

Show more concern for downtown area

Now that the task force on downtown revitalization has held its second and final public meeting, a few observations seem clear. The fact that the town eventually took the initiative regarding revamping the business section of Penetanguishene deserves commendation, but the major decision for council and Mayor Moreau is still to come.

Should the municipality get directly involved with the revitalization of our dying downtown core? Or should they allow local business and industry to take the first step? In our opinion, the municipality must get directly involved, because area business people simply will not be bothered. Attendance at the two public meetings on the downtown was good according to task force members, but considering the number of merchants that would be affected by a revitalization program, was the attendance really good? Not even half the merchants in town bothered to show up at the meetings, and even fewer residents attended.

Perhaps area residents feel that a "downtown" revitalization doesn't concern them. If there are people who feel that way, they should carefully consider the stakes. Right now, Penetanguishene's downtown core is a boring, not very clean place to shop. The main street is constantly littered with garbage, and the selection of services simply isn't very good.

We don't intend to say that the problems of

the downtown area are the fault of the merchants who presently work there. Those merchants can only be commended for remaining in a place where the surroundings tend to drive people away, rather than bring in their business.

In fact, the condition of our downtown is everyone's fault, from two town council to the residents who couldn't be bothered attending a meeting on the subject.

Residents of Penetanguishene may also take for granted that the businesses located downtown will always be there. That is a fallacy. No merchant will remain in a place where there just isn't any business to be done. At least not indefinitely.

The most important thing about any project like revitalization is that people work together. Forget petty squabbles about unsatisfactory by-laws, about poor working conditions, and about apathy regarding the fate of the business section.

Instead, why not focus all our abilities on improving the situation, no matter what the initial cost? There is no point in carrying on with the task force study if groups of people are going to waste their time arguing about who's right and who's wrong.

While that type of argument is going on, the downtown area is dying very quickly. Surely, the fate of our business section deserves more attention from the public sector than it is getting right now.

Our letters policy

The editorial page of this newspaper is open to any reader who may wish to express a thought or opinion on any subject in, or of the news. We'd especially like to see letters or articles dealing with local issues and concerns.

Our only limitation is space. If necessary, letters or articles may be edited at the discretion of the editor, for good taste or for legal reasons. Material may be of any length and if possible, typed or hand-written clearly so that no mistakes will be made.

We will not print any letter sent anonymously to this newspaper. We ask that writers include their name, address and

telephone number in the letter or contribution so that we may verify the authorship.

From this point onward we will publish letters to the editor with names withheld—provided the authors of the letters make themselves known to this newspaper, and provided they have a valid reason for wishing their name withheld from publication.

We believe that there are citizens in this community who wish to communicate their opinions on important issues, but because of valid circumstances, may be compromising their position.

We feel those citizens have a right to make their opinions known.

Queen's Park report

George Taylor M.P.P.

Policy change not favourable - Taylor

There is presently a movement by the Ontario College of Nurses, and only them, and not the Provincial Government or the Minister of Health, to have changed the policies relating to the issuance of certificates of competence for Registered Nurses (RNs) and Registered Nursing Assistants (RNAs).

The College of Nurses proposes that for a certificate to be issued the RNs or RNAs who have not worked at least 50 days a year will not be able to retain their certificate. This policy would continue thereafter, thusly reducing the number of RNs or RNAs who have not done the necessary qualifying days of work each year. To regain the certificate some form of re-qualification, yet unknown, would be required by the College of Nurses, rather than the present method of renewing the certificate annually by payment of a fee.

The Health Disciplines Act, a provincial statute, presently sets out through its regulations the standards for nursing and procedures for certification. The College of Nurses advises the Minister of Health, the person responsible for changes in the legislation for nurses, to changes as such, so ultimately the government will have the final decision making authority. Joan MacDonald of Toronto, a Director of the Ontario College of Nurses, has been out across the Province explaining some of these proposals to different meetings of nurses. This explanatory trip has produced numerous letters to me all of which have been against the proposal and any changes.

N.U.R.S.E. - The Nurses United for

Registration Security and Employment, has been created by the Registered Nurses and Registered Nursing Assistants to block the proposal. They argue the present legislation safeguards the public against reduced competence by lack of use which is the main thrust of the new proposal. A further safeguard is that most nurses are employees and thusly the employer, whoever it is, should be responsible for the competence of the RN and RNA.

Both sides are putting forward their proposals. The proposal of the College of Nurses is not new, but it is the only profession presently attempting to put forth such certification methods to its members. Does this mean that eventually the same will apply for teachers, mechanics, plumbers, lawyers, doctors. Undoubtedly such proposals would refill our fast emptying schools, but naturally it would be an enormous cost to the public to support such recruiting programs.

