



The lady and the sea

Visitors to the Museum of the Upper Lakes at Wasaga Beach this summer will be able to relive a moment in history when the American Naval forces sunk the British Warship, the Nancy at the mouth of the Nottawasaga River during the War of 1812. The Museum open seven days a week in July and August is one of three historical sites operated by the provincial Ministry of Tourism in the Collingwood-Midland area. The other two are Fort St. Marie at Midland and The Naval Military Establishment at Penetang.

Hurononia Happenings

Although some \$250,000 is still needed to reach this year's Easter Seal objective of \$2,000,000 the Ontario Society for Crippled Children hopes that companies and individuals who normally contribute outside the official campaign period will close this gap by the year end.

And for anyone wishing to see just one aspect of what their Easter Seal support is accomplishing, the Society extends a cordial invitation to attend Open House Day at Blue Mountain Camp on Sunday, July 20, between 2:30 and 5:30 p.m.

Whipper Watson firmly believes that all youngsters derive some benefit from a camping experience, and from the look on the faces of his two young friends listening to his tales of camp life, it is obvious that the crippled child is no exception to this attraction.

The Ontario Society has long understood and recognized this need and its five camps today offer the largest summer camping program of its kind in the world.

Thanks to Easter Seals, on June 29 the Society will again open its gates to the year's first group of campers. By the end of summer, more than 1000 of Ontario's handicapped youngsters will have enjoyed a two-week vacation in a relaxed atmosphere away from the demands or confines of treatment centre or hospital routines.

Activities are designed to encourage the active rehabilitation of each camper both physically and emotionally in stimulating surroundings and special emphasis is placed on individual participation in these activities.

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It's like flying a kite with a difference — no strings attached and instead of a cloth tail, a human pendulum guides the craft.

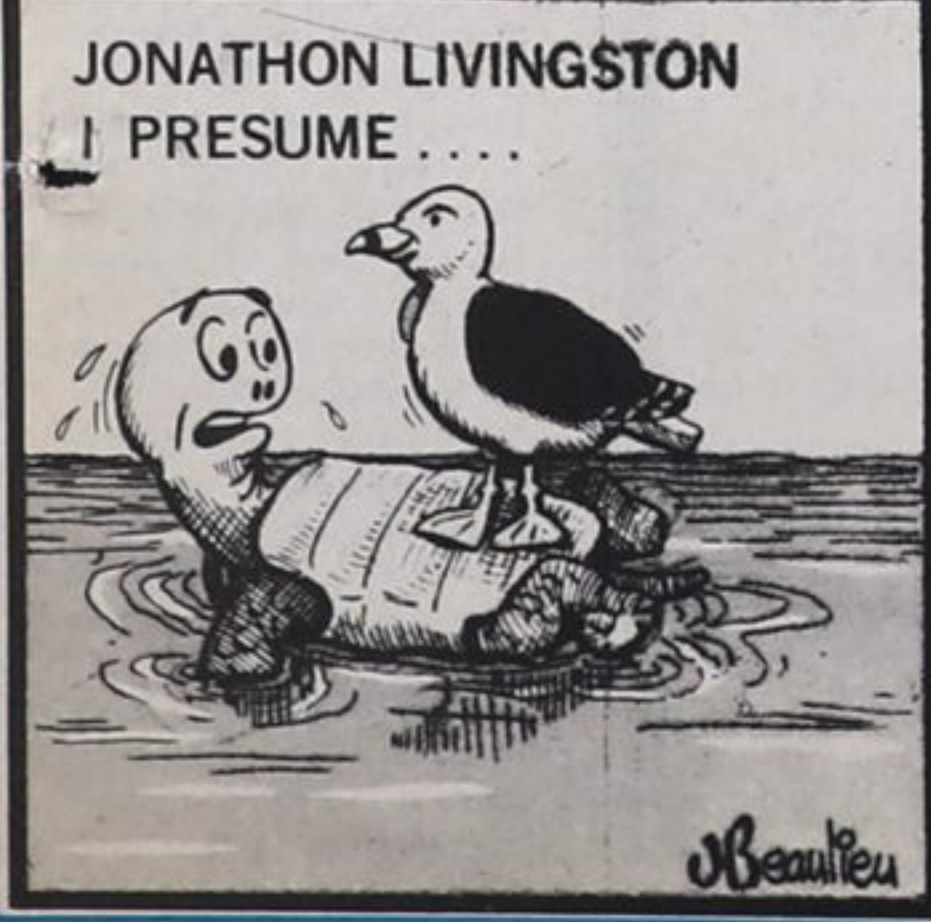
Hang gliding is gaining popularity quickly throughout Canada. Here in Ontario there is no better place to practise the sport than on the ski hills by Blue Mountain.

