

New owner for pioneer business



After 40 years in business on Mission's main street Gordon Windebank is going to take a well-earned rest. So is his sister, Muriel who has been associated with the firm for the past 20 years.

"I am going to relax, work on my property, finally have time for hobbies and may re-activate my amateur radio again, there is lots to do", he said. Gordon is not retiring, just taking time out to look around. Muriel will have time for her music. She is well-known as an organist and soloist in Mission area.

John Janzen of Mission Electric Limited has purchased the pioneer firm which will continue to operate as W.J. Windebank, but in a new location. Mr. Janzen established his business in Mission over 15 years ago and is well known throughout the area.

Original business was purchased by Gordon's father W.J. Windebank in 1923 from former owner, Billy Bond whose premises were located in the area of the present Overwaitea parking lot. Three moves followed, to the sites of the Valley Inn and Rex Cox Men's Wear and finally to the present shop in 1935.

Business was incorporated as a limited company in 1953.

Windebank family in Mission dates back to the 1800's to Gordon's great uncle, Hori Windebank, a figure who played a key role in the development of Mission townsite and services. he built the first three dams to pipe water to Mission, started a water and power company generating the first electricity in the town. He owned and operated the Bellevue Hotel, a butcher shop and a large piggery. He put in the first ice-making machine in town, the first cement block machine and a mill at Silver Creek.

Gordon's father, Bill Winde-

bank arrived in Mission 67 years ago. He helped to form the Odd Fellows organization here and was a member for over 50 years. He joined the Masonic Lodge in 1920, was a member of the hospital board for 24 years, a president of the United Appeal and Red Cross, was the first mayor of Mission and was instrumental in establishing the first sewer works and water tank on Cedar Valley road. Windebank Elementary school was named in his honor.

Gordon took over the electric business when his father died in 1969. He started with the firm as a part-time assistant in 1937 and worked full-time from 1939.

Gordon and his wife, Hazel have four children, Lee, 25, a Hydro bus driver, Mark, 19, who is planning an accounting career, Karen, 12, and Sheila, 8, both at school. Feb. 2/77

W.J. Windebank
*End of era 1994
as Windebank
closes doors*

W.J. Windebank Ltd. has closed its door on its downtown location.

The building will be taken over by Wentings Cycle Shop, the plumbing business will go to Fraser Valley Building Supplies and the electrical end of the business will continue to operate as a home-based business.

The business traces its roots to 1909 when William J. Windebank, newly arrived from England, helped his uncle, Hori Windebank, establish the Mission Water, Light and Power Company. They harnessed hydro power by damming Silver Creek near Cedar Valley St. and 14th Ave. and sold both power and water to the emerging town.

The community grew to the point where, in 1957, it became the village of Mission City and 'Bill' Windebank became its first mayor.

Several years ago the Windebank family sold the electrical and plumbing business but daughter Muriel Windebank continued to work at the First Avenue store until she broke her leg last fall.



MCR Sept 7, 2000

We've Retired!

Larry & Hank are pleased to announce the sale of W.J. Windebank Ltd. to Dwayne Ferguson and Randy Hubbs.

We wish to thank all our friends and customers for their continued support.

Dwayne and Randy want to continue the strong tradition established in Mission by Hori Windebank and carried on by W.J. Windebank in the early 1900s.

Please give them your support.

*Larry & Nancy
Hank & Pauline*