

Letter writer's museum plan a good solution

Herald letter writer Isabel Cruise may have come up with an idea that will solve a number of problems plaguing the Georgetown area.

In a letter to the editor published in last week's Herald, Ms Cruise suggests that the Georgetown library building, long the centre of local controversy, be turned into a museum.

She believes a new building should be constructed to house the library, as well as other community facilities.

The Georgetown library building is a beautiful and striking reminder of a time in Georgetown's past when buildings were constructed, not only to serve a functional purpose but also to serve as works of art.

As Ms Cruise says the building should neither be altered or destroyed. But she is also correct when she says it is simply no longer adequate to meet this community's needs as a library.

What better way is there for the beautiful old building to continue to serve a functional purpose than as a much needed local museum? It's safe to say that Georgetown is at a crossroads now in terms of preserving its heritage. While local groups and individuals, like the Esqueving Historical Society, have worked hard over the years collecting items of

memorabilia and historical significance the time is rapidly approaching when they require one roof under which to collect and display these valuable items so they will not be shunted off in some box or attic to be lost or damaged. The volume alone makes it increasingly difficult for those determined to help preserve this town's heritage to do so.

A project like the creation of a museum in the library building would likely qualify for some degree of Wintario funding although we expect the costs incurred by the building's conversion would be minimal.

If the entire library building is not required for use as a museum, we're certain area residents would have other ideas for the additional space.

As stated previously in these columns, Georgetown does require a new library building, preferably with a theatre facility attached. But as we step proudly into the future with the new structure, why not also treat our past with the respect it deserves through the creation of a museum?

The town should thank Isabel Cruise for her idea and Halton Hills council should be considering the matter at the same time as they develop plans for a new library building.

Tax hikes blamed on municipalities

Halton Hills town council, along with the Halton school board and regional council have now all completed their 1979 budgets and they are coming in for some undeserved criticism by at least a few local residents as a result.

In the new budgets recently tabled, the school board levy increased by a little over eight per cent, Halton Hills tax rate increased by 6.8 per cent and the region hiked their levy by eight per cent.

But, to a large extent the tax increases are not the fault of fiscal irresponsibility on the part of local politicians but factors out of their control, including a provincial government dedicated to cutbacks and re-election.

Since the early 1970s, when a fellow by the name of Darcy McKeough was treasurer of Ontario, the Tory government at Queen's Park has been on a determined 'restraint' campaign.

What this has meant is that despite the pleading of citizens involved in anything the Tories deemed marginal, like daycare, any level of social services, education and more recently, municipal governments, they have hacked away at funding levels.

Recently, the provincial government has drawn praise from at least a few Halton Hills taxpayers for their 'restrained' five per cent increase in grants to municipal governments.

What this has meant is that before even calculating 1979 budgets, local governments must contend with an inflation rate of over nine per cent as well as staff who are hoping to get a salary increase that will at least keep them close to the increasing cost of living.

On top of this, there are the annual costs created by wear and tear on equipment, buildings, etc. owned or administered by local governments. These are costs that are basically unavoidable.

So without even considering expansion, local governments are placed in a position of having to

raise taxes by some degree, just to maintain a semblance of previous levels of service.

The budget planning has been further fouled up by the provincial government's insistence upon providing minimal funding to municipalities. By providing grants that fall more than four per cent behind the inflation rate, the Tory government ensures that municipalities will have to hike taxes more than may be palatable for local residents.

Of course, this way provincial government escapes the blame and the local politicians become the heavies.

For the main part, it's just a game of politics. The provincial government cuts back their grants to municipalities to appear to be using restraint yet knowing full well the difficult position municipalities are being put in and the almost impossible task they have of trying to stay within the government's five per cent grant increase.

The municipal politicians position is made doubly difficult because while the public wants them to cut taxes, no one wants them to reduce services. It's safe to say that local residents are quicker to get on the phone to complain to Mayor Pete Pomeroy or their town councillors about tardiness in road repair caused by cutbacks than they are to phone Ontario Premier Bill Davis to complain about his cutbacks.

So either way the provincial government can feel relatively secure that flack, either for increased taxes or cutbacks in services will fall on the shoulders of municipal politicians rather than their own, despite the fact that they are largely responsible for local government's tough choice between service cuts or tax hikes.

So Halton Hills taxpayers shouldn't be fooled, the provincial government isn't really keeping a lid on expenses they're just making you put the money directly into the municipality tax kitty rather than going via Queen's Park.



Few splashy changes in Ontario's new budget



Queen's Park
By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau
Of The Herald
TORONTO - On a superficial level Treasurer Frank Miller's first budget is just a rebash of those produced by his predecessor Darcy McKeough.

There is the same emphasis on restraint, the same commitment to a non-socialist economic system.

It should be noted, though, that when you're writing a budget based on the premise government is doing too much already, it's hard to make splashy changes.

That's a problem any treasurer who believes in restraint faces.

