

## New town hall okay IF we can afford it

There are a few 'ifs' that should be tackled on to anyone's enthusiasm about the new town hall plans as presented last week to town council.

Certainly the plans and drawings depict an impressive new asset for this impressive new town of ours, Halton Hills. Don Hallford and his associates appear to have another award winner on their hands.

However our chief reservation—as it does on so many things—comes down to money.

Town treasurer, Ray King, has to assure us that we can afford it.

As the town's senior financial advisor Mr. King must take a very sceptical look at the project and all the financial implications it will hold for all Halton Hills taxpayers.

His observations and conclusions must not be based on whether we need a new town hall. We do need it but let's face it, it's not a do-or-die proposition. Interim measures may have to do for two or three years, or even longer.

King's final conclusion which he will pass on to town council must simply be whether the project is financially advisable at this time in Halton Hills' history.

Hopefully there's a scheme by which we can finance this without going any further into debt than we already are. If we have to issue further debentures for this or any other major project it's about time councillors called for a full report on the town's current debenture debt status.

What are all these long-term loans costing us in interest?

Another avenue that should be pursued by the Chambers of Commerce of Acton and Georgetown is a more involved role by those two bodies, perhaps in conjunction with the town, in the day-to-day life of the town.

Most towns of similar size to Acton or Georgetown have either town offices or a Chamber of Commerce-operated facility to which someone requiring information about those towns can be sent.

To this point in Halton Hills' history we've been able to provide that thanks to the downtown municipal offices. But taking the offices out of the downtown areas will mean a bigger loss than many people realize. It would be wise if some group, particularly the Chambers of Commerce, began to prepare some method to fill that information gap.

Overall, we support the idea of a new town hall. The divergence of departments has been a pain in the neck ever since the town was created.

Besides a new Halton Hills town hall will be a major physical indication to the region and the province that while Halton Hills is prepared to, albeit begrudgingly, accept and live with a two-tier system of government there is no way we'll allow our local autonomy to be eroded any further with a single tier system.

We're willing to spend \$800,000 to give Halton Hills a permanent and very visible focal point. It will be the first true municipal facility that is not linked with any "former town of" or "former township of". It will stand on its own as the Halton Hills town hall.



### Queen's Park Commentary

## Little chance for sex preference bill

By Don O'Hearn  
Queen's Park Bureau  
Of The Herald

TORONTO—It couldn't have happened even 10 years ago.

As a note on just how much times have changed the house actually has had a debate on the rights of homosexuals.

Liberal Margaret Campbell introduced the private member's motion that would have amended the Human Rights Code so that "no person shall discriminate against another by reason of sexual orientation or affectional preference."

And it was debated in the special hour set aside for private member's business, with two Liberals, two NDPers and one PC supporting it, and only one member, a PC, opposing it.

#### No Chance

There is no chance that such an amendment will become law in the near future. Private member's motions don't even come to a vote, they are regarded principally as a prod to government.

And this government, at least, is certainly not going to take the political risk of

catering to homosexuals. (If the NDP were to form a government it probably would. Rights for homosexuals is official NDP policy.)

But the fact that today it could be brought up in the house as a matter of routine is a graphic illustration of the mood and mores of the day and the legislature.

It also can cause one to wonder just how much in tune with the times Attorney-General may be politically with his latest crusade, his campaign against pornography.

#### Eighteen Back?

Mr. Hockey, Alan Eagelson, has retired as president of the Ontario PC organization. It is reported that now the Toronto lawyer who zoomed to fame and wealth on Bobby Orr's hockey stick will run in the next election.

Eagelson was a member from 1963 to 1967 and was distinguished as a member of the "Chicago gang," a group of back-benchers noted for their furious and persistent heckling. Darcy McKeough was another member.

Eagelson was beaten by NDP'er Pat Lawlor but has never lost his intense interest in politics.

If he were to be returned now he would be automatic for the cabinet.

When he was in before he said he couldn't take a cabinet job because he couldn't afford to. Now he presumably can.

#### Belts Stay

Seat belts. Bob Johnson, the PC member for St. Catharines who has been opposed to them, delivered a petition directly to the premier's desk with 29,000 names on it.

A woman in the Guelph area reportedly gathered a petition signed by 24,000 protesters.

And, of course, there has been a good deal of other opposition to the compulsory belt legislation.

But it is here to stay.

This was assured by the highway safety record for the first quarter.

With compulsory seat belts and lower speed limits there was a 33.6 percent drop in traffic fatalities and 18.7 percent in injuries over the preceding year. This despite the fact accidents were up four percent.

