

Fun weekend thanks to our service clubs

It's weekends like we've just had that make Halton Hills citizens proud of their service clubs. If you left town for the long weekend, the weather probably spoiled most of your fun, but if you stuck around, chances are the Kiwanis and Optimist Clubs of Georgetown kept your family entertained, well-fed, busy - and together.

Between the Martin and Downs Circus hosted Friday night by the Kiwanis and the marvellous Bang-o-rama staged Monday by the Optimists, thousands of area residents had a ball.

More than 2,000 people quite literally jammed the Big Top bleachers at Friday's back-to-back circus shows. Once the touring crews had quickly adjusted site plans, the crowds flowed in, children in tow, for the excitement of elephants, charging horses, trapeze artists, clowns and cowboys. The delight on the youngsters' faces was all the evidence needed to prove the event a success.

And at least 10,000 attended Victoria Day celebrations in Fairgrounds Park Monday. Bang-o-rama, with its mammoth garage sale, good eats, wild midway, fun competitions,

live entertainment and of course the fireworks, has become a seasonal highlight among Halton Hills' family-oriented activities, and we hope it will continue to rouse as much if not more excitement year after year.

Not to be outdone, the Norval Community Association came up with an unprecedented roster of weekend-long events to celebrate the "dowager queen's" birthday, which suggests the not-so-little village to Georgetown's east may soon be giving the Optimists something to fret about each May 24.

But this past weekend, the Optimists ranked supreme among service clubs, putting on a show and a half to attract enormous crowds on a day shrouded by overcast skies.

Thankyou, Optimists, and thankyou, Kiwanians. It was quite a fun weekend. And adding to the satisfaction is the knowledge that both clubs turn their proceeds back to the community's benefit. Whether it's next year's Bang-o-rama or another visit to the circus, we can all look forward to enjoying more community fun thanks to hard efforts by volunteer club members and the investments we've made in the past.

Perfect chance to honor our arts 'patriarch'

If you take any interest at all in the Halton Hills arts scene, the library-cultural centre gallery offers you an important major exhibition June 4 through July 16.

Sixty years of paintings and sketches by Frank Black, generally regarded as the patriarch of Georgetown's artistic community, will go on view in the new gallery, providing the opportunity of a lifetime to consider one man's stunning labors of love.

Now 87, Mr. Black will himself greet gallery visitors each Saturday morning during the exhibition. More than 20 area arts patrons have been persuaded by John Sommer of Gallery House Sol and library staff to loan their paintings by Mr. Black for the show, most

likely the only time they will be gathered together for such a retrospective.

A contemporary of the Group of Seven, the Guelph Street, Georgetown, resident continues to share his time and talents with the local Palette and Pencil Club, nurturing the budding interests of weekend painters with his own substantial experience in commercial art and landscape painting.

If you've never seen Mr. Black's work, take the time to visit his exhibition. You'll probably come away quite amazed that such a considerable talent still resides in our midst, quietly fostering new artistic growth and reinforcing greater appreciation for the fine arts.



HAPPY TO HELP OUT

Optimist Tom Ramautarsingh (left) invited several local friends to judge the children's art contest at Bang-o-rama, but none expected it to be as hard a job as it was. More than 200 youngsters took time out from the midway, track and field competitions and other youth-oriented events to dabble in watercolors. Holding the winning entries from each of three age categories are judges Carmel Ewens, Georgetown Area Ratepayers Association president Brian Bush and Herald advertising consultant Sandra Wilson (right).



Don't worry about Robinson - U.S. embassy unties knots



Ottawa Report

By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau Thomson News Service
Paul Robinson, the blunt-spoken former Chicago stock broker who now is the United States ambassador in Ottawa, isn't settling into his new neighborhood too easily. In fact, he's off to a terrible start.

Usually when a new boy moves into Ottawa's Diplomatic Row you don't hear a sound from him for months. He's off shaking hands with other diplomats, he's busy getting to know the intricacies of the vast external affairs department, and he's so preoccupied with listening he doesn't have time to express opinions.

