

Residents concerned over loitering

By **KAREN SMITH**
The Champion

Youth

Hayward Crescent residents are trying to nip a youth loitering problem in the bud before it ruins their summer.

Approximately 30 residents of the southeast Milton street recently voiced concerns about large groups of teens hanging out behind Sam Sherratt School. The residents came before the Community Consultation Committee, a citizen-run group that probes crime-related issues, last week.

Alcohol, smoking, foul language, noise and loitering are the bones of contention in reports of youths congregating on a 40-foot pathway off Hayward Crescent.

Town Councillor Colin Best, who is a member

of the Community Consultation Committee, said he received one report of a teen at the path spitting close to a passing baby carriage.

The path is meant as a shortcut to Sam Sherratt school, but has become a hot spot for teens this spring, said school principal Gary Sadler.

He said high school students along with senior Sam Sherratt students — some smoking — hang out between classes at the spot, and their presence is intimidating to younger students.

But Mr. Sadler said he can do little about teens loitering at night and can't stop them from smoking since the path is on municipal property. However, he feels confident he cleared up problems during the day.

He said he sent no-trespassing letters to high school students known to hang out at the path,

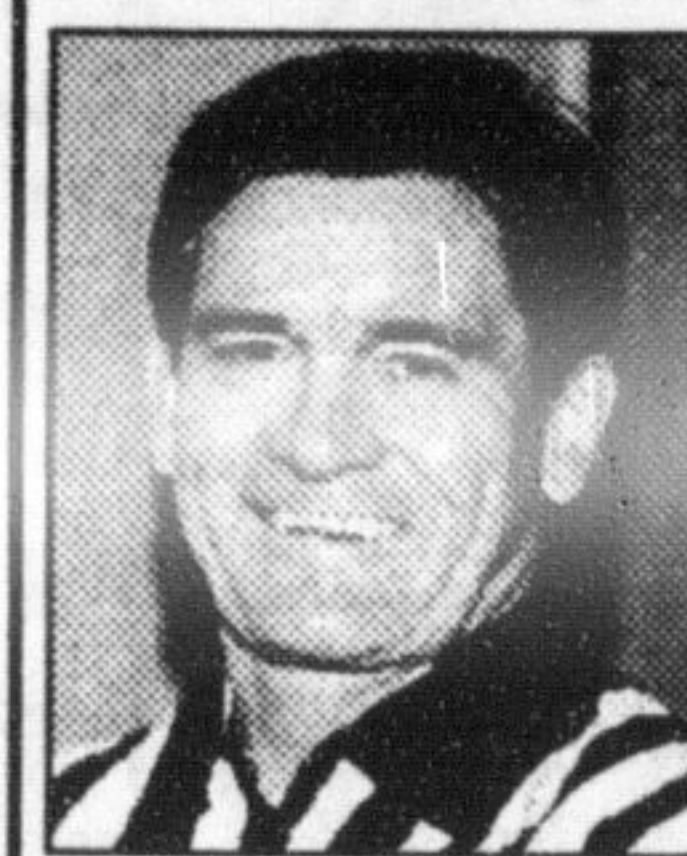
which they access from school property. And police have been making regular visits to the site, asking students to move along.

Halton Regional Police Staff Sergeant Roy Smith said police have been monitoring the situation and are first trying a "soft approach" before playing hardball. A few youths have been handed tickets for loitering, he said.

Under the law police authority is limited unless the teens are caught doing something wrong, Staff Sgt. Smith said. Glass from broken beer bottles can be seen along the path, but youths usually scatter when police arrive, making it difficult to catch a culprit, he said.

Police could issue tickets for noise bylaw infractions before 11 p.m. After that time, the park closes and no-trespassing regulations take effect.

