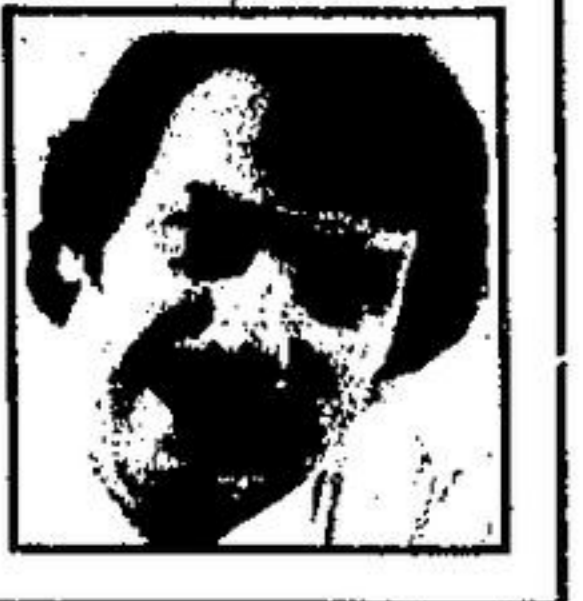


Collison says

I'm not building recreation empire

Ottawa Report

By Dr. Frank Philbrook
HALTON MP



Recreation Director Doug Collison

"Just trying to provide services people want"

"We certainly aren't building an empire. We're just trying to provide the services people tell us they want."

Halton Hills recreation director Doug Collison said in an interview last week.

Collison, who has been the target of charges of "empires building" the last couple of months, said his department is building for the town "what residents are demanding."

He added his staff is just "listening to people."

He said he thinks the town has made great strides in the last few years in doing a better job at providing an "essential service."

"Recreation is an essential need. Just look at labor agreements these days. Unions are going for higher wages and a shorter work week. When people don't have anything constructive to do with their leisure time, laziness sets in and decay in society quickly follows," Collison explained.

He said recreation is especially important in times of high unemployment.

Recreation should continue to grow in importance for people as the years go by, he maintains. Looking ahead to the next 20 to 30 years, automation will mean "it will be a privilege to work and most people will have a lot of time on their hands. The government will be forced to step in and subsidize activities to keep people busy."

Collison, who became Georgetown's recreation director in 1970 and Halton Hills' first recreation director in 1974, said now the town is finally getting some of the recreational facilities it has been "sadly lacking."

He cited the new arena in Georgetown and new indoor pools in Acton and Georgetown as some of the things which have been missing in Halton Hills for many years.

While the town has moved ahead by leaps and bounds by building these three new facilities the recreation development jobs far from over he declared.

Collison pointed out the recreation situation in Halton Hills will vastly improve when the new Georgetown arena grounds are fully developed with tennis courts, a new ball diamond and a soccer field. Even then the town may need more fields for soccer and baseball.

Looking ahead 10 or 20 years, with a possible population of around 50,000 people in Halton Hills, Collison said he envisions the entire Silver Creek area of the town being one big park with areas set aside for bike riding, walking and hiking, nature preservation and a variety of outdoor activities.

Another project might be a theatre hall because he

thinks there is a lot of talent in Halton Hills and it needs a facility like a theatre hall to bring it out.

He also thinks a population of about 50,000 people would necessitate a fourth arena. In addition Collison said his department has had requests to build a ski hill.

Collison said he thought whatever recreation development materializes in the years ahead it will have to be planned in conjunction with various service groups in the community.

"There are lots of things we could do for recreation in this town but you have to keep cost in mind all the time. In the future we will have to move more in the direction of cultural activities and away from athletics," Collison stated.

He continued the town has just spent over \$1 1/2 million on athletic facilities but "for the person who doesn't skate or swim there won't be any benefits to reap," Collison said in explaining the need for more culturally oriented facilities.

He pointed out sports is only one-fifth of recreation and that really recreation was anything people do in their leisure time which is the reason the town helps run craft courses and clubs.

"I'm not saying the public sector has to supply all these things. The private sector, groups like the Y, can provide a lot of these things and we simply try to coordinate our activities with theirs. Because of costs there is no way the town can supply all the things people want but the number and kinds of facilities that could be provided are unlimited," Collison explained.

He believes firmly that those who are participating in town operated recreation activities should help with the financial burden.

Collison said regional government has its advantages and drawbacks as far as recreation goes.

He noted one problem for him has been just getting to know about recreation needs in Acton and Esquesing and the difficulty in spreading things out evenly. The recreation director added his department didn't have the staff, until recently, to adequately operate

recreation programs evenly throughout Halton Hills.

"We are one town and funds aren't divided up anymore so we have to try all the time to make sure everything is spread out equally and everyone gets equal service. It is hard to justify one activity rate in Acton and another in Georgetown so we are moving towards standardized rates throughout the town," he pointed out.

Another problem of regional government was that since the town is bigger and his department is bigger, more money is needed. He added that he "doesn't like it but it happens."

Among the assets are the town is bigger and there is more money available to be shared and co-ordinated.

He cited the fact the town now has available open space for recreational development in Esquesing as a strong point for regional government and added his department is looking at Esquesing as the future home for many forms of outdoor sports and activities in years to come.

Collison was quick to point out that both the assets and drawbacks would have come with amalgamation of the three former municipalities and couldn't really be credited or blamed on regional government. He said there were few things the region itself took over as far as recreation was concerned, he thought the biggest problem the region poses for his department is it slows down budgeting process.

