

REES' Pieces

Normally, I can pick one topic, upon which I feel comfortable expounding. However, recently it has not been easy to focus on just one subject, as there are several equally important related topics vying for attention.

When I started to dissect several topics, I discovered numerous common threads, which appeared in many, but not all. Within the last three generations we have made significant changes within ourselves, which account for much of what is happening today.

Here is a sampling of the most common hidden agenda converted into words or phrases: NIMBY (not in my back yard); unwillingness to sacrifice; no one seems to care; greed; thirst for power, financial chaos, wastefulness and a shrinking work ethic.

So let's start on this journey to see where we as a society might be heading.

During the past 20-25 years NIMBY has become more prevalent. It might be opposition to locating a landfill site, a half-way house, an apartment building, or a railway transshipment facility. Regardless of what someone wants to do, there is opposition. Some of the opposition is founded, other times it is idealism and lifestyle related.

Think back to how our ancestors suffered and sacrificed. I wonder how in such a short span of time, we have turned 180 degrees with many unwilling to sacrifice or work hard. (We want everything today). The financial turmoil of 2008 turned everything upside down. High unemployment has meant less people paying taxes, hence governments received less money.

When it is necessary for government to tighten the belt, we're all happy with that as long as it doesn't impact us. Eliminate all highway construction, but still pave my road. Cut back on healthcare services, but I still want my Emergency Room open 24/7, even if no one uses it after midnight.

Greed has beset itself upon all of us, we want higher wages, cheaper products, and to work less for the same or more money. Politicians are not immune to greed either, as evidenced by recent scandals. The shame is even those who were not involved and spent taxpayers money wisely did not push to increase transparency and efficiency. In essence they are partially guilty for keeping quiet and not putting the taxpayers first.

The financial chaos of 2008-2009 has severely changed the future of many from the loss of career, or pension plan, savings evaporated and some lost housing. It has caused many to become less tolerant of those to waste or try to control without a conscience. Society is angry.

Convenience and wastefulness is taking its toll many ways. We would rather buy prepared frozen foods, rich in chemicals, lacking in taste and less nutritional value than enjoy home prepared diets. Add to this, the wastefulness of packaging, gasoline and time to run around to get the best deal. No wonder we are becoming an obese society.

If we planted a garden and exchanged a few baskets of fresh produce from our garden with the chicken farmer next door, would that make a difference? Sure it would, and we would not need to join a fitness club to stay in shape.

Unfortunately, a majority of the public feels those in power want more power and will do whatever is necessary to keep or increase their strangle hold. Hence the power brokers try to keep at bay – the auditor general and others who look at the appropriateness of systems and transparency.

To top it all off, many elected officials have lost touch with what built this country - the rural areas rich in farmland and natural resources. Not to mention the great leaders who lived in the extremities of the province.

Out-migration to urban areas has been a major problem for over three decades and has sucked the life out of rural Nova Scotia. Let's not forget everything in life comes full-circle. 250 years ago most of Halifax was uninhabited woodland.

Recently politicians have focused on the urban core at the expense of rural areas. They need to be mindful of increased public discontent. The public wants answers and action.

The result of all this is: Like never before, the public is changing from being cynical to "dam the torpedoes, we want action now". Those currently in government need to be concerned. Those elected the next time best make the right promises, keep them and deliver what the public demands. Times have changed. Rogue politicians are an endangered species.

Maurice

Letters to the editor

This is an open forum for your opinions and comments.

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Dear Maurice:

The April edition of the "Shoreline" featured a photo and story of a house fire on Wharf Road, Great Village. The home, which was completely destroyed, was owned by Rob Hudson and was being renovated and restored at the time of this unfortunate event.

This house, built the middle of the nineteenth century, was located near the entrance to the Great Village shipyard, where, in the "Age Of Sail" between the 1850's and the 1890's, some one hundred large sailing vessels were built and launched at high tide, into the Great Village River. During this period, the home was

owned by Capt. Robert Merriam, who both sailed and built vessels on the Cobequid Bay. Also during this time, someone, or several people, sketched on the plastered sloping walls of the third floor rooms, several images of full rigged sailing ships, one of which was Identified as the "Sea King". Fortunately, Mr. Hudson, in co-operation with the Colchester Historical Society, had given permission to the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic to send their photographer to Great Village to film these images. This work was done last fall, and the images, although gone, have been preserved, and may be seen, on

C.D. at the Archives in Truro.

This event, and the consequences, serves as a reminder to folks who have preserved items of family or historical significance, including items of historical importance to the community at large, that these items should be entrusted either in the original or copied state to the local Archives. In the case of Colchester County, that is the Colchester Historical Society, Museum and Archives".

For more information contact:
Dick Akerman, Archives Volunteer
Colchester Historical Society,
Museum & Archives,
895-9530, Home 647-2937

Hello Maurice:

I just wanted to drop you a quick note and thank you immensely for printing the whole article on the Shore Drive Area. Everyone who submitted an advertisement are most pleased as to how the page is set out and grateful that the write up was included.

Thank you so very much, and we look forward to doing business with you again in the future.

