Georgetown Herald

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Not the First Time

After the municipal elections, The Herald referred to the incoming council as Georgetown's first "two year council."

It isn't so.

Thanks to the memory of Mayor Gibbons, we must set the record straight and say that once before in the town's history, the same procedure prevailed. Mr. Gibbons should recall it, because then, as now, he became a "two-year mayor."

It was in 1940 that a question vote asked ratepayers if they would prefer a council elected for two years. It was approved by a vote of 203, with 130 opposing.

Mr. Gibbons headed the 1941-42 council for the two years, Harold Cleave was reeve; and councillors were Sam Mackenzie, Kenneth MacDonald, James Costigan, A. E. Cripps (now of Stayner), Clifford Bradley (now of Acton) and the late Norman Brown.

The new procedure lasted only for the two years. When elections were held again in December, 1942, they were only for one year again. Mr. Gibbons was elected mayor again that year when the reeve made an unsuccessful run against him, Mr. Brown became the new reeve, Councillors Bradley, and MacDonald were returned, and new councillors were Joseph Hall, Sr., William P. Thompson, Hedley Shaw, who lost his life on active service overseas, and the late Thomas L. Lyons.

In 1959, voters turned down a two-year term resoundingly 1727 to 523 in a plebiscite vote.

It was adopted this year on a split 5-4 council vote, without being submitted to a ratepayers- vote.

An odd fact is that, in both cases, Mr. Gibbons is a reluctant two-year mayor, for he is a supporter of yearly elections. It will be interesting to see if the innovation lasts longer in its second time around than it did back in the forties.

Forty Years A Printer

One recent day was an important one for Herald staffer Garfield (Mac) McGilvray. He began his 41st year in the familiar surroundings of the business where he has spent his working years.

Perhaps it was typical that it was a busy day (what days aren't busy in a weekly newspaper) and there was no time for an adequate celebration. What better way to spend an anniversary working at the trade you know, with the people whose joint efforts produce a newspaper which, in its century of existence, has earned a place of respect in the community.

It's people like Mr. McGilvray who have helped create this image. Besides knowing his business, he has served Georgetown in a larger way — as a councillor, as an executive of the fall fair, in positions of responsibility in church and civic groups.

He is one of the old school who can fill any role in the business — from typesetting to news writing. He is old enough to have learned his trade in the days when every line of type comprised individual letters, paintstakingly set by hand — young enough to have absorbed the modern techniques which the printing business has acquired in these forty years.

He has seen The Herald quadruple from its old four-page weekly format, its staff triple from four, its move to a larger location, its equipment scrapped for modern machinery.

The Herald is proud to have people like him on the staff and happy to salute him on one of the important milestones.

Christmas a Happy Time

Christmas is, and should be, a happy time for Christian Canadians. Sometimes we lose sight of the fact that it is primarily a religious celebration — a time for religious observance, for thankfulness and praise.

This does not mean that we do not condone Santa Claus and gift giving, parties and merriment, Christmas cards and decorated trees. They are all part of the festive air which should surround such an important birthday celebration.

What we always hope is that everyone be temperate, that nothing cloud the horizon at such a happy time.

We hope no one will let a convivial drink become the excuse for a drunken party — that gift giving be kept within the bounds of income and not become a future burden in this "buy now, pay later" age; that motorists use extra caution with youngsters playing in the snow; that those for whom the year has gone right will share a little of their surplus with some who have been not so blessed.

This year, particularly, when Christmas day falls on a Sunday, we hope there will be no vacant seats in our churches, as Georgetowners celebrate the day.

Cheer, Not Fear for Christmas

Simple, sincere precautions can put cheer into the Christmas celebrations, and eliminate fear. Since Christmas is a home observance, the National Safety League of Canada centres its Christmas safety advice around the home.

Falls; Greatest Danger

Falls account for most of the accidental deaths and injuries in the home so a special effort to avoid them is essential.

- Keep walks and steps free from ice and snow.
- Keep walks, paths and doorways clear of obstructions.
- Carry parcels so they will not obstruct the view.
- Store packages on shelves or in drawers never on stairs
- Give the children a box to keep toys in.
- Use a sturdy ladder, never such makeshift as chair, box or books.
- Never reach from a ladder Move it, or get someone taller to do the chore.

Fire Hazards

The fire potential in the home increases during the Christmas period. These precautions will help prevent fire tragedies.

- Keep the Christmas tree in water.
- Keep candles away from the tree or curtains
- Extinguish candles and tree lights at night and when leaving the house even for a short time.
- Cover candles with hurricane lamps.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach.
- Replace worn electric cords and decorations. Make sure new ones carry the Canadian Standards Association approval.
- Use non-flammable or flame-resistant materials (metal, glass, asbestos, etc.) for decorations.
- Use off tree spotlights or floodlights on metal trees. Never use tree lights in which a power leak could turn the metal tree into a fatal weapon.

