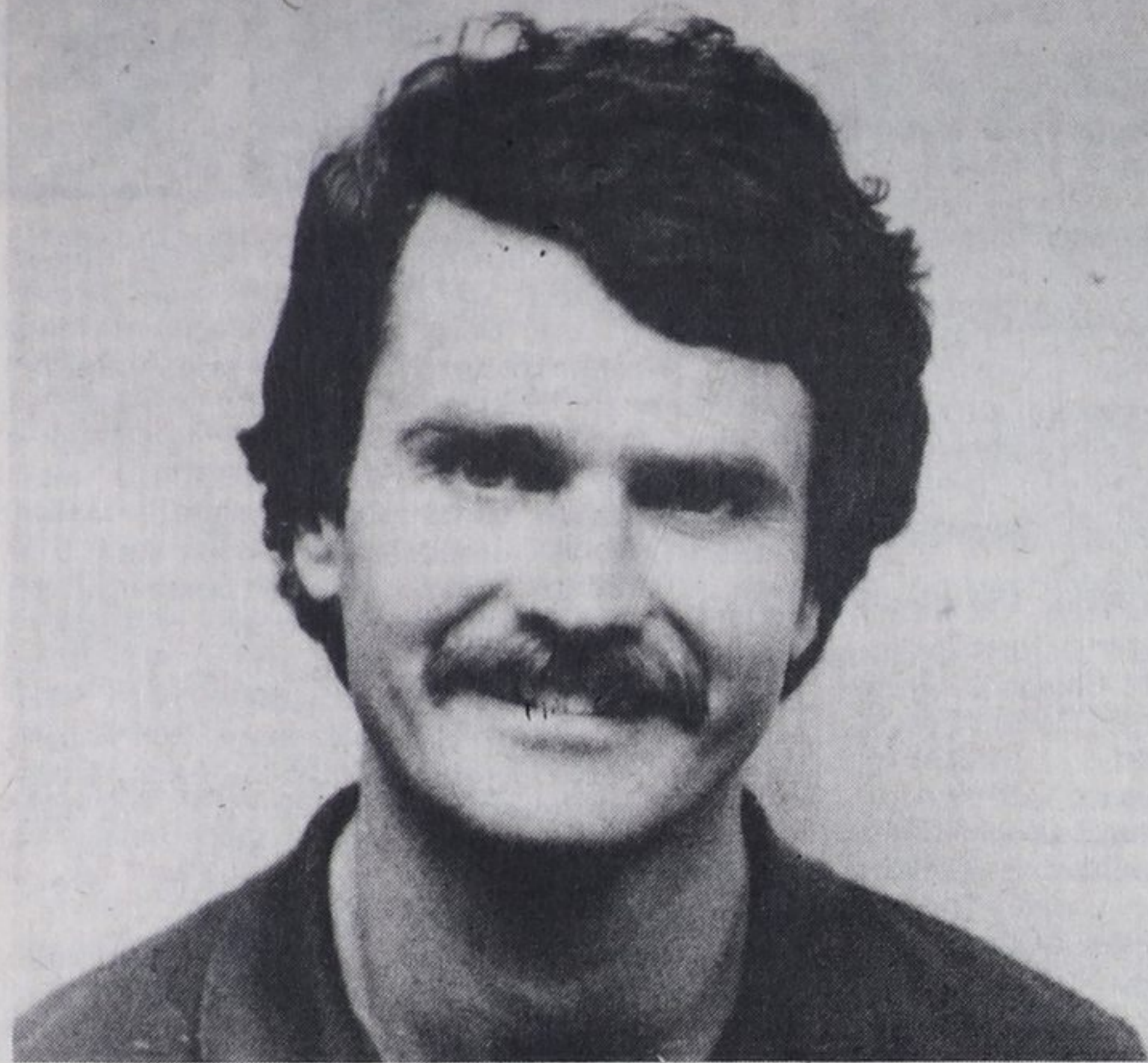


That's My Line



Bill Byrick

Sainte-Marie planner

1981 is Bill Byrick's fourth summer at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons. A native of London, Ont., he worked as a planner in the parks and recreation departments of London, and of Sarnia. He has a history degree from the University of Western Ontario.

