

Free Press / Editorial Page



GLENLEA SUBDIVISION and Indusmin Quarries are prominent in this aerial photo of Acton taken by Hamilton Industrial photographer Phil Aggus of Phil Aggus and Sons Ltd. Mr. Aggus and Halton Warden Alan Day recently flew over the county in a helicopter to obtain photos for use by the Halton Industrial Committee. This one was taken as the chopper bore in from the west. The Free Press received permission to reproduce some of the photos.

A dear George letter . . .

An open letter to the Hon. George Kerr, Minister of Energy and Resources Management, and M.P.P. for Halton West:

Dear George: I know you are busy bearing around after the pollution bug-a-boo, which is one of the big problems facing us today in the global village, but I wonder if you have a few minutes to discuss something that's been on my mind and I'm sure on the minds of many of your constituents since the government issued Design for Development for the Toronto-Centred Region?

"The growth which does take place in Zone 2 will be encouraged into (1) the vicinity of an urban axis which is expected to begin in Zone 1 with Richmond Hill and include Aurora, Newmarket, and to a very small degree, Bradford; (11) such communities as Orangeville, Bolton, Acton, Georgetown, Milton, Uxbridge, Port Perry and Stouffville."

Now we gather from government policy in the last few months that although there has been no specific legislation passed, that the Toronto-centred region plan is being used as a guide for any growth proposals. For instance, the O.M.B. recently turned down proposals for two subdivisions in a neighboring township because they didn't correspond with Design for Development.

Acton presently is planning to annex 1,000 acres of Esquesing township at the request of owners of land in the east end. Does this fit in with the plans in Design for Development? Or is the town being too ambitious?

Although there are some fine farms in this area, the land is not particularly suited for agriculture. Is the province merely stamping land for agriculture on a blanket basis?

We gathered from recent government statements that all growth in Zone 2 would be curtailed, which in our estimation, runs counter to the statement in Design for Development promising encouragement of growth in the towns of North Halton. Where does the government stand?

Does the town of Acton sit in a growth area or has the government decided it must sit and wait for development within its own boundaries?

If the town is to grow with encouragement from the province, what form will the encouragement take?

These questions and many more require answers if the town is to have guide lines to plan for the years ahead. It is very difficult indeed to plan for your future when there are no definite guide lines to follow.

Perhaps there will be more definite answers to these questions and others after the September 30 deadline for briefs from the local level on the Toronto centred region.

Meanwhile, the people in North Halton, like many others affected by Design for Development are living in a kind of limbo.

Nassagaweya councillor Allan Ackman summed up feelings in North Halton pretty well recently at a township planning board meeting when he told board members they were "sitting around planning the future of this township and we are not even sure it has a future."

Just thought you'd like to hear from us, George. Wishing you every success with cleaning up pollution in the province, and hoping you have some of the answers to questions we've been asking.

Yours sincerely, Resident of North Halton.



Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

In a burst of blind fury, I made my wife get off her tail and go with me on our Big Trip, in the last week of holidays

It had started out, back in May, as a leisurely trip to the British Isles. It shrank like a dowager on a crash diet.

There was no formal opposition, just a lot of little feminine tricks, something like the Chinese water torture. Drop after drop. Insomnia, nothing to wear, can't afford it, who'll cut the lawn, absolutely must have the so-and-so's for a weekend. You know the gamut.

By mid-July it was a trip across Canada, with a trailer. Looking up friends and relatives, not driving too far in a day, enjoying the camaraderie of the trailer camp.

By mid-August, it was a mad dash to the Maritimes. But Kim was home and, "We can't leave her alone" (and she didn't want to go with us, after just having been there).

Well, split milk isn't much use. We finally made it. Left on Thursday afternoon, and got home Sunday evening. How's that for a Big Trip?

However, perhaps it was worth waiting

for all summer. It was different. We bought a Coleman stove, as we planned to cook along the way. Anyone interested in a brand-new Coleman stove that has never even been lit?

And, of course, we bought food here and there, to cook on our new stove. Arrived home with two huge boxes of groceries. I swear I had 12 meals in a row of bacon and eggs and beans. No mean fare. But we've still got two weeks' supply.

We just drove until we felt like stopping. North and north. And we wound up spending a couple of days in a cabin on a lake and loving it.

It was a run-down, old-fashioned tourist resort. We got one of the deluxe cabins. No bell-hops, no broadloom, no TV, but a real washroom, with running water. In fact, the water was running all over the floor, from a leak or something, when we checked in.

Strangely, my wife loved the place. At home, she's a psychotic emptier of ashtrays, sweeper of floors and maker of beds. At the cabin, she cheerfully walked around in grit up to the ankles, and actually chuckled when the Trans-Canada train went by three or

four times a day, rocking the cabin like a cradle.

