

The Acton Free Press

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Business and Editorial Office

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A worthy recipient

The selection of Dr. David van der Bent as Acton's 27th Citizen of the Year is a popular one. Along with his associates in the Acton Medical Group he has created a solid profile in the community which for many years lacked sufficient medical practitioners.

It is always difficult for those charged with selecting citizens of the year to separate the duties of professional men from their community activities because they so often overlap. In Dr. van der Bent's case it was not difficult. He has taken an active interest in many facets of community life and although sometimes professional duties are involved such as the Sabres' club doctor his interests went above and beyond the call of duty.

He has been the chairman of the Salvation Army's Red Shield campaign for the last four years, supported the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded both financially and morally, donated swans for Fairy Lake and as an avid featherfancier breeds ornamental pheasants at his home. He has always shown an avid interest in the community in the time available for a physician who is constantly on call from patients.

Doctors, we are told, should try not to be too emotionally involved with their patients for the sake of their



Dr. David van der Bent own health, but somehow Dr. van der Bent manages to combine both, including making house calls, and still retain his zest for living.

Father Ralph Diodati of St. Joseph's commenting on the selection of Dr. van der Bent as Citizen of the Year commented that he thought the honor would have already been accorded the popular physician. Everywhere I go his name is mentioned, he said.

This newspaper, along with countless others, joins in congratulating Dr. van der Bent on his selection as Citizen of the Year. We hope he always retains his interests, both professional in this community and its people.

No need for study

Halton Region is considering spending \$60,000 on a tourism study but little support is forthcoming from the hotel and restaurant people, who would benefit the most.

It hardly seems warranted. Another study and another consultant fee is the last thing we need right now.

The province is already spending a bundle on tourism promotion, paid for by the same taxpayer who would pay for a Halton study.

Surely the more sensible and certainly the cheaper way would be to make sure Halton is included in that fancy Ontar-i-ar-i-ario brochure the province is paying for.

If all else failed it would be better to take the \$60,000 and have Halton advertise its attractions directly, since by paying a consultant, the Region would still have to pay for the advertising.

Surely regional staff, with help from the municipalities, know what could be featured in their own areas.

Clergy comment

Our limitations hinder flight

by Rev. Jean Stairs
Acton Baptist Church

Quite a few years ago I met a young man by the name of Jacin to Ordinez while attending an International Students' Conference. Although we struggled with the language barrier he was able to share with me a poem that held meaning for him:

"Butterfly, you and I are limited.
Limited are your wings and my dreams.
You who have wings have not dreams,
I who have dreams have not wings."

