



With garden popularity growing in leaps and bounds, folk are often overwhelmed with information and choices. One of the simplest and most important tools gardeners can harness is combining plants.

Textures and colours can be used to contrast and compliment each other. This helps the garden work as a unit instead of having each plant stand on its own. This is true of both flower and foliage. For instance, a fantastic spring flower combination is yellow Leopard's Bane, pink Bleeding Heart and blue Forget-me-nots. Three colours working in harmony together are more eye catching than each alone. Another lovely although more subtle trio, which works in shade or partial sun, is the groundcover Sweet Woodruff with a yellow leaf Hosta such as 'August Moon' and the evergreen Blue Oat Grass. In this case, both the textures and the foliage colours provide interest.

The best way to learn which plants look well together is to take pieces and hold them against each other. You may be surprised what works and what doesn't. Bright orange Lillies, which are not my favourite, look great against soft blue Delphiniums. Keep an eye on gardens and magazines and think about why certain gardens work well. More often than not, it is the subtle pairings of plants that catch your eye. Milton has some beautiful gardens to look to for examples.

Keep in mind that the garden needs something of interest at different times of year. The Purple Cone Flower looks great in August with the dusty rose Joe Pye Weed and pink Summer Phlox. Yellow Rudebeckia, Showy Stonecrop and any ornamental grasses look wonderful in September and throughout the winter. As an aside, I am not inclined to cut down most of my perennials until March, leaving them standing through the winter for shelter and visual interest. Be aware of the mature heights of the plants so the tall specimens don't hide the smaller plants.

Plants can be mixed together. Growing vines such as Clematis or Honeysuckle woven into a Juniper or Rose-of-Sharon add a season of interest to an area without using extra space. It doesn't hurt the shrub to have a companion such as Clematis. Planting Tulips under Lillies that are planted under Asters, in layers, gives three seasons of interest in one small area without hurting the plants.

Try anything you think would look well together. If it works, great. If it doesn't, it can be changed.

Sean James N.P.D.

President of the Milton & District Horticultural Society

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Arts & Entertainment

Town planner's book in paperback

By IRENE GENTLE
The Champion

Secrets to the universe lie everywhere, if you know where to look.

Still, it's no mystery where Milton Town planner Bill Mann's career as an esoteric writer is going.

Fast, furious and forward is the general idea.

After spending eight years gathering information to write the 250-page tome *Labyrinth of the Grail*, Mr. Mann recently signed a contract with Bantam Dell to have it released as a mass market paperback.

It's one of five books selected to be in a series named after a syndicated radio talk show host broadcast out of San Antonio, Texas.

Mr. Mann's book is the last in the

Whitley Strieber's Hidden Agenda Series and should be out in paperback next spring.

"The show is called Dreamland," said Mr. Mann. "He has seven million listeners world wide."

That's a heavy-hitter to have on side, and Mr. Mann is expected to increase his own notoriety by hitting the show's airwaves in the future.

Borne out of his own background, which is steeped in military and Masonic traditions, *Labyrinth* is a complicated cornucopia of history, religion, philosophy, math and art.

It challenges readers to look at life in a new manner, hunt down connections in the seemingly unconnected, and even change their thinking on the meaning of the Holy Grail.

Long considered a chalice or material treasure, Mr. Mann contends the grail may be nothing less precious than knowledge itself.

That's why he laughs at e-mails he receives offering to track it down for cash. "I tell them if you're looking for money, you've missed the treasure," he said.

Since publishing the book, Mr. Mann has gone on a number of small speaking engagements.

But his ideas have found a more willing audience across the border.

"In Toronto I've had between one and 20 people show up," said Mr. Mann. "In the States I get 200. I fill the room. The Americans are much more open to what I guess you'd call hidden knowledge."

Despite keeping busy with the Town's burgeoning population boom, Mr. Mann is already hard at work with a second book.

And he sees no sign of stopping soon. "I have 10 in my mind," he said. "There seems to be hidden secrets everywhere in the land when you know where to look."

