



I've been having a love affair for fifteen years. A glorious enthusiastic affair with the writing of H. Gordon Green, one of Canada's most valuable authors.

Why he isn't a national institution, I'll never know, unless he wants it that way. He's written masses of books, articles, and stories, worked for the Montreal Star, edited the Family Herald, broadcast his own syndicated radio column, "The Old Cynic" for years, won awards and medals for his work and his pioneering in farming.

What a lot of man to pack into a well lived, stocky body thatched with horse hair and chimneyed by a well chewed pipe.

New book from Erin

Gordon has a new book out produced right in our neck of the woods, Erin. The author was raised in Arthur but now lives in Ormstown, south-east of Montreal. (Only the Lord knows why he chose to leave southern Ontario).

Corey Herrington, of Herrington Publishing and Printing, has pulled his second Green book off his presses. A couple of years ago, the pair published "God and the Rooster", a collection of Green's poultry spiced writings in honor of the feather fancy, the hobby or raising exhibition poultry of which Green is an enthusiast and Herrington is publisher of the national "Fancy" newspaper.

The partnership must have worked because "With My Sock Feet on the Oven Door," a collection of Gordon's radiocolumns is well worth the five dollar asking price.

Green has also birthed a new radio program airing right now over Guelph FM radio. Listen to CKLA (106.1 on your dial) at 9.15 on a Wednesday evening to hear H. Gordon Green's "Almanac". His "Old Cynic" program airs daily on CJOY at noon and in the early morning between milking and cleaning the stable, (around 6.15 a.m.).

"Dirty old man" superior

As an avid reader I've been influenced by many writers from Khalil Gibran, Richard Bach, and Farley Mowat to Erica Jong and Louisa May Alcott. But Gordon Green is my favorite.

His thoughts on rural life, farming and politics tickle my fancy and guarantee a raucous belly-laugh of agreement.

In fact, I can become quite a bore on the subject. Most of my friends have been given at least one of his books and lent many more. It's hard for me to keep track of his books, they're spread all over the countryside.

One friend, on receiving the "Diary of a Dirty Old Man" (my all time favorite), reacted the way I hoped she would to the sheer beauty of the love story. Two days later she phoned me and said,

"Next Christmas can I have H. Gordon Green?"

Green thoughts for spring

Gordon Green, an honest gentleman in an age when honesty is akin to lack of ambition and as great a sin. An honest man who has learned, not only to be honest with others but to be brutally honest with himself.

Gordon Green on marriage: "Men and women are supposed to argue, and one of the reasons why they get married is so they won't have to argue with strangers."

On horses: "If you've never seen a 2000 pound draft mare it will be difficult for you to imagine how any hide can be so full of horse."