At the west end of Blue Mountain Resorts, at the Toronto Ski Club, Mike Rogers Mountain Flying School teaches the precarious art of hang gliding.

Each weekend, his students and hang gliders from throughout the province, congregate at the ski hills at Blue Mountain and Georgian Peaks, to catch the winds of Nottawasaga Bay, and soar out over the Escarpment.

TERRY PENN

by John Beaulieu



Juanita Rourke

Lady of the harbour:

A veteran journalist and a park yet to be born

by Shirley Whittington

The lovely lakes and craggy splendour of the Moon River country is out of reach for most weekend boaters and campers. Dedicated fishermen know about the deep reaches of the Moon where whopping Walleye and muskunge lurk, and the silent inner lakes of the area have been explored by hardy canoeists, but for most of us the Blackstone Harbour area is remote and inaccessible.

Plans for the park

Now plans have been developed to make the distant wilderness accessible for campers and fishermen from all over Ontario. The Ministry of Natural Resources is planning a gigantic provincial park that will extend along the Georgian Bay shore from the mouth of the Moon River in the south to near Parry Sound in the north. The proposed park will include more than a dozen lakes and many tens of miles of Georgian Bay shoreline, as well as several islands in its 25 thousand acre scope.

Administratively, the new park will fall within the Parry Sound district of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The entrance to the park will probably be immediately north of the town of Mactier, and there are plans to increase the capacity of Highways 69 and 103, which would put Blackstone Harbour within three hours of Toronto.

The lady's story

Midland's Juanita (Meyers) Rourke has a deep personal interest in the new park area. Her grandfather William Meyers was the first settler in the district. He brought his Scottish wife to his Moon River homestead on a November day in 1895. On the way, they stopped in at Midland to pick up their winter supply of sugar and flour. Their grocery bill, back in 1895, was five dollars!

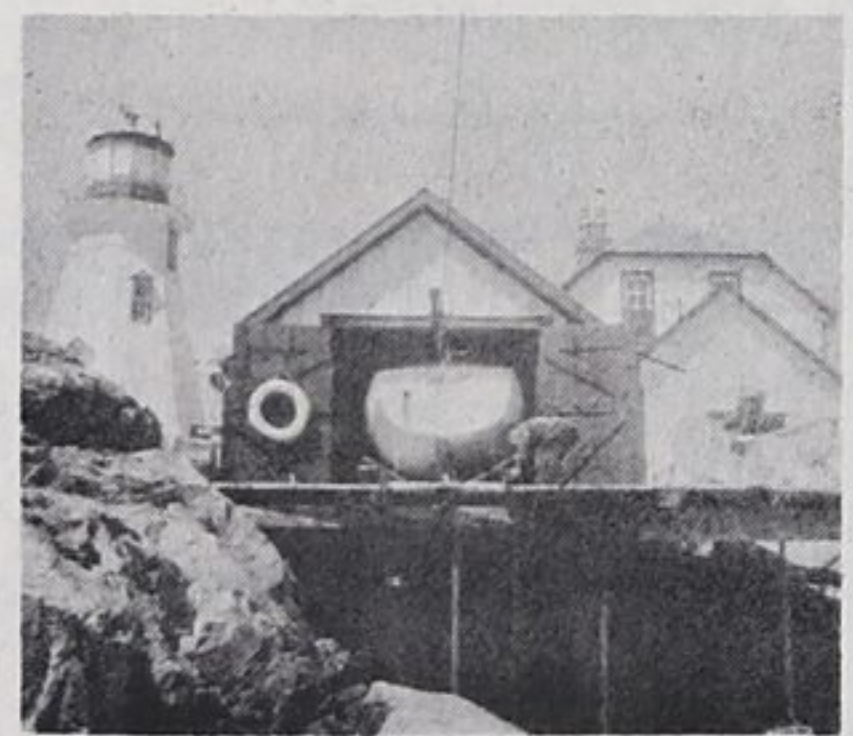
Myers was a boat builder, and Juanita Rourke still has the tools he used, many of which he made himself. He fished, and made his own nets. One of them decorates the wall of the basement recreation room in the Rourke home.

