

# Streetsville, Port Credit: tales of 2 towns

## One bantamweight against 2 heavies

BY JOHN KERNAGHAN

STREETSVILLE — Paradoxically, even as this Credit Valley town was being stripped of its municipal autonomy residents were taking vast strides to strengthen its identity against the tide of urban sprawl.

Provincial Bill 138, which created the Peel Region and erased Streetsville as an independent municipality, had not even been set forth when the town adopted an aggressive stance to clean up its deteriorating town core.

While the 115-year-old community battled like a game bantamweight against the twin heavyweights of the provincial government and Mississauga council the determination to create a unique town centre received little attention.

Mayor Hazel McCallion's January policy statement calling for a refurbishing of the "straggling" core was lost among accounts of how Streetsville would oppose the legislation which would annihilate it.

The widespread community support for organizations such as the 1972 SCORE (Streetsville Citizen's Organization for Retention and Expansion) and 1973 SPUR (Streetsville's Place under Regionalism) was also evident in the backing of the plans of three University of Waterloo students for an old-fashioned business core — although not nearly as well publicized.

When a Mississauga businessman planned to rebuild the 1857 Franklin Inn for instance, the elders of Streetsville First United Church were among the leaders in commending the plan and supporting a liquor licence for the hotel.

Curiously, it was the unlikely melding of the sometimes heady idealism of Waterloo students Doug Flowers, Myles Cullum and Peter Mau with the usually crusty political pragmatism of Hazel McCallion which brought the core plans to the initial state of fruition.

The depressed business community with its uneven sidewalks, maze of overhead wiring and 1950's neon signing blossomed forth slowly as the town braced for a final confrontation with Premier and Peel North MPP Bill Davis.

The politicking, petitions, letters to the editor and one futile appeal for a municipal referendum on the question of amalgamation in the City of Mississauga came to naught.

On June 14, before 500 often raucous and emotional townspeople at the Vic Johnston Community centre, Davis rejected the final pleas to make the town a fourth area municipality under a Peel regional government.

"It was not that your arguments were illogical; some of the aspects might just work but we had to look at our total responsibility," he said.

Davis added that Streetsville simply didn't have the services for the 75,000 people the town would hold if it expanded by 10,000 acres.

But the town bounced back with renewed vigour and a healthy surplus financial situation to set in its lockstone sidewalks, underground wiring and tri-globe streetlighting.

In June a Core Merchants Association was formed to protect Streetsville business interests after amalgamation. On Oct. 1 in the City of Mississauga elections, the townspeople reacted in granting Mrs. McCallion a lopsided victory for the Ward 9 council seat over Mississauga Reeve Grant Clarkson.

This week residents undoubtedly considered the Town's beginning, starting in 1821 when Indian trader John Barhardt first set up shop and shortly afterward when official founder Timothy Street built the first brick house.

They probably considered the town's new role as a ward in the gregarious City of Mississauga in emotional terms.

Merchant Hugh Manning describes the feeling: "We don't want to be dragging out the petitions and opposition of the last year. We have our own way of working it out."

"We'll always have our identity; in fact some of the newer members of the community have stronger feelings about it than the older residents."

"We still have our own post office and we'll work to keep it that way. I'd say if anything, our identity has become stronger as a result of losing our autonomy. The core area has had a great impact. Where there was reluctance, now people are beating to get in to the core."

"You would have to say it's a very emotional situation."

## Oil leak fouls water supply

Thousands of householders in the Dixie-Lakeview-Port Credit area were exposed to foul tasting and smelling tap water on Boxing Day the result of oil seeping into the water supply.

Arthur Kennedy, manager of the Mississauga Water Commission, told The Times a tiny quantity of oil, "perhaps only a pint," was drawn into the intake valve at the Lakeview Pumping Station late Christmas night or early Boxing Day.

Later Wednesday afternoon when complaints began pouring in, the flow of water to Brampton and Chinguacousy was shut down and attempts were made to flush out the system by opening fire hydrants in areas of the worst complaints. The northern communities used supplies held in water towers.

