

Free Press Editorial Page

Spruce up time...

Mayor Les Duby's thought on a project to benefit the town at the inter-service club meeting last week was something to beautify the town.

Goodness knows, the town could do with one.

We are particularly concerned with the condition of some of the buildings along the business section—which don't need to be pointed out. If the business streets are neat and tidy in a community they reflect credit on it.

It isn't fair to the owners who look after their premises when some let property deteriorate and give the street a run-down look.

Winter debris doesn't help the picture. Town employees were busy last week cleaning up the streets but it won't be long until the litterers are allowed to throw wrappers and cartons about with impunity.

Litter cans installed by the town

are used by the neat and orderly but those who are inclined to be untidy still use the streets for a receptacle. A little thoughtfulness is all that is required, and respect for the community.

There is a heavy fine for those who litter on the highways. A similar penalty for town litterbugs might engender more respect.

It will be good to see the street sweeper in operation to clear up the accumulation of sand which already is causing dust problems in town, being tracked into houses and covering them with a fine layer of dirt. Spring rains will eliminate much of the dust nuisance but the street sweeper cleans up what the rain misses.

Perhaps the town should have a clean-up, paint-up and general spruce-up week to introduce Spring.

Sideburns old hat...

According to the Printed Word the fashionable sideburns evident on many men today should really be called burnsides.

The fashion is named after one established by General Burnside, a Union officer in the American civil war. There is a suspicion, says the Printed Word that the general decided the best way he could work his way into the history books was by a whisker. The fashion caught on and today we're seeing a rebirth of the old fashioned look among the gentry.

This, of course is not the first time army officers have set fashions. Two British commanders in the Crimean War made notable contributions to male fashions.

You have heard of the Raglan sleeve. It is named after Lord Raglan who invented the sleeve that even women make use of. Then there was Lord Cardigan who invented a woven jacket, known nowadays as a sweatercoat.

So the Charge of the Light Brigade wasn't the only memorable thing that came out of the Crimean conflict.

Wars seem to be the time of ingenuity in the fashion world. Remember the Eisenhower jacket? Churchill's siren suit? The trench coat?

Faces may remain the same but the chin shrunken and hair styles that go with it have periodically come back into fashion. Some of the stern old patriarchs who settled this neck of the woods had abundant hair and whiskers to match. Part of the reason, of course, was the scarcity of barber shops.

The Romans when they ruled the then known world were clean shaven. Naturally they figures anyone with flowing tresses and long beard was a barbarian. And they were right in many cases.

School principals sometimes take the same tack today. The boy with the long locks is sometimes ordered to get it cut or face expulsion. On the other end of the scale is the girl with the short skirt, accurately called a mini.

So, depending on the time you come into the world, it could either be the long or the short of it which will end up in trouble for you.

Swing to nonreturnables...

The swing to nonreturnable pop bottles looks unstoppable in the opinion of soft drink industry men as they gauge first public reaction to a stiff price increase for their NR-packaged products.

The popular 10 oz. half dozen pack went up to 67 cents-69 cents from 62 cents retail in Toronto a month ago. Meanwhile the same pack in returnables remains at a suggested retail price of 55 cents, after deducting the 12 cents deposit. And its performance in the last month hasn't been dramatically affected, either. The manufacturers

are gloomy because the swing to NR's is cutting into their profits.

Nobody says just how much more expensive one-trip containers are, but all say "substantially".

Off the cuff...

Nobody is interested in your troubles unless a woman is involved.

By the time a man finds greener pastures, he can't climb the fence.



WEATHERBEATEN lines of this country shed make a quaint picture along Highway 26, north of Acton. —(Staff Photo)



Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

Great changes are taking place these days in education. Let's have a look at some of them from a straightforward, honest, prejudiced point of view, and then you decide whether they are good or bad.

Corporal punishment is practically a thing of the past. Good or bad? I think it's good for the students and perhaps bad for some of the teachers. It never did have any deterrent effect on the students as I know from personal experience as a student. It merely made the brutish student more brutish. But it was a great safety valve for the hot-tempered teacher.

