

The Editorial Page

Make Great Dinghy Race into an annual event

It appears that everyone entered, or connected with, the Great Small Dinghy Races on Midland Bay last weekend had a splashing good time.

The Times was proud to be part of the event and we congratulate our outdoor columnist Bryan Berriault even though he couldn't hold the lead right to the finish with his egg beater style.

The Midland Power Squadron, and in particular Barb McConnell, did an excellent job of organizing the Centennial event.

Talk has already begun about making the

races an annual event.

And why not?

Events such as these in other municipalities draw crowds and entrants from all over the province, most notably the Beaver River Rat Race in Thornbury.

Events such as these can mean added exposure for Midland and an added circulation of the tourist dollar in our area.

Centennial just may be hatching some new ideas to help us to promote our area a little better.

Ottawa should convince provinces on constitution

We have received another piece of very expensive mail.

Not to be outdone by Darcy McKeough's or Jean Cretien's glossy-bound budgets the Office of the Prime Minister has released a two-booklet set entitled "A Time for Action: Highlights of the Federal Government's Proposals for the Renewal of Canadian Federation".

The booklets contain the path the Federal Liberals would like to follow in striking aims and principles of a new constitution for Canada and a list of the deficiencies in the British North America Act.

It is hard to say at this time with so many First Ministers Conferences having been staged in the past just why the Federal

Government's position on these topics has to be explained.

The danger of the separation of Quebec may be one or the fact the Liberal Party will soon have to face the electorate may be another.

It is also possible the Liberals are going to the grass roots to gather leverage against the provinces the next time they meet face to face in Ottawa.

It would seem, however, the government may be heading in the wrong direction.

The average Canadian is convinced we need a new constitution.

The federal government would be better off convincing the provincial premiers their plan is the right one.

Letters to the editor

Thanks to Bryan Berriault for entering dinghy race

Dear Editor,

As your readers will soon know, the Midland Power Squadron's Great Small Dinghy Race was a great success. We certainly had a lot of fun.

I want to thank the staff of The Times for giving us excellent pre-event publicity and for covering the event. I extend that thank you on behalf of the entire Midland Power

Squadron.

Special thanks to Bryan Berriault, your outdoor columnist, who participated in the race.

Sincerely,
Barbara McConnell,
Public Relations
Midland Power Squadron.

Constitutional changes protested by committee

Dear Editor:

The chief focus of media and public attention since the release of the Government's Constitutional Amendment Bill has been on the provisions in regard to the Supreme Court and the Senate. However, I believe that citizens should be aware that the bill proposes revolutionary changes in the Constitutional Monarchy, changes which are in many ways more important to the average Canadian than any other of the bill's proposals.

The Bill presents a monarchical facade; behind lurks a republican reality which removes the Queen from being part of Parliament and which concentrates power in the hands of the Prime Minister's appointee, the Governor General. The Governor would exercise power in his own right, giving way to the Sovereign only when she was present in Canada.

Not only is this a gratuitous insult to the Queen, whose labours and interest have been directed so evidently to Canada, but it also would allow for a government to consolidate

its own power, without checks or balances, by keeping the Monarch out of Canada.

The deceitful danger of the bill is that it maintains many of the Crown's trappings, while these symbols would in fact stand for altered ideas and a quite different institution. Equally, it would preclude Prince Charles or Prince Andrew from serving as Governor General, it would eliminate reference to the Queen's Canadian Forces and it would abolish the happy status quo whereby both Queen and Governor can exercise their powers fully, within and without Canada.

Canadians determined to preserve their institutions should write their provincial and federal legislators to protest the Bill's provisions. A detailed statement outlining its threat to Canadian Constitutional Government may be obtained by writing the Monarchist League of Canada, 2 Wedgewood Cres., Ottawa, Ont. K1B 4B4.

Yours sincerely,
John L. Aimers,
Dominion Chairman

Thank you for coverage of Antique Market

Dear Editor,

Just a small note of appreciation for the "Times" coverage of the Huronia District Hospital Auxiliary's "Antique Market."

As always, the co-operation of the news media is in a large part responsible for the financial success of all Auxiliary projects. Proceeds all go, indirectly, to the hospital,

and it must be obvious that the "Market" is the hottest tourist attraction held in Midland each summer!