He finds it regrettable that because of regional government his job has shifted from running recreation programs to administering a large department. Collison described the first year of regional government as "frustrating" for him and suggested things were a lot simpler for his department when he served only Georgetown.

Collison, who is 33 years old, first became involved in recreation as a playground leader when he was a teenager living in Agincourt. Later he became active in running curling and golf

founders of WI, passed away in 1974 leaving a bequest of \$5,000 to the Erland Lee Homestead committee. WI week will be held June 9 to 13 at the Lee Homestead

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As I write this letter, I understand that Finance Minister John Turner is about to announce the date on which he will bring his new budget to Parliament. Of course no one but the finance minister and his most senior advisors has any knowledge of what will be in that budget.

I do, however, share the feelings of many constituents I have talked with in the last couple of weeks that Mr. Turner will continue with a moderate fiscal approach aimed at maintaining a balance between inflationary and recessionary pressures.

The consensus I get from those I've talked with throughout the Halton riding seems to be that business needs some stimulation in order to create jobs, but not too much stimulation that it causes undue inflationary pressure.

I do not envy the finance minister his important task. As I wrote in this column last week, Canada has enjoyed a better state of economic affairs than most countries, especially our major trading partners, but that is partly because we have tread cautiously between the opposing forces of inflation and recession.

The world economic scene has improved somewhat since the federal budget of last November but still calls for moderate fiscal moves aimed at specific problem areas such as unemployment.

I plan to make my first formal speech in Parliament after the budget is brought in. I was heading the Canadian delegation to the Commonwealth Medical Conference in Ceylon at the time of the last budget debate and so missed my opportunity at that time. I plan to speak on a number of social and economic issues, but I will say more about that when the time comes.

At Homeowd he worked with people who had drug and alcohol problems and set up a variety of recreation programs ranging from golf and baseball to sewing and bridge for patients.

"These people were faced with a lot of enforced leisure time and we tried to develop a community-like recreation program for them. A lot of people found it difficult to handle social contacts, so we worked to help them solve this problem," he explained.

After leaving Homeowd he went to Brampton, where he worked in municipal recreation for five months, before joining the recreation department of Mississauga for two years.

In both Brampton and Mississauga he worked with volunteer groups in setting up a variety of different recreation programs including various sports, yoga, fitness programs and pottery, using volunteers as much as possible. In addition I was looking forward to developing facilities and programs since Georgetown hadn't had a recreation director in many years," he stated.

Collison noted he took a cut in pay coming to Georgetown but thought it would be a great challenge. "It has certainly proved to be a big challenge. I've made lots of mistakes and learned from them. Sometimes I wonder if I should have left Mississauga. There you were just a cog in a big machine and really the money was too good."

In Mississauga there wasn't any chance for me to deal with council which is another reason why I came here," he concluded.

provided home ownership grants three times larger than the federal government was prepared to give.

"Bill Davis went to the federal-provincial conference on fuel prices and presented a strong defence for the people of the province who use these products," he said. "In addition he has brought down tough conflict of interest legislation while the federal government was just a smoke screen."

Mr. Hearty also called the new election financing regulations just passed by the province "one of the pioneer pieces of legislation."

The young member sharply attacked the provincial Liberals for their lack of policy and said that there was no question about where the New Democratic Party stands.

"People are moving to the right and saying it is time for hard work and thrift," Mr. Hearty said. "That is my message to both provincial and federal Progressive Conservatives."

Need leadership (Guest speaker Perrin Beatty, MP for Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo called on the new organization to pull together to elect a Progressive Conservative government in Ontario. He warned that it would be a bad thing for Ontario if a "Liberal puppet" for the federal government is elected in Ontario.) He compared what he called strong Davis leadership here in Ontario to what he sees as Quebec Liberals bowing to the power of a federal Liberal government not prepared to take action against the problems of the times.

To support his statement that people in Ontario have strong leadership the MP reminded the party followers that the Davis government

provided home ownership grants three times larger than the federal government was prepared to give.

"People are moving to the right and saying it is time for hard work and thrift," Mr. Hearty said. "That is my message to both provincial and federal Progressive Conservatives."

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Women's Year WI annual theme

By Mrs. H. Wilson
Halton District Women's Institute held the 74th district annual meeting in St. Paul's United Church, Milton on Wednesday, May 21 with Nelson W.I. as host branch.

International Women's Year was the theme for the day. Welcome was given by Mrs. F. Hadley and Mrs. G. McCormick who wished the 146 women an enjoyable and profitable day. Mrs. M. Reid, provincial board director, was in charge of the ratification ceremony. Mrs. Doris Lawson gave the auditor's report and complimented the treasurer on her book-keeping.

The president, Mrs. L. Jamieson, reported attending 4-H Club days, the plowmen's banquet, presenting scholarships and bursaries, as well as all the regular work of a WI president. She met many new friends and came to know many new faces.

Announcements
Mrs. Ann Carmichael, on behalf of the Silverwood Branch, presented an easel to the district in memory of Mrs. George Henderson who passed away while in office as provincial board director. The easel will hold the flags and a picture of one of the founders Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless.

The standing committee reports were given with Mrs. H. Wilson acting as moderator. Each committee report was given but some branches still let their district down by not sending their reports.

The bursary committee reported that Ann McClure of Acton was the winner of the Ethel Chapman scholarship. Susan Jamieson of Ballinacra and David Alexander of Georgetown were the bursary winners. A book of photos and information on past winners was presented by the committee.

Tweedsmuir history
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Asking \$22,900. Call Tom Ormesher 855-4439 or office 416-878-2095. 86d4

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