

Free Press Editorial Page

Similar situations . . .

Residents of Acton who protested at the proposed site of the senior citizen apartments here will be interested to know there is also opposition to a similar project in Fergus.

Citizens in Acton who protested at the Cobblehill site, did so claiming it was not suitable for such a project, is situated too far from the business section and conflicted with existing residential development.

Residents of two streets in Fergus protested in these words:

"We, the residents of Thistle and Union Streets, wish to protest strongly against the Municipal Council project to build an apartment house for senior citizens in the heart of one of the choicest residential districts in Fergus—a quiet street of homes and gardens, representing as it does the heavy investment of the owners, now facing a sharp depreciation of property values due to the building of the proposed apartments.

"There can be no denying that the fresh, pleasant spacious atmosphere will be spoiled because a whole, new community will move into the very middle of this chosen spot. Our Senior Citizens will have to choose between being shut up in

cramped quarters day and night or wandering about a neighborhood of private property. Mistfits in an uncomfortable situation. A situation incompatible to both resident and senior citizen alike. Is this responsible planning?"

It makes an observer wonder if there are suitable locations for senior citizens in any location. It seems that despite the assurances of Ontario Housing officials that the projects enhanced rather than depreciated property there are many misgivings.

It is a sad commentary on our times that senior citizens are not welcomed with open arms in any part of a community. Let's not pretend that we would act any different than the people who are protesting the proposed sites. Quite likely most of us would react in much the same way.

The Fergus experience points out that geographical differences in no way alter the feelings of individuals who see the threat of property being devaluated at a time when it is sky rocketting.



EVEN A PILE of old farm equipment can paint a picture as Jim Jennings shows here from a collection of old material he saw recently in the Eden Mills area.

Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, June 23, 1949.

One of the biggest gatherings ever to accord a welcome to any visiting dignitary at Acton station greeted Prime Minister Hon. Louis St. Laurent and Mrs. Laurent and their daughter and granddaughter when their train made a brief stop at Acton station Tuesday morning.

The Public School children were given a holiday and marched to the station and the Boys' and Girls' Band made the reception complete. Little Margaret Wilson presented a bouquet of flowers. Mr. Hughes Cleaver, member for Halton, introduced to Mr. and Mrs. St. Laurent. Mrs. Laurent was introduced by Mr. Thomas Jones, Mr. Norman McEcham and editor G. A. Dills. But the faces of the visitors were wreathed in smiles when they met Mr. W. J. Oakes who had spent his early days in Compton county, the home of the St. Laurents.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, June 19, 1919.

Pre. Ernest Barr arrived in Toronto from Vladivostok, Russia, Saturday. After being discharged he proceeded to Galt where Mrs. Barr has been residing. He has come to the conclusion that Siberia is no white man's country.

Pte. Ernest Brown arrived home from France Monday. He was accompanied from Toronto by his father, Mr. John Brown, Mr. Roy, Miss Bertha and Master Lloyd Forbes, who went to the city to meet him on the arrival of the 102nd Battalion. Ernie looks well. He came over on the Mauretania which made the trip from Liverpool to Halifax in the record time of four days and 18 hours. He was within 50 miles of Germany, came to England on May 2 and enjoyed trips to London, Edinburgh, Belfast and Dublin. Ernie is the sixth member of the Free Press roll of honor who has returned home safely from the war.

The Lawn Bowling and Tennis Club held a delightful euchre and bridge at the spacious residence and grounds of Mr. and Mrs. A. O. T. Beardmore. Between 60 and 70 members were present.

Angus McTavish, a Nassagaweya man who had been in Acton nearly all his life, was electrocuted while at work on a hydro line at Fort Credit.

St. Alban's church came near losing its esteemed rector, Rev. Maunsell and Mr. Kellen, the organist, were selecting hymns in St. John's, Rockwood, when the church was struck by lightning last Thursday night. Sulphuric fumes were quite noticeable. Both men were stunned and knocked to the floor but soon recovered.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, June 21, 1894.

At a meeting of local pupils of 1863-72 of the late Robert Little it was decided to arrange for a reunion on Friday, 13th July. Invitations have been sent out. Arrangements are not complete but the day will probably include a drive about town, a visit to the cemetery where the master and a number of pupils of the early days are resting, a gathering for addresses, music, etc., and a picnic at the school.

Mr. George Buckwell, who was a general favorite here when he was the right hand man of Mr. H. S. Holmes at the G. T. R. station, was married at Carthage, Mo., to Miss Leslie Huggins. The bride looked lovely in cream silk and lace and the groom wore conventional black. The parlor was exquisitely decorated and a superb supper was partaken of. The presents were elegant and useful. The groom is a young man of excellent standing and high moral character and will make his mark in his chosen profession.

The polling places for the election next week are in the town hall and C. C. Speight's store.

Counterfeit ten cent pieces are in circulation.

Acton Cornet Band played at the lawn social in Nassagaweya at the home of Mr. Marshall Holmes.

The farm notes... votes...