Thanks again,
Sincerely,
Marion Sleep
Public Relations convener

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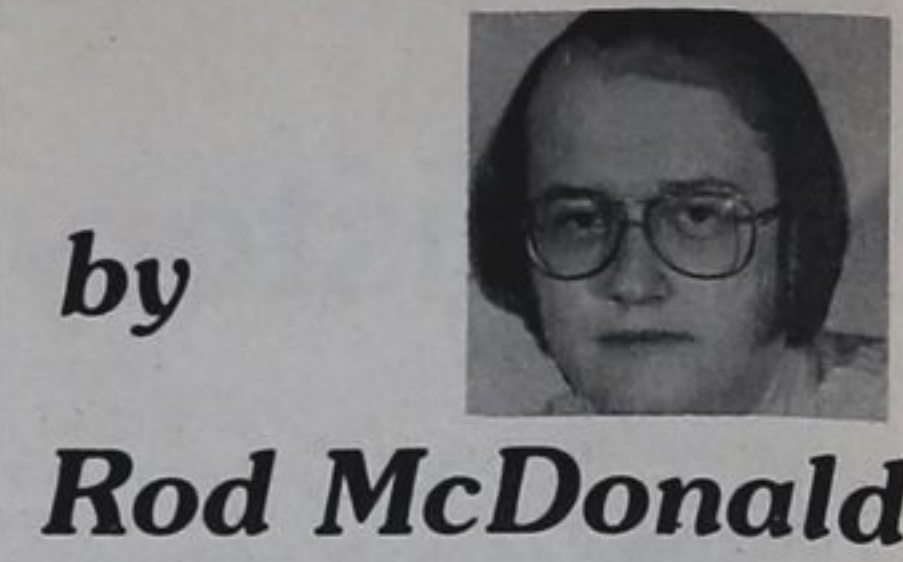
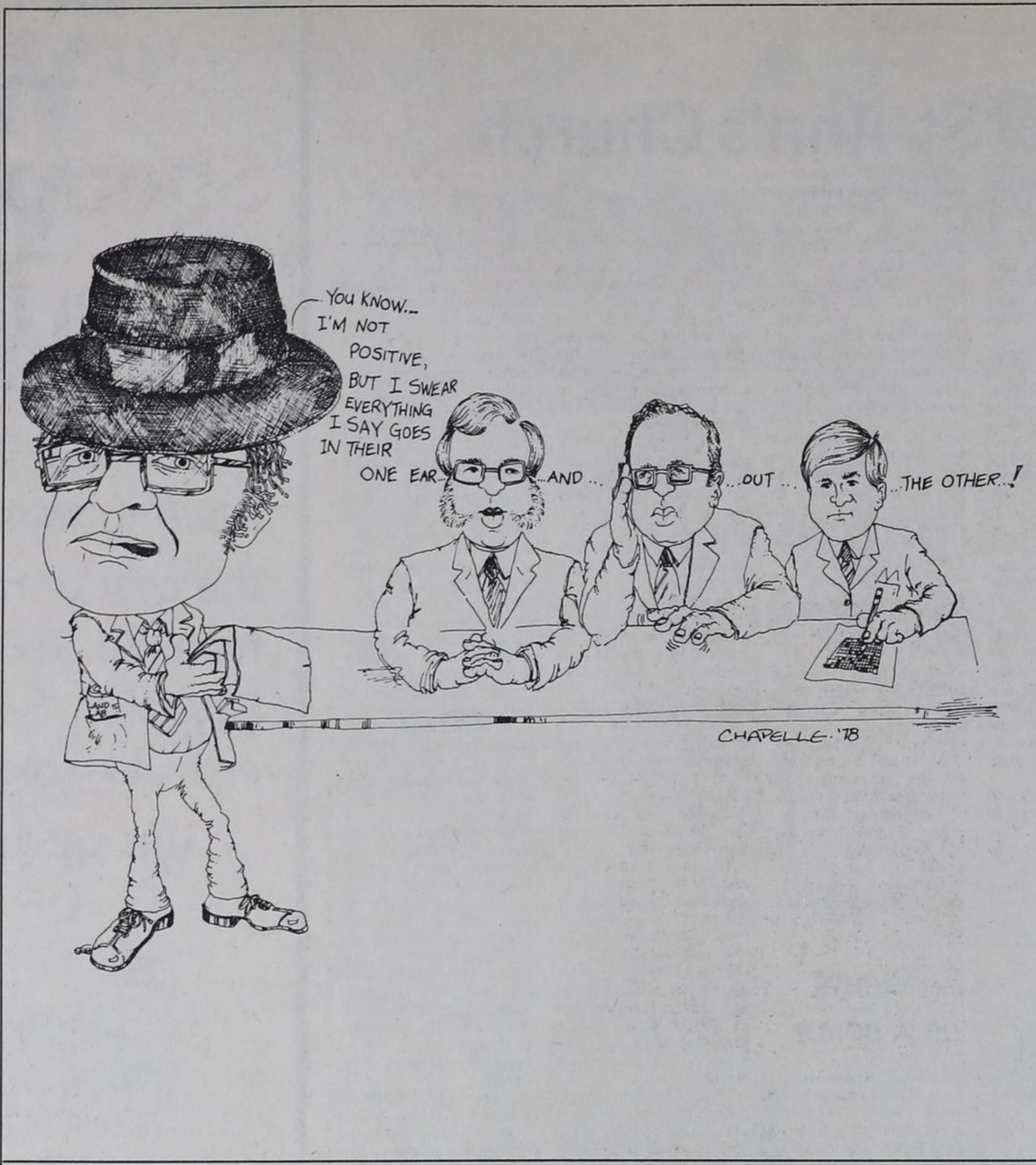
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by Rod McDonald

All in a name

By nature I'm not a very controversial person.

