

Local boy escapes serious harm during rifle shooting

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

December 1904

On Tuesday morning John Bradley's twelve-year-old son Lorne was standing on Pine St. when a bullet from a 22-cal. rifle struck him just behind one of his ears, making a nasty wound, but glancing off. Lorne has a sore, stiff neck now. The bullet was fired from a rifle handled by another boy who was about one hundred yards away, and as the 22-cal. rifle is a much more powerful weapon than most people imagine, would no doubt have penetrated Lorne's skull if it had not glanced.

A number of Milton youngsters have invested in small rifles, are constantly popping at marks and small birds and though this is the only recent case of wounding, several people have heard bullets whistling uncomfortably near them. Though it is desirable that every young Canadian should learn to handle a rifle, he should learn from a competent instructor and should practice in a suitable and safe place, not on the streets.

The Milton council committee on light and police reported as follows: "As directed by council, the members of the committee, accompanied by the mayor, met representatives of the Electric Light Co. They have agreed to accept \$2,600 for their plant, consisting of arc and incandescent dynamos, poles, wiring etc., and your committee recommend that the above offer be accepted, subject to the ratification of the freeholders, said vote to be taken on Jan. 2, 1905, the date of the municipal elections."

Warden J.H. Peacock entertained the members of the county council and a large number of other friends at dinner in the spacious new diningroom of the McGibbon House on Tuesday afternoon at the end of the current year's sessions.

The assembly given at the town hall on Tuesday evening by the bachelors of Milton was the first event of the kind here in a number of years and it was one of the most successful. A party of about 25 came from Georgetown and there were guests from other parts of the county, from

Milton Time Capsules



Toronto, Brampton and elsewhere. Fine music was supplied by the Glionna orchestra of Toronto. A dainty supper was served in the council chamber. The hall and the council chamber were tastefully decorated with flags, bunting and palms.

In an advertisement The Milton Electric Light Company gave notice that owing to the fact that they have failed up to date to secure a franchise from the Town of Milton for a term of years, under which they had hoped to be able to enlarge their plant and put same on a paying basis, have decided to give their patrons notice that at the expiration of such several contracts the Company in order to continue supplying them will be obliged to add 10 per cent when renewing such contracts.

On January 2, the date of the municipal elections for 1905, the freeholders of Milton will vote on a proposed bylaw for the municipal ownership of the plant now owned by the Milton Electric Light & Power Co., the purchase of machinery and other equipment necessary to put the plant in a suitable condition for the requirements of the town, the erection of a power house and the heating of the town hall with steam from the power house. The amount required for all this is \$8,000.

The action of the town council in submitting the bylaw should meet with general approval. The present electric lighting is not satisfactory. There is a shortage of power in consequence of which citizens who wish to have their premises lighted by electricity and who are willing to pay for it cannot get it, the lights now in operation are anything but brilliant and instead of improving the plant, the company has given notice that it will increase its charges. Under the proposed new scheme the lights will be improved, there will be plenty of new ones to rent, which will mean an increase of income and the town hall will be better and more economically heated than it is at present.

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

OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Trustees' recent decision to hold off on school closure study was the right move

(The following letter was addressed to Halton District School Board Education Director Dr. Dusty Papke, and a copy was filed with The Champion.)

Dear Editor:

I thank and applaud Halton District School Board trustees for having made the very difficult decision on January 12 to continue the moratorium on school closures until the revised education funding formula is released.

With school board education director Dr. Dusty Papke's assurance that the provincial government would be forthcoming and accommodating of school boards' needs, this was certainly the prudent course.

Just over a year ago, the board called a halt to school closure studies that would have resulted in moving hundreds of students into portable classrooms at crowded neighbouring schools.

This self-imposed moratorium came as a result of promises made by our newly-elected Ontario government that favourable changes to the inflexible education funding formula were impending. Fulfillment of this promise has, in my opinion, been far too long coming, but now appears to be imminent.

I respect the board's financial and planning staff decision to delay delivering the Capital Strategic Plan, upon which the trustees must base their closure decisions, until the revised funding model is available — especially as its release is so imminent.

The cash flow projections distributed to the public and the trustees prior to the meeting painted a gloomy picture, suggesting that under the old plan the board's cash position would go negative by 2010 or 2012, regardless of whether schools closed this June or

not. Is it reasonable to expect all new construction to grind to a halt without a new funding formula?

