

Between the Willows



By DON BYERS

In "nothing November", not much, I suppose.

As I walked through the long, wet grass of the sidehill, I could hear the wind roaring through the now naked trees in the woods. Sombre, grey clouds swept across the sky, and fine rain drove against my hunched body.

Within the protection of the trees, the blast backed off a bit. I sloshed through a blanket of slippery, sodden leaves in my never-ending search for fuel for our new wood stove. (The stacked logs in the barn require drying and splitting.)

Crossing the largest of our springs, over moss-covered rocks, I made my way up the steep slope, noting the many downed elms that lay about like forlorn, beached whales.

In this section of the woods, the trees have been thinned out, at one time, exposing more of the sky.

Continuing my climb, I came upon two hang-ups. They were not "widow-makers" but large enough, if dislodged by the wind, to have left a large lump on one's noggin.

"Another day for those," I thought, and, avoiding them, I moved on.

I had now reached a ledge of rock, that, years ago, had been quarried to provide lintels and sills for houses then being constructed in Toronto.

As I paused to scan my surroundings for suitable logs, my concentration was suddenly shattered by a raspy voice only too familiar to me.

"Well Scribbler, I was hoping I'd see you before we both holed up for the winter."

I turned and there he was—standing upon the ledge just above me.

"How's it going, Guru?"

"Could be better," he replied and with the agility of a mountain goat, he leapt from the rock, landing a couple of feet from me.

"I suppose you've been anxious about that novel of yours you left with me, to edit last summer," I said somewhat defensively.

"Not at all, Scribbler. I've given up writing for an art of greater importance—one with which I shall leave my mark upon posterity," said the Guru, puffing up his scrawny chest.

"Really? And what art form would that be?" I asked, trying hard not to burst out laughing.

"Cave-wall painting, what else? Do you realize, Doubting One, that man has recorded the events of his daily life on the walls of caves for thousands and thousands of years. I intend to carry on that venerable traditions."

"When you think about it," I said, "you are to be commended for your cultural contribution. I suppose you'll turn your cave into a tourist attraction next spring."

"Good thinking, Scribbler, but Mrs. G. and I value our privacy too much. After all, you are the only outsider who knows where our home is. Let's keep it that way, or else."

"Oh no. Not my driveway again. You wouldn't."

"It's that time of year," said the Guru. "I'll leave you to ponder that."

Now I don't know what to expect.

Our Readers Write

Trustee responds

Dear Editor:

Mr. Smith, in his letter to your paper last week, raised a number of interesting issues if one accepts his premises and it appears we disagree philosophically in a number of areas.

I campaigned in the recent election on the basis that the educational system must provide the best possible education to the students in its charge based on its resources. I do not believe that a teacher and a parent have conflicting concepts of educational goals and objectives as indicated in the letter.

A school system that operates effectively is one where all members of that system have common goals, not where each segment serves its own self-centered needs.

As a trustee I expect to be able to serve those who elected me regardless of my professional associations. No individual should be completely controlled by any of his associations. To serve to the best of my ability, I will serve on committees where I believe my expertise to be of most value or on such committees as the Board suggests, not on a committee that Mr. Smith wants me to serve on.

A teacher has as much a right to

serve on a school board, which is not his/her employer, as any taxpayer in the community. To use Mr. Smith's argument would logically mean that any member of the community who has contact with, or contact from the Board, should also be ruled ineligible to serve on the Board.

I agree with Mr. Smith when he indicates that he does "not believe that if all our trustees were teachers the solutions would be totally to the benefit of the student and/or the taxpayer." I also believe that, should the board be represented by lawyers, doctors, farmers, salesman or any other single group, then the decisions reached might not be of maximum benefit to the system.

I was elected by the citizens of Milton as an individual, not as a teacher. I will attempt to serve all citizens by acting in as rational and knowledgeable manner as I know how. I leave it to the citizens and to Mr. Smith to judge me based on my performance, not to Mr. Smith to prejudge me based on preconceived beliefs.

Yours truly
Bill Harrison
Maple Ave.

Conflict charged

Dear Editor:

I read with both interest and elation, the letter to you from Mr. Lyndon Smith, titled, "Trustee challenged." I agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Smith's comments and can only wonder how our "educated" electorate of Milton could elect Mr. Bill Harrison as our Board of Education trustee. I was relieved to see that someone else was as concerned as I, with Mr. Harrison's conflict of interest.