I'm not afraid to say what I think, but I've never gone out of my way to stir up trouble.

However, there is one facet of my life that has caused no end of opinion and controversy from the day I was born.

The big concern has been the way I spell my last name.

Everytime I give my name over the phone or sign my name to something people are constantly fascinated with why it isn't spelled M-A-C-D-O-N-A-L-D.

There are also many myths about the name spelled with an MC.

I have had several people tell me that it's really Irish and that all the McDonalds were driven out of Scotland about the same time St. Patrick was driving the snakes the other way.

Another person in a store came up with the original idea one day that MC was the "Canadian" way to spell it.

Being a fourth-generation Canadian I really never worried much about how the name should be spelled or whether by "Highland" standards it was correct.

After all my mother has been intimating for years that my father's side of the family are all "Tight old Scotsmen".

In fact, none of the Mc or MacDonalds could decide either.

The great family split came many years ago when two of my great aunts agreed to disagree on just how the last name should look in print.

The battle went on for years with one side spelling the name one way and one spelling it the other.

The question still wasn't decided by the Second World War.

My father was implored by the two aunts, that if he ever got overseas, he would promise to look up a long-lost, alleged cousin to settle the name game once and for all.

However, Dad didn't get much further than training Australians to fly in Regina.

The great mystery of whether the families last name was indeed Scottish or not continued.

Continued, that is, until recently.

Seeing as none of the Mac or McDonalds could seem to settle the argument it was all left up quite innocently to my mother-in-law.

She left recently for a four-week stay in the old country with bona fide relatives.

Getting up one Sunday morning at home we decided to take the trans-Atlantic plunge and phone her on the occasion of her birthday.

After a few minutes of chatting I got to say hello to Aunt Betty.

Now Aunt Betty was born and raised and lives in Edinburgh, so you can't get much more Scottish than that.

In the course of our discussion she said, "You must come over and look up the McDonalds."

"Well," I thought to myself, "We may be getting very close to the truth here."

However, not until my mother-in-law's return did all the pieces of the puzzle fall into place.

MC is not only correct, but it has the official stamp of approval from the Chief of the Clan.

It seems that while Isa was there, Uncle George (Aunt Betty's husband) had heard that the Chief was in town.

Yes, it was Ranald MacDonald, Laird of Kappoch and Chief of (Clan Donald who set everyone's mind at ease.

It was little disillusioning to find out that the Laird of Kappoch was not constantly clad in his kilts walking his estate, but makes his living as a record producer and has just recently cut an album of his own.

Well Uncle George tracked him down at the local record store and got him to sign an autograph copy of his new LP.

The Laird was not only glad to sell a record to a long-lost Clansman but penned the back "To Roderick McDonald from MacDonald of Kappoch".

But finding these things out can have a price.

When he asked Uncle George for the name I go by, he answered, "Rod".

"It should be Rory," the Chief replied.

No safety in these numbers

You don't have to be a lottery freak to play the numbers game.

Last week I was sitting in a neighbourhood coffee shop with some newspaper colleagues. We were having what is laughingly known as a story meeting. We talked about important stuff like why the office typewriter ribbons are always frayed, the possibility of rain on the upcoming weekend, and where it was really true that Igor Gouzenko was hiding out in a secluded estate on the outskirts of town.

In spite of the riveting nature of our chat, I noticed that two of our young male staff members periodically tuned out and began talking to each other in code.

"Five," one would say.

"Seven, turkey," his peer would reply calmly.

Then it was back to important stuff like how much it costs to get one's transmission repaired and the merits of home made yogurt versus the commercial stuff.

Suddenly, the young men were at it again.

"Nine," said one.

"Oh yeah..." agreed his pal. "Or maybe nine point five."

I'm a nosy person by nature. But I'd rather die than come right out and ask what's going on. I prefer to affect nonchalance. More secrets are plumbed, I find, through selective listening and inconspicuous observation. (My kids call this spying).

I listened and watched and discovered what the young dudes were doing. Code, my foot! It was a rating system.

Every time a young woman walked into that restaurant, the guys would do their number. My young friends were scoring girls, on a scale from one to 10, and I was fascinated.

I've researched this for a whole week, and it turns out that rating femmes on a scale

by Shirley Whittington



from one to 10 is a fairly universal preoccupation among those in whom the sap has not only risen but is actively boiling. It is an avocation that is at least as popular as dredging coins out of pay phones or playing pinball.