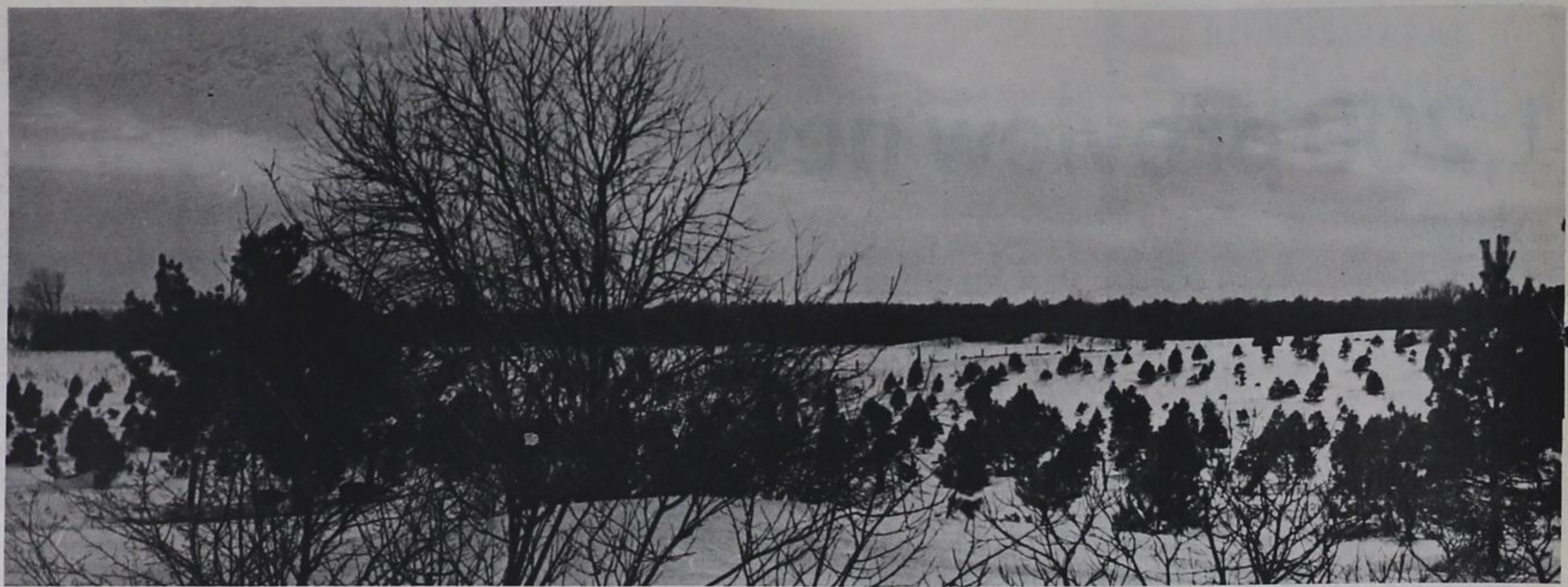
The RNs and RNAs, because of their high proportion of members who are females, and because of our social patterns of marriage, child bearing, rearing of children and divorce, make them susceptible as a group to be identified with a pattern of coming in and out of the work force. One of society's plagues has fallen on the RN and RNA, that of identification with a definable pattern, therefore, they are subject to control by legislation.

The College of Nurses will have to come up with stronger arguments than presently, if they have any at all, to substantiate a change from this M.P.P.

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Spring sunset

The bathroom has been bugged

by Shirley

Whittington



Visitors to our house who use the upstairs bathroom often come down aghast-faced.

"There's a tape recorder in your bathroom," they whisper. "Hidden between the sink and the wall."

It would be pleasant to create the fiction that we whisper secrets in our bathroom which are yearned after by secret agents and the RCMP. The simple truth is that the tape recorder in the bathroom is there for playing music, not for recording secrets.

But even this explanation seems to mystify people. Their eyes grow round with wonder as I go on to tell them that there is a stereo in the livingroom, a radio in the kitchen, a record player in the basement, a tape deck in the attic and a radio-record player in each kid's bedroom.

It's not as extravagant as it sounds. We limp along here without an automatic dishwasher, a clothesdryer, a microwave oven, a second car, or even an electric can opener, but we are well fixed for machines to play music on.

We have to be, or we'd tear each other's throats out.

The problem is that each one of us is passionately fond of music, but none appreciates what the other does upon. One man's beat is another man's annoyance. We all march to different drummers.