He also trapped and hunted, and farmed on his 136 acres on either side of the Moon. The log homestead in which he and his wife raised four children is gone now, and a Government fish hatchery stands in the location.

Juanita was born and raised at Moon River, and she went to school by boat. "It was a six month school," she recalls. "Ice made boat travel impossible in winter so we went from May to October."

After a girlhood on the shore, Juanita met and married Frank Rourke and continued to live on the Georgian Bay she loved. For 15 years, she and her husband supervised sea cadet camps on Beausoleil Island and at Cognashene.

When the camps closed, the Rourkes became light keepers. She raised her six children on rocky islands where the waves swooped so close to the front door that on



A beacon at night

On the light stations, buildings and boats had to be high to be protected from the waves. On this island Frank and Juanita Rourke raised a family of six while tending the light and fog horn.



Juanita Rourke

stormy days she had to keep her youngsters indoors lest they be swept away.

On Great Duck Island, the light tower every three hours to hand-crank the weights and keep the light revolving," says Juanita. "At that time, the shore was ringed with lighthouses and the regular intervals between signals were important to navigators."

The earliest light houses were lit with kerosene lamps, their feeble flames magnified to blinding intensity by enormous lenses and reflectors. By the time the Rourkes took up lightkeeping, pressure lamps were used.

"But" says Juanita, "we still had to polish the reflector and chimney every day. And each night the lamp had to be filled and warmed before it was lit."

There was a fog horn on Great Duck. "It never kept us awake," says Juanita. "The only time we woke up was when it stopped."

The years spent on the Western Islands, on Great Duck and at Cape Croker, were happy ones for the Rourkes. "That was when we became a flying family," recalls Juanita. "After travelling for groceries by boat, scooter or horse and sleigh we got quite accustomed to trips via Georgian Bay Airways."

Living without T.V.

Her children grew up without television or organized hockey leagues, but there always seemed to be lots to do. "A light station is a very busy place," smiles Juanita. "And in slack times there were always books and boats and ponies. We were too busy to be bored. And if the boys got to quarrelling, their father would point to one of our huge wood piles, and tell them to move it!"

In her spare moments, Juanita wrote - a compulsion she has had since childhood. It is entirely natural that her writing celebrates the beauty of Georgian Bay where "on a calm evening the water is like black velvet and the lights are jewels against that velvet."

She was published for the first time when she was nine years old. "I wrote a poem for a contest in a Scottish poetry magazine," she grins. "It was called the Seagull, and it won first prize."

Many years later, another of her poems appeared on the cover of a Department of Transport publication.

Called "On The Light Before Christmas" it asks for a chopper to get the family off their island, and home in time for Christmas Eve.

25 years with the pen

As well as frequent contributions to the Family Herald and Weekly Star, Juanita has written a weekly column for a local newspaper for the past twenty five years.

She and her husband retired from light keeping some years ago to a cozy house near the Georgian Bay they both loved. Now widowed, Juanita lives surrounded by mementoes from her days on the Bay. She still has the kerosene lamp that illumined her lighthouse living room, and there are photographs and paintings of the Bay everywhere.

Researching a park's history

At the moment she's actively involved in planning for the new park at Blackstone Harbour. The Ministry is researching pioneering and lumbering history in the Moon River area and Juanita is assisting by gathering historical photographs which will be enlarged and installed in the orientation centre at the new park. She herself has contributed a great deal of historical detail about the early families - the Meyers, the Gropps and the Gregoires.

