

Weekender

Comment

Tremont Hotel in jeopardy

Although the Tremont Hotel in Markham has been something of a landmark down through the years, the 113-year-old frame structure faces destruction — and there are some important principles at stake.

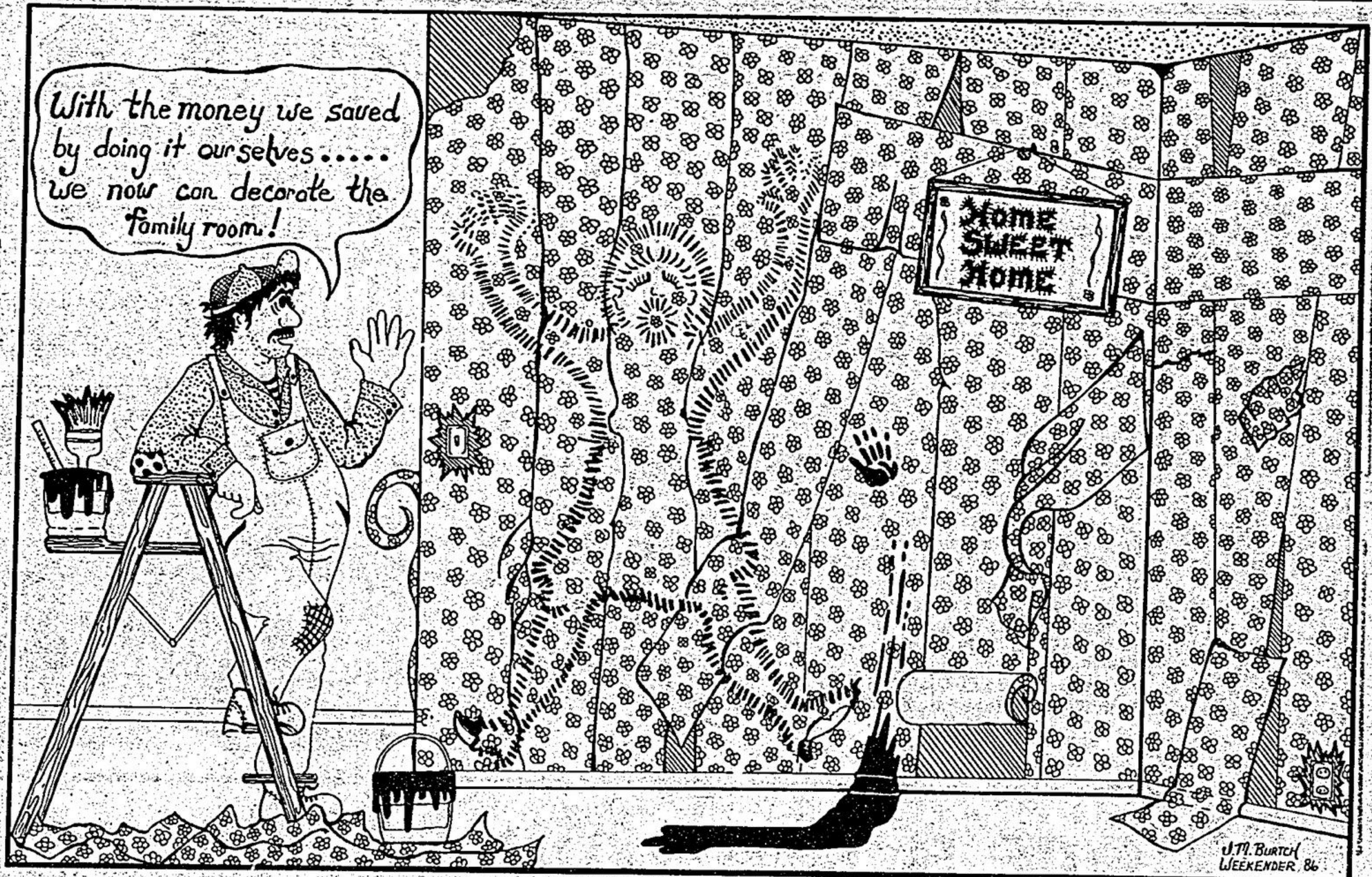
The owners of the property are proposing to tear down the building and put up a new one which would be a replica of the Tremont in its heyday.

