

COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT

Outdoor Recreational Centre, Park Has 88 Acre Body of Water in Fairy Lake

Between sixty and seventy years ago the land now known as Acton Park was purchased from the late William J. Smith and became Acton's fair grounds.

For years the only entrance to Acton Park was by way of Park Avenue. Until thirty-five or forty years ago that avenue known as Knox Avenue, crossed at the entrance of the church sheds. This property was a fine pasture field and owned by the late John H. Kennedy. The opening of Knox Avenue had a bearing on the park for now there were two entrances and the Knox Avenue way was popular for all those west of Mill street and a bit shorter.

About thirty years ago a very successful celebration was held in the Park commemorating Acton's fifty years of incorporation as a Village. Strange as it may seem, a good bank balance was left after the affair was over and it was decided the park entrance should be improved. The fences were set back to their present location and the band stand ticket office and stone pillars were erected. Further celebrations supplied the balance of the funds necessary to complete the work.

About twenty years ago the grandstand was moved from the lot on Lake Avenue to the west side of the park. The arena was erected in 1929.

But the story of Acton Park is not complete without something about Fairy Lake which forms such beautiful surroundings for this fine ground. It is just 120 years ago since the mill dam was completed that made this splendid body of water. The dam backed up the water until it covered 88 acres as it does today.

For about fifty years Fairy Lake was always referred to as "The Mill Pond." Eventually, Mrs. Sarah Augusta Secord, who settled here in the sixties, an educated woman of an artistic temperament, gradually succeeded in persuading our citizens that an expanse of such clear crystal spring water, with the environment of wooded hills and cultivated farms and pretty village homes and home surroundings, should keep its commonplace name and be honored with a more dignified appellation. Mrs. Secord then christened it "Fairy Lake" and it has carried that name for the past seventy years.

Acton's park is the headquarters for sports activities of all kinds. The arena, the lake and the fine open spaces have provided the town with a spacious outdoor recreational playground. A swimming pool is expected to be added to the facilities of the fine property and its addition will put another notch in the history of Acton sports and recreation.

June 1, 1876. Young men in town are gravely considering the question of abandoning the use of standing shirt collars. After 11 o'clock Sunday night most of the girls' cheeks look as if they had been pinched with a clothes pin.



IN 1929 THE ARENA was erected and this year it will be paid for. Hockey games with their wild enthusiasm and fall fairs, rodeos and numerous other shows have been presented in the arena which people predicted would never be paid for. Now we talk of artificial ice.



LEFT-OVER MONEY, supplemented by other programs built this fine entrance to Prospect Park. The celebration of 50 years incorporation as a village had a small bank balance and this formed the nucleus of the fund for the erection of the ticket office, band stand, and gates.



FEW CHANGES will be noted in the C.N.R. station but the appearance of such vehicles as is seen in the picture will be understood. Rides in the vehicle of J. Williams will be recalled by some readers as quite an event.

March 24, 1876—
To the Editor of the Free Press

I understand there is a movement on foot to establish in this village what is termed a "Moderate Drinker's Society" the principles of which are these: no member is allowed to drink more than one glass of Spiritous Liquors per day and any member going beyond this limit is to be fined for the first, second, and third offense the sum of twenty-five cents and for the fourth offense expulsion from the Society.

Son of Temperance

Town Hall Erected Filling Acton Need

The erection of a town hall and lock-up was quite an important improvement and addition to the town but it was met with storms of disapproval, and controversy. Clippings will tell more vividly of the issue but in all the town hall was erected and is still serving the town although there has been one fire, though not serious.

Sixty-nine years ago the town hall, lock-up, council chamber, fire hall and auditorium were erected. All this received its inception in 1881 when a meeting of the rate-payers was called to consider the erection of the building. Major Wm. Allan proposed a hall and a good one, on a central site on the front street. He would have it constructed with stores on first floor, main hall on second floor, with society halls on the third floor and council chamber and lock up in the basement.

The others' opinion varied, however and when they came to choosing the site, there were just as many varied ideas as to the location. In fact the final location was a decision that met with much discontent on the part of citizens after the choice was made. This is apparent by the abundance of "Letters to the Editor" following the selection.

The building to-day, however, is still serving the community's needs and the siren mounted in the belfry still signals citizens in time of fire.

Aug. 13, 1887—Hurdy-gurdy opera in town today.

Recreation Centre In Acton Y.M.C.A.

The last will and testament of J. A. Murray provided for a community centre for Acton and through the work of enthusiastic citizens this rung was added to the ladder of progress.

A corner stone of Beer's red granite was well and truly laid on September 29, 1931 by Mr. William A. Murray, cousin of the donor. As the building was completed and Murray Memorial began its work the Municipal Offices, Acton Free Library, and the Masonic Lodge all found space for their activities.

Young Peoples work has been greatly advanced by this addition to the town and for quite a long time Acton was able to boast of being the smallest town in the world to

support a Y.M.C.A. The youngest to the oldest have enjoyed the facilities provided for them in the erection of the Murray Memorial.

Energetic boards have improved the first building and added items necessary to the work with young people. It has been the centre for teenage dances as well as healthy recreation for nursery class children. Boys and girls, men and women find a recreational centre in the Y.M.C.A. of Acton.

The Free Press of June 20, 1878, extends congratulations to a bridegroom in the following way:

"Another of our young men has 'went and gone and done it' He got married yesterday. Our grief at his loss from the ranks of bachelorhood is great. We hope 'ike' will make as good a husband as he has been a friend to the boys and we trust that the broomstick and rolling-pin may never be brought into use in his case.



BRICK ADDITIONS were made in 1892 and 1914 to the original stone schoolhouse. These are the present school buildings that are bulging with the greatly increased enrollment.



CONTROVERSY RAGED when the erection of this building, the present town hall, was considered. The varying opinions as to what it should contain ranged from a three storey building to a one storey building.