Georgetown Herald

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W. C. BIEHN, Publisher

. . . EDITORIAL COMMENT . . .

Bad News . . . Good News

Last week's Herald reported a mixture of bad and good news on its front page.

It was with regret that we reported cessation of night school activities. For several years this has filled a prominent place in the town's cultural and social life, teaching skills ranging from dressmaking to welding, square dancing to typing. Hundreds of men and women have taken advantage of a budget-priced course which has made first-rate instruction available.

The school has for the present, taught itself out of existence, literally. And while many will regret to see the doors close, it is not necessarily the end forever — five or ten years from now, a new generation will be eager to learn to make metal trays, acquire experience in oil painting, upholstering and smocking and there is no reason the school cannot be again formed.

But to counterbalance night school's demise, along came an important day for the town when it was decided to introduce a YMCA-YWCA program in modified form.

The 'Y' is too well known to have to expound on its merits.

And it is a happy day when this district comes into the Y fold with its citizen-building ideals.

Coincidentally, there is every reason to believe that, while the night school organization could not interest enough people in enough variety of courses to make continuance worthwhile, the 'Y' could quite well adopt one or two of the desired projects and make the absence of night school less a blow to the town.

A committee is hard at work at present forming plans for the YMCA introduction and within three to six months, a program will be underway.

Has Our Idea Merit ?

Two weeks ago the Herald made a suggestion that building land owned by Delrex Developments be released for building under the terms of the present subdivision control and subdivision services by-laws, with the proviso that a penalty payment be assessed to release the Delrex firm from unfulfilled conditions in a 1954 agreement signed with the town.

The suggestion was made after a great deal of thought, with the hope that both sides in a virtual political impasse might give a little, and that a start might be made on solving a problem which has caused more unfavourable publicity than anything else in Georgetown's long history.

The editorial caused some favourable reaction. Several ratepayers have mentioned it, and two councillors commented on it off the record.

But frankly, we have been disappointed that neither of the parties concerned, council or Delrex Developments, have indicated that they think there is any merit at all in the idea.

Last week council overcame one major stumbling block when a motion to amend the subdivision control bylaw was rescinded, and at the same time a decision taken to keep discussing by-law changes in committee.

A lengthy report was submitted to a committee meeting on April 7th by council's planning committee, embodying suggested changes in the control by-law. A main feature would wash out the present sliding scale of payments for house building permits for a flat $400 per permit, as well as eliminating a sliding scale of industrial-residential ratios.

While the report contained much factual information about the town's history and growth, there are many grounds for argument in its comparative statistics, especially relating to percentage of debenture debt between older and newer sections of town. And we can see the committee bogging down in repetitive arguments which can only keep oiling troubled municipal waters ad infinitum.

Certainly the elaborate praise given in a Delrex Developments release to the planning committee report can have no other effect than to plant in more people's minds, rightly or wrongly, that the firm is master-minding the amendment move. And the more fuel added, the hotter the fire will rage.

DISTRICT NEWS
— AT A GLANCE —

BURLINGTON

Burlington's town council, Monday will consider modification of its new master plan to provide for a shopping centre in the area north of the Queen Elizabeth Way between Brant St. and the Guelph Line. Apparently Mr. Richard West of Upper Brant St. S. has already proposed to develop a shopping area in the same vicinity.

ORANGEVILLE

James L. Cooke Construction Co. of Orangeville has been instructed by the federal Department of Public Works to proceed with the demolition of the old Orangeville post office building.

STREETSVILLE

Land owned by Erin Mills Developments Ltd. at the intersection of the Fifth Line and the proposed Highway 403 may be the site of a multi-million dollar industrial research centre. Robert Robinson, solicitor for Erin Mills, told Toronto Twp. council Monday that the Ontario Research Foundation would like to locate on the site southwest of Streetsville.

MALTON

Relief from jet noise is a year away for Malton residents Toronto Twp. council's jet noise committee was told last Thursday. Dept. of Transport officials said a new runway schedule to go into operation next spring will take much of the jet traffic and the resultant noise away from Malton.

COOKSVILLE

The South Peel Hospital Fund has gone over the $400,000 mark, reaching a figure of $400,174.51 on Monday of this week, according to the campaign director. This is more than $15,000 over three weeks ago.

BRAMPTON

An indication of the size of Canada's boom town, Brampton, is the number of sub post offices. A new one, number five, has been opened last week at 40 David St. At the same time it was announced by Peel's M.P. John Pallett, that letter carrier service will be extended to 322 more homes.

