

Jim's Jottings

by jim dills

* Decided my education had been neglected since I'd never seen a ballet. The opening of the spring season of The National Ballet of Canada, within a 50 minute drive of my house, seemed an ideal opportunity to remedy the deficiency.

* The Ballet was Giselle, first produced in Paris in 1841. Leads were by Lynn Seymour and Egon Madsen in the weekend performance that I took in.

* It would, of course, be presumptuous for me to offer a criticism of the performance. While my praise may be similarly hollow, I was struck by the effectiveness of the scenery and the very spirited performance of Lynn Seymour. Where one girl gets all the energy she so vivaciously pours into her presentation, I'll never guess.

* Professional critics can describe for you the intricacies of the steps and the performances of the small groups. My vision is not so precise but it has always amazed me how the dancers can stand on their toes all the way across the stage.

* Giselle was an interesting introduction to the ballet for me. The music was excellent and the presentation was good. The season continues until April 25 and while some of the performances are probably sold out, you may find seats available for some performances. Ballet fans I'm sure will not need to take my word for the kind of performance the National Ballet of Canada is capable of producing.

* One of the features about such

performances is that you can reach them, certainly the tops in professional entertainment, almost as quickly from Milton as from some areas of the city. From home to the parking lot was a mere 50 minutes.

* It's always interesting to see the fashions at the O'Keefe Centre. On Saturday night they ranged from the blue jeans and sweaters, through the pant suit and jump suit styles to the dresses of varying lengths. Again I'm no expert so I merely observe they are interesting. Men's fashions also spanned the gamut and capes, beads, jump suits (I guess) and formal attire were all in evidence.

* As well as Giselle the current schedule also includes Swan Lake on Thursday and Saturday of this week. The title is perhaps more familiar which is one of the reasons I chose Giselle. It is set in a Rhineland valley where Giselle, a peasant girl, is courted by Loys who is Albrecht, Duke of Silesia in disguise, who is betrothed to a beautiful countess. He is unmasked by a jealous forester, Hilarion and the betrayal so shocks Giselle that she loses her reason and dies.

* That puts the second act at Giselle's grave and provides the base for the ghosts who terrify Hilarion who is flung into a nearby lake. Albrecht appears and is driven to near exhaustion. Just as death seems imminent, dawn breaks destroying the power of the Wilis and the ghostly figures fade away.

* The execution of the plot by dance is effective and interesting.



ANY DAY NOW these picnic tables, stacked up for the winter, will emerge from hibernation and be spread around the district's conservation areas and parks. Meantime, it's a great place for kids to clamber.—(Staff Photo)

Champion Editorial Page

The value of Sunday . . .

Support for the retention of Sunday as a day of rest is increasing and the base for the support extends beyond the church groups commonly allied in such a cause.

It is interesting to see, from the annual report of the Lord's Day Alliance of Canada, that an independent committee composed of officials in food store chains, labor unions, trade and consumer organizations and churches presented some views on the subject of Sunday.

The committee affirmed that "Sunday business would deprive many workers of rest and freedom from work on the particular day of the week when the majority of people are customarily at leisure; would take working fathers and working mothers away from home on the common rest-day, and would deprive children of parental company and supervision. It would add to the operating costs of business, and this would inevitably

lead to further increase in the cost of living".

The Alliance is being realistic too when it suggests that for those who attach little or no importance to religion, the next best use of Sunday is undoubtedly that of rest and recreation, best taken in family association.

Sunday will continue to be under attack despite shorter work weeks and supposedly more leisure hours. There will always be those who will eye the extra day's production or revenue as the deciding factor. Even those who see in Sunday sport great rewards may yet find difficulty as Sunday itself becomes used for other purposes.

We're selfish enough to hope that thinking people will continue to regard Sunday as an oasis in a week already muddled with frenzied activity. The value of the common day is clear but its continuation needs constant vigilance if it is not to be wrested from us by the disadvantage of all.

Worthy service . . .

In an age of growing non-involvement it is heartening to see men like the two Milton firefighters who were honored last week upon their retirement from active service with the local fire brigade.

George Vaughan hangs up his hat after a full 40 years of work as a volunteer or part time firefighter,

and Bill Tight turns in his badge after 28 years of service. Both men are of the "old" school, lifelong Miltonians, good family men and active in a number of other community endeavors over the years.

We thank them sincerely for their dedicated years of work. They have not only served well, they have set an example for all of us to follow.

Time factor . . .

The spillage of oil off Cape Breton from the wrecked tanker Arrow is a other warning to an increasingly pollution-conscious continent of the worse form pollution assumes.