Now I know there shouldn't be such things as hot-tempered teachers. But there are. They are human beings. And some of the hottest-tempered are the best teachers. Often, they care more.

No more for them the glorious release of hurling chalk or blackboard brush at that sniggering lot in the back seat. No more for them the sedative of the clout on the ear, the ruler crack on the knuckles, the five-of-the-best on each hand.

What's going to happen to them? You can turn the other cheek only so often. I prophesy a large tax increase for the purpose of building more mental institutions for teachers who crack under the strain of choking back their honest rage.

So much for that. Let's look at Counselling, or Guidance. This is one of the fastest-growing aspects of education. Only a few years ago, any guidance was done by regular teachers, usually chosen for their common sense. They chatted with the kids and tried to steer them in the right direction.

Now the Guidance Department is one of the busiest spots in the school. You don't teach Guidance. You're "in" Guidance. Right up to your ears.

The reason for this is that the duties of guidance people have snowballed. Why? For two reasons. Many parents have abdicated as counsellors of their own children, and leave it to the school. Many other parents, however desperately they

try, simply can't cope with their children, and expect the school to help.

Inevitably, the guidance teacher has become involved with emotional disturbances, family backgrounds, physical handicaps and all the other things that influence a child's behavior. He has become a sort of padre without dog-collar.

In addition, he is expected to guide the student into the right course. Thus, he must convince Johnny, who wants to be a doctor, and who failed his Grade 10 science dimly, that he might be better in another field. Even worse, he has to convince Johnny's father, who is a doctor and is darn-well going to have another one in the family.

Glad I'm not a guidance teacher.

How do you feel about examinations? They, too, are changing in status. The emphasis on exams is diminishing, and in some schools they have vanished. Good or bad?

My feelings about them are mixed. One day I feel that they should be abolished, so that we could get down to the business of learning, that they are an unnecessary ordeal, that they cater to mediocrity.

The next day I've reversed my stand and am convinced that they are the only good for the lazy student; that the pressure-relief is good therapy; that the student who is a wallflower in class has a chance to blossom on paper; that they reveal the classroom charm-boy for the ignoramus he is.

On the whole, I'm in favor of retaining exams, in some form, until our competitive society has changed completely. Otherwise, you have a repetition of the disastrous Children's Crusade of the Middle Ages. You are sending kids into battle with no weapons except a series of successful field trips and "projects".

You have to learn how to drive a car, and then you have to prove it in an examination. The same applies to building bridges or removing tonsils.

In fact we need more examinations: for prospective fathers in diaper-pinning; prospective husbands in coping with tears. And so on. I'll bet you can think of a few.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, March 24, 1949.

At the bi-monthly meeting of council a bylaw was passed to make application to the Ontario Municipal Board to have Acton elevated to the status of a town.

The doors at the new scout hall are ready to hang and this week the foundation was put in for a fireplace. Master mason Allan Leishman with two assistants, Kelly Gardner and "Louie" are building a fine fireplace. Baxter-Laboratories loaned the cement mixer for the fireplace foundation.

The Public Utilities Commission will make an inventory of all meters in Acton before the change to 60 cycle is made.

Acton Juniors faded from the hockey picture by losing their second straight game to Orono.

The spring fashion parade at the Roxy theatre drew large crowds both evenings. Feature of the show was the modelling by four local girls, Misses Lois Hunter, Joy Roughly, Georgina Perryman and Betty Gibson who had been selected by popular vote for the event.

Eden Mills and District Athletic Club put on their play "Speed" under the auspices of Rockwood community club last week.

Vic Bristow noticed a scarlet tanager last Saturday.

A new foot X-ray machine has been installed at E. Braids shoe store.

Spring temperatures and spring rains came right on time.

have secured from \$100 to \$300 worth of fur skins. Minks, muskrats, coons, foxes, skunks and weasel have been more common than in most years.

A civic reception was tendered Sgt. Geo. Cook, Pte. Dan Ritchie, Pte. Enoch McKinnon, Pte. J. Koutl and Pte. W. Green at the town hall last evening.

Nassagaweya friends tendered a kind farewell to Mr. and Mrs. William H. McCullough and family who are moving to Esqueping.