The Squire thrives on jazz, and the robust sounds of the big swing bands. His music

must have a beat and a good reliable forward motion. He would rather listen to a jackhammer than to a group of earnest aesthetes who groove along, oblivious to each other, or to rhythm and harmonious counterpoint.

Our oldest boy is into a different kind of jazz. A lot of it is electronically produced, with eerie, heart-skipping rhythms that would give Benny Goodman a migraine. The boy also favours gravelly-voiced singers, who shout for lost love, lost freedom, lost identity. They glare defiantly from their record jackets, daring you to question their integrity and their right to look tattered and grubby - even though they've soaked you twelve bucks for their latest album.

I lean toward the classics. Robust tenors and stratospheric coloraturas turn me on. If they are backed up by a thunderous symphony, I'm happier still. Language doesn't

matter. They can be singing in German, or Italian or Urdu. It's the onrush of glorious sound that raises the goosebumps.

There's a girl in our house who is currently infatuated with Joni Mitchell - and amiable and sweetly lyrical singer with a penchant for kaleidoscopic poetic images. She (unlike the gravelly-voiced jazz boys) sings with diamond-like clarity about "Suntans in reservation dining rooms; yellow schools of taxi fishes; Jonah in a ticking whale; caught up at the lights in the fishnet windows."

You could go nuts trying to follow her train of thought. I say no wonder the brains of the young are so scrambled, and my daughter says I'm biased and insensitive.

The youngest boy fond of heavy commercial radio stations the ones with never a second of dead air. Disc jockeys beat the listeners' eardrums with shouted baritone orders to go here, buy that, dig this - and

between the shouting and the chart heavies, are sandwiched commercials which are loud, lurid and sometimes lewd.

You can see that peaceful co-existence is not possible at our house, unless there is a power failure.

All of us, but one, think that two-beat jazz is old-fashioned and predictable and we don't hesitate to say so.

All of us, but one, think that commercial rock stations are crass and vulgar, and we don't hesitate to say so.

All of us, but one, think that operatic stars ululating in foreign tongues hurt the ears, and we don't hesitate to say so.

All of us, but one, think that Joni Mitchell suffers from a plethora of metaphor, and we don't hesitate to say so.

All of us, but one, think that cool electronic jazz is pretentious and artificial, and we don't hesitate to say so.

Each of us thinks he's right and the final authority on music. And we don't hesitate to say that either.

This helps to explain why we have a tape recorder in the bathroom. There, in steamy privacy, we can individually lock the door and turn on whatever turns us on.

We may insult each other's musical tastes, and argue and fight until our ears fall off about who's right, but there's one thing we all respect - a locked bathroom door.

Revels in brochures though they're hogwash

by Bill Smiley



One of my favorite indoor sports is leafing through travel brochures, and I've been indulging myself lately, while planning a jaunt to Europe this summer.

I revel in the colorful descriptions of exotic and romantic places, even though I know they are generally a lot of hogwash. It is common knowledge that Venice stinks like an open sewer, but I still want to have a gander at the Doge's Palace and the Bridge of Sighs.

I am perfectly aware that being a Canadian tourist in Paris is like being an open safe in a houseful of burglars. But that doesn't stop me from wanting to visit Notre Dame and have a dekho at the great bells where the Hunchback thereof swung so merrily.

I'm pretty sure that I won't be having an audience with the Pope, but I'd still like to stand in the Sistine Chapel in Rome, gawking at Michelangelo's magnificent ceiling with all the other tourists.

I'd love to ride down the Rhine guzzling pilsener and looking at castles, with one eye peeled in case we spotted Die Lorelei sitting on a rock in the middle of that polluted stream.

I'd delight in a real Hungarian goulash, Bavarian sauerbraten, Italian pasta, or even an honest Swiss steak.

It would be great to drop in on old prison camp friends like Nils Jorgensen in Oslo, Milan Karic in Dubrovnik, Jean Morai in Liege, Belgium, Rostislav Kandyuk in Morava, Czechoslovakia. Even though I know they would no longer be dashing young fighter pilots, but pot-bellied burgers heading toward senior citizenship.

In fact, I could happily take off every

summer and spend six weeks or more kicking around Great Britain and Europe, looking up old acquaintances, making new friends, and devouring scenery and history.

There are only two things that stop me from doing this. One is money. The other is my wife. There's not enough of the first item. And it almost takes dynamite to get the second travelling.

Looking at prices, I am shaken fairly rigid by the way they have shot up in the five years since we last went abroad. Hotel prices in London have zoomed by 50 per cent or more, to make that city, once a real bargain, one of the more expensive places to visit.