Some of their descendants still live in the Blackstone Harbour area, and although they fear that a sudden influx of campers and holidaymakers may destroy their privacy, Juanita is philosophically about the new development.

"More and more campers and boaters

are discovering this beautiful wilderness," she says, "and unfortunately they are leaving their litter behind them. Supervision by the Ministry will control this litter."

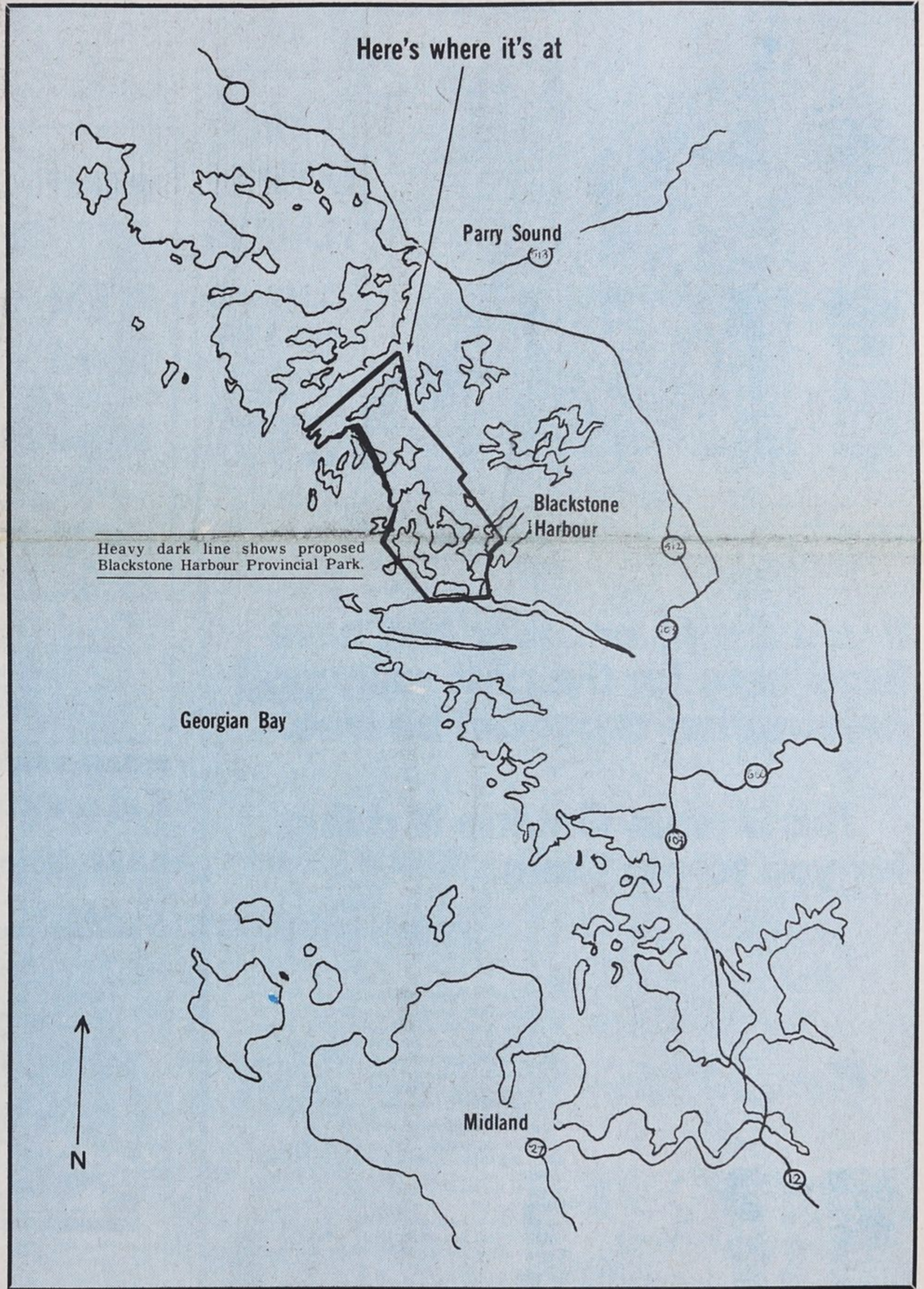
She is also confident that economic advantages will prove beneficial to local residents.

