

PRESERVING FOOD for leaner times is usually thought of as a prerogative of the human race but we could learn - like Robert Bruce - something from the common Harvest Spider. Jim Jennings, in this sequence of photos caught the spider in action when he

- or she - spied a grasshopper in its webb. He wrapped the hopper up tight in a silken web for a dinner when the pickings were poorer. In No. 4 he takes a well deserved bow with the grasshopper completely enveloped in the silky prison.

Free Press Editorial Page

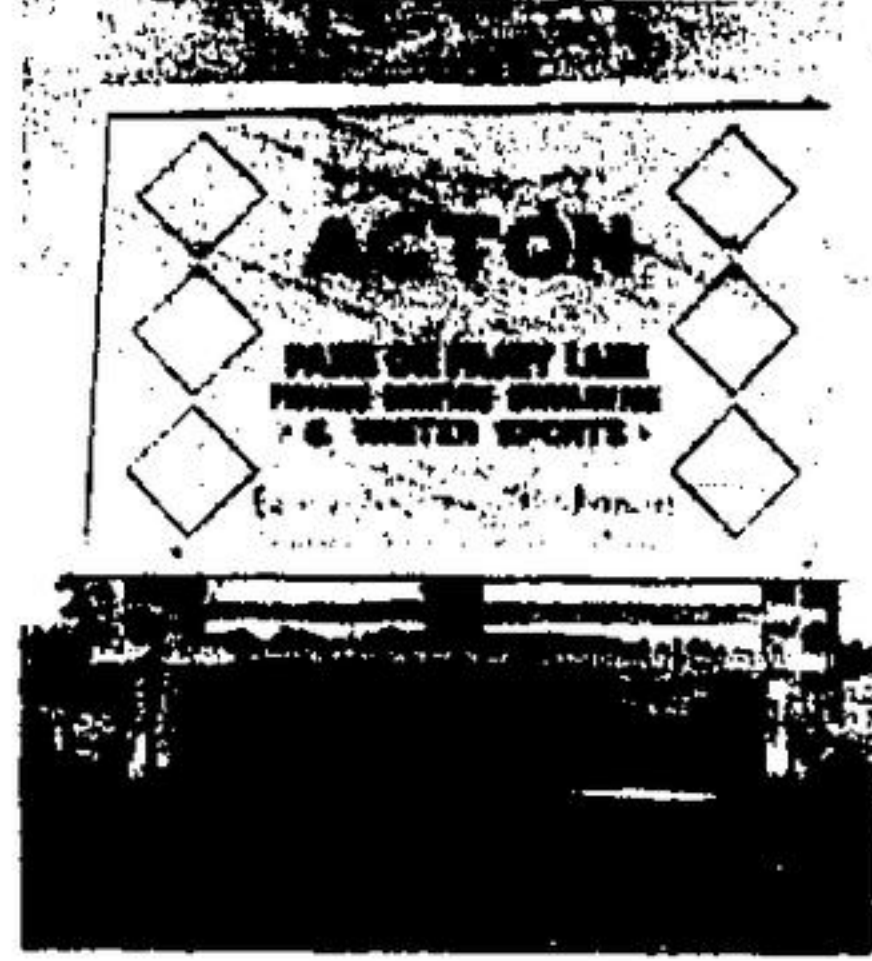
Signs poor advertising for town

First impressions are often the most important.

That's why we question the value of the signs which advertise Acton on two highway entrances to town.

Condition of the signs is not only a poor reflection on the town but the unpainted, illegible lettering and weatherbeaten appearance, create an eyesore.

Time and weather have joined hands to create the general deterioration. It has not been vandalism. The six empty squares which sit waiting for the various emblems of service clubs suggest the signs have never been finished.



Keep it in the open

Councillors of the Town of Brampton recently started closing some of their meetings to the news media.

Then there was an incident at Queen's Park where a cabinet minister reportedly was responsible for excluding the press from a meeting of the Standing Committee on Health with officials of OHSIP.

These are straws in a potentially foul wind. Weak men like to hide.

It is fundamental to our system of government that public business is done in public. This has been one of the hardest principles for the system to carry over the long life of British parliamentary democracy.

Because of human weakness there has always been a natural inclination on the part of elected

officials to try and get behind closed doors.

But it has also been so fundamental that they don't meet in secret, that an alert press and public, together with more knowledgeable legislators have been able to protect us against serious infringement.