But even within that limiting context there is an essential difference in the Miller and McKeough budget which

comes through more in their total approaches than any specific details.

Miller has a certain imaginative-ness that McKeough budgets lacked.

BIG TORY

Not that the change is earth-shattering by any means. In many ways it is more a matter of style and personality, Darcy's tendency to rigidity versus Frank's flexibility.

For all that both came from small towns, McKeough (Chatham) approached budgets like a Bay Street capitalist (which may or may not be why he's now a director of corporations).

But Miller (Bracebridge) still acts and talks small town.

McKeough wouldn't turn a hair at Miller's basic philosophic position, of course, nor would anybody committed to a high standard of living and free economic choice.

"I believe the future success of our society is dependent upon the maintenance of a very strong commitment to free enterprise," Miller said.

"Second, I believe the bedrock strength of free enterprise lies in private equity investment."

So he's written a budget that favors small enterprise, and these Canadians willing to gamble their cash on future returns in some profitable business.

McKeough's only experiment along that line, that Venture Investment idea, was so restrictive it proved a total failure. Miller is much more willing to gamble, as perhaps befits a successful Muskoka resort operator.

He wants the average citizen to risk his or her capital in small ventures and is willing to manipulate the tax system to produce that result.

OTHER SAY

His Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) is thus an attempt to involve Mr. and Mrs. Average in the risk capital system.

And that's the difference in the thrust of the Miller and McKeough budgets, all the tinkering with minor taxes aside.

And it shouldn't be forgotten that small business is labor-intensive, the best source of new jobs here in Ontario.

One can bet money that if the SBDCs don't work, and Miller himself is not sure they will, he'll try some other approach to boosting small business as long as he's provincial treasurer.

Pro-Canada committee may hit major roadblocks



Ottawa Report
By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau
Of The Herald

The Pro-Canada Committee, which co-ordinates the financing for the federalist cause in Quebec, may be crippled by internal power struggles, but there is no disputing the political leadership in that game cause. The Union Nationale and other smaller parties may not like it much, but Liberal Leader Claude Ryan has clearly emerged as the undisputed champion of the Canadian cause in Quebec.

Actually, Ryan's greatest potential problems had been within his own party, as senior Liberals continued to carry on some of the ill-will that was generated during the heated leadership race. Supporters of defeated candidate Raymond Garneau were reluctant to demonstrate any enthusiasm for the austere and scholarly Claude Ryan.

But at that recent convention of party brass in Montreal, it was apparent that Ryan has assumed full command of a relatively unified party. And furthermore, he has managed to stir the delegates into a fighting frame of mind for the forthcoming referendum on Quebec's future.

CHANGES IMAGE

The internal critics who had argued that Ryan's profile was too low and lacked lustre, now were complimenting him on the thankless spadework he had done immediately after his leadership victory. Other who had suggested Ryan was unprepared for Rene Levesque's assault on the emotions of Quebecers, now were

gushing excitedly about Ryan's response to the premier. They cheered gleefully, when the Liberal leader talked about leadership.

It was a new Ryan who emerged at that convention—a fighting field marshal, now appearing to be just itching for a fight, confident that all the painstaking detail in his over-all battle plan will carry him through. Sounding a bit like Lord Montgomery, he even suggested that victory has already been ordained 'in heaven.'

"Our cause is good. We are not afraid. There will be difficulties. I am offering no promised land." Then he went on to declare that it would lead his troops to a final victory. "I think it is written in heaven that's how it will happen."

Former supporters of Garneau, many of them openly critical of the methodical Ryan during the last few months, were on their feet cheering now. And this apparent display of unity was not mere window-dressing. It permeated the workshops and the convention backroom where disunity normally thrives.

"Ryan is in full control," said one Garneau campaign worker.

CO-OPERATION VITAL

A good many Quebec federalists had been worried about this convention, since it came so soon after the crippling of the Pro-Canada Committee. This committee, established to meet Quebec government requirements that one umbrella group co-ordinate the finances of the federalist forces for the referendum, could never expect happy co-operation from seven political parties and seven citizens' groups. It's often difficult to get such co-operation from one political party.

And it's likely that Rene Levesque's Parti Quebecois government thought of this when it decided that one umbrella group must be established for each side in the referendum battle.

While the problems of the Pro-Canada Committee are not disastrous—an umbrella group will be reconstituted—it would have been considered disastrous if the

Liberal party had followed with more serious squabbling. That would have set off a wave of giggling within the Parti Quebecois.

Instead, Claude Ryan provided a surprising demonstration of his leadership abilities. And his troops responded with a display of loyalty for Quebec liberalism.

It remains to be seen how Ryan and his troops will perform against the Levesque forces in actual battle. But the federalists clearly have more reasons for optimism than they did just a week ago.

