

The Liberal

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Handling Of Public Funds Is Public Business

One of the basic tenets of a democracy is that the collection and handling of public funds shall at all times be subject to public scrutiny.

The refusal of Richmond Hill Building Inspector Jack Hollowell to release to the taxpayers the amount of building permit fees collected by his department during April is bound to raise serious doubts in the minds of the public. Mr. Hollowell refused to make this information public until permission to do so had been secured from town council.

The usual procedure in most municipalities is for the building inspector to include the amount of the building fees collected in his monthly report to council. This report is tabled at a public meeting of council where its contents are available for

study by any taxpayer. The collection of public funds by the building department should certainly be readily available without question or reservation of any kind to every citizen of Richmond Hill. Town council should not attempt to restrict or censor this information in any way whatsoever. The action of Mr. Hollowell in refusing to divulge this information only raises grave doubts in the minds of the public as to why council should adopt such a line of action. What has council or its building department to hide?

Our town council would be well advised to instruct its building inspector to release these figures without further delay. The handling of public funds is public business.

Wanton Damage To Public Property

The problem faced by the Richmond Hill Public School Board as how to stop a rash of broken windows and other damage to school property occurring after regular hours has had an echo in the provincial legislature's select committee on municipal law. The committee has been holding sittings since March 1961 when it was set up by former Premier Leslie Frost.

Concerned with the number of broken windows and other forms of damage the trustees have considered taking the drastic action of closing all school grounds after hours. Such a decision would only be taken as a last resort as the board appreciates that the grounds provide welcome recreational outlets for people of all ages. Deputy-reeve Tom Broadhurst, police committee member, recently discussed the matter with the board. This was followed by a meeting between Trustee Ron Firman, the police committee and Solicitor J. D. Lucas. Mr. Lucas reported that it was not legally possible, to make the town's parks by-law which defines the type of activity which can be carried on in the parks, applicable to the school grounds.

Referring to this very problem before the Queen's Park committee Alfred Cowling (PC High Park) suggested that it would be a good thing

if some parents were ruined by being made responsible for wilful damage to public property by their children. "If we had a few parents ruined, they might be more careful in bringing up their children," said Mr. Cowling who is also chief government whip in the legislature. The committee of which Mr. Cowling is a member heard a delegation from the Association of Ontario Mayors and Reeves suggest that parents be liable for restitution of up to \$200.00 for each case of wilful damage to public property by their children.

Mr. Cowling felt that parents who feel a responsibility towards their children would also feel responsible for the children's actions. There is now no way to deal with irresponsible parents, he said. "It's about time parents started being responsible for their children," said Mr. Cowling. "The damage now to public parks, schools and facilities is a disgrace". Reeve Marie Curtis of Long Branch said windows are broken regularly on week-ends in the schools in her area but that nothing can be done.

It remains to be seen what action if any the select committee will recommend to the legislature. The matter of wilful damage to public property is a serious one and some government action to control it is sorely needed.

Should Ottawa Help Pay For Education?

Well aware of the increasing and well-nigh intolerable burden that rising costs of education have placed on the property owner, this paper has long advocated greater financial aid for education from senior levels of government. That this is the growing preponderance of feeling on the part of the whole population of our province is evidenced in the opinion expressed by the delegates at the Ontario Educational conference held in Toronto Easter week. The conference went on record as believing that the federal government should assist education through grants and extensive research.

The question was raised by Oscar T. Sigsworth of the Toronto Board of Education, who said that educational development in Canada has been retarded because it has been strictly a provincial matter. "Whether we like it or not we are in an educational race with other countries," he said, and stated that only the federal government had sufficient tax powers to finance education in the future.

Dr. R. W. B. Jackson, research director of the Ontario College of Education, told another section of the conference federal funds were available for research into almost anything but education because the gov-

ernment feared results would show provincial policies, practices and outlook were inadequate."

The last statement contains the reason why such a resolution is doomed to wither and die without bearing fruit. Desirable as we are all agreed federal assistance in the field of education is, it may not be given without a major revision of the British North America Act. To make such revision, the provinces will have to voluntarily relinquish some of their rights granted by that act. All provinces always have guarded these rights most zealously, and there is little indication that any province would be willing to relinquish traditional rights in the field of education even to relieve hard-pressed property owners of an intolerable burden.