However, today we probably are approaching the most serious threats there have ever been to this vitally important principle.

The strongest plea of those few who have espoused secrecy in government always has been that it is more efficient.

But the public interest cannot be jeopardized for such a reason. Closed meetings of public bodies undermine the roots of our political principles and traditions.—The Leamington Post.

Thifting thands . . .

The Christian Science Monitor, in an editorial on Canada, refers to "Arctic oil spilt".

We trust that the typesetting machine did not lisp. The word is too neat, too expressive, too pat a coinage to have been accidental.

Considering the filth that has already been deposited on beaches by oil spills along both coasts of Canada and the United States and ecological horrors that have been

projected in connection with an Arctic oil pipeline or a route through the ice pack for huge tankers, the new word seems likely to achieve wide currency.

We do not know whether the Monitor was the first to use it. We predict, however, that the birth of "spilt" may prove to be as felicitous as the earlier creation of "smog."—Leamington Post.



Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

Good fences make good neighbors. That's what poet Robert Frost told us in The Mending Wall. From our experience this summer, I agree with all my heart, though perhaps not in the way that Frost intended it.

We had two of the worst fences in town. One, at the back, was ours, leaning at a 45-degree angle over our neighbors' vegetable garden, and killing it ruthlessly, year after year.

They, understandably annoyed, suggested a new fence. I was loath, after pricing fencing. But we agreed to split the cost of a mutual fence. And here's the kicker: He's a builder. I couldn't nail two boards together without mutilating myself. So I jumped at it.

It was arranged that I would help him. You know: Hold the boards; fetch nails, provide encouragement. As it turned out, he built the whole thing, singlehanded. I always seemed to be busy when he had time to work on it. Didn't fetch a single nail.

I felt rather sheepish, but not unduly so. I've been getting away with this for years. Some time when he wants me to write a nasty letter to his creditors, I'll be glad to do it for him, and we'll be even.

Then there was a big conference about the color of the stain we'd put on it. Our wives did most of the conferring. Jim said, and I agreed, "I don't give a damn if you paint it purple."

Painting began. My wife painted one panel of our side. We were away for a few days. When we returned, the whole fence was finished. His wife said, "I hope you don't mind that we went ahead and painted your side." I assured her we were delighted. My wife hid, in shame, for two days.

Now he's going to use his power saw to cut up all my old dry cedar fence and we'll have enough kindling for the fireplace for two years, and the finest fence in town. How's that for neighbors? At least on one side of the fence.

The second fence, along the side, is an atrocity, erected about the time of the War of 1812. It leans, lurches, and looks like a gap-toothed grin. Unfortunately, it isn't ours and the bird who owns it has no other interest in his property than collecting the rent from the series of unfortunates who move into his house, a new family about every six months. I've toyed with the idea of arson, but there are those numerous small children to consider.

But it's not only good fences that make good neighbors. There are other things. This week, our neighbors on the third side showed what they are made of.

Their son, a universally student, works for the autumn at a mental institution. On a fine autumn day, he brought home two cartloads of potatoes for a barbecue in their back yard.

How would you like a dozen patients dumped in your back yard for a three-hour picnic? I'd probably go hide in the bathroom. Yet his parents were out there, talking to them, tending them, feeding them, and simply being sympathetic and decent.

Can you imagine what it means to those poor devils - the patients, that is? Some of them had probably not been in a house in 20 years. But they were given the run of the house, as well as the back lawn.

One of them said not a word all afternoon, but when it was over, he shook hands with his hostess and murmured: "Goodbye. Thank you." It was a great achievement for him, according to those who knew him.

Another, a schizophrenic, examined all the rooms in the house, verbally rearranged all the furniture, dabbed himself with any perfume or lotion available, and drew a portrait of the hostess, including a heart above her head, and a swastika in a basket. She wonders if he saw her as a benevolent dictator.

It takes all kinds of neighbors, but I think we're pretty lucky. Luckier than our neighbors are, perhaps. They have only us.

Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, August 31, 1950.

The rail strike is over. There is, of course, a big accumulation of mail, express and freight to clear after the nine-day tie-up. The government acted with unprecedented speed to bring an end to the strike.

The 1950 edition of Rockwood Horticultural Society's annual exhibition was acclaimed a big success with 276 entries being judged and displayed in the Community Hall in Rockwood. With the highest membership in 20 years, the Society presented a colorful array of flower and vegetable exhibits. Honors for the oldest exhibitor went to Mrs. E. Nickell while Arthur Brown claimed title to being the youngest.