Kennedy claimed the water had been tested and could still be used for drinking although he admitted its taste and smell were "horrible."

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# The Times

Mississauga

## Family Didn't Know He Was In House

# Man dies in Streetsville fire

STREETSVILLE — A British Columbia man who had celebrated his 21st birthday Christmas Day died early Boxing Day morning when fire gutted the John Street home of Manuel Santos.

Bradley Wayne Bolton, of Whiterock, B.C. was sleeping in the basement recreation room at 58 John St. when the fire broke out about 5 a.m.

Police said it appeared that the fire was centred near the stairs leading to the room in which Bolton was

sleeping and they believe a draft pulled smoke into the room asphyxiating the overnight guest.

Eight members of the Santos family escaped the flames with only minor burns and cuts. They are Manuel, wife Maria, and children Maria, 22, Angela, 20, Beverly, 15, David, 13, and Tony, 19.

According to Mrs. Joseph Carlson, with whom the Santos family are temporarily lodged, Bolton had been asked to spend the night

by Tony, but the rest of the family did not know the man was in the house.

"They feel so terribly bad about it. They didn't know he was in the house. He was brought home by Antonio."

It is believed Bolton was trying to locate a sister and brother-in-law who live in the area.

An autopsy was conducted Thursday but no results are expected until later this week.

Inspector W.G. Halliday of the Ontario Fire Marshall's

office inspected the home which was burned to the foundations, but said the cause of the blaze had not yet been established. He expects findings to be completed this week.

Police said the home and contents were insured for \$21,000 but the home was valued at considerably more than that.

Funeral services for Bolton were held Thursday at Brampton.

He was the seventh person to die tragically in the town

in the last year. On April 17 four members of the Wirth family of Hammond Road died following a traffic collision at Derry Road and Highway 10. Simon Wirth, wife Anna and daughter Monica, 2, were pronounced dead on arrival at hospital. Heidi, 11, died the next day.

On April 23 Haddo Von Bruce, 20 and George Richard Markell, 19, died when their rented single engine aircraft plunged into the Chrysler parts plant parking compound.



We're A City

Mississauga Mayor Martin Dobkin beats sign painters to the punch with announcement of city status which became official yesterday.

(Times photo by Ron Pozzer)

# Mississauga '73: the year in review

The birth of Peel regional government; an election full of surprises; three killings and yet unsolved disappearance of an Erindale Secondary School student; the final days of the towns of Mississauga, Streetsville and Port Credit. These are among the highlights and low moments of 1973 recalled in the following summary prepared by Times staff writer John Stewart.

## JANUARY

### JANUARY 3

School trustee Rudy Bos said it might be necessary to publicly apologize to defeated incumbent trustee John Hart for some charges of conflict of interest and absenteeism Bos made during the school board elections. One of two winners in an eight-way ward two race Bos said in his campaign literature that incumbent Hart had a conflict because his wife was a teacher. Bos publicly apologized to Hart at the last board meeting. He said he "felt sick" about printing literature but was forced to go ahead with the literature because of pressing limitations of time. Hart, through a lawyer had requested Bos apologize through advertisements in the local press.

Mississauga's federal representation was more than doubled under new elec-

toral boundaries proposed by the federal government. The town, now treated as one riding would be divided into Mississauga North and Mississauga South with part also being included in the Oakville riding.

### JANUARY 10

Mayor Chic Murray of Mississauga claimed action to rid the town of "gypsies and fast buck artists" of the building trade was the number one priority item for council in 1973. Assailing "rotten workmanship" Murray called for support for a private members bill designed to license local builders.

Reeve Frank Leavers revealed that the figures for Port Credit's operating expenses at the end of the year showed a budget surplus of \$25,000 compared to a deficit a year ago of \$64,000.

Mississauga's Paul Henderson received a plaque from town council honouring his contribution to Team Canada's eight game victory over the Russians in late 1972. The plaque was a reproduction of Henderson's

spontaneous celebration of his last minute goal that won the eighth game of the series.

