



Mortar men

Shown here are two members of an 81 mm mortar platoon during a practice shoot at the Canadian Forces Training Area in Meaford. On the left is Private Mike W. Gopill of C Company Lorne Scots

(Georgetown). At right, checking the sights, is Private Trevor L. Brennan of A Company Lorne Scots (Oakville). (Photo by Captain E.B. Landale)

Back from Sri Lanka, Georgetown girl says

Refugee Tamils are welcome



Sheila MacDonald

Someone in Georgetown is very happy the 155 Tamils found adrift off the coast of Newfoundland last week are here.

Sheila MacDonald, of Ontario Street, told The Herald the Tamils have had problems for hundreds of years with the majority Sinhalese population of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is the official name of Ceylon, adopted in May 1972. The tiny country is an island off the coast of India.

"Personally, I'm really happy the Tamils are here and out of Sri Lanka," Sheila, a 21-year-old university student said.

It was only in January that she returned from Sri Lanka, after a four month cultural exchange trip arranged through Canada World Youth.

She and 20 other exchange students were paired up with residents of Sri Lanka. Sheila was the only one of them to have a Tamil partner.

"There was violence when we were there, but we were in a Sinhala district so we didn't see it," she said. "Most of the violence is in the mixed district of Sinhalese and Tamils."

The country is mostly agricultural, with every family growing an acre of rice, another of tea, and another of coffee. As well, everyone grows his own vegetables. The rice is sold to buy oil for the oil lamp. There are no roads, no electricity, no running water in the countryside, which is where Sheila stayed.

Tamils are mostly Hindu and the

Sinhalese are Buddhist, which can also be a source of conflict between the two cultures.

Next month, Sheila begins studies at the University of Trent in international development. She plans to travel again, to India and Sri Lanka.

Missed the curve

A teenage driver from Terra Cot- to and a passenger were thrown out of a 1986 Jeep when their car left the road Aug. 11.

The accident occurred near the intersection of the 10th Line and Sideroad 27. According to a police report the driver was unaware of a sharp turn and the Jeep slid into a ditch, causing the vehicle to roll three times.

The vehicle damage is estimated at about \$9,000. The driver of the vehicle was taken to hospital and treated, then released.

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Council votes 8-5 against Croatian Centre expansion

After a lengthy public meeting last week, councillors decided against allowing any changes to the Croatian Cultural Centre.

In an 8 to 5 vote in the general committee meeting which immediately followed the Aug. 13 public meeting, councillors said "no" to the Centre's desire to put an addition on an existing multi-purpose building, build tennis courts, move the barbecue pit, grandstand, children's playground and storage shed, alter a barn into an art gallery, and add a garden equipment shed.

The Centre's request to add a cemetery and chapel on its 150-acre land at Winston Churchill Boulevard and Sideroad 5 had been dropped earlier from the plans submitted in 1984 to the town.

The general committee vote last week denying the changes didn't survive Monday night's council

meeting. Monday, councillors determined a decision on the Croatian Centre application until the Centre and its solicitor are ready to talk security and enforcement of controls on the property. The motion by Coun. Marilyn Serjeantson has no timeline.

"I think we need control and need to keep the ball in our park," Coun. Pam Johnston said. "The only way we can do this is by having an agreement with the Croatians that will give us control."

She and Couns. John McDonald, Pam Sheldon, Norm Elliott and Rick Bonnette expressed the same view.

"The reality is, the Croatian Centre is there, and is going to be there for a long, long time," Coun. McDonald said. "We have to face the fact we'll lose some of the controls we do have... by not passing the recommendations (of staff)."

Coun. Sheldon pointed out by turn-

ing down the Centre's application, the town could end up at an Ontario Municipal Board hearing and find themselves losing the case.

"If we let this opportunity go by, we're in a grave position of not being able to do anything for the neighbors," she said. For, if the case is lost at the hearing, the town may lose any authority to add controls to the changes made at the Centre.

"It will make the Croatian Centre have to play by our rules," Coun. Bonnette said. "At least we'll have something in our control."

These five were supported by the town's planning department which undertook a comprehensive report for council last month on the issue.

The report looked at the three studies undertaken and funded by the Centre over the past year: agricultural impact, stormwater management and traffic impact.

The Credit Valley Conservation Authority has reviewed the stormwater management study and found it to be satisfactory. The town's engineering department also had no objections to it.

As for the traffic impact study, based on 2,000 people turning up at the Centre, the town engineers were satisfied, as were Peel and Halton Regional engineers.

The final study was the agricultural impact study which looked at the relationship of the Centre and its activities with the adjacent farming community.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food says it will support the requested changes to the Centre, seeing them as a key to reducing the conflicts between farmers and the recreational use made of the Centre's land.

Ministry representative Harold Fleming didn't mince any words when he got up to speak during the public meeting.

Bought in 1977 for "recreational, social and cultural purposes", the Centre lands have been the source of much dissatisfaction by its neighbors.

Veto could mean OMB appeal

The threat of an Ontario Municipal Board hearing now hangs over town council, following councillors' decision to veto any further development at the Croatian Cultural Centre.

The plans put forth last year by the Centre and backed by three studies are in line with legally acceptable uses of the 150-acre property, as identified in the Esqueusing Official Plan.

"There could be no reason to doubt that my client relied on the planning documents of the municipality when it acquired the land and made investment into what has gone into it," Centre lawyer Ron Webb, of Davis and Webb, said.

The rural lands were acquired in 1977 for "recreational, social and cultural purposes", and these were permitted uses under the Esqueusing Official Plan for lands zoned rural. It's only in the past year that these uses are not permitted in rural lands, according to the newly approved Halton Hills Official Plan.

However, a decision on the Halton Hills Official Plan designation for the Croatian Centre was deferred by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, pending the result of this application. The Esqueusing Official Plan is still in place with respect to this property.

Councillors won't accept plan without a fight

North Halton Regional councillors aren't going to accept the province's Mineral Aggregate Resources Planning Policy sitting down.

Although approved by the provincial cabinet in May 1986, the policy documents are now being distributed to Regional councillors who want a letter sent to the Mines Minister voicing their concerns.

"This has very serious implications to the Region and to North Halton," Milton Coun. Bill Johnson said at last week's planning and public works committee meeting.

"I think a permanent committee of council should be set up, to be called upon at the discretion of the chairman, to put out any brushfires that come up," he suggested.

"This is one brushfire, from reading it, that didn't get put out; we certainly tried over the years," Halton Hills Coun. Pam Sheldon said. "I'm not terribly pleased."

In essence, the policy freezes Regional lands on which there are mineral resources, at the expense of other uses, she said.

Regional planner Peter Langdon said the mineral deposits must be protected under the provincial policy. The way the province wants Halton to ensure that, is through the Region's Official Plan.

Regional staff interpret the policy to state that mineral resources in the Niagara Escarpment Plan need not be identified.

"An underlying principle behind this interpretation is that the Niagara Escarpment Plan development policies are restrictive toward development and thus implicitly protect mineral resource deposits," the report by Planning Director Rash Mohammed says.

"The province obviously didn't listen to us," Coun. Sheldon said. "Halton had one of the most extensive representations to the province with respect to agricultural resources and how they should be treated. They've obviously ignored us and I'm very unhappy about it."

For Halton, the important implication of the policy is that mineral aggregate deposits must be identified and protected in the Official Plan, and if Halton doesn't do it, the province will do it for Halton.

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