OAKVILLE

A plan to link the Oakville police department with other police departments in a network of communications covering a large section of Ontario was approved in principal by council. The system may join departments by intercommunications using Telex, a device which rents for $540 a year.

ERIN

Fire of unknown origin completely destroyed the barn on the farm of Koopman Bros., 9th Line, Erin Township, in the heart of the potato country last week. Nine thousand bags of potatoes, a truck and several implements were also destroyed.

BOLTON

You can have your shoes shined by the preacher, the undertaker, the merchant, the plumber, the bank manager, the druggist or the editor in Bolton this weekend. The gimmick is a fund raising project of the Rotary Club to boost the treasury for community work. Stands have been placed in the business section.

AURORA

Aurora council is cracking down on door to door salesmen and pitch men. They gave first and second reading this week to a by-law which set license fees from $2 up to $250 for various types of businesses which solicit at homes.

ACTON

In the near future, visitors to Acton park will identify the arena by the name "Acton District Community Centre." The new name will symbolize the many changes and modernization taking place there. The name was suggested by Nino Braida.

MILTON

Milton District High School on Martin St. is up for sale. A letter last week explained the board was in a position to negotiate the sale for $135,000 pointing out that the operation of two high schools was costly and a definite handicap.

FATALITY-FREE TOWN IN 1961

For a second year, Georgetown in 1961 boasted a fatality-free accident record.

A letter read to council Monday from provincial transport minister Rowntree complimented the town, and Mayor Sargent in turn extended bouquets to the police department for their safety work.

"It's nice to know our town gets some favourable publicity too," remarked the mayor to a council tense after two hours of ratepayers' remarks about the controversial amment to the assessment ratio by-law.

Georgetown's record is the more noteworthy when it is realized that only nine Ontario municipalities of population 10,000 or over had no fatal accidents in 1961.

COMMON SOLDIERS BEAT KNIGHTS

English victories over the French at Crecy, Poitiers and Agincourt in the Middle Ages demonstrated — says the Book of Knowledge — the superiority of a light mobile force, largely made up of common soldiers and archers, over the traditional feudal army of armoured knights and heavily clad men-at-arms.

SPRING FEVER

THE MAIL BAG

Ratepayer Comments On More Land Release

216 Delrex Blvd.
April 12th, 1962

Gentlemen:

As a keen observer of the recent controversy regarding a subdivision bylaw, may I be permitted to voice my opinion:

We are dealing with an issue which is of the greatest importance to our town and which has held the attention of most of us for the past three weeks

It is also an issue which sees Georgetown again divided into two parts and — unfortunately perhaps — the two sides may again be classified as 'pro-Delrex and 'anti-Delrex.' As this situation has prevailed in the past it seems opportune to look back a little in order to find the root of all this disagreement.

Dangerously Lopsided

At the outset — we must remember — Delrex Developments Ltd. was formed to divide, develop, and make generally fit for human habitation in the modern sense some farmland which had been obtained by this company. As a direct result, Georgetown's population, increased by 100 per cent to the present figure of slightly over 10,000 inhabitants. Delrex Developments Ltd. made also quite generous provisions for the settlement of industry, but for various reasons this sector lagged far behind the residential development.

It is a matter of simple economics that new industry must go hand in hand with additional housing, especially if the latter is only in the low to medium assessment group. Failing this, the community's tax picture can become dangerously lopsided, which, indeed, it tended to. Seeing the danger, Georgetown imposed the now famous 60 to 40 tax ratio which is, of course, an effective means of protecting the homeowner from strangling taxation. As it was, the 60 to 40 ratio also stopped the developing company from the immediate continuation of their subdivision plan and they were not at all happy about the council-imposed stoppage.

Profitable Business

Now, it stands to reason that the operation of dividing farmland into little lots and their subsequent sale to housebuilders can be a profitable business and Delrex Developments Ltd. was no doubt formed to engage in this.

It seems important that we not lose sight of the fact that Delrex Developments Ltd. is a business concern. It is for business reasons that more of the restricted portion of 'Delrex' is wanted to be released for house building, not in order to create a 'surplus labour pool' which incidentally in a simplified version may also be spelled 'Unemployment.' Nor is the land release sought so that 'progress may continue,' nor even to make this a 'happier town for our children.'

