

Hope is restored

The meaning of life... the meaning of death. The hope that is revived every spring, and every Easter, will bring people of the Christian faith together in thoughts this weekend.

Frederik Kaan writes:

We meet you, O Christ, in many a guise;
Your image we see in simple and wise,
You live in a palace, exist in a shack.
We see you, the gardener, a tree on your back.

In millions alive, away and abroad,
Involved in our life you live down the road.
Imprisoned in systems you long to be free.
We see you, Lord Jesus, stilling your tree.

We hear you, O man, in agony cry.
For freedom you march, in riots you die.
Your face in the papers we read and we see.
The tree must be planted by human decree.

Your choice to be made at one with the earth;
The dark of the grave prepares for your birth.
Your death is your rising, creative your word;
The tree springs to life and hope is restored.

Free Press Editorial Page

Lessons of the Garden Tomb

by Rev. Chuck Beaton
Trinity United Church

One of the loveliest places in Jerusalem is the Garden Tomb. Beautifully kept with flowers, shrubs and trees, it is acknowledged as one of the likely sites of the resurrection.

On a Sunday morning, five years ago, two friends and I attended a worship service there. I was able to find a secluded bench near the back of the garden. From this position I could see the skull-shaped cliff, known as Gordon's Calvary, rising dramatically beyond the garden. I could well envision three crosses against the sky, hear the sound of the hammers, the weeping of the mourners and the groans of the dying.

Through the trees beyond the congregation, I could see a small dark opening in the limestone rock, which looked like the tomb itself. My mind wandered back to that first Easter morning, when in the dim light two women came to this place, to properly anoint Jesus' body for burial. There had not been time to do it before.

As they came they were worried about how they would move the huge stone which sealed the tomb. It was an obstacle they knew they must contend with and they weren't looking forward to it. When they arrived to their surprise and delight the stone had already been pushed aside. What they had anticipated as an obstacle turned out not to be one.

So often we worry about obstacles in our lives. We are frightened and paralyzed by them. Easter comes to us with the assurance that the things which you see as horrendous obstacles blocking your life will be removed. Go in faith. Do what needs to be done, and the Lord your God, who moved the stone from the tomb and raised our Lord from death, will go before you. Obstacles will no longer be obstacles.

Then I could see in my mind's eye the two Marys peeking timidly into the tomb. They went in. Then

they came out, saddened and confused. Jesus was not there. They were certain that the authorities had taken the body away and buried it elsewhere. A voice spoke to them, telling them not to be afraid—for Jesus was risen, and couldn't be found among the dead.

That confused them even more for they did not know what that meant. Often we look for Jesus in the wrong places, or we try to keep him entombed in the ancient rituals and language of the church. We have discovered that he cannot be contained by death or anything else for that matter.

Legend has it that the centurion in charge of Jesus' execution was asked a few days later where he was. "Let loose in the world" was his reply. The tomb was empty. Jesus was somehow alive and loose in the world.

