

Editorial Page

The Best Laid Plans

The lack of adequate recreational facilities in Acton has once again been emphasized by the necessity to cancel the Lions Club Ice Carnival. After many hours of planning and preparations for the carnival a spell of unseasonable weather forced the cancellation.

The advance sale of tickets for the event had almost met the promotional costs incurred to date. The club has shown a commendable attitude in their desire to refund the price of tickets if it is the purchaser's desire. It is our hope that the club, already obligated to pay expenses in connection with the carnival, will not be required to refund very many tickets.

The carnival was sponsored by the Lions Club to raise funds for the installation of artificial ice in the arena, which is the club's main project.

The completion of the artificial ice project will insure that such a situation will not occur again.

Two things are very obvious in regard to artificial ice and improved recreational facilities. The first is that we can not sit back and expect any person or organization to hand us these facilities without any effort on our part. The second obvious fact is that the project cannot be financed by the municipality, through taxation, for many years, if ever. With spiraling municipal and educational costs, it is foolhardy to expect the taxpayers to undertake this project.

The main, and at present only, hope is that the present facilities will be improved to such an extent that it is possible to bring them up to a standard, which when reached will make an artificial ice installation feasible.

After considerable investigation the public building committee of council has decided it is necessary to remove the front section of the arena, which houses the dressing rooms and washrooms. In its place would be erected new dressing rooms, washrooms and band room and a waiting room-auditorium. The benefits to be received by such a project should be very obvious. The main benefit, of course, would be the fact that we are preserving a paid for, sound building which would cost many thousands of dollars to replace and we are preparing the arena for the eventual installation of artificial ice.

The biggest problem of the whole project, of course, is financing. The council may be able to finance a portion. The council may be able to collect some grants on the project. The balance will have to be raised in some other manner. It is council's opinion the project could be completed for approximately \$25,000. We feel the difference between what council can raise and the cost of the project can be raised by an organized public canvass.

Will you financially support a campaign to pay for the first stage of an arena improvement program?

Write, wire or phone us - But don't just sit there.

Early Planning

Basic plans for celebrating Canada's 100th birthday in 1967 will be formulated in a matter of months, we are told. The news will be encouraging to any who have ever participated in centennial events and know the amount of work involved in preparation.

A government meeting and a meeting of private organizations is scheduled for April to establish "a meeting of minds" on many of the basic questions facing centenary planners.

On the government side, a 24-member federal-provincial committee, headed by Transport Minister Leon Balcer and Fisheries Minister Angus Maclean, will gather in the capital to discuss working group reports on the historical, cultural, ceremonial and administrative and financial aspects of the celebration.

At the same time, the Canadian Centenary Council, sponsored by the Canadian Citizenship Council and the association for adult education, will bring together representatives

of 99 private organizations covering "almost every facet of Canadian life" to study what contribution this group can best make to the nation's birthday party.

Both groups reported a steady flow of suggestions for centennial projects, mostly from individual Canadians. The government spokesman said his committee had received more than 100 proposals, ranging from holding of cultural competitions to the worldwide eradication of leprosy.

"It would take about two billion dollars to implement all of them," he said. "One of the big jobs now is to establish priorities among all these ideas."

The general feeling on all levels appears to favor a birthday party blending the gaiety and color of commercial events with the solemnity and dignity of the memorials to Canadian history. Perhaps 1967 would be a good time to dedicate that Halton County Museum that could be built up between now and then.

A "Weighty" Problem

It can be appreciated that our friend municipalities to the south are feeling a little "hard done by" in the voting power they represent on the county council.

As it stands Burlington, Trafalgar and Oakville hold four votes each in county council, yet they hold about 80 per cent of the assessment and 85 per cent of the county population within their borders. The northern municipalities control 16 votes and of course if a split based on sectionalism should develop, the north is a shoo-in winner.

The situation isn't as bad as we might be led to believe since sectionalism doesn't play the part in county politics it once did. Of course the south had the voting power too before municipalities like Bronte and Nelson Township started disappearing. The amalgamation of Trafalgar and Oakville of course will serve to aggravate the problem.

The voting power should be rectified. With that we can't argue. But we do feel it shouldn't be on the basis of assessment or population. Quite obviously northern municipalities wouldn't even have a vocal balance of votes. The act that presently sets out county representation does so mainly by municipality and partially by population. The feeling apparently is that while every municipality must have votes the bigger ones are entitled to a slight edge. This seems satisfactory and much more reasonable than basing voting power on such unbalanced figures as population or assessment.

