

OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

We should give some serious consideration to a single-tiered governing body for Halton

Dear Editor:

The recent announcement of Halton Regional Chair Joyce Savoline not to seek re-election came as a surprise to many.

She has provided very competent and even-handed leadership during her term in office and, in my opinion, was facing no serious political contenders.

Ms Savoline is to be congratulated for her years of dedicated service and hard work on behalf of the people of Halton.

As a result of her decision, after the next municipal election this coming fall the office of Halton chair will have a new occupant. That person will be assuming a very powerful position that encompasses the area and population of four federal ridings. Where that individual seeks to lead the Region will have consequences for all Halton residents and for our future taxes.

The direction the Region might take can in part be determined by where we've been in the past, and where we are today.

Prior to 1974, the county form of government — with its many municipal jurisdictions — had been in effect for over 100 years. The creation of regional government in 1974 was in part an effort to respond to the forecast growth and the knowledge that the old county system would be unable to cope with this growth.

For the past 32 years, the Region of Halton has been responsible for

the provision of the essential services of local government, including police, social services, water sewage treatment and waste management.

Is it now time for a major change in how we govern Halton?

For those who have studied the changes in municipal structures in the GTA over the last 50 years, it's obvious that at some time in the future Halton will become a single-tier city structure with one mayor and one governing council. The question is whether our elected officials will consider the very substantial cost savings that are possible with a single-tiered government, or will they wait until it's imposed on them by the Province, as has happened with the City of Toronto and Hamilton-Wentworth Region?

When regional government was initiated and replaced the county system, it substantially increased the cost of municipal government. As a result, we have a very expensive political and administrative structure in Halton, and now that the provision of regional services has matured we shouldn't only consider but demand a structure that will reduce costs.

Let's look at two municipalities with about the same population as Halton.

Hamilton has roughly 500,000 residents and is governed by one mayor and 15 councillors, while London, with a population of 360,000, has one mayor, four con-

trollers and 16 councillors.

Meanwhile, Halton Region has a chairman and 16 councillors and each municipality has its own mayor and a collective 38 councillors — 10 each in Milton and Halton Hills, 12 in Oakville and six in Burlington.

Do we really need four times as many elected officials to politically administer about the same population?

In addition, in Halton we have five chief administrative officers, five treasurers, five engineering departments, five planning departments and five administrative buildings.

Proposed city status for Halton would have one mayor and 16 councillors — eliminating 42 elected positions.

The cost of our local government continues to climb at an unacceptable rate, and every avenue should be pursued to improve efficiency and eliminate excess bureaucracy and duplication. The potential for major improvement in these areas with a single-tier administrative structure is very substantial.

We have the major portion of 2006 to encourage our politicians and the public to give serious consideration to the future make-up of our local government. If my letter is a catalyst to that end, then my effort will have been worthwhile.

Ric Morrow, former Halton chair

Staff and volunteers at Allendale just amazing

Dear Editor:

I'd like to take a moment and tell you about Allendale, a long-term care facility located across from Milton Mall where I've been a volunteer since July.

I've been completing my high school co-op there this past semester and will continue next semester as well. I'm writing to make the public aware of what an amazing job the staff and volunteers do for the residents and their families.

I'm so blessed to be able to work in such a caring environment.

I'm also speaking as a family member of a resident

there. My grandmother has been at Allendale for three years and from my point of view she has been blessed to be able to get care and assistance there for her various health issues and to have staff that care.

I'd also like to thank The Champion for reporting on events at Allendale, like our annual tree lighting ceremony and the new Halton Ride transit program.

As well, I'd like to thank Allendale's administrative assistant, Janice Evans, for helping me learn the jobs required of a volunteer and letting me be part of her team.

**Thomas Jones
Campbellville**

Passerby prevents fire at blacksmith shop from getting out of control

'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.

January 1907

At 5.45 a.m. Monday a man who was passing E.F. Benson's blacksmith shop on Martin Street saw a glare inside and gave the alarm. The brigade turned out, the door was opened and it was found that the floor was blazing close to a small box stove. The hose was turned on and a very little water put out the fire. The damage was not great, only a hole burnt in the floor. A spark from the stove is supposed to have caused the trouble.

Chief Constable Bradley left town on Friday morning. He said he was going on duty connected with his appointment in the licence department of Ontario but did not say where his duty would take him.

Miss Kathleen Panton, of Milton, was one of twelve probationers who entered the nurses' training school at the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, on Tuesday.

C.E. Galloway has sold his brick residence at the outer end of Martin Street to John Murray of Esquesing. Real estate values have increased greatly here of late. Mr. Galloway's property sold for \$900 more than he paid for it about two years ago.

For some time Messrs. Winn & Co.'s shoe manufactory has been undergoing extensive alterations and improvements and most of their hands have had to take holidays. They are all at work again, and there is work for many more if the proprietors can find them to engage, which may not be easy. Skilled shoe hands are in demand and there are few, if any, out of employment. By the alterations and the putting in of much new machinery the capacity of the factory has been greatly increased.

A strip of slates two feet wide and 25 feet long blew off the roof of Grace Church and the woodwork underneath was loosened.