Even if nine of our ten provinces were agreeable, it is hopeless, with the growing popularity of the separatist movement in the Province of Quebec, to expect that province to relinquish any of its treasured privileges granted by the act which founded the Dominion of Canada.

So, we are afraid that assistance from Ottawa toward education is out for the present at least, and the problem will remain the bane of the lowly taxpayer.

Rambling Around

By Elizabeth Kelson
ANYONE FOR TENNIS?

The tennis season is here again. Join your local tennis club or renew your membership, whatever the case may be. Then get those racquets out of the cupboard and gather up your old tennis balls. They'll be plenty good enough for the first few practices.

Tennis is the most valuable sport you can learn. It is valuable because it is an individual sport and is more easily carried on in adult life than team sport which takes considerable effort to organize in the press of the business and professional worlds. Tennis, because of small requirements of time and playing space, and its comparatively inexpensive equipment make it an ideal sport for almost any age group and also for those of different income levels.

Certainly, the greatest benefit that tennis gives its followers is the means to keep physically fit. It helps to increase powers of co-ordination and alertness. It aids in making a more graceful-looking body. I believe that all young people should be encouraged to play tennis. I would like to see tennis included on the sports programmes of the high schools. Students should be taught at least the basic fundamentals of the game. Who knows, one of them might go on to be champion in their area or province.

One of the saddest things that can happen to a community is to allow their tennis court to deteriorate because of apathy and lack of interest on the part of its members. There is nothing that adds more to a community than to have tennis courts that are being constantly used by its members. It is a pleasure to watch them playing, garbed of course, in the traditional whites. Do not allow tennis to die out from lack of interest. Keep teaching the young to play as they are the future adults who will keep this great game alive.

BETTY PRIESTMAN — AND THE FOOTLIGHTS CLUB

Betty Priestman, her husband Roger, and sons Bob and Peter of 70 Grandview Ave., are a real theatrical family. Even before they made their home in the Highland Park area, they started a Footlights club down at the Church of the Messiah on Avenue Road, and it flourished for three years. When they moved to Highland Park eleven years ago . . . ardent churchworker, singer and drama enthusiast, Betty Priestman, along with her family began a new Footlights club, sponsored by Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Thornhill. The membership of this club includes people from other denominations.

Prior to Mrs. Priestman's interest in drama, she was widely known as a coloratura soprano and L.T.C.M. at the Royal Conservatory. She is also a gold medalist of the Royal Conservatory. She studied music in New York. Her radio experience is considerable. She sang over CBC in the earlier days of radio and also on station CKGW. She sang light opera from Gilbert and Sullivan and acted in musical comedy. Her contribution as singer and soloist in the churches has been tremendous. She sang for 15 years at the Church of St. Annes on Dufferin. She was soloist at Simpson's Avenue United Church and she was soloist at Westminster for five years. She also sang with the Bach Choir. Now, she sings in the Holy Trinity Choir in Thornhill.

Mrs. Priestman has been a hardworking churchwoman most of her life. She was on the Toronto Diocesan Board of the Anglican church and was Dorcas secretary for five years in charge of the sales. She was treasurer of the board for five years, and now is President of the W.A. at Holy Trinity.

She is a member of the Heliconian Club in Toronto, a club for the woman professional artist, and a member of the Dickens' Fellowship Society, and it was here that her keen interest in acting was aroused. This is the tenth anniversary of the Footlights Club, and it was commemorated with the successful presentation of "Pool's Paradise," under the capable directorship of Betty Priestman.

The nucleus of the Footlights Club was formed by the Priestman family and it included Harry and Joan Iddon, Bert Fennell, Ruth Collins, Jane MacLaren and Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Lean. Since the Footlights Club was organized, many fine and outstanding plays have been directed by Mrs. Priestman and presented successfully to the public. How many remember the excellent performances in "Charley's Aunt," "The Years Between," "When We Are Married," "Quiet Weekend," "The Night Is My Enemy," "Dickens' Christmas Carol," "See How They Run," "Trial By Jury", and finally the anniversary play . . . "Pool's Paradise". The Footlights Club has also presented six one-act plays and spectacular Christmas pageants. According to report, the Footlights Club is gaining in prestige and power each succeeding year, and much of the inspiration for its success is due to the amazing energy of this versatile and talented woman . . . Betty Priestman.