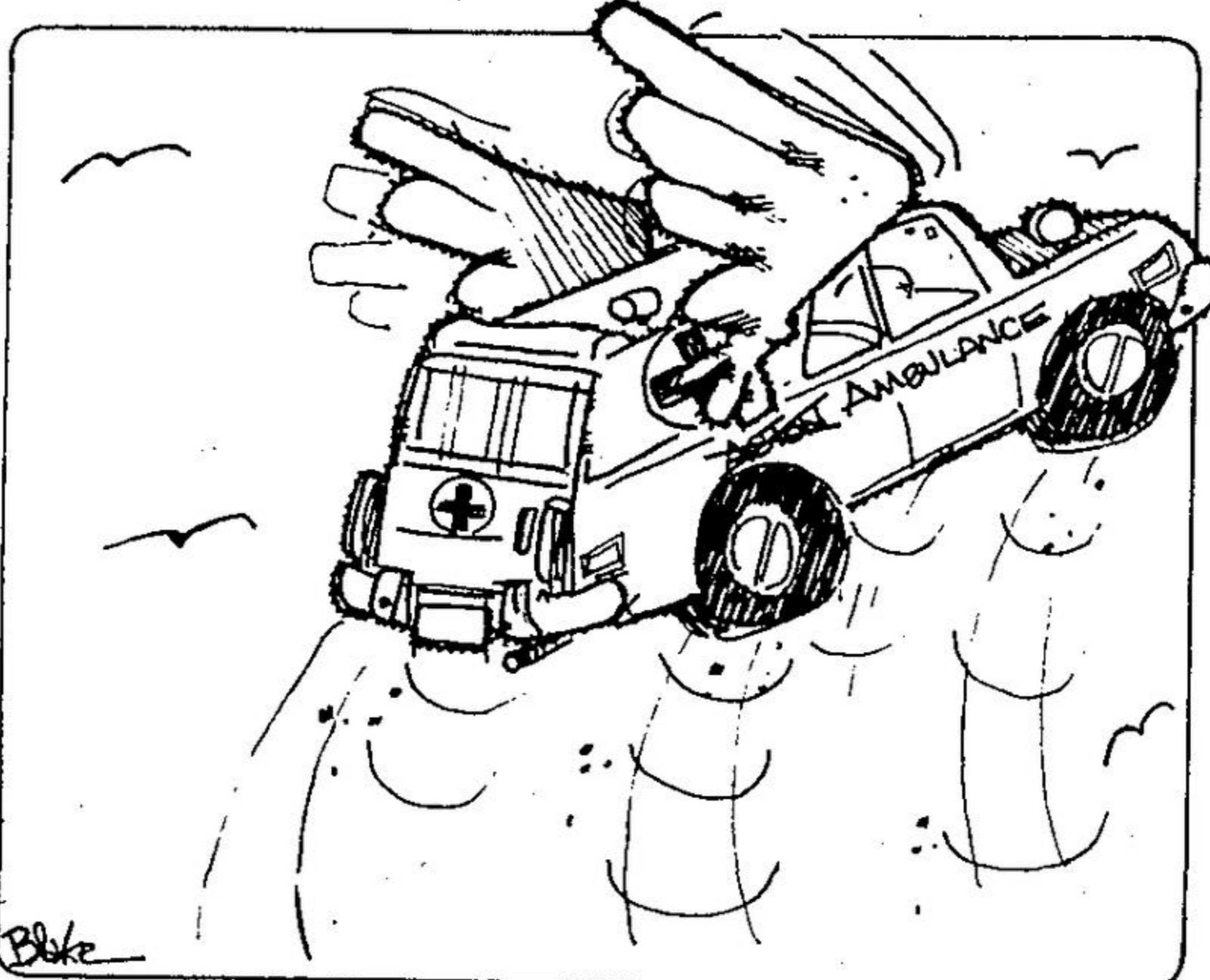
I remembered this poem last week when I was aware of my own limitations and a feeling that my wings (if I had them at all) were broken. Most of the time I want to soar with wings and put flesh on my dreams. But, occasionally my human limitations of forgetfulness and fatigue stall their fulfillment. Promises made can be disregarded. Connections that are important to maintain with people can go unattended.

At times like this, caught between spring and summer, my soul feels earthbound by a season of impatience and frustration with my seeming inability to make dreams come true.

Perhaps, like me, you too know what it is to dream dreams and long for wings broad enough to reach the summer's sun.

In the meantime we would do well to remember the words of Ephesians 5:15.

"Make the best use of your time,
despite all the difficulties."



Who were the United Empire Loyalists?

Ontario is marking its bicentennial this year, basing the anniversary on the year (1784) the United Empire Loyalists landed and established the beginning of this province. But who were these people, the UELs, who were disparagingly referred to as "Tories" by their U.S. compatriots?

The story of the Loyalists has been widely misunderstood, partly because their own Canadian descendants retroactively endowed them with a social prominence and political beliefs which most of them did not possess in the first place. The Canadian habit of subscribing to the popular American version of history in imported books, movies and television programs has done nothing to clarify the picture of what these people were really like.

The myth of the Loyalists as seen through Canadian eyes is that they were a lot of upper-class snobs who thought they owned the country and lorded it over later immigrants, as some of their offspring indeed attempted to do. Through American eyes, they are generally perceived as a small faction of pseudo-aristocratic "Tories" who refused to grasp the torch of liberty because they were too busy trying to hold on to the privileges and power they enjoyed.