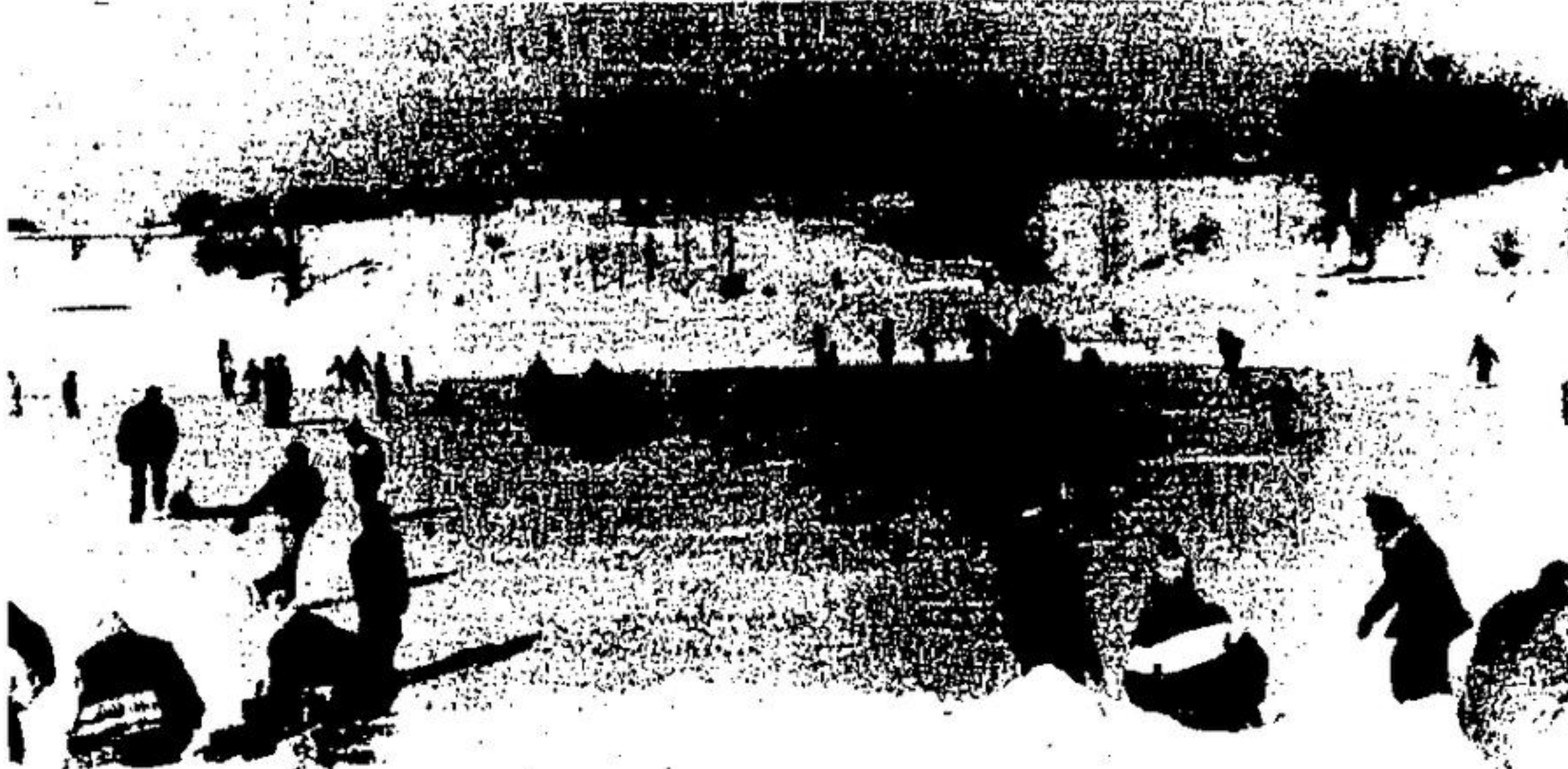
On humor: "...most farmer's humor is too truthful to print."

On the religion of farming: "Yet I cannot escape the belief that man is not only designed to wrestle with God himself, but on God's own fields, and under whatever skies God sees fit to provide."

On Heaven: "My father is still living and still farming and sometime I must try to extract a confession of faith from him. But I am quite sure that his idea of Heaven is a place where it is not only eternally morning, but where it is good farmland as well."

His writing style is gutsy. When he's got something to say he doesn't pull any punches but he sees the world with perceptive humor.

If you're not familiar with Gordon Green, you'll be a guaranteed fan after reading one of his books. He didn't pay me to write this either.



IT WAS A GREAT CHANCE to do some skating at the winter carnival Sunday

Local birds easily spotted in each of four seasons

District bird watcher Jeff Harvey writes this week about local birds, season by season.

by Jeff Harvey

Winter

Winter, as far as bird-watching goes, is the least productive season, and obviously so. Most summer residents have moved far south, but there is still a fair population of birds which are residents: these birds do not migrate, but stay with us all year long. Among these are the Mallard Ducks on Fairy Lake, Acton, together with some Whistling Swans and Canada Geese which also stay on the unfrozen parts of the lake.

Other hardy northerners which brave our northern climes (and may be seen at bird feeders) are the beautiful Cardinal, Black-Capped Chickadee, Tree Sparrow, Dark-Eyed Junco, and the common Starling.

At our feeder we have had these plus Downy and Hairy

Woodpeckers, White-Breasted Nuthatch, Mourning Dove, Cowbird, Yellow-Rumped Warbler, Snow Bunting, Common Redpoll, American Goldfinch, and even a Sharp-Shinned Hawk, which was looking for small birds to feed on.

Also, you may or may not notice hoards of large yellow birds which sweep over. These are northern Evening Grosbeaks which come down from Northern Ontario every year.

Spring

By the end of March, many birds have started the long trip from the south northward, as warmer temperatures are being experienced here.

As the thermometer continues this upward climb, and the snows dwindle, birds such as robins and red-winged blackbirds can easily be seen on any late March morning. Flocks of these blackbirds occasionally blacken trees the birds are roosting in on the long trip northward.

As we progress into April, many more birds arrive. The spring chorus has begun once again!

