

Terrace Bay
Schreiber

News

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Editorial

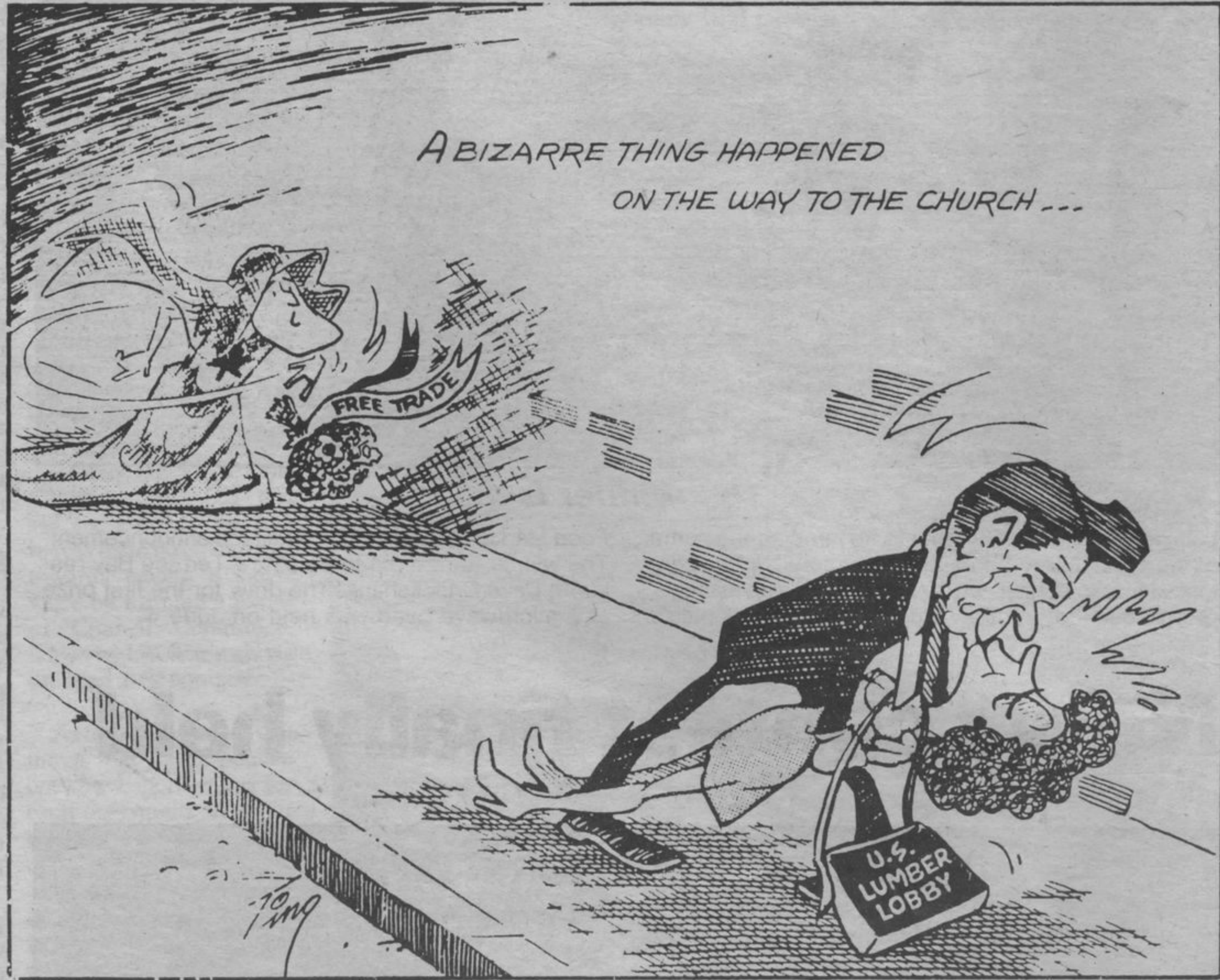
No B.S. for P.O.

It's been in three different locations over the years, and has sent and received mail during both World Wars. On June 2 it celebrated its 100th anniversary. "It," of course, is the Post Office in Schreiber.

At the party which was held to celebrate the event, area MP Keith Penner pointed out how essential the Post Office is in a small community like Schreiber, while town Councillor Ed Borutski noted how the P.O. also serves as a meeting place for residents of the community.

We often take the Post Office for granted, especially in the case of the one in Schreiber, which has now been around for over a century. Everyone complains when their mail is late or when the postal charges go up--again--but it is only on days like the one last week when we all finally realize just how important the Post Office is.

Therefore, to Postmaster Barbara McLaughlin and her dedicated staff at the Schreiber office, here's a bit of recognition and even appreciation, for a change. The P.O. in Terrace Bay should also be given its share of credit for a job well done. It may only happen every 100 years or so, but for what it's worth: *thanks*.



Close To The Edge

By Conrad Felber

There's something that has really been bothering me for a while now, and I think the time has come to mention it in this space.

