

What readers think of us

Hurry up with the Free Press I've been waiting a week

Box 1086
Acton

A lot of newsprint has rolled off the printing presses since the days of the town crier. At the sound of his bell, people gathered around to hear him tell the latest news. Today, townspeople hurry just as eagerly to pick up their copies of The Acton Free Press, for now, as then, news is important to man.

Events taking place on the far side of the earth or even on the moon can be seen on television, but our interest in "what's new in town" is best met by a weekly newspaper. Like the town crier, a newspaper's first function is to report facts to its readers.

The Acton Free Press fulfills this community-need with ease, giving us news which affects our daily lives. Human tragedies and failures are reported without

sensationalism, but always with compassion, while triumphs are heralded with praise and pictures of unsurpassed quality.

Editorial viewpoints on current events are stated frankly and readers' opinions, controversial or otherwise, are keenly sought and published.

Facts alone often make dull reading, but the paper includes articles and features to all tastes, their lines liberally seasoned with humour. Yesterday's baseball scores or today's new by-law, the arrival of spring's first robin, the departure date of winter's last pothole, - all are faithfully reported.

Should you wish to sell a bassinet or buy a swimming pool, success in the advertising section is assured.

The voice of the young is heard through the land today, but nowhere is it expressed more joyously than in the notes from

Acton High reporting the activities of its students. Reading of their happenings in the pages of the Free Press, our faith in youth is renewed weekly.

Nor are our senior citizens forgotten; each treasured and golden even in their lives is recorded with photographs for their added pleasure. Surely, the following testimonial from a golden ager, overheard in the Post Office lobby, best expresses the enjoyment our community derives from its weekly newspaper.

This gentleman sorted his mail and impatiently discarded handbills and advertisements. Reopening his mailbox, he hollered through. "Hurry it up there with my Free Press, I've been waiting a week for it."

-M. Merrin

The Free Press has received several entries for the Canadian Weekly Newspaper Association essay contest entitled "Our Hometown Newspaper" and we thought they were so good we decided we should let other readers in on our readers' impressions of us.

The best essay will be selected by the Free Press staff and sent on to the CWNA to compete in the nation-wide competition for which Dominion Textiles is offering a prize of \$300. We're sorry all entries could not be sent but competition rules call for only one. Meanwhile, here they are—both bouquets and brickbats for your weekly paper:



There is no secret

By Shirley Morrison
A Local Interest

To us, the people, there is no secret.
For those at rest,
Please read the Acton Free Press,
For what people say why should we care,
For can we help it if they are so square,
A friend of a friend,
For freedom of the press there is no end,
And to the people we will express,
The thoughts they write no more and no less,
To us the people there is no secret.
If you have a chance,
Don't stand around waiting,
Hurry and get one in advance,
For as long as Acton is a town,
The words of the press will always be written down,
To us the people there is no secret.
A friend of ours the Free Press is,
It writes the news as it occurs,
It has grown with the town
Through his ups and downs of ninety-six years,
To us the people there is no secret.
The Free Press tells the local news,
Of the people happiness, marriages and their blues,
It tells us of accidents that aren't too funny,
And lots of ways to earn extra money.
To us the people there is no secret.
For every tree that loses a leaf,
The Acton Free Press writes up all the news briefs,
They write about all the sports,
And even about people who go to new ports,
To us the people there is no secret.
For this weekly paper all we ask is fifteen cents,
Throughout the whole year,
Autumn, Winter, Spring, and Summer.

Hometown paper unique

It comes every Thursday afternoon in the mail. If it does not come, which is maybe once a year, I call to the postman to see if he has forgotten it. He knows better than to forget my "Hometown Paper!"

It is unique in so many ways. I read every word - news, ads, announcements, etc. It is just like an old friend coming in for a visit.

What memories it recalls! "Now could you believe it is twenty years ago a certain person got married or was appointed to an important position?" Really the "50" year column and pictures from the past, have attracted my interest, since especially 1967. It does seem a long time ago. But looking back to the stories (true ones) those articles recall, fills many a pleasant evening. The younger members of the family begin to realize that Mum and Dad really did have some happy times fifty years ago. And did you know 'so & so' was my uncle or aunt as it may be?

