

Council goes into buckwheat farming and has a fine crop on court house square dug up and sowed by the prisoners

'Time Capsules' are gems of information extracted from past issues of *The Champion* and other publications to provide a window into Milton's past. Explanatory comment is sometimes provided to place the situation in context.

July 1896

The county council has gone into buckwheat farming and has a fine crop maturing on the court house square, which was dug up and sowed by the prisoners in the jail.

...

On Saturday night, the excavation for the water main, which the corporation is extending down the hill on Mill Street to a point opposite the sash and door factory, was left open and though the night was dark there was no lantern hung above it. At about eleven o'clock

Mr. Wheeler of Esquesing drove up the hill. His horse was blind on the side next to the excavation and went into it. About a dozen men gathered and got the animal out by shoveling earth in and thus gradually raising him. One of the horse's hind legs was strained, but no bones were broken.

...

J.A. Cockburn will, in a few days, open the photograph studio formerly occupied by D.M. Reid. The gallery is being renovated and painted from end to end and will be fitted with an entirely new stock of the latest style. Mr. Cockburn is a practical photographer and portrait artist, having had nearly 10 years experience in Guelph, Toronto, New York and Edinburgh, Scotland and has taken some of the leading prizes and medals at the art exhibitions in Toronto. A fine line of picture frames and mouldings will also be on hand.

...

The hall of the Halton Agricultural Society here was burnt to the ground at about three o'clock this morning. It burned very rapidly. By the time the alarm had been sounded and the fire brigade had arrived, the rafters were visible and it was too late for any effective work to be done.

When the brigade had extinguished the fire nothing remained but the frame of the building. It was pulled down as it was already tottering. The hall was uninsured and valued at \$1,500. Its loss will be a heavy blow to the Agricultural Society. It is

Milton Time Capsules



supposed that the fire was started by tramps. J.R. Johnston had a new two-seated democrat valued at \$90 stored in the building and Finlay Chisholm two vehicles worth \$70 and all these were lost.

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Adam Clark, of Georgetown, who was sentenced recently to five months for stealing clothing, was at work with another prisoner yesterday morning wheeling earth in a wheelbarrow in the jail yard. Turnkey Field was overseeing the work and was in the front part of the yard where the earth was deposited.

Clark emptied his barrow there and went back to fill it, but did not reappear and the other prisoner told Mr. Field that he thought he was gone. Upon investigation it was found that this was the case and that he was gone too without his parti-colored trousers which he had taken off and left on the ground.

He had managed to open a gate, in the back of the yard, which was fastened on the inside with a bar and on the outside with a hook, and after going through he had carefully put the hook into position. It is supposed that some friend had provided him with a pair of trousers.

A lady saw him running towards the Agricultural Society's grounds, but that was the last trace of him. As he is not particularly bright in his intellect it is thought that he will soon be traced and captured.

...

It is said that Thos. Parker of the Port Credit Terra Cotta Works has purchased, or is likely to purchase, the property of the Toronto Pressed Brick and Terra Cotta Co. near Milton which has been lying idle for several years. It is to be hoped that this is true. Mr. Parker, who is well and favorably known here, is an energetic businessman and if he reopens the old works it will be a good thing for this neighborhood.

This material is assembled on behalf of the Milton Historical Society by Jim Dills, chair of research, who can be reached by e-mail at jdills@idirect.com.

OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Arena planning is shortsighted: reader

Dear Editor:

The Town of Milton is proposing to build a new ice hockey complex south of Derry Road, around what will be a southern extension of Commercial Street.

At present, the proposal is to build a dual ice surface arena for the start of the 2003-04 hockey season, and then ultimately twin the facility with the addition of two more pads — bringing the complex up to a total of four ice rinks.

The Town's plan is wholly shortsighted and inadequate. We should be building a four-plex immediately, with at least two Olympic-size rinks. One of those Olympic-size rinks should have a seating capacity of 4,000 to 6,000 people. Along with the rinks, there should be community rooms with an abundant number of large dressing rooms.

The reasons we should build such a major complex are many. Initially, we all must recognize that this complex will have a life span of at least 30 years. It will serve a community of 80,000 people, not 33,000.

You can bet 20 years from now — if not sooner — ice rinks will be generally mandated to be Olympic size. A complex such as the one I'm proposing could be used for many events beyond figure skating and ice hockey.

We could utilize the large capacity rink for hosting a wide variety of activities including major curling bonspiels, figure skating events and exhibitions, NHL Old-timer hockey games, musical events like Scottish Tattoos, or jazz/blues/country/rock concerts. It would be a good venue for trade shows or auto/equipment/implementation shows.

Having a state-of-the-art, Olympic-size ice surface may draw an OHL hockey franchise to town. A 'dry' surface would support lacrosse, roller hockey, indoor soccer, basketball, a skateboard park, or even a roller rink. Geez, you might even have a place for Milton teens to go and have fun that's not an organized sport.

Of course, if this structure were to be built, the Town would need to hire a savvy facility manager/promoter to expand the building's revenues from its many possible uses.

The nay-sayers will no doubt be screaming, "It'll cost too much." But then it'll cost a fortune to build two puny rinks now and then double the cost to build the expansion five years down the road.

That facility will only have local hockey teams/players and figure skaters as revenue sources. Interest rates are low now, and we have a good revenue stream from the Mohawk slots.

Think about having a facility where we can sell 4,000 tickets daily to curling fans for a week long bonspiel and the money generated.

Huge rental revenues can also come from an OHL team, or concerts. Heck, a lot more people might attend Merchant games if they weren't in such an old and cold barn.

