

Arts groups have come of age - is town ready?

Georgetown - and thus Halton Hills - is currently at a major crossroad in its cultural evolution. As two separate reviews in this week's Herald attest, the community's major performing arts groups - the Georgetown Little Theatre and the Georgetown Choral Society - have again excelled their own past achievements with highly laudable productions this past weekend (and in the GLT's case, this coming weekend should offer more of the same).

The productions - GLT's "Bedroom Farce" and the GCS' "Broadway Tonight" - marked the completion of the two groups' respective performing seasons; when they return to the stage, it could well be the one inside the new library-cultural centre.

The much-touted \$1.7 million complex was the topic of discussion at a badly-needed open forum organized last week by the Arts Council, and once again, we're a little dismayed to report, not everyone came away satisfied.

To be sure, the GLT - perhaps the single most active group striving to raise funds for the complex (doubtless the success story of the year) and likely the centre's prime user - is happy with the project as presented thus far and has no quarrel with the inability of project directors to answer a handful of pertinent questions.

We applaud the GLT and sincerely congratulate all of its supporters for so quickly sponsoring the purchase (as it were) of nearly 300 seats for the new theatre. It was another shining example of community spirit ranking right up there with the reconstruction of Georgetown Memorial Arena several years ago.

We'd particularly like to single out the GLT's John Roe, who has turned out to be the project's main publicist, submitting weekly updates - well-written and attention-getting - to both Georgetown weeklies.

Alas, John's features deal largely with fund-raising and, by necessity, offer precious little information about the kind of facility so many are struggling to finance.

The town's budget considerations are obviously the prime factor here, but judging from some of the answers provided at the Arts Council forum, recreation

director Tom Shepard envisions a relatively small-scale operation at the centre once it opens.

We've always been wary of Mr. Shepard's council-endorsed plan to have a single manager run the theatre portion instead of a board of directors. We hope that some form of advisory committee can be established to let that individual know what the town's arts groups would like to see happening at the complex; we're quite optimistic that such a committee would have a much better chance of survival than did the advisory committees which once helped guide municipal recreation in both urban areas of town before succumbing to public apathy.

And we'd desperately like to see a clearer picture of just what kind of equipment the complex will offer as soon as this information is available. At the forum, project chairman Rex Heaslop commented simply that much of the equipment will be purchased as its need is established. We suspect these needs could have been established long ago.

Yes, we still have our reservations about the scale and direction of this unprecedented project, but in all fairness to those directly involved, we're frankly bowled over (pun intended) by the kind of general support this project has enjoyed since last fall. The Rotary Club's fund-raising bowl-athon Saturday was, by all accounts, a rousing success, and you've already heard about the GLT's imminent success in raising another \$30,000-plus through its seat plaque sales.

But between now - as the GLT and GCS seasons come to an end - and Labor Day, when construction of the complex is expected to finish, we hope those few reservations can be replaced by a general public euphoria over this exciting cultural step forward for Halton Hills. The GLT and GCS, along with a number of other local arts groups, have demonstrated their readiness for a major, semi-professional facility. They deserve it; they've earned it; and if there remains any doubt in the taxpayer's mind about the need to finance a large-scale arts complex by summer's end, we fear these worthwhile groups may yet be relegated to using a less-than-satisfactory stage.



Halton's History

From our files

THIRTY YEARS AGO-Three area residents, two of them brothers, set sail for Korea with the Canadian Special Forces' Royal Canadian Regiment this week. Ron and Allan Edmunds of RR1 Georgetown and Mike Lorusso of Georgetown will join other hometown boys overseas, including Bob Rogers and Earl Beerman, who is recuperating from a knee wound in a Japanese hospital.

The Georgetown Raiders defeated Milton Co-ops in a special benefit hockey game Friday which raised \$300 for the family of Jack Kentner, a Milton player killed in a recent highway accident.

A notice on today's front page announces the town's plan to shut off municipal water supplies Sunday morning for an indefinite period. The shut-off will allow town workmen to hook up a new main off Guelph and Ewing Streets with the College View subdivision, where improved supplies will offer better fire protection for several major industries.

Wearing their new gowns for the first time, the Georgetown Girls' High School choir and the Georgetown String Quartet presented a concert Sunday at Knox Presbyterian Church.

