

## We're being short changed...

Objections to the proposed closing of the Acton C.N.R. station will be heard at a public hearing in the council chambers here Thursday, October 17. Outcome of the hearing could seriously affect the future of Acton.

There has been a tendency on the part of some citizens to pooh-pooh the suggestion that closing the station here will have any bearing on the town or its residents. They point out few people use the railway's services now. The era of the railway is past, they claim.

We think this is a shortsighted view.

It is true, few use the railway's services now, compared to a few years ago. Why? Few of the former services exist.

The C.N.R. has gradually withdrawn passenger service. Only two trains stop here each day, one each way. If those trains don't fit into your schedule you are forced to look for some other means of transportation.

Express? Some businessmen claim the service from Guelph is better but they are few. Others have said publicly that the service is now so poor they were forced to use other means of transport.

Freight? The once prosperous freight business here has dissipated but there is still enough to warrant a full time man at the station.

The C.N.R. proposes to run the

whole business from a master agency in Guelph, which the railway has been doing since last November in the case of freight and express. Passengers have still been able to board trains here when they stopped.

There has been a concentrated effort to supply good service from the master agency because the railway has to have a case to present to the Canadian Transport Board. Imagine what could happen if the railway wins its case to close the station.

The time is coming when highways will become so congested some alternate route of travel is almost a necessity. That service will not be available here if the station is closed. You can kiss the GO trains goodbye as well. If the station is gone you can bet the service will never extend this far.

This seems to be the answer the railway has for the future. Close stations before the passengers arrive.

It's true, of course, the C.N.R. must run an operation that pays for itself in the most economical way possible. But as a publicly owned company they are also obliged to supply taxpayers with service. You pay the same kind of taxes to subsidize the operation as the city dweller.

Otherwise we are being shortchanged.



**THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER** sheds a tear for days when the sun shone warmly on its petals and the dew sparkled like a diadem on leaves in the early morning mist. Soon frost will leave a path of destruction over fertile gardens while autumn ushers in the stillness of winter. (Staff Photo)

## Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, October 7, 1948.

Fall Fairs are over. There is just Thanksgiving and the Plowing Matches to divert attention from the Christmas shopping preparations.

Rehearsals are underway for "Fun for You" local talent show sponsored by the Y's Men's Club Thursday and Friday of next week at the town hall. The proceeds from this production go to the Acton Swimming Pool campaign.

A hay stack fire near the buildings on Victoria Ave. gave Acton Brigade a Sunday morning call. It was soon extinguished when a couple of lines of hose were laid from the pumper.

If the old tradition holds true that "winter does not come until the swamps are full" we can anticipate a long autumn with a lot more wet weather than we have been having.

The weather was the deciding factor with Acton Fair on Saturday and perhaps the afternoon was the most unsuitable for out-of-doors of any this past two months. It didn't rain but it was cold and dull.

A fire about eight o'clock last night destroyed a storage shed at the rear of the Acton Creamery and for a few minutes threatened a section of the business district of the town.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, October 5, 1893.

The Revised Version breathes there a man with soul so dead, who never to himself had said, I will my local paper take, both for myself and family's sake? If such there be let him repent, and have the paper to him sent; and if he'll spend a happy winter, he in advance, will pay the printer.

Last Thursday evening the usual prayer meeting in the Methodist Church took the form of a service with old hymns of the church. Nearly every chair in the school room was occupied, the choir was present and also the Sunday School orchestra. A selection of grand old hymns so popular a generation ago was sung, some of them being engaged in with unusual fervor. An interesting event in the proceedings of the evening was a presentation to Mr. J. C. Hill, the leader of the choir and Miss Lottie E. Speight, the organist. Following the addresses, they were presented with a beautifully carved and finished oak exhortoire, with chair to match, to each.

Another new house is in the course of erection on Lake Avenue.

Choice Groceries, Crockery and Glassware at T. H. Harding's, Acton.

100 years ago

The great success of the Toronto Exhibition is in no way better exemplified than in the vast receipts of the Great Western Railway, which were during the Fair week \$103,684. This was the largest sum ever received for one week's traffic. Number of passengers last week was 56,000, of whom 41,632 were visitors to the Fair, and all conveyed without the slightest accident.

On Saturday last we had the pleasure of a call from Dr. Burgess Book, formerly a pupil of the Milton Grammar School, but now of Detroit. The Doctor was on his way to Europe, where he proposes to spend about a year in selecting materials for the Museum of a Medical College to be commenced in Detroit. Dr. Book, although but twenty-five years of age, has secured a leading position in his profession, and has been selected by the medical men of his city to perform this very responsible commission. He will probably accept a professorship in the new Institution when he returns. It will give his numerous friends in Trafalgar as much pleasure to hear of his success as it does his former preceptor to chronicle it.

Our friend of the Brampton Review is getting rather fast, and some of his friends will do him a kindness if they place him in a straight-jacket until reason resumes her sway. For a striking sample of his rashness see Mr. Logue's letter in another column.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, October 10, 1918.