Protect Children

Most Christmas things look good enough to eat to the little ones, and they'll try to nibble on dangerous items like ornaments and bulbs. Some of these items can be deadly, so the children must be protected.

- Cover empty power outlets such as tree-light sockets.
- Make sure all ornaments are strongly attached to the tree or the wall.

Firearm Care

More than half of the fatal accidents from firearms occur in the home, so special attention is necessary if the holiday is to be kept free of tragedy.

- Make sure firearms are not loaded when in use.

Children and others unfamiliar with safe handling of firearms can kill themselves and others unless caution is taken to keep them out of reach.

After Christmas

When the holiday is ended hazards still exist.

- Dispose of gift wrappings immediately. Place them in metal containers or burn them.
- Dispose of tree. Follow municipal instructions or, where no such instructions exist, burn tree in an open area, keeping a fire extinguisher handy because trees that are exceptionally dry can explode when set ablaze.
- Dispose of dried-out decorations.

Moral Responsibility

"Everyone has a moral responsibility for the safety of their families, friends and themselves, at all times," said Gay McLaren, General Manager of the League. "This must be realized at Christmas time more than any other time. If this were done, many human lives would be saved and much suffering would be prevented.

DENMARK CUSTOM

A Danish Christmas custom is the 'Jul-bock'. This is a long pole with a goat's head whose duty it is to butt in when children misbehave.

NOW WHEN JESUS WAS BORN IN BETHLEHEM OF JUDAEA IN THE DAYS OF HEROD THE KING, BEHOLD, THERE CAME WISE MEN FROM THE EAST to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto Him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: For thus it was written by the prophet, and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, are not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people of Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what the time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young Child; and when ye have found Him, bring the word again, that I may come and worship Him also. When they had heard the King, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east went before them, til it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary and His mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented until Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their country another way.

Evergreens, symbolic of eternal life, have long been used for decorating at Yuletide. Teutonic peoples believed that certain greens would frighten certain evil spirits away. The Saxons hung holly, ivy, rosemary, or laurel in their homes and churches. In the great manor houses, walls, pillars and windows were adorned with branches of greens. A bunch of mistletoe hung from the door or ceiling. Each time a man stole a kiss under it he had to pluck a berry from the bough.

It is said that early Roman enemies made up their quarrels when they met under the mistletoe; this is believed to be the origin of kissing under the green. This plant was not used in churches (because of its association with the pagan Druid ceremonials.) There was one exception to this — at York Minster — where a bunch was laid on the high altar "with a benediction for peace and good will."

As early as 1444, greenery was used on the streets of London as Christmas decorations, and the custom grew through the years. Holly has long been a favorite holiday green. There are several legends connected with it. One is that Christ's crown of thorns was made of holly. Some say that the idea of making holly wreaths came from His Crown, as the berries resembled drops of blood. Today holly wreaths, with their glistening green leaves and contrasting holiday decorations.

ing berries are among our most distinctive holiday decorations.

HARLEY TO HALTON

Weekly Observations by Dr. Harry Harley, M.P. for Halton

This week has seen the continuation of the debate on the guaranteed annual income for our senior citizens. I have previously detailed this in the last column which I will not repeat here. Everyone now drawing old age security will receive an application form for the new income supplement in the very near future. This form is, I understand, very simple to fill out. It does not ask for detailed information other than what is required on the income tax return. It is expected that this legislation will pass the House of Commons in the very near future and that it should receive Royal Assent before the Christmas Recess.

One days' debate was spent on the threatened strike by air control officers who supervise air traffic at our airports. The Government had appointed a Commissioner to enquire into this matter and his recommmendations have been accepted by the air control officers as what they wish to receive in the way of further benefits. The Government has taken the position that this Commissioner was an adviser and they cannot accept all his findings although they are willing to accept the majority of them. The Government has pointed out that some of the Commissioner's report is based on an inaccurate assumption and that in effect if the Government accepted the recommendations he has made regarding wages it would mean that the air control officers would receive over a period of two years a wage increase of 40 per cent.

The Government feels that this is not within the usual or justified range of salary increase. Here I might just mention that it is indeed strange to observe that the Opposition who so severely criticized the Government's handling of the Longshoremen's strike for a 30 per cent salary increase are now equally busy arguing that the Government should accept a wage increase for air control officers of 40 per cent. The Government has prepared emergency legislation for presentation to the House of Commons if a settlement is not reached which will ensure that no strike is held which would paralyze air travel at this busy time of year.

