

Internal issue . . .

Reports of the attempt by freshmen councillors to join the budget committee, and failing this, to at least attend the finance meetings of Acton council as observers, reveals the split between the veterans and newer members of town council. But it is not fair to assess the situation from the comments gathered from one confrontation between the two groups. The issues go deeper.

Councillors Marks and Coats are spearheading attempts to allow non-members of the finance committee to attend budget sessions as observers, with Councillor Chapman and one member of the committee, Councillor McKenzie, lining up with them.

Opposed are the committee chairman Dr. Oakes, Deputy-Reeve Tyler, Councillors Masales and Greer. The mayor lined up with the nays and cast the deciding vote on the second resolution.

Crux of the Marks-Coats resolution was the allegation that they could not vote intelligently on budget night unless they had more information about certain items. They felt they would not hinder the budget if they could attend as observers, but first tried the more direct approach of making every member of council a member of the finance committee.

This alienated veteran members of council who remember long sessions in the early hours of the morning. They suspected Messrs. Coats and Marks felt the budget committee was not capable of doing the job, without them to assist.

Traditionally, seats on the finance committee have gone to those who are the most experienced in municipal matters and rightly so, in our opinion. Once you have been over problems and been involved closely with settling them, you are better qualified to vote intelligently on the financial end of it.

However, every member of council votes on money issues budget night and to deprive them of knowledge which they could use to vote intelligently smacks of outdated autocracy.

We doubt if veteran members of council have intentions of depriving neophytes of information. They come up through the system. They feel and know from their own experience that they must depend on the good judgment of fellow councillors to come up with answers when they are struck.

They also feel the present system of budgeting has streamlined the unwieldy methods of the past. They remember with distaste long budget sessions when nothing was resolved in spite of meetings which included all councillors long into the morning.

If everyone is on the finance committee, then there really is no justifiable reason why the entire council should not be on every committee.

In spite of this we suspect those who voted against allowing the Marks and Coats faction to sit as non-voting and non-participating observers must feel sheepish about the entire affair. It has made the nays look bad in the eyes of the public when really they acted with the best motives.

Of course, the newer councillors feel they can do a better job than veteran incumbents. This is one reason they ran for council in the first place.

We feel they should be allowed to sit as observers for budget sessions just as we feel that any member of the finance committee should be able to cross the committee threshold and sit in as an observer on other committees although we know of some sad experiences in the past.

But we also feel it is an internal issue of council and one they best settle amongst themselves.

Mini, midi or maxi . . . ?

Is the fashion-conscious woman a slave to the fashion coutourier?

Women apparently are having one heck of a time making up their minds about whether they should go mini, maxi or midi. Retail store executives, according to the Financial Post, are going hairy about what they should buy to please hesitant women.

One major Canadian department store laid hem lines on the line, saying: "We believe short lengths will continue for the coming season. We do not generalize in yardstick measurements, knowing your current wardrobe at any time evolves with your personality and taste."

Which to our way of thinking is advice for the ladies to be ready for all occasions with several wardrobes to fit. This may suit the average women's change of personality and taste but it quite likely would be extremely hard on the married man's pocketbook.

This spring and summer, however, the Post writer expects that

the longer lengths of hemlines are going to experience trouble capturing a market.

For instance, when midis were shown recently at a large Canadian fashion show the response was so apathetic that the commentator felt obliged to say: "Never mind, ladies, this is what you will have to wear anyway"

Now this is the kind of dictatorship the female proletariat should kick out without delay. Tell the fashion clique that you are going to pick out the clothes that suit your personality - not theirs.

It is one of the paradoxes of the fashion world at the present time that while the nuns of the world are shortening hemlines the laity is trying to get the ladies to lengthen their hems. Meanwhile, the stage world is going nuts over nudity.

Never mind lengthening the hem line, ladies. Raise the barricades. Throw the manacles off and proclaim the freedom of choice.



Birch Screen

ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 1970



Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

Beginning of March, and our neighbors still have their outside Christmas tree lights glowing.

Glowing with rage? Glowing with passion? No, they're just glowing because the snow is so deep they can't get out to unplug them.

But glowing is something there should be more of, especially in the miserable month of March. There must be something in this sad, rotten, mixed-up, wonderful world to glow about. Let's find it, you and I together.

So, what glows? The sun. People. If the sun, or people, cease to glow, they're dead. Ashes, dust.

Just as our neighbors' Christmas tree lights are still glowing because they can't get at them for snow, our spirits, and yours, I hope, are glowing because they, too, are still plugged in, and no amount of snow and ice is going to stop them from casting their light.

There's always something to glow about, though at times our light seems to be hidden.

Our daughter is not as sick as she seemed. She's sicker. Unglow. But my sister, and all her aunts, and Earl Munroe of London, Ont., with whose sister Jean I was madly in love in Grade 6, and Mrs. Rhoda Beal of Weyburn, Sask., have written or called, to express their alarm and concern. And one of her old teachers, and a neighbor, both sent her a rose. Glow.

