

It's the weather that holds Canada together?

"Hot nuff fer ya? By the time this appears in print, I may be looking through drawers for my longjohns. That would be typical of the weather in this Canada of ours."

But as I write, huddled up in my study with the drapes drawn and the fan blowing, we're well into the second week of one of those scorching summer sessions that we masochists in this country endure and even enjoy, in a perverted way.

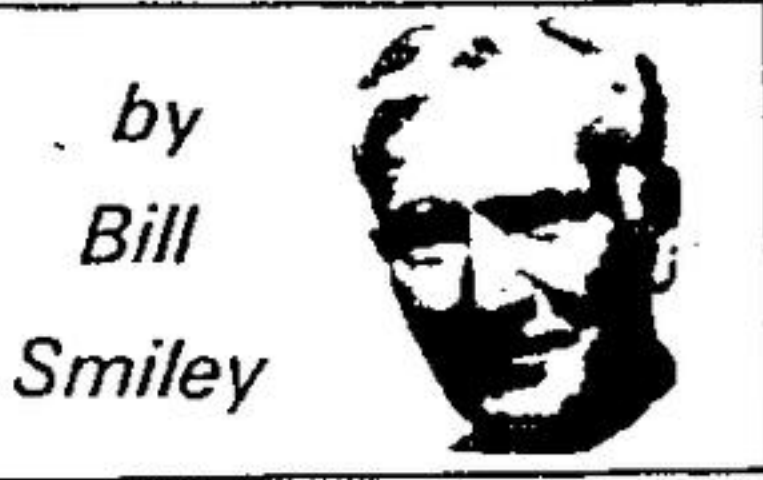
We suffer, but we suffer with a certain pride. One wilted citizen will say to another dripping one, "Ain't it a corker?" And the other will respond, almost joyously, "Never seen the beat of it."

On the streets of our towns and cities, we duck from one air-conditioned haven to another, catching our death of cold in the process. Smart people take a heavy sweater to the supermarket so they won't freeze their extremities, and peel right down to those extremities as soon as they get back into the street.

What a crazy way to live. Six months ago, and six months from now, we'll be doing the opposite, ducking from one over-heated place to another, and bragging about the cold.

I wonder if there is another nation in the world that talks as much about the weather as does ours. I doubt it. Perhaps it is because we are rather shy and inarticulate when it comes to opening a conversation.

As a result, we commence with, "Cold nuff fer ya?" or, "Hot nuff ler ya?", and can nearly always be certain that the person



by Bill Smiley

spoken to, even a complete stranger, as long as he's a Canadian, will respond with something like, "Real brute, izzen it?" This retort covers extreme days in either winter or summer.

If an immigrant, unfamiliar with our opening gambits, makes a sensible remark about the weather, such as "My, it is unpleasantly warm today, is it not?", we go right on the defensive with, "Ah, this is just right. Wait'll the real heat wave hits. It'll slaughter ya."

Or if a similarly untutored foreigner, just trying to be pleasant, says in February, "Mein Gott, zis is a cold country in winter, hein?", we snarl, "Nah, she's mild this year. Ya shoulda been here last winter. Forty below for three weeks straight."

Yes, there is a certain arrogance in Canadians when it comes to our weather. Nobody much likes rain and wind. But when it comes to hot and cold, we are fascinated by temperatures. We exchange weather reports. We remember winters and summers as far back as 30 years.

If some unusually urbane Canadian ven-

tures to utter a, "Nice day, eh?", we usually come back with a yabbut. "Yabbut there's a big blizzard comin' in from the West." Or, "Yabbut it's supposed to rain all next week."

Canadians know, without being told, that if a winter week has been sunny and sparkling, it's going to snow and blow on the weekend. They are positive that, if the summer has been ideal, warm and dry and delightful so far, it will be cold and wet when it's their turn to go on holidays.