To rate young women thus would suggest that a universal code exists, but I have discovered that the rating system is as individual as fingerprints. One man's meat may well be another's aversion.

Still, if you're interested the following points seem to come under scrutiny most often. Healthy and clean (especially hair) rates at least one point.

A girl who carries a book rates one point. If she's actually reading the book, intellectuals will give her another point. Magazines are a moot point, but The National Enquirer is not likely to swell the total.

Smokers and gum chewers are not favourably regarded, nor are girls who butt their cigarettes in their French fries. Hairy legs and armpits, obvious sweating and dirty bare feet earn demerits. So do carmine lipstick and purple fingernails. On the other hand, appropriately filled shorts, halter and tube tops send the applause meter soaring.

Jeans that fit well do too, but not if the wearer is giggling a lot.

Girls who are spectacled may well get their necks tickled. The young men I consulted agreed that eyeglasses didn't affect scores at all, provided the girl looked like the type who knew when to remove them.

Generally speaking, thin wins. Overweight shaves points, although a winning smile and/or large inviting eyes may turn a chubby debit into a credit.

A vibrant, natural healthy look (achieved with God knows how many exotic oils and cosmetics) sends scores soaring into the nines although one young confidant assured me that he'd never award a 10.

Yet another reliable source cautioned me. "Look-you're taking this far too seriously. It's just a game, like."

That's good, because as the two young score keepers walked out of the restaurant last week, and passed the table where the aforementioned Five and Seven were sitting, I'm sure I overheard the following:

"Six?", said a sweetly feminine voice.

"No way. Five point four," replied her companion. It's only a game, guys, but any number can play.

Home looks good from far away

By the time this appears in print, I'll probably be flogging around Europe, irritable, exhausted and disgruntled, muttering, "What am I doing here, bucketing around on a bus, gawking at cathedrals, and listening to the yammering of a horde of people of whose language I know eight words on a good day?"

And I'll go on. I know it. "What am I doing blowing half of my life's savings junketing around with a bunch of other middle-aged has-beens, when I could be back home right now, playing golf with a bunch of middle-aged has-beens?"

"I must be out of my mind, paying \$24.00 for two hamburgs and a bottle of wine, when I could be out at Foster's picking my own strawberries and going home to a great chicken dinner that costs about \$2.00, with tiny new boiled potatoes, green onions, new carrots and fresh green beans.

"I could be sitting in my own back yard right now, looking at the Lear-like oaks, sniffing my neighbours' flowers, contemplating a late-afternoon swim, and sucking occasionally on a cold ale, instead of sitting in this ruddy bus, looking at the other turkeys who took this trip, inhaling the fumes of gasoline, contemplating the folly of trips to Europe, and knowing I'm going to pay \$1.25 for a Coke at our next stop, if we ever stop.

"We didn't go anywhere near Lille, so I couldn't look up Andree, but she's probably a fat old lady now, with a moustache. She was tending in that direction back then. And we didn't even go near Antwerp, so I missed

seeing Tita. I wonder if she thought I'd stood her up that night, Friday the 13th of October, when I didn't show up? She'd have no way of knowing I'd been shot down that afternoon. Nice kid, and she said her old man had lots of money.

"I wonder if young Wilson, next door, is keeping the lawn cut. Thank the lord we had no cat to be fed this time. I wonder if Kim got a job. I wonder how The Boys are.

"That was some du we stayed in last night. The mattress was so lumpy I had to sleep on the floor, and the Old Lady didn't get a wink, she was so excited at those young Italians whistling at her and pinching her bum. She made me take pictures of the bruises, to show the girls back home.

"It wasn't as bad, though, as the night we crossed the North Sea to Holland in that converted barge they called a cruise ship. She must've lost ten pounds that night. They should have called it a crew's ship. They were the only ones who weren't tossing their

tripes with every roll.

"The Old Girl's been pretty decent though. She hasn't said more than four times a day, 'My God, I'll be glad when this is over.' And she insisted I'm not the most miserable man on the trip. She says I'm about one jump ahead of that mean old sod from Cleveland.

"About the only time she gets snarky is when I try my trilingualism out. I say to some young German blonde, 'Wie fil ihr ist es, bitte?' The blonde laughs heartily, even though I've only asked her for the time of day, because of my accent, but my wife thinks I've cracked a dirty joke or something.

"Thank goodness we have our tickets home paid for. I'm going to seek out and kiss Trudeau on both cheeks when I get home, even if it makes me throw up. Canadian inflation is peanuts compared to what they have over here. Buck and a half for a cup of coffee. Sold my watch in Vienna after they gave me my bill at the bier garden. Sold my



by Bill Smiley