With the expansion of the county administrative unit into more and more services it increases in importance. Representation on the Council that will direct that unit is not something to be taken lightly and the development of the "representation formula" will be a significant move.

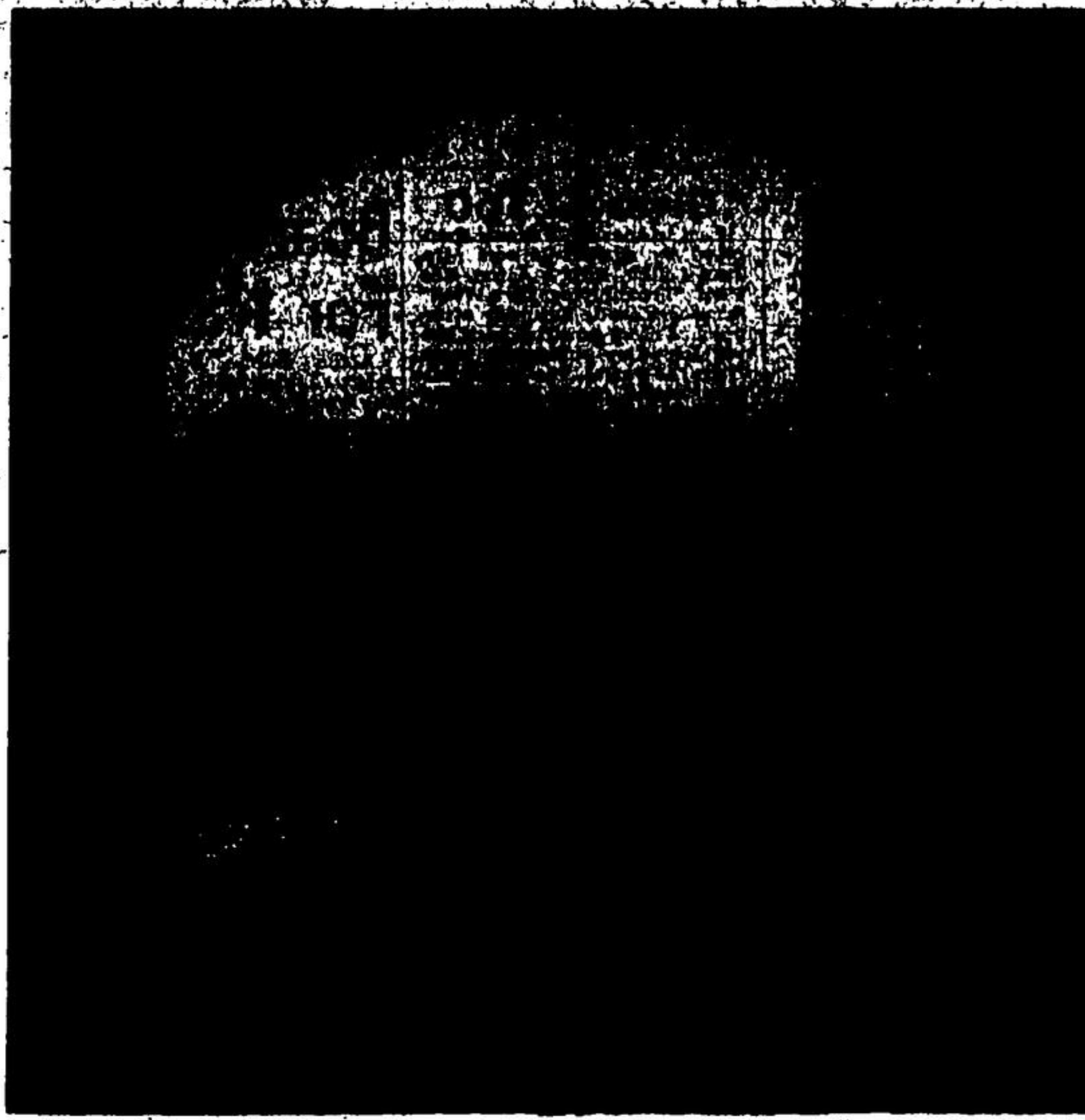
Plenty of Scope

The results of the Dominion-Provincial fiscal conference in Ottawa recently are not too reassuring as far as the taxpayers are concerned. It's much too early to predict the net results of the new agreements and proposals but there is a great deal of talk about application of a provincial sales tax in the near future. The whole problem of taxation is a vexing one, not only for those who have to pay the shot, but for government officials as well. It would be hard to imagine a more

thankless task than that of attempting to meet all the demands of the Canadian public and at the same time having due regard for the squeals of pain at every tax increase.

