

# EDITORIAL

## About time

Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa has finally agreed to sit down with the rest of his counterparts at a federal-provincial meeting on The Constitution.

Bourassa's announcement ending a two-year boycott of first ministers meetings is long overdue.

In the two years since the Meech Lake Accord failed, Bourassa has managed to keep Canadians guessing if Quebec would indeed leave it's nine closest neighbors.

Every time provincial leaders presented Quebec with what appeared to be a reasonable offer — practically begging our francophone friends to stay at the party — the offer would be turned down.

Last month — after yet another offer was hammered out among the rest of the provincial leaders — Ontario Premier Bob Rae said that he too would refuse attend anymore constitutional discussions unless Bourassa showed up.

We can't help but wonder how long Quebec would have held out before finally coming to the party that will keep the country together.

We are extremely glad that Bourassa will grace next week's meeting with his presence.

But, we wonder just what it is going to cost to keep Quebec part of Canada for while Bourassa is coming to talk, he has boasted of getting "total satisfaction."

Given the number concessions that have apparently been made to Quebec it is hard to imagine what Bourassa could possibly need to get his "total satisfaction."

Bourassa is walking something of a political tightrope, possibly realizing that Canadians outside of Quebec are getting fed-up with his boycotts.

Proof that the rest of Canada is getting tired of the games was Ontario Premier Bob Rae's threat to also boycott unity meetings unless the Quebec Premier was in attendance.

But Bourassa is also getting pressure from Quebec nationalists like Jacques Brassard, the Parti Quebec constitutional critic who called Bourassa's move to talk unity, "a betrayal" of a commitment made to Quebecers.

And to that end, Bourassa has said there is no guarantee that formal constitutional talks will be held following the meeting at the Prime Minister's summer residence next Tuesday.

We hope that formal constitutional talks do follow next week's meeting.

We also hope that the price of keeping Quebec is not so high that the fabric of Canada is forever torn.

## Costly dinner in Georgetown

The following letter was sent to the Town of Halton Hills and the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce.

A copy has been sent to Halton Hills This Week for publication.

### To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed please find my \$8.00 contribution to the financial well-being of the Town of Halton Hills. I trust you will now be able to balance the budget.

Unfortunately parking officer #9903 gave me the parking infraction notice for the wrong reason.

The offense I did commit at approximately 7:52 p.m., Friday, July 17 was supporting local busi-

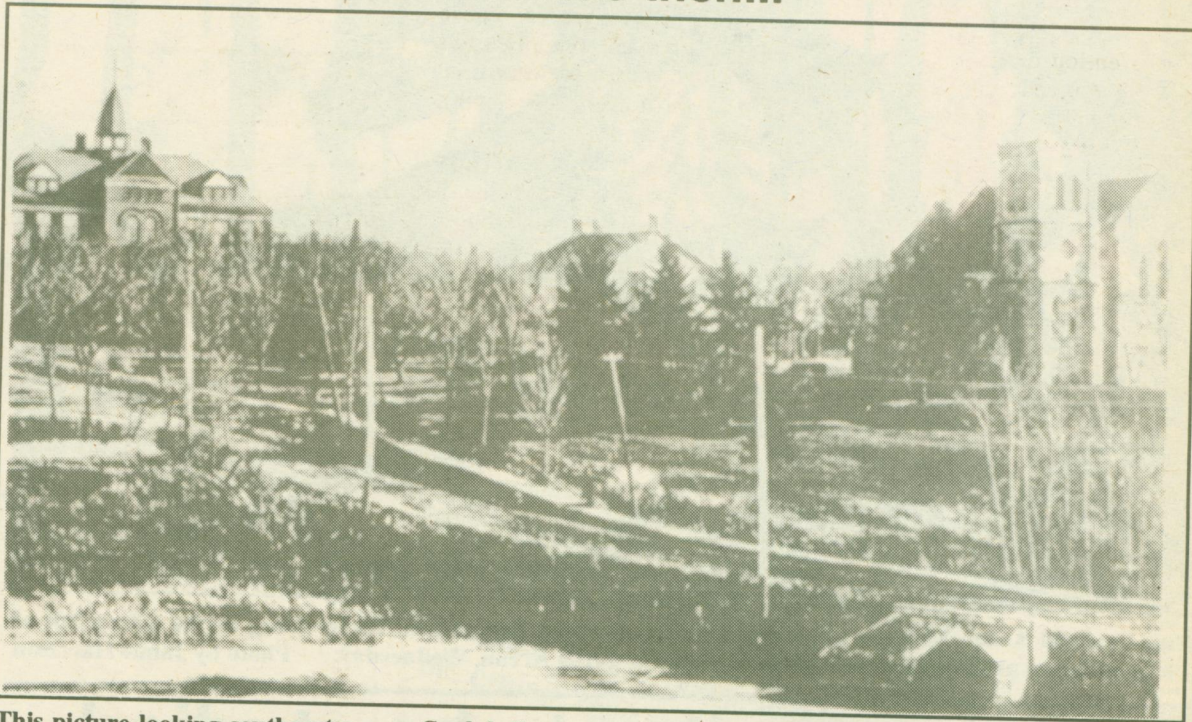
ness. In most areas that I am familiar with, parking meters take their bite until 6:00 p.m., but Halton Hills apparently needs a 12-hour grab between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

On this account I plead guilty and promise not to venture into downtown Georgetown again prior to 9:00 p.m. each day. This won't help local business but it will help me balance my financial affairs.