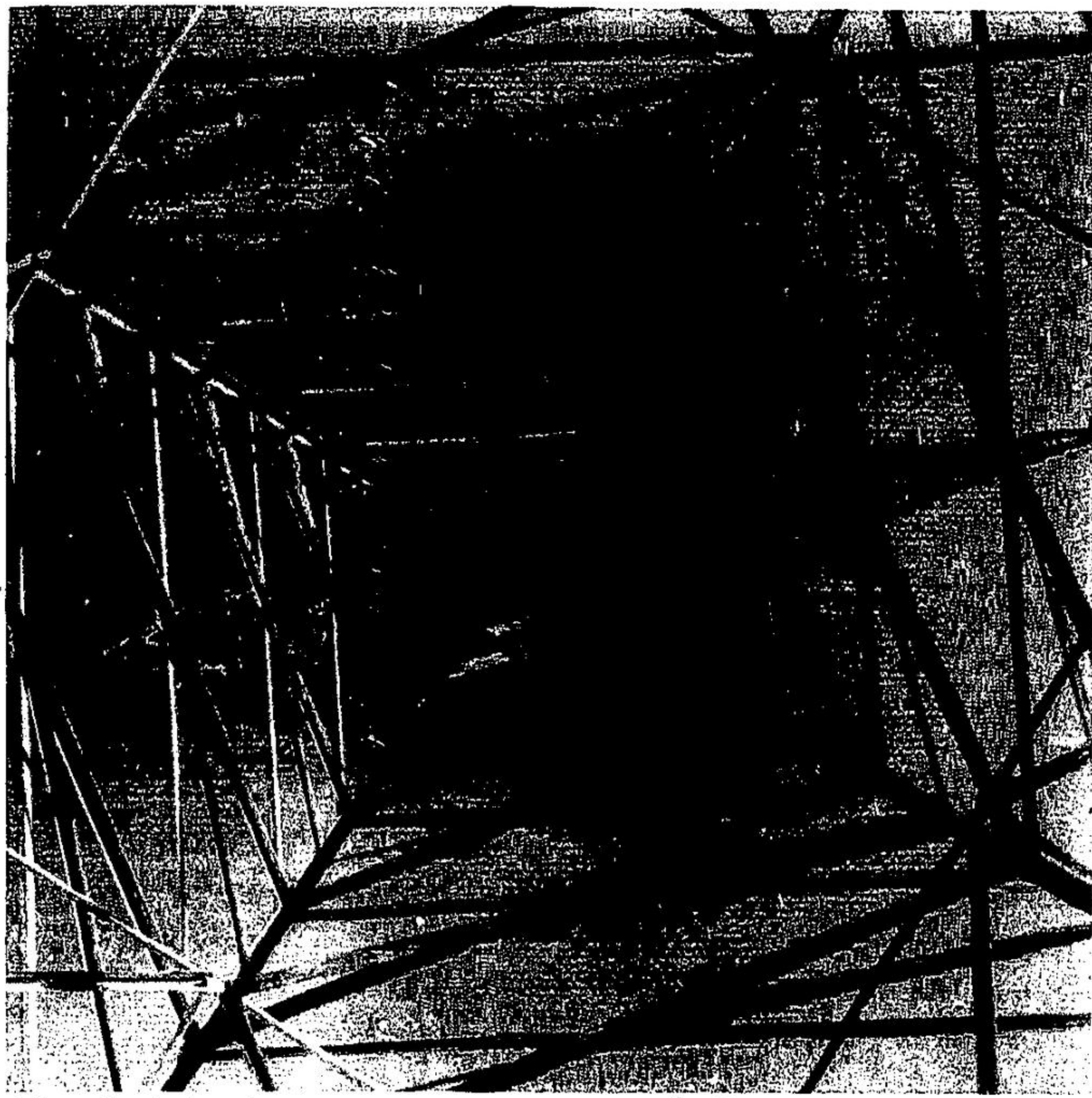
As that drama and its implications rambled through my imagination I was overwhelmed by the peace and beauty of the Garden. I felt a presence very close to me. I thought Jesus had come to stand beside me. I could almost feel him put his hand on my shoulder and say my name.

I turned with a start and there was someone beside me. It was not Jesus. It was my friend Bob, my companion and a fellow minister. In that instant I learned something else about the resurrection. The living Jesus comes to me in the presence of my friends. I knew that Jesus was in Bob, for he is such a loving guy, who gives himself to other people and cares for people deeply. The risen Christ has been in a whole army of people that have touched my life over the years.

That's how the risen Jesus comes to you—through other people—people who you have known, people you know now, people you will know in the future.

He lives in us, as we live in Him. The lessons of the Garden Tomb are with us this Easter.

Let the trumpets sound! He lives!



SPIDER'S WEB in steel... an inside view of one of the new hydro towers which have just been erected north of No. 24 highway. Similar structures are due to pass near Acton.



Sugar and spice by Bill Smiley

If you missed a column, it was because my big brother died, and between making arrangements, phoning family, and emotional exhaustion, I didn't have much heart for turning out a column, the first time I've missed in about 25 years.