Often woodlots are ringing with the songs of the many arriving species. As ponds and lakes melt, many types of waterfowl find easy resting spots. Yet the bulk of the migrating birds have not even arrived yet. By late April the butterflies of the bird world, the wood warblers, are popping up in various parts of the countryside. By June all of these small, colourful birds are here to nest. Among them are some extremely rare warblers, one of which is known only to nest within the Acton-Milton area (north of the Lake Erie shoreline). This small (four inch long) bird is the Blue-Winged Warbler. There are several other comparatively rare birds which nest within this area, and can be seen quite frequently locally provided you look hard enough in the right places.

Within this region, the best places are:

(a) Speyside Escarpment Forest, south of Speyside, via Highway 25 to No. 15 Side Road. This whole area is excellent from mid April to the end of June.

(b) Milton Heights-Rattlesnake Point, northeast of Campbellville. Same notation as above.

(c) Acton Swamp-Fairy Lake. From late March through May and from early September till late October there is an abundance of waterfowl to be seen.

(d) Hilton Falls complex. Found a mile south of Speyside (along a dead end road), this area, which extends as far south as the Guelph Line (No. 3 Side Road, paved, 3 miles north of Campbellville) is entirely forested and is the best area for rare songbirds which are found locally from mid-May through August. There are several government owned woodland tracts (1,000 plus acres) and these are open to the public. There are walking trails which run through the heavily forested region.

(e) Bruce Trail. This very famous nature trail runs right along the Niagara Escarpment and is quite good for locating migrating woodland species in the spring.

Summer
The birds which are found within Halton's boundaries in summer are the same as those in the spring.

Fall
Many birds which winter in the tropics migrate here as late as June and begin to move south as early as mid-July (Cerulean Warbler, for example). However, the height of fall migration does not occur till early October, and at this time it is best to avoid the forests and concentrate on the smaller woodlots (for woodland birds).

Waterfowl is often abundant in large ponds and lakes at this time, so don't overlook these areas. Fairy Lake and Kelso Lake (just south of 401 Hwy.) are very good places to concentrate your search for the waterbirds such as ducks, grebes, and geese.

Estimate 10,000 at region winter carnival

An estimated 10,000 people took advantage of ideal weather conditions to participate in the second annual Halton Regional Winter Carnival held at Kelso Conservation Area Sunday.

Organizers acknowledged it is difficult to come up with an accurate estimate of how many people attended. But Bill Warwick of the Halton Region Conservation Authority said calculations indicated that some 7,000 people parked in and around the park.

Organizers were excited about the excellent turnout and how smoothly the large crowd was handled. People assigned to parking and traffic flow found it difficult to accommodate the great flood of people that arrived between 1 and 2 p.m.

Aside from parking and traffic flow, plans were executed without a hitch. The available parking in the park filled quickly and the overflow filled on both sides of the road from the gatehouse right back to the Milton Heights corner and the other cars were channelled into the parking lot at the Ontario Agricultural Museum.

Susan Clark of the Oakville Recreation Department said three buses made a total of between 15 and 20 trips from Milton Mall to the park.

Warwick noted the estimate of 10,000 might be a bit high, but he indicated it isn't far off the mark.

A pancake and sausage brunch was set on at one end of the park by the Oakville Gun and Rod Gun Club while Milton Firefighters Auxiliary served hot chili at the other end. Both ran out early in the day.

Drinks and cakes were served during the day at the Halton Regional Museum and they, too, ran out of food at one point.

Museum tours, a dog sled team demonstration, a winter camping demonstration and helicopter rides got underway at 11 a.m. and the family competitive events started at 1 p.m. and continued throughout the day.

In planning the event, organizers placed heavy emphasis on family participation. Skiing, skating, and toboggan races were well

supported as were donut eating competitions and family snow sculpturing. A log sawing competition was held as well.

The event drew a heavy response from outside as well as inside the region with many people coming from Mississauga and Toronto and some from as far away as Willowdale and Scarborough.

A spokesman for Milton Parks and Recreation, Karen Uhrny said she was pleased with the number of families that turned out.

She suggested the event would probably continue and become an annual event, but indicated the festival wouldn't likely be expanded to two days for at least another year.

Conservation Authority employees worked Friday night and all day Saturday flooding the pond in preparation for family skating and skating races.

"It was a really terrific day", Warwick commented. "Any time when you can spend eight hours on the site and not hear complaints (other than parking) you know things must have been done right. People were smiling. They were happy and it was really great," he said.