The Merchants Bank has installed a series of Safety Deposit boxes.

John Graham passed away, terminating a close association with Acton for 60 years. He assisted in the erection of numerous buildings in Acton, including the Methodist church and government building.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, March 15, 1894.

Mr. James Grant, who has done the express business from the G.T.R. has disposed of his outfit and good will to ex-councillor John Harvey.

Exactly 37 years from the month in which it was erected the Roman Catholic church on the first line Esqueping, known as "Dublin", was torn down. Since the purchase of St. Joseph's church in Acton several years ago the old church has not been in use and it was recently sold to Mr. Alex. Joe, who purposes using the material for the erection of a house on a farm in the vicinity of Speyside. The church was built in 1857 and among those who assisted at its erection were Messrs. Peter and William Gibbons, the late Peter McCann, Matthew and Patrick Lee. The altar was built by the late J. Drummond, whose tragic death by shooting about 28 years ago will be remembered by old residents. Nearly all of the pioneers who worshipped in the old church, the McCanns, the Lees, the Lambs, the Daltons, and Malones, and many others have died or removed from this section.

Palm Sunday the mercury rose to 70 in the shade. Crocuses are in bloom.

Married - Mr. James C. Sprowl of Esqueping and Nellie, youngest daughter of William Griffin Esq., Erin.

The Limehouse kilns commenced operation again last week and the men are getting back to work.

The long and useful life of Mrs. Ann Hemstreet was ended triumphantly when she fell asleep in Jesus at the home of her daughter. This remarkable woman lived in Acton for many years. She was born in 1812 in England. Considering her limited education her literary attainments were marked.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, March 20, 1919.

For sometime the Messrs. Beardmore have had up for consideration the construction of some public utility for the benefit of their employees and the people of Acton generally. They have now definitely decided on a rink building for skating, hockey and perhaps curling. They will also provide tennis courts and bowling greens. The plan is to utilize the whole of the block bound by Mill, Wilbur, Church and Fellow St.

This splendid program will be greatly appreciated by our citizens. The enterprise will entail an outlay of \$20,000 or \$25,000.

County Council voted strongly against Daylight Saving Time as not in the interests of the gardener, fruit grower or farmer.

The local trapper had a good season. Some of the persons of this vicinity who pursue this vocation in their spare time

Salt and Pepper

by hartley coles



Thought you were the great white hunter? Buddy, you're the prey. But don't let it get you down. There's a way out if you use the old noodle.

For instance, the other day a buddy of mine neglected to tell his wife he was going out for dinner. It slipped his mind until 5 o'clock when a quick phone call designed to set matters straight went something like this:

"Hello, honey. Won't be home for dinner tonight. Got a banquet to go to. Heh, Heh!"

"You what?" A deep freeze crept along the phone wires and tinged the air with sarcasm. "You're going where?"

The acid in his stomach started to churn and began to eat away more lining. "Well, I forgot to tell ya... slipped my mind... gotta go to a big meeting. They're serving dinner."

A chilly silence! Then an icy voice, "And what'll I do with your lamb chop, sweetie-pie? Feed it to the cat?" There was a loud click as the phone on the other end landed back on the rocker.

The acid ate deeper into the stomach lining. Buddy, hung up, disconsolate, braved a smile, shrugged his shoulders and muttered something about skinning a cat.

I couldn't stand it. "Listen Demetrius" (fictitious name,) I said, "You've gotta use more tact. You'd never catch me telling the little woman a thing like that."

What would I do? "Well, the last time I was in a similar situation I went home and ate."

"You went home and ate?" "Yes—then I went to the banquet and ate again."

Comprehension dawned slowly. "You ate at home... and then again at a banquet? You ate twice... ha, ha... ha, ha, ha, ha..." He laughed all the way down the stairs. He laughed all the way to the banquet.

Like I said earlier it's no wonder the better half lasts longest. But you can keep ahead of the game by using the old noodle.



ACTON FIRE brigade posed for this official photograph at the town hall. This picture, which hangs in the fire hall, is not dated, but it's presumed to be not long after the turn of the century.

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