Agriculture may not be this area's dominant industry as urban development and utilization of land presses in, but farmers do have an important vote on June 24.

One of the greatest difficulties in the voting, as in other balloting, will be the people who don't vote.

Those who do vote will have a fairly hefty ballot to contend with when they do their voting. The first question will ask "Are you in favor of a general farm organization with compulsory checkoff?"

When you've got that one out of the way two more questions are asked to provide guidance to the founding convention, if a general farm organization is approved. "Should each marketing board have a vote on the provincial council of the general farm organization."

The next phase deals with the type of membership that you would support if the GFO is approved. "Should membership require a voluntary payment regarding less of the amount of checkoff paid by the individual?" or "Should membership be automatic if a farmer pays a checkoff whether large or small?" or "Should membership require some minimum level of contribution toward the general farm organization which could come from a combination of a checkoff and a voluntary payment?"

We make no suggestion that we are knowledgeable enough to tell farmers how to vote. We've found them very competent in making up their own minds, but we do urge they express their views in the balloting next Tuesday, June 24.

Can't have it both ways...

Laymen who query television executives about the impact of their medium on current behaviour often have the uneasy suspicion the latter are walking two ways at once.

They report with pride their effectiveness as purveyors of goods and services. The pitch for cereals, hairspray and easy credit presumably pays off.

However, when it is suggested that the programs themselves are equally influential, the story changes.

When asked about the connection between the incessant gunplay on the screen and the rising

crime rate and disrespect for law, they answer solemnly that there is none at all. Confronted with the similar techniques used by psychotic mass killers in various places they vigorously reject the idea that television has been either stimulus or teacher.

"We only reflect current patterns, we don't create them," is the stock answer.

It is difficult to see how communications experts can have it both ways. Either television advertising is not what they claim, and the buyers are being fooled, or programs that tie viewers to their sets leave a potent residue.



Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

Having one 18-year-old daughter around the place is enough to turn you white before your time, as I can verify. For most of last week, we had three and it's quite an experience.

One of them had auburn hair, brown eyes and freckles. This was one way we could tell our own from the others, who also had brown eyes. Another was that they were neat and tidy and made their bed and didn't spill things and didn't slouch around in ripped, faded jeans and my oldest shirt.

Early this spring, one of our history teachers organized a trip for his students, during the vacation, to Washington D.C., because they were studying American history. It was a success. They saw numerous historic sites and visited a high school in that city.

They were warmly received. As kids will, they responded with, "Why don't you come to Canada and visit us some time?" you know how this happens. You're away from home at a wedding or something, meet someone you like and, vowing that you must see more of each other, throw out one of these meaningless invitations.

Then one day a strange car, full of strange people, pulls up at your house. A couple and four kids get out. Your wife's hair is up in curlers. You have a two-day beard and smell like a goat after mowing the lawn.

Yep, it's Elsie and Herb, the couple you met at the wedding, except that you can't remember their names. And they were just coming this way on a trip, and thought they'd drop in and say hello, and they've been looking all over for a motel, and everything's full up.

Well, that's what happened. Our history teacher got a letter saying that 85 students and four teachers from the Washington school were arriving, as invited. All they needed was billets and a schedule of sightseeing.

He arranged a program that would exhaust an elephant: historical sites, band concert, dance, boat trip, canoe rides. And billets. There was no problem there. Our own kids were practically fighting over the visitors. One girl, who comes from a family of eight, snatched four of them.

Kim arrived at our place with the two prettiest chicks from that entire high school: Sheila and Caroline. It was 11 p.m., they'd been on the road since five a.m., and were not only tottering, but a little

shy. But we got along fine, and shooed them off to bed.

The next three days and nights were enough to kill anybody over 20. The first day, they visited our school and completely disrupted the schedule, which everyone enjoyed thoroughly. By dinnertime, our two guests had lost all shyness and were giggling and talking frantically about what they were going to wear for five different events next day.

Suggested curfew was 11 p.m. They went out with Kim and all three got in at three.

Remember, these were city kids. They were used to concrete and asphalt and apartments. And here they were in a small town with green grass and blue water everywhere. And houses on big lots, with trees and shrubs and lawns and lilac bushes.

Saturday night was the grand finale, with a beach party for the visitors and their teen-age hosts—about 120 people. There must have been 500 at it, as every teeny who could get out to the beach gate-crashed the party. I know, because I took the girls out to it and promptly lost them in the happy, milling mob.

Party ended at five. Bus left at 6. In the a.m., that is. My wife kissed the girls. They gave us a thoughtful present, lugged all the way from Washington. I took them to the bus. Confusion and emotion were rampant, with tears flowing freely, and kids wildly writing down addresses.

I got a big hug and kiss from Sheila and Caroline, stuck them on a bus and headed home for a few desperately-needed winks.

Four nights and three days of people meeting other people and liking each other, and learning something, and treating each other as individuals.

Perhaps I forgot to mention it, but the visitors were all Negroes.



