

## TIME IS PASSING, AND SO ARE OUR HEROES



Photo: Ken Mulveney

Every year at this time we shake our collective heads in amazement that yet *another* year has gone by in this continuing battle. Can it really be 46 years since that black day – expropriation, March 2, 1972 – and still no resolution?

And then it hits us in the gut and in the heart, as it did so painfully this past December, when we lost two of our

heroes. First, Al Graham, and then, just weeks later, Bill Lishman. They were two of the most visible stuntmen for People or Planes. Fearless, funny, in-your-face with their publicity stunts that regularly hit the front page and enlivened the 6 o’clock news spots, keeping the cause of stopping the Pickering Airport firmly in the public eye.

Al was also a brilliant communicator and behind-the-scenes guy, one of those who created the infamous POP newspaper, while Bill continued preaching to the very end the gospel of saving the land, air, and water, all the while soaring above it, literally and figuratively, becoming an internationally recognized artist, inventor, and environmentalist.

Both of them would have had something pithy to say – once they’d stopped laughing – about the *News Advertiser’s* choice of the proposed Pickering Airport as “Newsmaker of the Year for 2017”!

We also know they’d be telling us not to take our eyes off the prize now, when the goal is so clearly in sight!

## HER SPIRIT LIVES ON

This month we received a treasure box – the personal archives of the inimitable, the irrepressible, the hilarious, backbone-of-steel and heart-of-gold Brenda Davies, one of three women who made the famous Last Stand, occupying the Bentley-Carruthers house in the final days of POP’s resistance. Her daughter, Terry Pook, sent us never-before-seen photos, and daily journal entries from the occupation, along with a note that reads, in part:

*“It is with great pleasure I pass along to you the files from my mother’s cabinet. My mother’s personality sure shines through...! Thank you for honouring her by accepting them in your archives. I wish you all the best success in the latest efforts to make our world a better place. The theme of my mother’s life was JUSTICE and I know you are carrying that on.”* Terry, the honour is all ours.

## AG STUDY RELEASE!

Feel the excitement? **We’re just weeks away** from the official release of our long-anticipated Agricultural/Rural Growth Economics Study of the Remaining Federal Lands!

As many of you know, we have very limited capacity to host the hundreds of parties interested in the findings of this landmark project. So we’re planning a staggered release to accommodate as many of you as possible.

**Phase 1:** Politicians, Media, NGOs, and Partners

**Phase 2:** Donors and Supporters

**Phase 3:** General Public

Phases 1 and 2 will feature presentations by the consultants. In Phase 3, we’ll take the findings “on the road” to neighbouring communities to share more about the cause, and about options for citizen action.

We could not have done it without your generous donations. Our grassroots, 100% volunteer organization amassed an astonishing \$85,000 to fund this study, proof of the powerful desire out there for a different future for these Lands! We look forward to seeing you at one of the upcoming events. Stay tuned for dates and locations!



Photo: Edwin Gallits

**Published in the *Toronto Star*, Dec. 1, 1973, after the municipal election:**

Congratulations to Toronto on electing a mayor who has the sense to see that Cedarwood\* would not be a separate city as the Ontario government so frantically reiterates, but rather a conception which is in direct violation of the Toronto Centred Region Plan.

Those of us whose homes are due to be confiscated can take comfort that the leader of the fastest-growing city in Canada feels neither government has made a case for a second airport.

Let us hope that Premier William Davis and Prime Minister Trudeau will take his advice and cancel what Mayor David Crombie is convinced would destroy precious greenbelt with urban sprawl.

The saddest words I know are "Too late".

BRENDA DAVIES,  
Cherrywood

\* *Cedarwood was one name for the satellite city. It was also known as Seaton. (our footnote)*

## IT'S ALL ABOUT FEEDING PEOPLE

**Feb. 7:** In a *Peterborough Examiner* article, Ontario's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Jeff Leal, notes that countries such as India and China are contaminating their farmland and depleting their soils, and that it will soon "be up to North America – Ontario in particular – to grow export food." He points out that Ontario has "the most diverse agriculture in North America," and sees the province as a key player in future efforts to feed the planet, leading to many new agricultural jobs. "It's my job to make sure we preserve farmland for future generations." Two days later, these farsighted comments become more than words.

**Feb. 9:** New Ontario policies identify and protect prime agricultural land across the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Significantly, the Province declares all of Pickering north of Hwy 7 (including the remaining Federal Lands), as an Agricultural Area. It's too early to breathe easy; the federal expropriation of the land for an airport still takes precedence. But land-use planning is within the Province's jurisdiction. Were Ottawa to abandon the airport project or decide not to use some of the seized land for an airport, then, as has been the practice, the federal government would defer to provincial land-use planning. And with the new Agricultural System policies in place, Ontario's position couldn't be clearer: the land in North Pickering is a Prime Agricultural Area requiring permanent protection.

**Feb. 21:** At Queen's Park, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) and three other agri-food organizations join together to show how provincial investment in the rural economy benefits all Ontarians and has the potential to reap huge economic and social returns. At the OFA's 2017 AGM, president Keith Curry had spelled it out: "Farms and food forever tells us that we need to sustain our food system with each decision. We need to be environmentally smart and we need to be financially viable now and in the future. ... Food security will be a real and significant outcome of sound public investment in rural Ontario. There are no better stewards of the land than farmers. We were green before it was fashionable. But, there are critics of modern farming, so we need to continue to advocate and educate on what we do – reminding consumers that a healthy environment, healthy soil and clean water is our livelihood. We know that farmland conservation and preservation are critical issues."

## "ON THE ROAD" TRAVELS BACK IN POP HISTORY

The "airport lands" have received some in-depth attention from the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville in the latest two editions of "On The Road" magazine.

The January article covers the lands' expropriation and the resistance of the 1970s, highlighting the involvement and commitment of the Stouffville cell of People or Planes.

February's article looks at the years from 1980 to the turn of the century, with a focus on the provincially expropriated lands to the south of the federal ones, and the creation of the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve, the town of Seaton, and the Rouge Park.

You can find PDF versions of these publications here:

[www.townofws.ca/en/explore/on-the-road](http://www.townofws.ca/en/explore/on-the-road)

## Land Over Landings Because food is a **GROWING** concern!

[landoverlanding@gmail.com](mailto:landoverlanding@gmail.com)  
[www.landoverlandings.com](http://www.landoverlandings.com)  
905-649-2433