It's not that I went around weeping and tearing my hair. We don't do that in the Smiley family, although I've nothing against it. It's just that when one of your immediate family goes, it makes a gap in your life, whether you were close or not. And it's also a reminder of your own mortality.

My big brother was five years older, and, naturally, something of a hero for me at times. He got all the good looks in the family: six feet tall, blond curly hair; strong white teeth, a great physique.

He was a top athlete in high school. He passed, kicked and ran on the football team, and set a high jump record that lasted for some years. So you can imagine that little brother often basked in reflected glory.

Because of the age difference, he hung around with a different crowd, but he was kind to me, and did for me a lot of things fathers are supposed to do with their sons. Like playing catch, showing me how to stick-handle a puck, letting me help gather sap and make syrup, and one glorious day about this time of year, allowing me to fire two shots at a tree with his .22. I was about 10 and it was some big deal.

He had a strange sort of life, because he was a combination of doer and dreamer.

He was a young man in the latter part of the Depression, and it was a bad time to be a young man, in some ways. His first job was in a bank, at a miserable pittance. He was like a young bear in a cage.

With some kindred spirits, he left the bank, they bought a Model T, and with a few dollars each, they headed north. He went into hardrock mining and within a year was a shift boss, making big money for the times. He liked the hard rough work and play of miners.

I remember the first time he came home from the north, for Christmas, huge, hearty, laughing, with generous presents for all, and to the horror of his young brother, whiskey on his breath. Funny, that memory. He was never much of a drinker.

Came the war, and he joined early, obtaining a commission in the Engineers. He went overseas with the body of young Canadians who were to spend the next three or four years training and frustrated in damp old England.

Next time I saw him, he was almost dead. I had just arrived in England, a young sprog of a pilot, and was informed that big brother had been blown up by a land mine. I went to the hospital, as I did again more than 30 years later, and found him in rough shape.

The shrapnel from the mine had almost cut him in two, and he was still picking bits of it out of his skull and body just before he died. But the medics patched him up and within months he was out squiring the

nurses around the local pubs, minus one eye, but very much alive.

The three Smiley brothers got together fairly often for weekend leaves in London. To the disgust of my little brother and I, big brother would try to organize everything for us, treat us with paternal pride, and try to keep us from sowing too many wild oats, which we were only too keen to do.

A year after the war, he and I got married, within a few weeks of each other, and our wives struck up a close friendship. Then I was off to the dull safety of university and he was off on a series of bizarre and adventurous jobs.

First it was away up to Port Radium on Great Bear Lake, to mine pitchblende for radium. Then he worked as a construction boss for some quasi-government agency, in Southern Ontario. Next he bought a well-driller's rig and got into that.

First thing I know, he's off to South America to run a gold mine that did well but was closed when the government decided to build a dam that would close the mine. Back to Canada. Side trips to Puerto Rico where there was a big job building houses. That didn't pan out.

Then a year or two in Newfoundland, building highways. Various jobs after that. I was never quite sure where he was, what he was doing, or who he was working for. But there was always that indomitable dream that the next job was going to hit real pay-dirt and set him for life.

Two weeks before he died, he told me with great enthusiasm about a trip he'd made recently to Costa Rica, and felt there were great opportunities down there for him as soon as he got on his feet.

I'm sad that the big dream was always just over the horizon, and that he never quite achieved it. But I'm glad for his sake that he kept trying. There were lots of times when he could have settled into a nine-to-five job and lived dully and safely for the rest of his life.

But in this age, when everyone is seeking to wrap himself in a security blanket, he remained a boy at heart, ready to drop everything, pack up and go to the ends of the earth for a look at something new and exciting. May he rest in the peace he never found on this earth.

Of this and that

The official arrival of spring at 6:45 Monday was accompanied by freezing rain. Tuesday brought rain, eating away at the grey snowbanks. Birds were singing in noisy delight. It's the first good dint in winter we've had.

Got a comment? Write a letter to the editor.

