



CENTENNIAL OR NO CENTENNIAL - KNOWING IT DOWN WAS ONLY A SUGGESTION

## Bill Smiley



All winter I've been laughing. Not wildly or out loud so that some people could do what they've wanted to for years — have me quietly put away.

No, it's just been a steady stream of assorted chuckles, snickers and utters, with an occasional giggle erupting when it poured rain around here in January.

I was laughing, for the first time in about four winters, at the snowmobilers and skiers.

Winter after winter I have sat, glowering inwardly, as the snowmobilers tried to outshout each other in their boisterous, boyish manner, each trying to tell a taller tale than the other about how he jumped the creek or went up a 90-degree slope with no hands, or some such rot.

Winter after winter, I've tried to keep the sour look off my face as the ski hounds burble their "in" talk about how many runs they made, chortle with glee every time there was a fresh fall of snow and brag about their brand new Schiessnaken eighty dollar ski boots.

For about two months, the winter of 1971-72 was known as "Smiley's Revenge". There was a little snow in December, but it was almost a green Christmas. There wasn't a snowbank worthy of skidding into on New Year's Eve. And the fine weather continued for weeks: lots of rain, high temperatures and virtually no snow.

"Let their snowmobiles sit there and rust", I whispered, barely able to restrain a guffaw. "Let their skis warp and their fancy boots remain unscuffed", I muttered, scarce able to hold back a peal of laughter.

It's not that I have anything personal against these mid-winter bores. Some of my best friends are snowmobilers, though I wouldn't want my daughter to marry one.

And I know some perfectly sensible people who think there is something ineffably enjoyable in sliding down a hill on a couple of inflated barrel staves. The genuine skier thinks nothing of spending ten or fifteen dollars on a Sunday's skiing, even if he has to cut his church givings to the bone.

And it's not jealousy or spite. Just because I have a rosy knee that would put me on crutches for two months if I had a fall is no reason to envy those who swoop down the hill like a bird.

Same with snowmobiling. I have a slight handicap there too. I can fly a plane and drive a car, if there are good mechanics around. But when it comes to small motors which stop running, all I can do is stand there and stare, shifting from one foot to the other.

It's embarrassing, but I'm being frank. It's all very well to talk about carburetors and pistons and fuel lines if you know what they are, where they are, and what to do if they aren't working.

I figure I'm lucky if I get the lawnmower started once out of three times, without summoning help. Thus, the only picture I can conjure with me and a snowmobile in it is a nightmare: the pair of us out in the woods, ten miles from nowhere, with the carburetors seized up or burned out or whatever it is they do.

No, I don't hate the people or the sports. I just hate snow with a deep and bitter loathing which must have some psychological explanation.

Did I wet my pants, as a small child, while playing in the snow? Did my parents, sick of my eternal wailing, throw me into a snowbank and hastily retrieve me?

I don't know the answer. But I do know that Smiley's Revenge has turned into Smiley's Folly.

As I write, I can't see the house across the street. It's snowing sea-gulls, horizontally, with a forty-mile wind gusting to sixty or seventy.

The skiers are smirking; the snowmobilers are laughing out loud. And I'm crying, deep inside. I knew it was a dream. But dream we must, or we are nothing. Some winter... Well, never mind.

Hand me that shovel, woman, and stand back — out of earshot!

## Premier does some shuffling . . .

Premier William Davis, following the example of his federal counterpart, shuffled his cabinet last week, producing some surprises. Probably the most surprising appointment was a disappointment—moving popular George Kerr from his post as Minister of the Environment to take over the Colleges and Universities portfolio.

We don't know whether Mr. Kerr took the new post willingly, or with reluctance, but he has established a solid reputation as the province's pollution policeman. Now the experience will go to naught. In his place we have James Auld who was moved from Public Works, who in turn will be replaced by capable Jim Snow who previously was a minister without

a portfolio. The Globe and Mail wonders whether Mr. Davis recognizing some unsuspected qualities in Mr. Auld, moved Mr. Kerr over to Colleges and Universities to untangle the mess there with his adroit lance. These are answers, of course, which only Mr. Davis can supply.