But not Paul Robinson, the 51-year-old fledgling diplomat who earned this post by being President Reagan's chief fund raiser in Illinois. After only several months on the job, he is getting even more attention in Ottawa than the Quebec decision to remove Stop from its Arret signs. And that, in a city that's only a stone's throw from Hull, is no mean feat.

To say that Robinson is ruffling Canadian feathers is an understatement of significant proportions. What

he has done, in a few short weeks, has been to anger not only certain segments of the press, but also representatives of all three federal political parties.

And for a newcomer, that's quite a start.

FORD FIRST

You may recall that, during the height of our constitutional hassle, the former British High Commissioner, Sir John Ford, angered the New Democrats by commenting rather pointedly on this issue during a social function. But that outburst of resentment didn't have all-party agreement like the reaction that has greeted Robinson's observations.

What makes the ambassador's statements even more stark is the fact that, generally speaking, his predecessors have been the epitome of diplomatic decorum. Such representatives as Kenneth Curtis, William Porter and Thomas Enders never, but never, offered unsolicited public advice to Canada. As Porter says, "I always felt that an envoy is not functioning well if he has to get on the public platform to make his views known."

Robinson clearly doesn't agree. A few weeks ago, he offered the view that Canada isn't pulling its weight in western defence. And for this he stirred up the wrath in Defence Minister Gilles Lamontagne. "As an ambassador to Canada I think he should know better than to criticize or judge the country he's in," said the taken-aback minister.

Then there was that little aside in

Toronto when the Ambassador offered some advice to a 39-year-old newspaper reporter. "Shove off, kid," were the undiplomatic words used on that occasion.

WIDENS SCOPE

And now, Robinson has greatly widened the range of his critics by saying, in a public speech, that Canada spends too much on social services. That, in diplomatic circles, just isn't done.

Liberal Senator Norbert Theriault raised the issue in the Senate, saying "It is my business to protest such action" by the ambassador. Tory MP John Crosbie said that social services spending "is simply not any of his business so I think he would be well advised not to do that again." and NDP Pauline Jewett went even further. "His statements on this and other Canadian subjects have been insulting and patronizing to this country and its people."

It has been a long time since Ottawa reverberated with that type of reaction, and Robinson is already well on his way in compiling a unique scrapbook of his experiences.

But before suggesting this may lead to some sort of crisis in Canada-U.S. relations, I would like to offer the view that speeches by ambassadors, in themselves, are seldom the cause of anything more serious than minor aggravations. The American embassy has 138 men and women in Ottawa below the ambassadorial level and it's these people, along with their Canadian counterparts, who untangle the knots.

Miller's nickle, dime budget has problem with principles



Queen's Park

By Derek Nelson

By Derek Nelson, Queen's Park Bureau, Tomson News Service

Toronto - "Let them wear sweaters," former Treasurer John White joked with members of the media a decade ago about people who might not be able to afford his brand new tax on energy consumption.

It was, memory tells me, the final nail in the coffin of that proposed tax. A backbench Tory revolt fuelled by taxpayer outrage forced White to withdraw it within weeks.

One has to wonder whether Treasurer Frank Miller may suffer similar political problems with his attempt to reduce the number of items exempt from the seven per cent sales tax.

The headline in a Toronto newspaper of "let them eat peanut butter" - a reference to taxing hamburgers - is reminiscent of White's problems, as it is of the original line attributed to Marie Antoinette about France's starving masses: "let them eat cake."

Miller, of course, accurately denies having said any such thing, but it is too late now. The damage is done. (I don't know whether White or Antoinette said their lines either, but that is how they are remembered.)

BAD ERROR

Perhaps even more damaging to Miller is a reference he made to tampoons not being essential, since it smacks not only of the arrogance of the

peanut butter response but also insensitivity to women.

What Miller actually said was that "in general" consumer items are taxed unless they are "absolutely essential."

The question then becomes whether tampoons fall into that category. It is safer to say that if Miller were looking over the exempt categories again he would be awfully tempted to leave tampoons clear of tax.

Miller's real problem in this regard is strictly political. It makes imminent economic sense to plug the loopholes that have grown up over the years around the sales tax.

The difficulty he faces is that most exemptions exist for political, and not economic or philosophical reasons. Logic dictates that nothing "absolutely essential" exists except non-prepared food and accommodation - yet no politician with brains is going to tax children's clothing.