THE LESSON OF THE DANDELION

Many people complain about the Dandelion. No doubt they think of the time when Dandelion roots grow so big and strong that they threaten to choke the grass. Perhaps they unconsciously resent the grey heads of the aged Dandelions. Somehow I like to see the dandelions blazing on the lawns . . . fields or in the wayside ditches. They seem to challenge the very sun as their golden light leaps from many a nook and corner. The dandelion flaunts its wealth in the pathway of the rich and scatters largess where there is desolation and barrenness. This sunny flower provokes a gladness in me as does the laughter of happy children.

I'm sorry when the dandelion becomes old but the point is, it was useful for a little while. It reminds me of the shortness of our own life. Our lives too have its brightness and promise. Our roots grow strong as we build our families or serve others in the community and mature in our philosophy of living. We, too, have to come to terms with life as the dandelion. If we're lucky, we too, will have the privilege of growing old.

SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING SUCCESSFUL — THANKS TO ALAN AND MAUREEN FOSTER

Last fall, I introduced two very charming people to this column. Alan and Maureen Foster of Woodward Avenue from the Highland Park area. Sponsored by the Christian education department of the Thornhill United Church they have just completed a successful season of Scottish country dancing with children four to 12. Since my young daughter was a member of this popular dancing group, I have been able to observe the fine results that have been obtained, and I'm grateful, as I feel sure the other parents are grateful to Maureen and Alan Foster for helping our children to express themselves creatively. With infinite patience and imagination they have managed to transmit their sense of rhythm to them as well as a spirit of fellowship and fun. Having seen how shy and inhibited some of these children were, it was quite a revelation to see them emerge with confidence and a measure of grace.

"Dear Mr. Editor"

ST. PASCAL BAYLON C.W.L.

Dear Mr. Editor: On behalf of the Catholic Women's League of our parish, I wish to express our very sincere appreciation to you for publishing the activities of our council in "The Liberal".

We feel it is most important to the success of our undertakings to keep our members and the parish at large informed of our various functions, both spiritual and social. To this end, we

feel you have contributed greatly by your co-operation in publishing write-ups or announcements of our endeavours and we are very grateful to you for your courtesy and assistance at all times.

Hoping that we may count on your continued co-operation, I remain,

Yours very truly,
Mrs. Carroll Durrant,
Press Convener,
St. Paschal Baylon,
Steeles Ave. West

Second Thoughts . . .

by George Mayes

● Yesterday's news is not necessarily dead.

Students in St. John's N.B. greeted the Prime Minister with God Save the Queen, and God Save the Maritimes . . . Proving that down-easters can't remember the second verse either.

Who put the \$1000 in the deputy commissioner's flower pot? Who cares? The 'really big' problem is in our local baseball: Who puts the nickels in the coffee pot?

"OTTAWA — After living out of a suitcase for 18 straight days, Liberal Leader Lester Pearson finally came to grips with a staggering laundry problem and flew back to Ottawa Saturday night for a day of rest" . . . In a Laundromat?

British Columbia has sentenced 104 Doukhobor terrorists to prison since the start of the year. These are the "Sons of Freedom" and, having lost their freedom, they will now have to be sons of something else.

Pembroke is again staging its Golden Garbage Can contest. The tidest housewife in town will receive a gold garbage can and a dozen roses every week for a year. There are also \$1000 in cash prizes — possibly for figuring out what anyone could DO with a gold garbage can.

Montreal, on the other hand, is more practical about its "cleanest alley" contest, giving only gold-plated garbage cans to the bordering residents — who have been putting their garbage out the FRONT door.

Have You Read These?

BOOK REVIEWS FROM THE RICHMOND HILL PUBLIC LIBRARY

This week we would like to review some of the new spring books for Boys and Girls.