## It's time for Brownies

by Susan De Facendis  
With a definite lack of enthusiasm, I have decided the time has come when young Teresa's name should be placed on the waiting list for Brownies.

Anyone who has ever had a Brownie for a daughter will immediately understand my reluctance in taking this initial step, but for those who are uninitiated or fortunate enough to have escaped this organization by having hockey-playing sons, my congratulations.

The waiting list is usually about two years long, resulting in your child making 730 daily enquiries (or even 731 if one year happens to be a leap year) as to whether the Brownie leader has yet telephoned.

There are only two methods of avoiding this lengthy delay. One either has to have a certain amount of "pull" and I'll admit right now mine is negligible, or one volunteers as a helper.

I tried this method once with the boys (Cubs). My son dropped out in six months, and, three years later, there I was still fundraising eachre partying and patching tents. However, I digress. Assuming one does

### On The Home Front

finally get their daughter enrolled, that is when the real fun begins. The biggest laugh, one that will literally bring tears to your eyes, is the earning of her cooking proficiency badge and if Lady Baden Powell really thought that one up, she must obviously have had a cleaning lady.

When Louisa took aim at this one, we mutually decided that not only was father the biggest and strongest member of the family, but was also the last one out of bed on Sunday morning and it was therefore quite logical that he should be the recipient of her gourmet delights. (One up for mother.)

Co-ordination proved the first problem and the toast went up in a cloud of smoke while she was still bringing the water to boil for the poached eggs.

I smiled patiently as the first egg missed the little cup and slid gently down the front of the stove; gritted my teeth when the second followed suit and became decidedly strung-out as the third rapidly joined its brothers on the kitchen floor.

Deciding that the poultry industry would not appreciate any further misuse of their product, I took a hand and mother and daughter togetherness finally produced a breakfast.

Admittedly the orange juice was warm and the coffee congealed, but father agreed the eggs on burnt toast were delicious. (One up for father, making it a 1-1 tied game.)

On my knees amidst the slippery eggs, pieces of shell and toast crumbs, I mentally composed a glowing letter on Louisa's cooking accomplishments for the Brownie leader, meanwhile swearing never to buy another Girl Guide cookie as long as I lived, if that badge was not awarded to her in a hurry.

Well, I suppose I really should pick up that telephone and make a call on behalf of my youngest, after all, there is even a hand-me-down Brownie uniform safely stored away for her, but on second thoughts, maybe tomorrow would be quite soon enough.

### Viewpoint

## 'Very Special People'

by Gerry Landsborough

This week's Viewpoint will almost take the form of a book review. The book in question is one about "human oddities" the "freaks of nature", how they lived and how they overcame unbelievable handicaps, to lead real and full lives.

The book is entitled "Very Special People" by Frederick Drimmer, and is now available almost everywhere in paperback.

Every human being is subject to human emotions and feelings. We are all subject at one time or another to love, hate, joy, pain, embarrassment, tears, laughter and a multitude of other human emotions.

Those of us who are fortunate enough to be born whole, healthy and with sound minds have already so very much to be thankful for.

We who can give full play to life and emotion sometime miss so much and when we read of people who have had such great handicaps to start with and how they have built useful, full and happy lives, it puts those of us who are born whole to shame.

Today so many people fill their lives with "if only's" and all that is holding them back is their own failure to expose themselves to the possibility of failure or rejection in order to achieve all that life has to offer. Life is a hard task-master and gives only what is asked of her. If little is asked, little is received.

In this book "Very Special People" the freaks of nature, the odd, the maimed, the deformed, have asked all of life and through their remarkable perseverance have achieved it.

Carl Unthan is such a person. Born without arms in 1848 long before the tragedy of thalidomide, he became an accomplished violinist with his toes. He taught himself to walk, swim, read and write, ride horseback and type, all with his feet. He began at 16 an interest in music and practised endless hours becoming an exquisite violinist who went on tour. Before he died he told his life story calling it a "pediscript" a bit of humour on a manuscript, since it was written with his feet.

Another remarkable pair were two men by the names of Eli Bowen and Charles Tripp. Bowen had feet but no legs, while Tripp had legs without arms. These remarkable gentlemen, dress to the nines loved to go bicycle riding on a bicycle built for two. What a sight.

The one up front with no legs and the one in back with no arms. But manage it and enjoy it they did.

The book is filled with photos of these remarkable people and their stories are filled with humour and pathos.

Eng and Chang were the original Siamese twins. Joined at the breastbone they married and had 22 children between them. Their story is most unusual.

