

Milton Then and Now

An experiment with local option law

By Mel Robinson
The Canada Temperance Act, often referred to as the Scott Act, was passed in the early 1880s in an attempt to curb the heavy drinking of alcohol in those days. It gave municipalities the power to prohibit the sale of alcoholic beverages in their administrative areas.

Halton County was one of the first to adopt the provisions of this act. In a very few years it was found to be an unacceptable solution to the problem. After a six-year trial it was repealed in this country.

Over the years it was repealed in all the other counties which had given it a trial. A very important problem was the difficulty of enforcement. Where the sale of liquor became illegal in one area, the local drinkers merely brought it in from another area where it was being sold legally.

Nevertheless strong forces around the province continued to fight the sale of liquor. By 1908 it became apparent that there would be more referenda as provided by the Canada Temperance Act. William Panton, editor of Milton's Canadian Champion, was opposed to this, and his opinions were apparently in agreement with those of other leaders in this town.

One of the points he stressed was that local hotels would not be able to provide high quality accommodations and meals for travellers if they were deprived of their revenue from the sale of liquor. He had no faith in the ability of authorities to control the sale of liquor effectively. Drinking would continue unabated, and hotel service would be of poor quality.

It would be better, he argued, to improve enforcement of the Liquor Lic-

ense Act of the Province of Ontario. Under this legislation it was against the law for licensed vendors of liquor to sell alcoholic beverages to anyone on the Indian list. Anyone found guilty of drunkenness and disorderly conduct might have his name added to this list by a magistrate in a police court.

Native Indians were not listed. There was a Canadian government statute which made it illegal to sell liquor to them. Those listed were the ones who became troublesome when drunk. Magistrates tried to enforce this system but drunks usually were quite evasive about their sources of supply.

In the municipal elections at the beginning of 1910, several referenda were conducted in Halton on the question of Local Option. Nelson Township and Acton voted dry, but the referendum failed by reason of the small majorities in Esquesing, Oakville, and Burlington. In Georgetown a majority voted against it, Milton did not hold a referendum.

The by-law went into effect on May 1, and The Champion reported much drunkenness in that town late in April. A.J. Lehman of the Dominion House announced that the charge to boarders was to be increased to \$5 per week. The daily rate for bed and meals went up to \$1 a day. He also continued to attempt the sale of liquor from time to time. By May 1911 he had a record of two convictions under the by-law, and in a recent raid the government inspectors had seized and locked up in the Town Hall a quantity and variety of liquor awaiting a trial.

It was said the Lehman's defence would be that he had rented his bar to William Lawson. In court the inspect-

ors laid charge agsint Lawson, Lehman and his two sons. Fines levied against Mr. Lawson amounted to \$520. He apparently boarded the midnight train for Cheyenne, Wyoming. Lehman was fined \$200 each on two counts and his sons were each fined \$100.

