," Crone remarks. "It cost me \$80,000.

You can only afford one lemon every five years."

The unusable instrument, which may have taken months to produce, is an occupational hazard in industrial geophysics.

Another hazard is what geophysicists call "hydro noise." The mining products are very sensitive and electrical currents disrupt their readings. That is why the Crone building is set 100 feet back from Wolfedale Road. Even passing cars can throw out delicate calibrations.

The company's electronic technicians now do their testing on land north of Derry Road which is removed from any high voltage hydro transmission lines.

COLD TEST SITE
But in a few years, they will probably be forced to build a "hydro-free" area on their one-and-a-half acre property. At least that will eliminate winter testing problems now, when technicians must brave chilling winds that whip across miles of open land

near the test site.

The cost of "bucking" the hydro by creating an equal and opposite signal will be exorbitant but Crone believes it is a move his company will have to make. The next closest noise free site after the present one is near Barrie.

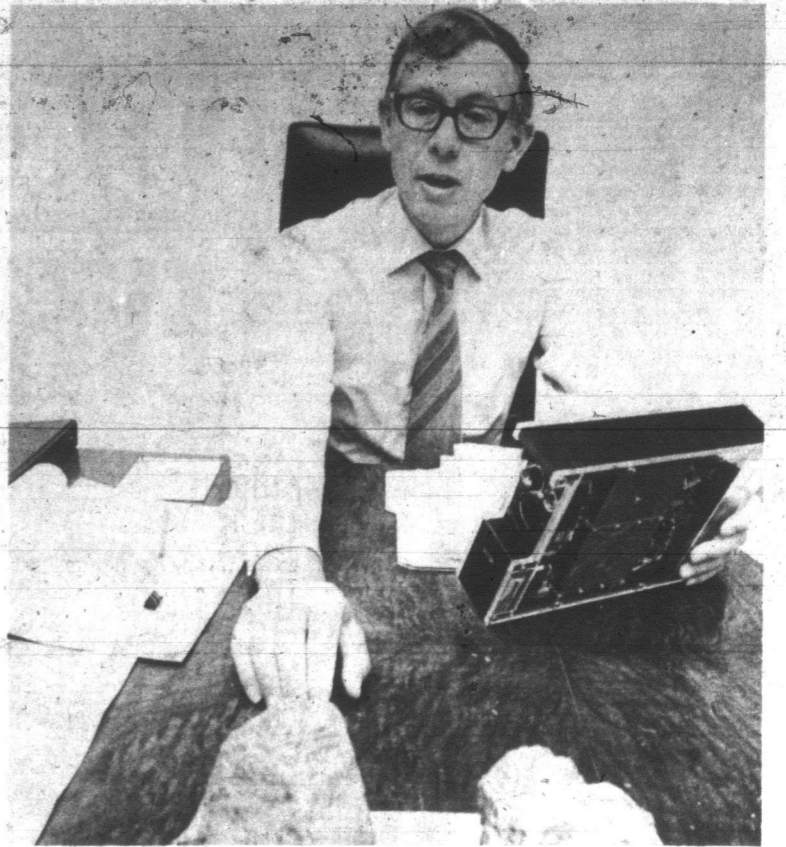
The geophysical equipment is manufactured to withstand a temperature range of 40 degrees below to 120 above. Crone has actually had complaints from Australia that certain instruments' stopped working in 140 degree heat.

Crone has its own machine shop and what might be termed a mini assembly line.

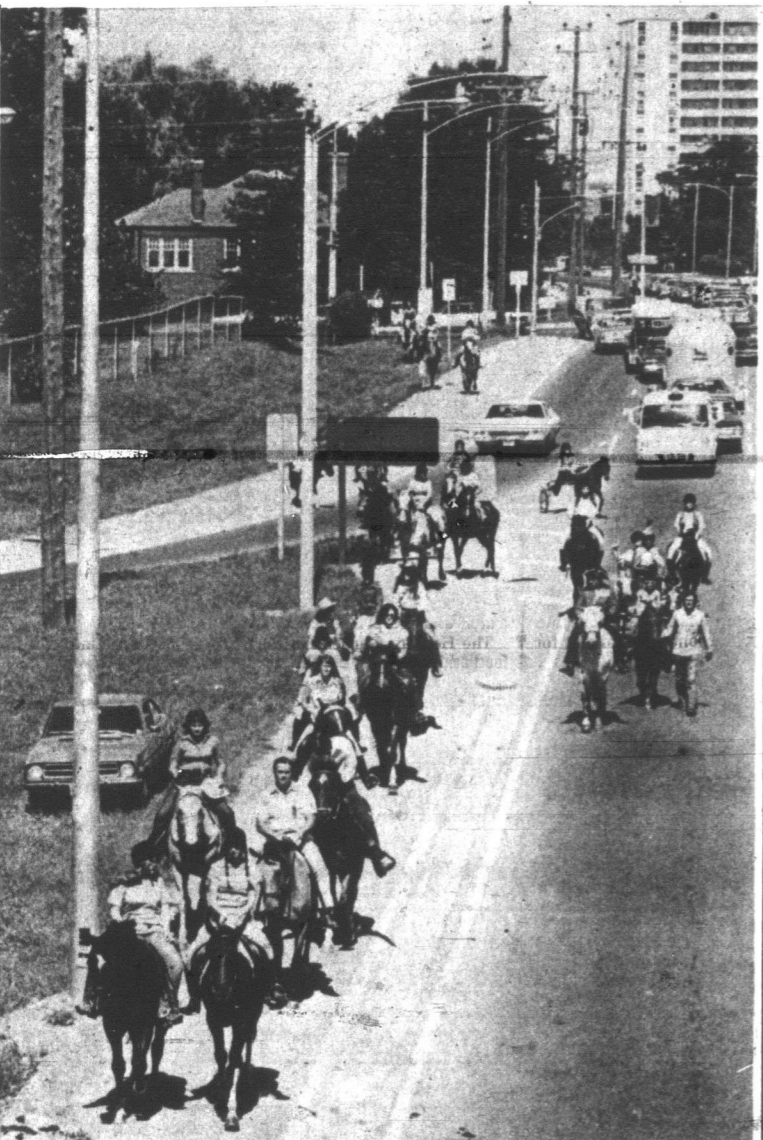
About 10 instruments are turned out in each production "run." About 1000 units of each piece of equipment are produced.

