

The Canadian Champion



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Turning the Pages of the Past

One year ago

From the June 13, 1979 issue
The Canadian Champion is continuing its tradition as an award-winning newspaper. The Champion won three first and a third prize in the contest sponsored by the Canadian Community Newspapers Association. Awards will be presented at the CCNA's annual convention in Toronto June 18-21.
Bell Canada employees here were among 3,000 union members to walk off their jobs Tuesday. The one-day strike was part of a rotating strike being carried out by workers in Ontario and Quebec. Employees are protesting the latest contract offer which includes a 26.5 per cent wage increase over a three year period.
Mayor Don Gordon officially opened the Optimist Centre Friday when he snipped a ribbon across the entrance. Later, during a banquet, he presented the club with a chrome plated shovel which was used to turn the first sod Aug. 20, 1977.
It was with one mighty blast of the whistle of a Sawyer Massey steam engine that the Ontario Agricultural Museum in Milton was formally opened Friday afternoon. Approximately 1,000 invited guests and government dignitaries gathered outside the main exhibit hall to pay honor to the \$1 million provincial project and the people involved in the plan.

20 years ago

From the June 9, 1960 issue
Council and the fair board are at loggerheads over odors in the fair grounds. The council claims it's coming from piles of manure outside the horse barns, but the grounds owners say the uncovered sanitary landfill site is the cause.
Backed by a ratepayer petition requesting more stores, Oakview Developments won council's approval this week to service the new shopping plaza site east of Ontario St. Oakview owner John Tamai said he is negotiating with three major food stores, but hasn't yet signed a deal.
Local 4970, United Steelworkers of America at P. L. Robertson Manufacturing, this week burned the mortgage on the union hall on Pine St. The \$12,000 debt was paid off with four years of hard work and social engagements in the hall, a former church.
Mary Lou Taylor of Burlington is Halton's Dairy Princess this year and will represent Halton at the CNE. She won a contest over Evelyn McKay and Lillian Finnie.
Toronto Sports Car Club's annual hill climb at Rattlesnake Point drew 56 entries and a large crowd of spectators.

50 years ago

From the June 12, 1930 issue
Shooting robins is a punishable offence. Bronte has adopted daylight saving time.
Invite your friends to Milton for the big celebration on Dominion Day.
Andrew Elliott, barber, is confined to his bed through illness. It is hoped he will soon recover.
Only two more weeks of school, and the summer vacation will be here. It is being eagerly looked forward to by both pupils and teachers.
Congratulations to A. Fine, of Milton, on passing his fifth year in the Faculty of Medicine at University of Toronto. Mr. Fine stood first in the class.
A large number of Miltonians witnessed the Shriners' parade in Toronto yesterday, said to be the largest and most magnificent procession ever held in Canada, taking four hours to pass through Exhibition Park, which was crowded with 200,000 people. The Shriners wore five-dollar bills under their little Fez to keep the sun out of their eyes. They were certainly a jovial lot of men.



The overall picture

One of the most ambitious plans for downtown core redevelopment in Milton was presented to council this week, as developers outlined a proposal to turn the Main-Martin corner into a showpiece of commerce.

At first glance, it sounds like the answer to the town's prayers — a full-fledged shopping concourse that could be the main cornerstone of the downtown revitalization. The plan could turn the southern half of the block bounded by Martin, Main and Millside into one of the most exciting, viable downtown attractions in the country.

And it could ensure a viable future for the remainder of the town core, which is obviously not in the best of shape, appearance-wise or finance-wise at the moment. Milton's downtown isn't dead just yet, but the signs of decay are becoming more visible every day. Years of planning a revitalization program are only now beginning to bear fruit.

But the Pylon Construction proposal to turn the block of property into a series of small stores and boutiques requires a thorough investigation before anyone gets excited about the prospects. There are serious ramifications beneath the surface. The first item to be established is whether or not the proposal will mean any further attacks on the taxpayers' earnings and savings.

In a nutshell, council is considering moving the town administration headquarters from the present town hall on Main St., to the old court house and jail property on Brown St. The town bought the old Halton court house-jail for a pittance, and must preserve it in an institutional use to live up to the terms of the agreement.

If council moves, the town hall would be available for developers. The old post office at the Main-

Martin corner is also available right now, as the new post office is under construction on Brown St., next to the old court house.

Neighboring lands owned by the Phillips family (the former Milton Private Hospital and an unused auto body shop) are also up for sale, after plans to develop a modern office complex apparently fell through. And the town's old fire hall and a parking lot east of town hall could be part of the package as well.

One fly in the ointment is the public washroom between the post office and town hall. Built from a bequest by the late Peter L. Robertson, the washroom building would have to be part of the development proposed, and the legal ramifications bear investigation.

Council last week selected a consultant to begin studies on the feasibility of utilizing the court house-jail property for a town administration centre and council chambers. His ideas are sound, and he has the experience needed to carry out a project of this magnitude.