"The Hometown Paper - The Acton Free Press" has risen in my estimation to a high degree. It never did stand still! Perhaps I am a little more critical because I am married to a newspaper man. I am quick to find errors and omissions in our local daily. Never would that happen in the Acton Free Press!

I had better count up the words because I am sure the limit allowed is not sufficient for me to express my good opinion and kind applause to the editors for such an excellent sheet.

It is a history of the people, past and present and gives a true cross-section of the community in every phase of life.

The Acton paper has had some wonderful pictures this past few years. There is nothing like a picture to tell a story - good or bad - the equipment has been so improved that it would be impossible to better the pictures presented in so many ways.

Another family asset is that one knows through the paper when

relatives marry or pass away. So few letters are written and so few family groups get together now that it would go unknown if it were not for the paper. I do not mean that in an unkind way, because in this day and age, we do not have the time to keep in touch so often.

The small town weekly is and always has been the beginning of a larger daily paper. It has been the foundation on which our friendly communities, large and small, have had their beginning and have grown up to larger periodicals and most of all, have trained the personnel to fill those higher positions called for on our daily papers. It is, in other words, the beginning of everything worthwhile.

Kathleen C. Currie,
(Mrs. J. C.)
15 Haddington St.
Gait, Ont.

Free Press is quite indispensable

The Acton Free Press, or the "Acton Blah", as it is more affectionately called here in north Moffat, has established itself to be quite indispensable.

Sensationalism is so very important to the very competitive daily newspaper business that we all tend to feel just a little frustrated with our fellow man.

Why should "Fuddle Duddle", murder, and riots monopolize so many front pages when, I'm sure, taken in their proper perspective, they'd rate four lines somewhere around page 12.

The Acton Free Press, although not a literary masterpiece, still holds life in that perspective.

Most of us live in this area by choice and are proud of the fact that our neighbors are anxious to make these few thousand acres a place to remember. With harmony and goodwill we can make it such a place; and what better way to promote these than through honest evaluation of all

events by good reporters and interested citizens in one local newspaper.

Man is basically vain, but sometimes a little unsure of his ability. This little paper can boost his ego by printing a few lines about how his hard work at farming, racing, breeding stock, or what have you, paid off with a win or an award at a local event.

This small item not only creates a certain pride in his neighborhood but occasionally provides this man with the incentive to try for larger stakes.

One's name doesn't have to be Trudeau, MacDonald, or Sinclair to make the newsprint; it can be Hoglewog who has worked hard for his community, be it with the boy scouts, the council or by digging a big pond and making it a home for 100 ducks and geese.

Upon moving to our new home in this pretty rural community a local grocer suggested we get a copy of the Acton Free Press which would probably answer many of our questions on schools,

churches, shopping, and other activities to our satisfaction.

Within a few short weeks he had this information, plus we'd become acquainted with some of our neighbors through the "Comin' and Goin'" and other special interest columns.

We are all proud of this little portion of God's good earth, our children can still run and play without too great a fear of being run over by a car or reprimanded for trespassing, our air is still reasonably free of pollutants and we all still have pride in our community which many larger areas have already lost.

Every Wednesday evening we are all reminded of how fortunate we are to be living in such a pleasant, happy, progressive community - how? - by reading approximately 16 pages called "The Acton Free Press."

Mrs. Lillian Neave
R. R. 1,
Moffat, Ontario.

Like letter from home

Dear Sirs:
It is a great pleasure for me to write this letter and let you know how much I enjoy reading the local paper.

Our own Acton Free Press has received many awards, and I might say is one paper which is enjoyed around the country for many miles.

To begin each week, we open the pages to read "The Word of God" a good message written by one of the local ministers of our community.

The news columns of twenty years, fifty and seventy-five years ago sure bring the memories which the older people enjoy so much.

The local community pictures and news from the different localities for ten miles or more - the sports column - hockey and skating, where children age five to parents and friends twenty or one hundred can enjoy themselves if they wish.

Our curling and golf report, in summer the baseball reports for girls and boys.

It is interesting to see the monthly reports of all the church women's meetings. The two groups of the I.O.D.E., the Women's Institute, the Y Ladies, the Legion Ladies. It certainly is grand to see the friendship and love in all these groups and all the good they are doing in our reports in the paper.

