

# EDITORIAL

## Innocence lost

When Keith Bettridge allegedly pulled the trigger that sent the fatal shotgun blast into the face of Kimberly Thompson, he did more than allegedly murder his common-law wife — he introduced Halton Hills to the violence that surrounds this community.

Until this weekend it was easy to breathe something of a sigh of relief and say that violence was happening "in the city" or "just a bit too close to home."

And while residents here get upset about such things as the April murder of Burlington's Kristen French or the odd brawl at a local drinking establishment, we — as a community — have been pretty lucky when it comes to violent crime.

Halton Regional Police statistics from last year show that while Halton Hills had more attempted murders than any other part of the Region, the rest of the violent crimes stats were below — in many cases well below — our regional neighbour's totals.

But in just one weekend, the community has seen an alleged murder and the beating of a man who was new to town.

The argument against this community being so isolated when it comes to crime is that it is a small town, but given its proximity to Peel, Guelph, Toronto and Hamilton, it is surprising that we are not faced with more violent crime.

Unfortunately — as we have seen this weekend — the beginning of Halton Hills' exposure to "big city" crime may have started.

We hope that this is an isolated incident and that life in Halton Hills will continue on its relatively violence-free path.

Violence of any kind against another human being is intolerable and when it is in a community such as ours it is more than frightening.

When Keith Bettridge allegedly pulled the trigger this weekend he not only took another life, he took away a community's innocence.

### READER DISMAYED

Dear Sir:

I read with dismay your article on a local contractor not being awarded a tender by the Town of Halton Hills despite the fact they were the lowest over the winning contractor by over \$22,000. In fact it was the third lowest bidder who was awarded the contract!

Council justified this decision by not wanting to open themselves to "the biggest dog's breakfast" by allowing substitutions and that there was no "fair" way to make a comparison between the products.

Some of the questions Council should have asked themselves before taking the easy way out were:

- will denying this award to the lowest bidder — a local business — cause the loss of jobs in Halton Hills?

- would awarding this contract to a local business create jobs in Halton Hills?

- do we have so much money that we can afford to throw away over \$22,000. without, at least, making an effort to investigate?

- could we not make a comparison by requesting a list of the substitute suppliers municipal customers and making a few phone calls and asking a few pertinent questions?

In this time of severe economic conditions with hundreds of business going under and thousands of people losing their jobs does our Town Council make the tough decision? Of course not, they take the easy way out and pay \$22,000. more than they need to and let over a quarter of a million dollars flow out of the local economy!

This is the second time in the last few months that the Halton Hills Town Council has treated a local business shabbily. They actually appeared to be trying to drive

Country Video out of business. Once again, it is doubtful if they asked themselves if jobs would have been lost by their actions in this case also.

The Halton Hills Town Council were elected to make the best possible decisions for the community as a whole. They were not elected to take the easy way out or listen only to special interest groups.

If this tender award is an example of their fiscal responsibility then we are all in trouble!

Yours sincerely,  
Don White

### PAPER THANKED

To the Editor:

On behalf of all those involved with the Love In Christ Food Bank I would like to thank you for your story and picture in your inaugural edition of our newest community asset. It is through willing contributions like that story that we are able to make others aware of our needs.

We extend our sincere good wishes for the growth of your newspaper in our community and look forward to your weekly news on the life and activities of all its individuals and organizations.

We wish you much success in your future publications.

