The Acton Free Press.

Eighty-Fourth Year.—No. 21. ACTON, ONTARIO, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1958 Second Section.

ACTON CITIZENS' BAND is pictured when they attended the Acton Fall Fair this September, to play for the huge crowd in attendance. The band as in past years led the parade from the Town Hall to the Fair grounds. The present day band has 35 members and is under the leadership of A. H. Perrott of Georgetown. With the summer engagements fulfilled the band is now engaged in a schedule of winter practice sessions. The horn section practices in the Town Hall and the 10 man drum section hold their practices in the arena. Names of members appear elsewhere on this page under the history of the band.

Acton Citizens' Band Organized in 1868 Grows From Four to 35 Present Members

As pointed out in last week's issue of the Acton Free Press, Acton voters will be asked to decide at the municipal elections in December on a half mill grant to the Acton Junior Pipe Band and Acton Citizens' Band, as well as the dissolving of the Public Utilities Commission.

In today's issue, the second of the series outlining the activities of the Acton Citizens' Band, is published for the benefit of the voters.

Acton Citizens' Band

First organized in 1868 by John Hill, an Acton business man and noted musician, the first Acton band consisted of four members and was known then as "Acton's Cornet Band".

Practice was held at that time in the store owned by Mr. Hill, on the premises where Albert and Morris Van Gils are erecting apartments and stores at the corner of Mill and Elgin Streets.

The four man band expanded when other members became interested and additional instruments were obtained, and later it became known as "Acton Citizens Band" which it is presently named.

Oldest Member

The oldest active member of the present day band is Charles Mason, who began taking lessons from Mr. Hill when he was a youngster

John Hill

in his teens. He started out by learning to play the cornet and later the French horn. Now he plays the baritone horn in the present 35-man band.

Mr. Hill continued as band leader for 40 years, after which Mr. Mason took over the leadership.

Acton was without the services of a band from 1936 until 1940 at which time Mr. Mason decided the community should have a band once more. He organized a Junior Boys' and Girls' Band using the instruments owned by the town.

In 1944, Acton Y's Men's Club presented the band with capes and caps.

Thirty boys and girls responded to Mr. Mason's offer to teach them to play an instrument and after only three years of tuition the band began entering competitions.

First Prize

In 1947, the Boys' and Girls' Band entered competition at the C.N.E. and came home with first prize. The same year they won first prize at the Waterloo Musical Festival.

Mr. Mason recalls the happy incident of winning at the C.N.E. and this week relived the occasion as he told the story.

"We (the Boys and Girls' Band) were lined up near the band shell at the Exhibition, awaiting our turn to play and glancing around the crowd of bands competing in the event. Ours was the only band without uniforms," recalled the ex-band leader.

"Upon receiving the cue to take our place on the bandstand, we overheard a comment referring to us as 'a bunch of hayseeds,' and I told the youngsters, 'We will play this selection as it has never been played before'," related Mr. Mason.

Charles Mason

The band leader told how, when the other bands had completed their selection, small groups applauded. "When the Acton children finished playing, the entire crowd burst into applause and cheers went up when the adjudicator announced us as the winners."

Memorable Event

"It was the most memorable event in my life," Mr. Mason said.

Of the band members who went to the Exhibition and won that year, nine are still active with the present day band.

Mr. Mason recalled how many of the boys and girls left Acton to attend school elsewhere. The band was dissolved in 1948 and the same year, the Acton Citizens Band was reorganized.

Asked how the early band was financed, Mr. Mason replied it depended strictly on charity. "If we received $50 a year, it was a wonderful thing."

Annual Grant

He pointed out that it was not until 1948 that a half mill grant amounting to $900 was given to the band following a petition and plebiscite that was carried 5 to 1.

He also noted that the following year the assessment had doubled which meant the half mill would be worth $1,000, so ratepayers voted to rescind the former by-law and made an annual grant of $500 to the band.

With the expansion of the band and the necessity for uniforms and equipment, band members took a petition to the ratepayers in 1955, following which a vote was taken for a half mill grant and carried.

In 1940 A. H. Perrott of Georgetown was hired as band leader and the Acton Citizens' Band began to increase its membership. Today it is the only brass and reed band known to have its own drum section with 10 active members.

Routed by Roll

Mr. Mason when asked why he continues to blow for Acton, remarked: "It is the greatest pleasure I have in life and I enjoy band music and the fellowship of musicians and bandsmen."

He recalled an incident a few years ago at the Erin Fair when the Acton band was leading the stock parade. One of the big prize bulls became unruly and hard to manage. The band members dispersed in a hurry to allow the bull plenty of room to cool down!

Always ready and willing to appear at any community affair, band members are civic minded and strong boosters of sports and children's events as they turn out to parade he noted.