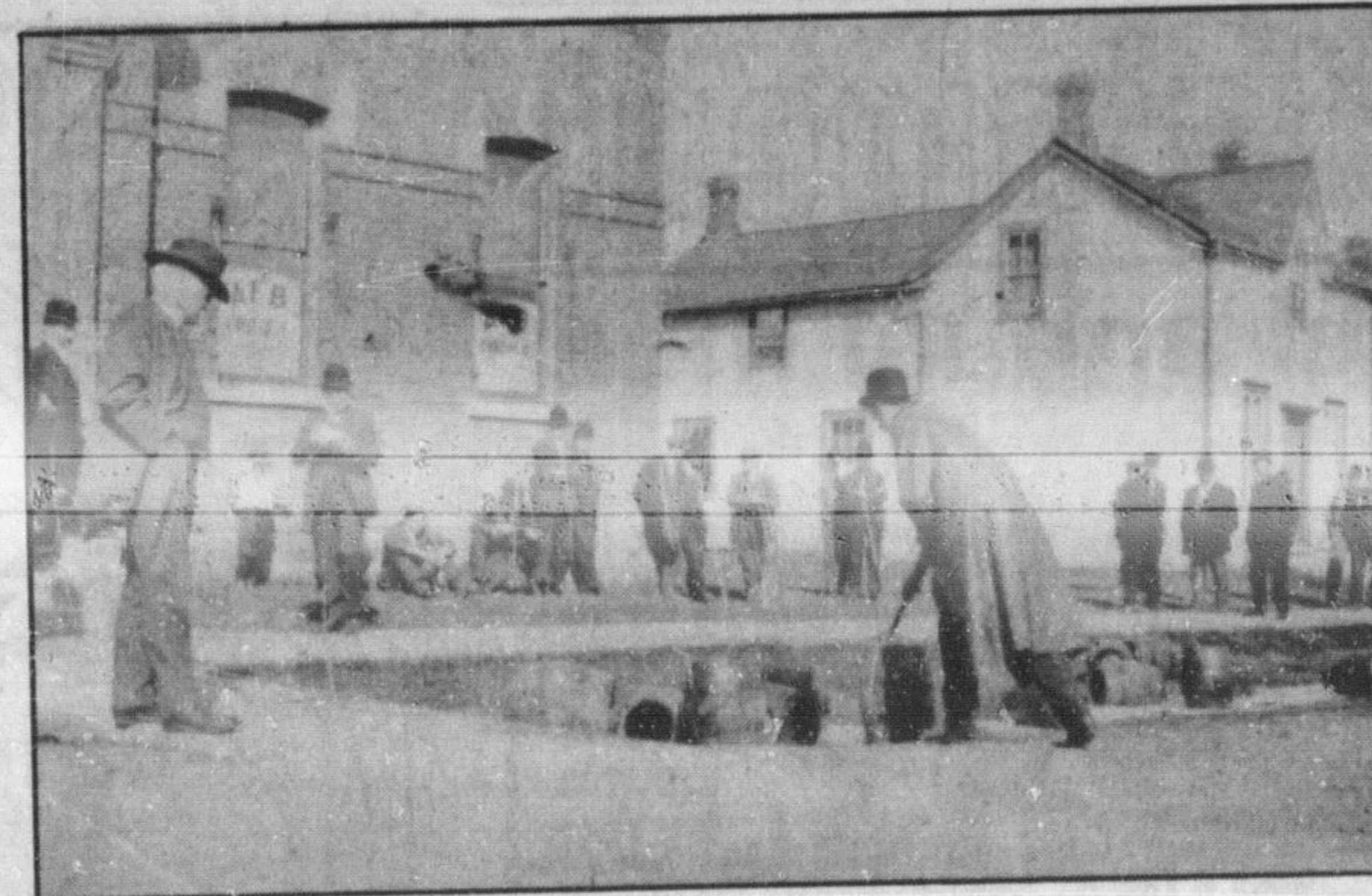
After the trial a number of people gathered to watch the inspectors, who rolled the kegs of liquor out into the street in front of the Town H.. Here they smashed in the heads and allowed "a river of beer to flow down the street in the dry town of Acton."

Back last March, about the time I took sick, Marion Hill loaned me the picture postcard which has been re-

produced to accompany this article. Recalling items about this event in old issues of The Champion, I concluded the picture must have been taken then, but I could not be sure about it.

Jim Dills recognized the card immediately as one produced for sale at A.T. Brown, long time druggist in Acton. After view of the same scene had been used in a historical review published years ago by The Acton Free Press.

By 1913 the local option by-law was repealed in Acton, and an Oakville man was planning to take over the operation of the Dominion House. A hearing was to be held for two applicants for hotel liquor licenses.



River of beer. A crowd gathered in Acton in May 1911 to watch government inspectors break open kegs of beer which had been confiscated at the Dominion House. Photo courtesy of Marion Hill.

Annual conference on pre-schoolers

If you have an interest in pre-school education, the Association for Early Childhood Education's third annual conference Saturday, March 14 at Sheridan College, Oakville campus may be of interest.

The featured speaker, Sylvia McPhee will deal with the subject of children's creativity and how educators can assist the child in reaching full potential.

Her long list of experience in the education field includes three years as special consultant to the primary task force for the Halton Board of Education, an infant school instructor in Wales, visits to schools in Mexico, Great Britain, New Zealand, Russia and the United States.

Miss McPhee now serves as Education Officer, Teacher Education Branch, Ontario Ministry of Education.