Peel South MP Don Blenkarn announced that he spent \$48,399 on his campaign in the October 30 election, more than the other three candidates combined.

### JANUARY 17

A rising tide of discontent over Mississauga Transit service surfaced. Residents said buses were rarely on time and never properly co-ordinated. Unreliability of service and failure to provide the most logical routes were other major citizen complaints.

A 23-year-old Streetsville woman was killed by a hit-and-run driver as she and a friend walked along Mississauga Road. Norma Jackson of Britannia Road was dead on arrival at hospital. The car involved in the accident was located later the same night outside a Streetsville tavern. Brian Edward Leslie, 21 of Preston was charged with failing to remain at the scene of an accident.

The Mississauga Road diversion north of Dundas Street would cost \$1.4 million and would begin sometime in 1974 the county engineer told the roads and transportation committee. Robert Knight said the diversion, designed to protect the scenic

qualities of present Mississauga Road, would swing west of the present road south of Erindale College and rejoin it at proposed Highway 403.

### JANUARY 24

The provincial government announced that regional government in Peel county would begin Jan. 1, 1974 with three municipalities established in a Peel-only region. Endorsing proposals forwarded by county council in Plan C the proposals grouped Port Credit and Streetsville with Mississauga as a new municipality. Brampton, Toronto Gore and Chinguacousy would combine in another municipality as would Bolton, Caledon, Caledon East and a portion of Chinguacousy.

Saying "I can't read and I have trouble recognizing people" police chief Bruce Kivell announced his retirement. The 55-year-old chief who celebrated his birthday the day before the announcement lost the sight of one eye last year and noticed a gradual deterioration beginning in the other eye. "All of a sudden I have to give up something I've been doing half my life," he commented. Deputy-chief Douglas Burrows was named to replace Kivell.

## FEBRUARY

### FEBRUARY 7

Southeast winds dumped coal dust from the Lakeview Generating Station on nearby residents who reacted with disgust at the veneer of black gunk. Merchant Cal Small commented, "You can't fight that Hydro outfit. I'm sick and tired of cleaning up after them."

Streetsville planned to go ahead with a proposal to fix up its downtown core. Four University of Waterloo students received town backing for their application to begin the work under an Opportunities For Youth grant. The concept included reproducing older building facings and linking stores with a common canopy.

Foot bridges and gardens were flooded in the Streetsville area because no government or agency would assume responsibility for regulating the water flow from \$4 million Mullett Creek diversion. Mayor Hazel McCallion claimed the Credit Valley Conservation Authority had responsibility, but they said it was Mississauga's duty to control the flow. Emergency measures were taken by the Authority to finally stem the rising water level.

### FEBRUARY 14

Mississauga Mayor Chic Murray chastised federal MP Don Blenkarn for his suggestion to phase out Toronto International Airport saying northern Mississauga would become a "ghost town" if that happened. "I can't think of a better way for you to lose an election by suggesting this," Murray told the MP.

Wives of police officers from Mississauga, Streetsville and Port Credit were among those who met to form Canada's first association for police wives. The action was spurred by the shooting deaths of two metro officers within the last month. The women wanted reforms involving capital punishment, parole, bail reform, two-man cruisers and gun control. Michael Houlton, unsuccessful federal candidate in the October election was rescued from four days in jail when Mississauga Reeve Lou Parsons paid his \$20 fine for illegally posting a campaign poster on a utility pole. Parsons said it was unfortunate Houlton was charged because other candidates were guilty of the same offence.

### FEBRUARY 21

A 17-year-old boy died in the parking lot of Cawthra Arena after being kicked in a

Continued on Page 5

## A 60-year history ends

BY SID BODAWAY

PORT CREDIT — Goodbye Port Credit, hello Mississauga. Although places never die, their historical and separate municipal identities can go the way of the Dodo — an end this one-time town's residents fervently hope can be avoided.

