

# The Editorial Page

## Will Highway 69 claim more lives?

The Civic Holiday, another three-day weekend guaranteed to draw even the most stay-at-home people out of the cities and into holiday country is approaching once again.

With the travelling people come traffic jams, short tempers, loss of patience and accidents. Like it or not, some of us won't be coming home once the weekend is over. Statistics prove that holiday weekends claim more lives through carelessness, than any other weekend of the year.

Midland and Penetanguishene drivers heading north for the weekend need to use particular caution. We at The Times feel that Highways 12 and 69, once crowded with drivers short of patience and anxious to get where they are going, become two of the most dangerous holiday highways in the province.

Last summer a new so-called improved Highway 69 was open. In an effort to move traffic north faster, the Ministry of Transportation and Communication added a wide paved shoulder on both sides of Highway 69. In theory the shoulder is meant to be used by slow vehicles to momentarily move over to let faster vehicles by. In reality, the shoulder is misused and we feel, a death trap.

One Times staff member reported seeing an American family pulled over on the

shoulder. The car was sitting as though parked and the unassuming family was picnicking on the side of the road. A speeding vehicle using the shoulder to pass a slow moving vehicle narrowly missed crashing into the parked car and ruining a vacation for a handful of people.

We are also informed by several daily users of the highway that transport trucks run up close behind cars in an effort to make them move over. Where there are turn-offs on the highway it is taking your life in your hands to pull over to let a truck pass, we are told. We wonder how soon it will be before someone finds a transport truck in their back seat.

Even though the highway is legitimately only two lanes, the speed limit is 55 miles per hour. The passing lane seems to encourage fast drivers to go faster and few people seem to obey the limit.

We wonder why the highway wasn't made four complete lanes with an appropriate shoulder? We also wonder where the MTC expects a car in trouble to pull over to get out of the way of traffic?

During this holiday weekend be extra cautious on the highway, and if you don't have to be out on Highway 69, don't.

## 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.

## Letters to the editor

### 'Stop rowdyism in Little Lake Park'

Dear Editor,  
We need help.

Why do the young people make such a fool of themselves in Little Lake Park?

The drinking, obscenity, noisy vehicles and tires and destruction is hard to understand. Daytime is bad enough, but night time is a nightmare.

If the night man says anything the static he gets is something - boys or girls, doesn't matter.

The bathing houses? First thing in the morning you should see them. Kids say it's too far to walk up the hill. What next?

This is a beautiful clean park. You should be able to enjoy it.

Why were the gate chains taken down? I

remember years ago they were up and even the campers were asked to keep the noise down.

There seems to be signals. Because if a police car comes through - all is quiet - when it's out of sight the noise starts again.

Maybe I'm not ready to accept the changes of today's young people. I don't think such a beautiful park should be used in this manner.

I am sure parents have no idea what is being done. But no doubt pay for it in their taxes and wonder why the added cost.

I hope this can be printed and in some way help to keep your park. Thank you.

A long-time visitor  
Name withheld by request

## Team should behave like men: reader

Dear Editor,  
In a game played Sunday in the Midland-Penetang Ball Hockey league, a team that had won its previous eight games suddenly found themselves on the short end of the score sheet at the end of their last game of the regular season.

There is nothing so abnormal as that, teams in all kinds of sports lose games everyday. It's a natural common occurrence. For a team that has the most wins in a league to lose now and again is as natural as water flowing downstream. It is bound to happen.

Sportsmanship is a thing that one must find in him or herself. It is just disturbing to find that almost a whole team cannot find that simple sportsmanship when after a simple ball hockey game is over, in which the short or long run had no real significance in the standings of the league or any individual

standings.  
To blame the referee is usually a natural thing to do after a loss, especially when one team has been assessed a lot more penalties than the winning team. But in this case both teams had been assessed the same amount of penalties until the last minute when for some unknown reason the team in question decided to throw the game away.

