

The old organ in the parlor...

Remember back in the days when almost every parlor had its own organ, a beautiful wooden cabinet with a fascinating range of stops above the keyboard? At foot level there'd be two large foot pumps, which when depressed simultaneously with the keyboard, would produce tone with such grand names as fortissimo, crescendo and pianissimo.

For a small boy it was a fascinating instrument and a source of amusement while granddads and grandmas entertained. It seemed to go with the decor of the room which had large prints of Lord Kitchener and King George on the walls, bearded and forbidding leaders of another age.

These strict patricians looked sternly at the small boy who fiddled with the stops, experimented with tunes like "The Old Spinning Wheel in the Parlor", "Old Black Joe" or "Pack Up Your Troubles".

Occasionally when the mood hit them on a Sunday the company would

assemble in the parlor on the floral patterned rug, gather 'round the organ and sing, with a thunderous accompaniment, the hymns which lifted spirits and provided sustenance for another long week of labor. The sabbath would never be profaned by popular songs like "Red Sails in the Sunset" or "There's a Gold Mine in the Sky", which came from the mental radio of the day.

The grand old parlor organ gave way to the piano, which in turn went into decline for the television set.

Now there's a swing back in the other direction. Home Goods Retailing says keyboard music, which now covers everything from the low priced chord organ to the electronic unit at \$2,000 or more is growing steadily in Canada. "The syngers", says one manufacturer, "like the organ sound".

Customs, methods and manners may undergo some drastic overhauling but the swingers of another age probably figure tastes really don't change much.



View from the Crescent bridge

Free Press Editorial Page

First impressions...

Nothing creates as good an impression on a stranger in a community as the way in which he is greeted as he visits local places of business.

Commenting on the matter, the St. Marys Journal-Argus tells of the reaction of a visitor to that town.

"With more new people moving into our community as time goes on, the merchants of the community should be more than ever aware of the need to serve to the very best of their ability — not only through the wide variety of goods they offer, but in the unique personal service given by themselves or their employees."

"This past week we had a chat about this very matter with a man who is relatively new to the community. He has been most pleased with the service he has been given in some local outlets,

but in more than one case he has found a place where he states: "The attitude is bad."

"By this he means that a few stores and places of service take a very short sighted attitude when it comes to encouraging new business. If a person is a regular customer they are warmly greeted. If a comparative stranger or newcomer enters the establishment, and if by chance they are just shopping or browsing, they are often given anything but a welcome treatment.

"One weak link in the chain of service offered means that there is a reflection of poor reputation rubbing off on everyone.

"Unfortunately, a few short-sighted persons have to be reminded quite often concerning the disservice they are performing on behalf of all."

Psychedelic experience...

Teen-age music? Don't hold up your hands in horror. If you haven't done the frug, the twist, the monkey or maybe the Freddy, accompanied by a "group" — you haven't lived.

Remember back when you danced the fox trot? Smooth, dreamy, music. How about a fast, lively polka. Or maybe you could do a pretty mean schottische.

It's passe now in the lively circles. No more holding a gal or guy close.

The idea now is to exercise. You shake your head, wiggle your shoulders, get those arms revolving in their sockets, sway with the beat and look like a Beetle or a Supreme.

It's healthy for everybody — band included. Some groups can play on their heads. Others would make snakes envious of their wiggle.

It's the end product which counts, though.

I inveighed against the noise coming from one particular radio station for the kids one day. They stopped shaking and wiggling for a moment.

"If you don't like it why are you snapping your fingers and keeping the beat with your feet?" they wanted to know.

Darned if I could think of a good answer.

Sugar and Spice

by Bill Smiley



It was quite a blow to me to read recently that the Warton Town Hall had been destroyed by fire. Admittedly, the catastrophe didn't rank with Hiroshima, or the San Francisco earthquake, or even Hurricane Hazel, but it hit me pretty hard.

It was rather like reading of the sudden death of an old girl friend. You knew she had gone to fat and drink. But you could remember when, at her best, she was the heart of your life.