The weather is so much a part of our national psyche that it's a wonder it hasn't crept into politics. On second thought, it has. Elections are carefully geared so that they don't occur in midsummer, when nobody gives a damn about politics, nor in mid-winter, when it's too cold to get out to vote.

One of these days, so enthralled are we with the weather, that we'll probably have a couple of guys running for prime minister who are weather forecasters. And the ones who give us the most horrendous forecasts will win in a walk.

I am not sneering at my fellow Canadians' obsession with the weather. I am as bad as the next. There's nothing I enjoy more, on a winter day, than blustering in from the cold, tearing off my boots and overcoat, and asking all and sundry, "Did you ever see such a rotten winter?" And sure enough, someone will retort, "Yabbut we had two feet more snow this time last year."

In summer, I sizzle around the golf course (my body, not my score) and whine with the best of them. "Isn't this brutal? My lawn is

baked black. It was '98 in our bedroom last night." And one of the foursome will come back with, "Yabbut remember last summer, when we hadda play in rubber boots and mackinaws?" You can't win.

One of the few Canadians who doesn't care about the weather is my wife. When we had babies, she'd pop into the office in the middle of a blizzard. "What in the Sam Hill are you doing out on a day like this?"

And I'd discover that she'd thought the baby needed some fresh air, and pushed the carriage through the snow for half a mile.

Her indifference to our great national conversation piece infuriates me. We had a bitter quarrel just this week. I'd been out in the car, and told her the guy on the radio said it was '96 downtown. She said she didn't believe him. With a touch of warmth, I repeated what the guy on the radio had said. Ninety-six degrees.

"It couldn't be."

"Why not?" "Because it doesn't feel that hot. And what does it matter, anyway?"

You can see why I blew my top. Matter? What could be more important?

There is no single element in this country that is more important to us Canadians than our love-hate relationship with the weather. In fact, it may be the only thing that will hold this country together, when all the referendums have been taken.

Speyside pre-school hangs on board's OK

Steps are being taken by some Speyside parents and Georgetown's YM-YWCA to start a pre-school program this fall. A final green light for the project turns on approval from Halton Board of Education for the use of a classroom at Speyside School, on Highway 25, south of Acton.

Both Sandra Kenzie, R.R. 3 Milton, and Georgetown's executive director Sheilagh Finn are optimistic about the prospects of the program. The Y, for example, is advertising the Speyside pre-school play school in its brochure, though approval from the board may not come until later this month.

"It's just a matter of getting the facility," said the executive director Friday. The Speyside

group approached the school board.

"I think we are looking at a fee to use the facility. I don't think there's a question of getting it," executive director Finn said.

The Speyside program would start next month and run 14 weeks until December. Youngsters between ages 2½ and five years would be welcome Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The Y has developed a program. The Speyside version will have a professional staff member and some parents helping, said the Y executive director. She said many people consider parental assistance in preparing work to be menial. However, helping children develop such things as the small manipulative muscles is important. For one thing,

parents helping frees the professional teacher to give some attention to each child.

Minimum enrolment at the play school is 10, according to Mrs. Kenzie.

In addition to the traditional cutting, pasting and coloring skills to be encouraged at the pre-school, Mrs. Finn said the Y is introducing physical activities such as rolling and somersaults for youngsters. Songs and games are also part of the program.

For this first year at Speyside, the Georgetown Y is budgeting for a minimum of equipment. The Georgetown Y also runs pre-school programs in Georgetown and in Glen Williams town hall. In the Glen, though, the classes are for children two to three years old and from three to five years.

Come to parade see Orson Welles

Come down and watch big "July 4 American Independence parade" being filmed Sunday and Monday morning starting at 10 a.m. in downtown Georgetown. You will not only see a big fancy parade, but you will spot the rotund frame of Orson Welles, not in the parade but on the sidelines for the shooting of one scene.

Westfront Productions, filming "Never trust an Honest Thief" want spectators lining the sidewalk, just as they normally would at any parade.