Horticultural Notes

Diseases, pests illustrated by B. McNeill

Marjorie Powys, president of the Milton and District Horticultural Society, didn't need to say much to introduce the speaker at the Feb. 16 meeting.

Burke McNeill, secretary and long-standing member of the Society and Nursery and Landscape Specialist with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, gave a slide presentation on common disease and insect pests of garden ornamentals.

Each insect or disease was illustrated by a series of slides showing the symptoms, damage done, and the pest responsible. Mr. McNeill indicated whether or not the damage done by each pest was serious, and if control programs were necessary or even possible.

For example, pod galls on the leaves of maple, ash, oak, and honeylocust do no real damage, which is fortunate because the pod gall mite is difficult to control by spraying. Similarly fall webworm, common on birch trees, does little damage by defoliating the trees because it occurs late in the growing season. On the other hand, spruce spider mites can kill a tree, and spraying with an insecticide or miticide is necessary.

Tree borers, such as the bronze birch borer,

lilac borer, and peach-tree borer, are also serious pests, but control measures in these cases are cultural or biological, rather than chemical. Verticillium wilt in maples and fireblight in members of the rose family, such as crabapple, mountain ash, and pear, have no practical chemical control as well, but respond to such cultural care as pruning out diseased branches, fertilizing, and heavy watering.

Natural resistance of the plant to the disease or insect is also helpful, and Mr. McNeill recommended selecting resistant cultivars of flowering crabapple, for example, to avoid problems with apple scab and tree defoliation. Resistant cultivars of hawthorn are not as susceptible to leaf spot and subsequent defoliation.

Two rust diseases illustrated at the meeting are interesting because they must each have two alternate hosts to complete their life cycles. Cedar-apple rust appears as jelly-like galls on junipers (red cedar) in the spring, and then as large orange dots on apple leaves later on. White pine blister rust infects both white pines and currant bushes. In both cases, the diseases

can be prevented by not planting the two necessary hosts together in the same vicinity, thus interrupting the life cycle of the diseases.

Of special interest at the meeting was a display of magazines that Wilma Muselius had brought in for members to borrow.

During the business meeting, Burke McNeill read a letter from the Halton Region's Ecological and Environmental Advisory Committee asking for suggestions of noteworthy trees in the Milton area that deserve to be honored and preserved. These Heritage Trees may be outstanding for a number of reasons. Especially large or old trees, rare

species, or trees associated with historical buildings or tree-planting ceremonies are all suitable for preservation. Anyone wishing to nominate a tree should contact Betty Barhydt, subcommittee chairman, 20 North Shore Boulevard, Apartment 20, Burlington, 634-5295.

The theme of the monthly flower show was Valentine's Day.

Class one, Heart to Heart: the winning arrangement by Margaret Wrigglesworth featured red and pink fibrous begonias, with blood-leaf, and red and green begonia foliage.

Class two, Sweetheart: Wilma Muselius' winning design was a large wicker basket filled with

a delightfully fragrant pot pourri of peony and rose petals, chamomile, several mints, lavender, citrus peel, almond oil, cinnamon, cloves, and ginger. In the basket were two large heart-shaped velvet sachets and an arrow.

Class three, Tea for Two: Margaret

Wrigglesworth created a small design in a teacup of pink geraniums, blue lobelia, and asparagus fern.

Class four, My Sunny Valentine: Margaret Wrigglesworth's winning arrangement used apples, strawberries, fuchsia, coleus, and ivy.

In the horticulture section, class five, African Violet: M. McIntosh. Class six, flowering houseplant:

Margaret Wrigglesworth. Class seven, forced bulbs: Nellie Wood won with a pot of crocus.

The meeting ended with a lunch prepared by Sarah Small and Nellie Wood.

Between the Willows

I'm all tied up

By Don Byers
It is at least five years since I have worn a necktie. During this time, I have worked here at home, for the most part. Consequently, there was no reason to dress up for the wild, wee folk (furry and feathered) with whom we share our small, personal, conservation area.

When I did venture out into the commercial world, I went sporting a "Scafe"—a special kind of cravat, designed by son Richard and sewn by daughter Donna-Jane, many moons ago.

