

Continue efforts to improve cores

Businessmen in Acton and downtown Georgetown must be commended for the decision taken last week to seek municipal assistance for the improvement of the downtown cores in both communities.

It is the first step in what may ultimately be a long and uphill battle to improve the image of the downtown cores and save them from a slow death experienced in downtown areas in many communities across the province.

But the first hurdle will be the designation of what is the downtown core in each of the communities.

Hopefully, all businessmen will be progressive when looking at the long-term costs and possible results from the proposed program.

Acton businessmen, who have been seeking off-street parking for more than a decade may very well see such a development completed within the concept of a business improvement area. It can only add to the service and convenience of consumers using the downtown core.

But the effort now started must not stop. Agreement must be reached on a progressive scale in order to provide an over all plan for development and a proposal for the resulting image of the two downtown areas.

Georgetown and Acton, which are now in the midst of urbanization, must act or face the total loss of identity felt by many small Ontario towns which have lost their downtown business districts.

Fergus, which has for many years, attempted to find a solution to the same problems facing Halton Hills, two years ago promoted a contest sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce for a plan for the eventual redevelopment of the core area which

abouts the Grand River. It is an impressive proposition with much credit, but the implementation of any of the ten plans accepted as prize winners in the contest has been stalled or become buried in constant debate over how, when and at what cost to implement the proposals.

Prior to any action being taken for the town to designate both downtown districts as improvements areas under the authority of the Municipal Act, which stipulates that improvement costs may be added to assessment, merchants in both communities should seriously discuss what the future holds.

What the businessmen proposed last week can not be taken lightly and all merchants must agree to the improvement. Although the Municipal Act places a requirement on objectors to raise a petition supporting their position, and requires one-third of the affected persons opposing the plan, core businessmen should consider seriously the implications of ANY opposition whether or not it is strong enough to defeat the proposal.

Downtown cores have provided an identity to smaller towns that can not be replaced by contemporary business practices such as plazas. They represent a vitality and a part of our own heritage which must be preserved.

Possible consideration should be given to redeveloping the Georgetown business district to reflect the Pioneer Days celebrations on a year round basis instead of only annually. And maybe Acton can exploit a vital part of its history in any downtown redevelopment.

The ball now rests in the businessmen's court and the next move belongs to them.



A tongue-in-cheek look at our world from Jaws to water beds to sex bias

By GERRY LANDSBOROUGH

It's time again for potpourri a regular feature of this column. Here we travel the globe to bring you a sometimes serious but mostly not so serious tongue-in-cheek look at this wonderful wacky world we live upon.

First we're off to Seattle, Washington, where a "great white shark" sank his vicious teeth into eight-year-old Everett Johnson's leg - while he was lying in bed. How so you ask? Well it appears that "friend of Jaws" was mounted on a board above Everett's bed. The board fell, and the result... Boy attacked by shark while in bed. Can you believe it?

Off to Edinburgh now where our friend the dashing Prince Charles known as "Foggy" to his friends has done it again. If you recall from before he gained his nickname because he isn't always as bright as can be.

This time he asked a beauty queen as he welcomed her aboard the minesweeper "Bronington" "I hope you have taken your pill." Beauty queen blushes - and aside replies later the "Prince naturally referred to sea-sickness pills" - naturally. I mean to say Princes don't fool around - with statements like that.

Back home to Kingston, Ontario, where four enterprising young women have come up with an unusual solution to "the old mice in the cupboard routine."

The girls were staying in a cabin in the Bon Echo provincial park. Mice were a problem and they tried rat poison to no avail. One night one of the girls accidentally left her purse ajar with a new package of chocolate-coated laxatives in it. In the morning the laxatives were long gone and so were the mice.

I can see the commercials now - "Bothered with Mice - laxatives are nice." Who knows maybe it really works.

WATER BED
Here's a nip from Ventura, California. It

appears that the fire department had an unusual rescue to attend to when Eleanor Youngston water bed sent a great wave crashing, throwing poor Mrs. Youngston out of bed, and the 1,700 lb. mattress on top of her.