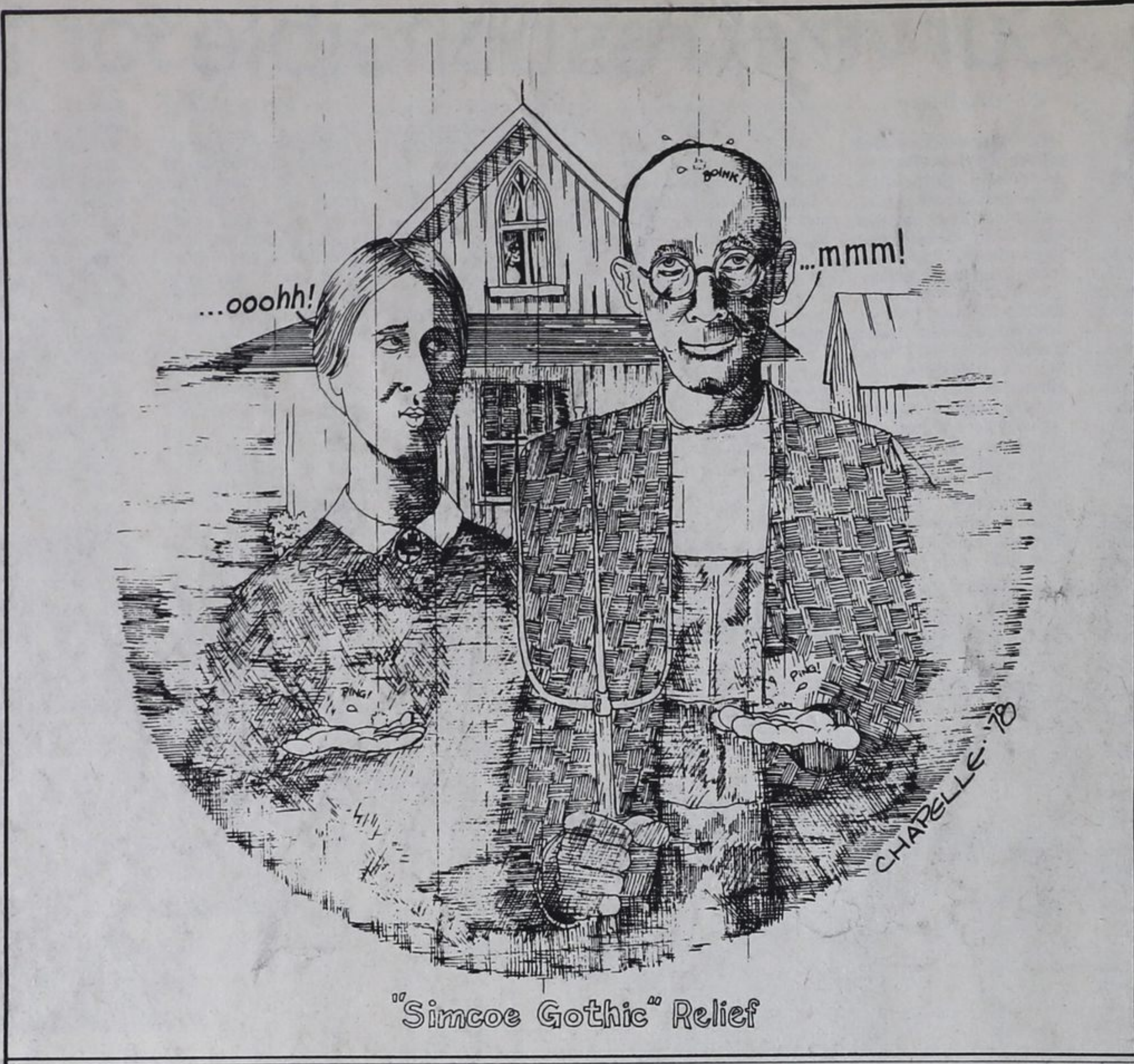
And to top it off, coaches should not barge into opposing dressing rooms to bitterly complain about officiating. There is a proper time, a proper place, and a proper way of protesting and a certain coach should read up on the subject.

All I ask is for a team to use a little common sense and make an attempt to behave like men. Is it too much to ask?