A lot of personal memories came crowding back when I read about it. That ugly old building with the shaky tower on top was one of the hubs of my existence for more than a decade at a special time in my life.

It was when I was young and my family was young and I was learning the newspaper business. I didn't have a mistress. I didn't hang around the pubs. I didn't take part in all-night poker sessions. I just went to the town hall. I spent more nights in its council chamber, crouched over the rickety press table, than I did with my family.

On more than one occasion, my spouse, a tender young wife and mother, displayed psychoneurotic tendencies toward the old town hall. At least twice she suggested I move a cot into the council chambers and not bother darkening her bedroom door.

I'll bet I attended more than a thousand meetings in that town hall. It was the only non-denominational meeting place in town, and it was there that great causes were launched and collapsed; that political careers were begun and ended; that human triumphs and tragedies were recorded. And I was in on all of it.

It was a regular breeding ground for lost causes and last-ditch battles. We fought such behemoths as the CNR and the government; we lost. We battled to salvage moribund industries with heavy transfusions of local cash; and some of us are still anemic.

But a lot of good, positive work was done there, too. The commercial fishermen, the farmers, the resort owners and the merchants met there, fought with

each other, but emerged united in each case, to fight for their existence, and the betterment of the area.

Another function of the council chamber was that of court room. This was one that I didn't mind seeing go up in smoke. It's the only time the council chamber smelled bad — on court day. Most of the time it smelled dusty, waxy, and cigar-smoky and just plain old. But on court days it stank: hangovers, puke, fear, shame, curiosity and the law.

But that was only one part of the old town hall. Across from the council chamber was the auditorium. And what memories that brings back! Concerts, plays, recitals, dances and political meetings. It even had a balcony where elderly ladies could watch the Sailors Farewell Dance in comparative safety.

Our children made their public debuts there. I'll never forget the night Kim, age three, dressed in a bunny costume, spotted me in the audience, burst out of the dance line, and hurled herself into my arms.

Or the night Hugh, about nine, won the grand prize in the music festival, even though two of the notes on the piano did not sound.

Or the night I was an unwitting sucker in an elaborate practical joke, at a concert. I was to pretend I was playing a trumpet solo, while a real trumpeter played the piece off-stage. He double-crossed me. Warned the audience what was going to happen, and when I went into my routine, no sound. Felt like a fool.

Or the nights the old girl and I stumbled through our lines with the local little theatre group. Or the great New Year's Eve dances, when the whole town was out, flying. Got a sock in the eye at one of them when I Auld-Lang-Syne'd a pretty young matron in the usual fashion. Not from her. From my wife.

Town halls, those great, ugly, draughty chapters in our history, are burning down, falling down or being torn down. They are being replaced by modern, efficient "municipal offices", which have about as much tradition, humanity and warmth as a filing cabinet.

Editorial notes

Taxes bear down heavily on all Canadians these days. If you add up what Canadians pay out in personal income taxes, plus all the indirect and hidden taxes wrapped up in the price of goods and services, along with the various sales taxes, it would amount to more than a third of every dollar earned, for most Canadians.

In several recent traffic accident liability suits in the U.S. the chance to recover damages has been lost, or diminished, because the victim had a seat belt available but did not use it. The Ontario Safety League reports that one judge said: "According to the law, new cars sold must have seat belts. It must follow that the legislature intended that these belts be used." If this becomes an established factor in assessing liability claims, many drivers who refuse to wear seat belts to protect their lives may buckle up to protect their pocket books.

Free Press

back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Acton Free Press, Thursday, February 20, 1947.

The regular meeting of Acton Council on Monday evening was a brief one. With Reeve McCutcheon and all the councillors present, Mr. Hoose of War-time Housing gave details of the obligation and agreement of the municipality if these houses were provided. Complete copies of the agreement were furnished and photos of the houses and all details. A motion was passed by Council authorizing the reeve and clerk to sign an agreement with the War-time Housing to erect 50 houses in Acton.