The rumors are more juicy. We are told Mr. Kerr could not get along with Bert Lawrence, one of Mr. Davis' new super ministers, who will set policy for the government. We have also been told that Mr. Kerr was too popular in his Environment post, that Mr. Davis could brook no challenge to his image as Tory leader.

Perhaps Mr. Kerr was transferred

to the Colleges and Universities post because of the experience he chafed up in the fight to preserve the environment. The Wright Commission report on post-secondary education in the province will likely require careful, measured thinking and public statements. George Kerr has never been one to issue statements without doing a lot of careful research and thinking.

As one of Mr. Kerr's constituents we'd like to think his presence is needed more in the new portfolio than in the Department of the Environment, however, we doubt it, and look for other reasons for the shuffle.

Maybe it is clearly a case of old faces in new places, as Opposition Leader Robert Nixon claims.

## Editorial notes . . .

The Rockwood Trail Riders' bulletin "Hoof Prints" contained the following in the last issue: "A farmer bought a new car after spending much time pricing them. A few days later the dealer who sold the car appeared at the farm to buy a cow. The farmer wrote out and handed this list to the dealer:

Basic cow \$200, two-tone exterior \$45, extra stomach \$75, produce storage compartment \$60, dispensers (4 at \$10) \$40, genuine cowhide upholstery \$125, automatic swatter \$35, dual horns \$15. Total plus tax and delivery—\$595.

Sometimes a person has to put things off until tomorrow to get done what they have put off from yesterday.

Ever think of how stress placed on a word may completely change its meaning. Consider the simple sentence, "I never said he stole money." Read it aloud and emphasize the words in capitals:

I never said he stole money.  
I NEVER said he stole money.  
I never SAID he stole money.  
I never said HE stole money.

I never said he STOLE money.  
I never said he stole MONEY.

Mayor Bill Smith of Georgetown thinks environmental factors outweigh benefits any airport might create in his area and plumps for the area at the junction of Highways 8 and 5 as the site for the new jetport. His sentiments are shared by Halton East MPP Jim Snow.

Dropping the Lord's Prayer from county council meetings is another sign of the secularization of community affairs. In lieu of the councillors praying for themselves, we would suggest that everyone now pray for them.

The superintendent and work staff of the town deserve a special word of praise for their work cleaning the streets during the Thursday-Friday snowfall and ensuing blizzard. Their constant vigilance kept traffic moving. The business section was completely cleaned when stores opened Friday morning despite blustery winds that filled in almost as fast as drifts were cleared.

## Take time for these

Take time for 10 things —

1. Take time to Work—it is the price of success.
2. Take time to Think—it is the source of power.
3. Take time to Play—it is the secret of youth.
4. Take time to Read—it is the foundation of knowledge.
5. Take time to Worship—it is the highway of reverence and washes the dust of earth from our eyes.
6. Take time to Help and Enjoy Friends—it is the source of happiness.
7. Take time to Love—it is the one sacrament of life.
8. Take time to Dream—it hitches the soul to the stars.
9. Take time to Laugh—it is the singing that helps with life's loads.
10. Take time to Plan—it is the secret of being able to have time to take time for the first nine things.



by Hartley Coles

## COLES' SLAW

Last week we left you just after the Sunward docked in the harbor at Nassau, in the Bahamas, a berth she shared with hundreds of other vessels including shrimp boats, sailing craft from the other islands and a couple of other passenger liners, one on a world cruise from South Africa.

We no sooner had tied to the dock when some teenage boys, clad in bathing trunks, appeared on board, offering to jump the 50 or 60 feet from the deck into the shimmering water for 50c, an offer which was later lowered to a quarter. They took up a collection, popped the coins—and bills—into their mouths and standing atop the rail jackknifed into the harbor water.