"We'd like to have Burlington take part. We're trying to run a regional carnival and you can't really do that with one community missing."

"We learned a lot this year, and last year. You have to build on your experience and develop a level of expertise."

A spokesperson from Halton Hills recreation department, Anne Pickering said she was very pleased and would recommend continued participation on the basis of the program itself. But she noted a final recommendation to Halton Hills Council concerning participation next year would depend partially on an assessment of participation by Halton Hills people.

Museum Curator Erla Brittain said she was ab-

solutely thrilled and the Friends of the Museum were astounded.

"They never anticipated the crowd and they ran out of food at 2 p.m. They say that'll never happen again."

"They just never anticipated the crowd. It was a terrific way to introduce people to the museum. Now they know where it is and they'll come back in the warmer weather. It was just a terrific day".

Mayors Don Gordon of Milton and Harry Barrett of Oakville and HRCA Chairman Brock Harris were in attendance and presented prizes to winners of competitive events.

Barrett said it was a good show. "I was amazed at the number of people walking in. They had a good time. There were a lot of people from Oakville that I saw. It was a good chance to relax and get together... really good for families."

14,000 to come-along

Fourteen thousand people of all ages have visited the Terra Cotta Conservation Area since Christmas to ski, snowshoe, skate or "do their own thing" in the snowy forest.

The area has become so popular that facilities are used almost to capacity and those wishing to rent skis are arriving earlier and earlier on weekend mornings.

The winter activities at Terra Cotta will continue into March as long as the snow stays.

The area will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, depending on the weather. The gate fee is \$2.00 per car or a 1978 season's pass available at the gate.

Warm-up areas offer free movies and hot food and drinks are available. Horse drawn sleigh rides and skating are other activities for both children and adults.

HRCA refuses to cut budget

The Halton Region Conservation Authority (HRCA) has rejected regional council's demand that the authority cut its 1978 budget.

Last week HRCA endorsed its executive committee's recommendation to stick with the original budget proposal

region had asked the authority to reduce the 1978 administration budget to a five per cent increase over the 1977 budget from a 6.7 per cent increase. It also asked for a \$75,000 cut from the 1978 conservation areas capital development budget.

Boat race starts at Cheltenham

The route of the Crazy Boat Race, April 1, has been changed. This year the boats of all types will assemble at Cheltenham, come down the Credit River and end at the Glen ball park.

This means portaging around the paper mill dam, a hazard in the past, will not be necessary.

News letter from Chamber

The Chamber of Commerce now has a news letter which goes out to members. The letter lists committees, plans and upcoming dates for social events.

The obstacle course will be set up at the 10th Line bridge, the same spot the race has started in previous years.

Jaycee groups from many different areas are planning to try their luck on the river, and hope service clubs will join in the fun. Jaycee Larry Nichol, himself a merchant, hopes others will use the race as a method of advertising.

The wind-up dance at the Way Jay Club Saturday night, where awards will be presented, will feature Rocking Horse.

Georgetown Jaycees plan to navigate the course in a bathtub with Snoopy at the helm.

Ski expansion

Further delays with a new triple-chair ski lift at Glen Eden ski slopes, scheduled to open in time for Sunday's Halton Regional Winter Carnival, are causing embarrassment for officials at Halton Region Conservation Authority.

Bill Warwick, Conservation spokesman, said he would make no comment on the delay, noting only "that I am not at all happy with the company."


"Skyway Engineering has told me previous dates when the chair lift would be opened, and it only embarrasses me each time they fail to complete by the date."

A spokesman for Skyway Engineering Co. blamed the

delay on a parts hold up. "The chairs for the lift are being built by another company, and they let us down, and we had to build them ourselves," he stated. He added that the entire project "has been behind."

The lift is now expected to be finished by Wednesday (Feb. 22) or Thursday, he said.

The \$400,000 Glen Eden expansion including an additional run, an extension to the present ski chalet and a snow grooming tractor began early fall.




RED CROSS INFORMATION SHEETS

March is Red Cross Campaign-for-Funds month. Halton Hills residents are advised by the Red Cross to keep the "Information Sheet 1978", delivered by mail, handy by the phone. These sheets list all available Red Cross services and their phone numbers. Acton-district residents, business, professionals and industry, canvassed by mail, are asked to please make a donation (with address given for receipt) to Red Cross, c/o Bank of Nova Scotia, Acton. If not canvassed by March 18th, please send in your donation.

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