As a bonus for enjoying the parade, at the parks afterward hot dogs will be given out free, and T shirts, as long as they last, but above all the film

company hopes the local residents will have some fun.

Apart from many familiar faces, from around town, who have been signed as extras, the Optimists, Rotarians, Georgetown Girls' Pipe Band, Scouts, Guides, Jaycees and Jaycettes will be on the floats. Burlington Teen Tour Band and the Georgetown Majorettes, as well as a local rock group will all take part.

Since the time is supposed to be 1972, Richard Lavender, Unit Manager, hopes some people have clothes of that time left, mainly shorter skirts and narrow ties.

Also on hand will be movie actors Michael Murphy and Michelle Finney formerly of the Razzle Dazzle show on CBCTV.

Study traffic 17 Sideroad — again

Another try will be made to control the hours of heavy truck traffic on 17 Sideroad. Monday night Halton Hills general committee asked town engineer Bob Austin to look into control of the trucks.

A bylaw was passed extending the half load season by a month to protect the road during spring break-up. Traffic counts showed truck traffic had increased east of the Sixth Line since the wayside pits were opened, but showed west of the Sixth Line the most recent count in July showed a drop of more than half. The report said 17 Sideroad

has stood up well under the traffic volume, with only routine maintenance required. Councillor George Maltby said it was a terrible report, which tells council nothing. He claimed the traffic counts should be included.

The engineer said the counts taken between six and ten in the morning showed 52 trucks of a total of 206 vehicles August 22, 1978, on 17 Sideroad and the Seventh Line, 108 trucks of 268 vehicles on November 7, (when there were no wayside pits open), on July 31 of this year, 132 trucks out of total of 312 vehicles. He said 100 of the 134 trucks were going to the wayside pits. This count was taken at the Sixth Line and 17 Sideroad intersection.

Mayor Pete Pomeroy said he had a lot of calls saying the trucks at the wayside pit started as early as 5:45 a.m. He said King Paving told him they had repeatedly spoken to the truckers telling them not to start before seven or run later than seven at night.

Austin said he understood trucks were parking on the road, lining up to get started, but now had been told this had ceased. Councillor Roy Booth said he saw no reason a bylaw restricting heavy truck traffic to the hours between seven in morning and seven at night could not be passed.

Jim Goodlet, a resident of the area, said Indusmin had stated they would try to have truckers use Highway 25 south, "and that was two years ago!" He said 90 per cent of trucks leaving Indusmin are paid by the

ton mile, and would go the route Indusmin told them to use. "Indusmin's profits are soaring right now." He contended trucks are travelling as early as 4:30 and 5 in the morning.

Austin said he was under the impression restricting truck traffic according to hours cannot be done, but promised to look into it further.



An all-time favorite among MAD centre children the song and dance entitled, Peanut Butter, had parents and friends up taking part at the Cabaret

Thursday evening. Esqueusing community hall was filled for the one hour program.

Obituary

Pearl Kennedy dies in Guelph

Funeral service was held at Shoemaker Funeral Home August 4 for Jennie Pearl Kennedy, who died August 4 in St. Joseph's hospital, Guelph. She was 92 years old.

Mrs. Kennedy lived at the Elliott in Guelph and was a former school teacher. She became a practical nurse. Later, however, she returned to her real love, teaching.

Mrs. Kennedy, until recent years, was active in the Presbyterian church and belonged to the Dublin Women's Institute. As well as her husband,

Mrs. Kennedy was predeceased by her parents, and brothers and sisters, Robert, Annie, (Mrs. W. Matheson), Dr. William Russell, Minnie and George. She is survived by several nieces and nephews. Rev. C. Beaton officiated at the funeral. Pallbearers were all grand nephews, Ronald Ross, Paul Matheson, Bruce Matheson, Ernest Kennedy, Clark Somerville, and Christopher Somerville. Interment was at Fairview Cemetery.

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