A Christmas Poem

Mrs. Edward Stafford, Glen Williams, has submitted this Christmas poem to share with Herald readers. It was written by a relative, Mrs. Albert Pieroway, Marysville, N.B.

• • •

If I could buy a yesterday,
And place it on your tree,
I'm sure the joy upon your face
Would be heavenly to see.

I think I'd choose a Christmas day,
When we were all at home,
In the old house by the cotton mill,
Where all our thoughts do roam.

I'd place the big old candy bowl
Upon the dining table,
I'd have my father tell the tale
How cows kneeled in their stable.

I'd have you smell tobacco smoke,
And see the sparks that flew
From out that poor old favorite pipe,
When for relief he drew.

I'd have him carve the turkey,
The one he bought from Stell,
And of his many blessings
I'd have him once more tell.

I'd have you see the lovely smile
Upon your mother's face,
When she'd show off some small trinket
Or a hanky trimmed with lace.

But I can't buy that yesterday
They simply can't be bought,
So the little gift I'm sending
Is just a simple thought.

When the sun comes up tomorrow,
A fact that cannot fail,
You'll have another yesterday.
For which there is 'NO SALE'

—Tuesday, December 27 has been declared Boxing Day in Georgetown.

SUGAR AND SPICE

by Bill Smiley

CHRISTMAS IS REAL!

Christmas comes but once a year.
In fact, it's just ahead.
But have you heard the bad news,
Santa Claus is dead.

He didn't have a stroke.
In fact it's difficult to say
What made old Santa croak.

Some say it was exhaustion,
Some say it was a clot;
But others seem to think he conked
From smoking too much pot.

Chimney-pot, that is, of course,
He wouldn't touch the other.
But what an anti-climax,
For Santa just to smother.

At least he could have fallen
From his sleigh and made a splash,
Or run into a satellite
With one almighty crash.

I know it's going to be hard to explain that to your kids, but that's your problem.

The revelation contained in the above doggerel is my personal campaign against the assortment of creeps going around smelling up the atmosphere with their God-Is-Dead garbage.

There's just as much truth, and just as much common sense, in my report about S. Claus as there is in theirs about God.

I don't care whether they are eminent clerics or half-baked beatniks, the God-Is-Dead crowd is dead wrong. He may be out to lunch occasionally, but He is not Dead. He is very much alive. And you can go tell that on the mountain, my folksinging friends.

Sorry if I sound a bit heated at this time of peace and goodwill and four-color ads for whiskey and perfume. But I've had enough of the complete current scene for a bit. Quite enough of psychedelic sensations, and clever little clergymen saying glib things, and young people with open mouths who swallow anything that flies into them, and simple minded, earnest "liberals" who bore the hell out of me trying to explain things far beyond them.

There, it's out. I'm just a ruddy old reactionary, after all. And I don't give a diddle. Never in my life have I had a desire to be one of the "in" crowd, and I have no intention of starting now.

First of all, what is Christmas all about? Is it not a celebration in the Christian world, of the basic tenet of faith: that God gave man the greatest gift in his power, a son, a living breathing manifestation of His concern for the muddled, wrong-headed, two-legged creatures who make such a muck of things on their own?

He gave man this gift only once. But every year for 20 centuries its celebration has renewed peace and joy and love in the world, even if only for a short time. That's quite a gift.

Now, Santa Claus is a little different. He's been in business only for about a century. He brings something different every year, and all his gifts can be broken, lost or worn out.

Already, a lot of people are getting a bit sick of Santa. We see him everywhere: on floats in Christmas parades, at Christmas bonfires, the Santa Claus [illegible] different each time. And he spends two months of the year leering at us from all directions and ho-ho-ing like the village idiot.

He's like everybody's jolly old grampa. But after two months of white whiskers, belly laughs and urgings to buy, buy, buy, even jolly old grampa should be sent off to the funny farm.

How would you like to have God around for two months a year, every day and night, right where you could see him? And what's worse, where He could see you.

What we've got to do is stop treating God like Santa Claus. A visiting clergyman told us on Sunday the story of a family that wanted something very very much. They prayed for it. And prayed and prayed, the whole family, as hard as they could, for a week. Nothing happened.

In despair, the father said, "Well, I guess God didn't answer our prayers."

His little daughter piped, "Sure He did, Dad. He said no"

That's faith. God is alive. Christmas is real. And if you have enough faith, maybe you will find that rumour about Santa's untimely demise is false and that he's alive too.

YULETIDE OPERA . . . Among television highlights of the Christmas season is presentation of Gian Carlo Menotti's Yuletide opera, "Amahl and the Night Visitors". Singers in the classic presentation of the two past holiday seasons include, left to right, Kurt Yaghjian as Amahl, Martha King as the mother, and John McCollum, Richard Cross and Willis Patterson as the Three Kings.

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