



PARADE MARSHAL LEGIONNAIRE Bill Nicolak leads the Milton Girls' Pipe Band and the Legion color party through the newly dedicated gates at Fairview Cemetery, following Sunday's Decoration Day service. The gates were moved recently from Ransom St. to their new location on the Cobblehill Road entrance. —(Staff Photo)

Red-wings part of balance . . .

It has long been recognized that man must learn to live in harmony with his natural environment, that a delicate ecological web exists in nature.

The balance can be easily upset by actions such as draining a swamp, cutting down trees, removing natural cover, etc. Our own observations have borne out changes that happened when Fairy Lake was dredged and the swamp on the north end filled in with silt.

The swamp was the home for hundreds of red-winged blackbirds which nested there, raised young and sang shrill accompaniment to the frogs and other water creatures which made the swamp and that end of the lake a sanctuary.

Now the swamp is gone—and so are the red wing blackbirds.

The distinctive flash of red which makes these blackbirds so distinctive has gone except for a few itinerant birds. Filling the area in created other

changes, too. The swamp was also a breeding ground for millions of mosquitos and other insects which nearby people never appreciated.

There likely have been other changes in the ecological balance at this end of the lake, but it is the blackbirds we miss, although they have been called pests because of their tendency to congregate in large numbers and feed on grain crops.

Two wildlife workers at the University of Guelph, J. W. Hintz and M. I. Dyer have shown by their studies that the blackbirds have benefitted man many times over the amount of grain they consume during the harvest season.

They found the red-wings feed chiefly on insects during the period June 24 to July 19. From July 20 to August 14 the percentage of insects in the diet decreased slightly and there was a greater intake of weed seeds, small grains and corn.

During the period August 15 to September 10, although there were still lots of insects to feed on, the birds switched their diet to corn and weed seeds.

From these findings the searchers deduced that the red-wings reduce the extent of damage to economically important crops by feeding on certain pest species of insects and are an important part of the recently developed agricultural ecosystem in the Lake Erie area.

Likely the red-wings at the northern end of Fairy Lake have only gone a few hundred yards further to new nesting and breeding grounds. However, if residents of the area find they have more weeds in their lawns and more flying insects to contend with this summer, probably the reason is the dearth of red-winged blackbirds which used a much-maligned swamp at the north end of Fairy Lake.

Student clean-ups commendable . . .

The awakening consciousness of the general public to the need for preservation of natural beauty is reflected in clean-ups being conducted around town by school students. They are being educated to appreciate the aesthetic value of areas where there is no junk cluttering up the landscape.

Students from public and high schools have waded into the School Creek and started on Fairy Lake to help improve the appearance of these natural waterways, which always seem to attract more than their share of litter and garbage.

It was amazing the stuff they fished out of the water, ranging all the way from boots, children's toys, water-logged boards, pieces of fence wire, sticks and limbs of all sizes, bottles of every size and shape, tin cans,

buckets, boxes and cartons, wrappers and over in Rockwood one clean-up even yielded the proverbial kitchen sink.

It is also amazing how fast the areas that were cleaned up collect a new load of garbage. The school creek flows serenely past Acton's picturesque library, where a small dam holds back a considerable amount of water.

Less than a week after high school students cleared the mess up, there were cigarette cartons, wrappers and milk shake containers bobbing around the water, proving the public still needs plenty of education about the mechanics of good housekeeping.

Thoughtlessness is the main enemy in the battle against litter but there are also instances where lazy householders gather up all their garbage and dump

it alongside some convenient country road, fully aware of what they are doing. They should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law because they are not only polluting the countryside but show scant regard for the public as well.

We notice that one M.P.P., Murray Gaunt, is conducting a campaign to impose a ban on non-returnable bottles. It is his contention that containers on which there is no return value will always be tossed aside.

This is another facet in the fight for a tidier environment which should be fully explored. If appropriate measures are taken to force the soft drink companies either to ban the non-returnable bottle or to be responsible for disposal, it would go a long way towards eliminating one nuisance.



Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

Boy, show me a silver lining these days and I'll show you a dark cloud.

It's only a couple of weeks since I was crying the blues about being stuck with a jobless child for the summer, and wishing my daughter could find work in this slim summer for students.

She has a job and she likes it. It's waiting on tables in a smart hotel dining-room, overlooking the water. The pay's not much, but tips are fair.

She has learned the joy of coming home with her apron pockets loaded with quarters, dimes and nickels, and arranging them in neat little piles, and counting them over and over. Anyone who has ever worked as a slavey knows the sheer, Scrooge-like delight of counting tips.

But there's always a catch, and in this case, I'm the one who has been caught, and not for the first time.

The catch is that the job is about 10 miles from home, and there is no transportation to and from. Bus service is strictly from the stone age, and it's too far to take a cab and take any money home.