Mr. John Chapman, who has recovered from a recent illness, is resuming his work with the Metropolitan Insurance Co. and will move to Fergus shortly. He has been with the company for 18 years. Many friends here will regret the removal of Mr. and Mrs. Chapman from Acton.

The Lorne Scots band from Georgetown has won top honors in their class at the C.N.E.

Several district men have enlisted with the Canadian Special Force for service with the United Nations in Korea. Recent downpours have had a settling effect on local streets. A bulldozer was stuck on Wilbur St. Tuesday, an excavation under the front end of a parked car settled, a lady fell into a caved-in sidewalk and the streets were generally in sinking condition.

Don Wiggins, accountant at the Bank of Montreal is in Sunnybrook hospital. He is being replaced here by O. F. Hunt from Walkerton.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, September 9, 1920.

The Duke of Devonshire chapter of the Daughters of the Empire held a farewell tea for Mrs. Jas. Warren and Mrs. D. C. Russell at the home of Mrs. C. C. Henderson. The

presentation of the scholarship to little Miss Jeanie Orr was an interesting feature.

Today Acton loses a family which has been most useful in the uplifting activities of the community for many years. Mrs. James L. Warren, Miss Helen and Fred leave today for their new home in Toronto. Sincere regret is felt at the removal of this esteemed family.

Miss Florence Murray has opened millinery rooms in the Havill building. Her showrooms are upstairs but she has the privileges of the front window.

Labor Day on Monday proved an ideal autumn day and was generally observed as a public holiday. Hundreds of our citizens took in Toronto fair; many driving down by motor. A number spent the afternoon at Georgetown Community picnic. Labor ceased in the factories and the day was enjoyably spent.

The Institute ladies held their first meeting of the season at the home of Mrs. Ed Gamble. The kind offer of the veterans to meet in one of their rooms was kindly accepted.

A rather precipitate marriage took place last week when a young man working in town secured a license and was married by a local clergyman to a maid only in her 16th year. The amorous groom failed to secure the consent of parents and added two or three years to her age on the affidavit. The magistrate, informed by the bride's mother, gave the young fellow wholesome advice. It is now reported the marriage ceremony was performed a second time with the consent of the parents and everything is now on a satisfactory basis.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, August 22, 1895.

Last Sabbath the congregations of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches were united for two preaching services. Rev. Mr. Howell preached in the Presbyterian church in the morning and in his own pulpit in the evening. The utmost Christian fellowship prevailed.

Last week the general store of J. N. Stinson in Rockwood was broken into by burglars and goods to the amount of \$100

stolen. The burglars were traced as far as Georgetown but not captured.

The material is being laid down for the new buildings of Messrs. Beardmore and Co. at the G.T.R. station. A contract has been let for 200,000 pressed bricks.

A barber named Kelly, who came here from Toronto a couple of weeks ago, was hired to run Morton's barber shop while the proprietor went away on a short vacation. Last Wednesday night Kelly left for Guelph taking with him a number of razors, clippers, brushes etc. He was arrested there and brought back to town. The tools were restored and the case was settled.

The special flower services held at St. Alban's church on Sunday were most successful. The floral decorations were profuse and artistically arranged. The offertory was large and will meet a considerable portion of the cost of the proposed memorial font.

A memorial service, relating to the late Mrs. John Pletch, will be held in the Methodist church. She died age 38 after many months of suffering. Hers was the first interment in the new survey of Fairview cemetery.

THE ACTON FREE PRESS

PHONE 853 1010

Business and Editorial Office

Founded in 1875 and published every Wednesday at 50 Willow St. Acton, Ontario. Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation, the C.W.N.A. and O.W.N.A. Advertising rates on request. Subscriptions payable in advance. \$6.00 in Canada. 50.00 in all countries other than Canada. Single copies 15 cents. Second class mail Registration Number 0515. Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied 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 typographical error advertising goods or services at a wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell, and may be withdrawn at any time.

Dills Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd.
David R. Dills, Publisher
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Photos from the past



PICTURED AT GUELPH on June 25, 1936, were long service employees of Beardmore and Co. who had served the company 30 years or more, the heads of departments and salesmen.

Recognize anyone in this picture loaned by Miss Madeline Gibbons.