

# Georgetown Herald

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## ... EDITORIAL COMMENT ...

### Back On the Job

To ease anyone thinks that the editor has returned from vacation with head so jammed with editorial ideas he doesn't know where to start — only the last phrase is true.

The type of holiday we chose this year — a three week glimpse at London and the continent was just what it was billed — a whirlwind tour. Never before and probably never again, will we see so much in so little time. And we're still reeling; still glutted with the kaleidoscope of antiquity, beauty, history, and drama which passed before our eyes as our tour bus took us to one highlight after another.

People ask: "What country, what city did you like best?"

And we can only answer "each in its turn." — for each European country has its own special delights for the tourist.

Before signing up for a tour, we had toyed with the idea of renting a car and touring a portion of Europe on our own.

After seeing what would be involved, we wouldn't advise this unless one spent a lot of time studying points of interest. Certainly it would be next to impossible to cover the ground we did in a scant three weeks in this way.

Most of western Europe is, singularly unmarked by highway signs. And while it is a treat to see nature unspoiled by the billboards we have become accustomed to in America, it is difficult to find what you are looking for as a tourist. And traffic in the big cities — London, Rome and Paris, particularly is weird and wonderful.

Nor can one assume that, because Europe is flooded with American visitors, every resident in every country automatically has learned to speak English. In the larger hotels and city shops, certainly there is always someone on the staff who can. But many times you are on your own with a dictionary and hand signals your only communication.

### Random Impressions

Perhaps the most interesting thing about travel in countries strange to us, is the little things one notices.

We have already mentioned the lack of highway signs. Where our neighbours to the south avail themselves of every means to ensure the tourist visits the district's attractions, the European seems to deliberately understate his. There are no signs saying: "Only five more miles to the Leaning Tower" ... "Don't miss Tivoli Gardens." So one has the feeling that he is discovering them by himself. ... One cannot fail to be impressed with seeing buildings which have stood the test of centuries. ... the Etruscan villages in Italy, still habitable, the Parthenon, St. Paul's Cathedral, standing firm on their foundations for hundreds of years. Do we build to last like this today? ...

Except for the absurd hair styles of young Londoners, there was little evidence of this in other countries. Young people were better groomed than their teen counterparts here ... breakfast of rolls and coffee we never did get used to, nor the habit of serving rolls without butter at other meals, and coffee always with hot milk if

American style, or sugar only for espresso which is much the most common ...

The use of every inch of space, especially in Holland, for flowers or a bit of garden ... the red tile which make villages so attractive from a distance, though our individual homes in Canada are much more attractive ...

Absence of traffic as we know it on the highways, where motorbikes are much more common than private cars ... but the reverse in the big cities where it's every man for himself as pint-sized cars vie with buses and taxis in a great melange of motion ...

Sidewalk cafes, orchestras playing in the public squares ... stores closing for an hour or two at noon, and again for an hour in late afternoon, so different from our own retail work week ...

The feast of art in Florence and the Louvre, priceless masterpieces of painting, sculpture and mosaic work ...

And over all, the underlying sadness of past wars, buildings in ruins, military memorials in profusion, so one wonders how so much could have survived the madness of man.

### Water Safety Week

The Red Cross draws attention this week to the summer hazards which can cause heartbreak as Ontario prepares for its annual exodus to the beaches and tourist resorts.

Statistics compiled last year by the Red Cross show more than 170 youngsters under 12 years of age drowned because parents and guardians failed to supervise them when they were near the water.

The Red Cross urges that conditions be investigated before children enter the water, that warning signs indicating undertow and deep spots be carefully checked, and that a child should never be out of a parent's sight when he is in the water.

Only good swimmers should attempt

canoeing ... wear approved life jackets for water skiing ... be sure of your footing when fishing from the water's edge.

In Georgetown, we are particularly fortunate in having swimming instruction available at a moderate cost each summer. Your children should have this advantage, and every parent is urged to take advantage of the Red Cross classes conducted in July and August.