Why, not even the desire to build houses can be the motive for the pressure to give the remainder of the land free. We hear of 800 lots already released within the present built-up area where — in line with the proponents of the 'labour pool' theory — builders ought to be busy putting up houses. But they are not. Could this be because a prospective house buyer is offered numerous private deals at exceedingly attractive conditions? "House for Sale" signs literally dot the subdivision, and it has actually come to a point where a homeowner leaving this area can't even rent his place. Surely, about the last thing we need around here are new houses.

One Catch

If despite all this Delrex Developments, Ltd., like to see the freeze on unreleased land lifted it is because they like to make a profit subdividing it.

Of course nobody is blaming them for trying to make a profit. However, there is one catch: The planned activities of Georgetown's principal developer happen — at this stage — to interfere with the town's economics because a brand new residential section with all its initial requirements for schools, streets, sewerage, police protection and countless other necessities burden any town's budget, particularly if — as in our case — there is no new industry to share in the cost.

It is interesting to remember back a few years and to review the actions initiated directly or more infrequently by Delrex Developments Ltd. to circumvent the town's dedication to sound municipal business.

Futile Actions

There was this item of cessation of 'Delrex' from Georgetown proper, a proposal so thinly disguised as to its purpose that it was defeated in its infancy. Secondly a legal action Delrex Ltd. This same company also helped to start off a second weekly newspaper, something that for so limited a population as ours is hardly needed, nor does it seem to be even wanted except to put the views of its foster parents across.

After all these futile actions it is understandable that council's ill-advised decision to amend or repeal its restriction on opening up further as yet 'undeveloped land was so heartily applauded by the 'pro-Delrex' people.

Council has bowed — for the time being — to the strong protests of the other faction which, after all, included over 1,000 persons who signified their opposition by signing their names to a petition to put the entire issue before the voters. This seems a reasonable solution. Let us hope that reason will prevail.

—Charles Hildebrandt

THE MAIL BAG

RETIRING TREASURER DESERVES TRIBUTE

10 Albert St
Georgetown, Ontario

Dear Mr. Editor:

With the actual retirement of Mrs. J. P. Reid to take place shortly, I feel that I as a Hydro user for many years, should express what is my own, and I am sure the opinion of all other users of this service.

Mrs. Reid took over the position of Secretary treasurer "several" years ago and was "as green as grass" insofar as the nature of the work was concerned. However, as we saw, she soon made it her business to know what it was all about and I defy anyone to name a more efficient, dedicated servant of the people. Those of us who may at one time or another have had reason to deal with her, found a stern yet kindly attitude at all times, and if by chance we didn't quite make it for the "fifteenth" we were soon set to rights . . . without the discount, which is as it should have been. At the same time, I can wager that many a time her own purse was opened when someone unable to pay, was in danger of being cut off.

For myself and all other grateful Hydro users, I salute Mrs. Reid, or as she was affectionately known by many of us, "Mrs. Hydro," and wish her many years of happiness in her well earned retirement.

Cecil Davidson

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MERRY MENAGERIE — By Walt Disney

"Stop calling me an old goat!"

SUGAR and SPICE

By Bill Smiley

I look forward with the keenest anticipation to the annual church drive for funds. Every year I volunteer as a canvasser, because the experience provides a capsule commentary on human nature, concise but comprehensive, and I enjoy every minute of it.

• • •

Like everything else, the 'drive for funds' has been elevated. Just as a caretaker has become Superintendent of Maintenance, the battle of the bucks has assumed the disguise of a Sector Project, or a Visitation, or an In-gathering

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But the victims aren't fooled. They recognize you the minute they span the door, just as readily as you penetrate the Hallowe'en garb of the neighbor's little girl, the minute she says: "Twick or tweet, Mr. Smiley, I bet you don't know who I am, I'm Mary."

• • •

There's nothing new about the church needing money. I'll lay odds that St. Paul was telling potential Christians to put up or shut up a couple of thousand years ago, nearly. And he probably got the same answers then.

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Such as: "Well, we've had a lot of expenses this year, with the new house," and "It seems the church is always looking for money" and "We donate pretty heavy to other charities, y' know;" and "Seems to me that preacher has a pretty good thing, free house and all"; and "I ain't gonna sign no pledge"; and a hundred and forty others.

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As civilization has become more complicated, the need of the church for money has become greater. Maintenance costs were low, I understand, in the Catacombs. Light, heat and insurance didn't amount to much and the rector didn't need a car allowance, and the telephone and the organ weren't invented yet, and Sunday School supplies consisted of a stick and some sand.