The Free Press Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Wednesday, March 29, 1968. Mail delivery in Acton may not become a reality in the near future, but the foreseeable future could see house delivery if present expansion of the town continues. Two hundred and sixty more post office boxes were installed in the Acton Post Office last week to handle the increased demand, making a total of 1224 boxes, using all available space. Future of the year's school ice carnival will hinge on a meeting Monday night arena manager Harold Townsley said this week. Unless there's more enthusiasm shown, Mr. Townsley predicts this year's, and all subsequent carnivals will be written off. Mr. and Mrs. Ernest West accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Fred West spent two weeks motoring to Florida, visiting Fort Lauderdale and returning via Washington. Esquej council rushed through the essential business at their regular meeting night so they could view a threatened flood in Glen Williams.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, April 3, 1958. Rolling up a plurality of 11,013 votes, Charles Alexander (Sandy) Beat of Georgetown won Halton's federal seat at Ottawa on Monday with one of the biggest majority victories witnessed in the county. The 70 per cent vote saw the Progressive Conservative candidate poll 20,937 votes compared to 9,924 received by Liberal standard bearer Ken Dick of Milton. Jack Henry, the CCF candidate ran third with 3,488. Mayor W.H. Cook of Acton was appointed chairman of the North Halton Urban Board at the year's first meeting of the board in the Acton Council Chambers on Wednesday evening. Also appointed was J. Hurst of Acton as vice chairman and J. McGeachie as secretary treasurer. Celebrating her 90th birthday today (Thursday) is Mrs. George Chapman, 26 Main St., who is considered one of Acton's grand old ladies and friend to all. Many friends, neighbors and relatives have been dropping in to congratulate Mrs. Chapman and this evening, no doubt, there will be many more visitors to sit around and enjoy a chat over a cup of tea and one of her favorite cookies with the bright eyes nonagenarian. Acton fire brigade responded to four grass fires last weekend and another call on Wednesday morning of this week and one in the afternoon.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 15, 1928. The annual supper, entertainment and dance of the Hewitson Shoe Co., Acton employees will be held in the town hall tomorrow evening. A good program has been prepared. The Mason orchestra will provide the music for dancing. The council, the Public Utilities Commission, the Chamber of Commerce and business men of Acton will hold a conference on telephone matters in the council chamber this evening at eight o'clock. All interested in this important matter are urged to be present at this meeting to discuss telephone matters with the representatives of the Bell Telephone Co.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 21, 1878. One of our merchants wishes me to inform the party who sold him a roll of butter with a muffler in the centre he can have the muffler by applying at the store. The summer session of the Ontario Agricultural College commences April 16 with vacancies for 20 additional pupils. The college is now thoroughly equipped. The Acton checker players are practising nearly every evening. They are the champions of the county. Last week the village was besieged by half a dozen insurance agents. Mr. Robert Galloway has been suffering from a healing thumb, after being struck by a sword. Last Friday two men, both having performing bears, paid this village a visit and amused some of our young folks by their antics. A collection was taken up at the end of the performance. Mr. James McGuire has purchased the hotel business of Mr. Maney for \$840.

Groups need grants

Finance committee of Halton Hills council suggested last week budget cuts for Acton Citizens Band, Acton Community Services Centre, Halton Helping Hands and the North Halton Contact Centre. The Acton Agricultural Society's grant was also questioned.

Councillor Walter Biehn said it's easier to cut \$1,000 from each of these groups than to cut a little from many groups. These are the five largest grants.

Certainly there will be acute disappointment here if this suggestion is followed through.

Three of the five are Acton groups and the other two theoretically include Acton in their area of concern.

The band, Community Services Centre and Agricultural Society all do excellent work for their community. The organizers and workers direct themselves toward

