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One of Work's first memories would be of Sunday school at Melville Presbyterian Church, which he and his wife Margaret attend to this day.

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"What teenage boy would you know who would stay in town for church on Sunday night?" says Marg.

"It was one of the things you did," said Graham. "You were brought up that way."

Work attended the service at night as he did the chores during the mornings so his parents could attend.

His trips to Wroxeter took about 20 minutes in the family's Model A.

Another of Work's earliest memories is of main street — and the smell of fresh bread. "That's one of the first things I remember is the smell of baked bread coming from Willis's bake shop."

Youngsters could always count on getting a raw weiner while Mom or Dad were shopping at the butcher's. Across from the the bakery was Bill Procter's store, where, said Work, "there was a little bit of everything. Anyone my age would remember that."

Every Saturday night Elston Cardiff delivered milk. When Work was a young teenager he rode around on the running board to make the deliveries and was paid an impressive 10 cents for his efforts. "I'd go to Bill Procter's for a hot dog. He boiled the weiners in a little aluminum dish and it cost me five cents."

You could pick up a pint box of ice cream in the summer, directly scooped into a little box. "And they had double cones then. Really double, with a scoop on each side."

And once in a while there were "real" treats available like "oysters and limburger cheese."

There were several gas stations in town and Work recalls a price of 25 cents a Canadian gallon.

There were at least two egg grading stations where folks brought their eggs on Saturday night,

then bought their groceries.

The stores were actually open two nights a week to serve the community, but Saturday was always the big one, especially in the summer.

“That was the day of angle parking and it was the thing to park the car in a good spot so you could sit and watch who was passing by. The farmers’ store, the co-op, was always the place to visit. They sold harnesses, men’s work clothes and had a small egg grading station.”

No less than five hotels graced Brussels main street at one point. There was even one located outside of town, on the same corner where the Work farm is located.

Next to the bake shop was the Queen’s Hotel and Maggie Rutledge’s pool hall. “That was always a good place to go for a hamburger if you had 10 cents,” said Work.

When the Queen’s was demolished in March of 1986, the old storefront for Maggie’s was uncovered. It is now housed at the Huron County Museum.

The town bell rang three times a day, 6 a.m., noon and 6 p.m. “I guess it was just a reminder for everyong,” said Work. Town custodian Gordon McDowell was charged with the task, along with serving as constable, street sweeper and weighmaster for the cattle driven into town. “That was something. To try to keep them out of people’s gardens.”

While the adults tended to family’s material needs in town, the children spent Saturday night burning off energy. “We met the neighbours and always played hoist the sails (like hide and seek). The library was always home base. You’re parents didn’t worry about your getting lost or coming to any harm. There was a lot of freedom.”

Generally for children, Work said, there wasn’t a lot of entertainment available. “Not that I remember. While they did have variety revues at the town hall, this was later. When I was young there wasn’t much until you were old enough to go to dances.”

The fall fair was eagerly anticipated therefore. “It was the big day of the year. They sold all kinds of fruit as well as the exhibits, so there were lots of vendors. There was a midway, such as it was, and races. The horse races were good, so that was a big drawing card for the farmers.”

The students marched, but it was a bigger deal than today, Work recalls. “You had to practise for weeks and the teachers all had gloves, purses and hats.”

Skating was also a popular pastime. “You always went skating on Saturday night in the winter. Before they built the old arena it was an open air rink. I remember going in once with Dad on a load of chop, thinking I was going skating, but there was a hockey game on.”

Walter Williamson looked after rthe arena then. “He was kind of gruff but it was good I suppose that he had you a little scared. You could play crack the whip back then if he didn’t see it.”

The dam was always a big attraction as well. "I have been totally immersed in the Maitland River," laughs Work. Kids used to go to the dam at noon during school, strip to the underwear and take a dip. Work was standing at the flume when "Big Buster Stiles" pushed me in. It was the first time I'd been in deep water and I couldn't swim."

What happened?

"I learned how."

The dam could pull people to it in the winter too. "There was one particular time I remember when they knew the ice was going over the dam on Sunday. We drove over to see it."

Work said the ice used to be cut from the dam for the ice house and packed for people to use in their ice boxes.

Work remembers a variety of responsibilities and jobs he had when he was young including helping lead horses from Jack Galbraith's stable to the train. "There were six in a row haltered together. We must have moved 24. I was pretty excited about that, proud to be helping."

Many things have changed, obviously since Work first began spending free time in Brussels. Where once residents had their choice of doctors or veterinarians, they now must drive for medical assistance. Work recalls an era when community was dependent on community, when people stayed close to home and supported home.

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