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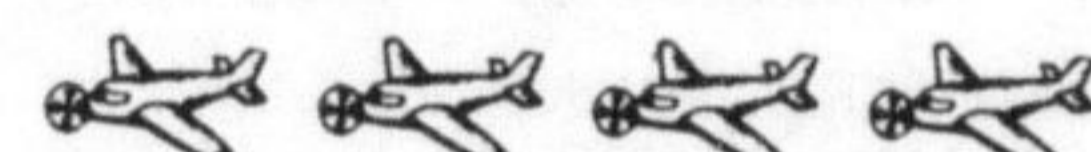
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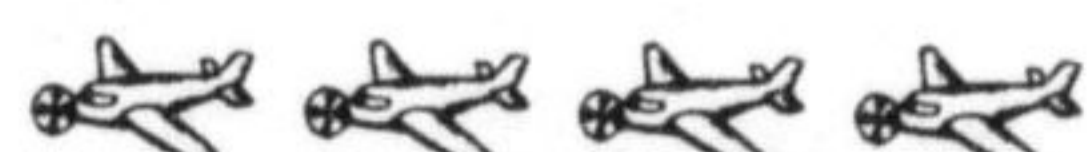
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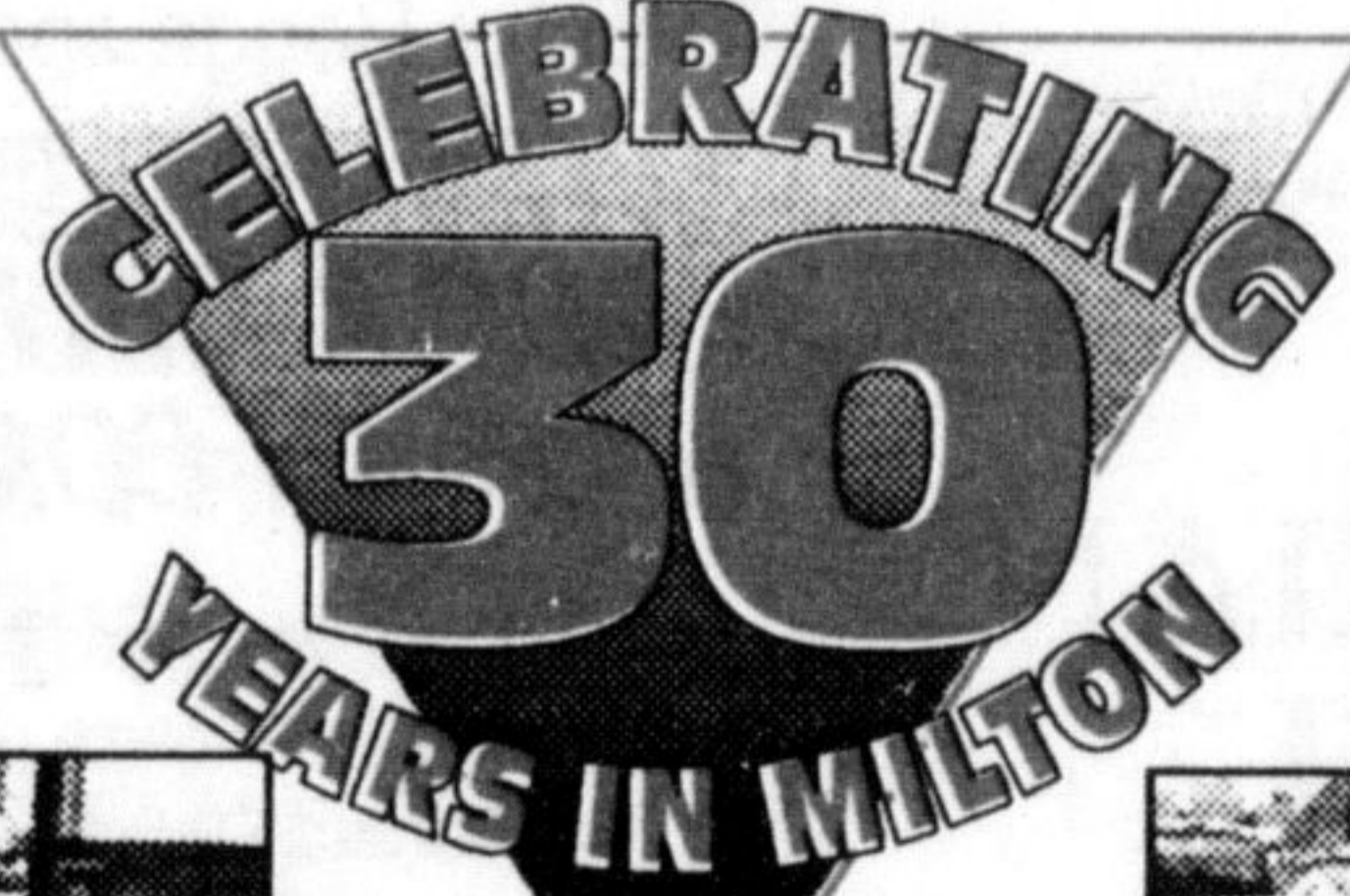


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