

"Information is the hallmark of democracy"

Robert Graham is remembered

THE LATE Robert Graham of Penetanguishene (1897-1979) had he still been alive would have been proud of a special event which took place last week at Penetanguishene's waterfront park.

There, members of the Penetanguishene Horticultural Society unveiled a plaque in Bob's memory.

Robert Graham had been an active member of the society and our town is better for all the things he did for this community.

It has been said Robert Graham was a well loved member of the community . . . and that's the truth. So last week's special unveiling was indeed a fine tribute to a wonderful Irishman.

Pay cut proposal won't wash

AN INDEPENDENT MP from Edmonton, Bill Yurko, has suggested members of Parliament take a pay cut and that future hikes be pegged at six percent.

Sounds good but you can bet federal law-makers will thumb their noses at Yurko's proposal . . . and why not, at present MPs in Ottawa earn a minimum of \$65,000. And that's without all the neat little perks that go along with the job.

We've carped about this before, so often, that it almost seems redundant to again bring up the matter . . . but it would appear we Canadians aren't getting our money's worth from most, if not all, of our elected federal representatives who appear to enjoy clowning around more in the House than rolling up their sleeves and getting down to the business at hand.

It's a pity MPs are only accountable for their actions at election time.

If their stipends were indexed to their performances some of them would be looking for other lines of work today.

As for Yurko's proposed Private Member's Bill to slash MPs' earnings . . . he hasn't a hope in hell of winning any support in the House.

Important public service feature

ALTHOUGH TEST results have yet to be known (or available) it is expected most if not all emergency personnel who were tested last Thursday at the Medonte Fire Hall at Moonstone will eventually be given a clean bill of health.

About 100 of the 128 firefighters, police and other personnel who attended last Feb. 28's train derailment in Medonte were tested last week by officials from the Ministry of Labour's Occupational Chest Disease Section after it was feared some of the men may have come into contact with possible toxic fumes at the disaster site and didn't know it.

There has been some debate as to the length of time that has transpired from the time the derailment occurred to the time tests were finally conducted.

We are not at all uncomfortable about the time lag. Had some of the emergency crews become sick in the interim, we feel comfortable in knowing they would have sought immediate medical attention.

Last week's testing, an across-the-board affair, was seen as an important public service feature provided by the province's Ministry of Labour in conjunction with the Simcoe County Health Unit.

A service, we might add, those who took the test appreciated.

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Letters

Our readers say...

A status report from teachers

Dear Editor:

Elementary Public School teachers in Simcoe County have voted by an overwhelming majority (92 per cent) to have their Provincial organization assume responsibility for negotiations with the Simcoe County Board of Education.

The teachers have been negotiating for more than fourteen months and have concluded that the Board has not been bargaining in good faith for most of that time. The teachers have formally charged the Board with failure to bargain in good faith, and have asked the Education Relations Commission to investigate.

Every employee group working for the Simcoe County Board of Education has had difficult negotiations with the Board this year. A strike of school secretaries was narrowly averted in

September and school caretakers were one day from strike when a settlement was reached.

Early this month, almost 80 per cent of the secondary school teachers in Simcoe County voted in favour of strike action.

The main issue in the elementary dispute, in addition to generally bad relations with the Board, is class size. Simcoe County has the second worst pupil-teacher ratio in Ontario and the Board has reneged on what the Board minutes show as a firm agreement to reduce class size.

Provincial Federation presidents Ann Thomson and Duncan Jewell are now in charge of elementary teacher negotiations in Simcoe County. No date has been set for further negotiations.

—Federation of Women Teachers Ass'n of Ont.
Ontario Public School Men Teachers Federation.

Honoured to receive award

Dear Editor:

I would like to thank the M.M.H.A. House League Executive for their beautiful surprise on Thursday May 20.

I was very honoured to receive the House League Coach of the year award.

I could not have achieved what I did if it hadn't

been for the cooperation of the boys and parents of the Georgian Bay Atom team, which Peter and I both would like to thank for a very enjoyable winter.

Thanking you
—Andrea Desmasdon
Midland, Ont.

An open letter...

Dear Editor:

An open letter to Mayor Ron Bellisle and the Town of Penetanguishene.

I would like to address you on a subject that has been discussed in recent issues of the newspapers.

There are three different issues that seem, to my way of thinking, to be very closely related. They are: 1. The availability of land on McGuire Road, that has been rezoned for multiple units; 2. The figures that were released to you from the Orillia and North Simcoe Housing Authority showing the desperate need for subsidized housing in this area and the relative statement that "no more Ontario Housing is to be built in the region"; 3. The tragic unemployment situation in this area. Although these are separate matters they are, I hope you would agree, very closely linked. I would agree, very closely linked.

I would be so bold as to suggest to you that the Town of Penetanguishene, showing some of their customary boldness and ingenuity, could take a very brave step in this matter and demonstrate leadership in contributing to the solution of these three very serious problems.

You have the land! If money is available from Federal funding to assist Midland in the laying of bricks on its main street, then surely Mr. Lewis could do something to direct much needed funding for a building project to alleviate the subsidized housing situation in your town.

Surely Mr. Taylor with his influence in the Ontario Cabinet should be able to do as much as Mr. McLean has been able to do in helping Midland with its downtown improvement scheme.

Is it necessary to even mention what a project like this could do for the unemployment problem?

Ladies and gentlemen - do not allow yourself to think that these problems are some other level of Government's concern. Although your description of responsibilities does not include these issues I sincerely believe you have a social and a moral responsibility to at least consider and discuss the suggestions I am making.

Let us get going and do something about our housing problems. We agree there is a problem; the statistics confirm our beliefs; AND WE HAVE THE SOLUTION.

Yours respectfully,
—Lt. Raymond Braddock.

What's Your Opinion?

The Midland Times, The Penetanguishene Citizen and Elmvale Lance welcome Letters to the Editor. They must be legible, signed, (by hand) and carry the writer's address and telephone number for verification purposes. Pen names are not allowed and anonymous letters will not be published. Letters published by this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the newspaper, its publisher or editor.

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