

Reflections ? Goodbye Bruce

By Bill Rea

It was a sad time Sunday afternoon when I learned of the passing of Bruce Haire.

Bruce was the long-time publisher of the Citizen; a man I worked for, off and on, for more than 30 years.

I first met him in a time when we were both a lot younger, I had dark hair and a man named Trudeau was Prime Minister of this country.

That many years represent a lot of time, and many memories.

This is a business which carries with it a lot of pressure, and throughout those pressures, Bruce was always a constant source of stability. In all the years I knew him, I can't recall a single occasion when he got angry or displayed temper, although there were plenty of times when I would have ticked him off, and vice-versa.

And in this line of work, there is plenty of room for disagreements.

Think back to the summer of 1993, when new Prime Minister Kim Campbell called the provincial premiers together for a conference. All the premiers attended, except for Ontario's Bob Rae. He opted to take his kids fishing instead.

Bruce and I had a spirited debate about that. I wrote a column criticizing Rae for insulting the new prime minister by standing her up, while Bruce wrote one praising him for the same thing.

There was a lot of mutual razzing in the days that followed.

There weren't many things that seemed to faze Bruce. He always seemed to have an ability to take life as it came.

That appeared to be the case with the illness he battled for many years. It was taking its toll on him, but he continued to function despite that. The closest I came to hearing him complain about it was when he lamented on what it was doing to his golf game.

Despite all, he was able to get elected to New Tecumseth Town council in 2010.

Taking life as it comes is a lesson many of us, myself included, could learn to do better.

Although I hadn't seen Bruce in some time (about five years, if memory serves), I knew his health was an issue, and I knew the message I received Sunday was going to come one of these days.

It was hard news to deal with, but it's part of life, and that was something Bruce was able to take as it came.

Well done, Bruce.