And Kim feels great one day, and full of beans and plans and smiles. Glow. And that very evening she's completely pooped and utterly depressed. Unglow.

And my wife, after 20 years of worrying and sweating about the kids (unglow) because they don't have any life insurance, has finally decided that it's high time she started worrying and sweating about me. Glow.

There are all sorts of things to turn off and on about, besides belated Christmas tree lights.

There's the state of your health, for example. If you can get along on anything less than all fours, you're in business. Ask any arthritic.

There's the state of your mind. If you have an IQ of 80, relax. It's probably higher than any mark you ever got in school. If you have an IQ of 150, relax.

Who needs it in this push-button world?

And then there's your spiritual life. If you believe that God saw the little sparrow fall, bully for you. And if you wonder why He didn't do something about it, you've got plenty of company.

And, of course, there's pollution, the poor man's Communism. It's the capitalism of the 1970s. Everybody is against it. Except the big industries and the hydro and government and the town that wants a new industry at any cost. No glow.

And there's inflation. This produces a very definite glow, especially among the middle class. Some of them are glowing so brightly they're apt to blow a fuse.

But there's always the Just Society. Just what, and just where, and just when, have yet to be resolved, but there's no question that we have a Just Society. Just as long as you're in the \$20,000-to-\$30,000 bracket. No, definitely, glow.

We all glow occasionally. Let's try to glow a little brighter. But anybody who glows all the time should take a cold shower.

Sometimes my wife is sad. Sometimes she is wonderful. And sometimes she just plain glows. That's the best. Try it.

Salt and Pepper



by hartley coles

Last week we left our heroine, Maggie Stiltleg, sitting on a bench at Toronto's ultra-modern new city hall, disconsolate because she had caught no sight of just plain Bill who left her in the hurch many years ago. But just before she pulled out a handkerchief to dry bitter tears she recognized a voice enquiring about the mayor's office. Her heart jumped. Was it just plain Bill?

She peered at the bowler-hatted man with near-sighted eyes, with no sense of recognition. But the voice was familiar. It turned back the years.

The stylish gentleman doffed his hat and asked in a well modulated voice, "And whom do I have the pleasure of addressing?"

Maggie forgot her innate shyness as the moustache turned in her direction. There was something familiar about the man's deportment, his lack of consciousness about his fine clothes, but she couldn't quite place him.

She answered in a voice which seemed to originate from somewhere outside herself. "I'm Maggie Stiltleg, and I've just arrived in Toronto, so I really can't direct you to the office of the mayor. But no doubt it is somewhere in that horror."

She gestured towards the city hall, past the magnificent Archer enshrined in the court yard. Maggie had a deep-seated dislike of modern architecture. Too reserved to admit it, she was fond of the old city hall with its tall clock tower and booming bell.

At this moment the clock tower started to toll the hour. It momentarily distracted Maggie. When she turned to face the well-dressed gentleman again she noticed a look of surprise on his face.

"Maggie Stiltleg," he exclaimed in an incredulous voice. "Not THE Maggie Stiltleg - from little old Acton?"

"Why, yes," Maggie replied, her cheeks rosy from embarrassment as several people stopped to look.

"You're my sister-in-law. Don't you

recognize me," he cried out as he grabbed her around the waist and hugged like a bear. Maggie just stared, incredulous at this chance meeting.

"C'mon Maggie. I'm fearless Phil Crane, blood brother to just plain Bill Crane and a cousin to the man who wrote taps - Crane taps, get it, heh, heh!" "I knew I'd seen you somewhere before. What a surprise to see you here!"

Fearless Phil explained he was in from Montreal. "I haven't seen that rascal Bill for years. Since I've made my fortune with bicultural cookies I thought I'd look him up and swap stories about old times. I was just biding time till the next bus to Acton. No trains, you know!"

Maggie gulped. "You haven't seen just plain Bill for years? But fearless Phil I haven't seen just plain Bill since he disappeared down the second line one foggy February Friday!"

Fearless Phil quaked.

"Maggie," he said, "just plain Bill hasn't written since he left the army. I thought you and he were running the perfect marriage. We served with the Lorne Scots, went overseas together and he always spoke of you with concern and tenderness."

"After the war just plain Bill couldn't wait until he got back to Acton - and you! What ever happened?" Fearless Phil stood up in an expansive gesture.

"He told me he'd been a cad when you lived on Willow St., promised to reform when you moved to Mill St. but fell back into his old habits after the move to Scene St. But the army cured him of that."

"Why, just plain Bill was decorated by General Bullhorn for courage above and beyond the call of duty," fearless Phil told Maggie.

"Something has happened since the time he was discharged and the time it takes to get to Acton," fearless Phil said mysteriously, "and I think I know what it is."