Typical tourists, we stood with mouths open and threw them more shekels over the side, which they promptly dived for at the harbor bottom, which could be seen easily in the crystal clear water.

We were some of the first off the ship, touring Nassau on foot, a prodigious accomplishment, which we never completed because of time and distance, and also because funds were getting low. This meant popping into the city banks, which turned out to be nearly all Canadian, and offering to identify ourselves if the managers would allow us some money.

Charlie had no problems. He came equipped with a well known card which produces almost instant money. But the only collateral I had with me were my true blue Canadian eyes which turned out to be green. This didn't cut much ice with the manager at the Nassau Bank of Montreal until I produced press credentials. Then he decided to take a chance on my honesty and the fact I had my wife in tow. (Later he disclosed he came from Kitchener and knew about Acton.)

Presto—one name on a pad and we had enough money to work our way home without doing dishes. This left me with a new respect for banks which I have since passed on to the local branch manager, by arranging another loan as soon as we arrived home.

Nassau? I liked the policemen directing traffic under an umbrella in the middle of the street, gracefully waving white gloved hands in flowing signals to the left bearing traffic. Just as in the British Isles, traffic in the Bahamas stays on the left when roads are wide enough. In many instances there is only enough room for one car and the problem doesn't exist.

Our wives liked the straw market, which catered almost specifically to tourists but we found shopping expensive. Almost all items in Nassau come from somewhere else. Shipping charges made inflated prices.

To make sure we saw most of the island we hired a taxi limousine and toured the city, and island, for two hours while driver Percy Moss charmed us with stories about the city. He showed us the prime minister's modest bungalow where a sentry stood outside with the children, the governor general's regal residence where the Queen's representative lives, the suburbs and some of the beaches where the real people of the island live.

Children were going home from school in bright uniforms which identify schools, and occasionally we saw ladies walking along with parcels on their heads, in Caribbean style.

The people of the island are religious and Mr. Moss assured us the mainly black

population was proud of their heritage and determined to make good when they finally won their independence from Britain.

Trouble? Some, but only from a few malcontents, he assured us.

A trip to Nassau isn't complete without a visit to the Casino where slot machines and gaming tables compete with a gigantic semi-nude stage show and bar, for the tourist dollar. The casino has lush knee deep carpeting hushing the sound of silver dollars and other coins disappearing into the jaws of the one armed bandits.

Mini-skirted girls pull small wagons loaded with bags of silver dollars around the floor to the astonishment of tourists and blasé acceptance by international gamblers crowded around roulette and other tables.

The stage show is much like the mammoth extravaganza seen at the Radio City Music Hall in New York, except the girls have less on—if you can believe it. Some obviously belonged to Women's Lib since they had no covering where women usually wear bras.

This curious display of nudity was entirely unlike the actions of the ordinary people of the island who dress very modestly, and well, even in the hottest hours of the day.

We often remarked on the modest dress of girls and ladies through the southern United States and this was also true of Nassau. Those who showed lots of flesh usually turned out to be tourists. The native Nassauans saved their brief attire for the beaches.

## 20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, February 14, 1951.

Knox church was filled to capacity when organizations, school children, and citizens assembled in tribute to the late King George VI. It was an appropriate and very impressive service arranged by the Ministerial Association. Mayor B. D. Rachlin stated the purpose of the gathering and paid tribute to our late sovereign. Ministers taking part were Rev. R. H. Armstrong, Pastor D. B. Shuter, Rev. E. A. Curry and Venerable Archdeacon Mackintosh.

Venerable Archdeacon Mackintosh gave the address and said it was the fourth memorial service for a ruling monarch in which he had taken part, for Queen Victoria, Edward VII, George V and George VI. Reeve Hargrave read a resolution of sympathy and loyalty of the people of Acton which was forwarded by wire to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. Mr. E. A. Hansen presided at the organ and the choir was composed of members of Acton churches.