Their reasoning is that the building is wood frame construction and is not worth preserving — it's also deteriorating and would go up in flames fast if fire ever broke out there.

However, if the Tremont owners are allowed to demolish the hotel, can other people step in and demand the same for their older buildings on Markham's Main St?

Does approval of the Tremont project open the flood gates for demolition of other historical buildings? Our feeling is that the owners should be required to retain the present structure — although they should be encouraged to modernize it.

Otherwise other heritage buildings on Main St. may also be in jeopardy.



Leafs rose to playoff challenge

A fan can be excused for jumping ship when a bungling, uncouth ego-maniac rips the guts out of the hockey team he once admired.

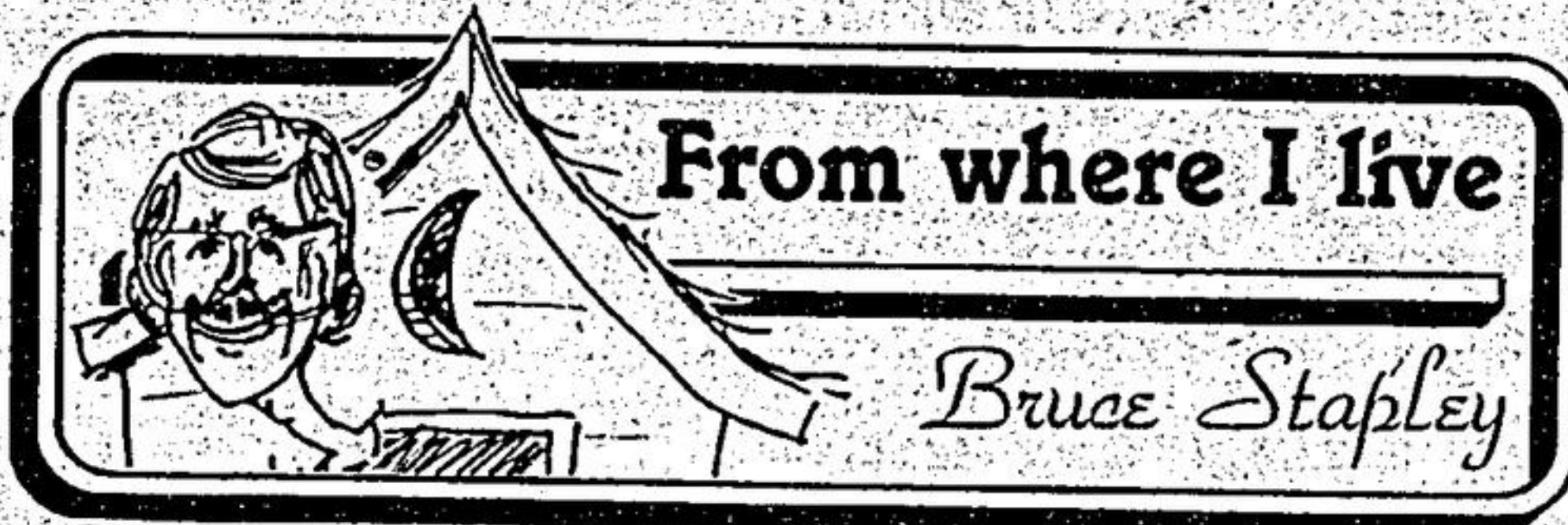
The Ballardization of the Toronto Maple Leafs that occurred over the past decade or so forced many of us life-long Leaf fans to seek more exciting ways to spend our winters. Like watching frost form on the windows, or shovelling wet snow.

It's not that Harold didn't want his team to be a winner. The old reprobate simply didn't have the foggiest idea of how a hockey organization should be run.