Her husband unable to lift the mattress did the only decent thing and called the fire department. Those indoor tidal waves can be very dangerous. Hard to explain too.

The latest from Chicago, that swinging town, is a plant stand that comes complete with a recorded message that begins "This is your plant talking."

I really don't know what else it says but "this is your plant talking" is enough for me.

It's hard enough talking to those funny little green things without them starting to talk back. You know if you weren't prepared for it - if someone planted such a device in your plant you could permanently dent your watering can - or worse even.

Away to Georgia now where Little Ripoff is about to exchange marriage vows with Little Stinger. Officiating at the ceremony is Sky Pilot normally known as Rev. Hubert Heaven (what else). Guests included Ruptured Duck - Whampus Cat - French Hillbilly - Lee County Wallygator - Lady Teapot and Skinny Minny. You guessed it - a CBR's paradise - wedding vows tripping the airways.

First a 10-7 (stop transmitting) then - Do you Little Ripoff take this woman to be your lawful wedded wife - to which he replied 30-12 I will. Oh, how utterly romantic. Like I've always said, different strokes for "different" folks.

SEX BIAS
Over to Hamilton now where a handsome young vassal can't work in the castle. Translated - Ray Gamble claims sex bias because he can't get a job as a maid in Dundurn Castle. He claims only women are hired as tour guides. These girls wear the clothes of the period of maids and cooks. Doesn't say much for our friend Mr. Gamble. A daring young man from Dundurn Castle

As a maid he wanted to hassle But he's still unemoloved And definitely annoyed

Because the castle won't tassel that vassel. Stop everything as we bring you a special bulletin from Van Nuys California. If your ping pong balls are smashed don't throw them out. Drop them in a saucepan of boiling water and guess what? Why they bounce right back into shape.

The only problem I foresee is explaining to someone what your doing if they happen along while your boiling your ping pong balls - and what's your idea of a fun thing to do on a Friday night?

Well that about wraps it up for this week - but just a minute I think I see... I do see... it's that strange and mysterious Maharishi Sometimes Yogi he's caught up with me again. And if I know the Maharishi he's bound to want to impart words of wisdom on us. Take it away Maharishi.

"Remember that though it is written that the foot of the rabbit is a source of good luck - remember the rabbit who originally owned four and was not so lucky." I know - don't tell me - he's done it again. Oh Maharishi such profoundly - such wisdom - such a pain. Why can't he find his own column somewhere.

Surely someone out there needs a profound and clever Maharishi - its something every home shouldn't be without. Till next week - keep on smiling.

Queen's Park

Ham report may affect other industry

By DON O'HEARN
Queen's Park Bureau
Of The Herald

The Ham Report on Health and Safety of Workers in Mines could have a great impact on working conditions, and incidentally on industrial relations, in the province.

Although Dr. Ham's inquiry was specifically centered on mining his findings and recommendations inevitably will involve other areas of industry.

In fact early in his report the commissioner says "the problems of the health and safety of workers in mines discussed in this report are probably not peculiar to the mining industry."

MORE PARTICIPATION
Generally, the basic recommendations of the report are that there be an obligation in industry to be more open about working conditions and safety records, and that there be more worker participation in safety and health matters.

Specifically Dr. Ham recommends certain records of pollution, personal contamination etc., that should be kept by mine and be open to the public; that there be worker-auditors who would monitor safety and health matters; and that there be a new Occupational Health and Safety authority which would apply to all industry.

The government will almost certainly adopt these recommendations, at least

On The Home Front

Dreams of youth

By SUSAN DeFACENDIS

I would really like to write something whimsical, poetic and beautiful but, approaching the end of the summer holidays and the end of my rope at approximately the same speed, my mind has blanked out.

'Moon', 'June' and 'Spoon' would be about the greatest heights I could possibly aspire to this week and, apart from that, I believe those words became outdated, as I did, about two decades ago.

Weren't they beautiful though - or is it just the passage of time that makes them appear that way? Maybe there are always a few nostalgic tears to be shed for our youth in whatever decade it may have occurred.

