

Eden Mills Writers' Festival A subjective celebration of words

The Eden Mills Writers' Festival is, of course, all about words and people who love words. And now, reflecting back on this year's festival, the word that keeps coming to mind is subjectivity.

The festival is all about personal taste and personal choices, right down to the choice between burgers, French cuisine or East Indian fare, all within one village block. And, amongst festival goers, there was no shortage of personal opinions about the new fake bow string bridge. It obviously comes down to a matter of personal taste (but let's not get into the bridge thing because nobody's ever gonna change anybody's taste by arguing about it).

And then there are the writers - your pleasure or displeasure with any given writer is such a subjective thing. For instance, I "interviewed" (or more accurately eavesdropped upon) several people who had just heard the same writer read. One said how inter-

BY DALE HAMILTON
THE COMPASS

esting it was to hear the perspective of such a young writer. Another said she wondered how these young writers get off thinking they have anything valuable to say.

Some local people react with self-imposed evacuation before the literary crowd even hits town. One local woman, who likes to sit and people-watch during the festival, told me that she attended one of the readings years ago and hasn't gone within earshot since because the language and subject matter offended her. On the flip side, scores of people probably drove all the way from Toronto to hear that same author read. Granted, this event will never be anyone's cup of tea (like the local man chainsawing in his yard during the festival this year) but I think if you do some homework in advance and pick and choose

carefully, you're likely to find something to suit your tastes. I certainly did, but I won't get into my subjective likes and dislikes (OK, two - Tom King and Scott Wicken were my highlights).

But it was the overall atmosphere of the festival that captured most of my attention. It really is a heyday for people-watching. And the tributes to the festival founders were worth the price of admission; first by CBC radio personality and Eden Mills resident Shelagh Rogers and later by the Guelph Native Men's Drum Group. Likewise, the atmosphere at the New Writers Forum was lively and I hope festival organizers will include it as an annual feature.

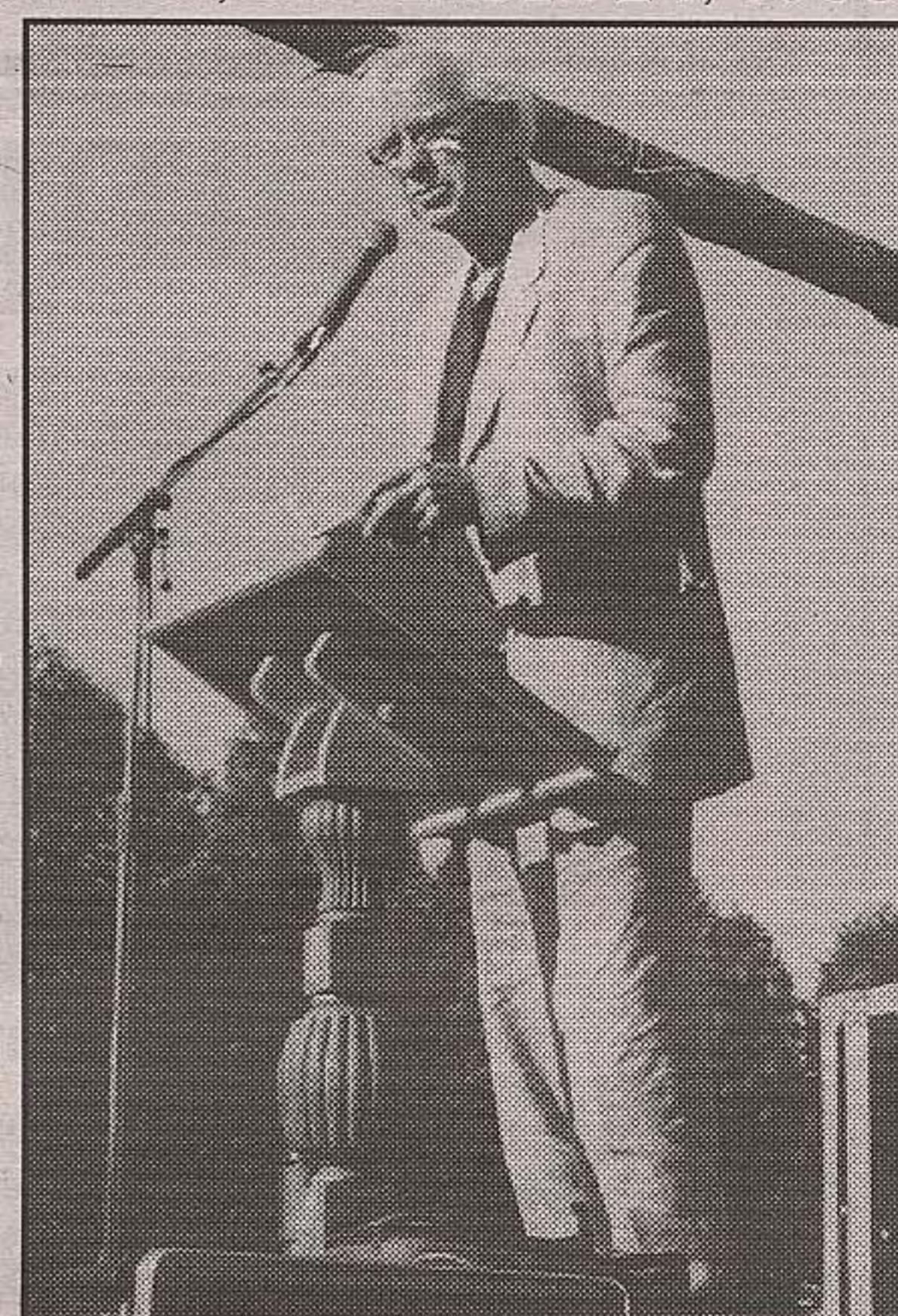
I spent some time listening to excellent children's authors before my son grew more interested in throwing rocks into the river. That was his subjective choice and that's the beauty of the Eden Mills Writer's Festival.