Appearing in the Milton Champion on Nov. 3, 1982, was a pre-election

synopsis of our candidates. Mr. Harrison's first concern was "the need for Halton Board of Education teachers to continue bargaining contracts as a separate unit." Why isn't his primary concern with the children of Halton and their educational needs, instead of the teachers of Halton and their contract wants.

As an informed voter, I did not vote for Mr. Bill Harrison.

Sincerely
Leslie Feddery

Disabled need help

Dear Editor:

I am in a wheelchair so I am writing first hand. There is only two stores on the main street that don't have a step or steps to get in. There should be ramps for disabled people so they can get in and out of stores and ramps at the crosswalk for handicapped people as there are more disabled all the time.

Who ever designed those medical buildings sure never gave a thought to the disabled people.

I have written to the mayor's office and got no where. I think people would like to close their eyes and hope we will all go away but we won't—we will still be here.

Sincerely
Mrs. I. Pegg

Chamber says thanks

Dear Editor:

On behalf of the Milton Chamber of Commerce I wish to thank all those who helped us put a float in the Milton Santa Claus Parade.

Thank you to Cooney Haulage for the loan of a driver, truck and trailer; to St. Clair Paints, Milton Mall, for donating the paints; to E.C. Drury Regional School for the Hearing Handicapped for painting our railway cars; to Langholme Nursery for the loan of the beautiful evergreens to decorate our float; to Maplehurst Correctional Facility for assembling the model of the station;

to the Fifth wheel Truck Stop for the loan of a service bay; to M.A.R.C.H. Mechanical Ltd., Campbell's Furniture, and The Appliance Centre for empty boxes; and also to the Dept. of Parks and Recreation, Town of Milton, for transporting items back and forth for us. Thank you to Richardson Chev-olds for the loan of a pick up truck to return the trees.

We greatly appreciate your assistance.

Yours truly,
Margaret Burgess
Manager
Milton Chamber of Commerce

Battered wives

Dear Editor:

This item is in response to your article in the newspaper on "Charges Rarely Laid".

The issue of battered wives is coming into the open now more than it has come into view in the past. I think this is good because in the past the "Battered Wife" could do little because there were no facilities to which she could go for help or for protection. In fact, I think some people accepted that it was the man's responsibility or privilege to keep his wife in line even if it meant

physical abuse. In the past there were rarely, if any, charges laid on husbands who beat their wives. Now all that is changing, not so much the beating of wives but the alternatives the wives have such as—divorce, separation, legal action and protection. These things might not prevent it, but it might help to make people realize that you can't get away with it anymore.

Michael Smith
Grade 10
E.C. Drury

Past pension turned down

A request for spend more than \$12,000 of public money to increase pension benefits for long time regional councillors has been rejected.

Council last week turned thumbs down on a request from Burlington Coun. Vern Connell to purchase for him two years of pension benefits under the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement Scheme (OMERS).

In a report to council, Dennis Perlin, chief administrative officer, explained that in 1974 when Halton was formed, council decided not to have councillors participate in the scheme.

That stance was changed in 1976, but councillors can only collect pensions for the period that they have been members of the scheme.

Including Mr. Connell, four regional councillors would be eligible for the greater benefits.

"I suppose that your support for this depends on where you find yourself sitting," Mr. Connell told councillors last week.

He did not seek re-election during the recent campaign and his pension request could only be granted while he is on council.

He explained that under the OMERS plan, councillors are paid a pension based on a formula of two per cent their last five years earnings times their years of service.