Halton's History

From our files

SUBWAY WIDENING
THIRTY YEARS AGO—The Board of Transport Commissioners held a hearing in the Municipal office yesterday on the John Street subway case in which the town, represented by counsel J.D. Armp of Toronto and K.M. Langdon of Georgetown presented their case in which they claim the Canadian National Railways is responsible for widening the subway. The case hinges on whether the roadway or the railway was there first, and the CNR based the railway's case on evidence that the roadway was there before any road.

Carroll's store this week featured coffee for 61 cents a pound, head lettuce for 17 cents a head, Heinz baby food, three tins for 25 cents, Sockeye salmon for 23 cents a tin, tomatoe soup, two tins for 21 cents, and two one-pound packages of margarine for 63 cents.

Gray Coach Lines says "Nowadays, it's no trick at all to pay a visit to the folks back home on the farm. Over thousands of miles of Ontario's highways, fast and modern buses provide frequent and convenient service direct to the farm gate. Round trip fare to Chicago is \$19.50, to Los Angeles, \$25.45, to Winnipeg, \$43.80 and to Montreal \$14.85.

FIRE RAVAGES CAMP NORVAL
TWENTY YEARS AGO—Two main buildings of the YMCA Camp Norval were completely destroyed early Tuesday morning when fire of unknown origin swept through the camp, aided by heavy winds and exploding tanks of oil and propane gas. The loss will run in the neighborhood of \$23,500. Every available truck, fireman booster pump and heavy hose line was rushed to the blaze, which broke out around 1:45 a.m. and raged out of control for almost four hours as firemen concentrated on saving the surrounding buildings. A sixty-gallon drum of oil and a 45 gallon drum of propane gas stored behind the main building exploded within seconds of each other.

Two Georgetown district boys were instantly killed when their car and two 40-ton gravel trucks were in collision early Saturday during a heavy fog two miles south of Brampton on Highway 10. The boys were Daniel Smith, 17, son of Mr. and Mrs. Roy C. Smith, and William Walker, 18, son of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Walker of Stewarttown. Harry Middleton, 35, of Toronto, operator of one of the tandem dump trucks, said the car suddenly appeared out of the heavy fog. He was uninjured, as was Daniel Rogers, 31, of Malton, who was following northward in the other truck.

Wayne Fiebig, son of Mr. and Mrs. G.W. Fiebig, 45 Victoria Ave., was presented with his Queen's Scout certificate by the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, Hon. J. Keiler MacKay, at a ceremony at Brantford on Friday, where 125 scouts from all over Ontario received similar honors.

TERRA COTTA STORE SOLD
TEN YEARS AGO—Forty cattle, 27 of them registered Guernesys, perished Monday afternoon when a barn owned by Dr. R.D. Kunic was burned to the ground. The farm known as Falgarbrook Farm is located just north of the new Hornby cutoff. Damages were estimated at \$100,000 in the fire, which started at about 3:30 p.m. Among the cattle lost in the fire were two bulls which won Grand Championship at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto.

Donald Findley, newly hired golf professional at North Halton Golf and Country Club on Maple Avenue, has just returned from a winter season as golf and sports director on a Caribbean Cruise ship out of New York. Last year, he was teaching professional and assistant to a former North Halton pro, Doug Bruton of Northwood Country Club in Downsview.

Terra Cotta General Store has changed hands. Mr. and Mrs. Walter (Red) Asseltine will be the new proprietors as of May 1, and Mr. Asseltine will assume the duties of postmaster as well.

An idea spawned by a group of Georgetown high school students has received the okay from Halton board of education area supervisor Lavender and Saturday night the school's first student-operated drop-in centre opened its doors here. It enables students and their guests to use the cafeteria for discussion, chess, cards and record playing. Organizers will also add a feature attraction from time to time.

Monday night, council decided to back the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Reeves fight against any Bell Telephone rate increase. They approved a \$47.94 charge of the \$30,000 legal costs, to be paid by the various municipalities. The cost was based on one-third per capita.

OMB HEARINGS TO RESUME
ONE YEAR AGO—The possibility exists of organized opposition in Halton Hills toward the implementation of preliminary proposals for the Niagara Escarpment. Several area landowners attended a meeting of the Niagara Escarpment Central Ratepayers' Association Thursday to learn what efforts have been made by landowners north of Halton Hills through Dufferin, Simcoe, Grey and Bruce Counties.

Halton Regional Police were called to investigate a break-in at Harrison Public School which occurred overnight Sunday and resulted in considerable mess but only minor damage to the building. Vandals stole some money, ransacked desk drawers, poured fluorescent correcting liquid on a desk and public address system, and threw black stink ink about the school office. They also took fruit juice from the refrigerator in the staff lounge and splashed it about the room and painted obscenities on chalkboards and floors.

November 6 has been set as the date for resumption of Ontario Municipal Board hearings into the matter between Halton Hills and Focal Properties. The hearings were adjourned last November after Focal Properties, a subsidiary of S.B. McLaughlin Associates, presented its arguments on why it should be allowed to proceed with construction of 1,840 homes south of Silver Creek.

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