Sincerely and in God's blessing,

LAURA ELLISON  
Love In Christ Food Bank

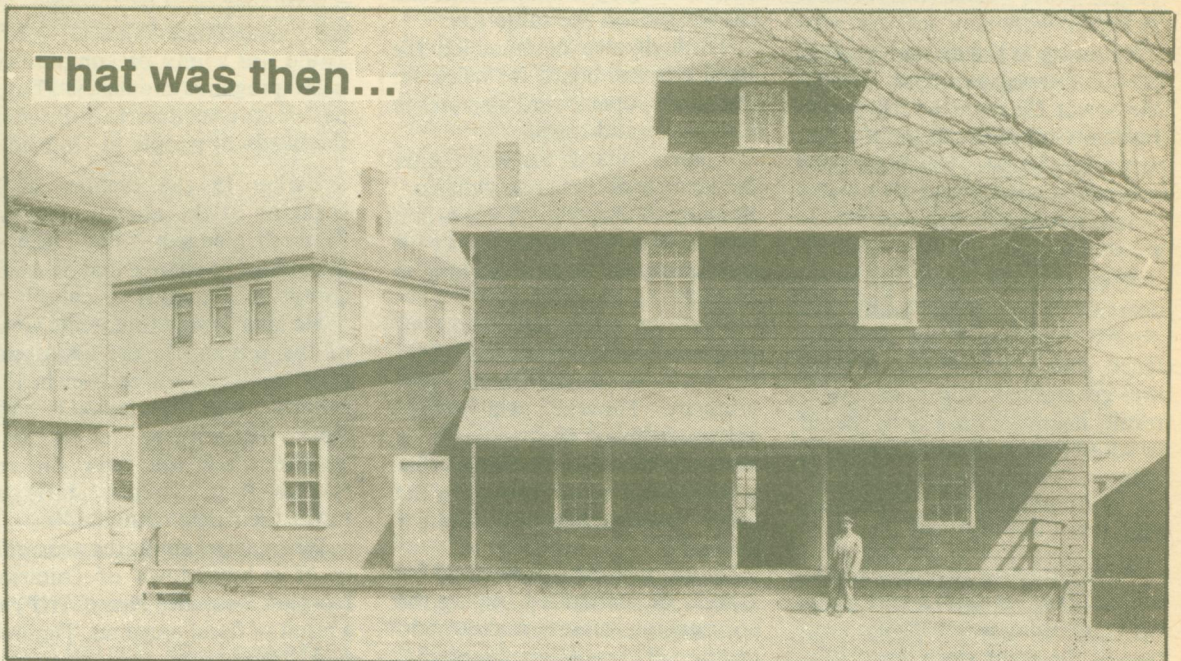
### CONFUSED READER

Dear Editor:

I would like to share the following with you.

When the new newspaper came out on Wednesday my daughter Leah asked, "What's the name of the new paper?" I replied, "Halton Hills This Week." She said, "What's it going to be called next week?"

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Christine Buikema



The Feed Mill on Guelph St. at Mill St., Georgetown. Now abandoned, it was the *Herald* office for many years. - Photo courtesy of The Esquesing Historical Society

## Have you got a Minute?



Wheldon "Steamer" Emerson

Halton Hills This Week is thrilled to have Wheldon "Steamer" Emerson writing a weekly column. Steamer's anecdotes are always entertaining and usually full of insight into life's lighter moments. Look for Steamer's "Have You Got A Minute" every week in this space.

My heart went out to Lady Di the other day, when she broke down and cried. When her emotions got the best of her I could feel the soft trickle of tears on my cheeks. It brought back a painful memory to me.

Unintentionally I dethroned a king. It was all over in five minutes.

Shock waves swept through the crowd at the Ontario Plowing Match, in Woodstock, and perennial emcee Vince Mountford blabbed it to thousands. He knew the both of us, the king and I.

The king of the furrows was Spencer Wilson, Ontario champion Plowman 1942, Halton County champion several times and was looked upon as the Wayne Gretsky of plowmen. That was until I got into the act.

As a teammate in a plowing contest I was a disaster. Frankly I don't think Spencer ever recovered from his experience with me.

When he bought the 1927 Model-T car and put on a high hat I knew he suffered more than he let on from our incident.

Look at Pioneer Days and you'll see Spencer with his car. Don't bring up the mention of me as a plowman, it might set him back.

The Ontario Plowing Match has a class each year for mayors. It sounded like fun and Woodstock was only a short hop from town so I filled in the form and started preparing for the big match.

Naturally I needed a tractor and plow. I knew just where to go,

Spencer, of course. He agreed to coach me.

Heavens to Betsy, I was excited, I had the best rig — a Massey Junior 101 — and the king of plowmen to teach me the tricks of how to plow in one easy lesson.

Before the actual contest there is an afternoon parade within the grounds; bands, farm equipment, antique cars and so on. Unknown to me there was a wagon with chairs for the visiting mayors.

In front of each chair was your name and town. Les Duke from Acton, Brian Best from Milton, Jimmy Archdeacon from Brampton were all next to me.

It was fun, people threw peanuts, insults and one fellow yelled "when did I give up the organ grinder." "When my monkey died" I replied.

With the parade over, Spencer took me to the proper spot for our plowing match, told me the plow was set at regulation depth of six inches and while I was plowing he would "put the foot to it." This is an expression used by plowmen to mean they will put their foot on the furrow to make it look neat and straight.

In the excitement and noise I misunderstood, and thought he meant to put the foot to the accelerator. Goodness, I looked back and there was poor old Spencer "putting the foot to it", he was using both feet.

He looked like Arthur Duncan

of the Lawrence Welk Show tap-dancing to "Shuffle Off To Buffalo". Some spectators thought he was dire need of the men's facilities.

When it was all over we were paraded to the platform and there was our old pal Vince on the mike. As the winners were announced Vince gave them a line or two, patted them on the back and couldn't wait to get at Spencer and yours truly.

Since I had embarrassed my friend Spencer, Vince bellowed to the crowd about how Spencer was a true champion and he picked a bent mold board when he picked me.

Vince, always quick with quip, said: "Spencer's wife Kay has taken up bird watching. She watches him like a hawk".

Turning to me he bellowed into the mike: "Ladies and Gentlemen, my old friend Steamer finished dead last".

"He has ruined the reputation of the king of plowmen. You did a fine job on poor old Spencer. Whatever you do, ladies & gentlemen, don't applaud, he started at the bottom of the ladder of success and stayed there".

Then I fell down the stage steps. I don't go to plowing matches anymore. And Spencer, I saw him with the Queen at Pioneer Days last week-end. He looks fully recovered.

## Letters Welcomed

Halton Hills This Week welcomes your letters. Letters must be signed and include your full name and address. Names will be withheld on request.

Halton Hills This Week reserves the right to edit, revise, or reject any letters on the basis of factual errors, punctuation, spelling

errors or as a result of space limitations.

Send your letter to:

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