

"Home is the Sailor"

Editorial Page



—Photo by Esther Taylor

A Closer Relationship a Necessity . . .

It has not been difficult to collect newspaper clippings lately on the costs and future role of the Canadian Broadcasting Commission, as is sometimes our habit before attempting editorializing. Taxpayers it seems provided \$70,418,000 for the operation of the CBC and the corporation managed to spend nearly all of it, rather than returning about \$9,000,000 as it did the previous year.

Others' Comments . . .

Concern over the interest of citizens in public affairs is voiced by The Petrolia Advertiser-Topic. The services of modern government have become so numerous and so complex that a kind of bureaucratic wedge is being driven between the people and their governments. Today few people clearly understand how their governments work.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Back in 1942

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, August 13, 1942. Sometime during Monday night or early Tuesday morning, the automobile owned by C. V. Force was stolen from in front of his residence on Bower Ave. The same night, the pumps at the Highway Garage owned by A. McIsaac were broken open and 11 gallons of gasoline stolen.

Following the break-in and theft at Statham's grocery store last week, Chief Lawson has been hot on the trail of the culprit. This week, the trail became hotter and the chief found a cache of stolen goods across the street in the upstairs of Super's store, which is vacant.

Since it requires four days each week to cart away the garbage in Acton, we've often wondered how disposal was made before collection was instituted. During the announcement of the prize winners of the Canadian Weekly Newspapers convention in Saskatoon, it was learned the Acton Free Press won the High Savage shield for the best all-round newspaper.

Five hours after his light plane crashed in the swamp on the farm of Mr. S. H. Lindsay, north of Acton, Leslie Gregory died in Hamilton Hospital, Sunday afternoon. Mr. Gregory was the son of Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Gregory, who operate the theatre here, and was flying to Honey Harbor, where his wife is staying at their summer home.

Clearing for the Post Office site began this week and contractors Forbes and Mackenzie have been busy tearing down the old hop kiln and storehouse and the barn at the rear of Acton's new Federal building. The floor and feed store building is also being moved to the rear of the property.

Back in 1912

There is something deeply comforting to the human spirit in fire. Whether it's a log in the fireplace, chuckling cheerily or burning with a slow, dream-making flame, a bonfire on the beach pushing back the darkness, or just the gleam and warmth from the kitchen stove, fire soothes and renews the inner self.

I'm writing this column by the faint flame of all — a candle. There's been a hydro break and the lights have been out for hours. With the soft, little, yellow glow of my candle beside me, I don't care if they never come on again. At the moment, and in my present mood, I would not trade this one candle for all the lights on Broadway.

It's a brave, small, red candle, left over from Christmas. There are only about three inches of it left, and in an hour, it will be just a burned-out candle. But right now, it brings me comfort, companionship and memories.

Its flame brings back the nights of wonderful coziness, as a child, at the cottage in summer. Snuggled in bed with my young brother, I'd watch the grotesque shadows flicker over the ceilingless interior by the fireplace flames. But there was no real terror in the weird, leaping figures.

On the other side of the partition, my parents talked in the low, peaceful tones of people half bemused by an open fire. The coal oil lamps cast a sturdy, orange glow that chased the leaping shadows. The whip-poor-will on the hill behind the cottage called his cheerful goodnight.

The candle flame reminds me of the first time I fell in love.

Sugar and Spice . . .

BY BILL BAILEY

I was at a huge bonfire. I was 11. After the marshmallow and the singing, we grew silent, watching the deep red of the hottest inside of the fire, as it burned lower. This treckle-faced girl with the brown eyes and the white teeth and the golden arms was sitting beside me.

Next day, I proposed to her, believing it was mutual. She gave me a bloody nose and I was off women for years.

My candle flame brings other "fire" memories. Prison camp in Germany, December, 1944. The wind howls out of the Balkans. The only light in the room is a red flame shining through the cracks of the crude stove. The only sound is "drip, drip, drip. . ." 18 young flyers of half a dozen nations lie silent and watch the firelight dance on the walls.

They are of a single mind. Escape? Home and loved ones? A thick, juicy steak? No, they're all listening intently to that "drip, drip, drip" emanating from the home-made still hooked up to the stove, and wondering if the potato whisks it's producing will be fit to drink in time for the New Year's party.

Yes, fire is truly a blessing. Under its soothing light and warmth, even the chattering of women's tongues will desist. Under its influence, business men who would sell their own grandmothers' into slavery if the net profit were right, wax imaginative, sentimental and idealistic.

We have come a long way from the days when our primitive ancestors cranked before a fire in a cave, dimly wondering what was for breakfast. We don't wear skins any more. We wear hickies and strapless bras. We don't kill people with a club any more. We use push buttons. We don't fear the liver out of a newly killed animal and eat it hot and raw and juicy. We pay 60¢ a pound and eat it dry and glisty, with onions.

But firelight has the same magic for us, after all the progress, as it had for our ancestors. Still the cave man. It can take the bitter blues from around a woman's mouth and turn her into a Madonna in T-shirt. It can put a look of sheer hellery into an old man's eyes as he looks into the flame and sees himself as he was 50 years ago.

It would be a sorry day for mankind if he lost, somehow, the great gift of fire. In the meantime, however, my column is finished. I feel like eating a fried egg sandwich, you can't cook eggs over a candle, and I wish the hydro boys would hurry up and get the power on again.

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE DISTRICT

BRAMPTON — This community put its foot forward toward bigness officially when council passed a by-law asking designation as a city from the Ontario Municipal Board. City status would take Brampton out of the county system. Services might be rented from the county such as jail facilities and health unit services.

OAKVILLE — Council here is having considerable difficulty deciding how often to meet. Presently gathering the first and third Mondays, a proposal has been made calling for weekly meetings. Weekly meetings were termed difficult by the town administrator who noted it took two days to prepare the agenda and two days to write minutes following the meeting.

GEORGETOWN — Workmen building Georgetown's new composite school are racing the calendar so the building will be ready to accept classes in a month. The school will be offering technical and occupational training plus the normal courses for academic students. Priced at two million dollars the cost will be met 75 per cent by the federal grant program. Ultimately the school will accommodate 1,055 students.

BURLINGTON — A veteran detective inspector of the Hamilton Police Department, 50-year-old William Hopper, was chosen last week as this town's new chief constable. When Inspector Hopper takes over his new post, Chief Constable Lisle Crawford will step down to deputy chief, a change recommended in an extensive report on the town police department made earlier this year.

STREETSVILLE — A "new city" of 15,000 people may spring up in Toronto Township adjacent to Streetville in the next 10 years. The project, to be undertaken by Meadowsdale Developments Ltd., may be started as early as next spring with work beginning on the first phase. Phase One is on a 750-acre site immediately south of Hwy. 401 north of Streetville. However, an agreement involving the use of this town's sewage facilities must be approved by the Town before plans progress farther.

MILTON — An all-out campaign to town place safety belts in as many local cars as possible has been undertaken by the Coachmen a town car club. The club hopes to sell 300 seat belts at cost between now and October. The belts are being provided through the Ontario Motor League and are SAE approved. Cost is only \$6.50 plus 50 cents installation fee.

ROCKWOOD

Church Attendance Down Due to Holiday Season and Marden Highway.

Civic Holiday passed off quietly here. Even church attendance was down at churches Sunday morning. Rev. Dr. and Mrs. George Aitken are away for their vacation in Muskoka district. After the dry weather, lawns about the village are showing a lovely green shade following recent rains.

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