During its heyday, the Scafe sold in many cities in Canada, with a gentle nudge from guess-who, as he travelled, on business, across our vast land. Senior vice-presidents, corporate lawyers, sales managers and advertising executives were numbered among those who succumbed to the colorful neck-pieces.

Looking back, it's entirely possible that we had a good thing going. I can't remember why we didn't carry on (Canada today, tomorrow, the world.) but it wasn't to be. Perhaps, because Rick's attention was arrested by the time-consuming, uninspiring process of getting a university education. Win some, lose some, I suppose.

In any event, as I've already said, I have carried on what has become a family tradition. Last July, I proudly stood up with my daughter when she was married, wearing a then suffocating Scafe. (They are about as uncomfortable as neckties on hot days.) Slow, sweaty strangulation.

What got me off on this train of thought, which I hope is still on the tracks, was my recent 56th birthday.

(No, madam, I really didn't expect to make it this far, either.)

I'm glad I did, for lots of reasons. I'm wearing one of them now. It is an official, RCAF plaid tie... a gift from my sister-in-law Edna and her husband Les.

I got quite a kick out of the tag, securely attached to the material. In no uncertain terms, the sombre, printed message warned the prospective wearer that he had better have been in that particular branch of the Armed Services, before snugging up the knot around his neck.

I have no way of knowing how many pretenders have been strangled in front of their mirrors while getting dressed to go out. After all, dying with death is for professionals. If you can't wear the colours with impunity, it's safer to leave them alone.

Not that it's newsworthy, but ties are narrow again. Last time I bought one they seemed to be about 10 inches wide—but that was some years ago. Going back a few more, I can recall a period when I wore perky bowties, the kind you tied yourself. At present, the only males I know in Canada, who still practice this skill, are Gordon Sinclair and Pierre Berton. With their money and fame, why not?

What, if anything, can you tell about a man by the kind of tie he wears? I wonder.

The next time the House of Commons appears on the boob-tube, I intend to scrutinize the dishonorable members' neck attire and make notes. Should my findings prove significant I'll report them here.

But don't hold your breath.

Planners, historian

Milton Historical Society will be holding its first general meeting of the 1981 season on March 12 at 7.30 p.m. at Milton Public Library.

Guest speakers for this meeting will be Barry Lyons and Peter Turner, planner and architect, presently contracted by the Town of Milton, in conjunction with the Business Improvement Association.

The evening's topic will cover the work which Lyons and Turner have been doing towards plans to rejuvenate Milton's

downtown area. If many of the town's older core buildings were properly restored, the town could take on an entirely new look.

Lyons and Turner's talk will be supplemented by a slide presentation showing present buildings and an artist's conception of their proposed restoration. Also a 12 foot photographic showing the entire downtown area will be displayed.

For further entertainment, local historian Bus

Norrington will show a selection of his photographs of some early homes and businesses in Milton. His colorful commentary is sure to enlighten all visitors on life in Milton after the turn of this century.

Following the meeting, coffee and a lunch will be provided by Mr. Norrington and Mrs. Jessie Hamilton. Sandwiches will be made of bread from the "Hannant Bakery," butter from the "Dawson Creamery" and ham from "Stan Buck's Butcher Shop."

