

Township apprehensive

Residents of Nassagaweya are naturally more than a little apprehensive about their future with the spectre of two acreage-hungry developments looking at the township.

Ontario Hydro has plans to run a grid line through the northern end of the township but the exact route of the transmission towers has not yet been disclosed. The possible route has been challenged as being disruptive to the farming community. Nassagaweya council has urged the line be moved into the service corridor outlined in the Toronto-Centred Design for Development.

The other, more menacing possibility, is the location of the new international jet airport in Nassagaweya. It is believed the Department of Transport has pinpointed Nassagaweya as one of four possible sites. It would envelop almost the entire township if the Department decides it is the most logical spot.

Councillor Allan Ackman is convinced Nassagaweya is the site favored by the government. He sees a growing similarity between

the surveys taken there and those taken in Quebec before the site north of Montreal was selected. He predicts the airport would stretch from Highway 401 in the south to Highway 7 in the north and from Highway 25 in the east to Highway 6 in the west. The area enclosed would be roughly similar to that of the new jetport site in Quebec.

There is significant evidence that the township is being considered as a site to land the new jumbo jets, although there is similar dismay in other parts of the province concerned it could happen in their area.

Final selection of the site has been left to late summer and it is expected an announcement will be forthcoming in the early fall.

Meanwhile the residents of Nassagaweya — some of whom have roots in the township which go back well over 100 years—and others who have built modern homes on quiet country acreages—are becoming increasingly alarmed that their heritage and adopted part of the country, respectively, will be wrenched from them in the name of progress.

If it is feasible for the hydro line to take the service corridor rather than cutting across township's farms it would be senseless to allow it. Design for development has placed the township in an agricultural, conservation and recreation area with growth restricted to existing communities. It would be a departure from the plan's goals to allow the rural character of the area to be spoiled by the presence of the huge towers.

But, of course, the Hydro line problem is insignificant compared to the disruptions a new jetport would cause. The immediate area would be flooded with up to 120,000 people. Public and private investment will likely exceed \$3 billion.

Some residents, no doubt, are praying the hydro line will go through. If Hydro receives permission to go ahead then it amounts to virtual assurance the airport will locate elsewhere.

Most people in the township would likely prefer both developments locate elsewhere.

Strong case

With the imminence of regional government, it could be seriously debated whether Acton should make application to annex 1,000 acres of Esquesing township.

What's the sense of grabbing extra land when the whole parcel could become part of one region, without any expense to the town?

On the surface, there seems to be no real reason to not wait for regional government. Cost to the town will be about \$5,000 to acquire land.

On the other hand there are many reasons for the move, when you relate experiences of the past to the present.

The only way the town can control development on its borders is by achieving actual control. Since Acton is one of the areas mentioned in the Toronto-Centred Design for Development plan as

being chosen for limited development, it is conceivable land on the town's borders will be bought by speculators interested in earning a buck since township development is frozen.

If evidence is needed that the Ontario government intends to stand behind Design for Development it was supplied by events in Nassagaweya township the past few weeks. Proposals for subdivisions at Moffat and Eden Mills have been discouraged by the Department of Municipal Affairs with comments that they should be considered in the light of the development plan proposed by the province. Design for Development indicated only certain urban centres would be allowed growth.

This corroborates Mayor Les Duby's stand that annexation of land by Acton will achieve some

measure of control over the price of land on the town's borders. There are developers there eager to get started on several projects. If they become disenchanted with a long wait, they in turn pass holdings onto someone else for a higher price!

Land could be passed around several times before it is developed with the final price well above the initial money paid.

A higher price for land immediately reflects in a higher price for the houses and anything else developed on the property.

Houses being built in this area are already well beyond the pocketbooks of most people. Speculators could widen the gap more.

There is a strong case for immediate application for land annexation.



DAM BUILT by beavers on 22 Sideroad, near Limehouse, has created a pond on the Black Creek. Residents of the district say they have never known

beavers in the area before. An Acton trapper says they may have come downstream from Acton where he observed one last year.—(Staff Photo)



Hard Pepper by hartley coles



I think I have mentioned in this column before that as a wildlife observer I'd make a good bird watcher. I haven't the patience or time necessary to stand still and watch native wildlife haunt their own environment, excluding Saturday nights in Acton, of course.

Consequently, when a call came this week from Mrs. Art Benton over Limehouse way, about a beaver dam and beavers on 22 Sideroad, constructed by an active pair of Canadian emblems, I doubted whether I was the person to go over and interview Paddy and his missus.

On other missions into the Canadian bush to catch the beaver at work on dam projects I'd been completely frustrated by (1) the absence of the beavers (2) my impatience and (3) my suspicion that the animal lumberjacks were concealed somewhere close by having a laugh at my expense.

