

A jaundiced report

What to expect if you're stuck in Windsor

Former Excalibur sports editor and current Windsor correspondent Rick Spence sends in his first report of the year.

As a public service to the members of the York community, Excalibur presents the following report on living conditions at another Ontario university.

Chances are you may be dissatisfied with certain aspects of York; if so, you'll be counting your blessings after reading this article.

The University of Windsor, situated on the banks of the Detroit River, has been likened to a tropical island. This is because most of the students are castaways.

Almost all students who are not natives of Windsor and surroundings have come to the U of W from another university. The reason for this is not clear, although one scientist likened the migration to that of lemmings.

The U of Windsor boasts of over 150 students. (The other 5,000 they try to forget). In addition, there is a large part-time contingent, 3,000 strong. Night classes are popular in

Windsor, because, let's face it, there's nothing else to do at night in Windsor (unless you're on the night shift down at GM).

The city of Windsor itself, despite its nickname "City of Roses" (which is like calling Toronto a city of giant redwood trees), is generally considered a blot on the landscape, a cancerous growth, a malfunctioning welding torch in the assembly line of life. The city is so flat that its highest point is a bridge over the railway tracks, and when the wind blows through the city, it almost rips all the American flags down.

Civic authorities have been trying to discourage people's thinking of Windsor as a lunch-bucket town, but have met with little success. After all, the original name of the settlement was Sandwich. Windsor is an old community, settled over 200 years ago. Unfortunately, the only features remaining from those years are the city's streets.

The university is old too, going back to the days when it was Assumption College, a venerable Roman Catholic institution. All



associations with the church are being phased out now — only the holy water in the drinking fountains remains. They've even stopped burning heretics at the stake.

Although a few tenacious students still pursue Religious Studies, the majority of students concern themselves with the studies proven most popular in all colleges through the years: parties, drinking, pub-crawling, loitering, psychology, engineering and business administration, among others.

The university also boasts the only department of communication arts in the province, the pursuit of which brought this erstwhile reporter here to the edge of the world. Com Arts, as it is affectionately known, offers courses familiar to many York students: Mickey Mouse 100, Basketweaving 205, and Advanced TV-Watching 315. A three or four year dose of Com Arts gives a student a chance to enter graduate school, and to take some respectable course.

The knowledge that Windsor is 200 miles from any outpost of civilization (nobody considers Detroit, a

mile away across the river, to be civilized) pervades the campus atmosphere. However, we're not completely cut off — a copy of the Toronto Telegram made it through just last week. Glad to see Mayor Dennison's been re-elected.

Actually, the presence of Detroit affords students in Windsor many opportunities available nowhere else. However, few students wish to be attacked nine times in one night, so there is not that much traffic across the border.

The abundance of colleges and universities in Detroit represents another fine opportunity. Every week when Windsor's basketball, wrestling and hockey teams go there to play exhibition matches, they get totally annihilated and embarrassed by their American counterparts. However, the U of W's snowshoe team recently scored a brilliant victory over Michigan State.

Detroiters don't appreciate people from Windsor coming over to their city. They have enough troubles already. And after all, Windsor lowers property values in the slums

of downtown Detroit.

Nevertheless, there are many people who like, even love Windsor and the university. Of course, most of these people were put away a long time ago. Generally, Windsor makes Hamilton look like Shangri-La, and, compared to Windsor, even Downsview looks like paradisiacal... well, let's not get too carried away.

If one were to pick a symbol of for the University of Windsor, it would have to be the Ambassador Bridge, a colossal, black, ancient structure which towers over the campus and casts shadows at sunset over the university's traditional brick-and-ivy-covered buildings.

Carrying millions of vehicles each year between Canada and the United States, it stands like a rock, defying the forces of time, nature and progress to tear it down. Although some might say it has served well but must now be replaced, there are those who defend it, and point to its long, honorable tradition with pride.

However, the rest of us know what it really is — a lovable, old, slow, inefficient dinosaur.