As some of you may have figured out by my bi-weekly front page reports, I regularly cover Terrace Bay Township Council meetings (and, once a month, Schreiber Council as well). Although I publish complete, detailed articles, apparently there are still some folks out there who don't really know too much about municipal politics...and that's a shame.

In fact, a few of these people have been getting mad at me because of their own ignorance. They attend these Council meetings, say a few words at the end of the session, and are then amazed to read what they said in the following issue of this here

newspaper.

They haven't been complaining to me because they've been misquoted, as my stories are *always* (*ahem*) accurate. No, they are usually just upset because their name popped up in a news story and they had never realized that such a thing might happen.

I don't want to dissuade these public-spirited individuals from speaking at Council meetings, but you should *all* be reminded that if you stand up and say something at an open, public meeting--whether it is in Terrace Bay, Schreiber or anywhere else for that matter--the press (me) is well within its rights to take down what you say and then publish it.

I really didn't want to have to say all of this, because now I'm sure we'll never have any more delegations at these meetings, but it's time the facts

were told. Besides, I don't know why seemingly every person in this entire area is shy of the media. I've been here for a number of months now, and this puzzle is one I still haven't figured out. Have I not yet won your trust? If not, I guess I haven't been doing my job right (or, horrors, some of you haven't been reading this paper! Naw, that couldn't be).

But enough whining. Let's return now to one of my favourite Close To The Edge subjects: booze. I read in a recent issue of the Toronto Star that the provincial government has started a public review of Ontario's drinking laws that may lead to a higher drinking age and extended drinking hours in bars and restaurants.

I have mixed feelings about the possibility of raising the drinking age, but I must applaud any talk of extend-

ing the drinking hours. Aside from the fact that such a move is long overdue, it may actually reduce the number of drinking and driving accidents on the road.

It's like this...in Quebec, you can drink in a bar until, in some places, four in the morning (compared to 1 a.m. here in puritanical Ontario), and therefore many Ontarians, after closing their local watering hole, jump in their cars and zip off to Quebec if they happen to live in a border town (like Ottawa or New Liskeard).

Now, if they would just stay at home instead, that would mean less trips for them in the car and maybe even a chance to sober up before closing time.

Another thing the public review advisory committee should consider is a resolution passed by Terrace Bay



Town Council (oops, we're back to them again) a few months ago. Council believes the responsibility for the safety and sobriety of people at a licenced event should be on the shoulders of those who have the permit and are holding the dance or whatever, and *not* on the owner of the building where the thing is being held, (that's the current state of affairs). Cross your fingers and hope the committee picks up on this idea.

Black N' White

Bring back the hammocks

By Arthur Black

Ever since the snow melted, I've had the uncomfortable feeling that there's something missing from my backyard. Oh, I found the lawnmower. It was right there, where it stalled last October 14th, the afternoon of the first snowfall. The garden hose hasn't moved. It remains coiled like a sulky, underfed python, almost hidden by the dandelions and crabgrass on which I swear I will mount a full frontal attack this very weekend. I uncovered the two pairs of horseshoes rusting quietly by what used to be the horseshoe pitch (dandelions got that, too). And I think I can make out at least two and possibly three of the hoops of the Croquet Course which is in the process of undergoing the same fate as Muccha Pichu, Chitzen Itza and L'Anse aux Meadows -- which is to say that the jungle is reclaiming its own. Good luck to the anthropologist prowling through my backyard a thousand years hence.

But still, as I say, there is something missing. It used to fit in right...there...between those two gnarled apple trees. It was homey and

familiar -- the very essence of a Canadian summer, of lazy days of dozey flies and tall cold drinks on muggy afternoons...

My hammock. What happened to my hammock?

Wasn't so very long ago that the hammock was the very emblem of that two or three month respite from winter that all Canadians consider to be their birthright. The hammock was a personal sanctuary to which you repaired with a sense of weariness, a sample of your favorite beverage and a less-than-favorite book. You never took a good book to the hammock because the object of the exercise was not to read; it was to become drowsy as soon as decently possible and drift into a snooze, wafted along by a jam session featuring vocals by a rag-tag combo of orioles, robins and sparrows, all brought to you on a warm, heavenly-scented summer breeze.

When I was growing up, back in the Neolithic Pre-Highrise Era, just about every family had a hammock in the backyard. Folks who didn't have a couple trees of a fence post or a porch bannister to screw hammock

