



PRINCIPAL DAVE KATZ listens as Bob Bateman, right, expounds theories on preserving our natural and cultural way of life.—(Staff Photo)

Wake up, says speaker, Ontario could become a Disneyland

Unless Canadians start preserving their heritage - natural and the cultural - we could end up with everything looking like a great big wonderful Disneyland.

That was the tenor of Bob Bateman's remarks to a high school assembly in Acton last week when attentive students heard a strong plea to start thinking about the good things of the past which are going under the wrecker's hammer or being destroyed by chemicals and other poisons of modern civilization.

Art consultant
Bob Bateman is an art consultant at Lord Elgin high school in Burlington, world traveller,

one of the founders of the Bruce Trail, an artist who could make his own way by painting but prefers teaching as a way of life. He has spent time in Biafra, the Arctic, South-East Asia and Australia, as well as sampling the mysteries of the East in India.

He showed slides to illustrate his talk. They picked out some of the best of Ontario's heritage.

"We are wiping out variety and replacing it with uniformity," he declared as a slide of the Fisher home slid onto the screen - a gem from the past which has been torn down to make way for a parking lot for the Burlington mall.

Torn down
"Do you know," he told the students, "that there are no houses left in Hamilton pre-1837?" They tore them down to make way for parking lots and sterile looking modern buildings which look alike.

What is there to distinguish this street from any other street in any other town? he asked the students and teachers as row upon row of gerry built chrome plated store hardware appeared on the screen.

What is there to distinguish this school from any other? he asked as a slide depicting a typical modern school hallway lit up the screen with rows of locker doors.

Where are the elm trees that make this part of the world different than any other? Ravaged by disease. Soon, he said, unless people wake up Ontario will look like a carbon copy of Los Angeles.

He deplored the disappearance of the natural way of life, the lack of pride in community as evidenced by the mountains of litter.

Sucked in
People are sucked in by modern, shiny new conveniences to such an extent they'll sacrifice their whole life to get them, he said. That's what is causing the riots, the murders, the unrest in the developing countries.

Something can be done but it will take a lot more work and money if we don't want everything to look like a great big Disneyland. The natural and historical part of the world needs some champions, Bob Bateman said calmly. Life soon won't be worth living if we don't get better town and country planning. Can you envision having to buy tickets to enter Algonquin Park on a busy weekend? Unless things stop disappearing the old houses and natural world will be curiosities surrounded by fences for the curious to see as relics. Eagle extinct? The American way of life?

DDT is wiping out the birds. The bald eagle, symbol of the U.S.A. is becoming extinct. Why? Causes lie in the great American way of life. "I'm not anti-American," the blonde art consultant told his audience. However, he warned American values would soon ruin the world as we know it. He asked students to envision a better way - one which took into account the finer things, the precious heritage of the past which can never be replaced. If you don't it will be gone forever, he said. He was introduced by Principal David Katz and thanked by Joe Petric.



By Mary Ann Freuler
We are living in a disappearing world. This was the theory of our first guest speaker, Mr. Robert Bateman, at an assembly last Tuesday. Mr. Bateman expressed the opinion that things are disappearing at a faster rate now than in the year 2020 because by that time everything will either be gone or else be found in organized groups. He visualizes the selling of reserve tickets to visit Algonquin Park on the major weekends.

Mr. Bateman is presently teaching at Nelson High School, Burlington. He was one of the original founders and walkers of the Bruce Trail, and has travelled all over the world, taking pictures as he went. With the aid of slides he showed the students how the world is drastically changing and how we are seeing it in our own lifetime. He was very well received by the student body.

Will canvass
Wednesday there was another assembly, only this time it was for the senior students only. After a brief speech on arthritis and its problems the classes were shown a film. This was followed by an

appeal from the Acton Y's Men, for the students to canvass for the Arthritis Society on Monday and Tuesday evening. Several members of the audience volunteered their services.

Also on September 23, the High School track team competed in Shelburne. From 39 entries, Acton boys took seven positions in the first ten finishers: 1 Bob Andrews, 2 Phil Morris, 3 Pete Morrison, 4 Randy Bould, 8 Dave Tomlinson, 9 Glen McKenzie, 10 Bob Smith, 18 Bill McGilloy, 23 Scott Somerville, 25 Steve Marshall, 27 Roger McEachern, 32 Angelo Albano, 33 Bob Beerman, 31 Jan Stachyra.

First dance
The first school dance was held last Friday to the music of Buster Crabb. The event was very well attended and much school spirit was demonstrated.

In order to have a field trip to Quebec the grade 13 students are having a car wash this Saturday. For only 99 cents you may have your car thoroughly cleaned anytime between 10:00 and 5:00 at the high school parking lot. Tickets may be purchased from grade 13 history students all this week.



THE FORMER ACTON HIGH school and now part of the Robert Little school, the former Sidney Smith residence still preserves much of its character. Art teacher Bob Bateman urged students at the high school

to help preserve their heritage which is being replaced by structures of uniform shape and size that look like any other town.