At the home of Mrs. William Arnold on Wednesday there was held a social evening in honor of a bride of the week. The highlight of the event was the presentation of a gift to Miss Helen Manill by the ladies of St. Joseph's Church. Miss Manill is a native of Greenock Scotland and became the bride of Michael McMillan last Saturday.

The regular monthly meeting of the Scout and Guide Mothers' Association was held at the home of Mrs. L. Agar with the tanneries of Beardmore and Co. in the chair. Final plans were made for the St. Patrick's Dance to be held next month. The hostess served a delicious cup of tea and sandwiches.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Acton Free Press, Thursday, February 15, 1917.

The tanneries are busy harvesting their crop, which is a good one.

The dance and euchre under the auspices of the I.O.D.E. in the Town Hall provided an enjoyable means of commemorating Valentine's Day for many.

Messrs. McLean and Conway, of Uxbridge, who have purchased the well established business of Henderson and Co., arrived and the store has been closed since Monday for stocktaking.

The tanneries of Beardmore and Co. and Acton Tanning Co. are having considerable difficulty getting coal. Unless coal reaches here at once it seems as if the tanneries will be forced to close.

Dr. G. B. Carbert, of Campbellville, received official notice from Ottawa on Monday that his son, Captain Charles Molyneux Carbert, Military Cross, had been killed in action last week. Captain Carbert was reported missing February 1. He was twenty-two years of age.

Mr. James B. Lawson, Ph.M.B., left for Toronto today, where he will report to the A.M.C., to which unit he has enlisted. He will take the rank of Sergeant and will be in the dispensary department.

The Berliner Journal, published in Kitchener, has changed its name to the Ontario Journal.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Acton Free Press, Thursday, February 16, 1892.

The tanneries are getting in enormous quantities of bark just now. There were between fifty and sixty carloads on the sidings on Saturday night.

The northern heavens on Saturday night were resplendent with the touch of nature. The scene was unique and attracted the attention of all who were on the streets between 7 and 8 p.m. Directly north the aurora borealis was shining with all its mid-winter brilliance, and was illuminated with rays of rich coloring of various hues.

A very interesting event took place at the residence of Richard Graham, Esq., Ashgrove, on Wednesday afternoon, 10th inst. The day was one of the brightest that our Canadian winter affords. The occasion was the marriage of their daughter, Jennie, to Mr. N. F. Lindsay, of Acton. The bride was assisted by her cousin, Miss S. Price, of Burnhamthorpe. The former was handsomely attired in garnet silk with veil and orange blossoms; the latter in cashmere of the same color. Each carried a magnificent bouquet of roses. Mr. Lindsay was attended by his brother, Mr. J. R. Lindsay. The ceremony was performed by Rev. R. Davey, assisted by the Rev. T. Gee and Rev. D. M. Buchanan, in the presence of about seventy guests. The presents were numerous and very choice. After partaking of a sumptuous repast, the afternoon was spent pleasantly in social entertainment. Mr. and Mrs. Lindsay took the 6.30 p.m. train for Montreal. Their bridal tour will extend to Boston, New York and other American cities.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Canadian Champion, Milton, February 21, 1867.

At a meeting of the Nassagaweya Agricultural Society held at Lyon's Hotel, it was moved by Peter McGregor and seconded by Thomas Elliott that the fall exposition will be open to the adjoining townships by paying \$1 before May 1 or \$1.75 after that date. It was moved by T. M. Taylor, seconded by John Cargill that a plowing match be held in the fall, and be open to the neighboring townships. The fee for membership in the Society can be paid to any of the following: James Peddie, John Cargill, Peter Gould, Christopher Moffat, S. R. Lister, Peter McGregor, Nicholas Norrish, William Burrows, T. M. Taylor, George Stark, Lawrence Smitten, or to the secretary of the Society, John Kean.

The recent thaw has caused great freshets, which have carried away near Oakville two bridges and an quantity of flour. In many places the water was deep on the roads.

Free Press

Church News

ACTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Founded 1842
Pastor: Rev. Stanley Gammon
Res. 144 Tidey Ave., Ph. 853-1615

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1967
10.00 a.m.—Church School and Adult Class.