A major concern will be the financing. Council can't afford to move to Brown St. if the revenue from the sale of town properties on Main St. doesn't cover the total cost of the relocation. The town cannot afford to lose a penny on such a transaction.

Yet the proposal for the downtown block will, on the other hand, attract plenty of commercial dollars to the community. A detailed cost study is certainly warranted, before any definite steps are taken.

We are looking at the entire future of the core of this community. Let's sit back and take a serious look at the overall picture, before we get embroiled in a pair of projects that could either put this town on the map, or create a white elephant we could never live down.

Viewpoint

I saw IT, honest!

by ROY DOWNS



In almost 25 years in this newspaper business, I've written plenty of stories about people seeing Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) but never, until Sunday, had I ever had the chance to see one in person.

My wishes finally came true Sunday afternoon around 5 o'clock when IT appeared in the skies over Milton. Don't ask me what IT was, all I know is this: IT was an object, IT was flying, and IT certainly was unidentified, to me at least.

Saucer-like? Yes.
Spherical? Yes.
Silver? Yes.
Stationary? Yes.
Shiny? Yes.
Silly? Nope, IT was there, darn it. You can scoff all you like, but I saw IT.
Sober? Yes, I was.
Satisfied? Yeah, but I still wish I knew what IT was.

The phone call came from Carl May, a friendly local firefighter who lives on Miles St. on the south side of town. (Now Carl has been known to take the odd drink, but he was sober Sunday. His chest may still have been puffed out, after his pretty daughter Cathy won the Miss Milton Firefighter title at a dance the night before, but Carl's head was okay.)
"Look up, straight over town, you'll see

it." Carl suggested as he described the silvery, saucer-shaped thing. "Call me back and tell me what it is," he added.

It didn't take long to find IT. There IT hovered, standing still, high in the sky over my Highside Dr. home. The sun was bright and made my eyes water, and the occasional cloud obscured the view, but IT was there, darn it.

Wife Dorothea and son Greg joined in and we all gathered in the back yard to watch IT. After 10 minutes of craning, our necks were sore so we gathered up some binoculars and lay on our backs in the yard, watching IT without getting our necks any stiffer.

Daughter Kathryn came home and thought the enemy had annihilated her whole family, when she discovered us all flat on our backs in the grass. Soon she joined us to stare at the thing.

IT wasn't quite round, IT was more triangular. I thought IT looked like a fingernail, triangular but flatter on one end and curved around on the other. IT was silvery (see-through, said Dorothea) and IT glinted in the sunlight.

IT didn't seem to move, but as we watched over the course of an hour, IT did progress north-easterly, against the strong wind, at a very slow pace.
Summoning up my nerve, I called the

local constabulary. "Er, uh, heh, heh, has anyone else reported a UFO?" I timidly asked.

The officer was polite, but careful. "We'll send someone around to look at it," he promised. I went and hid in the cellar, in case a truck full of men with white coats and butterfly nets came along to pick me up, but nobody showed.

Called Carl back, to confirm the sighting, and tell him the police had matters well in hand. Called out the next door neighbors, to (A) let them share in the phenomenon, and (B) make sure they didn't report the Downs family's crazy back yard antics to the authorities.
Listened to news reports on the radio, but nothing was mentioned. Checked later, and IT had disappeared behind a thick cloud cover.

One of the Monday papers said folks in Hamilton reported seeing IT too (which made me feel better). Their descriptions matched ours, and the time of sighting was the same.

The paper said the Mount Hope Airport control tower couldn't identify IT, and Toronto Airport radar facilities hadn't picked IT up.

So what was IT? Can anyone shed light on the mystery, or was IT just another of those UFO sightings?

Commenting briefly

Winners again

Again this year The Champion has distinguished itself as a first place winner in the national newspaper judging competitions. It's heartening to the staff to learn that our peers feel we are doing our job, but the nation-wide recognition only serves to remind us we are daily striving to improve the paper and please the people who matter the most — our readers and advertisers. No, we don't plan to rest on our laurels, even as this paper hits the streets we are planning improvements in the weekly issues that will keep The Champion in the winners' circle, both in competitions and in the eyes of our local "judges" who really keep us in business.

Dim the lights

You can't argue with success. It was always thought that plenty of lights would reduce night-time vandalism, but Halton Board of Education is proving that theory false. It is turning off all the lights at area schools, to deter vandalism, and it's working! It seems vandals are scared off by darkness. "Let there be NO light".

Cheap emeralds

The OPP have issued a warning about firms selling emeralds by mail order. At \$7 plus \$1 for hand-

ling, it sounds like a good buy. But, as police point out, you are only going to get what you pay for, and if you want some \$7 emeralds, go ahead and sign up. "The stones are low grade and worth about the price the customer is paying," report the OPP. Let the buyer beware. Anything that sounds too good to be true, usually isn't.