The man with three good and functional legs, Frank Lymbini, felt sorry for himself in the beginning till he visited an institution and saw others so much worse off than he. His third leg, perfectly formed projected from his back. He could kick a ball with it, but it was too high to walk on. What he did have,

however, was a built in stool. He could sit without a chair anyplace, anytime and found it a great convenience. He married and became the father of four healthy and perfectly normal children.

One of the most moving stories in the book is that of the "Elephant Man". He was born with neurofibromatosis which causes hideous tumours to protrude all over the body. The story of John Merrick is an unbelievable account of human suffering and endurance and the ability to find joy under the most horrendous of circumstances. John Merrick was so grotesque that he dared never go out in the daytime. He ventured out only at night disguised with a long cloak and veil hiding himself from a horrified world.

How he kept his sanity and remained a loving and gentle human being is a story of unbelievable courage and perseverance.

And so it goes with the people in this book. Grace McDaniels the "Mule faced woman" (men faint when she lifted her veil), and Jo-Jo the dog faced covered with hair from head to foot. Many people born with parts of their half formed twin protruding from various parts of their bodies. Giants and midgets, fats and living skeletons.

Very special people indeed. A book filled with courage, endurance, and the gift of these people to remain happy without bitterness at what life has offered them. Here are lessons for all of us.

### On Parliament Hill

## Cool it Joe!

By Stewart MacLeod  
Ottawa Bureau  
Of The Herald

OTTAWA—Conservative Leader Joe Clark has certainly been getting encouraging news from the pollsters since he assumed office in February - but I can't understand why party officials are so happy about it.

With a general election probably two years away, it's too early for any political leader, and particularly a new one, to be riding atop all the popularity polls. It would be far better to start a gradual climb about now and then peak just before the voting.

As it is, the 36-year-old Conservative leader is bound to experience some opinion-poll setbacks before the next election. And

everytime the party's popularity drops even a few percentage points, the leader will face criticism from within his own ranks.

The first poll taken after Mr. Clark became leader indicates that the Conservatives were favored by 43 percent of the voters while only 34 percent supported the Liberals. Mr. Clark could scarcely conceal his glee. "I want to gallop right along," he said, in an apparent reference to the Gallup Poll.

Now, another poll shows that 60 percent of Canadians believe Mr. Clark will be "an asset" to his party - a remarkably high proportion considering the historic disagreements existing within the party. By comparison, only 27 percent thought that Ed

Broadbent would be an asset to the New Democratic Party.

The poll showed that only seven percent thought Mr. Clark would be a liability to his party, while 33 percent couldn't make up their minds. His strongest area of support appears to be the Atlantic provinces where 79 percent considered him an asset. On the Prairies it was 78 percent, in British Columbia 61 percent, in Quebec 55 percent and in Ontario 51 percent.

Sixty-eight percent of those polled were able to name Mr. Clark as the Conservative leader, while only 32 percent could identify Mr. Broadbent.

It is difficult to make an accurate comparison of polls that ask different questions, but it is significant that another recent

sampling showed that 49 percent of Canadians expressed "disapproval" over the way Prime Minister Trudeau is handling his job.

If we were on the eve of an election, all of these indicators would send shivers through Liberal party headquarters, not to mention an odd chill among the New Democrats. But most remember how Robert Stanfield pulled his party's popularity way ahead of the Liberals immediately after he became Conservative leader in 1960 - in fact, it was the same as the most recent poll. Just one year later, the Liberals won 155 seats compared with only 72 for the Conservatives.

There is no reason to assume this will happen again, but there is also no reason to assume the present popularity standings will

prevail.

Much will depend on the performance of Mr. Clark. Another major factor, of course, is the state of the economy and the government's ability to handle the other messy little problems that have arisen lately.

#### High TV Profile

Mr. Clark entered the leadership fresh from about four days of national television coverage. It is understandable that the initial polls would indicate a high profile.

Since then, he has been concentrating on organizational work, visiting provincial associations, meeting the party faithful, and trying to inject new life into riding organizations. Most Canadians have had little opportunity to see him since he became Conservative leader. And it's still too early to

judge his performance in Parliament.

His work as national campaigner is just beginning. If he proves effective, and if the Liberals continue to be hounded by inflation, unemployment and other assorted headaches, Mr. Clark just might maintain the present popularity of himself and his party. But there are a lot of ifs here. And he'll still have to face a campaigning Pierre Trudeau.

It's impossible to look two years ahead in politics. But Mr. Clark's immediate concern must be those high popularity ratings, because the moment he slips, he will be forced on the defensive. And that's not where an opposition leader should be.