TWENTY YEARS AGO-The Georgetown High School teaching staff will become departmentalized next term. School enrolments and the volume of teaching periods necessitated the change to departments. Recommended to head departments were: John Bellamy, Maths; George Rogister, Science; and Florence Louke, Moderns.

No open deer season for Halton County in 1961 was the bad news given to local hunters at County Council last week. Hunters will have to go far afield, since there will be no deer season in any counties in the Lake Huron district.

Word has been received by officials of the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital Association that the official opening of the hospital will be attended by the Ontario Minister of Health. Matthew Dymond will officially open the building on behalf of the Hospital Commission June 17.

At the suggestion of D. L. Hooper, Delrex Developments Ltd. has forwarded a cheque for \$100 to the Georgetown Memorial Hospital. Some weeks ago, the company announced it would make grants of \$100 to \$500 for information from citizens assisting in land sales or bringing industry to town. Dr. Hooper was instrumental in the sale of a lot.

The Daffodil Tea held by the Georgetown Branch of the Canadian Cancer Society will become an annual affair. The tea will be held in conjunction with the local cancer campaign for funds and will be continued in future years to launch the 1981 canvass.

TEN YEARS AGO-A bottle of nitroglycerine was discovered in the basement of the Willett home on Ontario Street, but most of the residents in the neighborhood were unaware that anything was on until a loud explosion ended the drama shortly after midnight. Mr. Willett at one time was a quarry worker and it is believed he used the nitro on the job. It was estimated the bottle had been sitting in the cellar for over 20 years.

Randy Smith, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gerry Smith, placed first in the Peel Music Festival, grade six piano, competing against 20 others. He is studying piano under Alva Allen.

The Concerned Citizens of Georgetown will sponsor a bottle drive April 26 to May 1 in an attempt to have the glass recycled. This would be a big step toward combating pollution, and helping to find more land for sanitary landfill sites.

In an attempt to provide as many students as possible with summer employment, the federal government hopes to endorse several programs, such as repainting and repairing houses for senior citizens.

ONE YEAR AGO-The North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded will be celebrating its 25th anniversary this Saturday night with a gala dinner at Milton's Bayrischer Hof.

After a sometimes heated debate, town council amended a bylaw Monday evening to allow the location of a private commercial health club on industrial land. Cherrytree Developments' proposed site for the club is a vacant building next to Kelly's Hardware on Highway 7.

Casey and Finnigan weren't there; there were no bright lights or TV cameras; but the Tickle-Trunk was there, front and centre, and that was all the well-known children's television show host Mr. Dressup needed to turn Holy Cross auditorium into a giant live TV screen for 800 two to 10-year-old youngsters.

The year 1979 produced a bumper crop of new industrial-commercial development in Halton region - 77 per cent more than in 1978 and far more than any other year in history, according to the region's business development officer.

Joe's BNA footwork has given him his second wind



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau of The Herald

Following that unsettling February convention, it was widely assumed that Conservative Leader Joe Clark would be forced to accept premature retirement and leave a divided caucus to some unknown successor. The writing was all over the wall.

Fully one-third of the delegates attending that national convention had voted in favour of a leadership review. And while the 42-year-old former prime minister at first suggested that the conventional wisdom that his time was limited.

The party's regional caucuses, which went into session immediately after the convention, dished up gloomy reports for the beleaguered leader. One by one, they reported that a leadership convention seemed inevitable.

As one former Clark minister said: "It's a self-generating situation. Everyone seems to be saying that we can't win with Clark. As a result, no

one will go out and try to win with Clark."

That was before the country was seized - and Parliament was seized - with the constitutional debate.

The writing on the wall is no longer so obvious.

VIEWSVARY

There are all sorts of conflicting opinions on what happened in Parliament over the last two months. Many abhor the way Prime Minister Trudeau handled the constitutional question; there are probably many who abhor the time-killing tactics used by the Conservative opposition. Some agree with the package, others are almost violent in their opposition. No two people seem to agree on most questions involving the patriation package.

But you won't find too many people who are critical of the way Joe Clark performed personally, given the difficulties he faced. I didn't agree with many of his party's approaches, but as a political leader, Clark's performance was difficult to fault. For a leader who is in effect "on parole with his own party, he performed with remarkable confidence." And regardless of the rights or wrongs of this whole constitutional question, there is no doubt that Clark strengthened his position as leader.