The area under consideration for a park as yet has no official name, and the Ministry is inviting suggestions from the public. Oddly enough, the grand daughter of the first settler in the park area has no firm ideas about how the park should be named.

"It's so difficult to get a name that would signify the scope and beauty of such a vast area," she sighs.

She's right. How can you put a name on a part of your life?

Here's where it's at



column

Catching the lackadaisical housekeeper

But ultimately friends, you get found out. This week I got caught in a double crunch, caused by the departure of the Little Kid for camp, and the arrival of a couple of house painters.

The camp was a week-long educational affair, and the school thoughtfully provided a suggested packing list. I never realized how hard it would be to find a warm jacket that fits, a pair of shorts with a workable zipper, some pyjamas with the buttons on and a clean comb, simultaneously.

The gathering of underwear and socks for the fourth grade Odyssey set us all on edge for a while. I can usually round up one pair of clean, mended and mended socks for state occasions, but a whole week's worth of respectable footwear is beyond my capabilities.

This is not my fault, you understand. I can't help it if the Kid puts one sock in the laundry and the other up the chimney or under his mattress.

We will draw a veil over the subject of

underwear. Let us say only that my philosophy of underwear goes as follows: if it's to be worn under, it needn't be mended; although it should be clean, it doesn't necessarily have to be under white.

It's necessary to socks and underwear and so forth, the packing list suggested that a flashlight be included.

We have eight or nine flashlights around the house. I run across them when I'm looking for my nail file, or the egg beater. I never find one when I am looking for a flashlight, because it's usually dark then, and that makes searching difficult.

Fortunately it was broad daylight when we tackled the packing list, and we dug up several flashlights. With parts from this one and that one, and batteries borrowed from the Hot Wheels Supercharger, we pieced together a workable torch.

"Be sure," said the note from the school, "to pack your child's belongings in an old suitcase or duffle bag."

Since all our luggage looks as if it had

crossed the Atlantic several times, without a boat, finding an old suitcase was our easiest task. We crammed everything into it - the button-less pyjamas, the mismatched socks, the cut off pants that I never got around to hemming and the warm jacket with the rip under the arm.

Somewhere between the dock and the bunkhouse, the rusty clasps on that suitcase will have sprung open, and all those dirty, ragged secrets will have tumbled out, in front of the camp nurse and the Kid's teacher. And you know who they'll blame. Not the Kid - he'll be smothered in sympathetic twitterts.

The scorn will be heaped upon his absent and feckless mum.

Yesterday I was lying abed, idly ruminating on this injustice, when I heard a faint scratching at the window. The house painters had arrived and another layer was about to be stripped from the onion of my housekeeping.

There are almost two dozen windows in this house, and each one has a lovely view

unless you're on the outside looking in, as of course, the house painters were.

So now those two gentlemen know about the perpetually unmade beds, the piles of papers and magazines in my den, the overflowing laundry hamper, the mountains of dishes in the kitchen sink, and the cyclonic disaster of the Little Kid's room after we finished packing.

I wouldn't care except that one of the young painters is a boy I taught, years ago, when he was in grade eight. I remember him as an agreeable and polite young man whose work was acceptable but often untidy. "Neatness Counts!" I would scrawl indignantly across his written assignments.

If he were the vengeful type, he'd be perfectly justified in scrawling those two priggish words across the front wall of our house, in yellow paint. On a clear day the message would perhaps be visible across the Bay at Camp Kitchikewana.

But then, over there, that's not news any more.



by Shirley Whittington

Lackadaisical housekeepers can bluff their way through most situations. If you dust the piano and put a bowl of flowers on the coffee table, nobody would guess that you haven't dusted under your bed for two weeks.