Air fouled with factory smoke and motor exhausts; soil contaminated with pesticide residues; rivers ruined with industrial waste, domestic sewage and detergents are but a few of the pollutants contributing to the deadly brew we are mixing in the oceans. These have become the catch basins for every type of pollutant we are concocting on

In addition we are directly poisoning the oceans by oil accidents like that of the Arrow or the Torrey Canyon and countless other less-publicized outrages. The Manhattan's voyage through the Northwest Passage makes it probable that sooner or later an oil-laden

tanker will be crushed in the Arctic ice with deadly consequences to every form of marine life.

We are discovering that numerous forms of ocean-based life are nearing extinction or are no longer safely edible. The algae which feed upon phosphate-based detergents are consuming the precious oxygen in the sea water, downweighing the balance of nature against the survival of life's higher forms.

It is in our power, if we act resolutely, to reduce to a tolerable level every form of pollution of air, soil and river.

But in the oceans we have started a life-destroying process which may already be near the point of irreversibility. It is the possible nearness of this deadline which makes the time factor the vital element in mounting an all-out attack on pollution.



Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

Can you whistle a Bach prelude and fugue without a memory slip? Can you hum a Beethoven sonata without sliding into falsetto or basso profundo?

Darn right you can't. But I can. Almost. And it cost me only about \$12,000.

Trouble is, and this is a touchy point in April, none of it is deductible. That's what it has cost me, over the years, to provide a musical education for my family.

After all that, I can whistle and hum, both of which I could do before. There's something wrong here, but I can't quite figure out what it is . . .

I wish I had the 12 G's in bonds at eight per cent. But my wife doesn't agree. We could have taken a trip around the world for that, but she still doesn't agree.

As far as I'm concerned, I could have taken that \$12,000, thrown it off the end of the dock, and been just as far ahead. Once again, the only one who agrees with me is I.

Both my kids have degrees in piano. Both were talented. Near, but not quite at, the concert pianist level. Both eschewed (I like that word) a career in music, because they wanted to be first. And they wanted to be free.

Well, they're free. Hugh broke his middle finger, and can play I Went Down To St. James Infirmary, with only a few bum notes. I think Kim could play The Happy Farmer, with a couple of days' practice.

But perhaps it's all been worth it. They've learned something. Hugh has realized that you can't practise the piano when you're waiting table at the Chateau Frontenac or selling vacuum cleaners in Calgary. And Kim has realized that "her" piano won't quite fit into a three-room pad in Toronto, unless you want to sleep on top of it.

What brings all this to mind, and without bitterness, is the fact that my wife,

a former piano teacher, has become hooked once again, after a lapse of a couple of years, on the local music festival. She's going every day and listening intently to her former students. (Though she's a bit miffed that some of them are doing extremely well, despite the fact that they don't take lessons from her any more.)

But her reports have cheered me. Things are just the same as they always were. I went through years of them, and I know the scene intimately. The festival mothers are still as friendly as an R.C. bishop and a Mormon lay preacher.

The adjudicator is still rotten, giving the first-place certificate to the girl who played worst. Except when it's your daughter, or your pupil. Then he (or she) shows an insight into music that is superb.

The kids are still sailing into their pieces at breakneck speed, which they can't possibly maintain, and breaking down in the middle, while their mothers and teachers turn purple as the youngsters fumble, and throw up their hands, and burst into tears.

But perhaps the Old Lady is right. Those moments at the music festival, in other years, were the closest to heaven and hell that I've ever experienced, with the possible exception of shooting at a concentration of German tanks, which were firing back at you with bigger guns than you had.

I've stopped breathing for as much as a dangerously long two minutes while my son or daughter weaved through a sonatina. I have gone out afterwards and smoked a complete cigarette in two drags.

I have called the adjudicator a slob, a cretin, moron, and, sometimes, a brilliant judge of music.

Maybe the Old Battleaxe is right. Maybe it was worth \$12,000. Anyway, I can whistle three bars of Tchaikovsky's something or other.

Pages of the Past

from champion files

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Canadian Champion, April 20, 1950.

To a packed theatre, a group of teenagers known as the Sunshine Variety Troupe of Hamilton, thrilled their listeners during their presentation under the auspices of the local I.O.O.F. and Rebekah Lodges here last week. From the youngest, aged four, to the oldest aged 18, each number was well received by those attending.

Beauty, skill and artistry were displayed by the many artists who presented Variety Ice Revue, staged at the arena last Friday night. The show was sponsored by the Milton Rotary Club. The large crowd attending praised the performance as one of the best skating exhibitions ever presented in Milton.

Open House at Milton High School Friday, April 28 at 8:30 p.m. Everyone welcome. Admission free.

The directors and Farm Forum representatives of Nelson Township Federation of Agriculture met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Hume on April 4. Plans were completed for the euchre and dance at Nelson Hall and it was decided to co-operate with the County executive in promoting summer activities at the Lowville Community Park.