Whether he now can survive is debatable. Trudeau could still win the constitutional war and Clark's parliamentary performance would be

forgotten with embarrassing rapidity. But what is significant is that Clark himself clearly has a new outlook on his future. The constitutional debate has given him a second wind, so to speak.

BLEAK OUTLOOK

Just one month ago, Clark was reading this assessment by a nationally-read columnist. "They, the Conservatives cannot carry on with a leader who is not accepted by a third of the party and reluctantly accepted by most of the rest. It would be certain disaster to head into an election in such a situation."

At that time, Clark's response was that, whatever decision had to be made, he would act in the best interests of the party. It was hardly a fighting response.

I don't know whether you caught him on television last weekend, but there was the same Clark, now making it clear he was ready to fight for his job. "...my inclination is that I have demonstrated once again that I can lead this party to victory on important questions and I think that given the support of the party I can lead it to victory in the nation..."

"One of the things the party has to judge is how effective under pressure its leader can be and we've proven ourselves to be effective under pressure..."

"My very strong inclination today is to stay on..." And coming from Clark right now, those are fighting words.

Non-licensed driver penalties discourage no law-breakers



Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau of The Herald

A startling group of statistics leap out at you from a traffic accident study by the Hamilton Automobile Club.

It concerns people driving without a legal licence, whether suspended, cancelled, or the wrong class.

About 12 per cent of all accidents covered by the study involved such drivers, which may or may not be representative of the number of people in general who are driving without authority.

While 41 per cent of drivers in the study were handling their vehicles properly at the time of the accident, only nine per cent of the unlicensed group were doing so.

Worse, alcohol contributed to the cause of the accident in 40 per cent of the unlicensed cases, versus a study average of 17 per cent.

In short, non-licensed drivers, almost all of whom were male and under the age of 24, were and are a menace on the roads.

TOO MANY

And the situation is getting worse. "A growing body of people are driving with suspended or cancelled licences," the study said.

"Although the extent of such driving with suspended or cancelled licences came as a surprise to me when I read the study, conversations with Solicitor-General's ministry personnel indicate the problem is already well-known to police and other traffic experts."

The reasons for this flouting of the law appear to be two-fold.

One is that the current \$28 fine for doing so acts less as a deterrent to some people than as a kind of surcharge a person pays if he or she wants to ignore the law.

A second cause is the ease with which people in large metropolitan areas can "borrow" another's identity with current licences, since without a photograph police officers have no way of telling whether the person they have stopped is actually the licence's owner.

TWO ANSWERS

The Hamilton study group recommends two solutions.

First is "severely increased penalties" for driving when a licence is suspended or cancelled.

Having an otherwise improper licence, such as a driver licensed for cars only handling a motorcycle, would not, in the study's view, require quite so harsh penalties - although I have to wonder why.

The second answer is to put the owner's photograph on the licence.

But changing the law so violators are hit with bigger fines, or maybe even jail, will likely be easier than squeezing the \$1 million plus required for the photo system out of Treasury.

UP AGAIN

Transportation and Communications Ministry sought the money a year or two ago and were turned down, and a later request from the Highway Traffic Safety Council is in a holding pattern.

The Hamilton study, which goes before the council in May, will likely mean a repeat of the recommendation.

Such licence violations are considered to be a major factor in traffic accidents, maybe second only to drugs and alcohol. To reduce them is to reduce the carnage on the highways.

A majority Conservative government shouldn't hesitate. The photo system should be phased in over three years, and it should be paid for by raising driver's licence fees enough to cover the estimated costs.



Letter from the editor

Paul Dorsey

Sprucing up the past

In keeping with the "I Love Georgetown" campaign launched last week, in which homeowners are invited to show their community pride by sprucing up their properties, I'd like to do my part by sprucing up the community's history. Here then, is...

that much be clear. We would have stopped and likely settled down hard by Akron, Ohio, and formed a New Wave band had it not been for Smokin' Joe's incessant imploring: he wanted to see Niagara Falls. I'd seen that magnificent sight many times, having escorted most of my 114 known relatives to the spot (one at a time) during their respective visits to the northeast from points south of the Arizona border (these ancestors and other relatives having been chased there - one at a time - by the legendary Texas Rangers).

