

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Andy Bartle

BY PAULA BOON

Moving to the Huntsville area has given Andy Bartle a new perspective on life.

The production manager for the Muskoka Roastery Coffee Company came here from England five years ago with his wife Jodie Auckland and daughter Emilie.

"The pace of life there was frenetic," he says. "It was becoming a rat race."

Then, in 2001, Bartle was laid off after 27 years in the corporate world of the automotive aftermarket.

"We came to a crossroads," he says. "And we decided, 'If our life is going to change, why not make a big change? If we're fed up with England, why don't we do something about it?'"

The same day Bartle was laid off, his older daughter, Emma, phoned and told him about a seminar for people who were thinking of emigrating to the United States, Canada, Australia and South Africa. He and his wife drove 40 miles to attend.

"To be honest, we were planning to go to New England," says Bartle, explaining that they had vacationed there several times. "But the seminar was run by a Canadian who asked us

why we wanted to go to the States. She said Canada has all the same benefits but the people are nicer. So we said, 'Let's go for it.'"

They applied for a visa without ever having set foot in the country.

In February of 2003 the Bartles planned a two-week holiday in Ontario. Using a roadmap, they planned a driving trip that would show them as much of the province as possible.

When they passed through Huntsville, they thought it was the friendliest place they had been.

"Everyone was so welcoming and kind," recalls Bartle. "We said to each other, 'This looks like home.' It had a real community feeling to it which we never had in England."

Now, five years after moving to the area, Bartle says they haven't been disappointed.

"Emilie, who was 15 at the time, started school at Huntsville High School in September of 2003. She slotted straight in. She has really blossomed since we got here. She's now at the University of Western Ontario."

Jodie, a teacher, actress, author and poet, took some time to focus on her writing and now teaches at Huntsville Public School. Emma had her own life in England and now works in Germany.

And Andy has found a job he loves. As production manager of the roastery, he oversees two staff members, roasts and packages coffee and processes orders. He also works hard to help develop new customers around the province.

"It's a small family business with people who care and a great product," he says. "Patricia and Doug Snell and I have become great friends."

When asked what he likes best about the job, Bartle says, "I like being able to make a difference. I find that my skills are valued, and I give it total commitment."

Bartle says that it's almost impossible now to walk down the street without seeing someone he knows well enough to say hello to. "They may be strangers but you have a passing connection, like you see them at the bank, so you say hello. You just don't get that in England."

He and Jodie, who first met while doing a production of *Kiss Me Kate* in England, have also become part of the Muskoka theatre community. Most recently, Bartle was the stage manager of another *Kiss Me Kate* show, which was staged in Bracebridge at the end of February. He's hoping to act in another comedy this year after enjoying co-starring with his wife in

One for the Road last summer.

But the most important thing to Bartle is the opportunity to enjoy the 25 acres he and Jodie own near Bay Lake, between Novar and Emsdale.

"Being here I have the wonderful opportunity to indulge myself," he says. "We have great fun in the yard doing lots of outdoor things. It's just a whole different way of life. We can sit at home and enjoy the trees and the birds without distraction. There's no traffic; the air is clear. We just love living here."

Thanks to Patricia Snell for suggesting that Andy be profiled. If there is someone you'd like to see in this space, please call Paula at 789-5541 or e-mail pboon@metrolandnorthmedia.com.



LETTERS

Conservatives are 'Americanizing' politics in Canada, says reader

Re: Clement's mass mailing obscures reality, letter to the editor, Huntsville Forester, March 5.

I commend the writer for drawing attention to these mailings, which I find fairly offensive. Their over-simplified and precariously spun questions are insulting to our intelligence. By posing questions the way they do, they discourage critical thinking about these important issues.

I think we all need to focus on what the Conservatives are actually doing. In my opinion, one of the things they are doing is "Americanizing" politics in this country:

- They engage in destructive rhetoric with the provincial party we elected because Ontario's tax policies don't agree with theirs;
- They privatize or sell off public assets to finance the running of the government (which is like selling your house to buy a car) and then brag about being fiscally responsible;
- They interfere with the proper operation of the public service when they dismiss senior public servants for doing their jobs, such as Linda Keen, the Nuclear Safety Commissioner; and
- They advocate tax cutting and deregulation

as the *only* way to support businesses and the manufacturing sector.