A super club

Congratulations to Milton Jaycees and past president Tom Blanchard, who have brought honors to the community by being named the top club in the Jaycees' 39-club district. The Jaycees have been most active and community-minded in their few brief years of service here, and the award is truly deserved.

Ante-up time?

It will soon be time for regional councillors to consider their salaries for next year. The Burlington Post suggests editorially it's also time for us all to decide what kind of councillors we want to serve us — the best possible people, to be paid high rates of pay in return for their expertise; or by retired and independently wealthy types who can volunteer their time to serve the community at no cost to the ratepayers other than normal expenses. The Post opts for the best, as "second best is not good enough."

Sugar and Spice

with BILL SMILEY

In theory, women are the sentimental sex, men the hard, unfeeling sex. In reality, this is pure horse... wait for it... feathers.

Underneath all the cooing and crooning and weeping, hidden behind the ahs and ohs and other symbols of maudlinity, women are about as sentimental as turtles.

This is said in no disparaging sense. I detest sentimentality, though I have nothing against sentiment. Thus, I despise myself for being sentimental about things: old shoes, old hats, old hip waders, old houses, old cars, and even old ladies.

There is nothing of this in my wife. Oh, she can get sentimental about the way I used to baby her, or the joy the children were before they grew up, or her school days in the one-room country schoolhouse. In other words, figments of the imagination.

But when it comes down to things I love and cherish, she's as sentimental as a meat-grinder.

Just the other day, she threw out my golf shoes. I'd had them only 21 years. They were a size too big when I bought them, and my feet skidded around abut inside them; the spikes were worn down to pimples, many missing. But they were old friends. I felt low for two days. She didn't turn a hair.

This week, she made me buy a pair of dress shoes, black. I had a perfectly good pair of black shoes. As usual, I had worn them only to weddings and funerals for the first four years, then to work for the last three. They were good shoes. Cost me \$22.

But they weren't good enough, in her opinion, for some darn fancy party we were going to. I didn't matter to her that they were comfortable (it takes about three years to break in a pair of shoes), still quite black when sufficient polish was applied, and only a few scuffs here and there, about the size of a thumbnail each. Out they went.

Have you any idea what a pair of decent shoes cost these days? By George, they must be using humans for skin. Blacks for black shoes, brown people for brown shoes, and Scandinavians for white shoes. No animal hide, alive or dead, is worth what they're asking for a bit of leather.

My old lady recently bought a collection of strings of leather that wouldn't make a medium-sized jockstrap. It was called a pair of shoes. It cost \$85. They were made in Italy. I'm going to write the Pope.

But I mustn't digress. Latest victim of my wife's complete lack of sentimentality about old and cherished things was our car. The Big Car, as my grandboys called it when they climbed, cramped, out of the poky little Datsun their mother drove, and in which she carried a pail of water to fill the leaking radiator every thirty-five miles.

A little sentimental

Those little fellows loved it. They didn't even notice the rust. It was a veritable playhouse, the Yellowbird, another pet name. They were at their happiest when we were steaming down the highway, crawling around my feet, pushing buttons, twisting dials.

It was sheer bliss for them when they got everything going at once. A cold winter day. The air-conditioning turned to full cold with the fan on. Windshield wipers flying at top speed, and one kid pushing the windowwash button, the other punching buttons of the radio, turned to full volume, or trying to put on, simultaneously, the headlights and the emergency brake.

Do you think any of those good times, those tranquil moments, meant anything to my old lady. Not on your life. This week I bid a fond farewell to the Yellowbird, wiped away a surreptitious tear, and climbed into a new car she'd made me buy.

No fun there for the kids. No air-conditioning to switch on suddenly, making Granddad's hair stand on end. It's a two-door, so no more playing with the locks and leaning against the door and watching Gran go out of her mind. Caged in, like little animals.

Have you bought a new car lately? Neither have we, but it's fairly new. Our last one cost \$2,000 and was only five years old. It lasted over three years and was still valiantly breasting the waves of traffic on the highway.



When I asked for prices on a new one, I turned red, then white, and had to be helped to a seat. Had the sales office not been so magnificent, rather like the lobby of a bank, I think I should have, perhaps, vomited.

There are more ways than one in which a car agency resembles a bank. Their interest rates are similar, though, to be fair, slightly lower than the eighteen-odd per cent our banks, those holiest of holies in our economy, gouge.

Their salesmen are somewhat like those well-groomed young men at the bank, not exactly accountants, not managers, who guide you smoothly through a maze of figures and papers to the stony reality that there is no easy way out, no way to really save money, no way to beat inflation.

There was one pleasant difference this time. The car salesman was a former student, Ernest Moreau, a craggy young man with a sense of humor, a sweetness of spirit, and a sense of the ridiculousness of things that was a charming change from the dull, humorless, unknowledgable young men I've met in the bank lately.

Yep, we've bought a car, new shoes, the works. And my wife showed no more sentiment over the old ones than she would have over the last week's laundry. I wonder if she could discard an old, well-used man with the same equanimity. I fear so.