Several Jersey herds in Halton County report cows that have recently completed R.O.P. records. The leader in this recent group is Pinetree Valiant Rose owned by Maurice Beaty of Milton.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Canadian Champion, April 22, 1920.

Boston Presbyterian Church congregation propose to hold their centenary celebrations in June with special services in the church.

The council met Monday evening. No important business was disposed of but the matter of the proposed new high school building was discussed. The purchase of one of the finest and largest residences in town, with grounds of ample size had been contemplated. The inspector examined the property, but found the house unsuitable for the proper arrangement of school rooms. Therefore, the council instructed the clerk to prepare a \$48,000 debenture by-law.

Licence Inspector Harvey was in town on Tuesday. On being told by a citizen that

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Canadian Champion, April 21, 1870.

On Monday night Warcup's grist mill was broken into by some persons unknown, for the purpose of plunder. The thieves had ransacked the place for money but were unsuccessful, as there was only the sum of 40 cents in the building and it was contained in a drawer which was the only one not opened. There are some suspicious characters about the town who want watching and it is to be hoped that they shall soon meet with their deserts.

We learn that the Colonel and majors of the Halton Regimental Division have received their commissions. These officers are Col. Donald Campbell, Majors William Allan and John R. Barber.

The Spring Show will be held in Milton on Friday, the 29th inst. In Nebraska the Indians are interfering with the railroad, and on Friday, succeeded in throwing 14 cars off the track. They appear to have been driven away by the fire of a brakeman who remained after his companions had started on the engine for the next station.

A woman in the northern part of Maine, who is the mother of 20 children, has been granted a divorce on the ground she has no affinity for her husband.

Do we Government come to Pollution time for all their considerable problem. An investment. Why not war. United We're DEAD.

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Down[s] in this Corner

with roy downs

Spring officially arrived at the Downs house on Sunday, April 12 this year. Why so late? That's the day I saw my first robins, the perennial harbingers of spring.

Didn't see just one, either . . . there were three big, fat, red-breasted robins strutting about my lawn that afternoon. I know others have seen robins earlier than that, it seems to me we had some reported here back in January, but as far as I'm concerned the springtime season isn't officially here until I've personally seen some robins.

The sighting of three robins on the front lawn really impressed me that day. You see I was home sick with a heavy cold—my first cold in a year and a half—and just seeing those true signs of spring on the lawn can sure lift a fellow's spirits when he's inside the house cooped up with aspirins, hot and cold drinks and a box of hankies at his elbow.

Fishing season officially opens this weekend and, if I ever get over this darned cold, I'll likely be out there with the first-morning crowd snagging on logs and stepping in potholes and losing all kinds of hooks and sinkers like any sane trout fisherman is wont to do on opening day.

Having tried all the well known "hot spots" around this county, without much luck naturally, I'm still waiting for some super-angler to come along and tip me off about some out-of-the-way place where they bite like whales and come as big as you can carry home. Despite frequent appeals through this corner, nobody has ever brought me any big tips. It's not that nobody loves me, it's likely just the fact

that a good fisherman never tells ANYBODY where the big ones lie in wait for a juicy worm or a flicking fly.

I am the proud new owner of a beautiful basswood whistle today. Bob Laking, who has been around these parts long enough to know just about everything and everybody, dropped into the office to present me with one.

It's neatly carved and whittled and it has a beautiful tone. "I just whipped this up in about five minutes," Bob modestly explained. "They're easy to do". He says cedar saplings are even easier to make into whistles.

When Bob was a boy he remembers cutting basswood into long strips and carving them into flutes, with the help of a drill. Right now when the sap is running is the best time to cut your whistle. It's an interesting piece of Canadiana and I'm just as proud of my new whistle as I would be with a new car.

That flag commentary last week produced some notable results—new flags are flying this week at Centennial Park on Martin St. and Milton District Hospital. No sign of a new flag to replace the torn one at the high school yet, however.

On a trip around town Sunday we were chagrined to see the heavy winds last week took their toll at two more places where good, whole, all-in-one-piece flags had been flying a week earlier. The flag at ONSD has become a little tattered and the Ensign at the Legion cairn at Evergreen Cemetery was rent into shreds by the winds.

PEEKING INTO MILTON'S PAST



BROOKVILLE BRASS BAND members had their instruments all shined and their caps all in place when they posed for the photographer a long time ago. In the rear row are Tom Blacklock, Mr. Milne, Sam Frank, Mr. Kitching and Joe Leachman. Second row, William Frank, Alex

Crawford, Ron Richardson, Joseph Frank. Front row, Duncan McTavish, George Blacklock, Ed Britton, Duncan Campbell, Jim Leachman. Seated in front, Jack Moffat, Jack Barber.—(Photo courtesy Harry A. MacLeod.)