A letter from Eden Mills

This is the second in a series of letters written by Miss Val Barrow relating her experience during five "delightful" years spent in Eden Mills. Miss Barrow is writing the series to show her appreciation to residents of the village.

Eden Mills, Ont.
15 June, 1965.

Dear May:

I was so excited when I wrote to you the other day that I didn't even tell you much about the village - what it looks like, I mean. But it really looks like a nice place to live.

On the way home to get packed up for the move, I took the time to drive around and have another look at the place. And I really am pleased.

There is a huge old stone chimney on the property - must have been a great deal higher when it was built - which was the fireplace for the first store and post office in the district. And there is also the remains of the foundation of the store - stone, of course, and about three feet high in places. It is all crumbling now, and something may have to be done about it.

Looking at the fireplace, which must have taken at least three-foot logs, one can imagine the men sitting on old nail kegs in front of the roaring fire in the winter, and gossiping away, looking up at the newcomers stamping their feet and shaking the snow off their coats at the doorway.

The valley was settled in 1827. There would have been log cabins to begin with, but there are a lot of stone houses now, and mine is reputed to be the oldest. There is a huge three-storey building just to the right of my house, down at the road, which is the present store and post office. It was occupied in 1874 with the business part on the ground floor and two apartments above it.

Right across the street from that is what was the old inn. The original part was stone, of course, with a wooden extension which has been torn down now. About in front of the store, the road swings right over a couple of bridges to cross the river and climb the opposite hill out of the river valley.

On our side, if the road had continued straight up the hill it would have gone right through the house - so that is how I can look right down the village.

Everything looks so nice right now, of course. June is such a lovely month. I wonder how it will be in the winter - but it is only about eight miles to work, and I'm used to country driving by now. But I should think they get much more freezing rain and bad road conditions in these parts than we do.

There are only four more houses up the road from me, two on the river bank, and two on my side of the road. One of these is at the same level as mine, but the other had been built nearer the road. Up at the back of the lot is an old split-rail fence, and beyond that just farm fields - so here I am virtually in the country yet part of the community. Ideal, I should think.

There's a magnificent double French purple lilac in full bloom at the front of the house, and up at the back the pale mauve and white lilac that mark the long-settled sites. I can hardly wait to move in.

Well, I'd better go and do a bit more packing. The movers come next Tuesday, and the time seems so short with so much to do.

Thanks for your last letter. Your garden sounds lovely - but then you have a green thumb, or an awful lot of drive and energy in that direction.

That's the only thing that worries me about this lot - it's large and living so near other people I'll have to keep it tidy - not just let it go like I did at the cottage.

Best love,
Val.

Photography fair specials

Winners of the Free Press special photography competition at the fall fair:

Jim Jennings first \$5; Tony Vos, Wendy Thomson, H. Haslett, seconds for \$2.50; Allan Green, H. Haslett, Ann Vos, Tony Vos, Wendy Thomson, Jim Jennings, other awards at \$1.

Miss M. Maxted resigning post

After serving as Halton County's Treasurer for 33 years Miss Margaret Maxted of Milton has asked to be relieved from the job by the end of the year.

County Council decided to accept her resignation and will have the responsibilities of the treasurer divided between the clerk and his assistant. Miss Maxted will be retained on a temporary basis following her retirement.

Rap MacKay Report own committee too

Members of Halton County Board of Education have expressed opposition to the MacKay Report on Religious Education and dissatisfaction with a report on the same topic by a committee appointed by the board a year ago.

Following a thorough debate at a meeting two weeks ago, members brought it back for a second look at Thursday's meeting in Oakville.

"I'm dissatisfied with our committee report. I was dissatisfied to see patriotism lumped with religion. Surely we can be patriotic without being religious," vice chairman Bill Priestner commented.

Too idealistic
Priestner charged the report as being "too idealistic" and wondered if the recommendations were possible to implement. He said, "I don't believe there is a place for formal religion in our schools."

Trustee Bruce Edwards added support to Priestner's claim about the report being "too idealistic". I think it is time we get down to real basic concepts," Edwards said.

Edwards termed the MacKay Report "hogwash" and said there was still a need for a harder look at the real needs.

Trustee Liberty Pease said he was glad to see the committee reject the MacKay Report in parts at least. He said he felt strongly against the MacKay

report and wondered if it wasn't fraud. He said the committee might have been stronger in their recommendations and noted they have pointed the way.

More than morals
Mr. Pease said he felt the MacKay Report had indicated morals and religion went hand in hand. He said there must be more to religion than a set of morals. "I can't get unduly perturbed about the removal of religion in the schools as it has been practiced and I don't feel our morals will drop around our ears because of it."

John Ronson suggested that no particular religion should be taught in the school because of a divisive effect it can have. He suggested a curriculum should be based on positive things and added debate could go on for nights on end without coming to a conclusion.

Activate committee

Members agreed to activate a committee to develop a curriculum within the guidelines of the board and approved in principle the first six recommendations of the report. The seventh and final recommendation suggested activating a committee for further study.

Recently the Minister of Education William Davis declared no courses in religious education will be offered as a credit course, however it could still be offered as an interest course.

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