This last point is particularly dangerous since it strengthens corporations (with corporate tax cuts and lax regulations) while it weakens the public's ability to safeguard against the actions of those same corporations by reducing the number of front-line public servants.

Take a close look at the U.S. Yes, the upper class is doing well, but the rest of the people? Not so good. Before we become any more American, let's look at the big picture: middle-class people working 60 hours a week for a minimum wage that barely allows them to survive; millions of citizens without basic health-care coverage; marginalized people living on the streets; under-funded schools; crumbling infrastructure and an inability to protect people when that infrastructure fails, as when hurricane Katrina struck.

We have so much to be thankful for in Canada. Let's not give it away to be more like our American neighbours.

Doug Banwell
Huntsville

Stop idling Hydro One trucks!

It's telling that each weekday morning an army of Hydro One trucks idle outside the Coffee Cabin while their drivers go for 45 minutes of in-store coffees.

I'm sure the lungs of the earth appreciate this wanton ingratitude.

It's hilarious, really, with all the expensive government campaigns asking people not to idle their vehicles even in winter. In my experience the majority of government servants, such as these upstanding Hydro One linemen, are blissfully oblivious to environmental concerns.

Yes, I know, the chief Hydro One administrator will issue a rebuttal to let me know that these trucks have diesel engines and must run 24/7 to ensure proper lubrication and so forth,

and that it is essential they destruct the environment.

Pity the lungs of their children, who have to breathe the aftermath of their parents' careless and oblivious souls.

Tobias M. Andersen,
Oakville

P.S. With Hydro One's evident environmental insensitivity it would be prudent for your town council to disallow these oblivious cads from using roadside pesticides. I'm sure Mr. Hydro One will have a rebuttal for this, too. Yes, I can hear it now: "Pesticides are necessary for healthy children and a healthy environment."

Do pity this earth when we Canadians are so callous in our environmental disregard.

Huntsville is still Hockeyville

At a time when many of us here in Huntsville are feeling the sadness and disappointment of the unexpected playoff loss of our Junior A Otters, as well as the loss of the Kraft Hockeyville top five to Kingsville, I wanted to remind people of just what this past season has brought to our little town.

We had a young lady named Katie Peleikis, who stepped up on behalf of all of us to spearhead the Hockeyville effort. She helped present Huntsville to the rest of Canada as a small town with a great big heart!

She brought together people from all walks of life for this great effort. Despite the loss, we have

become a serious Hockeyville in our own right. Be proud, Katie. You've made a difference.

To all of the Junior A Otters players, coaches and the entire organization, I want to say thank you. You have provided us with so much fun, entertainment and spirit. You brought life back into our arena, became important role models for our children and gave us all a true sense of community. You made us believe and have changed hockey in Huntsville forever. You guys are a classy bunch.

Thanks for the memories!

Marta Long
Huntsville

Pay cut for town council might be more in order

The town council thinks they are entitled to another raise. I was taught that pay raises were based on performance. So far their performance might indicate a wage cut is in order.

Council could start performing by getting River Mill Park completed. On time and on budget are likely not attainable goals. But please get it done, and soon.

This council thinks that there isn't any acting body that can determine if they should get this ridiculous raise. Did they forget that they work for us, the taxpaying citizens of Huntsville? Ask us for our input before you vote on this matter. Citizens of Huntsville, let your voices be heard.

James Stanton
Huntsville

See page B5 for additional letter



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"Petticoats" Supports Mammogram Program

In October, "Petticoats" ran a fundraiser to support the new digital mammogram equipment and renovation project at Huntsville Hospital. "Petticoats" customers were encouraged during "Breast Cancer Awareness" month to give a donation to help fight breast cancer.

"Petticoats" owners, Michelle and Angela, were pleased to give a \$300 cheque to Foundation Executive Director, Debi Davis. The amount given by their customers was matched by Michelle and Angela. Please join us by saying thank you to these generous ladies and their customers.

Huntsville District Memorial Hospital Foundation continues to support:

- Huntsville District Memorial Hospital
- Fairvern Nursing Home
- Burk's Falls & District Health Centre



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If you are interested in holding a fundraising event to support your hospital, please give the Foundation a call. There is a guide to help you with your planning.