

Established 1861
The Canadian Champion

Published by Dills Printing and Publishing Company Limited

Jim Dills, Publisher; Roy Downs, Editor; Paul Belanger Jr., Advertising Manager

Published every Wednesday at 191 Main St., Milton, Ontario. Member of the Canadian Community Newspaper Association and the Ontario Weekly Newspaper Association. Subscription rates payable in advance, \$7.50 in Canada; Carrier Delivery in Milton, 15 cents per week; \$25.00 in all countries other than Canada.

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Champion Editorial Page

Leave-taking time

Leaving as publisher of The Champion follows its sale to Inland Publishing Co. Limited, but it is also leaving a way of life that has spanned 28 years.

It's a time when I reflect on the work of many fine people who have been directly involved in writing and selling the pages of The Champion; who have been reported and written about; who have been there to produce and deliver the papers; who have offered encouraging or critical words as readers.

I came to Milton as a 21-year-old, fresh out of journalism school, with unlimited confidence about how things should be done. The years have mellowed me and the right answers now come less readily, but Milton has been a community to be proud of and I've never lost my enthusiasm for it. Nor do I expect to.

My family and the newspaper have been bound together over the years because the newspaper business demands more than a 9 to 5 involvement. Frequently family members have been involved in the message-taking, the understanding in my absences, the delivery of a late commercial printing job or seeing that a newspaper got to a forgotten subscriber.

The leave-taking is something that touches us all. For the children too, it has been employment as a carrier, as a student during the summer or in caretaking around the office.

The printing industry has changed from when I learned to handset type for headlines, or fed the printed sheets by hand into a noisy folder. At the outset I was permitted one picture a week because of the high cost of the necessary engravings. How dramatically that has changed. Terms unknown then are common in today's printing industry as the technology of the computer masters new tasks.

The pace and style of community life has changed. When I began covering Milton Council there was a seat for me at the council table, for convenience in fulfilling my reportorial function. Occasionally my opinion was sought and it was not necessary to later offer that view in an editorial. Council members were often blunt in their views but they spoke openly and honestly, often battling hard for their viewpoint. When it was over they could still have fellowship with their opponents, win or lose.

Attitudes change. At one time no nomination meeting would have been complete without promises to attract development to the community. Today, immersed in development, the promises are more likely to be slow it down. If a major public facility was required there was liable to be a bee to provide it or a fund raising drive to seek the funds. Today the first glances are cast at lottery funds or the government for help.

Through all the times of change the staff and I worked to make The Champion a newspaper worthy of a great community. In the process I will have offended some editorially or personally. For that I'm sorry.

I learned very young too, that if I was to have a very long career in newspaper work I should not load myself down with grudges or seek opportunity to "get even" with those I might have imagined had offended me. I tried always to be conscious of the power of the press and the tremendous responsibility that is attached to it.

Some will suggest my editorial views were not as strongly critical as they should have been. I've always tried to be constructive in criticism and I've had an empathy for those who work in community programs or wrestle with difficult decisions on the community's

behalf, recognizing my own fallibility.

November is a significant time in my family's background. It was on November 4, 1943 that my mother, on her 50th birthday, opened The Champion office on behalf of my father who had just purchased the paper. He already published The Acton Free Press and it was very unusual in those days for one person to publish more than one paper.

It was wartime too, and manpower was scarce. The days and nights were long for him and his very small staff. There was no paved road between Acton and Milton and the week's copies of The Champion were brought from the Acton plant in the back seat of a car, for mailing and distribution to the stores. The practice continued for a number of years and the oldest son of Shirley and me was in a basket at the office as we pitched in later years on many "paper days" to assist in the mailing operations.

There have been many milestones. It was a milestone when we decided not to have our plant work Saturday mornings, or to introduce a common coffee break, or to buy a large unused industrial building and develop it as our plant, or to install a new, faster press to speed the newspaper printing, or to change from the ages-old letterpress printing method to the now accepted offset method.

I've never spelled out a philosophy on publishing a community newspaper. It never really seemed necessary. I just assumed that those of us who worked together knew that ours was a limited-time stewardship of something that was a part of the community. The Champion, I felt, was always bigger than any of us and we were merely its custodians — guardians of its traditions, its credibility and its principles.

The time has come when my brother Dave and I felt others could better assume that stewardship. The challenges of growth, the necessary financial commitment, the need for new levels of marketing expertise and the importance of a forward vision are difficult for a narrowly based ownership like my brother and me to sustain, while being closely involved in the day to day operations.