Constant revisions are needed because of changes in transistors and other technical equipment.

Crone, which has about 150 different types of equipment, also trains men to use their products.



Duncan Crone explains how an instrument which his geophysical company manufactures can find zinc ore deep within the earth's surface.



Lead riders head down Hurontario Street during Sunday Ride-a-thon in aid of handicapped children. (Times photo by Ray Saitz).

Townhouses proposed but resident wants high-rise

A Burnhamthorpe Road resident, speaking at a public meeting discussing townhouse proposals this week, suggested to planning board that the developer be asked to construct high-rise dwellings instead.

Jack Hassall, of 1279 Burnhamthorpe Rd. E., said the area under consideration "warrants a higher density than proposed."

The proposal was to put about 55 townhouses and a service station on a 3.8 acre parcel of land between Cawthra and Wilcox roads where the Fleming Block

Company is now operating. Hassall said that in view of the heavy commercial development which will be going into the area in the near future, higher density development is more reasonable.

The North Cooksville Study envisages a shopping centre at the north-west corner of Cawthra Road and Burnhamthorpe with lands in proximity to be developed for multiple family use.

Cawthra Road will also become the main link between the new Brampton Expressway and the QEW.

Amused by Hassall's suggestion, chairman Doug Sherbanuk addressed John Montague, planning consultant for the applicant.

"Mr. Montague, may I ask a rhetorical question? Would you prefer RMTD5 (high rise) zoning?"

"What do you say at a time like this?" replied Montague.

The board was able to satisfy the complaints of the other two citizens who expressed opinions about the proposal.

Police beat

Three men were arrested Sunday after 200 bricks were taken from an industrial site on Burnhamthorpe Road near Dixie Road.

Someone observed a trio of men on a building lot and phoned police, who stopped a car containing three occupants a few minutes later.

Charged with possession of stolen property are Paulo DeLoiveira, 34, and Hildar Serra, 45 of Pagehurst Cres. in Mississauga and Carlos DeFaria, 40, of Grand Ravine Dr.

DRUG RAID
A 16-year-old Meadowvale youth was charged with possession of marijuana for the purposes of trafficking after a Sunday afternoon raid. Police seized 83 grams

of marijuana and several other articles. Day Nielsen, 16, was arrested.

SHOE THEFT

The theft of a pair of shoes from the Sheridan Mall K-Mart store ended in a chase along Erin Mills Parkway on Saturday. A security guard took a man into custody after he was found to be in possession of the stolen property but as he took him through the store, the man bolted away.

He managed to get out of the store and began running along the Parkway with the guard in pursuit.

A passing Oakville OPP officer noticed the chase and stopped the suspect. Charged with theft by shoplifting is Peter Simoneau, 24 of Canvey Crescent.

Softball with beeper means blind can enjoy new sport

Blind baseball is perhaps best known as a bizarre form of poker but thanks to a group of Mississauga electronics experts the phrase now signifies a very real variety of softball.

The Mississauga Council of the Telephone Pioneers of America have designed a softball with a beeping device and will donate it to the CNIB.

The ball can be heard by

the players and will revolutionize the sport for blind people.

A spokesman for the Mississauga chapter, Bill McCormick said the group has ordered the ball from the Massachusetts council of the Pioneers.

McCormick, a system analyst at Northern Electric, said he expects the \$20 ball to be delivered within a month. It will be tested and

evaluated by the CNIB.

The beeper device is inserted in a two inch hole bored in the baseball along with six batteries that power the beeper for an hour.

"I'm so glad they are going to send us one," said CNIB children's department supervisor Daisy Ho.

"We have play balls with bells on them but as soon as they stop the kids can't find them."

Lifeguard team fifth

The Mississauga Recreation and Parks Department lifeguard team finished fifth at the provincial championships in Oshawa during the weekend.

Bettering their position of last year, the team was fourth in a simulated emergency situation, eighth in the paddle board event and fourth in a medley swimming relay.

Competing at the Oshawa Civic Recreation Centre were: Don Henderson, John Blaicher, Don Rogers, Marie O'Shea, Debbie Richardson, and Marilyn McCormack. Bill and Marnie Hallett were alternates.

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