Places of business and the town office were closed for two hours and industries stopped for a brief silence. Schools were closed all day.

Wm. Mattocks, Legion president, was in charge of the parade to the church.

Sybil Bennett was chosen Progressive Conservative candidate for Halton at a convention in Milton town hall.

Singing of the national anthem now sounds strange.

Bob Rumley broke a bone in his ankle playing hockey. Mrs. Hazel Leishman broke her wrist in a fall down stairs.

## 50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, February 9, 1922.

It is a long time since anything has stirred up the people of Nassagaweya so much as the report of the sale by bootleggers of whisky at the dance at Brookville on the sixth of January, the presence of intoxicated persons there and the subsequent trial. It was impossible to secure witnesses who would help the authorities clear up the disgraceful matter and cases were dismissed. However, the sentiment of

the right-thinking people of Nassagaweya is with the authorities in their efforts to clean up the drink traffic in this township.

St. Alban's parish hall was the scene of a memorable gathering on Monday night when a Fathers and Sons supper was held. The rector emphasized strongly the need of the attendance and support of the men and his remarks on the prevailing conditions in the parish and what they might be if all members attended and supported the church were received with profound interest. Mr. Baugh says the future of St. Alban's is very bright indeed. The programme included toast to Our King by Matt Tyler, responded to by Mr. Cutts; our church proposed by J. Ewing, responded to by Venerable Archdeacon MacIntosh; Our Parish, Fred Ewing and the rector; Brotherhood of St. Andrew by Edw. Clifford by Fred Ray and Mr. McCleary.

Dance in the town hall tonight after the ice carnival. Proceeds toward new floor in town hall. Music by Mason's Orchestra.

The pupils who stood the highest: Laura Murray, John Gibbons, Annie Dunn, Stanley Mackie, John Mann, Stewart Lasby, Max

Starkman, William Tyler, Marjorie Switzer, Rose Waterhouse, Isabel Lantz, Ivy Holmes, Hazel Coxe, Fred Waterhouse, Mildred Hollinger, Audrey Gervais, Isabel Smith, Helen Ostrander, Marjory Garden, Charles Holmes, Winnie Brewer, Adabel Brown, Frank Winter, Cathleen Cook, Jack Savage, Ross Hunter, Hazel Hillman, Gordon Hansen, Alex MacIntosh, Doris Holloway.

## 75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, February 18, 1897.

A couple of our esteemed young people — Mr. George Agnew and Miss Jessie Bescoy — went quietly to Guelph last Thursday evening and were united in the bonds of wedlock. The bride was attended by Miss Nellie Hynds and the groom was supported by Mr. Murray McDonald. The happy young couple will take up residence in the cottage on Willow St. next to the town hall where they will receive their numerous friends.

With the first frost last fall Miss Lottie Ebbage, the 14-year-old daughter of Mr. Thomas Ebbage, met with an accident while at play by which her left leg was fractured. She has been confined to bed almost continuously until last week when she was sufficiently recovered to get about. Last Wednesday she went sleigh riding and in the frolic one of her girl friends fell against her and the limb was again fractured. She surely is the child of misfortune, this being the third fracture within a year or so. The nursing entailed is a severe strain upon the mother and other members of the family.

The visit last week of the four Hill brothers—all of whom are successful photo artists—to their boyhood home, recalls the fact that the studio here has been very prolific in turning out artists who are a credit to the profession. The studio was established in 1873 by Mr. J. G. Hill, now proprietor of a profitable business in Toledo, Ohio. Mr. H. Ramshaw, the present owner, received his inspiration here. The list of graduates, (listed) proves verily the Canadian country boys with their general and thorough country tuition and wholesome ideas of honest service invariably go to the top in the cities to which they migrate.

The anniversary tea-meeting in the congregational church on Swackhamer's hill was an unqualified success. The sumptuous tea attested to the culinary ability of the ladies of Churchill Section.

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