With the stroke of midnight Monday, Port Credit ended its 60 year history as an independent municipality, the last 13 of those as an incorporated town.

From fur trading beginnings as far back as 1750 to the highest-taxed community in the County of Peel, Port Credit has finally been absorbed by the growing suburban-city giant called Mississauga.

It was passing was in large part the result of the rapid growth that both Port Credit and Mississauga embraced so eagerly after the war and especially in the last decade. The very trend looked upon as the economic saviour of the town was, in the end, its undoing.

As the newcomers flooded into what became a dormitory town for many, Port Credit's old identity slowly waned. Its pioneer and trading port character crumbled bit by bit as new development mowed down the old hotels, stores and fishermen's houses.

Its one last hope for immortality in 1967 was rejected by a council and populace convinced they could continue to go it alone. At that time the then Township of Toronto offered to join with Port Credit under the latter's name. The offer was rejected and the Town of Mississauga was born.

Port Credit reached its zenith of independent power by 1850 when it served as a major trading port for Credit-River Valley timber and foodstuffs. Two ships a day sailed for various lake ports from the 200-foot-long wooden wharves. At that time the little community hugging the mouth of the Credit River boasted less than 400 souls. Five bars and only one church.

But technology disrupted Port Credit's special position as a midway port between York and Niagara. The opening of the Great Western Railway in 1854 and the great fire of 1855 dealt a blow to the harbour from which it never recovered.

For the next half century the harbour filled with silt and the village mouldered in the shadow of Toronto but the construction of the St. Lawrence Starch Company works in 1886 marked the beginning of a long slow climb back to health.

By the turn of the century some shipping had returned and yachts filled the shallow harbour mouth. Cottages started dotting the lakefront and, stonehooking the lifting of shale from the bottom of Lake Ontario for construction purposes, still prospered.

A downtown shopping area sprouted in response to the demands of wealthy summer residents and by 1910 Port Credit became a Police Village. Street cars reached out from Toronto in 1905 and in 1914 Port Credit was formally incorporated as a village.

The basic layout of the town's streets and subdivisions was accomplished in the 1920's with the population filling out to the 2,000 mark by 1946 with many of the newcomers commuting to Toronto each day.

Construction along Lakeshore Road continued with the commercial shopping section extending virtually uninterrupted from the river east to the town border.

Apartments appeared and by 1961, when it was incorporated as a town, Port Credit contained 6,500 persons. By the last half of the 60's the apartment boom was rapidly becoming an explosion. The entire central core area, became a dense forest of high-rise towers.

The Official Town Plan was approved by a council unaware of its impact on local taxes and provincial reassessment combined with the high density oriented plan to shift the weight of the tax burden onto the shoulders of the private homeowner.

A small minority of angry ratepayers finally organized themselves and burst upon the scene in the last year, turning once ignored council meetings into battlegrounds.

Almost as a last move symbolizing their too late recognition of the population density problem the council, at its final meeting last week, approved a recommended shake-up for the Official Plan.

Although not enough time remained for councillors to legally alter the plan they did forward strong recommendations to the new Mississauga city council to take up the recommendations.

And what will happen to Port Credit now? By and large the wave of development has passed by the little town at the mouth of the Credit, with a few major exceptions. The downtown shopping section will improve with trees and park benches — also the result of last-minute funding for a facelifting project.

The 48 municipal employees have few worries — at least for one year. They are guaranteed jobs under the new administration at their old salaries until Jan. 1, 1975. After that they sink or swim on their own talents.

In a way Tuesday morning dawned no different than any other on Port Credit. In fact the old girl, named after the credit given Indians by fur traders on the site almost two centuries ago, died long ago.

The fishing shanties, the nets strung out to dry, the marshes and the beaches have all gone. Unlike Streetsville she lost much of her enthusiasm for a separate identity a dozen years ago.

Port Credit is already becoming just a memory in the mind's eye of its dwindling "natives" and will soon be preserved only in antique photographic collections and library histories.