David Micheal Dupuis

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"Simcoe Gothic" Relief

## There's a name for it

When something becomes part of your life, there's a strong compulsion to name it.

Some people have funny names for their motor cars. A Rambler becomes a Rumber; an Astra an Ashtray; a Vega—the Vegamatic.

I know a man who drives an ancient truck which once carried the letters FARGO on its grille. Over the years, one letter fell off. He rearranged the remaining ones, and now he drives a FROG. (The tire marks it leaves behind are of course, FROG prints.)

We call our cat Bill, but nobody can remember why. The lumpy sofa bed in the sunroom is called MacBeth, because it murders sleep.

Boats bring out the christening best in some folks. The Clark's had no choice but to name their craft Clark's Ark. A snappy little sailboat called Half Fast wins hearts, if not races. I know of no small craft called Titanic, but Peter Gzowski defiantly sails a little boat under the name of The Empress of Poland.

So it is with a piece of land or a summer cottage. If it's a frivolous piece of real estate — not the place where you get your mail or receive the minister on pastoral calls — the temptation is strong to name it.

Sometimes it's more than a temptation. It's a necessity. "Where have you been?" your friends demand. "I can never get you on the phone anymore."

If you reply that you've been out on your acreage on the twenty-first concession, half a mile from the highway and hard by the railway bridge, they'll wander off to talk to somebody more interesting. So—you hang an attention-getting name on the place.

A lot of imagination goes into the naming of vacation homes. For a pathological reader, a drive through cottage country is filled with delightful surprises.

I can't pass Cuddle Doon without wanting to Dunwerkin and Durnushin take a bit of

by Shirley

## Whittington



figuring out, but once deciphered, they thumb their clapboard noses at the pressures of urban living. Loaf Inn is similarly somnolent, and considerably more charming than the traditional Dew-Drop-Inn or Bide-A-Wee.

Sometimes names make names. A family where Bill's the father, Rita's the mum, and Ricky and Jane are the kids may opt for a tossed salad like Ribiljanky. Four-C's and Cumming Home are delightfully self evident. The Pitt's on a sign at the gate tells you who lives there, not how they feel about it.

I know a place called Father's Folly. I wonder what testy moments and unforeseen disasters seeded that idea?

Not all retreat names are frivolous. Lakeview and Shady Pines usually indicate exactly what they say, but country landowners who in the leafy past have christened their place The Elms may have to do some revising. The Stumps?

I have never seen a place called simply The Cottage, but I know one that goes amiably by the name of Our Place. And not far from us there's a mobile home with a sign outside that reads Bill / Doris / Fred, suggesting an interesting menage a trois within.

When we became mortgaged to 41 country acres, some sort of handle was indicated

because the Squire kept referring to it rather gruffly as The Property, with a roaring emphasis on the first Syllable. This made it sound as if nobody was supposed to have any fun there, so we had a family conference to come up with something jollier.

A surprised slither of grass snakes shortly after we bought the place inspired Snakey Acres—a name heartily endorsed by our oldest boy who uses "snake" to refer to persons of unstable and suspicious character. The rest of us thought the idea stank.

Another metric-minded family member ran Healthy Hectares up the pole, but nobody saluted.

For a while we tried calling it The Farm, but that sounded too lofty. Besides, it's a lie. Nothing useful grows there.

Then a young friend with an academic turn of mind paid us a visit. He mused through the marsh, shouldered his way through the long grass and high bracken, struggled up the hill and clambered through the rock strewn woods.

"What you have here," he puffed, "is a bi-om. An ecological entity. A little bit of everything."

And Bi-Om it has become. What's in a name? In this case, everything.

## Hope to arrive in one piece

When you are going on a trip, your first hope is that you will get there in one piece, preferably the fairly large piece in which you began the trip. Not a lot of little ones.

Your second hope is that you will not be hijacked. Or, at least if you are, that the hijackers will insist on landing on the island of Bali, where the terrified hostages will be comforted by nubile, young bra-less, topless ladies, waving fans and things around to keep them (the hostages) cool.