11.15 a.m.—Morning Worship. "Eternal Comparisons."

7.00 p.m.—Evening Service. "From Fear to Faith". Film strip. African Boy Goes Home.

Come and share the blessings of our evenings.

Tuesday—February 28—The Rev. Lloyd Pierce will tell of trip to Germany.

World Evangelism. The community and district are invited. Mr. Pierce will also show slides. Come early if you want a seat.

Wednesday—Prayer and Bible Study 7.30
Thursday—Explorers at 6.30
Friday—B.H.F. at 7.00 p.m.

Saturday—March 4—Overseas Mission Rally. Highland Rd. Baptist, Kitchener.

Text for the week: "If ye forgive not... neither will your Father forgive." Matt. 6:15

BETH-EL CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Acton, Ontario.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1967
10.00 a.m.—English Service.
11.10 a.m.—Sunday School.
2.30 p.m.—Alternating Dutch and English Service.

Saturday—Bible Classes, 10-12.30 a.m. Everyone Welcome

MAPLE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH

(Georgetown)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1967
9.45 a.m.—Sunday School.
11.00 a.m.—Morning Service.
7.00 p.m.—Evening Service.
Wednesday, 8 p.m.—Prayer meeting.
Acton 853-1956 Georgetown 877-6665

EVANGEL PENTECOSTAL TABERNACLE
P.A.O.C. 33 Churchill Road
Rev. S. M. Thoman, Pastor, 853-2715

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1967
10.00 a.m.—Sunday School.
11.00 a.m.—Morning Worship.
7.00 p.m.—Evangelistic Service.
The Western Ontario District Superintendent of P.A.O.C., Rev. Don Expansions will be guest speak at both the a.m. and p.m. services.
Tuesday, 8 p.m.—Prayer and Bible Study.
Thursday, 8 p.m.—Christ Ambassadors.
Friday, 6.45 p.m.—Crusaders.

TRINITY CHURCH

(The United Church of Canada)

Minister: Rev. Dwight I. Engel, B.A., B.D.
Organist: Mr. George Elliott, M.A., Ph.D.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1967

SUNDAY SCHOOL
10.00 a.m.—Junior School (to Gr. 4).
11.15 a.m.—Senior School (Gr. 5 to Gr. 8).

SERVICES
10.00 a.m.—Trinity Church Acton. (Nursery provided.)
11.15 a.m.—Churchill Church (Churchill Rd. N.)

Sermon Subject: "Lenten Psalms 3. 'Let My People Go.'"
8.00 p.m.—Adult Instruction Class. "The Doctrine of God."

All Welcome

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA
KNOX CHURCH, ACTON
Rev. Andrew H. McKenzie, B.A., B.D.
Minister

Mr. E. A. Hansen, B.A.
Organist and Choir Master

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1967
9.45 a.m.—Church School for ages 3 to 15.
9.45 a.m.—Church Membership Class For Teenagers.
11.00 a.m.—Divine Worship. Sermon Theme: "Enough and to Spare."
7.30 p.m.—Youth Fellowship meeting. Everyone Most Welcome.

THE CHURCH OF ST. ALBAN THE MARTYR
ANGLICAN

Corner Willow St. and St. Alban's Drive
Rev. Ritchie McMurray, M.A., S.T.B.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22
7.30 p.m.—Holy Eucharist and Address.
The Wednesday evening services during Lent are being conducted by the Reverend Eric Mills, the new Rector of St. George's Church, Georgetown.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1967
Lent III