The Rice Bowl Pet by P. M. Martin - Crowell \$3.50. A delightful story of a Chinese family in San Francisco. The story is about Ah Jim's efforts to find a pet which is small enough to fit into his rice bowl (his mother's stipulation) and yet which is alive and warm and pleasant to hold (his own requirements). Well told, with humour in the writing and bright, appropriate illustrations, this will appeal to any child from 4 to 8.

The Tale of the Turnip by Anita Hewitt — McGraw - Hill \$2.50. A read aloud version of an old folk-tale. In a little house on a hill lived an old couple, their grandchild, a cat and a mouse. One of the turnips that grandfather planted grew to enormous size; repeated tries at pulling the enormous vegetable from the ground availed nothing until the little mouse added his strength to the others. Attractive line drawings in earthy colours add to this picture book for 4 to 8 year olds.

The Secret World of Og by Pierre Berton - Little, Brown, \$3.75. The author of this delightful fantasy for children will be no stranger to York County residents. Using his own children as models for the characters in his book, Mr. Berton has created a make-believe story which can compare favourably with the best in fantasy.

The children with their dog Yukon King and their cat Earless Osdick descend through a door in their playhouse floor to the home of the Og people. These little green people live along tunnels and an underground river, and they speak and play the roles of comic-book people discovered in books dragged down from above. This whole new world and the adventurous children who discover and finally conquer it are very well portrayed. Adult readers will recognize the familiar satirical Berton touch, which makes this a book for the whole family to enjoy.

Madcap Mystery by Karin Anckarsvard - Harcourt \$3.25. Another fine story from this Swedish author who has given us so many good portrayals of teenage life in Sweden. Readers will be struck by the similarities of school life in Sweden and Canada and the easy handling of the problem of the bad effect on a school class of a new girl of marked sophistication and wealth. The mystery element in the story is satisfactory yet not fantastic. This makes excellent reading for the 12 to 16 year-old.

Dawn Wind by Rosemary Sutcliffe - Oxford \$2.75. A story of sixth-century Britain and the years after the Saxon victory at Aquae Sulis. Fourteen-year-old Owain, wounded and orphaned, gives himself as a thrall to the Saxon Boernwulf to save the life of another British waif, Regina. After years of thralldom, Owain earns freedom and joins the warriors whose campaigns will pave the way to a united country. As usual, Miss Sutcliffe

WOODBRIDGE — Cocktail bars and dining lounges were decisively rejected by the voters. The Woodbridge vote on cocktail bars was: No, 555, Yes, 304. The dining lounge vote was: No, 496, Yes, 367. A total of 898 persons out of an eligible 1,332 cast ballots.