Gayle Shaw
Port Greville

Iowa Publisher writes favourably about Nova Scotia

By Peter W. Wagner

A funny thing happened when Connie and I went to church last Sunday: We ended up visiting one of the Titanic burial sites located in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

My wife and I were in Halifax last weekend to take part in the Atlantic Newspaper Association's convention. The publishers of the community newspapers on the eastern edge of Canada publish some of the best local papers in the entire North American continent. All the convention functions took place on Friday and Saturday, leaving us all day Sunday to explore one of America's oldest communities.

We'd inquired about nearby Presbyterian or Episcopal churches at the hotel's front desk Saturday afternoon and found the closest was about 10 blocks away.

It was very windy and raining when we were ready to leave for the eight o'clock church service so we chose to go by cab. It was while we were on our way, seated in the back of a very comfortable late model Cadillac turned into a taxi, that I mentioned to our driver our plan to rent a car that day to tour the region.

"You don't want to do that," he said. He then offered, for a very affordable price, to take us on a five hour tour of the city and famous South shore.

And what a tour it was. Connie and I sat comfortably behind Darrel Downey, our driver, taking in all of Halifax's famous buildings, hidden historic sites and modern improvements. A local history buff, and retired police officer

with 30 years on the job, our host was ready with yet another interesting fact or local antidote at every stop.

We made a number of interesting walking tours along the way: A museum dedicated to the history of maple syrup; Peggy's Cove, where the Swiss Airliner crashed in 1998; the studio of a local author and artist; a seaport village where things remain much the same as they were 100 years ago and a wholesale fish market. It was there that we met Dave Hoskin, the manager, who fixed freshly caught one-and-one-half pound lobsters for each of us for less money than we usually pay for a small steak.

Our five hour tour eventually turned into an eight hour adventure. Our driver, it seemed, was having as much fun as Connie and I. Time and again he thought of one more place we "just had to see."

At the end of the day we paused at the local cemetery. Although Halifax is over 300 miles from where the Titanic sank on April 14, 1912, it was the site of the nearest White Star Line offices. Company officials turned there for ships to recover the remains of the deceased.

There were 2,223 passengers and crew on board the famous ship. Of that number, 1,515 perished. The majority of deaths were caused by hypothermia. With a water temperature of just 28 degrees, few could survive more than 15 minutes floating in the sea.

White Star Lines charted the cable-ship CS Mackay-Bennett to retrieve the bodies. Three other ships later joined in the recovery process. Each

carried embalming supplies, undertakers and clergy on board. Eventually 333 bodies were recovered.

Once the ships arrived at the disaster site they found more bodies than they had supplies to embalm. Since Canadian law would only allow for the on board transfer of preserved bodies, many were buried at sea. First consideration for preservation was given to the most wealthy, thinking their onshore identification would be necessary to settle their estates.

Some of the recovered bodies were shipped home at the request of their families. The others, many steerage class and crew members, remained unidentifiable and were buried at three different Halifax locations including 200 in a mass grave. There were 120 at the Mount Olivet Cemetery we visited.

Most of the graves are simply marked with a number – the order in which the body was retrieved. Some however, including one of the boat musicians, have the name – and sometimes other information – about the individual.

Perhaps the most interesting grave belongs to a young child, estimated to be about two-years old at the time of his death. First suspected to be the son of one of the identified passengers, he was buried at that the foot of the Italian mother who had four children traveling with her.

In 2001 the body was exhumed however and DNA tests were conducted. The body, it was determined, was that Eino Vljami Panula, the 13-month old son of a Finnish family that all died in the Titanic's sinking. The 68-year-old granddaughter of the mother's sister visited the site to bring closure for the family.

Then, in 2002, additional DNA tests were conducted. These revealed the first results were incorrect and that the body was actually that of Sidney Leslie Goodwin, born in September, 1910, in Melksham, Wiltshire, England. His parents and five siblings were expected to have also been lost at sea.

Even today the child remains the symbol of the terrible loss that took place at the sinking of ship once said impossible to sink. Stuffed animals, toy cars, small stones and dozens of coins are regularly left at the grave as gifts of remembrance none visiting the site could have known. It seemed a right and proper way for my wife and I to spend part of Memorial Day.

Peter W. Wagner is founding publisher of Iowa Information Inc., and White Wolf Web Printers Inc. He was in Nova Scotia as one of the advertising seminar presenters at the 38th Annual Atlantic Community Newspaper Association Conference held in Halifax, May 28 & 29. His column appeared in the June 5th issue of N'West Iowa REVIEW.

Summer Church Schedule

By Chris Urquhart

Summer Church services for the Upper Londonderry Pastoral Charge have started up with each service being at 10am. Services for the summer are: July 4 – Masstown, July 11 – Debert, July 18 – Glenholme, July 25 – Masstown, August 1 – services at St. James United Church Great Village, Aug. 8 – Glenholme with communion, Aug. 15 – Masstown, Aug. 22 – Debert, Aug. 29 – Glenholme.

I hope you can attend these services which are inclusive of our pastoral charge. You will be made welcome.

The Shoreline Journal (circ. 1300) is a monthly community newspaper serving communities along the Glooscap Trail from Truro to Parrsboro, Nova Scotia serving the communities of Belmont/Debert, Wentworth/Londonderry, Onslow/Masstown along the shore to Great Village, Bass River, Economy, Five Islands and Lower Five Islands. It is published on the last Wednesday of each month (earlier in December) with a deadline of the 20th of the month.

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