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Pioneer's descendants still scoring

By ARTHUR LOWE

It didn't take me long to discover that Howard is an enthusiast, but his enthusiasm is neither for apples nor history, but for youngsters and sport. That doesn't quite give the picture, though, and if I were a sociologist — which heaven forbid — I would describe him as community-minded. His community-mindedness, however, mainly takes the form of promoting sports among the younger generation.

As followers of the sport must surely know, Howard Pallett has become one of the foremost figures locally in the field of junior hockey. He operates the Dixie Beehives

I knew quite a bit about the current activities of the Pallett clan, for I had heard our sports editor, Al Waites, on the subject, and when Al waxes enthusiastic about anything or anybody, he doesn't need a microphone. Al had enthused about Howard Pallett, current scion of the house.

So I sought out Howard. Howard led me from the Pallett fruit-packing plant where I found him — said plant filled with the delicious fragrance of apples in storage — and out to his car. There we sat and talked.

But the intriguing thing about the Palletts in Mississauga is that they are all related, for they are all descended from a certain William Pallett, born in 1790, who emigrated to Upper Canada from Hertfordshire in England in 1810 or thereabouts. He was accompanied by his wife Mary, and their oldest boy Thomas, then aged two.

In point of numbers, as you might expect, the Smiths are ahead of the Palletts in Mississauga, but not overwhelmingly ahead. There are enough Palletts listed to fill half a column in the local telephone directory — and that is double the space they occupy in the Toronto tome.

— that famous team — as well as the Major Midgets and the Minor Midgets. From the way he spoke he must have been a hockey fan right from the cradle, and my guess is that he was probably given a puck to chew on in his infancy instead of a teething ring.

The Pallett fruit-packing plant and five acres of orchard lie on the south of Dundas street just west of Dixie road. It was there we sat and talked, scarcely a stone's throw from where Howard spent his boyhood.

"I got interested in junior hockey long before the days of indoor rinks and artificial ice," he told me. "The kids in this

*Pallett, Howard
3000 Dixie Court, #27, Mississauga, Ont.
A.K.A. "Hockey" Pallett, column Sept 27, 1972.*

Howard Pallett

area used to skate in the school-yard which was just around the corner on Dixie road, but the trouble there was getting water for the rink. There was a pump at the school, but it didn't produce enough water to cover the area and provide a good base, so my brother Ken and I used to truck in water in tanks to do the

job. Many's the time dad used to ask what we were up to?

"In those days the older kids would form teams representing the different areas — Dixie, Burnhamthorpe, Cooksville and so on. Games were played on the school rinks or on local ponds; it was a matter of waiting for the weather. But there were



no organized games for the little brats, so a gang of us in the township who were keen on promoting junior sports took hold of things and got midget teams going . . ."

It was not just Howard who was community-minded — his friends were too, and their action in promoting junior sports has produced fabulous results. The Dixie Arena, for example — that came along as a result of the interest 'the gang' took in the youngsters, and the curling club was a gang venture, too.

Howard calls them the gang, these community-minded Mississaugans, and he always speaks of them with pride and affection. He's proud to belong himself, I guess.

"At the beginning it was all voluntary," he said.

"If there were expenses to be met the gang put their hands in their own pockets and came up with what was needed. There were team sponsors, too, and they were glad to kick in . . ."

Howard holds the view that sports, like everything else, should be developed as the result of individual interest and initiative. He doesn't like to see too much bureaucracy creeping in, with paid officials replacing the volunteers. He is by no means an old man — somewhere in his fifties I took him to be — but he is old-fashioned enough to object to the modern view that all activities should be controlled by officialdom.

It is easy to understand why he remains an individualist. The first Wil-

liam struck out for himself in a new land and succeeded by his own hard work and enterprise. His son Thomas took on where the pioneer William left off, so that he and his brothers eventually farmed close to 500 acres in the Dixie area.

Howard's father, William, for many years reeve of Toronto Township, who died recently at the age of 88, continued to farm in Dixie, growing mostly fruit, and Howard, working with his brother Ken, established themselves as fruit packers when their farm dwindled as the result of urban encroachment.

Howard has a family of four and not surprisingly all of them are sports-minded, with the emphasis on community sports.