Neither perception accords with the facts. First of all, the Loyalists could hardly be described as a small faction. One of the fathers of the American revolution, John Adams, wrote that as much as one-third of the population of the 13 Colonies was opposed to independence when it was declared in 1776. The Loyalists were certainly not all privileged land-owners or officers of the Crown; there were probably as many of these on the revolutionary side, including George Washington.

The usual impression of the American War of Independence is that it was fought out between the English redcoats and the Hessian mercenaries of King George III on one side and tough American frontiersmen wielding squirrel rifles on the other. In fact, it was largely a civil war between Americans who wanted to break away from the

British Empire and Americans who did not.

Like all civil wars, it was an especially bitter conflict. Loyalist soldiers captured by their ex-compatriots were hanged as traitors to the revolutionary cause, and civilians in Revolutionist territory who expressed loyal sentiments were cruelly abused. At best, their property was confiscated and they were prohibited from practising their trades or professions. At worst, they were hounded by mobs who burned their houses, threw them in jail, tarred and feathered them and subjected them to other painful indignities.

After the decisive defeat of the British forces at Yorktown in 1781, scores of thousands of Loyalists clustered in British-held areas to await the results of the peace negotiations that would determine their future. When the terms of the Treaty of Paris became known two years later, they were shocked and hurt.

It seemed to them that the Mother Country had sold out their interests. Although the U.S. government promised to facilitate their return to their homes, many who tried to reclaim confiscated property were as roughly handled as ever by vindictive former neighbours. So, with the Crown's assurance that they would be assisted in resettling on new land, at least 60,000 of them (estimates range to 100,000) left their homes behind for good.

Loyalists with the means to do so went to England, Bermuda and the settled parts of the West Indies. The poorer ones—some 45,000 of them—took up offers of land grants in the British colonies to the North. They either sailed in convoys from Britain's last outpost, the port of New York, or trekked overland to the rivers and lakes that formed the new international boundary. The ships from New York landed in Halifax and Montreal. The land-bound refugees crossed into what was then Western Quebec, later to be joined by several thousand who moved up the St. Lawrence River from Montreal.

The people caught up in this exodus formed a microcosm of the present "English" Canadian population. Besides English-Americans, they were mainly of Scottish, Irish, French, German and Dutch descent. Among them were several hundred black ex-soldiers who had been released from slavery by the war, and about 1,000 Iroquois Indians who had fought as allies of the British. This last group, headed by Chief Joseph Brant, took up land in and around Brantford (named after the Chief) and Cornwall, Ont., which also became the home of many white refugees. Both these cities are observing their bicentennials this year.

In terms of social class, the majority was not much different from the majority of Canadians today: tradesmen, farmers, labourers, shopkeepers and discharged soldiers, with a sprinkling of doctors, lawyers, teachers and clergymen. Their ranks encompassed Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Methodists, Wesleyans, Baptists, Congregationalists, Mennonites, Quakers and pagans. They spoke a variety of languages, not the least French, since a community of Canadian farmers crossed the Detroit River to resettle near Windsor, Ont.

Along with their babies and belongings, the Loyalists brought with them the traditional gradualist Canadian approach to public affairs. They abhorred revolutionary extremes. Some indeed were the elitist hide-bound Tories of the Loyalist myth, but most were "Whiggish by persuasion" according to the historian W. L. Morton. This means that they were not averse to political reform, but they believed that it could be accomplished without violence or the severing of historical connections.

So great was the part the Loyalists played in the founding of Ontario that the province has decided to base its official bicentennial on their arrival in 1784, despite the fact that it did not become a separate jurisdiction until seven years later. The rationale for this is that the Loyalists really founded the Ontario society.

