



# Tom Urbaniak examines Streetsville's recent history

Peel Bios. May 2/02 The Booster

**A** new book on Streetsville has been released. Perhaps you or someone you know is in it!

The 257-page soft-cover book by The Booster's Tom Urbaniak is called *Farewell, Town of Streetsville: The Year Before Amalgamation*.

It is already available, for \$18.95, at several local stores: Bea's Hive (34 Pearl St), The Shop for All Reasons (228 Queen St. S.), Credit River Trading Post (257 Queen St. S.), Ontario Christian Books (125 Queen St. S.), and the Mississauga Heritage Foundation Gift Shop at City Hall.

It can also be purchased by writing to the author

(4106 Rockwood Road, Mississauga, L4W 2X6). When ordering directly from the author, please include a cheque or money order for \$18.95 plus \$4 for shipping. Please make your cheque payable to the author.

Streetsville became part of the new City of Mississauga on January 1, 1974. *Farewell, Town of Streetsville* is the first detailed review of the fascinating period that preceded the amalgamation, as well as the early years of the political career of Hazel McCallion (mayor of Streetsville, 1970-73), one of Canada's longest-serving and best-known municipal politicians.

Drawing from his extensive archival research and dozens of interviews, Tom presents a thorough profile of the town, including its battle to retain its municipal status and to gain some control over the significant suburban developments that were virtually at its doorstep.

Tom argues that Streetsville's resistance to amalgamation was inspired not by reactionary parochialism nor by a fundamental aversion to change, but by the reform/neighbourhood movement of the late 1960s and the 1970s. The movement was able to build on the town's tradition of civic engagement.

Public support for (or acquiescence in the face of) relentless development had given way to a "planning for people" orientation, with a greater emphasis on quality-of-life issues, including conservation of green space, public input/participation in development planning, preservation and rejuvenation of historically and architecturally significant sites, as well as improved amenities for recreation, transportation, and other community needs.

Streetsville's council and administration, in contrast with their counterparts in the much-larger neighbouring municipality (the Town of Mississauga), were perceived as being very much in tune with the progressive political climate.

Tom also looks at other pre-amalgamation initiatives. He brings to light how the first Bread and Honey Festival was planned, and he profiles the significant core-area rehabilitation efforts undertaken in 1973.

Also recounted and analysed is the 1973 election campaign for the first Mississauga city council (with Streetsville as Ward 9) in which outsp-

ken reformers took a majority of seats, including the race for mayor of Mississauga (won by Martin Dobkin over political veteran Chic Murray).

The epilogue discusses what has become of Streetsville since amalgamation and touches on the community's future prospects.

The book, which has a detailed endnotes section and index, mentions the efforts and contributions of many citizens and organizations—people who cared about their community. The publication is dedicated to "those who see communities as more than buildings, put people before profits, and regard civic affairs as a way to give something back."

On the front cover is a beautiful painting by local artist Marilyn Kutsukake. The painting is of Streetsville's town hall as it looked in 1973, and it was prepared especially for the book's cover.

Among the other people acknowledged in the Preface is Jean Watt, retired Booster editor and lifelong Streetsville resident,

who provided considerable input and encouragement.

"Although this is a work of history, I hope that it will, in some small way, strengthen our sense of community and reinforce the importance of civic participation," Urbaniak says. "We must work together — and work hard — to ensure vibrant, diverse neighbourhoods; to protect our air, water, and green spaces; to address poverty and the shortage of affordable housing; and to improve our transportation system.

"And that's only a partial list of the important issues facing the community," he adds.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tom Urbaniak, 25, was born after amalgamation. He has a respected record of service to the community. He is a past president of the Children's Aid Society of the Region of Peel (and is believed to have been the youngest person ever to serve as a CAS president in Ontario).

He was also chair of the Mississauga Crime Prevention Association.

Other previous volunteer posts include chair of the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee of Mississauga, public relations chair on the founding inter-agency steering committee for the Square One Youth Centre, and Ward 3 representative on Mississauga's Cycling Advisory Committee.

In 2001, Tom was appointed to the Citizens' Task Force on the Future of Mississauga.

He has an M.A. in Political Science from the University of Toronto and is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Western Ontario.

Tom is author of "A Constant Friend" — *A History of the Peel Children's Aid Society*, a short book published last year by the society.

Tom has worked at The Booster, part-time, since 1996. He was inspired to write the book after preparing a feature article, in the autumn of 1997, entitled "The Year the People Lost Their Town."

He began working on the book (on his own time) in May of 1998.



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Tom Urbaniak's recently released book is entitled *Farewell, Town of Streetsville: The Year Before Amalgamation*. Drawing from his extensive archival research and dozens of interviews, Tom presents the first detailed review of the controversies and discussions preceding the 1974 merger, as well as the early part of Hazel McCallion's political career. Other themes include the local reform movement of the late '60s and '70s; the first Bread & Honey Festival; and the dramatic election campaign for the first city council of Mississauga. The book is on sale at several local shops, or it can be purchased directly from the author.