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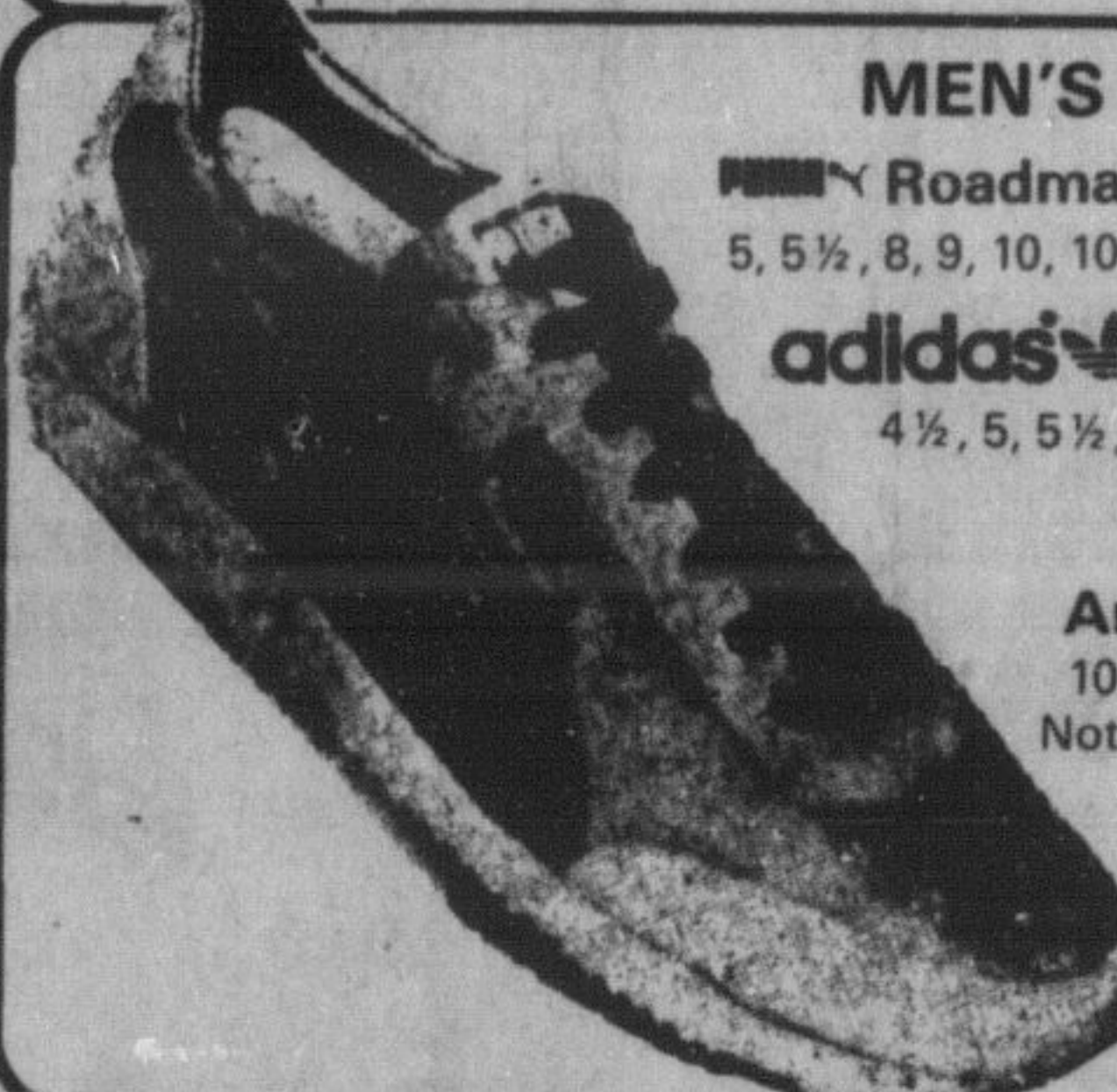
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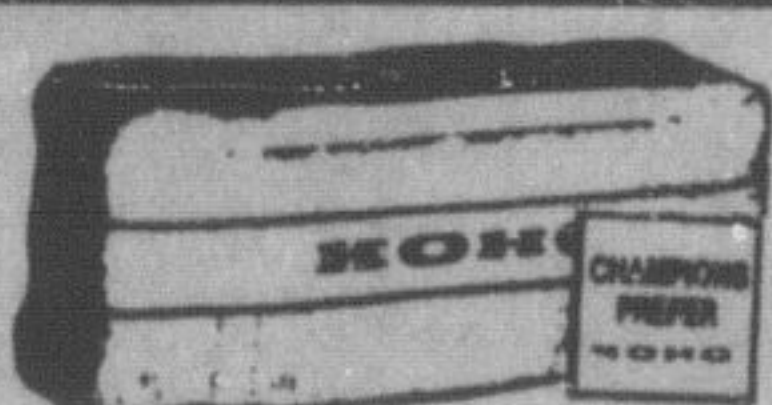
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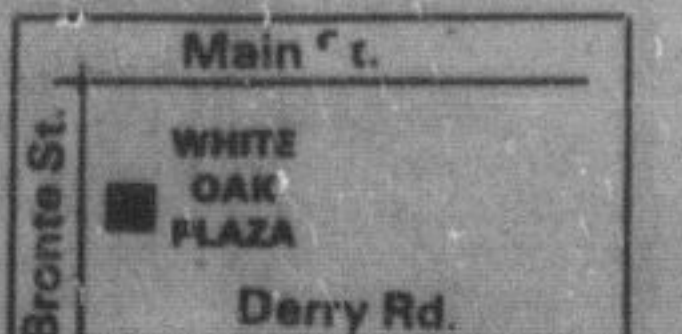
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