Another vague hope is that the airplane gets off the ground. It didn't help our frame of mind when one didn't recently at Toronto airport, and instead wound up in a ravine.

Then, of course, it is to be hoped that once the thing gets into the air, it returns to terra firma. This is fairly important, they tell me.

Next, it's rather essential that you have a place to lay your jet-lagged head when you get there. Marriages are made in Heaven, it says somewhere. Divorces are made when the room clerk says, "Sorry, sir. Your reservation definitely states August 15th, and this is July 15th. We haven't a thing for the next two weeks." This experience is far, far worse than being left at the altar.

It's basic that you should leave behind instructions for the disposal of your property, in case you are kidnapped in the red light district of Hamburg, or, in the case of wives, decide to run off with the one-eyed Afghanistan pilot you met in the discotheque in Rome.

We've drawn up a list for just that purpose. Kim gets the grand piano. Hugh gets the lawnmower and the color TV (They have some great programs in the jungles of Paraguay). Kim gets the lawn sprinkler for The Boys to run through, their favorite sport. My sisters get the old beds we outfumbled them for when my mother's estate was being divided. My wife's sister gets the huge linen tablecloth with the wine-stains that won't come out. And so on.

by Bill Smiley



Another thing you should look after before you commence a trip is to get well rested. Maybe that's why I'm taking off this afternoon in a bus with a lot of hooligans to drive, round-trip, 200 miles and watch a double-header baseball game featuring the worst major league team in the world, Toronto, and arriving home at 2 a.m. Four hours on the bus. Four hours in the grandstand. After a day's work. "You're crazy," my wife said, unequivocally. She's right.

It's extremely important, when you are packing, not to leave out anything vital to your well-being. Make a check-list: laxative pills, tranquilizers, stuff for athlete's foot, piles ointment, dandruff killer, a travel iron to press out the furrows on your forehead. And so on.

Naturally, you need six dictionaries: Canadian-cockney; English-French; French-German; Schweizer-Deutsch; Toronto-Italian; Joul-French. And so on.

Let's see. Oh, yes, you need money. When the Europeans came to Canada first, they brought lots of colored beads, and received in return for them prime furs, good as gold. When Canadians visit Europe, they take chinking great rolls of banknotes, and receive in return for them—you guessed it—colored beads. Seems fair enough.

Let's have another look at that list. Uh. Yup. Electric toothbrush. Extra dentures in case of breakage. Hair dye. Three quarts of underarm deodorant. Toilet paper, 12 rolls.

Adhesive tape for blistered heels. Seven-iron to practise golf swings while waiting for audience with Pope. Booze. Hey, where's the booze...? Hears a guy had to pay \$45 for a quart of rye when the Old-Timers played in Holland last winter.

Wait a minute, now. Have to call the cops and listen to their amused snorts when I ask them to keep an eye on the house while we're away. Leave the house key under the eleventh stone on the patio. We'll never find it when we get home. Cut off the newspapers—sure sign you are not home when there are forty-two of them on the porch. Put out some ant traps to make sure they haven't demolished entire house while we're away. And so on.

You know something? My wife may be crazy, as I suggested here recently, but she's not dumb. She never wanted to go on this trip in the first place. All she wanted to do was have a normal summer: swimming, playing golf; picking berries; enjoying the grand-boys; nagging me about the weeds.

Well, by George, we're going anyway, and she can lump it. As long as she doesn't lump me. You're nobody unless you've been to Newfie. Then you're O.K.

My greatest consolation is a line from a letter my son wrote on my birthday, "Tribulations, frustrations, rotten kids and neurotic spouse. All these things shall pass away."

Thanks, Hugh, I needed that.

by  
Howard Elliott



## Too much of a bad thing

Why is it that people in our society do everything to extremes? We eat too much, drink too much and generally over-indulge in just about everything. And its unfortunate, because most things are acceptable if taken in moderate doses.

Disco music, for example, is palatable enough, provided it is restricted to certain areas. Think of how pleasant it would be if there was just one huge discotheque in Canada. In Moose Jaw, or some other thriving metropolis.