Canada may follow the lead of the United States in prohibiting the use of hard coal before December 1. The strong probability is that Canada will have a somewhat serious shortage of hard coal for the coming winter. For the two months of October and November every home should, so far as possible, confine heating materials to wood, soft coal, oil or electricity, thus saving the hard coal for the severer months of midwinter.

So far no cases of Spanish Influenza which is sweeping the country have been reported in Acton. Neighboring towns and cities however, seem to be overrun with this disease that is causing so many deaths and seems to be beyond the control of all medical skill when in a certain stage. Georgetown and Burlington have a large number of cases and several deaths in these places have resulted from the epidemic.

Among those from Acton who attended Georgetown Fair we noticed; Dr. John Lawson and family, Messrs. J. R. Livingstone, L. Worden, George Elliott, Will Ross; George Somerville, Frank Holmes, Mrs. E. J. Gamble and Miss Irene Snyder, Olla B. Armstrong and Hattie Lindsay.

## Salt and Pepper

by hartley coles



Police in this country and the United States are taking a beating at the hands of the press and other media for alleged brutality. Victims in what usually is some form of social protest have been beaten by night sticks, set on by dogs and sometimes dispersed by tear gas and the new gas, mace.

In some cities law enforcement officers use fire hoses to spray yuppies and hippies with streams of water. Although it is an effective method, the yips and the hips object more to taking a bath than to being routed.

We've got few flower people around here. Police don't have to form cordons to protect political figures. Occasionally, though, we do experience some gang trouble.

This summer, for instance, some young touse-heads from Georgetown and their counterparts from Acton, staged a long war. It progressed from "my father can beat up your old man" to "we'll beat the tar out of you guys."

What the fellas were really saying was—"It's hot, I'm bored—let's start some trouble. So they did.

One night during the summer recess they chose a dance in the community centre, designed for teenyboppers, to start a rumble. A rumble if you are not up on the subject is another word for the old fashioned donnybrook, with overtones on the real rough stuff... bicycle chains and tire irons, etc.

Back in the pioneer era the village constable, if there was one, used to have the same trouble. With whisky cheap, boots big, tempers fierce, and the fiddler knocking out a tune that had every foot stomping, the boys sometimes went from feeling their oats to bashing the tar out of one another.

The village peace officer, who on top of duties usually kept weeds down, cut the park grass, dug the graves in the cemetery, acted as peacemaker in domestic squabbles, caught runaway horses, built sidewalks, kept the errand on the straight and narrow, usually reacted to the scene with indifference. Most of the participants showed up looking shame-faced the next

day with a loose tooth or a mousy eye in lieu of medals for bravery.

On this particular rumble the police were called to the community centre. They broke the festivities up, told the young lions to go home and do their knitting. In return, they got a lot of sauce.

The next week the two gangs decided a return engagement would be in order. We happened to be parked at a local eating establishment when the clan began to gather. We counted 13 cars, most of them crammed full of youths from our neighbors to the east.

Meanwhile the O.P.P. had got wind of possible trouble brewing. It wasn't long until the "fuzz" showed up—two cruisers and three constables. Poor odds against 13 cars.

Two of the officers got out of the cruisers and strolled into the midst of the assembly. After a few quiet words, which we were unable to catch since we were out of earshot, the assembly dissolved. Cars started to move away. Back home? Nope—they merely drove across the road and reassembled on a service station parking lot.

With this kind of provocation you'd expect the police would do a slow burn. They probably would have liked to aim a few well placed kicks at a few derriers. But they showed no anger.

Displaying a forbearance which could only have come from long training and experience, the officers merely repeated the "get moving" boys bit and searched some of the more vituperative for jungle juice.

The convoy wasn't long in heading back home. The calm assertiveness of the police broke up—for awhile, anyway—an accident where someone quite possibly could have been seriously hurt.

You can't help comparing episodes like this to the explosive situations in places where the use of uncalled for force has precipitated nasty and brutal retaliation. Tolerance and efficiency prevented what could have been an incident where youths might have ended up behind bars.

## Free Press Editorial Page

### A two sided coin...

Esquering Township Council has a reputation of being astute and when it was proposed to that group recently that they "go into the water business" to serve Milton Heights and Milton Brick, they were not quick to accept or reject the proposal.

The very valid suggestion was presented to the township councillors as offering an opportunity for the township's major industry to expand. There was some concern that the proposed tapping of the Milton well at Kelso would not offer enough of a supply to accommodate this move. Development of an independent source, it was suggested, would provide a supply unrestricted by another municipality.

There's more than digging a hole, of course, to "going into the water business." Township councillors are

undoubtedly aware of such problems as precedent which could affect other villages in the municipality's boundaries.

The township is also undoubtedly aware of the problems which develop if a number of acres is suddenly put on the market for housing. Esquering has a tough policy on this, but the provision of water in an area can often weaken the defenses.

It is essential that those present residents in the Milton Heights area have water supplies that are not polluted. It is clear that all supplies are not polluted but the problem is one which must be resolved. If the availability of water, however, becomes a spur to further residential development, the township's economy will suffer through mounting demands for schools and other urban services.

## Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley



Young people, however fine their ethical standards, have a knack of getting themselves, and innocent bystanders, into some unholly messes. Herewith a couple of examples.