The truth is that we have become a nation of grant-seekers. We expect our federal and provincial governments to provide handouts for every local project we undertake - yet somehow we always manage to convince ourselves that the money will come out of someone else's pocket.

"March Vista"



—Photo by Esther Taylor

Sugar and Spice...

BY BILL SMILEY



Couple of weeks ago, I suggested, with the delicacy of a Percheron, that it might be a good idea if I got some fan mail. Just a token—about a million letters. We were going to show that Pierre Berton, with his average of 30 letters a day, what real fan mail was. We were going to fill a truck with letters, drive to the city, dump the entire million in his office, and sneer, "There! Howd'ya like THEM apples, Buster?"

Well, all I can say is that I'm going to look pretty silly, pushing a wheelbarrow full of letters down that highway.

Come to think of it, though, we didn't do so badly. Berton writes a column a day, and gets 30 letters. I write a column a week, and I got 151 letters. Putting it roughly, I get five times as much fan mail as Pierre Berton. Say, this is sounding better all the time. Who does that guy think he is, anyway?

As I write, the letters are coming in at the rate of about 10 a day. We topped 25 three days in a row. I've never had such interesting mail in my life. Main reason is because it's all about me.

Mighty flattering it was when the first letters were from newspaper people who read the column before it gets into their papers. One of the first to arrive was from Art Revhdal of

Atikokan, a linotype operator who writes better than most editors. Various typed pages, lively and sardonic as only a lino operator can be.

Oddly enough, two of the earliest arrivals were from readers of the most faraway paper on the list, the Whitehorse (Yukon) Star. Fred Heck sent a pleasant note and Rgsy Erlam kept it to a brief "I'm witcha, boy".

from all directions — the west coast; the Maritimes; the prairie provinces, Ontario and Quebec, and a dozen or two different places in the States.

It's pretty exciting to know that Ted and Ruby Midgley are reading your column in their trailer in Chula Vista, California, just about the same time Molly Blackburn of Middle Musquodubi, Nova Scotia, is picking up her local weekly to have a look at Sugar and Spice.

Mrs. Lilas Gillet, a Swiss-born lady who lives Canada, scans it in Warwick, Quebec, before sending it to her son in England, and Madeline Vander Zanden, right across the continent in Forest Grove, Oregon, flips through the Red Deer Advocate to get at the column.

It's thrilling to know that you pack enough punch to make harassed housewives kick the kids out of the way, sit down among the breakfast dishes, and pen a note of encouragement to "keep it coming."

G.A.D. About

The School Creek

Fifty years ago when I went to school and crossed over the school creek, it was a placid little stream, its banks bordered with pine trees. It just trickled along. In winter a small section froze over, just enough to slide on. Sometimes we fell down on it and more than likely broke the slate that we carried to and from school.

The other day I watched the stream with its banks full all most to overflowing. The trees are all gone but there seemed to be more water passing along than I ever remembered in my school days. Perhaps the reason is that there is no more Henderson's Pond to store the spring freshet for summer. It was one of the favorite spots for swimming.

In the spring, the boys could catch suckers with their hands. I'm told that at the time there was good trout fishing in the stream, but of course that was before the suckers got into the stream. The stream is back to normal again now. In the meantime, we have other water problems, so perhaps I had better switch to another line of thought.

Always popular down through

Roger Hartzel of Neepawa, Manitoba, along with about 50 others, wonders how The Old Battleaxe likes being called The Old Battleaxe. As a matter of fact, she rather enjoys it. She's a pretty sharp-looking doll, and it makes her glow a bit when she meets strangers and they exclaim "OLD BATTLEAXE!" in amazement.

There's a good chance that she's going to have to be at her best to hold me, though. Now that I'm a popular idol, with 151 letters, she's going to have competition. One lady wrote to say that if I ever went farming, she'd go into partnership with me. Another said I was better looking than she'd expected and that she just loved me.