Over the past nine years, I've attended more than 150 meetings of the Halton District School Board and have seen the trustees make many difficult decisions. Whether I've agreed with them or not, I've always respected their decisions made in public sessions following engaging and occasionally lengthy debates.

Many motions succeeded or failed by narrow margins. This isn't an indication of dysfunction, but rather a reflection of the difficulty of the decisions, the dedication of the trustees and the trustees' concern for the students of Halton.

Making good decisions is often a long and difficult road.

That's why I'm saddened that after last month's election of the chair, Trustee Mary Chapin, rather than supporting her successor, chose instead to publicly decry the outcome — making what I considered inflammatory claims to the media and suggesting her ousting was some sort of conspiracy.

Statements in the local newspapers questioning decisions of the board and implying subterfuge on the part of colleagues have continued, reflecting very poorly on the board. Many trustees have preceded Ms Chapin as past chair and — in my opinion — have handled the loss of the gavel with dignity and grace. The motives of these attacks, I believe, must be questioned.

These public tirades have already taken their toll, as seen by recent editorial comments suggesting that overnight this board has become dysfunctional. A dysfunctional board might better be defined as one whose members aren't given the opportunity to be heard at the board table, or one whose deci-

sions are made prior to public meetings where they're approved without debate.

I don't believe these are characteristics of this new board.

Chair Paul Tate, I feel, has done an excellent job of ensuring that everyone is heard at the table — even giving the former chair additional latitude to interrupt with comments.

Previous boards have censured trustees for speaking outside the boardroom against board decisions. It's understandably difficult for anyone to lose an election. Subsequently, finding oneself in a minority position on important issues must be even more disappointing. Many other trustees, at one time or another, have been in a similar position and continued to be effective, functional board members.

Playground bullies spread rumours about their playmates and use innuendo and unsubstantiated claims to bolster their own status and serve their personal ends. Trustees with legitimate concerns should air them at the board table.

New 'board watchers' may be surprised by the politics at the board table. This, however, is the nature of education today. The boardroom is the place for politics, just as the classroom is not.

These two places are, nevertheless, inexorably linked, as it's in the classroom that the fruits of the board's successes are enjoyed or the ignominies of its failures suffered.

Trustees must take the politics of their boardroom and of all levels of government very seriously.

Once again, thanks to Halton District School Board trustees and staff for their interest, persistence and uncommon wisdom.

