

WEST LORNE LIBRARY



Karen Mack, library assistant is doing a craft with a group of children.



Alberta Jones

Nov. 10th, 1992

Some Former

Bank Managers

1964-1972- Fred Caley

1972-1979- Jim Kinney
Derek Pass

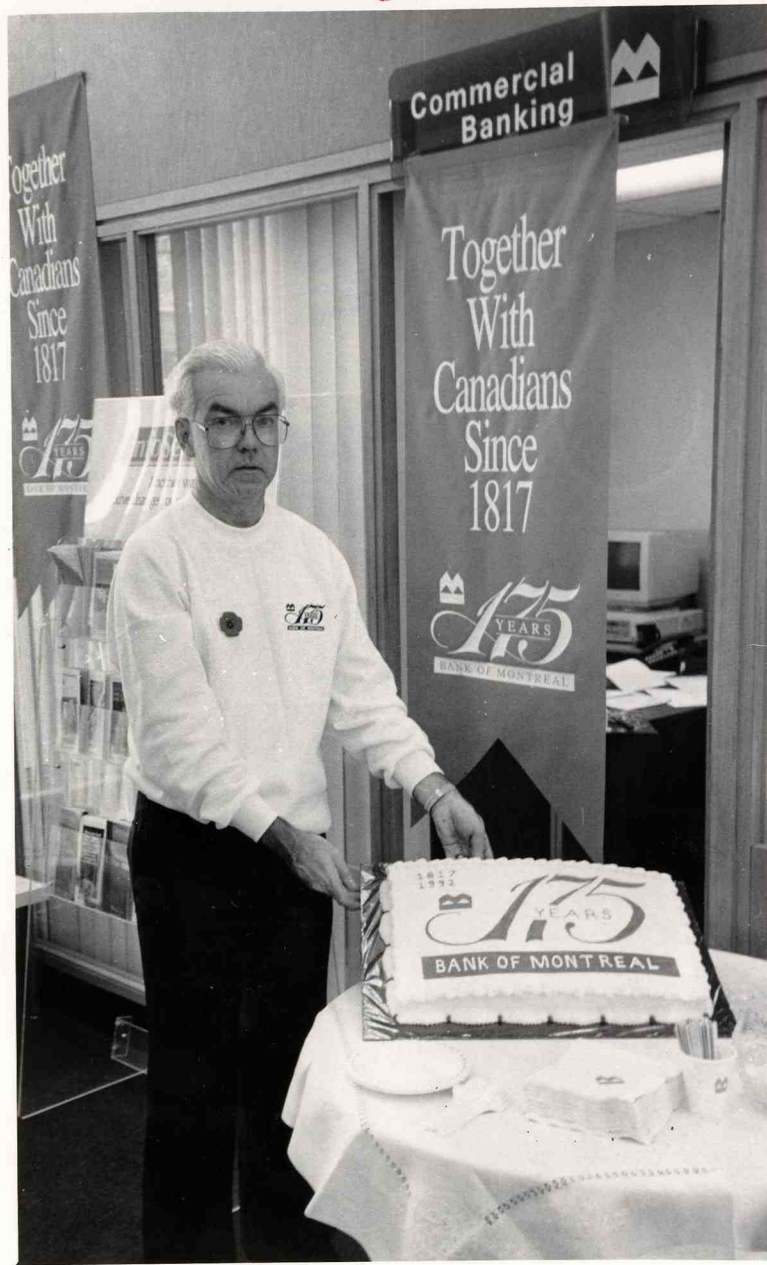
1979-1981- Don Dawson

1981-1983- Bill Trask

Sylvia Weigelt

Brian O'Connor

Nov. 1992- Peter Wiles



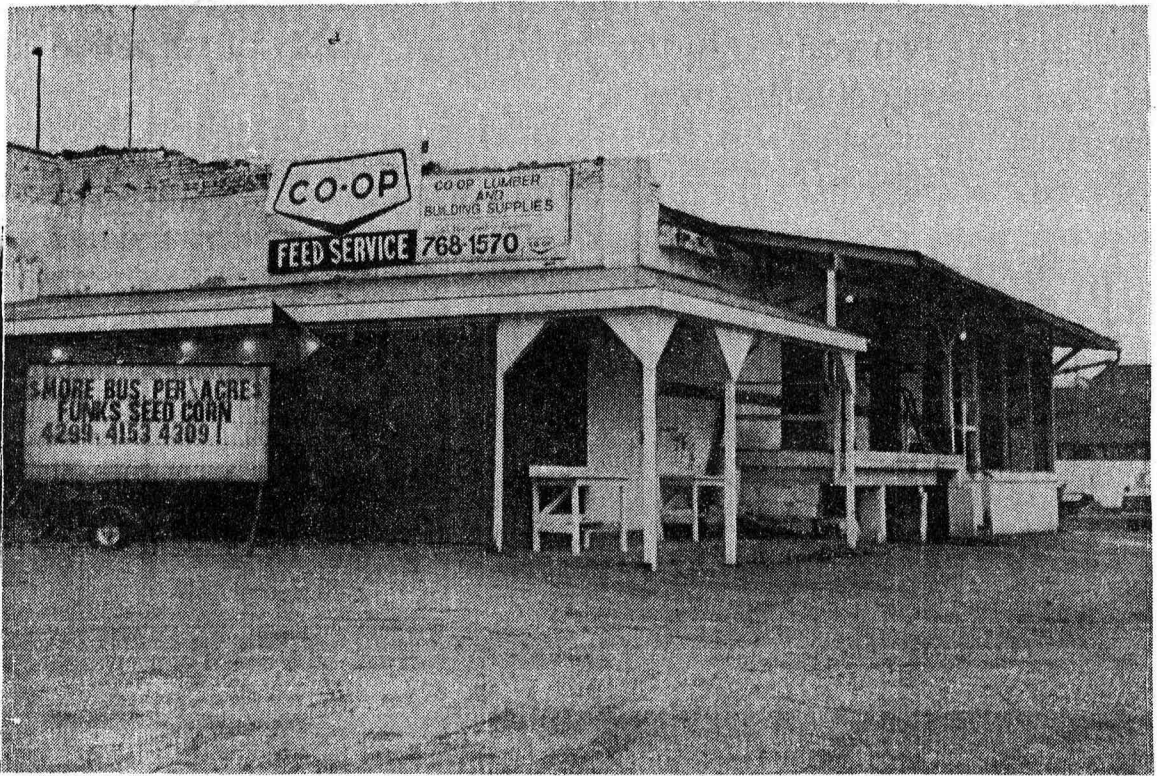
Happy 175th Anniversary
The West Lorne Branch is not this old but
the company is. Bank manager Brian O'Connor
is shown displaying the cake.

The Mercury-Sun Moved to West Lorne in February, 1992



Mercury-Sun Publisher Marie Campbell presents Ruth Hayes with a plant for 35 years of dedication to the Mercury-Sun. Mrs. Hayes says she will miss the people that have been coming into the Licence Bureau on Main Street to pay their subscriptions and drop off ads.





West Lorne's Elgin Co-op sign will soon be of Winnipeg. The new owners are re-
 changed. The 46 year-old farmers' co-operative sented in Southwestern Ontario by Topnotch
 was sold to James Richardson, grain dealers. Feeds. Mercury-Sun Photo

Elgin Co-op sold to Winnipeg firm

The 46 year-old Elgin Farmers' Co-op will be sold to J. R. Richardson and Sons Limited, of Winnipeg, known in Ontario as "Topnotch". The Co-op is a real cooperative company, owned by 2,100 Elgin County farmers. The grain processing business will soon be a private concern.

At a Co-op meeting March 26, members voted 224 in favour, eight against, to sell their facilities in West Lorne, Dutton, Aylmer and the St. Thomas Edgeware Road grain elevator.

The sale will take place before the end of April, will leave the Co-op owning its St. Thomas lumber yard, and there "should be money to bank after the sale of the St. Thomas head office," said a Co-op press release of March 26. The press release did not mention why the head office and lumber yard were not included in the sale.

The assets sold went for \$7.8 million, according to general manager Doug Best. W. G. Thompson and Sons, a grain dealer based in Blenheim, was second in line after Richardson, as potential buyer.

The press release states that "except for some of the

six head office employees, who will be offered severance packages, employees will be hired by Richardson, with years of service taken into account."

General manager Bale expects the changeover at the end of May or in early June. "I'm hopeful there will be no terminations," he said.