Mine was spent during the era of Stan Kenton and the big band sound and the heyday of my first love, Johnny Ray. Remember the songs "There She Is" and "The Little White Cloud That Came?"

Oh! The weekly allowances I spent on his records and all the adolescent tears I shed with him during the million or so times I played his recordings - and how it must have driven my mother to distraction. I shall never forget the important occasion when my parents announced we were emigrating to Canada and my first single thought was that I would be on the same continent as Johnny Ray. It is funny and rather sad how one's priorities change. He did come to Toronto though within a year of our arrival here, merely confirming my belief that Canada was wonderful, and I watched him perform every night for the week he appeared.

Do you remember falling in love, away back when? Not the painful agonies of puppylove, but the first "This Is It" occasion. That wonderful "kinda floaty" sensation of not quite touching the ground - and where the whole world seemed to be looking upon you in kindness, as though sharing in your feelings. Do the somewhat worldly-wise people of today still feel the same way? - and why is an apparently once-in-a-lifetime gift only placed in the careless hands of the young - can it never come again?

Falling a poetic column, I would like to write something very intelligent but, with three children trapped inside the house on a rainy day, the most brilliant thought I can muster is: "Hang in there, Susan. It may only be 10 a.m., but it is written in the stars that bedtime must eventually arrive".

It would be so pleasant though, after suffering through a day of inter-family warfare, to be able to relax with the evening newspaper and not have to go through it all again on a world-wide scale.

Wouldn't it be great if we could dig one huge garbage dump and pour into it all the corruption, violence, destruction and starvation existing today - bury it completely?

As an obviously incurable idealist and unable to write either a whimsical or an intelligent column due to circumstances beyond my control, I would like to have at least shared an uproariously funny anecdote with you. One that would have shut out the realities of life for ten minutes and had you rolling with mirth and gasping for breath.

However, knowing that there are still approximately 124 hours, 50 minutes and 23 seconds until those school doors joyfully open again, my sense of humour, a precarious little flame that has to be carefully fanned even at the best of times, has all but been extinguished by my continuous gusty sighs. Maybe next week.

On Parliament Hill

Tom Cossit, a thorn in the side of technocrats

By STEWART MACLEOD
Ottawa Bureau
Of The Herald

With the bureaucrats busy trying to convince Canadians they are being served by a penny-pinching government, Tom Cossit's continuing revelations must be driving them up the wall.

Mr. Cossit is that angry Tory member of Parliament from Leeds, a retrained Liberal who has taken dead aim the the extravagant spending around 24 Sussex Drive, the official residence of Prime Minister Trudeau. Although I can't recall Mr. Trudeau ever saying anything about this particular Conservative, I think we can safely assume he doesn't exactly worship him.

But the bureaucrats must find him even more distasteful. Here they are, churning out that propaganda about how the government is cutting all unnecessary expenses and along comes Mr. Cossit with another tale of big-league bills at Sussex Drive. This time, it seems there are some minor electrical repairs being carried out at a cost of \$9,000.

And, as usual, the straight talking Mr. Cossit referred to the expenditures as ridiculous, costly and worthy of suspicion. Furthermore he suggested, Mr. Trudeau delayed the work until Parliament had adjourned so no questions could be asked in the House.

This was denied by Gerry Baker, chief of building maintenance for the public works department. The current electrical repairs, he said, are "just one of many thousands maintenance items the department takes care of just like you would in your own residence."

Well not quite, Mr. Baker. Most of us don't spend \$9,000 to install a new circuit-breaker panel and replace some basement wiring. Perhaps \$3,000 is not out of line for connecting the swimming pool electrical system with the same transformer that supplies the house, but few of us are in a position to make such a judgement. Not many of us have \$210,000 swimming pools.

MORE TO COME
An information officer for the works department has said that some \$15,000 might be spent on rewiring over the next three years. I don't have the detailed breakdown of previous expenditures on electrical work at 24 Sussex, but many thousands of dollars were involved. And the additional \$15,000 should put things in pretty good shape. Mr. Cossit seems to have been close to

the mark in saying that wiring leading to that controversial swimming pool was installed contrary to Ontario Hydro regulations. Mr. Baker confirmed that "they (Hydro) allowed us to make a temporary connection when the pool was built last summer so we could get the pool in operation."