The start of the summer season at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons and the visiting there of 150,000 tourists ending in September, is, surprisingly, not the busy time of the year for Byrick.

The months between September and June are the months spent in busy preparation for the coming season. "The summer is less busy for me. The staff take over" and two supervisors do a "dynamite job" of running the show.

Each year it is in part up to Byrick to see that every year the 17th century reproduction of the Jesuit outpost has a new look. Research through the winter is one of the keys to being able "to present a better story to people" each year.

Research is interesting, Byrick says. "You open one door, you find four more, you open them, you find 50 doors." The result is something likely to be small, but interesting, that is incorporated into the program.

Sainte-Marie is supposed to be experienced as a "living history community" The slogan, Stepping into a different century, is a bit of a cliché, Byrick admits. But he hopes that visitors, after they see the film in the theatre, pretend that they are walking through a time tunnel into the 17th century. "I hope that they will feel comfortable, that they won't hesitate to touch, to use their senses. There isn't one area (of Sainte-Marie) that is blocked off for visitors. We hope visitors will talk to the interpreters, use the tools, try things out, and see how it was to live in the 17th century.

Going back 300 years isn't as simple

as adjusting to physical surroundings, either. "Their minds were different. It's like saying your views are different from those of your father, whose views were different from your grandfather. You take that back 300 years, and you'll see things differently.

One of Byrick's aims is to try to explain the point of view of both the native Indians and of the French priests and their attendants who came hundreds of miles through wilderness to both Christianize the Indian and to form an alliance with him.

"We try to give some sensitivity to the Indian people. They had a very complex society which our North American white school textbooks do not properly cover from an objective position. "We try to do that here, and from the French perspective too."

Sainte-Marie isn't just authentic seeming, but as authentic as human ingenuity and research can make it. All of the nails used in the three acre site are square headed. The lumbar is specially cut with a special saw in Thunder Bay so that the lumbar will have the proper diagonal socket.

Hondan chickens have been procured for the site's farm because they are very likely the variety of chicken there in the 17th century. The next item on the list to make the livestock closer to what was really there 300 years ago is pigs.

But people are the most important part of the site. We try to stimulate excitement in the staff so that they will pass it on to visitors. One employee who has been at Ste. Marie for six years "has a real feeling for what the site must have been like in the 17th century. Hopefully (he and the other interpreters and staff emanate this excitement to visitors."

Byrick hopes that visitors "will learn a lot and have fun: our whole goal is to achieve that."

Police dept. wins praise from Day

Deputy-reeve Bev Day waved Midland Police Department's flag Monday night at a regular town council meeting.