Recently, in a formal agreement, Canada's 300,000 boy scouts have adopted Red Cross standards for the award of their swimming badges. Royal Life Saving Society standards for awards in life saving, and St. John Ambulance standards for awards in first aid.



LOOKING OVER HIS SHOULDER

## NEWS DESK EXTRAS

by Terry Harley

### STEW POT POURRI

● Don't be taken in by the latest fraud—Pop Art. It's the most recent layer on a rolling snowball that gets its momentum from fear of being "out." The "art" isn't art at all — but because it's in to be an appreciator of the ridiculous you'll find there is a growing number of people at Pop Art exhibitions squinting perceptively at such things as a jumbo detergent box on a pedestal, a tin of soup on a pedestal, and a stack of pot cleaners.

We'd like to see somebody enter an "exhibit" with a supermarket shopping cart and stroll the length of it casually dropping the "art pieces" into it as they go.

● A question I keep asking myself without getting a satisfactory answer is why do we try so hard to be a carbon copy of the US of A. Two things made me ask it again last week. One was the gala opening of the Beverly Hills Motor Hotel in Toronto (unless the place was financed by somebody named Beverly Hill that one qualifies as a party) and the other is the stamping of local baseball teams with names of American cities — Detroit, New York, Cleveland, Los Angeles, et al.

The Georgetown Minor Baseball Association is a fine example of an organization that is making a great contribution to the community and we're not knocking it — in labelling the team clubs with names of USA baseball cities they're certainly not doing anything that hundreds of similar Canadian groups aren't doing — but we are suggesting the youngsters would have just as much fun on the diamonds as Vancouver, Halifax, Edmonton and Ottawa as they're having now as San Francisco, Chicago, Cincinnati, Syracuse, Rochester and the rest.

● Nobody can write an essay like a public school pupil as this response from a child of ten (it's genuineness is guaranteed) asked to write about a bird and a beast at exam time bears out.

### A Bird and a Beast

(Name withheld at dad's request)

The bird that I am going to write about is the Owl. The Owl cannot see by day and at night is as blind as a bat. I do not know much about the Owl so I will go on to the beast which I am going to choose. It is a Cow. The Cow is a mammal. It has six sides—right, left, an upper and below. At the back it has a tail on which hangs a brush. With this it sends the flies away so that they do not fall into the milk. The head is for the purpose of growing horns and so that the mouth can be somewhere. The horns are to butt with, and the mouth is to moo with. Under the Cow hangs the milk. It is arranged for milking. When people milk, the talk comes

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## NEWS ECHOES

From the pages of the Herald 1955 and 1945

### 10 YEARS AGO

- Ross Duncan was the envy of fishermen on Manitoulin recently. While visiting with the Stan Finlays who were spending their vacation near Little Current, he netted one of the prize fish of the season, a great northern pike measuring 41 1/2 inches and weighing 18 1/4 lbs.
- The new Verian Associates building at the Mountainview Road and River Drive corner being erected by McNally Construction is expected to be completed by mid-September.
- Hawes & Nelson are contractors on a job that will add a large addition to the Co-Op building on Guelph St. The new space includes a warehouse at the rear of the present building, and cement block addition which will contain a business office and showroom fronting on the highway.

### 20 YEARS AGO

- Robert Webster, aged 8, suffered a badly fractured shoulder, a slight skull fracture and numerous bruises when struck by a westbound truck. He was on his way home from school.
- Among the group returning last week from overseas service were: S. Sgt. Thomas Barnes, Sgt. Trevor Williams, Pte. Albert Simpson, Sgt. Charles Wall, Pte. Chuck Laws, Dvr. Sheldon Lawr, and L. Cpl. J. MacDonald.

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## Forecast Larger Units in Rewriting Ontario Municipal Act

By Gwyn Kinsey  
Special to The Herald

The most recent amendments to the Municipal Act introduced by Municipal Affairs Minister J. W. Spooner continue the slow process of updating and tidying this complicated and sometimes archaic piece of legislation.