Over the years we've had a warm relationship with Doug Bassett and members of his organization through association work and we've admired their management, development and search for excellence. Those were among the factors which contributed to our decision to sell to them.

I'm pleased the same staff will be continuing to greet you. My departure Friday will not be obvious to many. That's the way I feel it should be. The Champion will continue as Milton's complete community newspaper, under a new ownership, but with no less commitment to its role in the community. My best wishes go to all those who will continue to be involved.

The years have been, for my family and me, a treasure house of experiences we would not wish to forget. My genuine thanks to all who have been, with me, a part of The Champion's past 28 years. Particular thanks to Roy Downs, who for the past 23 years has been a dependable and conscientious right hand.

And now I look to some new involvements, quite unclear at the moment as I set out to rearrange the "furniture" of my life and to reorient our family focus which, in the past, has been so closely entwined with the newspaper way of life.

—Jim Dills



WE SHALL REMEMBER... Stark headlines from a 1939 newspaper serve as a reminder of the great conflict that marred world peace just a couple of generations ago. This weekend, in the Victoria Park cenotaph square, Miltonians will remember those who gave their lives for our freedom. (Champion photo by Peter McCusker.)

Sugar and Spice

I'd like to sleep until spring

By Bill Smiley



Why can't the big brutal world out there leave us little guys alone to get on with the difficult-enough business of living; putting on the storm windows, changing into the snow tires, digging out last winter's rubber boots with the hole in?

Not a chance. It's always shoving a ham-fisted hand into the delicate machinery of our daily lives. Today I received a summons to appear in court in the city to answer a charge of illegal parking, with all the "to wits" and "whereases" and threats that accompany such blackmail.

And that's what it is—blackmail. I haven't been in the city for four months. I don't even own a car in my own name, and I certainly was not hanging around respectable Parliament St. on that occasion or any other, with or without a car.

Oh, but I have a choice. If I don't want to travel to the city at considerable expense to plead innocent, or have a lawyer represent me at considerably more expense, I can just plead guilty by mail and send along \$7.80.

But dammit, I'm innocent. So what do I do? Lose a day's pay, spend the money to get there and back, just to prove to some frumpy traffic court that I'm as pure as the driven snow? Or take the chicken way out, and pay the rap? That's blackmail, brother.

A month ago, in came a bill from

Get out and vote

As all-candidates meetings go, the one in Milton Wednesday was one of the better ones.

A person could have walked into the Milton District High School auditorium without any prior knowledge of who the candidates were or what they stood for, and walked out of the auditorium two hours later with a pretty good idea of how things stood.

That's pretty high praise, when you think about it.

Armed with the knowledge gained from such a meeting, a voter must now turn his attention to the task at hand on Monday... electing a slate of men and/or women who will play a large part for the next two years in the process of making decisions which will have a direct influence on Milton's future—even after that council's term has expired.

Without wanting to pass judgment on the qualifications of each candidate, or their probable ability to perform the job, it is apparent that each candidate has a view that he or she is capable of dealing with any problem Milton may face. It is the voters who must decide which of them will get the chance to prove they can do as they claim.

Each of the candidates agree that it is important to have a high voter turnout in the election. In

National Revenue, stating that I owed them several hundreds of dollars, plus interest. No explanations, just the bald statement, accompanied by the usual dire warnings of the consequences, if I don't ante up. More blackmail.

I don't mind paying my bills. Well, I mind, but I pay them. But these mindless, inhuman, computerized attempts to make me feel like a criminal merely succeed in making me sick.

Down in Ottawa, the waffling and weaving and ducking and bobbing go on, ministers fall like autumn leaves, and nobody lets the left side of his mouth know what the right side is saying.

Trudeau, after losing a dozen able ministers in the last half-dozen years, totters along with a turncoat Tory, Jack Horner, insensitive arrogancies like Otto Lang, and political retractions like Bryce Mackasey, who, as I recall "solved" the last postal strike in only six weeks.

And His Eminence floats among these lesser fish like an octopus past his prime, still dangerous, still slippery, but given to emitting squirts of ink, disappearing into a hole, then tentatively thrusting out a tentacle to pick up the latest poll, before retreating into the rocks once again.