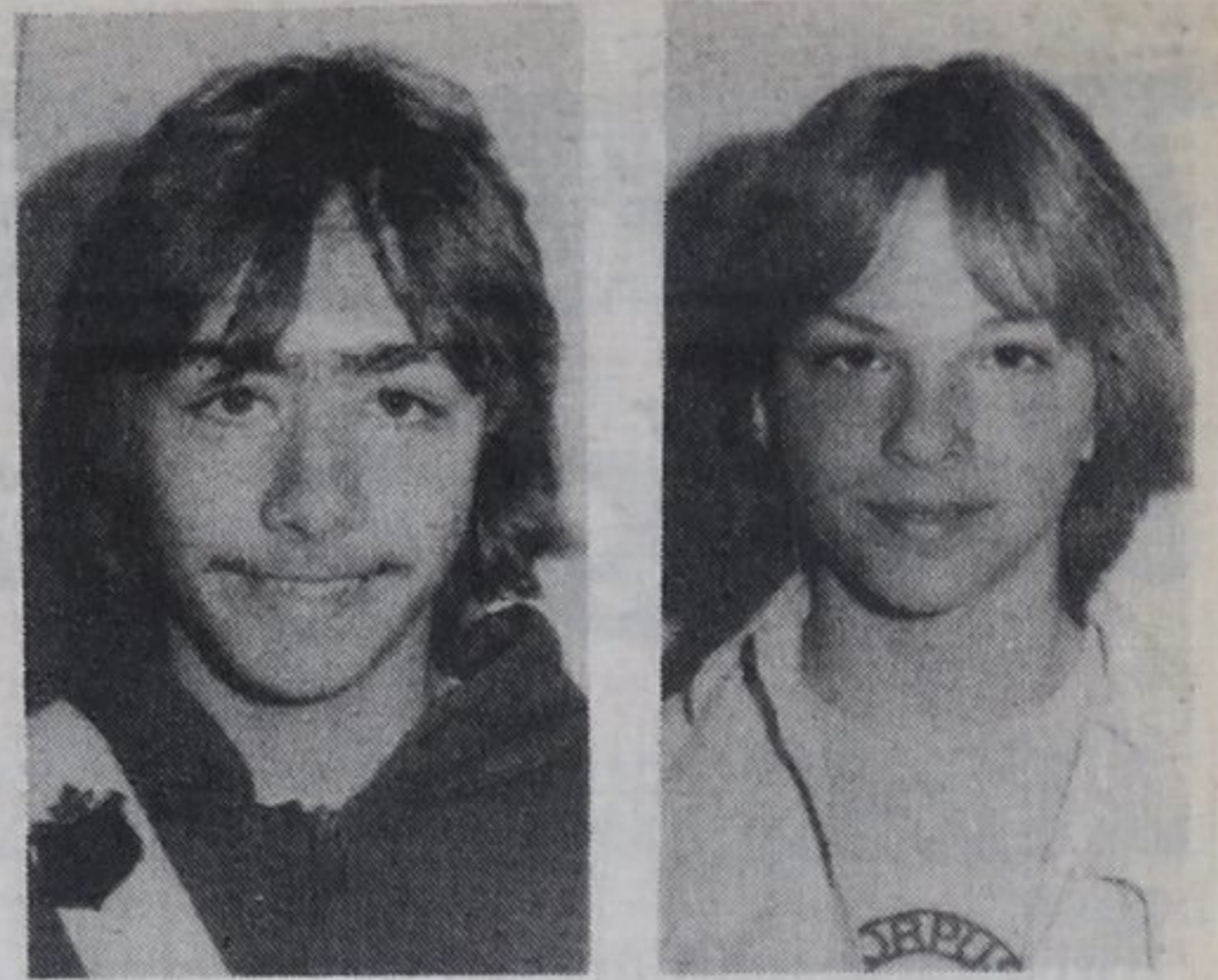
Day was commenting on Const. Willy Tiessen's recent attendance at Ontario Police College in Aylmer where the policeman passed the advance training course with a mark of 92 per cent.

Day noted that all local constables have now taken the course and that each of the Midland policeman scored 90 per cent or more.

A letter is to be sent to Const. Tiessen from council praising the man for his accomplishment.

Meanwhile Day said that both Police Chief Ernest Bates "and your police department are doing a super job."

The deputy-reeve is chairman of the town's public safety committee.



May patrollers

School safety patrollers in Penetanguishene for the month of May are Randy O'Rourke, Burkevale School, left, and Cathy Davis, Corpus Christi School, right,

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E600	600 / 21	76Kwh	\$425.

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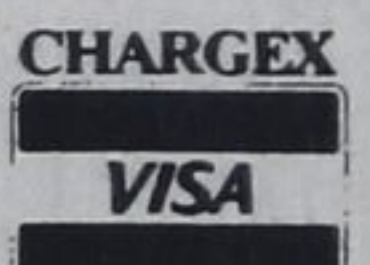
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