

by Bill Smiley

A beach soliloquy

With summer on the wane — and boy, how it waned around here — I've made a discovery. With the minimum of encouragement, I could spend the rest of my life as a beach bum.

Never was much of a hound for the beach life before. As a boy, I swam in rivers and lakes, but not at beaches. Anyway, kids are too busy swimming and diving and horsing around to be bothered lying on a beach.

As I grew older, beaches still had little attraction. I just didn't like sitting in the sun. I don't tan. I just sort of turn a burnt orange. Beaches were for women, little kids and old people. I preferred golf or fishing.

Well, I'm not a woman or a little kid, so I must be turning into an old people. Someone will think unkindly, no doubt, that it's the advent of the bikini that has prematurely aged me. This is merely a half-truth. I'm not particularly addicted to the sight of navels, though some of the other stuff displayed is mildly interesting.

No, it's the other sights and sounds that fascinate me. Now, I don't like the huge, crowded, commercialized beach. It inspires in me, with its noise and clutter and bawling transistors and screaming humanity, nothing but nausea.

But the beach we go to, almost every day the sun shines, is not like that. It is clean sand and cool, blue water and friendly, relaxed people. There are no loud-speakers bellowing the latest beat. There isn't a hot-dog stand or a motorcycle or a beer can in sight.

That doesn't mean it's as quiet as a church. The gulls wail, the mamas holler at their children, the kids scream and fight and cry. But when you stretch out on the sand after a dip, and the sun bores into you, taking away the aches and the tensions, it's as though you were hearing it all through cotton wool.

For some reason, "our" beach has become a mecca for newcomers to Canada. Foreigners, as we used to call them in the old, unenlightened days. You can lie there all day and scarcely hear a word of English. And what a pleasant change that is. You could be at Odessa, on the Black Sea. My Hungarian and Polish and Ger-

man have improved tremendously.

But they're great people. They love the sun, mind their own business, and pick up their junk when they leave, which is more than can be said of a good many tenth-generation Canadians.

It's fun to watch and listen. Over here are a couple of Italian grandmothers, in black dresses, both built about five by five, yattering away eighty miles an hour. Just over there is a majestic young woman with Slavic features, a baby, a bikini so sparse you couldn't blow your nose in it, and a bust that would knock your eye out. Maybe both of them.

Back up on the sand a bit is the teenage crowd. They too have discovered our beach this summer. About sixteen of them sprawled in a loose circle, heads together, indulging in harmless sex-play, laughing, punching, smoking and making their intricate plans for the evening. But they're decent youngsters, who apologize when they hit you on the head with their football. No hippies, thank the powers.

Here comes an elderly German gentleman who must have drunk half the beer west of the Berlin Wall to produce that magnificent pot. There's a young Jewish father, spoiling his kids rotten. There's a Hungarian couple, tanned the colour of tar, with two beautiful blonde urchins.

And speaking of urchins, this is the real fun of the beach. They are through, over and around the prone bodies. They build castles and dams and forts. They hurl themselves into the water, shrieking with delight. And they're all so brown and firm and smooth you could eat them.

Why do all those darling, chubby five-year-old girls have to turn into bored, neurotic, harassed women? Why do all those careless, sturdy, happy little devils of boys have to turn into hard, suspicious, ulcerated men?

A good question. But I still haven't told you why I like the beach so much. I've discovered that it's the only place in the world where my wife will shut her mouth for two or three hours at a stretch.



Rosspport Derby winners - July 30 - Aug. 5, with O'Keefe trophies. Photo by Mrs. C. Todesco

L. to R. Dan Kenney - O'Keefe Representative - Mrs. Ray Kenney Beryl Ray and Derby Chairman T. Seppala. Fish are becoming larger and free of lamprey marks.

ROSSPORT NEWS

Mrs. Mabel Humphrey, nee McMenemy of Toronto renewed acquaintances and visited old landmarks recently. She was born and raised here and found many changes in the village.

Guests of Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Pronovost Jr., were Mr. and Mrs. C. Pronovost Sr., Mr. and Mrs. Jean Guy Lacasse, Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Pronovost, all from Lac Humque, Quebec.

The teenagers held a successful beach party a week ago. Singing and lawn dancing was enjoyed. Attending were Colleen Kenney, Joyce and Agnes Mushqush, Corky Lespaneski, Roger, David and Wayne Spencer, Peter Legault, Kenney Langtree and Peter Mushqush.

Mrs. M. Todesco, the Misses Rachel, Agnes and Camillo Todesco of Pt. Arthur were recent guests of Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Todesco.

Albert Rouble attended funeral services for his mother in Renfrew.

Last week's derby prizes went to - 1st, Carl Killer of Pt. Arthur, \$25 - 2nd Dom. Figliomeni of Schreiber \$10 and 3rd - Mrs. Arlene Waugh of Pt. Arthur - a Labatt serving tray.

R. Fraser of Superior, Wisc., brought his yacht, The Robt. M. Fraser, into the harbour Friday. They left Saturday for Marathon. Art Harpel of Port Arthur was the pilot.

Corp. Brian Gerow, R.C.A.F. and family are visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. Legault.

Rev. J. Diller and family of Minneapolis, spent a week at their summer camp here.