WHO GOES THERE?

Leon Rooke, the "grand wizard of the festival himself," as he was introduced, read in the Meadow at the September 12 Eden Mills Writers' Festival. His next novel, which will possibly be published in the fall of 2000, is entitled *The Fall of Gravity*.

Nearby, Bonnie McTaggart and her daughter Jill Bryant had a display of their recent work, *The Wilderness Cookbook*, with a draw for a rustic gift basket of cookbooks. The winner was Katherine Shaw of Georgetown.

PHOTO BY DEBORAH QUAILLE



ROCKWOOD RED SOX SECOND IN ONTARIO



PHOTO BY REID KENNEDY

O.B.A. FINALISTS - Back Row, L. to R. - Coach Bob Boughton, Andrew Simpson, coach Mike Guindon, Kyle Adair, Brad Durocher, Mike Kuipery, Greg Boughton and coach Jerry Dean. Front Row - Elliott Shrive, Scott Timmings, Graeme Copeland, Jeremy Dean and Jordan Guindon. Absent - Kurtis McArthur and Kyle Dodd.

BY RAY DARLING
THE COMPASS

The Rockwood Red Sox recently competed in the Ontario Baseball Association (OBA) championships and earned a silver medal.

The Major Peewee division team advanced to the all-Ontario finals after having defeated Milton in the Central Ontario Baseball Association (COBA) finals.

The team compiled an impressive 16-1-1 record in regular season play. It was a very close final which saw them lose 7-5 to a team from Eastern Ontario.

The Red Sox defeated four other Ontario teams to make it to the championship game. The team is pictured after having won the COBA championship in Eden Mills in early September.

Fine time for a facelift

BY DONNA DANIELLI
THE COMPASS

The self-proclaimed "ugliest building in Rockwood" is getting a facelift.

Squire's Lodge, at 160 Guelph St. recently held an information evening to address questions about upcoming renovations. On hand were Chair of the Board of Directors, Michele Dawe, Board member Ken Mercer, Building Superintendent Jim Reid and architect Francois Maggioni. According to Mr. Mercer, the planned renovation has been three years in the making. The Board of Directors presented a case to the Ministry of Housing regarding structural concerns at Squire's Lodge. The building, owned and operated by Eramosa Non-Profit Housing, has been subject to fairly high maintenance costs such as water damage, balcony repairs and roof repairs. The Ministry of Housing, upon careful consideration of the facts presented by the Board of Directors, allocated \$462,000 to the project in June of 1999. Residents of the building were particularly glad to hear that the grant from the Ministry of Housing means that no rent increase will be necessary to cover the costs of the renovation.

Architect Francois Maggioni is an expert in accessible housing retrofit and renovations, and explained the changes that will be made. Balconies will be enclosed and insulated to extend their use further into the year, all the windows in the building will be replaced and better designed

for security purposes, and each apartment will have its own built in air conditioning unit. The outside texture of the building will be changed. Since it was doubtful that the foundation could stand the weight of brick or stone being added, a decision was made to use a combination of EPS board, mesh and acrylic that will not only create a cement like finish that is as resilient as stone, but has the advantage of not absorbing moisture the way stone does,

creating a watertight barrier.

"We're trying to give it the appearance of being residential, not institutional," commented Mr. Mercer.

Review of the tenders and a decision on which contractor had been chosen were not available at press time. A start date for the renovations will be announced after the contractor has been awarded the job; it's estimated that the renovations will take between eight to 10 weeks.

All welcome!

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