Pal Hal's efforts at motivation were the equivalent of trying to wake somebody up in the morning by tossing a live grenade into their bedroom.

But the miraculous resurgence of the lowly Maple Leafs has provided unmistakable evidence that, for hockey teams anyway, there is life after death.

Now for those of you who don't know the difference between a power play and a corporate takeover, it must be stressed that the Leafs' inspired showing this



spring was much more than just another great moment in sports.

It's a victory for oppressed people everywhere, for employees caught up in no-win workplace situations with bossmen who can never be satisfied.

Walt Poddubny's winning goal in last Monday's game, scored while falling flat on his face, struck a blow for the unappreciated spouses of this world, who, like Walter, had been banished to the doghouse of life for reasons beyond their comprehension.

Brad Smith, known as Beagle to his mates, epitomizes the phrase "a modicum of mediocrity", yet he's proven to average people everywhere that if they wait long enough, their chance will come.

And when it does, by golly, get out there and go for it, even if it means sporting a prize shiner for two weeks.

The Leafs carried their canine likenesses to the extent that they sported a trio of young phenoms known as "The Hound Line".

Some exuberant fans went so far as to extol their talents in song, with a rewritten version of Elvis' old classic, "You Ain't Nothin' But A Hound Dog."

What Courtnall, Leeman and Clark have done for the dignity of the Heinz 57 Variety pooch goes far beyond anything that could ever be dreamed up by Alpo's marketing boys.

Hey, we could really go crazy if we wanted to and draw a biblical

parallel of the Leafs and the prodigal son. "Hey Dad, I'm back" they are telling all their old fans, whose loyalties had swung over to the kid brother Blue Jays. But now, all is forgiven, and what a homecoming!

Funny thing, though, how picking up on a team you've abandoned for so long is like returning to the old neighbourhood.

The setting is the same, but who do all those new faces belong to? You keep expecting to see Lanny MacDonald, yesteryear's hero, set up Darryl Sittler in front of the net, or Tiger Williams punch out anybody who dares to share his ice space.

So gritty and determined were

the Maple Leafs during this year's playoffs that one could almost envision Pete Stenkowski, Bob Pulford and Jim Pappin suddenly skating out there and re-enacting the magic that was the Leaf's last Stanley Cup triumph back in 1967.

No, they won't win the Cup this spring. But having risen from the ashes of adversity in such dazzling fashion, the Maple Leafs have served notice that they intend to inject some spice into the lives of those fans who had lost interest in them.

So what if Khadafy is terrorizing innocent people everywhere, and Russia's nuclear plants are in flames. The Leafs are back! All is well with the world.

Drop us a line

If you have a beef or want to pat someone on the back, sit down and write a letter to the Weekender.

Deadline is noon Thursday prior to publication. Names may be withheld on request at the discretion of the editor. Under no circumstances will anonymous letters be published. The address is 9 Heritage Rd., Markham, Ontario L3P 1M3.

Economist & Sun

The Tribune

9 Heritage Rd.,
Markham,
L3P 1M3

Weekender

BRUCE ANNAN
Publisher

294-2200
495-9440
640-2100
649-2292

JIM THOMAS
DON BERNARD
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Distribution Dept. 294-8244
640-2100

Published every Saturday by Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing at 9 Heritage Rd., Markham, Ontario, L3P 1M3, Tel. 294-2200. Second class mail registration number 1247.

The Weekender is one of the Metroland group of suburban newspapers which includes The Acton Free Press, Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, The Aurora Banner, Brampton Guardian, The Burlington Post, The Economist and Sun, The Etobicoke Advertiser/Guardian, The Georgetown Independent, The Markham Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Friday Beaver, Oshawa/Whitby This Week, Oshawa/Whitby This Weekend, The Richmond Hill Liberal, Thornhill Liberal, The Scarborough Mirror, The Stouffville Tribune and Vaughan Liberal. Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing is a division of Harlequin Enterprises Ltd. NATIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE — Metroland Corporate Sales, 493-1300.