Major changes will not occur until next year when, Dr. Lorne Cunnings, formerly deputy minister of Municipal Affairs and now special advisor to the minister, may have completed his massive rewriting of the whole Act.

Some of this season's amendments can be considered as preparation for next year's changes. All assessors, for example, will be licensed by the municipal affairs department.

### Regional Nudging

Queen's Park is nudging the municipalities towards acceptance of larger units of government and the acceptance of regional responsibilities. Any unit of government, to be effective, must have taxing powers, a sub-

stantial control of revenue. There may well be some adjustment of taxing powers by statute next year, after current investigations of taxation have been completed and their findings studied. In the meantime, however, Mr. Spooner wants the municipalities to put their financial affairs in better order.

Municipal revenue is based on assessment. If the assessing is indifferently done, the municipality suffers. And Spooner does not have a high opinion of assessment practices across the province.

"It is safe to say that if the administration of the tax base by the senior levels of government were as inadequately administered, the nation would probably be bankrupt," he says bluntly.

### Survey Findings

His opinion is based on a survey his department conducted last year, in the course of which 940 assessment rolls were examined in detail. The department found:

- 640 municipalities had neither revised nor adjusted assessed

values since 1956. 405 municipalities did not use an integrated assessment system or manual, although some used parts of several different systems.

164 municipalities had no appraisal records of any kind. 803 municipalities did not use mechanical systems to prepare assessment rolls.

133 municipalities did not prepare their assessment rolls in accordance with the act.

170 municipalities did not include population on the assessment rolls.

162 municipalities did not bother to assess or collect business tax.

619 municipalities did not send assessment notices to tenants, many of whom were deprived of voting and school support privileges.

800 municipalities show "completely unacceptable deviations from the value norm for certain classes of property. For example if the main value for all property was 35 per cent of market value then residen-

tial might read 28 per cent, commercial 45 per cent, industrial 30 per cent and farm 30 per cent."

### Inequalities Noted

In every county there was an unacceptable deviation in the ratio of assessed value to market value for the various municipalities. Department comment: "It is true that county equalization reduces the impact to some degree. No equalization program no matter how well considered, can remove these inequalities."

The survey produced other "startling" evidence of poor assessment practices. Spooner cited such examples as assessable properties entering from the roll, summer cottages assessed for business assessment; "and what must be termed deliberate over and under assessment of property."

"The assessment office is the most important function within a municipality," Spooner points out. "It not only raises the tax monies which make possible all other municipal services but it also apportions the cost of

these services among individual ratepayers.

"Some ratepayers are now paying too much; others are paying too little, and more than you suspect are not paying at all."

"In these days of escalating taxes many municipal organizations are demanding access to other sources of revenue without making a reasonable attempt to properly administer the one they already have."

### Need Trained Men

Training facilities for assessors are available, he says, and "it is up to the municipalities to employ these trained men, pay them attractive salaries and allot them office space and equipment so they can work efficiently. . . . We cannot allow a tax base (our total municipal assessment), which produces \$874 million in taxes in Ontario, to be in hands of part-time or untrained employees."

Only 10 counties and one territorial district employ the centralized assessment system, despite the fact that grants are

and there is never an end to the supply. How the Cow does it I have not yet realized, but it makes more and more. The Cow has a fine sense of smell; one can smell it far away. This is the reason for the fresh air in the country. The man Cow is called an ox. It is not a mammal. The cow does not eat much, but what it eats it eats twice, so that it gets enough. When it is hungry it moos, and when it says nothing it is because its inside is all full with grass.

Spain had a flourishing textile industry in the 16th century.

Exporting wool from England was prohibited by law from 1800 to 1825.

available for this purpose — from a minimum of \$2,500 to a maximum of \$12,500 towards salaries, plus 50 per cent of the cost of equipping the offices and 50 per cent of the cost of renting data processing equipment. Would assessors object to being licensed? Spooner's reply was sharp: "If an assessor can't do his job properly, he should make up his mind to do something else."