Yours truly,  
R. Johnston  
Acton

P.S. If it wasn't for the exceptional food at the House of Buddha it wouldn't have been worth the drive from Acton.

## That was then...



This picture looking southeast across Guelph Street in Georgetown, shows the high school (left) Anglican rectory and St. George's Church. The date of the photo is not recorded.

Photo courtesy of the Esquesing Historical Society.

## The uncertainties of landfill sites

By Dianne Cornish

When it comes to controversial, contentious topics—the types that actually make people's blood boil—there are, at least, three that come readily to mind. Abortion, euthanasia and landfill sites. The first two are obviously life-threatening, while the latter, many would argue, could well fall under that same specter. One thing is for sure, there's nothing like the mention of landfill sites to get people riled.

Only a month ago, people from York and Peel regions descended on Georgetown to confront Environment Minister Ruth Grier about the possibility that a landfill will be located in their little corner of the world. The crowd of 150 protesters was boisterous and, many would say, over-reactive. They rocked Grier's car and threatened to bar her exit until she gave some assurance that she would speak to them. In the end, she offered to meet with representatives of the protesting groups at a later date.

Last week, it became apparent that Halton Hills residents are in for another landfill site clash over the selection of a possible site for Peel Region. Three of the 21 sites proposed for Peel lie on Halton's border on the east side of Winston Churchill Boulevard, south of Mayfield Road. Halton Hills is already fighting a private company's proposal to establish a landfill in Acton Quarry and is currently awaiting word from a Consolidated Hearings Board on whether or not the proposal will proceed.

Why don't people want landfills?

Because, in the words of Barbara Halsall, president of the environmental group called Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources (POWER): "All landfills leak."

The same remark was made last week by David Soward, whose Halton Hills rural home is located just 500 metres from the three proposed sites along Winston Churchill Boulevard.

Obviously, the major concerns about landfills are environmental. People are justifiably concerned about groundwater contamination from leachate.

Engineers can talk about "state-of-the-art landfill designs" and revolutionary engineering techniques that will protect groundwater and nearby streams, but when it comes right down to the bottom line, people simply don't believe what the engineers say.

Therein lies the biggest, and seemingly insurmountable, challenge facing landfill sites.

Until there is more trust and honesty built into the system, the anti-dump protesters will continue to trail Ruth Grier, shouting out their concerns and hoping for effective response. People will continue to get angry and feel frustrated with a public consultation process that appears to pay only lip service to the wishes of the public to have effective input into the decision-making process.

Everywhere, there is public consultation and everywhere people

continue to cry out that they're not being heard. A case in point is Caledon East farmer David Armstrong who complained to Halton Hills This Week at last month's demonstration outside Wastewise that he couldn't get even a minute of Grier's time to tell her why he opposed the proposed landfill site near his family farm.

Armstrong, unlike those who received media attention, is a soft-spoken farmer who wants a simple courtesy—an opportunity to speak with the woman at the helm of Ontario's Environment Ministry. He wants to make his point, not to those who are already converted, but to those who have the power to act on his concerns.

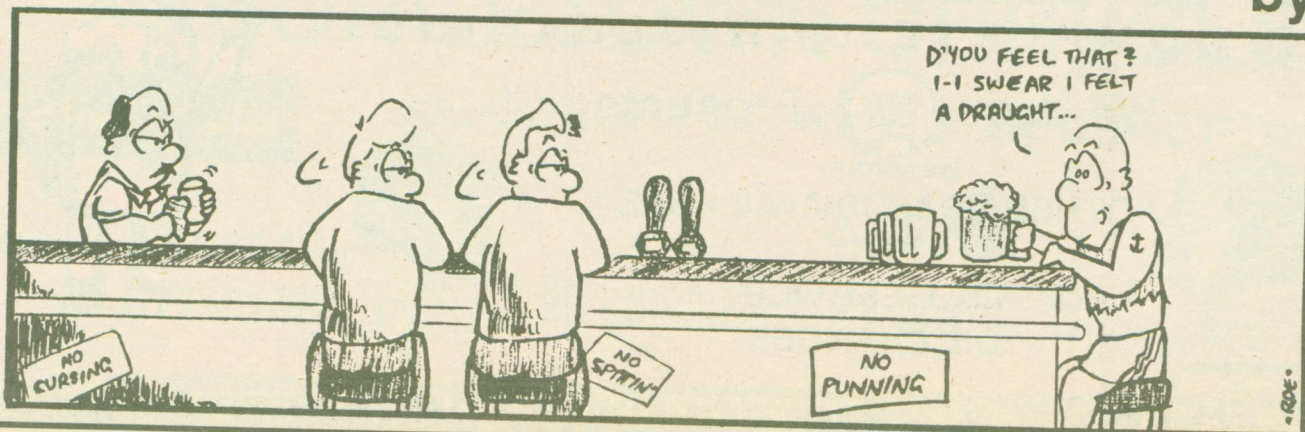
He's frustrated because he cannot accomplish that goal. The accessibility isn't there and neither is the sympathetic ear.

Still, people will continue to try to be heard — and well they should. Halton Hills residents concerned about the three identified sites on Winston Churchill Boulevard can attend an information workshop Tuesday, Aug. 4, 7 p.m. at the Interim Waste Authority's Community Information Centre, 2 Fisherman Drive, Suite 4, Brampton. That's just north of the White Rose outlet on Highway 10, north of Highway 7. The meeting offers local residents a chance to speak out, to have their questions answered.

A collective voice at that meeting might be heard. It's certainly worth a try!

## For Pete's Sake

by Roe



## Halton Hills THIS WEEK

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