Milton Time Capsules



The repairs will be expensive, as expert slaters will have to be engaged. The work cannot be done until the weather moderates.

The amount claimed by Streetsville high school for 14 Halton pupils during 1906 is \$266.43. It is explained that the school has three teachers now and their salaries are higher than formerly.

Advertisement for the position of assessor and collector of Milton. "This includes the collection of all property, poll and dog taxes; and all rates for water and electric light and keeping a proper account of the same at a salary of \$250. Signed J.S. Deacon, Chairman Finance Committee."

February 1907

The dam of the pond near Campbellville, owned by the Milton Fish and Game Club, broke last Sunday and was washed out down to its foundation. Mr. Morse, who owns the mill, and his family were at church at the time. The flats below the mill were flooded by an ice jam in the C.P.R. culvert and the water was so deep in Morse's stable that his cows narrowly escaped drowning. It is feared that many of the trout with which the pond had been stocked have gone down stream. The members of the club will find out when the fishing season opens whether this is true or not. As there is a good deal of water in the pond they hope their trout are in it too.

Town Council: The committee presented the report of the electric light book-keeper showing receipts for 1906, \$3,001.39 and expenditure \$1,478.78, the difference of \$477.39 showing the cost of lighting the town hall. The committee recommended that the old plant be sold and an oil filter bought.

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



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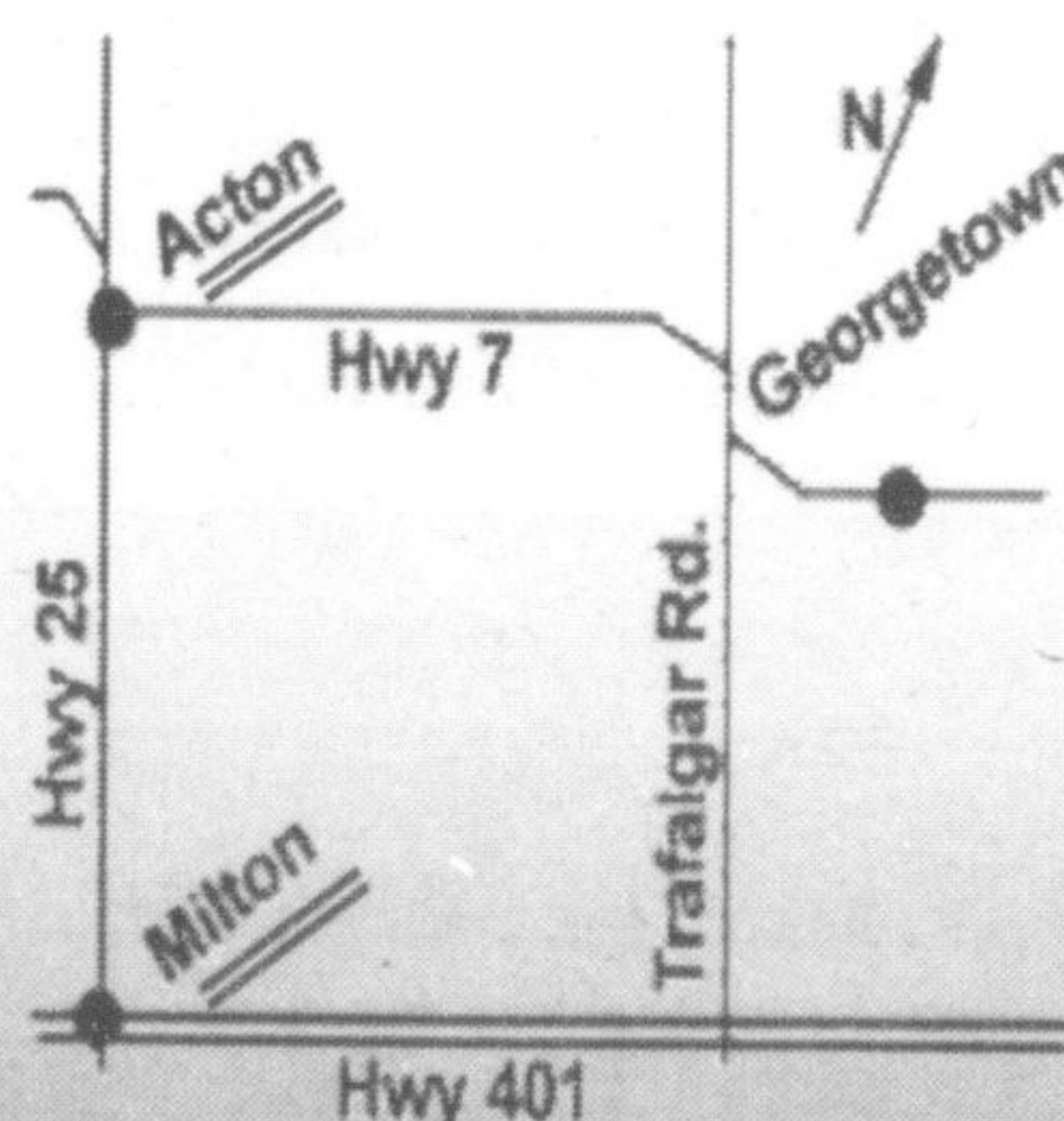
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