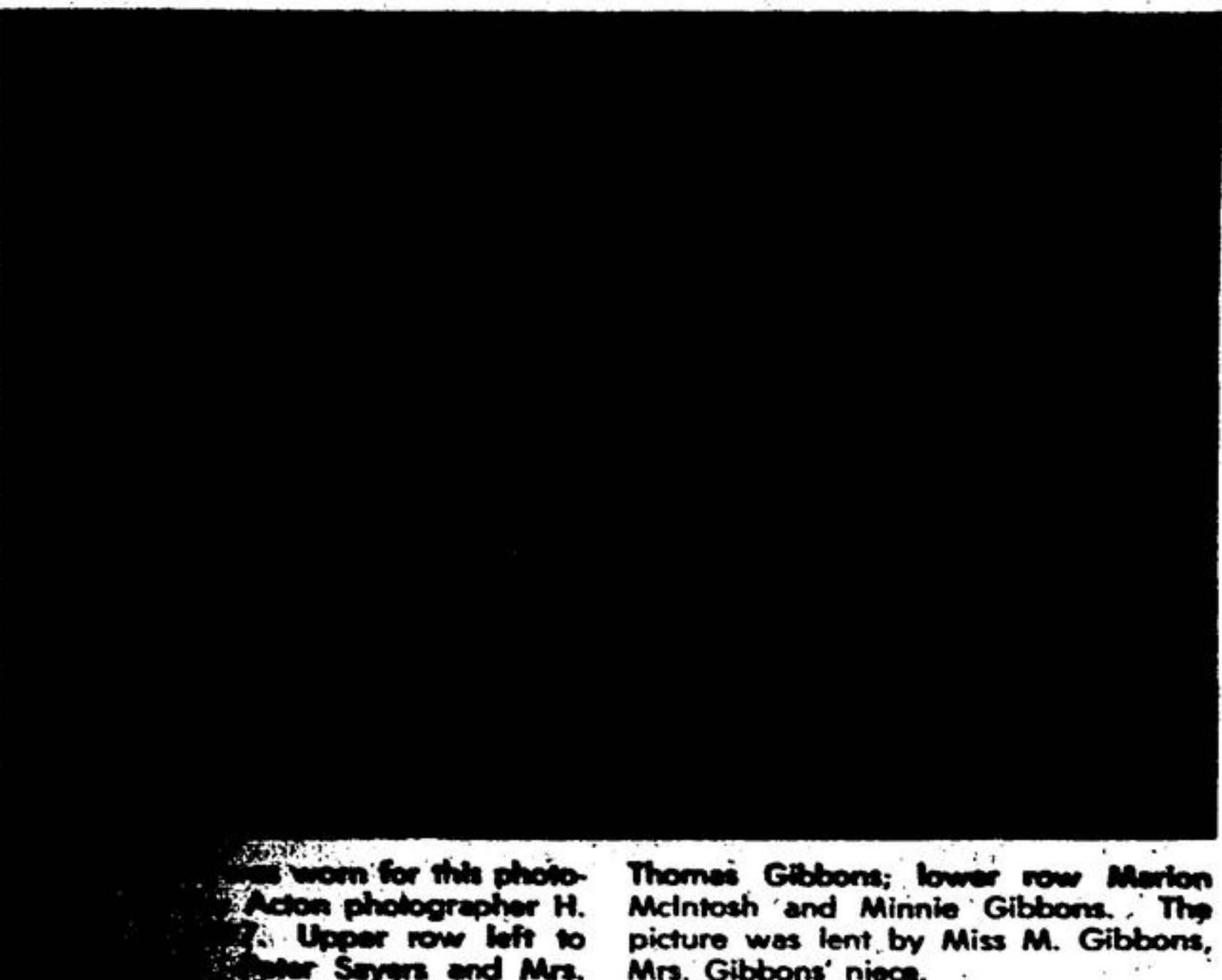
9.00 a.m.—Holy Eucharist.
10.30 a.m.—Church School.
10.30 a.m.—Matins. Address on the Rev. E. Harrison's book, "A Church Without God."

7.00 p.m.—The Rise of Confirmation will be administered by the Right Rev. C. R. E. Wilkinson, Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Niagara.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22
10.00 a.m.—Holy Eucharist.



Centennial Picture Gallery



Photom for this photo: Acton photographer H. Upper row left to right Sayers and Mrs. Thomas Gibbons; lower row Marion McIntosh and Minnie Gibbons. The picture was lent by Miss M. Gibbons, Mrs. Gibbons' niece.