Our neighbor's boy, Ian, is a good lad. He's clean, honest, polite and law-abiding. He's about as normal a young fellow as you'd meet. Likes girls, plays football and works hard at everything except school.

He and his gang are mad about motors. Motor-bikes and cars occupy much of their waking time. Ian had a Honda, then a Volks, and this summer bought a convertible for \$60. It runs.

Last week, his group was out cruising around, looking at used cars. They had no money to buy one. Just looking. And they came across a deal no red-blooded car-lover could resist.

It was a hearse. A huge, black, 1950 Cadillac hearse. It hadn't been stripped down into a vegetable truck or something of the sort. It was a genuine, ready-for-work hearse, complete with purple upholstery and every detail, right down to a crucifix.

Think of the history in that black behemoth's years of service. Think of all the good souls who had their first and last ride in a Cadillac in that long, sombre body.

I don't think the boys pondered much on these things. But they were hooked. They'd have the coolest transportation in town. And a Cadillac.

But what did it cost? One hundred dollars. Ian, the only one with any money in the bank, wrote a cheque on the spot. The others were to come in on shares when they raised the money.

I don't blame them. If I'd seen it first, I'd have bought it as a second car for my wife. It would certainly be a conversation piece.

And that's exactly what it turned out to

be. When Ian drove up and parked it in the driveway, and his parents found out what he'd done, there was some conversation, all right.

He was told in no uncertain terms that he had made a grave error, that he'd taken on a stiff proposition, and that this was not a motor-bike, but a hearse of a different color.

But the damage was done. The menacing black hearse had been seen in the driveway. The phone began to ring. The neighbors started taking up a collection for flowers. The Potato Man, who call regularly with produce, tapped timidly at the back door, hat on his breast, tears in his eyes, and said brokenly, "I didn't know whether I should call today, when you've had a sadness in the family."

Ian was told to get that hearse out of sight. He let one of the other lads take it home. The latter's mother told him not to park it within a block of their house. People chased him away when he tried to park in front of their homes. And so it went the rounds of the boys and their parents.

It is now hidden behind the cottage of one of the families involved, deep in the woods. But the boys, undaunted by ghostly or gruesome associations, are planning some fine parties and fishing trips in it next summer, when the heat is off.

The second incident occurred at our school this week. These days, teachers are trying all sorts of novel methods to make learning come alive. Some work; some don't.

One of our young history teachers had carefully planned a mock trial. He arranged for one of his students (a girl with a beginner's driving license) to "steal" his car, take it to the students' parking lot and try to drive it out of there at noon, which is verboten.

She was to be apprehended in the felony by a "detective", the vice-principal, questioned, then turned over to her classmates for trial.

All went well. She got the car started. The teacher had it pointed in the right direction. Then all hell broke loose. She had trouble with the hand-brake or the clutch or something, took a leap forward and staved in the side of the teacher's car on the bumper of another one parked there.

Net results: history teacher has a \$100 body repair bill looming; one hysterical teenager felt worse than if she had stolen a car. But it was a good idea.

### Notes...

There are a thousand ways to keep from growing old—poor driving is the most popular.

Why is smoking considered an undesirable practice for athletes participating in strenuous activities? The answer is that a good deal of medical evidence indicates that smoking is harmful to health. Increased heart rate, nervous tension and irritation of the throat and lungs are effects which may well prevent an individual from attaining the level of physical fitness he is striving to reach.

## Photos from the past



**TWO PHOTOGRAPHS** of Acton Band this week join the series of old pictures which have been running in this place in the paper since the beginning of centennial year. In the top picture, the band lines up in front of the post office on Mill St. between Willow and John. The picture was taken before World War One. This predecessor of the "old post office" might be called the "old, old post office". It was followed about 1913 by the brick building at the Mill-Willow corner, now apartments. In the

bottom picture, taken a decade or so later, are: front row, Harold Swackhammer, Archie Kerr, Cam Currie, Amos Mason the leader, Jack Alger, Charles Landsborough, unknown, unknown. Middle row, Roy Johnson, George Mason, Ray Agnew, unknown, Joe McGeachie, Rudolph Spielvogel, Alex Mann, Norm Wilds, George Smith. Back row, Jim Smith, George Agnew, unknown, George Simpson, Arlof Dills, Charlie Mason, Kirby Williams, Carney Byrne.

**THE ACTON FREE PRESS**

PHONE 853-2010  
Business and Editorial Office

Founded in 1875 and published every Wednesday at 16 Willow St., Acton, Ontario. Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation, the C.W.N.A. and C.N.A. Advertising rates on request. Subscriptions payable in advance \$1.00 in Canada, \$1.50 in all countries other than Canada. Single copies 15c. Authorized at Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa. Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of typographical error, that portion of the advertisement so caused by the erroneous item, together with reasonable allowance for signature, will not be charged for but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate. In the event of a substantial error advertising goods or services at a wrong price, goods or services may be sold. Advertising is hereby an offer to sell and may be withdrawn at any time.

Bill Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd.  
David B. Dills, Publisher  
Hartley Coles, Editor Don Ryder, Adv. Manager  
Copyright 1967