Another group which was organized seven years ago, "The

Golden Age" which will be glad to welcome anyone over sixty years old at Luxton Hall, the first Tuesday at 2 o'clock and the third Tuesday at 7.30 of each month.

The different activities of all the schools. The coming events. The page with the Births, Deaths, Wedding announcements, Marriages, Pictures. Over fifty years married or over. We also have our pages with all our advertisements telling us where to buy our best food and groceries. Farms and Sales.

Our weekly Editors - "The Painted Box" by Wendy; Sugar and Spice by Smiley; Salt and Pepper by Hartley; and the page from Rockwood. All these articles certainly make our paper one we sure can be proud of and, in closing, I wish the local paper the best of good luck for 1971.

Our "Acton Free Press" travels far.
We enjoy its news so much.
It tells us all about who's sick,
And always keeps us in touch.
"It's like a letter from home."
From Alberta came this word.
So, subscribers, remember your subscription,
And get the best news you ever heard.

Yours truly,
Margaret J. Davidson,
R.R. 2, Acton.

Suggests ways of improving paper

As a grade 8 student I enjoy sitting down after supper every Wednesday night reading the Acton Free Press. Personally I feel the paper is written very well and I think the people of Acton should not criticize it but help to improve it.

I feel when a crime is committed in your town or surrounding areas or anything else bad you should have the name of the person who did it put in the paper. The town council should let the people of Acton in on some of their future plans to improve the town.

Instead of the town standing

still the newspaper should take the responsibility to activate public and council interest to developing a progressive community. This could be done by head-lining in the newspaper, areas which need improvement. The newspaper should encourage more readers' letters to be sent in to the paper.

Why doesn't the paper originate projects to improve the town and why not run a series of sketches of local places? I feel the advertising section is good and all the local news covering is very good. Putting the different

churches in is very good for new people coming to Acton.

Another section of the paper should be articles from various people talking about general interest items such as local interest, crafts, painting, drawing and other interesting things.

In closing, a general poll of readers to find out what they would like to read in the paper, should receive priority.

Cheryl Williams
Grade 8
Robert Little School

Prints news without fear or favor

P.O. Box 571
Guelph

Having worked in the town of Acton for 13 years, I became an avid reader of the Acton Free Press.

This relatively small newspaper, in comparison with other larger weekly publications, is remarkable. It is produced in a size of print that can be read, whether of good or bad sight. It is exceptional, inasmuch, travelling as I have around Canada, I have yet to find a journal of weekly stature, to equal its excellence.

The paper covers a large area around Acton, and gives reports from its many outlying correspondents in its columns. This keeps people in town in contact

with regional happenings, and vice versa.

There must be a great deal of thought and hard work put into the production of this newspaper, which is also excellently laid out, with important news in the appropriate place. Editorials are both topical and varied, and at the same time written in understandable language. Comment is always invited, and it is something for a paper to print adverse criticism and compliments through the medium of letters to the editor.

Emphasis is placed on both local and Canadian issues and where there could be lack of understanding on the part of the reader, simple explanations and interpretations on the subject matter are given.

A newspaper such as the Acton

Free Press, can be an asset community wise, and the people of Acton should be very thankful that they have such a live organ in their midst. The photography content is very good too.

This paper prints the news as it is, without fear or favour, its editorials wide in scope, and the invitation to freely express one's views and opinions is readily available to all.

What better could you have than this in journalistic democracy? It is a credit to the community at large.

Congratulations to all concerned in the many facets of its Publication.

Andrew E. Welch.

Better paper? increase the range!

"Acton Free Press"
My Views

I opened up the weekly press
To read the latest news
And noticed that our Tanner team
Again did go and lose.

I sighed a bit, then turned the page
And read how Mrs. Gibbs
Had left her train-split Vauxhall car
And only bruised some ribs.

Then when I turned the page once more
A clipping caught my eyes.
It said that my opinion might
Just win me quite a prize.

It said that if I gave my views
About your news-filled sheets
That I could win three hundred bucks
O.K. then - hold your seats!

The first complaint that comes to mind
Is of the news you give
It seems to be some small town talk;
Do other people live?

When someone buys some news to read,
They want the very most,
They'd want to know if Russia bombed
The Eastern U.S. coast.

They'd wish to know if Britain was
Attacked by strange green things,
But when they buy the Acton Press
(Our town is all that sings).