I guess I don't have to draw a picture. Good Old Dad. It's not the money I mind

(about \$1.00 worth of gas, and five dollars depreciation on the car — most of the journey is on a highway under construction.)

I could let her hitch-hike. But I don't like girls hitch-hiking at 7 a.m. (That is, I don't mind the girls, but the hitch-hiking). Why, she might be picked up by some renegade and I'd never see her again. (That, on second thought, would solve the problem.)

Ah, it's just one of those rotten little problems that will have to sort itself out.

I've got another problem today. I haven't felt so tough since the Germans beat me up about twenty-three years ago.

Did you ever fall down a mine-shaft? I hadn't either, until a couple of nights ago. At least I thought it was a mine-shaft. Drove some people home. Into their driveway. No lights outside the house. Invited in for coffee. Stepped out the driver's side and straight into an excavation nobody had mentioned.

Tore a quarter-inch of skin, tissue and muscle off my left palm. Sprained the thumbs on both hands. Raised a lump the size of a baseball on my left thigh. Twisted my right knee. Hit my chest on something

else and have a great purple-and-gold bruise that hits me like a spear when I cough.

Can barely manoeuvre stairs, but apart from that, feel terrible. But good thing I'm a tough old nut. Scrambled out unaided, dripping blood and bad language.

It makes the transportation hang-up recede a little.

It's the fact that she starts work at 7.30 in the morning. We are a one-car family. She doesn't have a driver's license, so it's up at the crack of 6 a.m. for yours truly. I am not at my best at 6 a.m., except on those occasions when I haven't got to bed yet.

Good old Mom can also drive the car, but she always seems to have the vapours at 6 a.m.

I have two alternatives. One, have Kim get her driving license, in which case I'm stuck without a car all day. Two, buy a second car, let her use it, and fork up price of the car, license and insurance. The latter, considering what she'll probably earn, would put us about \$500 in the hole for her summer's work. How do you like them for alternatives?

I've scrambled desperately at other solutions. I might be able to hire a boy to take her out and pick her up for about \$4.00 a day, plus gas. That doesn't seem too profitable, and he'd probably rack up my tired 1967 model.

I could physically kick her mother out of bed and make her drive. But I haven't the guts to do this at 4 p.m., let alone 6 a.m.

"Six cruisers and two paddy wagons conveyed a large contingent of the town's elite to cells at Milton.

"Everyone can hardly wait now until next week when it is promised there will be another good time."

(The blanks are mine, not the law student's. He filled in names.)

I had to agree. There was oodles of local color in his story. You could almost be sure readership would expand with such meaty stuff in the pages weekly. But, I pointed out, it was next to impossible for our small staff to cover all the events of this nature.

It would also get pretty tiring keeping a step ahead of all the readers who would want to do us in—but good. And besides, I've been slowing down quite a bit in the last few years and I'm sure some of the more fleet-footed objectors would eventually catch up and I would either end up in the police news or the obituary column myself the next week.

"Well," this fledgling lawyer admitted, "I never thought of that aspect of the situation. Indeed, it creates a precedent to which I shall have to dwell upon further."

So as you can see there are two sides to every story. Don't get too uptight when the newsbonds skirt delicate matters with the aplomb of someone walking a tightrope over the Niagara gorge.

Sometimes we know a heck of a lot more than we can print but don't think we wouldn't like to sometimes. That day will come when we are tired of living and no longer feared of dying.



Snd Pepper by hartley coles

As you must have suspected, we news hounds at the Free Press are often the target for unflattering remarks from part-time and steady readers for the way we handle news and features.

We do our best to mix things up or spell names wrong, according to some acid-tongued critics. Others, more charitable, soft pedal their criticisms by clothing them in diplomatic language. They refer to "goofs" as "slips that pass in the type" or make statements such as, "I see the composing room has been messing up your copy again."

Although we get pretty thick-skinned after a few years' exposure to attitudes from all types of the reading public, we never quite discard all our feelings. I for one would much sooner talk to someone who came bearing compliments than a critic loaded with complaints.

But sometimes you run into people with legitimate grievances who have suggestions to improve the paper or help you see the other side of an issue.

One such nice young fellow, fresh out of law school, appeared a few weeks ago with a formula for publishing a large part of the news that is not fit to print. He suggested we should lay off all this political stuff and pose our pen for more mundane matters that require a social viewpoint.

"Just exactly what do you mean?" I asked innocently. "Where are we slipping up?"

Well that write-up of last week's police news could have been amplified to take in much more of the little things that the reading public loves to know, he explained. Instead of just reporting there was an altercation at a local fun place that required the appearance of two or three police officers, why not write something like this?

He produced a yellow sheet with some double-spaced typewritten copy. It read:

"The social event of the season went off without a hitch last Saturday night at the banquet hall of the —, and a good time was had by all.

