

# COMMENT

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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# LOOKING BACK



An estimated crowd of 7,000 turned out for the 14th annual Milton Fall Fair in September 1966, despite cold weather. Halton MPP George Kerr (right) officially opened the fair with Halton County Agricultural Society president Gordon Raynor (left) and Maurice Beaty (centre) one of the Jersey cow exhibitors. The 1992 version of the event starts this Friday at the fairgrounds.

## A deserved loss

Milton residents should be breathing a sigh of relief now that Reclamation Systems Inc. has been turned back in its initial bid to create a 20 million tonne landfill near Acton.

The landfill, its opponents would argue, could potentially threaten Milton's underground water too since a good part of that supply originates in the area.

Citizen groups opposing the RSI proposal caution that the battle against RSI is probably not over. But at least this prolonged skirmish is, and it has ended with RSI being routed. The company, in a decision announced last week, has effectively been sent back to the drawing board by a provincial hearing panel and told to come up with a more in-depth analysis of its project.

That analysis will then be subjected to tough scrutiny by various boards and agencies, probably a lengthy process.

In the meantime, Halton North MPP Noel Duignan has vowed to renew his bid to ban landfills on the Niagara Escarpment. The provincial government would do well to follow Mr. Duignan's lead in this matter.

There are two important issues involved here: Should the private sector even be involved in large-scale waste disposal? And what exactly are the long term plans for the Niagara Escarpment?

As far as the latter goes, we thought that was made abundantly clear during the brief reign of David Peterson as Ontario Premier. Amid much pomp and circumstance, Mr. Peterson and dignitaries from the United Nations sanctified the escarpment as a world biosphere.

We took that to be symbolic of the fact that it would be, from then on, cherished as a natural preserve. Instead there are those who continue to contemplate the rugged rock face as mainly a receptacle for refuse.

The escarpment in north Halton has been blasted by explosives, pummeled by bulldozers, trekked over by countless trucks ferrying gravel from the cliffs to construction sites hither and yon. It has been the subject of exploitation by quarry owners and more lately would-be landfill operators. It is time for some of this exploitation to be curbed.

If the provincial government's claim to environmental integrity is to be credible, then Queen's Park should move on Mr. Duignan's proposal. There can be no land use more diametrically opposed to preservation than creating landfills in the midst of existing natural reserves.

Regarding the other matter, the activities of RSI do little to support any case put forward by private industry that it should form an integral part of large-scale waste disposal solutions.

Simply put, while RSI is perfectly free to mount a private sector proposal for a landfill, as it has done to date, that proposal is not in the best interests of the citizens of Halton. In fact, in the legal sense it is contemptuous of those interests.

Halton has a public-sector landfill site, in Milton, that will serve regional needs for the next 20 years, at least, if all goes according to plan. This landfill was obtained at great cost, and will only operate with substantial taxpayer subsidies. There is no benefit to the Halton taxpayer or the immediate environment to be gleaned by an additional private landfill.

In that sense the RSI project is contemptuous of the Halton taxpayers' position. It disregards, dismisses the painful history that brought the publicly operated Halton regional landfill to Milton. That is a telling argument for keeping such matters in the public realm, and out of the grasp of profit-driven entities like RSI.

## PAGES OF THE PAST

### One Year Ago

From the September 25, 1991 issue

□ The 138th annual Milton Fall Fair was to feature many new attractions as well as old favourites but the highlight of the weekend was to be the fair's first truck pull competition which was to follow the opening ceremonies. There would also be a tractor pull featuring vintage, stock-farm and light pro-stock tractors. There was also to be appearances from Sammy Scarecrow of the Polka Dot Door, Ronald McDonald and the Sphere Clown Band. Other attraction would be old favourites including the demolition derby and petting zoo.

□ The United Way had kicked off a major month-long fundraising campaign. At the end of the campaign there was to be a United Way Robin Hood Dinner Auction where all those in attendance were invited to dress as those from Robin Hood's time.

□ The Milton Leisure Centre gained some financial support and hundreds of windows around town came clean during Teen Clean. Students from E.C. Drury and Milton District High Schools combined to shine windows in return for donations to the campaign to build a new leisure centre.

### 20 Years Ago

From the September 27, 1972 issue

□ A substantial crowd turned out at the Milton Fair Grounds for the 119th annual Milton Fall Fair. Baking competitions, prizes for the best livestock, fruit and flower exhibits and harness horse races added a nostalgic quality to the event. 18-year-old Joyce Wilson was named Queen of the Fair while the Princess title went to 14-year-old Karen Wickson.

□ Plans for Milton's third annual Winter Carnival were starting to fall into place. It was hoped that dog-sled races, sky-diving exhibitions and snow-mobile races would be among the carnival's events. It was planned that a plastic snowman tag would be used as the key to the carnival.

□ Members of the Milton Optimist Club achieved a special goal when they earned enough money to replace the funds stolen from the club at an auction sale in June. The auction's proceeds of \$1,200 disappeared and an extensive search by police turned up empty. Optimist members decided right away to take on extra fund raising projects to replace the stolen money so their community projects would continue unhampered by the lack of cash. Members of the club manned the gates both at Steam-Era and Milton Fall Fair and earned more than enough money to replace the missing auction funds.

### 50 Years Ago

From the September 24, 1942 issue

□ Dr. C. H. Heslop won the 2 28 trot or pace with his fast race horse Peterene, in Welland. Peterene was to be one of the main racing attractions at the big Milton Fall Fair on the weekend.

□ D.A. Hewgill who had successfully run the Red and White grocery store in town for 20 years had turned the business over to John Robinson of Ottawa. Mr. Hewgill ran the store ably with the help of his wife and daughter Alma and the family always held the respect of the Milton community.

□ The summer holiday, extended by two weeks finally came to an end for Milton District High School students who returned to the same staff of teachers for the next school year.

### PUD

BY STEVE NEASE