A well-designed, managed, and promoted facility would bring in more outside revenue sources, from folks coming from Oakville, Burlington, Hamilton and Mississauga to spend their money here.

This properly-planned facility would be a profit-making asset for our town that would provide desperately needed entertainment and recreation opportunities.

And by the way, when the people come here to participate and/or spectate at events, there's a pretty

good chance they'll drop a few dollars in restaurants and local stores.

Now that would be a shame.

If you wonder why this slam dunk project isn't already underway you don't have to look very far. After all, the people we pay to be the managers of our town's various departments don't live in Milton. (One does — the fire chief, and he's a good man. The others, though, come to our town Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and go home to their own towns.)

In recent years, they've brought us poor planning of new development, the E.C. Drury development with its torn up Tennis Club (where did they play tennis last week?), the debacle that is Main Street East (closing for excavation, now closed for widening), and the lovely plans for downtown redevelopment, to name just a few.

In the future you can expect more of the same when facing new and existing challenges, like stopping the proposed intermodal rail facility.

We need to have some vision in our town's leadership. Someone should step up and say, "Let's build a great facility that promotes our town's future."

Don't hold your breath, because collectively our leaders are real trendsetters.

They're doing the unheard of — thinking small.

Paul Tate
Milton

Reader says our local police officers deserve some praise

Dear Editor:

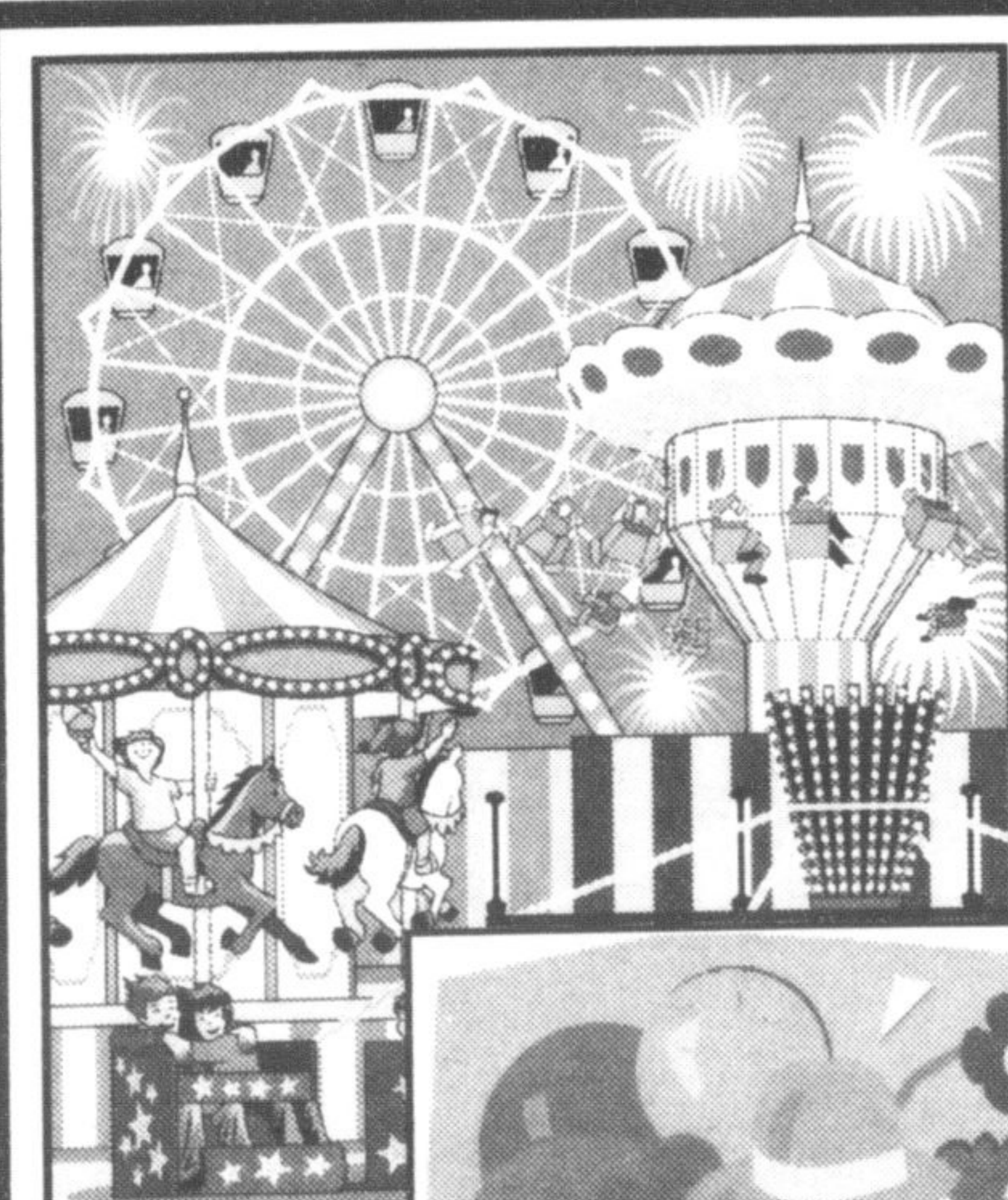
In all the years I've been a resident of Milton, I've yet to read a letter from anyone praising our men and women in blue.

I see them in action every day as I go about town.

They must take a lot of abuse from the public sector.

So I would like to hear a few cheers for them and may God be their back-up.

George Simms
Milton



Family Fun Days

at the Milton Mall
May 16th-20th

- Rides
- Popcorn
- Games
- Candy Floss
- Pay One Price \$15

GTA MIDWAYS

at the MILTON MALL
55 Ontario St. South, Milton

