

Montgomery Days bring back memories

As Norval gears up for the annual Lucy Maud Montgomery Days, I can't help but view it with mixed feelings.

On the one hand, the residents of Norval will go all-out and celebrate the life and works of Norval's most famous resident. Rightly so.

My mixed feelings come from the fact that it reminds me of my university roommate who died almost three years ago.

If there was ever a real-life personification of

Montgomery's Anne, it was Joana. A fiery red-head with milky white skin, she couldn't have been any more like Anne if she was reading a script.

Like Anne, Joana had a knack for finding a way to involve herself in other

people's lives, especially if it was a love life. She would get excited over things most people would find insignificant, and, yes, if there was ever anyone who could make the most mundane story melodramatic, it was Jo.

Not surprisingly, anytime a Halloween party came along, Jo dressed as Anne.

I once made what I then thought a mistake of deciding to spend a Saturday night in, thinking that I might watch a hockey game. Jo had just been released from the hospital after having another tumor removed. I never saw the hockey game that night, having to read the score in the newspaper the next day. Instead, Jo and I watched the Anne of Green Gables videotape she treasured.

We watched Anne break the writing slate over Gilbert's head, get her friend drunk on preserves, and stage her own flameless version of a Viking funeral.

I don't know how many times Joana watched that tape, though I would think quite a few as she seemed to know every character's line, saying them before the actors had a chance to.

At the time I wasn't all that thrilled about spending a Saturday night watching something I had little interest in. Besides, I'd seen it before. I guess guys don't get as excited over it as our female counterparts. It's our loss.

Looking back, I'm glad we spent that night together. It was one of those moments that could have easily been wasted doing a hundred other things. Instead, I spent time with an ill friend who would succumb to her cancer two years later.

I wasn't able to go to her funeral, having moved to Hong Kong at the time. I didn't see her toward the end, when her normally positive attitude turned to one where she accepted her fate. Even in death, I was later told, Joana managed to maintain her Anne-like ways. Her step-mother told me that several times during her last night, she stopped breathing and everyone resigned themselves to the fact that she was gone. Suddenly she would take a big breath and sleep awhile longer before the next episode. After this happened a few times, her fiancé made a comment that she was just hanging on so she could make sure everyone was saying nice things about her. It may not seem a terribly appropriate comment, but if you knew her, it would make sense.

A couple of hours out of my life probably wouldn't be missed. That time provided me with memories that will last a lifetime. I wouldn't trade the time we spent together for anything.

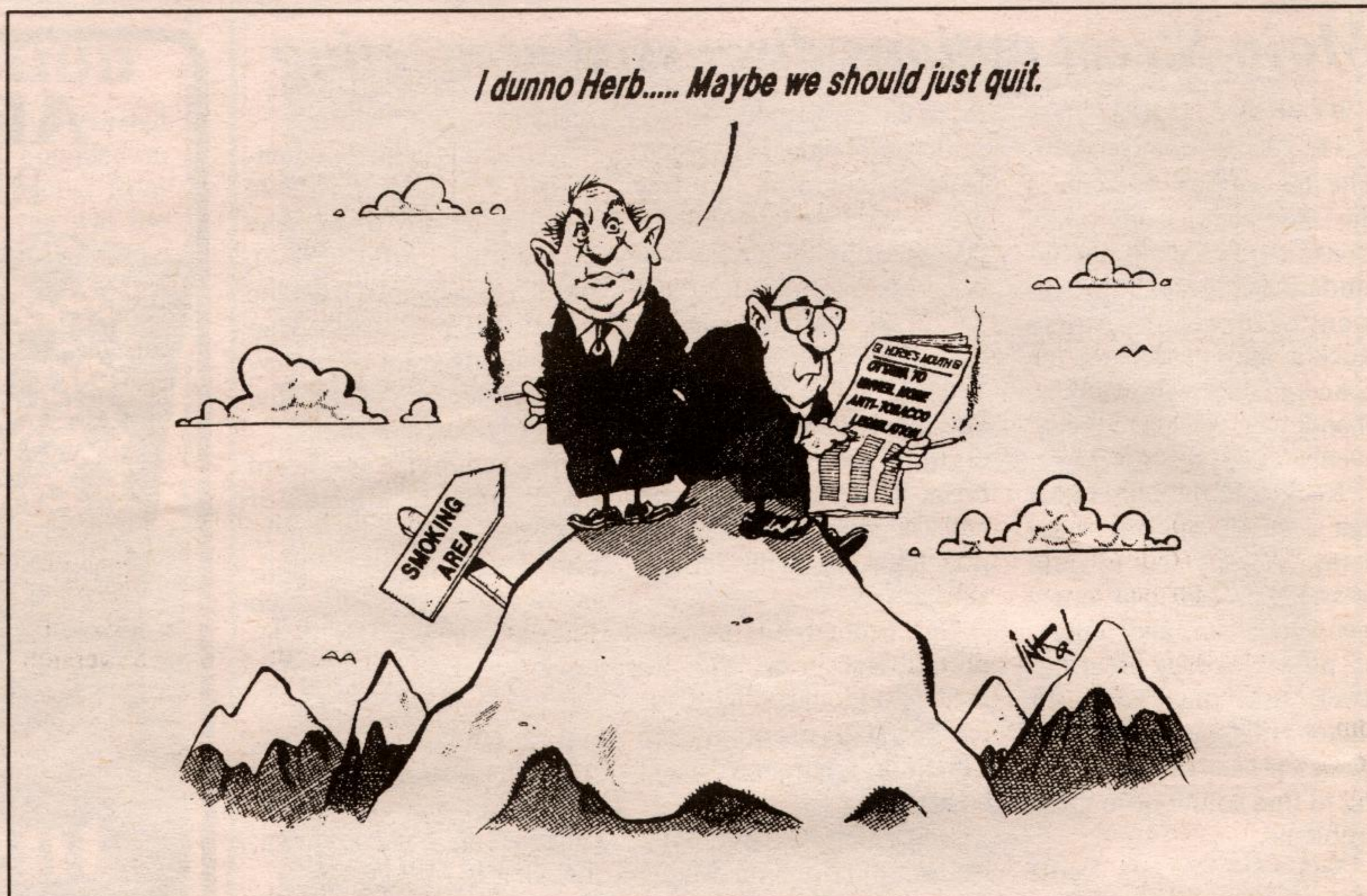
As tourists from near and far tour Norval, I'm sure most will be remembering Lucy Maud Montgomery's works and trying to appreciate a lifestyle from another day. I'll be remembering my roommate who would have dearly loved to have been able to attend.