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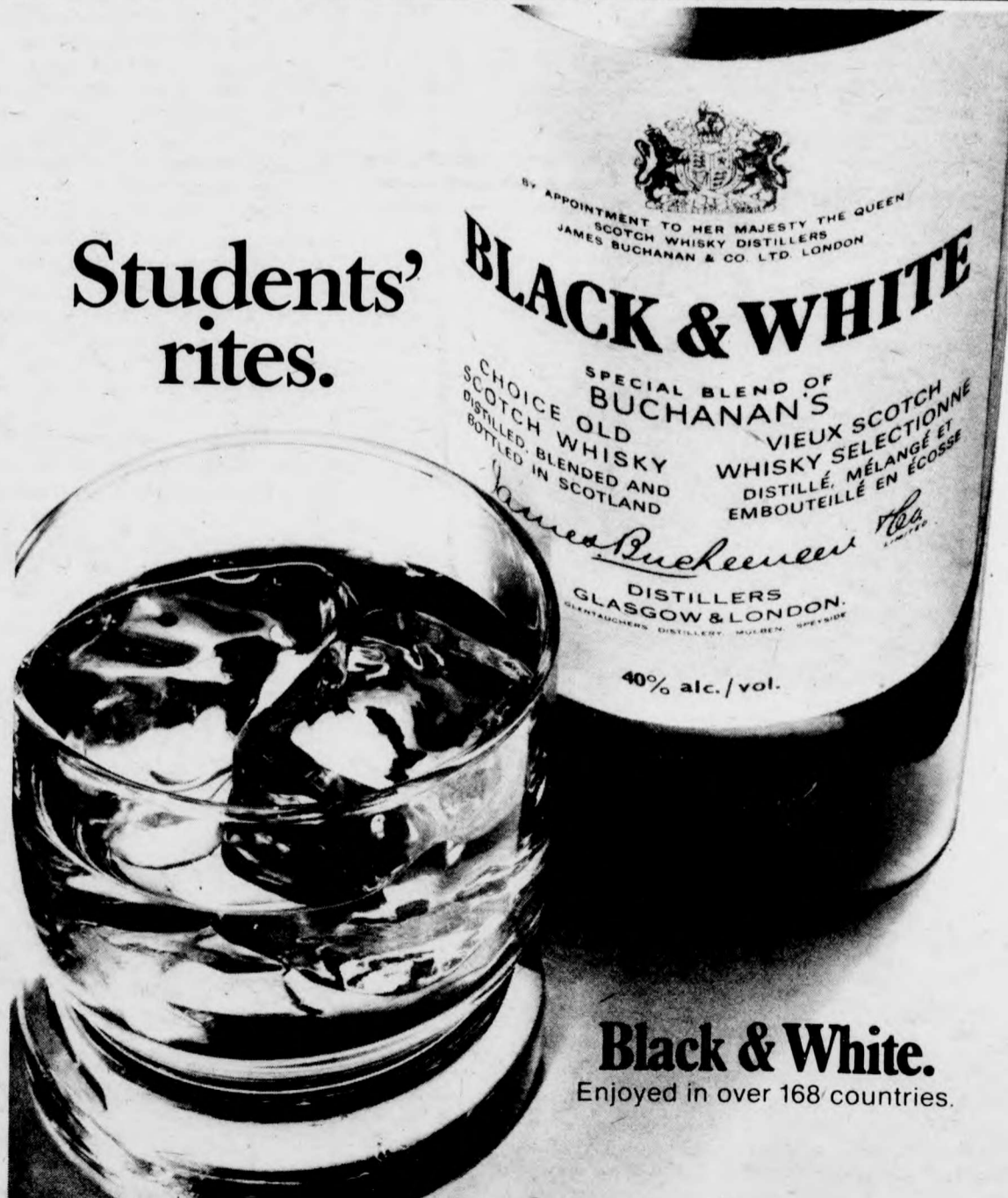
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