And as if the general state of affairs weren't enough to give me a big pain in the arm, there's the local. My wife, after lug-

ging her smashing new expensive white coat for about 10,000 miles this summer, in and out of 20 hotels, on and off countless buses and boats, trains and planes, has lost the blasted thing in her own home town.

My daughter, with three degrees is working as a file clerk, an honorable vocation, but scarcely one to make the creative impulses throb. My son-in-law is looking for a job, a rather harrowing business these days.

And my grandboys are out of all those fine new clothes we bought them last spring. The only thing they're not out of is energy and fiendish ability to dismantle things that electrical engineers would be afraid to touch.

I have a brand-new set of golf clubs with which I can hit the ball twelve feet. On a clear day. With a strong tailwind.

I tell yez, b'ys, if it weren't for all them old people, I'd be tempted to pack it all in, head for Florida, and sit on a bench in the sun, mumbling my gums.

But I guess things could be worse. I've got enough money to pay that \$7.80 blackmail for a non-parking parking ticket. I can fight the Feds on that mysterious assessment. I can live without the post office, though they sure know how to hurt a syndicated columnist, dependent on the mails.

And just maybe, when the dollar has hit 75 cents, unemployment has hit 10 per cent, and inflation settles in two figures,

we'll get sore enough to kick those tired flacks out of Ottawa.

My wife will find her coat, I found my pants last year, after they'd been missing four months. They were 120 miles away, in the hall closet of my father-in-law. And there was a \$20 bill in the pocket.

My daughter will get a job, probably as head of the CBC. My son-in-law will get a job, probably as his wife's copy and coffee boy. My grandboys will develop into great engineers. Or form of wrecking company and get rich knocking things apart.

Maybe I'll stick'er out a few months yet. But I wish I could do it like the ground-hogs—just fatten up, crawl into a hole and sleep until spring.

Philosobits

By Edith Sharpe

Many of us spend our lives looking for an elusive something, always looking for what we can't find, and in all the time we've wasted looking, we did not recognize we were actually looking for ourselves, our real selves.

If you can't count on your friends when you need them, then you really don't have friends at all.

Some terrible things are done in the name of Love!

Turning the Pages of the Past

From the files of The Canadian Champion

One year ago

From the Nov. 9, 1977 issue

A three-car vehicle crash on Steeles Ave. involving a propane gas truck took the life of a Georgetown man, 43-year-old Peter Fariskney of 29 Moultry Cresc. The accident occurred east of Trafalgar Rd. on Monday evening in the driving rain when a Superior Propane truck travelling in the westbound lane braked to avoid hitting a car making a left turn, according to Halton Regional Police.

A Halton police officer has been charged with using excessive force, following an internal investigation by the Halton Police Commission. Sergeant Jason Fields of Georgetown will face the possibility of dismissal from the police force, loss of pay, loss of seniority or a number of other penalties, according to Halton Police Chief Ken Skerrett.

A partial answer to Milton's Highway 25 connecting link traffic problems emerged in a meeting town officials held with Jim Snow, Minister of Transportation and Communications last week.

Rev. Lorne Brown, Professor George Johnston and Mayor and Mrs. Don Gordon arrived at St. Paul's Church in fine style Sunday morning. The group arrived in a horse drawn democrat, just as they would have 125 years ago when the church was founded. Their arrival to the waiting congregation was symbolic of the days of the saddlebag preacher. Approximately 600 people attended the special service at St.

75 years ago

From the Nov. 5, 1903 issue

Quite a serious smash occurred at the new Burlington canning factory early Friday morning, when a section of the two floors above the operating rooms gave way and fell with a tremendous crash. Fortunately it happened before working hours and no-one was hurt.

A tea meeting will be held at the Mountain Church near Bell's School, on Tuesday evening Nov. 10 under the auspices of the Mountain S.S. Tea served from 6 to 8 o'clock, and a good program will be provided.

K. Chapman found a lunatic in his farm yard this morning. He brought him to the jail here. He is supposed to have escaped from the asylum at London.

Walter Elliot, of Nassagaweya, met with what might have been a fatal accident a week ago yesterday. While opposite Jas. Campbell's gate, Esqueting, he got out of his wagon and was talking to Mr. Campbell when a collie dog ran out and nipped one of the horses on the heel, causing the horse to kick, striking Mr. Elliott on the back of the head. He was far away enough to escape the full force of the kick, but was rendered insensible for some time and received considerable of a wound in the head.

A Basket Ball Club has been formed by some of the young ladies of the town. They play in the drill hall.