Sixty-five people are employed in the Co-op's stores, elevators, and offices.

Why did the Co-op decide to sell?

One reason was a \$2 million grain loss in 1981-82. The Co-op "never got ahead in the nine years since then," said Bale. "Operational inefficiencies have crept in over the years as well, and were glossed over," he said. These inefficiencies were carried by high grain marketing returns, but when the marketing dipped, the Co-op ended up in debt \$3 million.

Bale said the West Lorne grain elevator and store business is one of the best-run parts of the Co-op. "It is kept in tip-top condition by Ray Schnekenberger," he said.

The Richardson organization has century-old roots in Kingston. In the 1850's

James Richardson was a tailor in Kingston. Some of his farmer customers paid with produce. By 1857 Richardson was devoting all his time to his grain business. In 1880 the Richardson family appointed a representative to Manitoba, three years before the railway reached Winnipeg. The executive office of the company was moved from Kingston to Winnipeg in 1924.

Richardson's Topnotch Feeds has grain processing facilities in Dutton. Manager Mike Hentz said "We've been successful here in Dutton," but had no information to release about the sale of the Elgin Co-op. He did say that the Richardson Topnotch Grain terminal facility at Port Stanley ships about one half million bushels of corn and wheat on lake freighters each year. Topnotch has shipped grain for Elgin Co-op in the past.

PLAN FEW CHANGES

"We do not have any plans to make any changes in the foreseeable future," Doug Larson, president of Ontario Topnotch said, but Topnotch will employ about 47 of the Co-op's existing 65 employees.



Cherie Pederson

Spotlight on Business

Gift ideas for all occasions

By Ruth Ferguson

Almost five years ago an interesting, unique shop opened its doors on Graham Street in West Lorne. Cherie and Company, co-owned by Cherie and Doug Pedersen, has just about everything a person could ever ask for in a gift shop.

The business came about from Cherie and Doug's other careers as sales reps. They decided to open their own shop because someone had to be in the office to answer the phone anyway and this would give them a chance to sell their merchandise here.

A lot of the items that they supply to other stores they also try here, but sometimes particular items do not sell as well in West Lorne as they do in London. "What sells in one area does not always sell in another but you'll never know what will be popular so you just try it and see how it goes," says Doug Pedersen.

Most of the inventory is also based on what local people seem to like and want to buy. The Pedersens also try and find out what people collect and stock items that they'd add to their collection. But because it is a small community, the inventory is constantly changing and being updated so that the

entire town does not wind up with the same things. It seems that variety is the key to this store's success.

The inventory is extremely varied ranging from relaxation tapes, framed prints, gourmet coffees and teas to balloons, picture frames, candles and West Lorne memorabilia. Naturally such a variety means that there is also a wide price range to choose from. The Pedersens choose the store's inventory from about 75 small dealers from all across Canada.

The Pedersens moved to West Lorne in 1967 after living for a short period of time in Barrie, Ontario. Doug and Cherie have been sales representatives since 1965 when they began offering Canadian made goods to stores. In the beginning "Canadiana" was not very popular but in time it took off and Canadian made products are still very popular and are known for their high quality and superb craftsmanship. As a result, a lot of their store's inventory is made up of Canadian made products.

Keeping in step with their ever changing inventory, Cherie tries to change the window display every week or so. Sometimes it's just taking some items out, rearranging the display and adding some new items while other times everything is removed and an entirely new display is created.

Along with their normal array of products, Cherie and Company also is a designated stamp shop, and an UPS depot. Gift wrapping is another service that is offered by the friendly and courteous staff.

To supplement their silk flowers, Cherie and Company also had fresh cut roses and carnations for Valentines Day.

Along with Cherie, the shop also employs Cathy Shepherd on a full time basis and Cynthia Rees, who has been with the company for approximately four years, works part-time when she is home from university during vacations.

Some of the most popular selling items are the collectors dolls, cards and the Precious Moments figurines. The store also has some very loyal customers who regularly stop by to see what's new.

Currently Cherie and Company is operating under their winter hours which are Mondays to Thursdays and Saturdays from 9:30 to 5:30 and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. During the summer months the

hours are extended so that the shop is open Mondays to Thursdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. If you'd like to check on a particular item just call 768-1316 or drop by and visit the store in person. Cherie and Company is located at 233 Graham Road in West Lorne.