GEORGETOWN - AN ALTERNATIVE HISTORY

(For out-of-towners unimpressed by the truth)

From the memoirs of George Kennedy (1789-1873), travelling salesman:

"In 1820, I took a little trip (out of New Orleans and up the Mississippi) by canoe, eventually finding landfall just before nightfall in the fall of 1821 - September 30, I believe. There was just myself and an Indian guide, Smokin' Joe Brazier (who late in life became a fast-food king), so the pace had been breakneck between Louisiana and the colony of New York, where we'd ended up after galloping and paddling full-speed, aspiring to freedom while all around us the trees took up arms, it seemed, and fired upon us seeking vengeance for the sordid affairs we'd been accidentally linked with during our residence in that great city of New Orleans, circa 1815-1820.

"They were lies, all lies, that were held against us by the testy townsfolk: Smokin' Joe had plenty of squaws at home in Alberta, so there was no way he'd drop by the Lone Star Saloon of Gentlemanly Comfort on Crescent Street that Friday night, as they charged, and certainly no way he'd have carried off the proprietor's wife and daughter to their alcohol-inspired demoralizations, as they accused.

"As for my own part in the crimes that so incensed the citizenry, I never saw that farmer's daughter before in my life, though I marvelled at her surprising talents of self-discipline when confronted later by my would-be executioners. Startling though the evidence was, I professed my innocence as wholeheartedly as my rapidly fleeing steps and breathless cries would allow, but, clearly unable to win my own case, beat a hasty retreat along the aforementioned Mississippi.

"New York was never our destination; yet

"So I'd conceded one more time, and lo! we were Niagara-bound. Then tragedy attempted to strike us down.

"Foolishly, I'd decided to sleep off another bout with a recurring ailment, my throbbing head to the bow of the sleek canoe, while Joe guided the craft along the shores of Lake Erie toward the falls.

"Two days later, when we both awoke, draped like bored snakes across the riverside rocks and lashed together by the remnants of our buckskins and canoe, the frightening reality of the situation came home like a bolt from the blue. Smokin' Joe, paddling like a piston against the suddenly surging current of the Niagara River, had finally got to see the falls up close; he'd realized too late that the mighty roar he'd first heard five miles downstream was in fact NOT an admiring crowd of tourists cheering the sight.

"Incredibly, we'd both survived. Even more incredible, the Maid of the Mist came sailing by with a fully-stocked bar. We drank to each other's health.

"But Smokin' Joe was never the same again. Immediately upon recovery, he began speaking with glazed-over eyes and a newly-acquired soprano voice about the vision he'd seen at the brink of the falls. A small town somewhere above Lake Ontario, he told me, would soon arise out of a clearing in the dense woods, and I - George Kennedy - would be its founder.

"Prepared to continue our journey in search of this vision, we stole a new canoe and sailed silently toward Hogtown."

Next episode: Why the McGill Hotel was Georgetown's first building.

Journeys

CLERGY COMMENT

By REV. DON STILES
St. Andrew's United Church



"JOURNEYS"

We are a nation of travellers and movers. One out of every four Canadians will move this year; some across the street and others around the world. In the province of Quebec when I was growing up, May 1 was the time it seemed that everyone was moving: some because it happened to be 'Moving Day' and others because they found a new job or they wanted a bigger flat to live in!

In Ontario, the end of June seems like the sensible time to move. School's out, and you have the whole summer to get settled into your new home.

I often wonder about the various "moves" that Jesus made. Before He was even born, His Mother Mary and Joseph moved from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Then, when He was only a boy of two or under, He found Himself making a quick exit out of Palestine into Egypt. Then after three years or so, His family returned to Nazareth. During that period they were political refugees, seeking political asylum in the land of the Pharaohs.

After Jesus began His ministry in about the Year 25 A.D., He was really on the move. He left his home of origin in Nazareth. His

second home seems to have been in Capernaum, where soon He had gained the confidence of four fishermen and recruited them to become His disciples - or as Jesus put it, "to become fishers of men."

From then on, the Master became an itinerant preacher and wandering evangelist.

Once, when asked by a would-be disciple about joining this band of preachers, Jesus remarked, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

He said that the Journey ran through Jerusalem through the Via Dolorosa (the path of sorrow), into the Garden of Gethsemane and out to Mount Calvary.

There on the hill stark and naked, threatening and deadly was the Cross.

Some thought the Journey ended there - on Golgotha. But these looked on one side of the map of Jesus' journey. They failed to follow the road which led away from Calvary to a land beyond the naked eye. To the land of faith which is brightened by Easter's sunshine. To the land where Journeys begin and where Journeys end. A place called Heaven. The other side of the Cross.