For a couple of days we forgot about pollution and population-explosion and other such poppycock. It was enough to wrench the door open, look at that great, clean lake 20 yards away and wonder what the rich people were doing. Sunshine and sand and bacon and eggs and beans.

Evenings were just as paradisaical. Campfire until midnight, then into the hut with the little gas stove sputtering cosily, a novel, a nightcap, and no phone ringing or car door slamming to indicate callers.

We had a special treat on Friday night, when the proprietors held a dance. The rock band made the railroad train sound like a muted whisper. We didn't go to the dance, but it was just like home, when Kim has a record on.

But idylls must end. Third morning, woke to a wild wind, a driving rain coming in around the front door, and the worst storm of the summer in full flight.

Drove the long way home in rain that was worse than a blizzard, with sundry morons tail-gating, cutting in, passing on corners and hills and over the white line, when you couldn't see the front of your car. Shaky.

Things didn't improve. They just got back to normal. Discovered daughter engaged to fine young chap who had two cents. Literally. I know it's hard to believe in this affluent age, but he had two (2) cents cash when he proposed.

The exercises recommended in the order they do the most good are running, swimming, cycling, stationary running and handball or basketball. Calisthenics? A poor substitute, says the book. And twiddling your thumbs, an exercise at which I excel, doesn't even appear.

There's a list of categories for users which runs from one to five, classified from poor to excellent. You start out running, walk if breath fails and then resume running. You keep going for 12 full minutes. When you've checked the distance covered, you're in business and can determine your physical fitness category.

Simple, eh? I thought so, too, until Sunday when I determined my status.

My wife and I started out in a drizzly rain. She was in the car. I ran behind on a deserted stretch of the First Line that winds around Fairy Lake. Dogs barked, cows gazed, crows squawked and people gawked. I kept going for 12 agonizing minutes huffing and puffing like one of those internal engines from the Milton steam reunion.

I covered 1.2 miles of ground. That nine-holed me in Category Two" — one step above

My illusions were shattered. This category, says the cook, "catches the social athlete, the man who plays golf on Saturday, or tennis on Sundays, or baseball at picnics, or goes swimming in summer, hunting in fall or skiing in winter—and next to nothing in between." I was convinced and made a vow I will complete the program if I can last.

So if you see some poor creature eating up distance on the stretch of road beside your place, don't panic! It's me. Yes, you are welcome to join—provided you get your doctor's O.K.

In the meantime, I'll keep you posted on the results.

Off the cuff . . .

Behind every successful man is another one who says he went to school with him.

Co-operation key to success . . .

We are still hearing exclamations of surprise from people involved in the first annual sportsmen's show which the Chamber of Commerce, three service clubs and Acton Hi-Flyers operated over the Labor Day weekend.

We suspect many people expected the show would flop and then everyone could go back to their pads convinced that nothing would go over in town which involved several clubs working together.

As a result of a lot of hard work and planning the event went off very well indeed, but perhaps the keynote for the show's success was the co-operation between the various groups involved.

Each club has its own area of competence and saw to it that their part of the operation was carried

out. This kind of inter-club co-operation should be an example to all of us.

Given the right conditions, the show could become an annual feature on this particular weekend. It could provide more advertising than a campaign from Madison Avenue.

We can easily look at the example of other communities who have built up attractions and made town and area synonymous with an event.

Examples? Fergus and the Highland Games. Stratford and the Shakespearean Festival. Milton and the Steam-Era Reunion, Georgetown and the Banham hockey tournament. Shelburne and the Old Time Fiddler contest. Chatham and its gigantic corn roast.

When these events were first conceived in their various places they started out small. Over the years they grew in size and reputation.

It would be a generous gesture if all the townspeople got behind the Acton event another year and gave the sportsmen's show the impetus it needs to establish it as an annual event in Acton.

The number of visitors attracted to this year's show should be a good indication of how many would come if the show was extended another day and enlarged. Visitors appreciated and commented on the choice of site.

We throw out an editorial bouquet to all involved in the first of what we hope will be an annual event of this kind.



and Pepper by hartley coles

According to a paperback book with the highly unlikely title, "Aerobics," I'm on the threshold of a new and keener appreciation of life. That is, if I last long enough!

Maybe you noticed this space has been filled by more circumspect material the past two weeks. Perhaps you wondered whether this fuzzy-faced scribbler had finally drowned in his own trivia.

Let me explain.

For the past three or four—or maybe five—months I've been feeling like all the road machinery reconstructing Highway 7 ran over me at the same time. Or if that isn't clear enough, perhaps a better analogy would be that I felt like the beer in a bottle with its top gone—awfully flat.

