



The Canadian Champion

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Ian Oliver — Publisher
Jane Muller — Editor
Nell Oliver — Advertising Manager
Tim Coles — Composing Manager
Dennis Willis — Distribution Manager
Teri M. Casas — Office Manager

Phone 878-2341
 Toronto Line 821-3837
 Second class mail Registration No. 0913



EDITORIAL: News: Rob Kelly, Karen Smith, Norman Nelson.
Sports: Brad Reaume. **Photography:** John Warren.
ADVERTISING: Sales: Debbie Pells, Andrea Boyle, Ted Lindsay, Don Hayward. **Classified:** Sheena Cameron.
BUSINESS: Shirley Dyc, Belinda Beasley, Linda Norton.
DISTRIBUTION: Karen Huisman.
COMPOSING: Mark Dills, June Colbourne, Karen Mathers, Mike Boyle, Linda Lamont, Michelle Huisman.

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Timely spending

Because Milton has plotted an astutely conservative financial course, for the most part, through the last decade or so municipal progress appears to be in no danger of grinding to a halt during the current recession.

The big projects, such as construction of the leisure centre, will unfold as planned, it seems. And last week town councillors agreed to press on with 23 other public works of varying significance, ranging from the \$3.6 million widening of Ontario Street to spending \$8,500 for flag poles.

If anything, Milton politicians have in the past been accused of erring on the side of conservatism, and we believe rightly so, when it came to providing the infrastructure citizens had a right to expect. During the mid 1980s recreational facilities, for example, were mediocre and less than plentiful. Instead, projects with marginal utility, such as the renovation of Hugh Foster Hall, took centre stage.

But now the municipal focus is on sprucing up what already exists — in no small measure because development, with its attendant costs, has slowed significantly.

We welcome this emphasis on improving what we already have. For instance the Town, in budget deliberations last week, made it clear a priority is revamping the downtown Mill Pond so the water flow is improved and consequently the pond is cleaner. A path around the picturesque pond is also to be built. It's about time this under-used and undervalued asset was subject to some substantial attention.

Milton is by and large a pretty town set against Halton's most attractive backdrop — the Niagara Escarpment. In the long term, the task will be to make certain the community does justice to that backdrop as it grapples with what promises to be substantial development — both residential and industrial.

But for now, with a residential development freeze imposed due to a lack of water and utility plants and industrial development in a slump, the municipal government has wisely turned its attention inward and opted to use some of the money it collected in reserve funds through the 1980s.

The Town is going to decorate Victoria Park, build a much-needed baseball diamond, finish off its leisure centre, do substantial road works and remodel its centrepiece pond. It's a good plan, and it's about time.

We are constrained to point out that while the political priorities for spending have at times galled us, we must give credit to the astute planning that has allowed Milton the luxury of choice regarding its budgeting during a recession.

We haven't always agreed with what municipal council chose to spend its money on, or indeed agreed when it chose not to spend at all, but the other side of that coin is that the very same spirit of fiscal caution led the Town to its rather enviable economic status today, when all around other centres are struggling more.

Drunk driving costs

The festive season is almost upon us again and already we have reports from the local police regarding misbehavior related to drinking.

Every year the same agencies repeat the same messages and every year a certain percentage of the population ignores the warnings. Let's remember: Drinking and driving will change your life for at least a year if you get caught because you won't have a car, and it'll change your bank account more than all but the most ambitious Christmas shopping spree. That's of course presuming you don't hurt anybody, because if you do all bets are off.

Think about it.

Pud



by Steve Nease

Looking back



The streetscape has changed since 1956 but the spirit behind the local Santa Claus Parade has remained the same. Residents spectate and participate in the parade which had its 1990 version on Sunday.

Pages of the Past

One Year Ago

From the November 29, 1989 issue

□ Revenue Minister Otto Jelinek had a good line for the Milton Chamber of Commerce at their annual meeting. He predicted the federal Government's proposed Goods and Services Tax (GST) would be dropped from 9 to 7 per cent. Jelinek said "I believe the GST is the right thing. It's tough and unpopular — we read newspapers and polls too — but it must be done for future generations."

□ Chamber of Commerce was \$22,000 in the hole without showcase event. The Chamber noted, however, that the previous year the group racked up a \$23,000 profit. "So over two years we're pretty well even," treasurer Bill Choma said at the meeting. Not having Showcase in 1989 was the central reason for the deficit — it cut down on membership since Showcase participants have to join the chamber.

□ CP Rail public relations people appeared before

municipal council's general committee. Councillors had some pointed questions for the railway representatives, who toured municipalities with a presentation stressing how safe they feel the rail line is and how well prepared railway personnel are in the event of a mishap.

20 Years Ago

From the December 2, 1970 issue

□ A \$200,000 rebuilding program for Base Line Road, Highway 25 and Ontario Street was unofficially launched this week by Milton Council. The council predicted in the next 6 years they would rebuild Highway 25 from Base Line north to Highway 401, rebuild Ontario St. from Base Line to Martin St. among other ideas.

□ A 90-year-old Cambellville man suffered a broken right leg and face cuts in an accident on the village's main street Saturday evening. Robert J. Inglis, a retired real estate salesman, was walking across the Guelph Line when he was struck by a car driven by Harris Hasse of Hanover. Milton, OPP investigated.

□ Vandals were at work again as many Christmas outdoor lights were stolen from homes in town. Milton Police reported four homes had lights stolen to date.

50 Years Ago

From the November 28, 1940 issue

□ Mr. Bain, of Milton, has moved into Fred Ward's house on Ontario Street.

□ Col. James Ballantyne, of Georgetown, favoured the Champion with a phone call Tuesday afternoon.

□ M. E. Nixon, proprietor of the Princess Theatre, Milton, returned home on Monday night, after spending a few days in Chicago.

□ Mrs. Norman Snyder reported the theft of a quantity of groceries last Saturday night. She had done her Saturday night shopping, and leaving the bundles in her car, was completing her purchases in a Main Street store. When she returned, she found someone had made off with her purchases.