WOODSTOVES

Miller's rationale is hazy. If one has an oil furnace, then home heating oil is probably "absolutely essential" in January, but for those with wood stoves it is irrelevant.

Only time - and the Tory backbenches - will tell whether dislike of the

budget dies away with the usual grumbles, or becomes a groundswell of rebellion among voters.

Unfortunately for Miller, he may suffer the consequences that comes from the incredible size and complexity of modern government.

When the health budget jumped \$900 million a ridiculous 18 per cent last year, people just shrugged. The figures are too big to comprehend. But when Premier Bill Davis bought his \$12 million executive jet the purchase lingered on in people's minds as a symbol of government waste.

COFFEE TOO

In the same way, Miller bumped the income tax last year and most people barely noticed (which is why I thought he would raise it again in this year's budget). The raise meant dollars off every paycheck.

Yet it could be that a three cent tax on a cup of coffee will make far more of an impact upon people's minds. The money is nothing, but it will happen every time a coffee is bought - a constant irritant.

Strangely enough, it may be true in the case of this so-called nickle-and-dime budget that it is not the money that counts, but the principle of the thing.

Halton's History from our...

THIRTY YEARS AGO—Self examination is good for the soul, and there are many places where Georgetown can benefit from such a search. In a decade, the town's population has grown by a thousand. Municipal garbage, a sewerage system and new water supply has been inaugurated. What do we lack? There is a definite need for more modern high school facilities. Sidewalks are terrible and streets only fair. Georgetown badly needs a swimming pool. Street signs and street numbers would be helpful. The new chamber of commerce has to do the ground work and lay plans for the future of Georgetown. We must try to avoid becoming a "dormitory community" for Avro and the new Ford plant and keep Georgetown on an even financial keel.

TWENTY YEARS AGO—Burning garbage at the town disposal site could be responsible for Georgetown losing industries which are seeking clean air, according to the Industrial Commission. Commission executives Roger Wade and Peter Berry were present at Tuesday's council meeting when a letter was read indicating that the Weststeel firm might no longer consider locating a 40,000 square foot plant here. Garbage was burning when company officials toured the proposed site recently, the letter said.

TEN YEARS AGO—Ratepayers in Norval are ready for another summer of fighting this year, as they try to save their three-room school from the double-bladed axe of efficiency and equal opportunity being wielded by Halton County Board of Education. "We're as ready as ever to fight them on this," says Julian Reed, spokesman for the ratepayers' committee formed last year when the board first announced its intention of closing the 19-year old school. The 130 pupil Norval School, along with a similar unit in Campbellville and had been recommended for closure this September in the board's capital budget. Norval students would travel by bus to larger schools in Georgetown.

ONE YEAR AGO—The president of Irwin Dorsey Ltd., Dick Willis, told the Georgetown chamber of commerce Thursday that the publishing firm may have to be shut down in a matter of months. Approximately 26 full-time employees would be affected by the shutdown, 21 of whom reside in the Georgetown area. The reason for the plant's potential shutdown is the Supreme Court decision not to hear the case of Dow Jones and Co. versus Canada's Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA). Approximately five years ago, the American-owned Dow Jones acquired Richard D. Irwin Inc., an Illinois textbook publishing firm. Irwin-Dorsey is not a small subsidiary of the American company. According to the Foreign Investment Review Act, however, no Canadian firm can have a change in foreign parent without first proving that it would provide significant benefit to Canada.

KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN...

for Herald reporters 'Takin' it to the streets'

We want your opinion about local events and current issues.

Share your thoughts with Herald readers when our reporters stop you for this new feature.

POET'S CORNER

For Aries

May today be full of sunlight,
May every wish come true.
Please accept these heartfelt greetings,
As a gift from me to you.

May all who know and love you,
Share your joy, today.
Let the smile that would melt glaciers,
Remain, increase and never fade away.

May good thoughts overflow you,
Peace of mind be yours, Shalom.
May your life be long and happy,
May the good Lord bless your home.

As the years ahead catch up,
Please look back in kind regard,
Let that smile that's always ready,
Be for this remembered bard.

—By Marlow C. Dickson
R.R.2 Beeton