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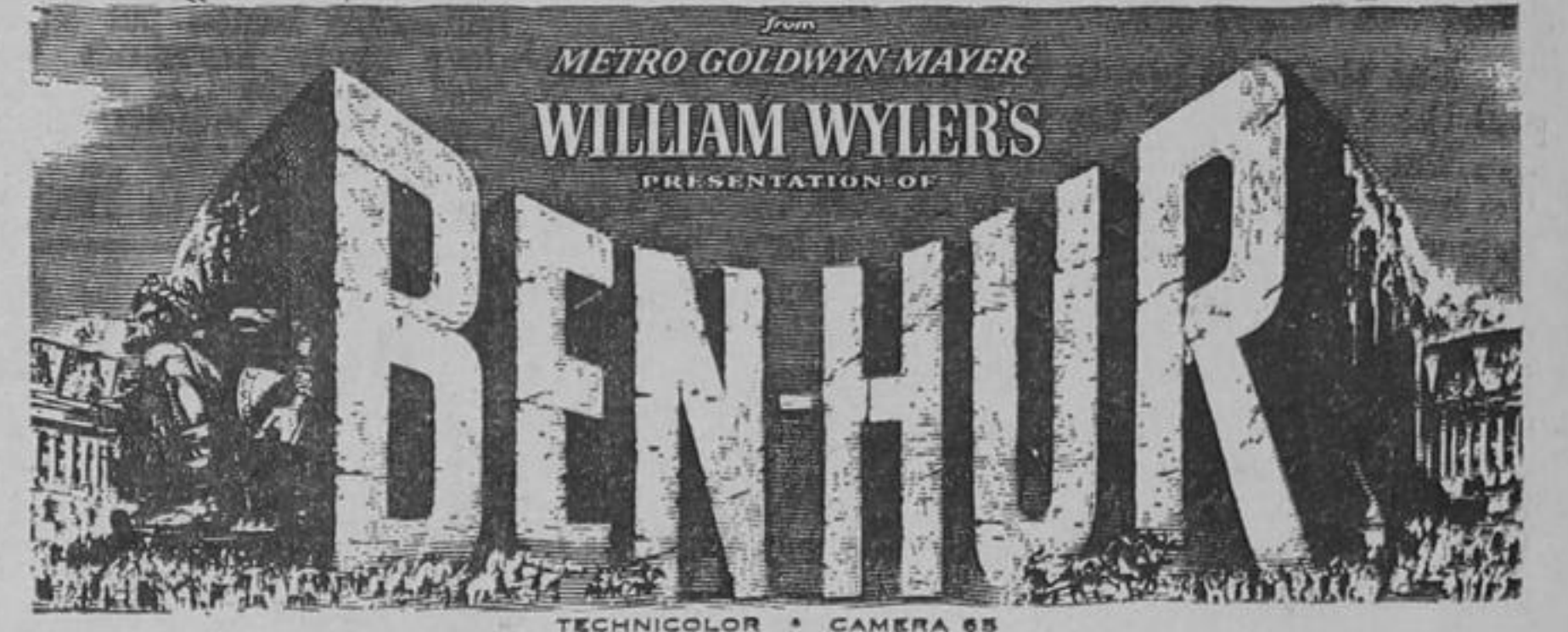
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for 1 week
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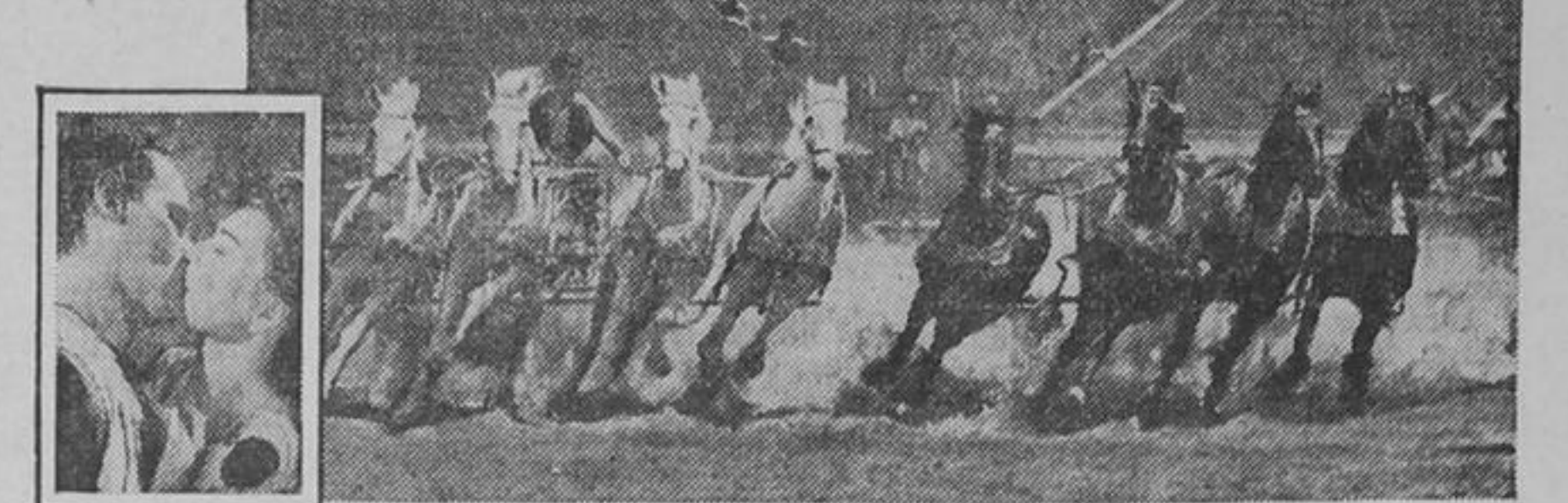
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