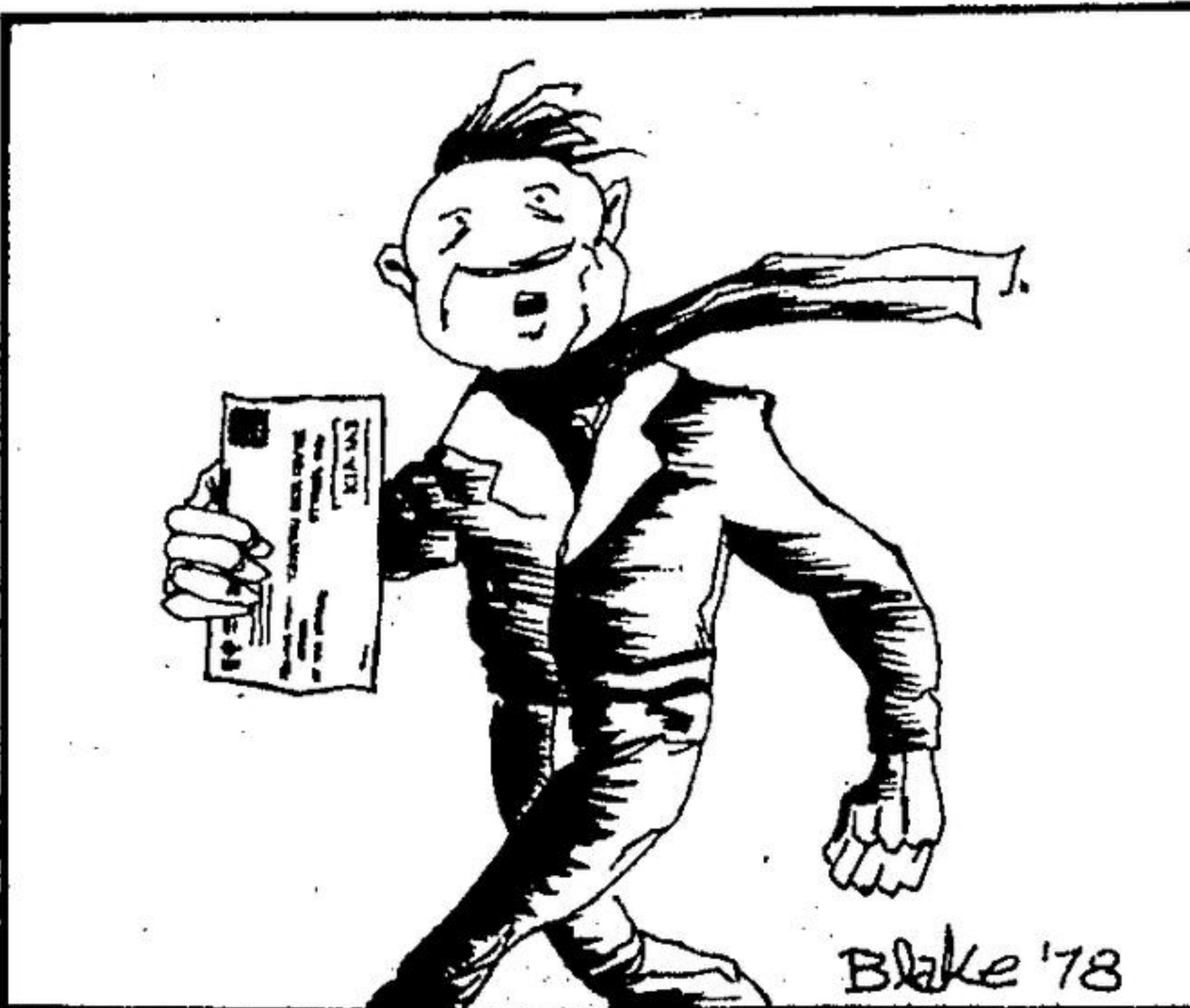
their goals, and to have to raise money to survive as well, would probably mean the end of the existence of some of them.

The bandspeople must spend their time practising and playing, not raising money. Their annual grant is a result of a vote years ago by Acton citizens. The Community Services Centre, run already on a shoestring plus a series of small donations, needs to be professionally operated. And that's not with handouts.

Acton needs its Community Services Centre partly because we are the only town in Halton without Health Unit offices.

The Agricultural Society runs a fair that is a community event, and a very successful one. Yet the costs involved are horrendous.

We certainly hope council finds other areas to cut from their grants budget.



SAINT PATRICK'S DAY
CERTAINLY WAS A DAY FOR PUTTING OUT THE GREENS.

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