Another thing you could improve
Is what your sports cast writes,
They tell of only Acton games,
As if Toronto bites.

The N.H.L. has hockey, too
But seldom do you see
That Boston beat Detroit
In a game of eight to three.

The Free Press has it's good points, too,
The news is not obscene;
It is not hard to understand
Just what your writers mean.

The words are not too big to read,
The printing's not too fine,
You do not need a microscope
To read between the lines.

To sum it up, it's not too bad
It needs but one main change,
You'd have a better paper
If you would increase the Range.

Stephen Atkinson

I like reading it "it affects me"

The Acton Free Press, our weekly paper, is very interesting and enjoyable to read. It has all the news happenings in Acton which is why I especially like reading it; also because it affects me.

The paper also includes area news from Rockwood, Eden Mills, Ospringle and Ballinafad. This also pleases me because it gives an idea of what's going on in the county.

If there has been a special event like a parade, fair, variety night or something similar, there is always an excellent and complete writeup with many pictures.

The paper is loaded with columns; some for older people, some for younger people, but most of them are for everyone and I enjoy reading them.

Some examples are, Salt and Pepper, Painted Box, Notes and Quotes, Sugar and Spice and others. These can be amusing, educational or both.

The Directory is also an

excellent as well as necessary part of the paper. It contains want ads, births, deaths, lost and found, coming events, letters of thanks, for rent and for sale sections. To me it is a complete section in itself.

The sports page is also a helpful part by telling the time and place of games or sports being played, it also contains pictures of games that were played the week before. There are also columns of bowling or other sports written by students themselves.

The weekly specials for the various stores are found throughout the paper and are very helpful. These articles however, are sometimes difficult to find and should be all put on one page where they will be easy to find.

The front page lists the most important and recent news happening in Acton. I say if the rest of the paper is as good and it is, it is an excellent paper.

By Susan Ancker
Gr. 8 - Robert Little

Likes briefer reports a word to reporters

I would like to compliment you on your Free Press.

I think the front page is okay but I think you should find a few more interesting articles to put on it instead of the regular news.

I always read the sports page and I think it is quite good except I would like to see the Legion hockey standings and the top scorers. There is a lot about some sports and little about others. The heading you have over the hockey report makes it easy to find.

The part about the dragway

used to just about fill the news section. I do not see why it is that important. You should be able to break it down a lot.

The council report is not very important because if you are that interested you could go to the meeting. Since you do have it in I do not think it is a very good idea to repeat what each person said. I would rather read what it was about and what happened instead.

When your reporters take pictures or notes they hardly ever

ask you how to spell your name and half of the time spell your name wrong.

Apart from these faults, I think that on the whole, you have good pictures and a very interesting paper.

I wish you luck in the future and hope you win a lot more awards.

David Morris
Grade 8
Robert Little School

Free Press "frank, candid, powerful"

For myself, I really like reading the Acton Free Press.

It is outstanding in communicating information, the news is intelligent, knowledgeable, prepared in understanding for all walks of life.

The Acton Free Press is frank and candid. It is a voice of power for the people of Acton and surrounding districts in local

politics, church and clubs, such as scouts, guides, Y.M.C.A.; legion, etc.

I agree that the advertisements in our little paper are some of the best anywhere in Ontario.

This is of course the reason why our paper wins so many outstanding awards.

Some of these awards over the past few years have been "Best front page" for small town paper, "Best editorial page" and also the "Best advertisement page" for paper of 4,000 and under.

The front page is distinctively printed with lots of pictures, and is often very colourful at Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving, making a nice change from black and white.

You will find interesting notes from the Acton High School, very well written by Mary Ann Freuler and you will see comments about the Golden Ages and their comings and goings.

Variety of sports for all ages such as curling, hockey, skating, bowling etc. are readily available each week.

I find the directory a most helpful page, especially for new people moving into our district.

I like the editorial page as it allows you to express your pros and cons (example - local politics).

The advertisement page is last but not least. Out of work! Look under "Help Wanted". Buying and Selling is found under For Sale and Wanted, auction sales, and Notice to Creditors. Anniversaries, coming events, cards of thanks, births and deaths are also found in this section.

All in all we can be proud of our little paper.

-Emily H.
Grade 8
Robert Little

More entries
next week!