I'm certain that Joana would braid her hair, accentuate her freckles, and wear her calico dress – a fine sight, indeed.

Jamie Harrison is a reporter with *The Georgetown Gemini*.

The View From Here

With
Jamie Harrison



Your LETTERS

Apartment fees 'too high'

To the Editor,
Being a homeowner who is not a landlord allows me the opportunity to express objectively on the newly approved apartment bylaw.

While I do agree that a fee is necessary to offset costs, the approved fee is too high and therefore will do nothing to promote co-operation.

Councillor Al Cook was able to see the forest for the trees unlike some of his fellow Council members, and I applaud his attempt to lower the fee requirement.

If a homeowner wants to register his apartment now, he would have to pay \$625, after which he may be forced to pay out hundreds or possi-

bly thousands of dollars in order to comply with Municipal Standards. Once completed, he would expect to be reassessed, resulting in an increase in market value and thus property taxes of up to 20 per cent. Finally, Revenue Canada would want their share of the rental income.

While these exciting options await the town's estimated 1,000 illegal landlords, I would not be installing traffic lights on the roadway leading to the Civic Centre to direct the crush of bodies fighting to be first in line to register their apartment.

After taking all expenses, not to mention the bureaucratic red tape into consideration, many current or potential landlords may reconsider renting out basement apartments.

A lower fee would have been a better inducement to landlords to register and thus promote community safety.

Councillors should try and promote civic responsibility.

Mike Foley,
Guelph Street

Attention deserved

To the Editor,
Re: "For profit 'charities' target town," in last week's *The Gemini*.

Thanks for setting the record straight and thank you, Molly Monahan, for bringing this issue to the attention of *The Gemini*. (This issue highlights the importance of having media alternatives).

For the record, Wastewise is a registered charity and all donations to Wastewise are directed to reducing waste in Halton Hills. Clothing is sorted, some is priced and sold at

our location on Armstrong Avenue, and the balance is sold to textile brokers – a process identical to that of The Salvation Army and Goodwill.

Our waste reduction and recycling operations save the Town of Halton Hills an estimated \$30,000 in disposal fees annually.

Best of all, if Wastewise's financial situation continues to improve, the Board will consider supporting other environmental initiatives and concerns in Halton Hills.

Diane van de Valk
Project Manager, Wastewise

'Gem is top-notch,' reader says

To the Editor,
I would like to add my congrats to the many you have received for presenting a top-notch paper.

As far as I can see, it is an interesting and accurate reflection of life in our vital living community.

For instance, articles such as Mike

O'Leary's "Drop The Torch", and Jamie Harrison's "Bored of Education", in the Nov. 13 edition are so "touché" that they should be printed in *The Globe* or *The Star* where there is a wider readership.

One question: When does Jamie sleep? It surely is not on the job!

Good luck to all!

Norma Reid,
Moultriey Crescent

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