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Then the Christian made the mistake of moving to such inclement climates as that of Britain, and that was the end of the infinitesimal budget. They had to move indoors, and promptly walked up to the ears into a morass of carpets and new roofs and stained glass windows and furnaces and seats and baptismal fonts and choir lofts and such.

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As if that wasn't enough, along came this crazy, socialistic idea that ministers and their families should eat as well or nearly as well, as the rest of us. Ever since, most churches have been staggering along in sorry financial condition.

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When I was a boy, the problem was dumped in the parson's lap. If he wanted to eat, he preached. Some of the most fiery sermons I heard in my youth were those based on the need — nay, the duty — to give more than two bits a week to the church. The minister would work himself into a regular paroxysm on the subject, while his flock just sat there and looked at him, coldly.

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After this system proved an utter flop, and the faithful proved as bloodless as stone, the new method came into its own. It has turned out to be immensely successful. Church revenues have sky-rocketed. Unfortunately, what with inflation and the like, church expenditures have managed to stay ahead of revenues, until it now costs as much to operate a fair sized church as it did, 70 years ago, to operate a fair sized town.

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Today's campaign is highly organized. The male pillars of the church, and a few doughty females are wheedled into declaring their willingness to serve. There are training sessions, which are a cross between a sales meeting and a pep rally, for these volunteers. Tremendous enthusiasm is caused. This is fanned into a veritable flame by a special speaker, who tells the canvassers how to crack the hard nuts.

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Everybody agrees that if everybody else gave what he should, the church would be rolling in greenbacks. The list of church members is produced. It is huge. It looks as tho' there'll have to be an addition built to the church, by the time the campaign is over. About here the minister tries to point out that it is the missing member's soul we are after, not his roll. But nobody pays any attention.

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When the volunteer canvassers are in a fine frenzy of unselfish inspiration, their own commitment cards, or pledge cards, are handed out to them, if the chairman is on his toes. Everybody defiantly increases his giving by a buck or 50 cents a week, glaring at his fellow workers.

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And right there, though not too many realize it, is the climax of the entire camaigin. Oh, it runs its course, like a spent rocket returning to earth. The canvassers are blessed on Sunday morning, they have a lunch after the service, and they go out in pairs, determinedly clutching their cards and their leaflets.

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To their amazement, as the figures are tallied, they learn that the campaign has been a complete success. She's gone over the top. How 'zamo? Because they, and their fellow-canvassers, carried away by the spirit, temporarily, had increased their own donations enough to make the total, before they ever went out. But it's good fun, good for the soul, and good for the church. So I'm looking forward to next year's campaign.

ROCK MILK

Bricks that will float, according to the Book of Knowledge, are made of "rock milk," a variety of silicate of magnesium found in Tuscany. Floating bricks of rock milk have been made since ancient times.

ECHOES

From the pages of the Herald, April, 1952, and 1937

10 YEARS AGO

- Two Toronto men have purchased a men's clothing store on Main Street from Harry Marcus who had operated it since last fall. The store, located beside Thompson's Hardware, had been operated for many years by Perc Blackburn. New owners are Irving Lass and Izzie Book.
- Members of the Georgetown Intermediate Raiders were entertained by the Parks Board at a hockey dinner at the Royal Hotel, Guelph, on Friday. Jack Gunning was chairman for the program and introduced, among others, Bill Hanley of the OHA, Ken McMillan, OHA, Mayor Jack Armstrong, referee Pat Patterson, W. G. Bell, Manager Bill Matthews and coach Dang Kentner.
- The manager of the Roxy Theatre here for the past two years, Bill Boal has been named manager of the 700 seat Majestic Theatre in Dundas. A Toronto native, Mr. Boal was assistant manager at Brampton before coming here.

25 YEARS AGO

- We understand that the Local Council of Women are seriously considering building a wading pool for children on the old radial property west of Main St. Approval has been obtained from the Dept. of Health and the donation of a small sum of money by some generous hearted citizens would enable the ladies to proceed.
- At a meeting of the public library board held last Friday afternoon, Mrs. W. Deans was appointed librarian to fill the vacancy caused by the death of the late Mrs. Winfield. There were eighteen applicants for the position.
- At the Gregory Theatre: 'Our Relations,' starring Laurel and Hardy, 'The Last of Mrs. Cheyney', starring Joan Crawford, William Powell and Robert Montgomery; 'The Plough and the Stars', starring Barbara Stanwyck.