Nice chaps at Hydro. Of course this renewed controversy over the pool provided a golden opportunity for Mr. Cossit to renew his demands that the donors be identified. It will be remembered that the pool was provided as a gift by a group of Canadians whose names have never been revealed.

"Do these donors really exist?" Mr. Cossit asks again. "It's long overdue for the public to know where the money came from, whether any favors were expected in return and once and for all it should be cleared up as whether any conflict of interest exists in the situation."

DOESN'T KNOW
Mr. Trudeau maintains he doesn't know the donors, nor does he want to learn their identities. "If I don't know who they are, I can't very well owe them any favors," he has remarked.

But this is getting away from the point we were trying to make - that with all the emphasis on spending restraints, it must be rather embarrassing for the bureaucrats when Mr. Cossit keeps coming up with internal spending details. Someone in the works department is obviously telling him what's going on at the big stone residence on the Ottawa River.

And all this publicity was not what the secretary of the Treasury Board had in mind when he wrote to deputy minister that "departments and agencies should use their own initiative to improve the visibility of restraint in government spending whenever the opportunity arises."

G.F. Usaldeton, the secretary, also suggested that when expenditures are announced, that it would be useful to indicate more expensive options which have been discarded in favor of restraints.

If the public works department was on the ball, it would have announced that rewiring the basement at Sussex Drive with pure gold wire and pearl-inlaid circuit breakers would have cost a million, but by using cheap materials the job is being done for \$9,000.

That would get Mr. Cossit off the backs of the bureaucrats.

From here and there

Recommendations merit thought

Two of the recommendations of a New Westminster, B.C., coroner's jury, call for more than passing attention, and serious questions.

The jury was investigating the death of an octogenarian following injuries he suffered when his car was hit by a police cruiser, unmarked, and in hot pursuit of another equally anonymous.

The driver of one cruiser instigated the chase when a car passed it at high speed. The car to be followed was driven by an undercover RCMP officer engaged in narcotics surveillance.

A portable two-way radio was used by the driver being pursued to try and alert his colleague that pursuit was unnecessary. There was a difference in channels and no contact was made.

What happened next is a reason why no highway user can consider himself safe if caught in the vicinity of a police chase. The cruiser in hot pursuit slid sideways into an oncoming car and in the resultant collision the elderly gent suffered massive injuries from which he died. His granddaughter, a passenger, sustained only minor injury.

No one was to blame for what happened, the jury concluded, a verdict that may have raised some eyebrows, but doubtless returned after due consideration of all the evidence.

But what might interest everyone who may, under certain circumstances, become the same kind of "sitting duck" when police are forced to resort to near jet-speeds to apprehend fleeing offenders; are these jury recommendations.

-That police cars use better quality tires.

-That policeman should take pursuit and skid training in driving instructions.

And the questions to be asked are obvious. 1. How can it be that any police department which knows its cruisers will, at one time or another, be involved in high speed driving, permit the vehicles to be equipped with tires of a quality not designed for this purpose?

2. How does it happen that officers, called on to drive with the skill and nerve of an Indianapolis 500 contestant, but under extreme weather conditions; are not compelled to take pursuit and skid training before being permitted to undertake driving at speed well in excess of posted limits?

We are told that an internal RCMP investigation into the unfortunate, and probably needless collision, led to the implementation of several jury recommendations.

Well and good, but what about the myriad police forces across the country whose vehicles may even now be equipped with run-of-the-mill tires, and who drivers are not trained for spectacular and hazardous work on highways and roads?

The whole issue of police chases is, we know, under review. But meanwhile, buying proper tires and training officers in special techniques, is something every force could do...and immediately.

So we suggest that while readers devour more than passing attention to the aftermath of a B.C. collision, police go a step further and give it their undivided attention.

(GUELPH MERCURY)