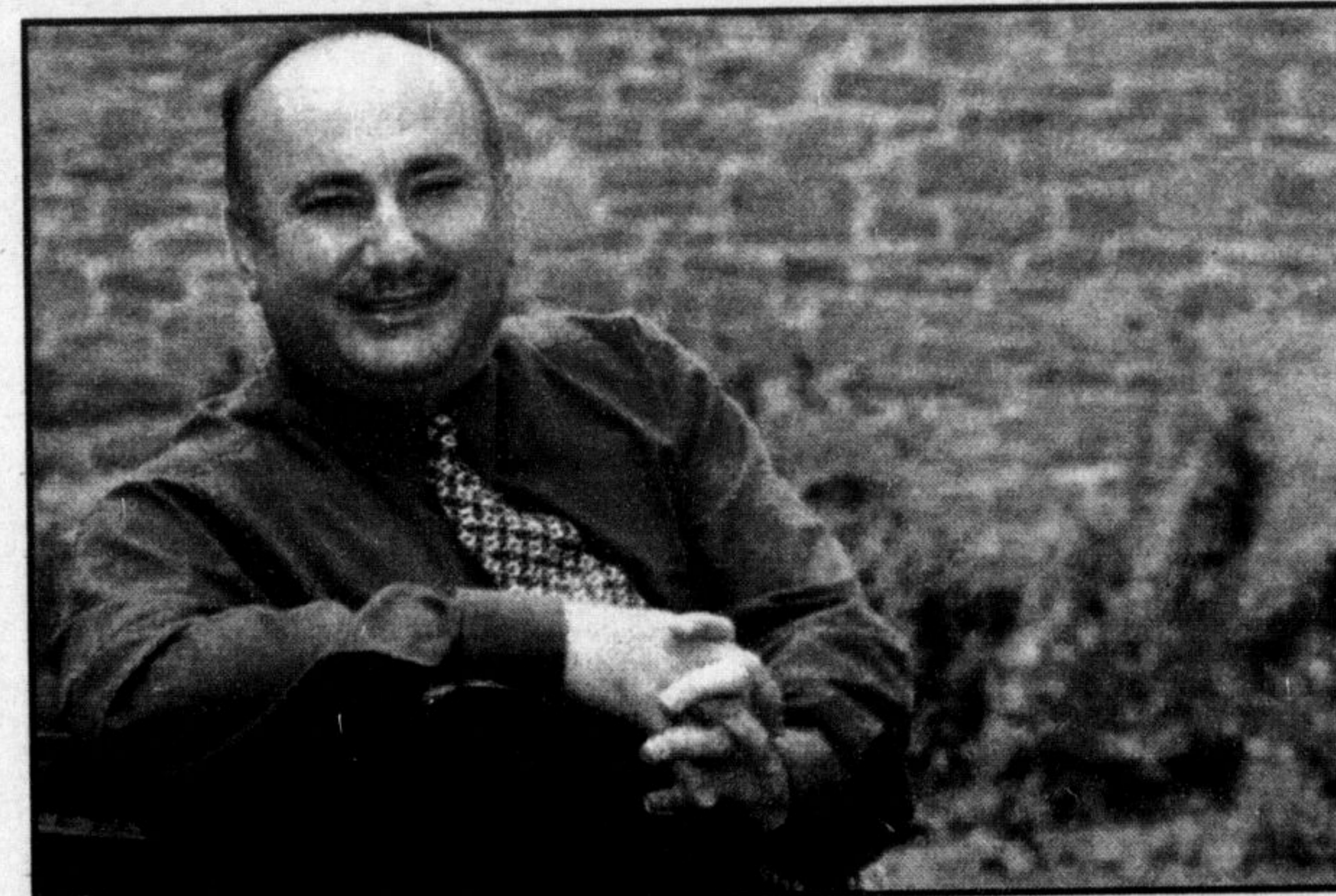


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Town planner Bill Mann has become a paperback writer after signing a contract to turn his debut book the *Labyrinth of the Grail* into a mass market paperback with Bantam Dell.

Mountsberg hosts music, craft show

In the summer months, creativity can unfold like buttery sun beams over a land in full bloom.

So it's no surprise Mountsberg Wildlife Centre in Campbellville is holding its music and craft show in the heart of the sizzling season — Saturday, July 15 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Featured at the event will be Wye Marsh Folk Festival winner Myrna McBrien. Marty and Pullin and James Miller will also take to the stage to spin folk and Celtic music around listeners, who can browse through a wide array of crafts in the show's rustic setting.

For the kids, there'll be nature crafts, face painting, Celtic dancing lessons and horse drawn wagon rides.

Centre staff will also be on hand to guide festival goers along a historic hike through the Cameron House and Barn and Jessie's Garden.

Admission costs \$5.

For more information, call the wildlife centre at 905-854-2276.

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