For example, by taking advantage of a "special discount" connected with our tour, we are able to stay for one night at the Penta Hotel for a mere \$56.00. Regular rate is \$62.00. Last time we were over, we stayed at a middle-class hotel, with bed and breakfast for \$32.00. And while the Penta is a new hotel, and no doubt very smart, it is far from being one of the great hotels of London. At that rate of increase, a double room at the Dorchester or the Savoy would now set one back about \$150.00.

Probably the answer is simply London's popularity. Although many new hotels have been built in the last decade, there is still an enormous demand for rooms, with hundreds of thousands of North Americans, Europeans and Asians pouring into the fabulous old town every summer, mouths open, wallets bulging, and cameras clicking.

Nor does it help that the pound has got back some stability, while the Canadian dollar has sunk to Depression levels.

A colleague who was over there last summer suggested, "Take as much money as you think you'll need, then double it. They'll whack you a buck for a cup of coffee."

When I was young and in my prime, as they say, the British pound was the soundest security in the world. A pound was worth about five dollars. Today, the pound is one of the least envied and most unstable units of currency in the western world. It used to be an evening on the town, albeit not a wild one, but a couple of drinks, a show and something to eat. Now it's an average-sized tip after a meal. That's what happens when you win a couple of wars and lose an empire.

But it isn't the money that bothers me

When it comes to moving, 'I don't want to know'

by Rod McDonald



Editor's note: This column is dedicated to everyone on staff who assured me last week I would be writing about moving this week.

When you think about it there's absolutely nothing as highly disorganized, or as much of a problem, as moving a house full of furniture, dishes, appliances, clothing and cats from one to another.

And as I found out, all too soon, last Saturday was no exception.

Actually the downfall was partly ours. Our downfall started last Friday night when, with good intentions, we were to begin in earnest packing everything in the farm house for the movers' arrival.

However, after dropping by to say farewell to some neighbours who couldn't seem to stop filling our drink glasses, we were in no mood to do anything except go to bed.

Actually, if it hadn't been for the arrival of my mother-in-law on the 8 p.m. GO bus I might still be sitting in the neighbour's house.

But we did manage to make a small, but significant, dent in the job after several cups of coffee.

"We'll go to bed and get up at 5 a.m.," we said to one another knowing it was a lie.

We did manage to get up at 6 a.m., one hour before the van arrived and more or less got everything under control.

Finally, the truck rolled up and the movers rolled out.

We walked around the property trying to

determine where they could bring the truck in close to the house.

The movers faces were less than friendly when they surveyed the mushy landscape from the previous night's rain.

I informed them that last summer movers had brought the truck down through a hay field that borders the house, but added, "you'll never get it through there today."

I walked back upstairs, looked out the kitchen window, and to my horror, saw the truck in the middle of the field nearly up to its axles in mud.

Within seconds the driver was inside calling head office to send a tow truck and asking us if we "really wanted to move today?"

We assured him that it was imperative, and he was heard to tell one of his underlings, "Just between you and me and the fence post

I'm not carrying anything out there."

With that he suddenly became seriously injured in the left arm and was reduced to coming out of the back of the truck about once every hour to carry a book of matches or a tube of toothpaste gingerly in his good hand.

That left us with a work force of two. One was a lad of slight build who didn't say much, but managed to shake his head everytime he saw the appliances, the piano and the narrow staircase.

The other, a lad of greater proportions, insisted on reassuring us by telling us repeatedly that this really wasn't his line of work, that he was really a professional musician and that he only moved on weekends because his mother worked for the company.

So the task fell upon these two to struggle

with our belongings.

Every once-in-a-while there would be a crunch or a crash on the stairway and my wife, who was sitting on the kitchen floor head in hands would look up, cringe and say, "I don't want to know."

In the meantime the driver kept his vigil from the back of the truck reappearing every so often to remove a roll of paper towels.

Finally at 1 p.m. the truck was fully loaded and ready to roll to the new house.

Well not quite. The truck rolled down the road one mile and stopped at the nearest restaurant where the crew disembarked for lunch. We beat the truck by a good hour and a half.

Finally they appeared and somewhere along the line had acquired a new driver.

This gentleman appeared to have two sound limbs and proceeded to unload in a scant hour and a half, with the help of the silent partner and the other who was still telling his life story to anyone who would listen.

And for all this we paid several hundred dollars and half the towing charge for the mired truck, which, had the company had its way, we would have paid in full.

The next time I move I plan to take a Caribbean holiday, drop off the keys at the movers and let them go to it.

As my wife so aptly put it, "I don't want to know."