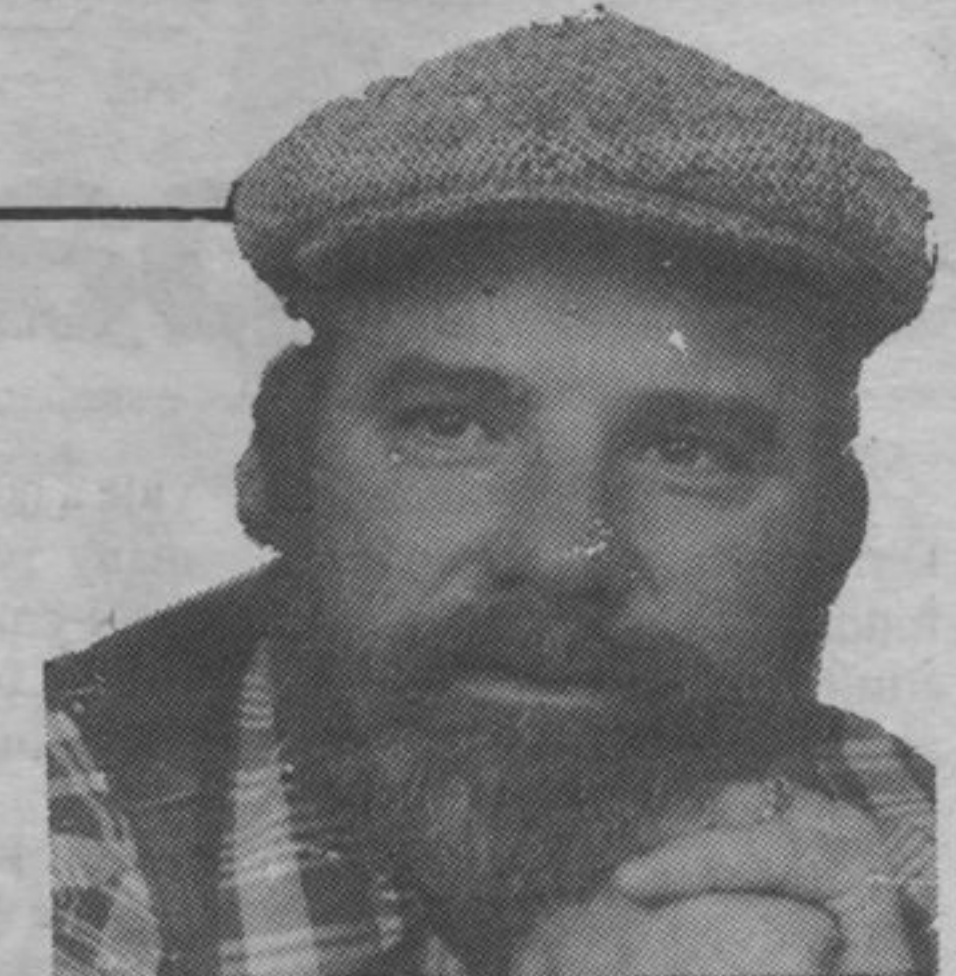
hooks into could make do with a free-standing tubular steel hammock stand from Canadian Tire. It was a kind of a Johnny-On-The-Job arrangement of metal poles that slipped into one another and arrangement of metal poles that slipped into one another and held the hammock. It wasn't your classic hammock mooring, but it got you off the ground -- and you could set it up anywhere.

Can't help but wonder what Sir Walter Raleigh would have thought of the modern portable hammock. Sir Walter was one of the first white men to view the original. In 1596, while visiting the Caribbean, Raleigh wrote about the natives in his ship's log: "They lay each of them in a cotten Hamaca which we call brasill beds."

Sir Walter's spelling may have been a little shaky, but he knew a naval breakthrough when he saw one. For sailors forced to sleep in tiny, pitching, rolling wooden ships, the hammock was a godsend. No more clutching at a straw-filled mattress as it slithered around the cabin -- let the ship heave and ho away. A sailor in a hammock could snore through a gale.

Mind you, there's an art to snoozing in a hammock, and the first step to master is getting into the thing. The secret of successful hammock entry is to treat it with all the respect you reserve for a shuttle docking in outer space. The first few times you should approach the hammock with both free hands. This allows you to grip both sides of the hammock and avoid an embarrassing, self-induced body slam to the grass in front of the family dog. True masters of the craft (See my book *Zen Hammocking and The Art of Hedge Clipping Maintenance*) -- can forego the timid two-handed approach and flop into the beast just as ordinary mortals carom into a favorite easy chair. A word of advice however: Don't try it your first time unless your name is Nadia Comaneci or Popeye the Sailor.

But hammocking isn't just for gymnasts and navy men, hammocking is a grand idea for everyone -- so what happened to them? They were everywhere in the 50's... then something happened. I don't know if they succumbed to some variations of Dutch Elm disease, or if a government study discovered that laboratory



rats forced to sleep in hammocks for six months develop duodenal tumors -- all I know for certain is, hammocks disappeared.

Stores mysteriously stopped stocking them and they gradually vanished from virtually every backyard on the block.

I don't even know what became of my hammock. Maybe the moths got it -- or a collector of Canadians.

Whatever it's fate, I sure miss it. It's a lovely summer afternoon as I write this. My lawn needs cutting. There's some cracks in the driveway I've been meaning to seal; I've got a fence post badly in need of shoring and the kitchen tap is leaking again.

Not only that, I've got bills I should pay, letters I ought to write, phone calls to make and I'm bucking a deadline for this column -- why, I don't know how I'll ever get around to it all.

But if I had my hammock, I know exactly where I'd start.