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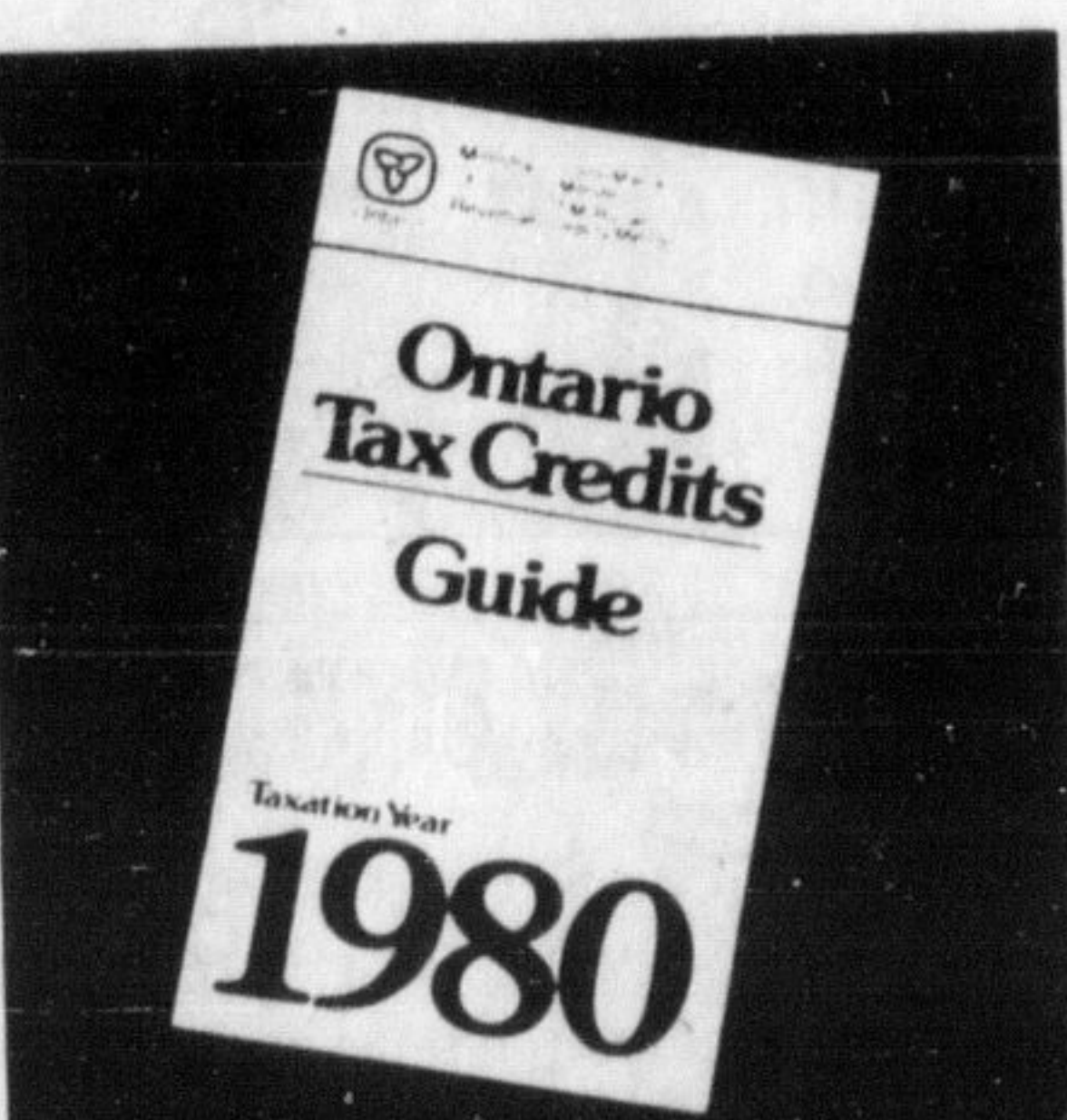
Remember Ontario Tax Credits at tax filing time.

Find out how you qualify:

If you're an Ontario resident under 65, you may qualify for one or more of three Ontario Tax Credits, even if you have no taxable income.

To claim the credits you must complete the mauve Ontario Tax Credit form and mail it together with your federal income tax return.

A reminder: Fill it in and mail it - Ontario Tax Credits are for you.



Property Tax Credit

The Property Tax Credit reduces the burden of municipal and school taxes. It is based on your property tax or rent and taxable income.

Political Contribution Tax Credit

This credit may be claimed by Ontario residents who contributed to a registered Ontario political party, constituency association or candidate in an Ontario provincial election.

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The maximum Political Contribution Tax Credit that may be claimed is \$500.

Sales Tax Credit

This credit returns a portion of money paid in provincial retail sales tax. It is based on personal exemptions and taxable income. The maximum amount that may be claimed for Property and Sales Tax Credits is \$500.

Attention Senior Citizens!

The Ontario Tax Grants introduced in 1980 replace Ontario Property and Sales Tax Credits for residents who were 65 years or older as of December 31, 1980. If you are filing a federal income tax return, you should **not** complete the Ontario Tax Credit form unless you are claiming the Political Contribution Tax Credit.

Nursing Home Residents

Residents in nursing homes and similar institutions are not usually eligible to claim the Property Tax Credit or the Property Tax Grant.