However, when Mrs. Benton mentioned these long-toothed pair of builders constructed this particular dam alongside the road, I reasoned there could possibly be a

breakthrough for my career as a nature writer and photographer. I'd seen the first rate pictures on slide and movie that Wes Fountain has taken around Acton. They'd be difficult to match but I would settle for a glimpse of these critters at work.

So come Sunday night I set out alone with the express object of (1) taking pictures of the dam (2) observing the beavers at work and (3) taking pictures of beavers at work. My enthusiasm for the project was not shared by my missus who declared with a shrug that inferred she didn't give a dam about beavers. So it was a lone expedition, just at dusk.

This pair of woodcutters built the dam just opposite Jack Roughley's house and while I looked the situation over earlier in the week, he advised me to come after 8.30 in the evening. They start work then, he said, and the night shift ends when day has fully replaced dark. Obviously, there's no beaver union.

Was he able to observe them at work? I asked. Yes, was the reply, as long as he

stayed perfectly still. They'd look the situation over, swim around in circles, and resume work when they figured he meant no harm.

I followed his advice, parking the car a few yards down the road and sneaking up unencumbered by camera gear to the bridge which overlooks the dam. There I stood perfectly still and made an assessment of the situation.

There were no traces of beaver but a dam and recent evidence that something was certainly building that dam since it had backed the Black Creek up for quite a distance. I peered into the dam pond and followed its course up the creek bed until my eyes were blurry. Still no sign of flat-tailed Chaps and his helpmate.

It was about then that the first mosquito landed on me, mistaking me for Joe Ross's airport, no doubt, since he was of considerable size. I swatted and missed! This was the signal for hordes of the flying stingers to descend. Easy meat, they must

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Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, July 6, 1950

The Free Press marked its 75th anniversary with a special edition, reviewing the history of the newspaper and the town. The paper almost always had eight pages then, the special edition had 16 tabloid pages.

Corp. Mason has assumed duties at the Acton Municipal Detachment of the Provincial Police. On council's request Corp. Mason was returned to take charge of the local detachment after being located here for a number of years with the Halton County Detachment. He was recently moved to Bradford to take up a post there.

Rev. A. E. Currey, formerly of Browns Corners, commenced his duties as minister of Acton United Church last Sunday.

A letter was read at the council meeting from the Mayor of the Borough of Acton, England, extending congratulations on Acton's elevation to town status and saying he was sending a desk stationary cabinet suitably inscribed which has been made by the students of the local technical college.

Rev. C. R. Gower, who has been pastor of the Acton Baptist church for the past three years, announced his resignation due to failing health.

Sympathy of Acton friends goes to Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Russell (nee Jean Kennedy) of Unionville in their bereavement when their 18-year-old daughter Margaret drowned at C.G.I.T. camp.

An Acton home was saddened when a loving wife and mother Mrs. R. Spielvogel passed away after a lengthy illness in her 45th year.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, July 1, 1920.

The Free Press' 46th anniversary! The present editor, H. P. Moore has held the

chair for 41 years. (There were four pages weekly for five cents.)

The second quarterly review service of the Methodist Sunday School was made the occasion of the unveiling of a memorial shield in honor of the four members of the school who made the supreme sacrifice in the great war. Lance Corp. Warren Brown, Lance Corp. John L. Moore, Corp. Roy Hurd and Pie J. D. Burt. The shield was unveiled by Miss Fern Brown as Miss Lorna Kennedy, the organist of the school, played Mrs. A. T. Brown offered prayer. Miss Lily Anderson and Mr. Ruthven McDonald of Toronto sang. The shield is the gift of Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Moore, and all four of the boys were for years members of the school during Mr. Moore's superintendency.

While cutting poles for a hay rack, Billy Cutting was imprisoned by roots and clinging earth of an overturned tree and his death was very likely instantaneous. His horrified companions, Thos. Titus, Norman DeForest and W. Peavoy of Ospringe were unable to release him.

Young men! Please do not form lines on both sides of Mill and Main St. and force ladies to walk the gauntlet in passing. They don't like it. They consider it rather ungentlemanly.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, July 4, 1895.

The spire of St. Joseph's church was struck by lightning yesterday. The bolt struck on the south side a short distance from the top. A few minutes elapsed before there was any indication of fire. Smoke then curled up the spire followed by a little flame which was alarmingly suggestive of destruction, owing to its height. The fire bell brought out the brigade and the hook and ladder company soon had ladders placed both inside and outside of the tower. It took very little water to control the fire but it took the courage of several brave firemen to reach a point high enough to work upon it. It

was indeed a narrow escape for this fine structure.

The 28th anniversary of the birth of the Dominion of Canada was celebrated on Monday in a loyal manner throughout the Dominion. The only event here of a public character was a league baseball match between Acton and St. Ann's. The lacrosse team went to Milton. Many of our citizens left town to spend the day and scores of residents entertained visitors.