She rather spoiled it by adding that she sends the paper each week to her granddaughter. Still another stated flatly, "Any time your Old Girl leaves you, I shall be waiting here with a beer to cheer, Old Maid."

It's amazing—but no news to weekly editors—how far some papers travel. Mrs. Lillian Smith of Leader, Sask., sends her paper to her children in Seattle, and from there it goes to California. Many others reported similar skulduggery.

I was deeply hurt that I received only one letter from my old home town of Winton. It was from Bert Sinclair, town clerk, and read, "Dear Bill, thanks for putting your address in your column. We didn't have it here at the office. This is not exactly a fan letter. It is just to inform you that your 1960 taxes are still owing plus \$5.82 interest. I'm planning to answer your letter, and I can assure you that one is going to the bottom of the pile."

I can't begin to pass along all the messages I received but will only add that they were generous, kind and interesting. There wasn't a scurrilous one in the lot. Thank you, gentle readers, with all my heart. It's pretty nice to know that, while there may not be any great demand for me in Hollywood, London or New York, they wait for me in Wainford, go for me in Georgetown, eat me up in Eganville, hang out my every word in Hantsport, and love me in Leader.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

BACK IN 1911

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, March 9, 1911. Sawdust has been shipped in from Toronto recently and it is rather a novel thing for this to happen when Acton has two saw mills of its own. However, the ice dealers are having a difficult time getting enough sawdust for ice storage and are buying it from Toronto.

In response to the advertisement for an electricist to succeed Ernest Macklin, who has performed the town duties for the past four years, 29 applications were received. The salaries ranged from \$540 to \$1200. During a special meeting Saturday afternoon, the applications were carefully considered.

The application of George Snoddy, St. Mary's, was finally decided upon. Mr. Snoddy made a personal application and was engaged on a trial basis for 30 days with the understanding that if he is satisfactory, the job will be of a permanent nature. The salary is to be \$625 per annum. The sap is beginning to run and several of the previous making maple syrup. The market for the product has grown so expansive that manufacturers are determined to prevent any adulteration of the product at all possible.

A Toronto brewery on Monday decided to come to trial absence on its employees. Every person connected with the establishment was refused permission to drink beer on the premises.

Last week, four tramps were arrested in town and later one of them was taken to Brampton to answer serious charges. They were locked up in the cells overnight.

The meeting of the Women's Institute in the council chamber last week was an occasion of much interest and was well attended. Since the previous meeting a new organ was purchased and this gave new interest to the musical part of the proceedings. In the competition for mending, first prize was given to Mrs. G. A. Black and the second prize to Mrs. Joseph Agnew. For darning, Mrs. E. K. Cook won first and Mrs. (Dr.) Gray won second.

BACK IN 1941

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, March 13, 1941.

During the council meeting Thursday evening, three councillors tendered their resignations and the people of Acton will be asked to nominate three new men on Monday to fill the positions. If an election is necessary, it will be held the following week. Council also approved a by-law naming E. T. Herford as town treasurer at a yearly salary of \$100.

Manager W. K. Graham of the Bank of Nova Scotia, along with his staff, moved into the new building erected next to E. J. Bassett's drug store. The interior of the building is of modern design and the closed-in teller's cage has been removed and an open type used.

Among the graduates at Up-lands R.C.A.F. Station who received their wings last week was Bert Hinton of Acton. He was one of 27 to receive this honor and is now known as Leading Aircraftman Pilot H. H. Hinton. He has been home on leave since graduation, subject to call for service at any time.

Norval Monarchs and the Beadmore team will meet this weekend to fight it out for the hockey championship in the Bush League. The Beadmore team pulled their chance to meet the league leading Monarchs when they defeated Milton Bruins 4-1 last night in the arena.

Members of the Y.M.C.A. have been very active the past week and especially the Senior Badminton club. They have played against Lergus, Port Credit and Guelph and on each occasion came out the victors. Tonight the club plays host to St. Paul's United Church team when some interesting games are planned.

Tuesday's snow storm made it necessary to get the plows out again and clear the roads and highways. Earlier in the week, the sun was shining brightly and the weather appeared to be heading toward spring.

Grade eight pupils at the Acton public school are in Toronto today visiting Queen's Park and the museum.

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