Royal Bank Letter



Remember 1834 at the old Acton High School? In this class picture are: front row, (left to right) Hugh Fraser, John Denah, Edward Johnston, Fred Turner, Gordon McCutcheon, Jack Beattie, Roderick Ryder, George Switzer. (2nd row left to right) Dorothy McArthur, Lillian Woodhall. — Gibbons, Barbara Taylor, Ada Sproule, Dorothy Claridge, Elben Broca, Helen Lamb. (3rd row) Marjory Near, Margaret Carrie. — Campbell, Marguerite Rosell, Peg Chalmers, Jean Lambert, Margaret Arnold, Etta Swackhammer. (4th row, left to right) Howard Norton, Harry Norton, Harold Skilling, A.D. Herbert, William Williams, Doug Guthrie. (back row) Ted Hansen, Charles Henderson, George Molozzi. Former Actonian Rev. C.D. Henderson of Exeter contributed the picture.

Back issues

10 years ago

May 21, 1974

Manfred Baron, 23, of RR 2 Acton has been charged with non-capital murder in connection with the disappearance of Isaac Wertman, 51, of Toronto. Police searched the Baron property for nearly five hours Saturday morning before leaving with evidence which is now being analyzed at the Centre of Forensic Sciences in Toronto. Dug from a shallow hole 200 yards behind the Baron farm were possibly two pieces of flesh.

Bruce Andrews, head of the Acton High physical education department and coach of the North Halton Harriers Track Club and Free Press sports editor Denis Gibbons have been accepted in a Loyola University sponsored course which will study the advanced system of sports and physical education in the Soviet Union.

20 years ago

May 21, 1954

Direct Distance Dialing (DDD) will come to Acton this fall. Northern Electric Co. technicians are busy installing the crossbar switching machines which will bring in DDD.

In June, Dr. Craig Hutchison will begin practicing medicine in Acton with Dr. Brian Moore. Dr. Moore's office at the Mill-Main corner is being altered to accommodate the doctors who graduated from the University of Toronto the same year—1951.

James Edward Aitken of RR 3 Acton, son of Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Aitken was presented with the diploma of the Hamilton Institute of Technology at the Institute's Convocation exercises. He has accepted a position with National Research Council, Ottawa and will work in the Control Systems Laboratory.

50 years ago

May 23, 1934

The old bark shed on Agnes Street belonging to the Beardmore Leathers Ltd. has been torn down. Another brick building, erected for a drying loft and which has not been used for some time is also being demolished.

While playing on Saturday, little June Talbot, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W.D. Talbot fell from a tree and fractured her left arm just below the elbow.

Mrs. E.F. Collier, Brock Avenue is suffering from painful bruises and injuries she received when the railing on the verandah at her home broke and she fell several feet to the ground.

At the meeting last Thursday evening of the Ladies' Bowling Committee held at the home of Mrs. J.M. McDonald, officers for the year were elected. They are: President, Mrs. J.M. McDonald; First Vice President Mrs. A.J. Buchanan; Second Vice President Mrs. D.H. Lindsay; Secretary-Treasurer Miss E. Glendenning.

75 years ago

May 20, 1909

At a meeting at the park on Tuesday evening the junior baseball club organized with the following officers: Hon. Pres. E.R. Biggar; Pres. G.J. Wallace; Vice Pres., N. Patterson; Sec. Treasurer C. Clark; Captain, A. Plant; Manager C. Ramshaw.

Perry Watson, one of our High School boys shot a chicken hawk on his father's farm on the Fourth Line, the other day which measured three feet, nine inches from tip to tip of the wings.

Rev. R.J. Drysdale, M.A.B.D., the former pastor, preached an eloquent sermon to the congregation at Churchill last Sunday afternoon.

100 years ago

May 22, 1884

Now that the Street and Sidewalk Committee have had the streets thoroughly cleaned, let every citizen take an interest in maintaining the present neat and satisfactory appearance. Some of our merchants deposit their sweepings on the sidewalk. This should be discontinued.

The high winds of last Thursday afternoon did considerable damage throughout the country. A violent hurricane struck a bush of Mr. Joel Leslie, a couple of miles from here and went clear through it, clearing down every tree in its path and leaving a scene of general destruction.

The foundation is being dug for a new double residence to be erected by Mr. John Matthews and Miss A.M. Brown on Willow Street opposite St. Alban's Church.