"The guests were entertained by a bare knuckle contest between — and —, and then two husbands phoned by their wives performed their renowned disappearing act. The Rt. Hon. — set the trend by consuming the good part of a barrel of draft beer between, calls to the rest room, and — enthralled with card tricks.

"Things progressed very smoothly until a brawl erupted in the ladies' room and the local constabulary were called to the scene. All hell broke loose and tables and bottles went sailing through the air.

Notes and quotes . . .

There's nothing wrong with teenagers that trying to reason with them won't aggravate.

The only ones that hear both sides of the argument are the neighbors.

Most dieters are poor losers.

One way of getting back on your feet is to miss a car payment.

"When my mother had an orchid named after her she was delighted and much flattered. Then her delight was somewhat dashed when she read a description of it in a catalog. This beautiful flower, she read, has a mauve-spotted face and a yellow, hairy, quivering lip." —from a letter to

the BBC

"As far as freedom of speech is concerned, it's a child's world. They get away with verbal murder. When one of my nephews was told off by his father for calling his grandmother an old lady, he went up and scrutinized her, and then said: 'Well, if you're not old, you've got a very creasy face'. — from BBC Woman's Hour

Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, June 7, 1951.

Acton council at its regular session on Friday night gave endorsement to a resolution from Kitchener urging a route for the new Toronto-Windsor highway that would serve the big industrial area through here.

Highway 25 is now receiving its top coating of pavement, and the end of road improvements is in sight.

Some folks are even low enough to steal from the church. Two flowering shrubs were carefully dug up from Limehouse Presbyterian church.

Representatives of 20 Women's Institutes and three Junior Institutes celebrated their 50th anniversary May 22 at Trafalgar Community Hall. Mrs. Milton Brown, the district president, presided.

All the teachers in the North Halton high school district have been re-engaged for the fall term.

The building between Van Wyck cleaners and Wm. Cooper's store, owned by Ben Rachlin, is being torn down this week.

Congratulations to Aldo Braida who received his B.A. degree from the University of Western Ontario Saturday.

About 1,000 items were sold at the community auction in the arena last Saturday held by the Y's Men. Hindley and Elliott handled the auctioneering. Ed Footitt, Charles Wood and Gordon Oder were in charge.

Nine tenderfoot girls were enrolled in Guides. Joyce Halladay, Betty Sinclair, Phyllis Barnes, Elaine Deforest, Elizabeth Jany, Darlene Lambert, Claire Lambert, Ena Jennings and Nora Robson.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, June 16, 1921.

Shortly before midnight on Saturday two men called at the Chinese laundry, faced Charlie, the laundryman, with a revolver and demanded the money. Charlie was powerless to resist and they secured about

\$80. The bandits are described as one tall and one short.

A semi-circular walk has been laid from the Mill St. pavement to the base of the soldiers' monument terrace; cement foundations for the war guns have been put in; a cedar hedge has been planted and flower beds made. The council has kindly put in a hydrant at the plot so that grass, flowers and shrubs may be conveniently watered. This will shortly be one of Acton's beauty spots.

The beautiful lawns of the Acton Athletic Association are greatly admired these days. Three rinks of Georgetown bowlers played a friendly game with Acton Tuesday. The visitors were loud in their praise of the new greens. A tennis tournament is underway today.

Lower School examinations are underway at the High School this week.

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Business and Editorial Office



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75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, May 28, 1896.

A meeting of local wheelmen was held to effect the organization of a local Bicycle Club. The club was organized with the following officers: Hon. Pres. H. P. Moore; President James Firstbrook; Captain W. Stark; Secretary-treasurer H. Ramsdell; First Lieut. Chas. Jenner, Second Lieut. Fred Storey; Bugler Warren Pollard. The prospects are fair for a strong membership. Wednesday will be the club night for parades, runs, etc. Several lady members are enrolled. A rule of the club forbids any club runs on Sunday. The colors of the club are purple and orange.

Mr. William Newton of Limehouse lost one of the finest horses in the section from inflammation of the lungs. J. D. Williamson and Co., Guelph—Men's blue serge suit \$4.50; all wool Halifax suit \$5; brown cheviot suit \$8.50; men's straw boaters 25 cents.

Burdock Blood Bitters turns bad blood into rich red blood. In spring time, pure blood with B.B.B. It not only cleanses internally but applied externally it heals all sores, ulcers, abscesses, scrofulous areas, blotches, eruptions, etc., leaving the skin pure as a babe's. It thoroughly regulates all organs of the body. If your appetite is poor, your energy gone, your ambition lost try B.B.B. for a happy, vigorous life.

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A. McLaren, dentist, Toronto. Full class \$10 set of teeth for \$5.