Along with the recently formed Junior Pipe Band, the Acton Citizens Band is making preparations for obtaining music suitable for the combined bands when they appear at concerts together.

All the Members

Listed are the present day members playing with the band. Names with an asterisk appearing after them were members of the Acton Boys' and Girls' Band.

Jim Green*, Aldo Brada*, George Elliott*, Ted Tyler Jr.*, Julian Zajac*, Charlie Kingsmill*, Ken Allen*, Bing Ramsden*, Frank Spielvogel*, Bill Patterson, Archie Kerr, Vic Carter, Gordon Padfield, Hughie O'Rourke, Gib Jordan, John Zion, Bill Taylor, Bill Spielvogel, Joe Seelen, Pete Edge, Tom Ulsh, Ian Johnson, Charlie Landsborough, Raymond Brada, George Smith, Ray Agnew, John McHugh, Elmer Smith, Jim Fienster, Gerald Wieck, Fred Carter, Charles Mason, with Lorne Wieck, president, Alf Perrott, bandmaster and Rudolph Spielvogel, assistant bandmaster.

ORGANIZED IN 1940 Acton Boys' and Girls' Junior Band is pictured in the uniforms presented to them by the Acton Y's Men's Club. The band in 1947 won first prize at competitions at the C.N.E. and Waterloo Musical Festival, under the leadership of Charles Mason, present member of Acton Citizens' Band. Some members of the Junior band are now playing in today's band.

—Staff Photos

ACTON'S EARLY BAND is seen in their uniforms as they lined up outside of where Hotchen's Bakery now stands. The picture was taken about the turn of the century and some of the members included in the picture are: Henry and Hilton Jeans, Herb Brown, Charles Mason, Bert Smith and George Agnew. Possibly some may recognize more of the members.

Learn of Influence Of Biblical Women

Mrs. Kerwin McPhail, president conducted the November meeting of the Daughters of Knox held in the Presbyterian church parlor.

Mrs. Lorne Masters, whose group was in charge, introduced the study concerning four women of the Bible and their influence on politics and religion. Mrs. Clifford Ashley gave the facts concerning Miriam, the first recorded songstress, and Mrs. E. A. Hansen told of the Queen of Sheba and her diplomacy in business dealings with King Solomon and her subsequent conversion to Christianity.

Mrs. Allan Holmes told of Rahab, who after a life of sin became a Christian and through her firm, unswerving faith was able to serve the cause of Christianity in many useful ways.

Judge of People

Mrs. Jim McKnight told of Deborah, whose life was unique in those times in that she became a woman of high authority, ultimately becoming a judge of the people.

Mrs. Lorne Masters led in prayer and the offering was dedicated by Miss Helen Holmes. Hymns suitable to Remembrance Day were included in the program.

Plans for the Christmas meeting in December were discussed and a donation was made to the C.G.I.T.

Lunch was served by the group in charge and a special feature of Norwegian smorgasbord prepared by Mrs. Kjill Martinsen and Mrs. Hans Martinsen was enjoyed by everyone.

Banff National Park, Canada's first, was established in 1885.

B. A. C.

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Mrs. C. Allan W.I. Hostess

The November meeting of Greenock Women's Institute was held on Wednesday evening of last week at the home of Mrs. Chester Allan, with a very good attendance of members. Mrs. Calvin Aitken presided and the meeting opened with a Remembrance poem read by Mrs. Ellwood Johnston.

Miss Pearen reported on the Tweedsmuir workshop which was held recently at Belwood with Mrs. Walker, R. R. 1, St. George, the provincial convener, as leader. The quilt block as suggested by Mrs. Walker was discussed and plans made to try this project; also a social evening was planned for later.

Mrs. Will Johnston, convener for citizenship and education, presented a fine program.

