

Editorial

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Publisher.....Sandy Harbinson
 Advertising Mgr.....Linda Harbinson
 Editor.....Robert Cotton
 Sales Representative.....Lisa LeClair
 Admin. Asst.....Gayle Fournier
 Production Asst.....Cheryl Kostecki



Beach and Gorge Development Develop link between the beach and the gorge first

After several years of studies and grand plans, tourism development in Terrace Bay is quickly becoming a reality and at a speed that might surprise some residents. The Tourist Information Centre is completed and providing information, not only about the immediate area, but about the Province and indeed the whole country.

Travellers are stopping in to ask about what can be seen in Terrace Bay and area, which means they are directed, primarily, to the gorge and the beach. Development of these two areas is moving along very quickly as well, as any one who attended last week's public meeting will tell you.

Moore/George Associates Inc. presented some specific proposals for the development of the beach and the gorge and those attending had the opportunity to comment on them.

One proposal for the gorge included several lookout areas along the trail that follows the west side of the gorge. There were also plans for a footbridge to cross the river near its mouth, thereby allowing access to the west side of the river from the beach area.

Bridges across the gorge at the upper end were also suggested, allowing for a complete circle of trails between the beach and the gorge. Improved access from Highway 17 and the creation of proper parking facilities were also included.

At the beach the consultants suggested parking, a boardwalk, a picnic pavilion and washroom facilities.

The public meeting was held to give the public an opportunity to view the proposals and voice their own ideas and concerns. At this point decisions on where to start have to be made. There is only so much money available right now and the Tourism Committee and the Township Council were seeking public input on when to begin the work.

Should the beach proposal get the go ahead, the complete gorge development, bridges and all, or should the project begin with the construction of the lookouts on the west side of the gorge and the bridge at the bottom?

The logical route is the development of the west side of the gorge with the footbridge bridge across the river mouth. The gorge is presently a dangerous asset and, if for no other reason than safety, should be developed first.

Linking the gorge, the beach and the area west of the rivermouth would create a wonderfully diverse recreational area that tourists could easily reach from the highway and local residents could easily reach from the beach. Improved access to the gorge at the highway would encourage tourists to stop and take in the view and a safe trail to the beach would draw them even further into the delights of the Terrace Bay area.

The bridge at the mouth of the river would give residents easy access to the area west of the river and effectively link the gorge area with the beach. Once this area of trails is safely accessible use of the beach should increase and improvements there will then be necessary.

There will be other opportunities for the public to have input into how these natural assets can best be developed for both themselves and the tourists. However, things are continuing to move quickly and these opportunities are not to be missed.

Robert A. Cotton



A more versatile crop

*When there's too much sun, they complain.
 When there's too much rain, they complain.
 Farmers are complainers.*

Pierre Trudeau

Well, so they are -- but then farmers have plenty to complain about. They have to eke out their livelihoods in the little piece of slack they can cut between a capricious mother nature and an unpredictable pack of politicians that saddle them with marketing boards, unstable markets and often ruinous interest rates.

Everything would be fine, of course, if farmers could just find one magic crop that wasn't susceptible to drought, monsoons, hoof and mouth, or grasshoppers. A crop that was environmentally friendly, easy to grow in our northern climate -- and for which there was a steady and reliable demand.

Well, I bear good news, Canadian farmers. I know just such a crop. I know a plant that will grow prodigiously in good loam or sandy scrub, on sun-baked plain and in shady grove. It's a hardy plant, not dependent on pesticides or fertilizers.

It's environmentally friendly. Cows seem to love it -- possible because mosquitoes and other insects don't.