Photos from the past

ANOTHER SERIES of four class photographs has been sent for this series. Today's picture was taken of the kindergarten class at the town hall on May 12, 1926. In the first row: Wilmer Davidson, George Fottitt, W. Anderson, Herb Woods, Ken Watson, William Hall, Harvey McCutcheon; second row Lan Cox, Rod Ryder, Jack McGill, A. Chalmers, Allen Gibbons, Charlotte Marshall, Eleanor Tubman, Burt Patrick, Eileen Brown; third row Helen Evans, Ethel Woods, Marj Mann, Ruby Allen, Barb Taylor, Violet Elliott, Blanche Smith, Kay Huard, Inez Talbot, Agnes Chisholm; fourth row Lois Crippa, Elna Corey, Lorraine Jacques, Annie Sageskie, Marg Arnold, Len Tubman, Cecil Gibbons, Roy Parker, Hubert MacPherson, Fred Harwood.

Out of gas

A recent study of a major Ontario highway indicated that almost a third of all breakdowns on this road near Toronto are caused by running out of gas.

If you run out of gas and your driving a standard transmission it is always possible to move a car with standard transmission off the highway should it stall in the traffic lanes by use of the battery alone. Put your car in low gear and holding the starter in. On position steer your car to a safe resting place.

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Salt and Pepper



by hartley coles

It's going to be harder than ever to tell the boys from the girls if current trends continue to dominate the clothing market.

Unisex fashions, identical for men and women, seem to be putting down roots for a long stay. They have become popular in London and New York and have been sold in Montreal by at least two clothiers for some time. Now they've been adopted by a 33-store chain selling women's duds in Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec.

Outfits vary from jump suits and pilot jackets to capes, vests, flaring pants and trench coats with Napoleon collars. Daring-do is also there with party attire. It comes in pants and blouses in see-through lace as well as voile shirts worn with black and white yak fur vests.

This will delight the "in" crowd. But I'm wondering what a fashion blockhead like me will do if this thing really takes hold.

I was into a men's store over the weekend trying to select some kind of travelling suit for a projected trip and I've found my taste glands must be in my feet.

For instance, trying to buy a tie to match the other stuff in the ensemble was downright embarrassing. The proprietor introduced me to the ties suggesting I should pick one out of several racks of them. I looked them over. All I could see were wide models.

"Where do ya keep your narrow ones?" I asked.

He looked aghast. Then in a soft Danish accent he pontificated: "People who wear narrow ties are advertising that they don't get around too much."

Well, if there is anything I don't want to do is advertise that I don't get around too much. It could be fatal in this business. Last time I inquired it was the wide ties that showed you were a relic from the roaring '40's and the zoot suit era. Now they've switched 'er all around again.

Think of what would happen to me if I happened to stumble into one of those "Unisex" shops, to be outfitted. I can see it all now.

"Pardon me ma'am . . . er sir, but could you show me what you have in pants?"

"Why, yes sir . . . er ma'm or whatever you are . . . and how about a nice see-through blouse to go with them. Just the thing to advertise that hairy chest."

I looked around, then whispered discreetly: "Well, alright, got any in frosted glass?"

"Now sir, or are you a she? You aren't that shy in this day and age. Come out and show people what you are really like inside. It's all the fashion."

That is a navel way of putting it over but I wouldn't have any of it. No, sir. If they didn't have frosted glass then I wanted the smoked plastic. And if they didn't have that then they could go to the devil. In which direction a lot of people are figuring fashions are headed, anyway.

I have enough trouble trying to decide what to wear from the male stuff they have now, without adding to the problem with unisex stuff.

Why don't the girls want to be girls anymore? Soft, alluring, tender, curvy, enticing females.

It's time the fashion experts quit leading us down the garden path.

And here is an article I wrote months ago but never figured I'd ever use:

Editors of weekly newspapers receive a variety of oddball articles each week in the mail from the best way to trim your geraniums to a sure cure for adolescent pimples. The crowning achievement arrived recently, however, in a gift wrapped parcel—a disposable dress!

In the event you're not up on the latest fashion trends, a disposable dress is one you throw out after it gets soiled. They make them out of paper.

Never having joined the select group of males who can wear a dress without drawing stares, I passed it on to the assistant editor. She eyed it up and down and announced she'd try it on but doubted it would fit.

She was right—it didn't; at least not in the right places.

Back came the package with the comment, "Try it on your wife."

I mentally conjured up my wife and looked again at the dress. The two pictures didn't fit. Oh, what the heck. Give it to her anyway and let her tell you the dress doesn't fit. Besides, what if someone lit a match to it at a party?

The last fear need never have gone through the thought process. It didn't burn—at least not a flame. It merely smouldered which means the Fire Marshall's office must have figured you'd have time to undress before getting too badly burned.

Still, it would be dangerous to stand near someone with a running nose. A soft paper dress would be a real temptation.

Again I need never have worried. It didn't fit my wife. She advised passing it on to daughter who relies on anything new.

It fit. She wore it twice—then threw it out.

The dress was an advertisement—disposable.