Program Presented

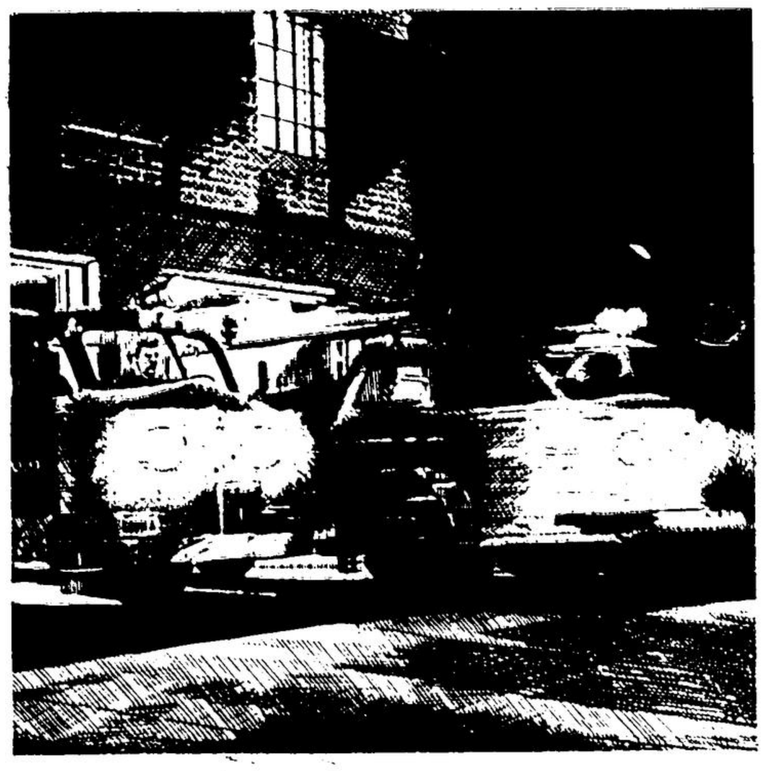
Mrs. Chester Allan spoke a few words on the motto, Time for Living. Mrs. T. Homeley gave a paper entitled Your Child Can Go to University.

Mrs. Ballentine read the provincial report on citizenship which explained many ways the members can, by their influence and support, help citizens to shoulder responsibility in civil defence, immigration, local traffic safety etc.

She gave the findings of the questionnaire on "drop outs" in education. From 60 to 70 per cent of the reports stated parental attitude as the dominant factor. Mrs. Ballentine concluded her paper by stating "May we, by our example in citizenship, keep the light of democracy burning so that not a shadow darkens our land and that a glimmer reaches to even the uttermost ends of the earth."

A reading by Mrs. Ellwood Johnston, It's A Fact, and community singing followed by a contest by Mrs. Will Johnston, with Mrs. Chester Allan as winner, brought the program to a close.

The Queen and Grace were sung, after which a social time was spent over the tea cups.



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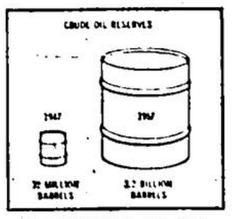

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ACTON

Writer in Observer Thankoffering Guest

The thankoffering meeting of the Woman's Missionary Society was held in the Sunday School room of the United church recently with the president, Miss M. Z. Bennett, presiding. She welcomed guests from Ballinafad, Rockwood, Ebenezer and the local churches.

The meeting opened with the reading of a portion of Psalm 23 Mrs. H. R. Force, assisted by Miss M. Mainprize, had the Thanksgiving worship period. A duet was sung by Mrs. B. Veldhuis and Miss D. Simmons, and a solo by Miss Betty Mae Fosbury.

Offering Dedicated

The offering was dedicated by Mrs. Gordon Johnson.

Mrs. H. Burns of Alliston introduced the guest speaker, Mrs. Shilton, the writer of "Prudence in the Parsonage" in the United Church Observer, who is also from Alliston. She gave a very interesting missionary talk.

Mrs. Shoemaker thanked the speaker and all those on the program. The meeting closed with a hymn and the Mizpah benediction.

Refreshments followed and a social time was spent together.

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W.M.S. Study Book Topic on Mexico

The Woman's Missionary Society of the United church met at the home of Mrs. Melvin Burns on Tuesday of last week. The president, Miss M. Z. Bennett, presided. The meeting opened with a hymn, prayer and the Lord's Prayer in unison.

Nominating committee is Mrs. H. R. Force and Miss M. Mainprize.

The worship service, Are Strangers Enemies?, was taken by Mrs. A. Shoemaker and her group. Miss Henderson, Mrs. Wm. Sterritt, Miss D. Simmons and Mrs. J. Lambert.

The study book, Concern of Our Continent, was read, giving a very interesting chapter on Mexico, which has a great variety of modes. It closed with a prayer by the writer of the extract.

The meeting closed with two minutes' silence in keeping with Armistice Day, a hymn and the Mizpah benediction.

Refreshments were served by the lunch committee of the month. The Christmas meeting will be at the home of Mrs. C. L. Poole in December. A vote of thanks was given to Mrs. Burns and Miss Simmons.

TOO MUCH HELP

"Over protection" of children from traffic hazards in school areas may be more dangerous than giving them no special protection at all. Dr. Fred W. Jeffrey on the Ontario Medical Association says that if children are overly protected in school areas, they may develop an attitude of carelessness that will make them less safety conscious, and so increase their vulnerability elsewhere. Concurring, the Ontario Safety League points out that at least nine out of every ten accidents to children occur away from school areas.