

Town clerk Alex Thompson has grown up

with Port Credit

By MARNIE GREENING

Town councils come and go and a small village has become a small town. Port Credit may have changed dramatically over the years but the families that saw it through those changes are still around.

Mr. Alex Thompson, Port Credit's town clerk was born here. As a child he played down in the harbor

among the fishing shanties and the lighthouse which have long since disappeared. The only memory left of the lighthouse is as the emblem on Port Credit's official town letterhead designed by his mother.

When Mr. Thompson began his first job with the town the mechanics of a working government were far from foreign to him. His dad, Mac Thompson,

had been reeve of the small village in the 30's.

In 1948 he began working with the hydro and public utilities department. The following year, he said, the whole council was wiped out because they were going to buy a new fire-truck."

"The one they chose wasn't the one the fire department wanted so voters brought in an entirely new town council."

ACCLAMATIONS

That new council stayed in office by acclamation for nine years. Even then it seems people didn't take much interest in municipal elections. "As long as the voters are satisfied it's pretty hard to get them to come out and vote," said Mr. Thompson.

Looking back at the records, he said; the town experienced its biggest growth from '48 to '53'. Back in 1951 and '52 we put sewers in for the whole town. We did a lot of work in the wintertime and that winter was unusually mild. The roads were nothing but mud throughout the whole town."

Now Port Credit has a population of 9,000 and as a result is losing its small town atmosphere. "There was a time when people would phone me and ask where someone was living and I could tell them right off the bat.

"We used to do all the hydro and water bills by typewriter instead of machine. Of course we only had about 500 to 600 bills to do," he said.

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Even so Port Credit is still small enough for

the town clerk to know what is going on in all departments. "I'm a go-between for the town departments and the town council. I get involved with every department including the fire and police. There is something different everyday."

If there are holes in the roads, trouble with garb-

age pickups or stray cats, dogs or skunks, Alex Thompson hears about it.

"I get about 80 percent of the calls and they're mostly from the old timers, the ones who knew me when I was a kid."

The old timers are still around but they're gradually dying out. Apart-

ments, town houses and new stores are springing up and replacing the old sections of town.

"Port Credit is bound to become part of some sort of regional government," he said. "But even if it is part of a larger unit people will still keep the name of Port Credit."



Checking up on town business with his secretary, Rosemary Gzebowksi, town clerk Alex Thompson finds he is involved with all levels of municipal government. Port Credit has grown since he began working for the town in 1948 but it is still small enough for him to know what is going on in all departments.