Don Vrooman
Oakville

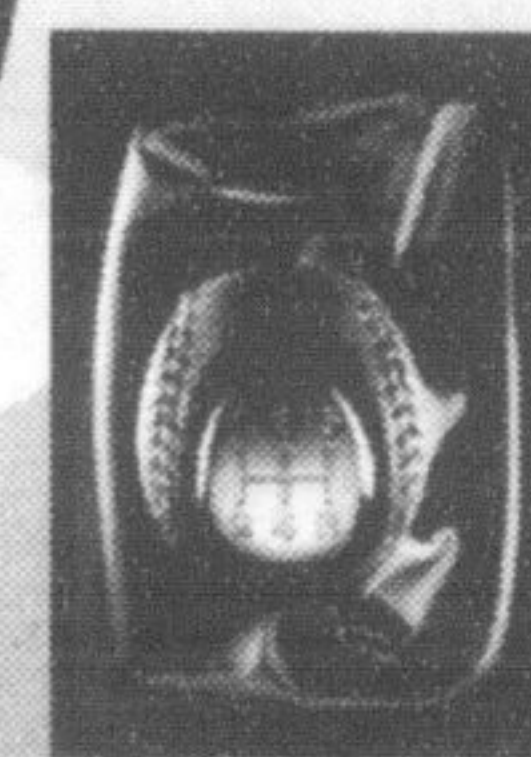
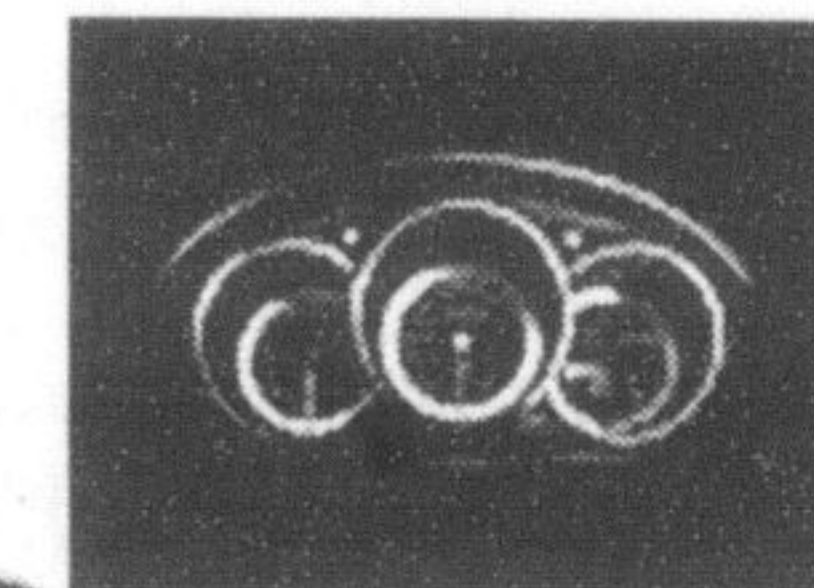
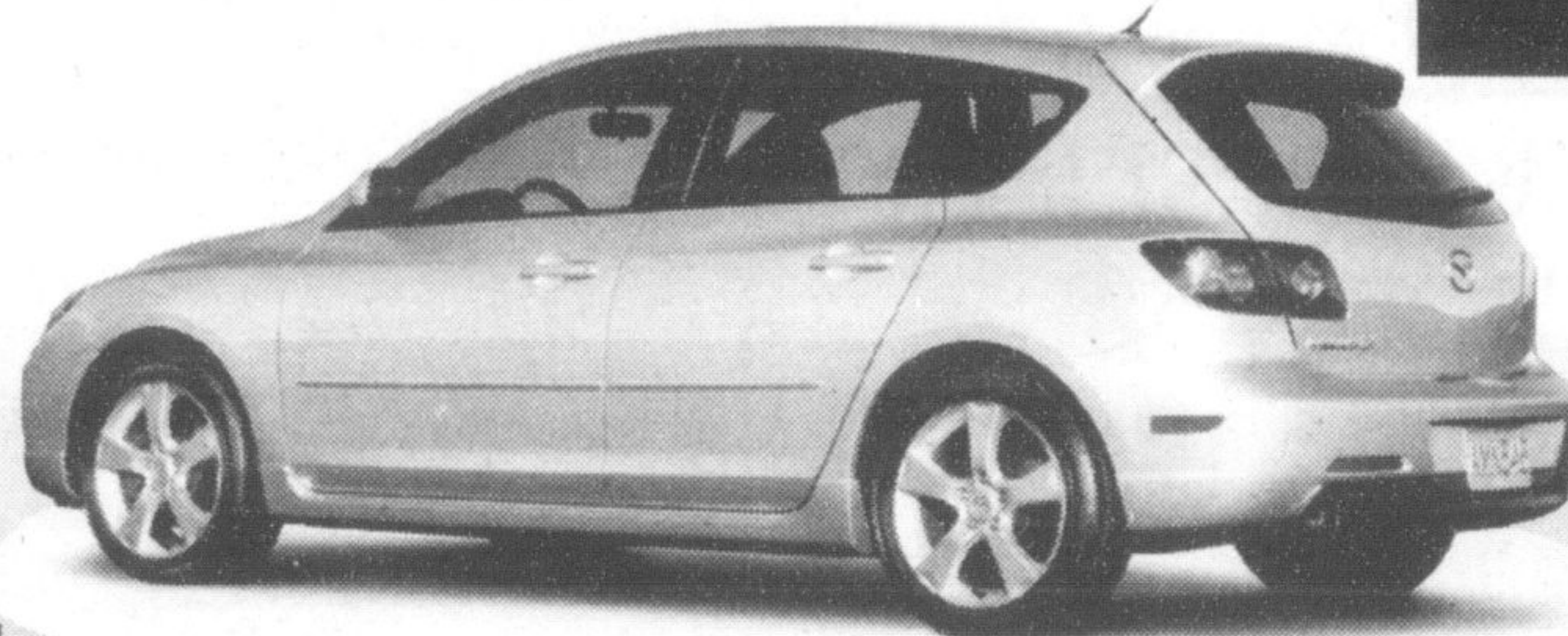
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