This annual did not creep up on me unawares. I could feel its tentacles reaching for me over the past several years, gradually wearing me down to where there was little "joie de vivre" left. It had reached the point where a walk across the street was like a trip through the Sahara desert. It made writing this column feel like I was penning a 1,000 page novel.

I complained, of course, loudly and almost daily to everyone who would listen, until finally my better half suggested perhaps I should lhwimbyltyachin and seek some medical advice. When it became clear I was either (a) a physical coward who dreaded doctors and dentists or (b) a chronic complainer who relished making other people squirm with a recital of my woes, she took matters into her own hands and made the appointment for me.

Although I pretended to be offended at the outright effrontery and threatened not to show up for the appointments, I was secretly pleased. On the appointed day at the appointed time I was in the doctor's office like any sick hypochondriac.

"How are you," smiled the doctor, motioning for me to sit down in a chair opposite him.

"Not worth a darn, Doc," I replied in a cowed voice. Then I belabored him with symptoms a yard long.

What followed will have to remain confidential between physician and me. There were tests. They stuck needles in me, hooked me up to machines with yards of paper, despatched me to a specialist. One day recently I got the summons to appear for results.

"You," said the doctor kindly, "have got myocardial ischemia."

It was at this point in the dialogue that communications broke down!

"My-o-cardia-ah-ah-what?" I asked incredulously.

Mentally, the words pictured a six month stay in hospital where at the end of a long corridor the Latin inscription "Myocar-d-a-h-a..." or whatever is inscribed in a granite tombstone above my name. But I was premature—I think.

"That means," he said resuming communications, "that your heart is not getting enough oxygen." My advice is to get off your fancy and start to exercise, or words to that effect. Then, he said one of the best methods would be in this book called Aerobics, by a doctor from the U.S. air force.

The doctor's theory is that many of today's ills are caused by sedentary living, whatever that is, and some good old fashioned exercise like running will clear the whole thing up. And he's got lots of evidence to buttress his case. Followed faithfully the exercises increase oxygen consumption, endurance and can give you a new outlook on the dull, old world.

Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, September 14, 1950. 1384 eligible citizens of Acton were absent from the nomination meeting in the council chambers on Wednesday evening. The meeting had received the required publicity and was held to fill the vacancy on council caused by the resignation of Tom Nicol. Among the 18 present at the meeting there were never more than 14 at one time. Not one nomination was received by clerk Jack McGeachie. Council decided to carry on for the balance of the year without filling the vacancy. Several important matters came before a special meeting of the North Halton high school district board Monday. Transportation of pupils to the three schools and selecting a central location for one school to serve the three towns and two townships were the main items of a session that began in the drizzling rain at Speyside. Members viewed possible land for the central school and the most suitable land in this district appeared to be at the corner of the third line and the road between Speyside and Georgetown. Congratulations to George Fountain who won first prize in the old time fiddlers' contest in Glen Williams.

There been as few entries in the dairy classes. The creameries are doing it. Farmers wives are not making butter as they used to do. The floral exhibit was the best seen for years. Notwithstanding the

multiplying of the number of motor cars the noble horse appears to hold his own at this fall fair. The midway features were numerous. C. W. Kelly and Son made a good exhibit of the famous Bell pianos. Johnstone and Co.'s furniture display was attractive.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, September 23, 1920. Acton Fall Fair of 1920 adds another to the unbroken list of successes. There were big squashes and pumpkins galore, fit for epicures and poets. Not for 50 years has

Advertisement for THE ACTON FREE PRESS, including contact information and a historical note about the newspaper's founding in 1875.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, September 3, 1895. A meeting of much interest to this municipality was held to consider the necessity of providing some adequate protection against fire. Reeve Storey said a first-class steam engine would be required with hose and apparatus. A motion to petition council to raise by debenture the sum required was passed without a dissenting vote. Thirty or forty free-holders stood up to give the motion their approbation.

Labor Day is a statutory holiday. It was instituted on behalf of the Labor Union but the laboring class do not as a rule desire it. Labor Day is the least regarded of all the holidays of the year.

It is reported that Mr. John Duff, of Erin, was attacked by highway men about one mile above Acton one night last week while he was returning home. He received no injury and gave his marauders more than they bargained for.

Mrs. Jas Ramabaw, Crewsons Corners, has a sunflower in his garden with 48 blossoms on. Mr. Thomas Cook, who lives upstairs in Reeve Pearson's tenement on Willow St., fell down the back stairs in a fit of dizziness but escaped without broken bones. The old gentleman is 78 years of age.