(Continued next week)

Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, March 9, 1950.

A packed house greeted the Commencement exercises of Acton High School in the town hall last Friday evening. The school orchestra and Glee Club under the direction of Mr. E. A. Hensen presented several delightful numbers. Accompanist was Crawford Douglas. Greetings from the North Halton high school board were brought by chairman G. A. Dills and invocation by Rev. Luxton.

Secondary school honor graduation diplomas were presented to Joan Coles and Ronald Hemsley and secondary school graduation diplomas to Dena Braida, Maeve Porty, Eleada Britton and James Spielvogel.

Miss Muriel Burns was presented with the Valedictorian medal by Jean Sinclair. Proficiency prizes in various grades went to Joyce Lambert, Viola Johnston, Eleada Britton, Maeve Porty, Olive Mu selle, Muriel Burns and Ronald Hemsley.

Girls' athletic medals were presented to Anna Marie Spitzer, Helen Sumerville, Jacqueline Watkins and boys' athletic medals to Jim Gunn, Donald Davidson, Crawford Douglas.

Never Late Never Absent certificates went to Helen Keelan, Ida Archibald, Margaret Foster, Marjorie McEnery, Irene Nelle, Jean Armstrong, Jo Ann Veldhuis, Leno Braida, Anthony Buckland, Mildred Armstrong.

Leno Braida won a prize for crest design.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, March 11, 1920.

Saturday afternoon the Beardmore and Co. hockey team of the Toronto office journeyed to Acton with their supporters to play a return game. Referee R. M. MacDonald came down hard on the Acton boys and was liberal in his retirements to their best effort and this final score was 4-4. After five minutes overtime the score was 5-5. Then it was decided to play until either team scored and Acton was successful. The Toronto group were entertained at the parish hall by Beardmore and Co.

At the annual meeting of the I.O.D.E. officers elected were: Mrs. C. S. Smith, Mrs. A. O. T. Beardmore, honorary; regent Mrs. R. M. MacDonald; Mrs. Dr. Bell, Mrs.

Jos. Holmes, Mrs. W. J. Gould, Miss M. Z. Bennett, Mrs. G. A. Dills, Mrs. A. B. McLean, Mrs. Wm. Arnold, C. C. E. Mills, Mrs. Wm. Johnston, Mrs. D. C. Russell, Mrs. C. A. Conway, Mrs. C. C. Henderson, Miss Stalker, Miss Folster, Miss A. Wallace, Mrs. Jas. Symon, Mrs. H. S. Holmes.

Bricklayers are asking \$1 an hour for the 1920 season.

Mr. and Mrs. William McNabb have purchased a home in Toronto and expect to move there next month.

The Elite Hat Shop will hold a spring open next Tuesday and Wednesday. Myrtle Cooper and Eva Cooper have a beautiful display of tailored and dress models.

The Great War Veterans have moved from their rooms above Noble's feed store to Sunderland Villa.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, March 7, 1895.

Toronto was visited by another great conflagration in the heart of the business centre and broke out in the large new seven-story building erected by Mr. Robert Simpson. The three other corners of Yonge and Queen were also destroyed. Eaton's great store was saved by firemen and employees. A firebrand caught the steeple of Knox church; it burned and fell to the ground.

The gentlemen who had charge of the erection of the new Knox church are building committee: Rev. Rae, John Stalker, Dr. McKeague, A. T. Mann, James McKenzie, Charles Davidson.

At a meeting held in Rockwood to establish a Mechanics' Institute a group was formed with a membership of 27.

It is expected that Dr. Whitelaw, the two nurses and young O.A.C. student Schwarz will break up housekeeping at the small hospital in Guelph this week.

A flag pole, contracted for the new Parliament Buildings in Toronto, was drawn into Milton last week by a four-horse team. It is of pine, 90 feet in length, and tapers from 24 to about 10 inches. George Holmes will receive \$100 for the piece.

The present winter has been more prolific in storms which have blockaded highways and railroads than any in the history of the country.

A large sleigh load of ladies and gentlemen of Eden Mills went to the Arkell council entertainment. On their way home they had the misfortune to tip in three feet of water, and they still had two miles to go.

Photos from the past



BYGONE DAYS are reflected in this old photograph, lent by Fred Wright. Gone are the Storey Gove building and old Kenney home in the background, the dirt street and the horse-drawn milk wagon. The picture was taken on Bower Ave. where the post office is now.

Et Cetera . . .

One of the excellent reasons for taking DDC, the Defensive Driving Course is that every normal driver shares the road with lots of people who have no right to be at the wheel of a car and whose driving is unpredictable - alcoholics, drug addicts, people who are sick in mind or body.

By illustration, the Ontario Safety League quotes this sobering statistic from an insurance company: there are now three million alcoholics holding jobs in the United States - and 87 per cent of them drive automobiles.

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