

Civic Centre defies "vulgar, showy" buildings of today



John Sommer
Ideas and the Arts

For a whole generation after the last war the "Bauhaus" style was the most influential architectural style all over the western world. This style had developed in the 1920's as a response to the modern age, at the seminal German art school "The Bauhaus" in Dessau. The right-wing dictator Hitler labelled the school "bolshivist" and closed it. Some of the teachers from Dessau emigrated to America where they resurrected the school. Ironically it was from the United States that the "Bauhaus" style conquered the world, when the American business corporations embraced the style for their headquarters. From there it eventually reached institutional and domestic architecture.

The obsession of the "Bauhaus" designers was with function. Ornament was considered a crime. The great architect Mies van der Rohe, who designed the Toronto Dominion Centre, embodies in his work

the "Bauhaus" style at it's most mature. It was a style of severe simplicity and minute nuances, a kind of high-wire balancing act that run-of-the-mill architects imitated at their own peril. Mostly they produced excruciatingly boring boxes. However, such watered down versions of the "Bauhaus" style as the bungalows of the '50s and '60s show an honesty and restraint that is totally missing in today's fancy yuppie housing. Never before in Canadian history has there been such a housing boom and never before have houses been quite so ugly.

This new style, that reared it's dizzy head in the mid '70s as a reaction to the "Bauhaus" style, is called by the trade "Post Modern", which means roughly, that anything goes as long as it is sufficiently vulgar and showy. With these bizarre creations causing visual pollution in our town and elsewhere it seems a miracle that the new Civic Centre on Maple Avenue turned out as well as it did.

The building's most arresting feature is the sheer glasswall facing Maple Avenue. At night the building becomes transparent and reveals it's inner structure. In the back a former orchard makes a lovely, parklike setting for the obligatory parking lot. A formal forecourt leads to the main entrance. So far so good. But the real glory of the Civic Centre is it's interior. The Centre has many spaces that are a joy to enter. One reason for that are ceilings designed to draw the eyes upwards, another are windows that frame the outside as if it were a painting. Take the entrance hall with the great staircase descending to the lower level like rock ledges and its huge window looking out over the golf course across the street. Or the committee room with it's curved wall echoing the window wall opposite. Or the elegant half circle of the councillors lounge with its floor to ceiling windows. Or the truly spectacular council chamber. In all these spaces coffering together with lighting is used for imaginative ceiling treatments. Throughout the Centre fine detailing, quality workmanship, good colours and lots of light are proof that for the architect who designed this edifice men and women are the measure of all things.

What about art? Some splendid old photographs of Acton and Georgetown occupy the walls here and there. There are a few original artworks by artists of this region. There are also many reproductions and posters, some of them of doubtful value. This is a minor blemish, however. So much wall-space is available that it doesn't

need a lot of imagination to see them filled eventually with paintings by the finest artists of Halton Hills.

Carlos A. Ventin is the architect of the Civic Centre and Wendy Shearer did the landscaping. They and their many helpers right down

to the last laborer, did a wonderful job. I am grateful to them for giving us for our money a building we can all be proud of.



Dittfach-Terashita

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Terashita take pleasure in announcing the marriage of their daughter Lynn Reiko to Hugo Edward III, son of Mr. Hugo Dittfach and Ms. Kay Dittfach. Wedding took place at St. John's United Church on Saturday, Aug. 5, 1989. Reception was held for 160 guests at Glen Abbey Golf Club, Oakville. Lynn and Hugo honeymooned for two weeks in The Dominican Republic and will be moving to Arizona in the new year.

M&M
meat shops

OPEN 7 DAYS
873-2151

Mon-Wed 10am-6pm Saturday 9am-6pm
Thurs-Fri 10am-8pm Sunday 11am-5pm

PHOTO REPRINTS
appearing in The Herald
877-2201

MOLLY MAID
Your Dependable
Home Cleaning
Service

Specializing in House Cleaning
For Particular People!

- Domestic Light Housekeeping on a regular basis
- Bonded, Insured, Unharmful
- Supplies Provided

CALL US FOR A FREE ESTIMATE
876-1672 or 873-1386

DAY CARE

- Programs for children 2 yrs. & up
- Nutritious meals
- Ample inside and outside facilities to develop your child physically and mentally
- Experienced child workers on staff

MAPLE ROCK
DAY CARE CENTRE
873-1876



Plans for
Cookbook '89
are now under way

The Halton Hills Herald
invites you to submit recipes

\$250 in cash prizes

1st prize \$125 2nd prize \$75 3rd prize \$50

Deadline
for entries:
October 18th

Send your entries to:
Cookbook Editor
The Herald
45 Guelph St.
Georgetown, Ont.
L7G 3Z6

Be part of The Halton Hills Herald's 1989 Cookbook by sending us one or more of your favourite recipes. You may be eligible to win part of \$250 prize money if your recipe is one of the top three chosen by our special panel of judges. We'll also print the best of the other recipes you submit to us.

- Rules include:
- Write plainly or type double-spaced on one side of the paper only.
 - Print your name, address and telephone number on each recipe.
 - Give complete cooking or baking instructions, including type of cooking utensils, oven temperatures and times.
 - Use all imperial measures.
 - There is no limit on the number of recipes you can submit, but to avoid duplication you may want to submit more than one recipe. Organizations may also submit recipes.
 - Recipes may be for any type of food or beverage.

Other features include stories and photographs on meal planning, cooking with microwaves, special holiday dishes and other kitchen tips. So send us your favorite recipes because we'd love to see what's cooking in your kitchen.

