

# Decades of sharing the life of a chimney sweep

Since I started writing this column about 35 years ago, a lot has changed in technology, and even how we think. Just in case you may ask, I have never used AI or chat GPT to write an article. However, I did search the net to do research.

Over the years I have covered a variety of topics, and in most cases had good feedback, but not always. Healthy critique was always welcome.

When I read some of the stuff that I wrote years ago it makes me realize that my opinions have changed over time. You often hear about a politician or some important person that posted something years back and now they are being chastised for a statement or point of view. But maybe they have changed their mind.

From the beginning I decided that I would not try to sell anything in this column other than ideas. At times good products may have been promoted, but for the most part, I didn't try to sell anything. As a result, this magazine became my best advertising.

People would stop me in the grocery store or out on the street and tell me how much they liked the last article, and please don't stop writing.

At some point I should compile some of these into my life story. Believe it or not the most popular articles were the ones chronicling the day in the life of a chimney sweep. Just the episodes about the interesting things that took place. Interesting people and their interesting homes and habits. Like the guy who ruined a few cast iron woodstoves before we found that he was burning cut up car tires. Or the time that I swept the chimney in the wrong house and yes, I still got paid. Or the time when I swept a chimney when no one was home and there was about \$20,000 cash spread out on the kitchen table.

You could be in a beautiful home that could feature in a home décor magazine and the next service call may be the home of a hoarder. Once there was a terrible smell in a home and we discovered a dead cat in the bathtub. On another occasion we found a young child sleeping on a dirty mattress on a dirt floor in a basement. Puts you in a tough position of how to respond to this situation.

Of course, we came across many very unsafe woodstove hook ups that were

BY  
MARSHALL  
BYLE

## Rooftops



just a fire waiting to happen. People loved to read about those.

On a number of occasions, I delved into politics to the chagrin of my liberal friends because as you may know I am generally a conservative.

The editor of this magazine said that I was the only columnist that she had to consult a lawyer before printing my opinion.

On that note, I thank the Pannell family, past and present, for the opportunity to write.

**Merry Christmas  
and Happy New Year**  
From our families (and Stevie) to yours.



**Heritage Fire Co.**  
519-368-5274  
www.heritagefirecompany.com  
info@heritagefirecompany.com  
Bruce Rd 15, 2km west of Tiverton

We install Natural Gas Conversions & Hook-ups, Furnaces & Water Heaters!



\*The statements and opinions are of the columnist and as such, are not reflective of Heritage Fire Co.