For more information or copies of the Ontario Tax Credit Guide, call the Ministry of Revenue's toll-free Information Centre:

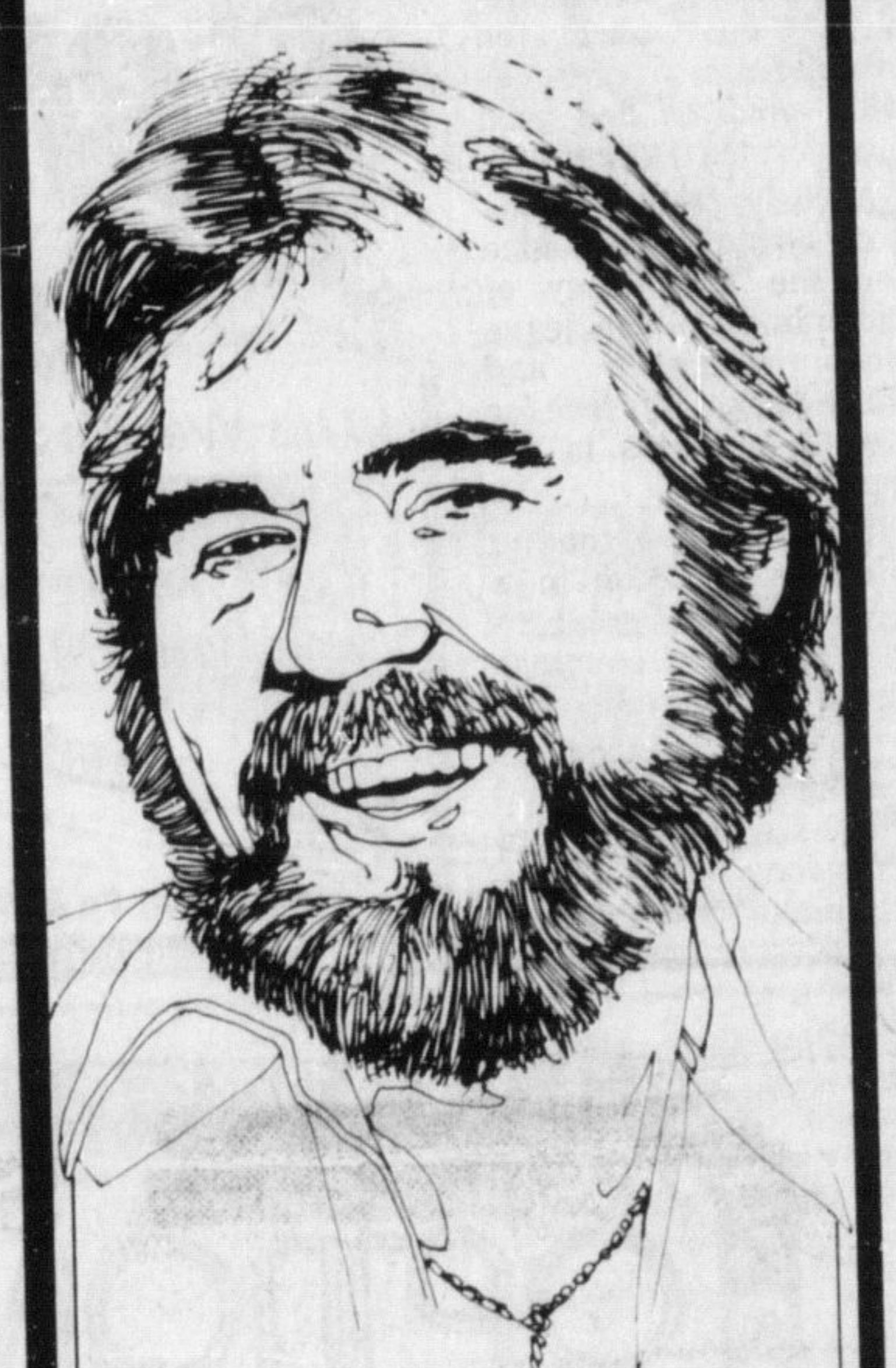
- In Metro Toronto - dial 965-8470
- In Area Code 807 - ask the Operator for Zenith 8-2000
- In all other areas - dial 1-800-268-7121

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