I witnessed another classic example of too much of a bad thing when I recently visited what used to be lovely town called Elora. Elora stopped being lovely a few years ago when a huge swarm of Torontonians descended on the unsuspecting community.

These business-minded individuals rapidly turned Elora into what I refer to as a back-to-the-earth community. In the wink-of-an-eye, artists co-ops and crafts shops sprang up all over the town. Most of these shops had names like "Ye Olde English Craft and Tea and Scones Shoppe". That in itself wouldn't be too bad, but the owners of the shops feel they are entitled to charge ridiculous sums of money for items of dubious quality.

The idea was to revitalize the downtown section of the town and turn it into a tourist attraction. An admirable suggestion since the local economy in that area was bad and getting steadily worse.

Now, Elora is a booming tourist town. Mind you, most of the people who lived in the town have left for more suitable communities. I can't blame them, since I wouldn't care to live beside a store called "Nancy's-Nic-Nac-Nook", either.

The original idea put to work in Elora, was, I think, a good one. The intelligent business crowd from Toronto realized that craft stores — supposedly returning the customer to a simpler age were very much in vogue. And Elora proved to be the perfect location for a whole cluster of these back-to-the-simple-life stores.

The only contradiction I see is that people returning to the simple life shouldn't have to pay 50 cents for a cup of coffee and \$500 for a dresser with marks all over the top of it.

Elora is located in a lovely spot, with the Grand River flowing through town and the picturesque Elora Gorge not far away. Until the crafty crowd invaded the town, it looked much like any other town in that part of Ontario.

Now, Elora boasts the highest concentration of pine and rough-hewn planks of any town. Most of the stores in the downtown section of town were given a face-lift, and before anyone knew it, Elora had become what it is today.

I actually enjoy Elora to some extent. I visited there last fall, and the streets were almost empty. That combined with the manufactured simplicity of the place made for a euphoric day. One of the highlights of the town has to be the Elora Mill restaurant.

The mill itself used to be the mainstay of business section, and when it went the way of all mills, the town's economy began to suffer.

Several years ago, a shrewd gentleman bought the mill and began restoring it and turning it into a restaurant. Dining there is a lovely experience. (Though my wallet would beg to differ).

In any case, the crafty money makers seem firmly embedded in the small town. Many live in back-to-the-simple-life farm houses in the area. Others migrate back to Toronto when the tourists have finished drooling over all the pine furniture.

The saddest thing about Elora is that there is simply too much fake simplicity and too many stores with silly names. (One of the classics is a relatively new take-out restaurant called a Fish and Chippery) If the crafty crowd would only control their growth to some extent, Elora would be a much nicer place to visit. Already, there is evidence of decay in the town's business section. There are a conspicuously large number of For Sale and For Rent signs appearing in shop windows. It seems the shop owners are starting to realize that they can't have a town full of identical shops with similar merchandise and expect to show a profit.

Another strange thing about the town is the line that has appeared between the arts and crafts section of town and the original section. It's quite sudden. You walk along the street, jostling with the other camera toting tourists, all peering at the shops—or shoppers rather—and suddenly the crowds thin out and the stores all have normal names.

Can you imagine what it's like walking past craft shops, pine furniture shops, small art galleries and restaurants with names like Le Femme and then suddenly coming across a Chinese restaurant and Ed's Barber Shop? It doesn't do much for the romanticism of the place I'll tell you.

I have to wonder what will happen to all the artists and carpenters with stores in Elora. Certainly, the back-to-the-earth trend won't last indefinitely.

Perhaps someone will come up with a back-to-the-city movement and then all the crafty folk will migrate to Toronto and leave little towns like Elora. What a shame.

I'll take this opportunity to bid farewell to the Georgian Bay area, since I shall be leaving at the end of the week to return to my natural habitat in the Kitchener area.

Having been here since January, I've come to appreciate the people and places in the Penetanguishene-Midland area.

I'd like to express special thanks to all the people I've worked with in Penetanguishene. Members of council, other municipal contacts, the Chamber of Commerce and police and fire spokespeople have all been a great deal of help.