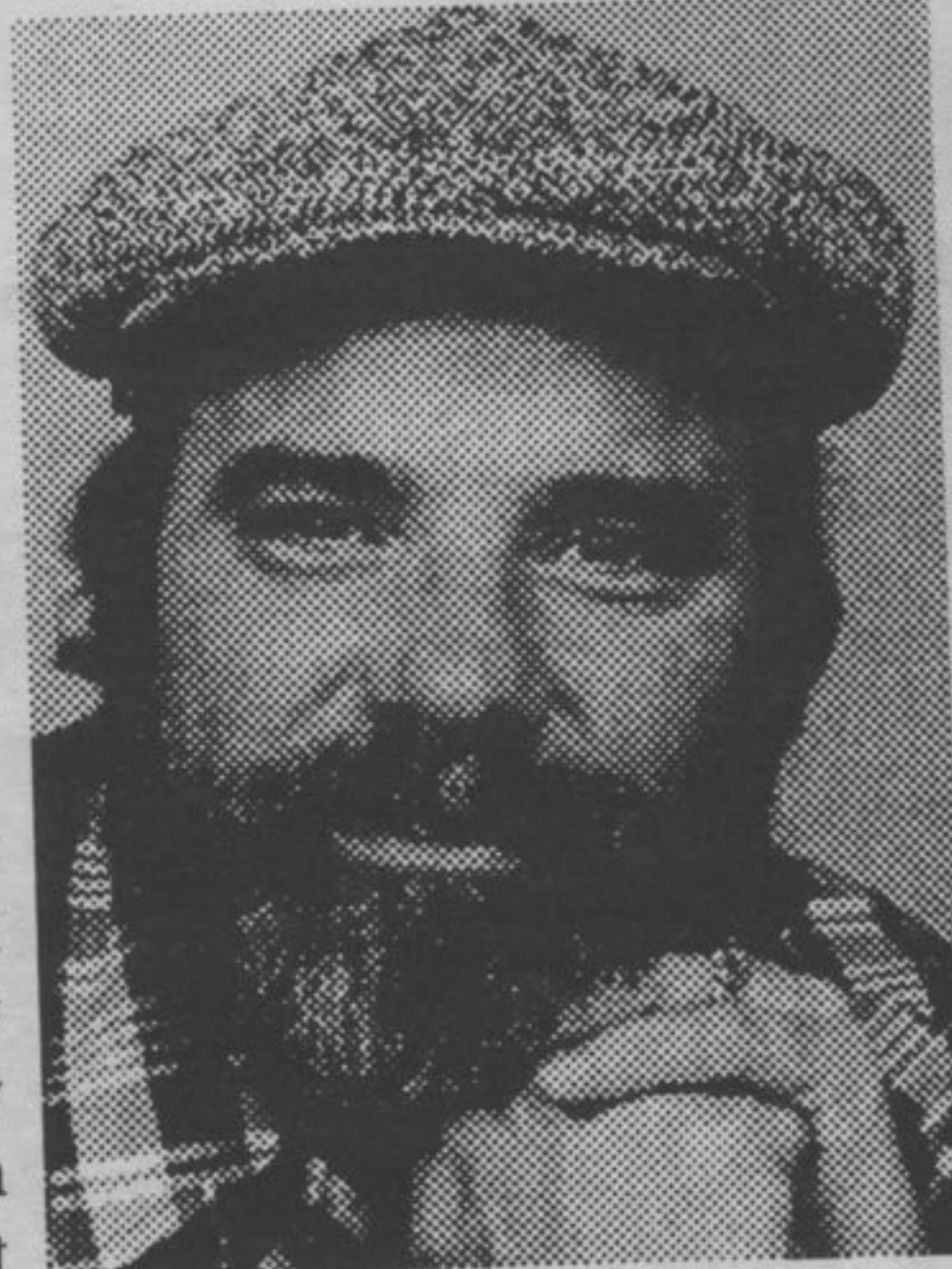
Once harvested this plant can be turned into anything from textiles to lamp oil. It makes paper that lasts longer and is more easily recycled than paper made from wood. It can also be rendered into paint, fibre board, plastics -- even plumbing pipe.

And markets? Oh my, yes, a market for this crop definitely exists. Last time I heard, this plant -- in its raw, unrendered form -- was fetching \$85 Canadian on the open market.

That's \$85 an ounce.

No question about it -- this is a miracle crop that could turn Canadian agriculture on its money-losing ear overnight.

There is just one tiny downside that prevents us from converting all those money-losing Canadian farms into billion-dollar enterprises.



Arthur Black

on your way to the slammer.

It's Mary Jane we're talking about here. Locoweed. Jimson. Hemp.

Also known as marijuana.

Blasphemy, you say? Balderdash, I say. Farmers around the world have been cultivating marijuana for years -- and not to make funny cigarettes with, either.

Folks have been turning the tough fibrous stalk of the marijuana plant into fabrics and textiles for at least 5,000 years. Columbus' ships were held together by ropes made of marijuana plants. Up until a couple of hundred years ago, every major document in the world -- including the American Declaration of Independence -- was penned on paper made from marijuana fibre. In fact, hempseed oil was the most commonly used lamp oil on the planet up until the early 1800's.

How did such a useful crop disappear so quickly? We can thank two agents for

that: the discovery of petroleum and Harry J. Anslinger. Anslinger ran the U.S. Bureau of Narcotics from 1930 until 1962, during which time he declared full-scale, take no prisoners war on marijuana. He devoted his life to stamping out what he called "the assassin of youth". To Anslinger, people who smoked the stuff were "immoral, vicious, social lepers." He made it a federal offense to possess the plant. He got it removed from the official U.S. book of drug standards. Needless to say, farmers quickly stopped growing the stuff.

But now that we're running out of fossil fuels, and reluctant to destroy what's left of our rain forests, maybe the lowly hemp plant will make a comeback. Maybe it will even replace a plant that's more addictive than cocaine, according to the U.S. Surgeon General.

Marijuana? Nah. I'm talking about a real Assassin of Youth.

Letters to the Editor

The Terrace Bay Schreiber News welcomes letters to the editor on any subject.

Letters must be signed and have the phone number and address of the author for verification. We will not knowingly print false libelous or anonymous comments.

Letters to the Editor are important to community newspapers. They serve to reflect opinions of members of the community we serve. However, we must insist on these rules to ensure that this very important forum is used responsibly.

Letters can be mailed to the News, Box 579, Terrace Bay, P0T 2W0 or dropped off at the News office, 13 Simcoe Plaza in Terrace