It is rumored that S. S. S., a young married man, an employee of the buckskin tannery here, eloped with Miss L. S., of Rockwood, his wife's sister, on Dominion Day. It is supposed the erratic pair went to Gloversville, N.Y. (Note: The full names were given in the Free Press of 1895.) Hundreds of wheelmen rode through town Saturday and Sunday to the big meet at Waterloo.

A commercial traveller named E. H. Grenfell of Hamilton had stolen from his mouth a \$40 set of false teeth while asleep in a train running to Lstowel on Thursday.



Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

One of the last, and one of the few traditional Canadian holidays is under attack by the termines who want to turn every holiday into a holiday weekend.

The grand old 24th of May, with scorched fingers and the pungent stink of firecrackers, has been whittled into just another Monday holiday. They're chipping away at Remembrance Day.

And the only day of truly national Canadian importance, celebrating the birth of our nation, is due to go under to the pressures of commercialism. Hardly anybody calls it Dominion Day and more, and some industries and business firms simply ignore it.

When I was an urchin, it was an impressive holiday. There were bands and baseball games, parades and panoply, and interminable speeches about our great Dominion, the Fathers of Confederation, ties with Empire, and what a great guy the mayor was.

It meant that school was really over, at last, that the endless glorious summer had finally begun. It was a strong punctuation mark in the year.

If you had a cottage, it meant your dad

had a day off to drive the family there, get them settled, get the boat out. It was often an all-day job for the old man, with an average of about three flat tires en route.

If you didn't have a cottage, and most didn't, you went to the ball game, or swam in the river, or went fishing, or had a family picnic. If you had a car, many didn't.

Those were peaceful days in the small towns. There was no frantic scramble for the tourist dollar because there were few tourists. Summer was a time to take it easy. The days were hot and long. The evenings were full of hot smells and children's voices, and parents rocking on the front porch. Lemonade or an ice cream cone topped off the day, which seemed 66 hours of enjoying life.

What a change in those (comparatively) few years. Today, with good roads, a car in every garage, and a restless populace, summer begins back around Easter, with thousands thronging the highways to get somewhere.

I'm not complaining, or trying to hold up progress, whatever that is. Just feeling a bit nostalgic about the leisurely pace of those days, and wondering why we're rushing

around like nuts, today. But I can tell you one thing. The clip-clop of a horse and buggy on a soft summer evening was a lot lovelier than the squeal of tires and the bellow of motor-bikes.

This summer, I'm in a bit of a dilemma. I'd half planned to go to England and Scotland, and just mosey around looking up some old pubs, old cathedrals and old girl friends.

But my wife isn't keen. She's not much for pubs, considers one old cathedral much like another, and would probably come to verbal blows with the old girl friends.

To clinch the latter, both our student offspring are among the vast army of the unemployed. At least, Hugh hasn't a job. Last report, Kim had one, as she explained when she called to borrow money on the strength of her job, but it was handling food, and she's been knocking over glasses of milk and dropping cups since she was one, so we figure she's been fired.

But there's a beautiful alternative to the overseas trip. In a letter to weekly editors, I suggested I might hire a trailer this summer. The response was overwhelming, though I wasn't fishing for invitations, just warning them, so that they could get out of town.

Alberta steaks, Nova Scotia sea-food and rum, tuna fishing off beautiful Isle Madame, Cape Breton. And a dozen others, offering everything from accommodations to libations. Can't you see me with a six-hundred pound tuna on the other end of a line?

Hope we can make some of them. It may just be the best summer yet, despite the fact that they're tinkering around with The First of July.



Photos from the past



THOMAS TAYLOR, the teacher, posed with his class and his bicycle at Peacock school. "He was one of the best teachers there ever was," claims Mrs. R. L. Davidson, who's second from the right in the front row, as Maggie McArthur. Back row left to right, Howard McArthur, Leslie Thompson, John Near, John Collins, Garfield Berry, Bob Armstrong, Jim Ismond, Dave Sinclair; second row Clayton Beswick now living in Hamilton; Kate Saunders, Lizzie Ismond, Tress McArthur (Keeler) now of Erin; Ada Near, Mary Ackit, Mabel Hills, Pearl Hills; three small boys in the centre, Will McArthur, Erin; Lloyd Marchmont, Hornby; Clayton Near, then Harry Swindlehurst; Clayton Hills; third row Leonard Harding, Harry Marchmont, Will Webster, Will Collins, Charlie Gardiner, Will Near, Detroit; — Hills, Martin Near; Donald McLean, R. R. 2, Acton; front row Rosella MacArthur (Griffin) Erin, Kate Sanders, Edna Thompson (Leslie) Erin, Maggie McArthur (Davidson) Acton, Florence Armstrong.