

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, Aug. 11, 1962.

Asked Wednesday whether the A.P. Green Fire Brick Co. Ltd., which employs 14 men, would rebuild in Acton, George Barbeau, manager of the plant here, said, "At this date no decision has been made." The plant was razed by flames last Friday night in Acton's most costly fire in 25 years. Mr. Barbeau stated the estimate of \$100,000 damage was "ample."

Married on Saturday, August 18, in an evening church ceremony in Toronto, Dr. and Mrs. Allan Irving Armstrong will live in Acton following a motor trip to the Southern States. Dr. Armstrong has just recently begun to practice medicine here and has his office at the corner of Mill and Fredrick Sts.

Merchants and others along the route of the parade when the Swift Current Band comes to Acton are urged to get out the flags and decorations and give the westerners a real welcome on their eastern tour on Tuesday evening next.

More than 80 per cent of all car horn blowing is unnecessary, says a traffic survey.

The Acton High School fall term will open on Tuesday morning September 2nd at 9 a.m. and all pupils planning to attend are urged to register on the opening day.

A large new sign, overhanging the street, has been hung from the Bank of Nova Scotia.

The Beardmore and Co. recreation draw for a leather bag has been postponed until September 13th.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, August 17, 1922

The musical tattoo by massed bands was a splendid success last Saturday. Bands from Acton, Milton and Georgetown were here in full force.

The Ruth Nelson Mission Band picnicked at Rockwood, Rocks and scenery were fully admired by all. The group was in the charge of Misses B. Speight and F. Brown, assisted by Mrs. C.C. Speight and Miss B. Brown.

The decoration in the auditorium of the town hall is now completed. This work was undertaken by the Duke of Devonshire chapter of the I.O.D.E. and executed by contractor L. Worden.

Knox Church annual garden party on Tuesday evening was favoured with ideal weather for a function of this sort. The Ladies' Aid, under whose auspices this affair is held, were fortunate in selecting a galaxy of fine entertainers. Acton Male Quartet provided numbers that were thoroughly enjoyed by all. Acton Citizens' Band ably acquitted themselves in the very generous program that rendered throughout the evening.

The following are the results of the Middle School Examinations held in Acton last June.

Those who tried twelve papers: Earl Cooper 12; Jean Kennedy 12; Rose McEvoy 12; Marie Mawat 12; Martha Orr 11; Mary Gibbons 11; Jordan Lawson 9; James Ross 9; J.C. Lindsay 7; Jack Robertson 3.

Those who tried ten papers: Laird Dancey 7; Laird MacDonald 4.

Those who tried eight papers: Viola Rumlley 8; Angus Kennedy 6; Ida Beswick 4; Vera Hurst 4; Margurite Ryder 3; Jean Barber 3.

Those who tried six papers: Ray Agnew 6.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, August 19, 1897.

Though John Doyle has intimated at one time or another that he would accept the office of sheriff if it were tendered him, he admits now that it has some unpleasant duties attached which he did not know of when he was willing to take the job. One of these was the seizure and sale of a bird store.

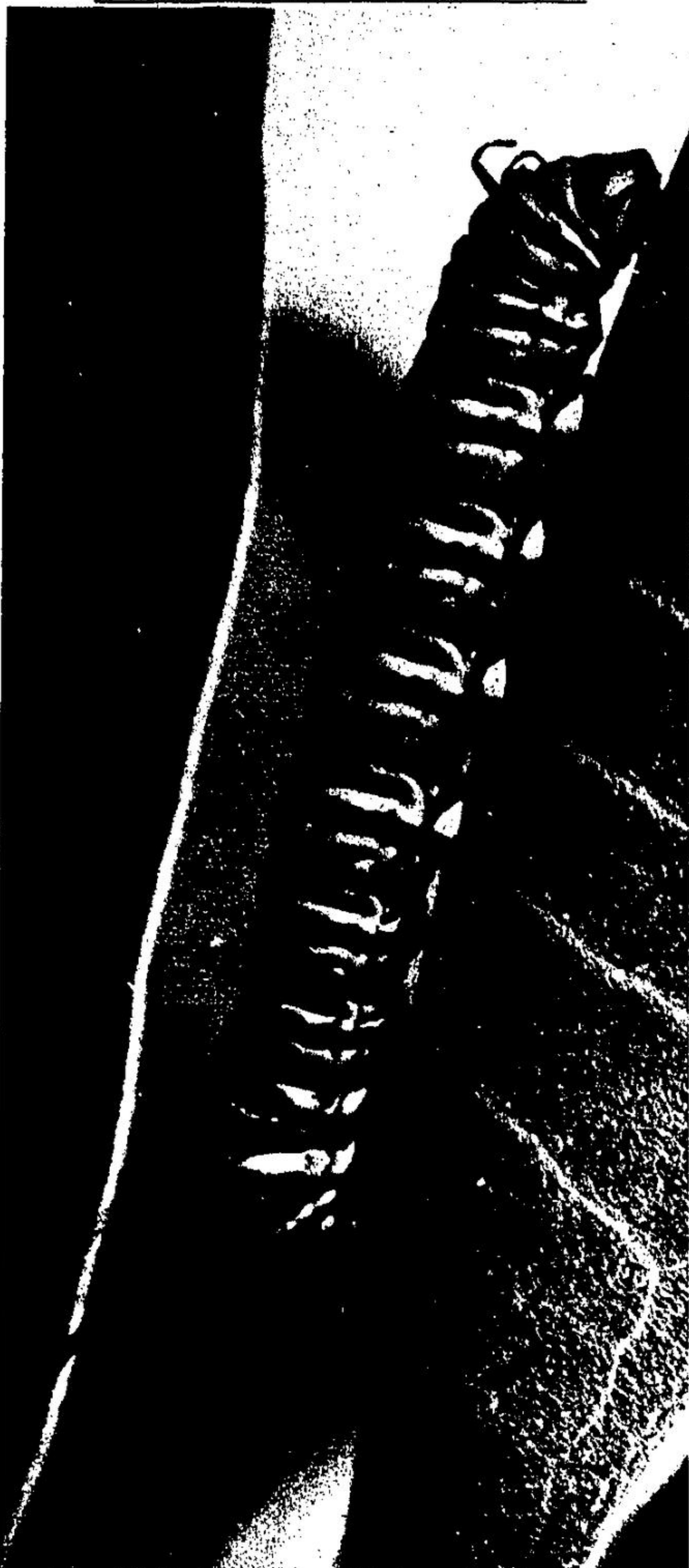
W.E. Sculthrope, a Marchmont, Ont., home boy, who has for nearly nine years been employed by Mr. O.C. Lawson, one of the districts well-known farmers has received a notification from London, England, asking him to present himself at Temple Bar, September 1. The letter says that on that day Sculthrope would be 19 years of age, and the heir to £1,200,000 sterling.

Lorne School opened on Wednesday. During the vacation it has been remodelled and repainted and now appears like a new school in its appearance.

Acton baseball team went to Milton last Saturday and again defeated the Milton nine. This result gives Acton three out of four games played with the county town team this season. The game played by Acton was first-class in every respect and clearly demonstrated their superiority, and also gives the players reason to feel that no team in the country is able to defeat them. The score was 7-4 with batters Steber and Ryder and Brush Mahoney and Elliott. Umpire, Mr. Hall of Toronto. Struck out by Steber, 10.

Free Press Editorial Page

The Acton Free Press, Wednesday, August 9, 1972



Coming or going? (Photo by J. Jennings)

OUR READERS WRITE:

Editor, Acton Free Press.

Dear Sir:

That was quite an article carried by the Free Press last week. The one about facilitating the downtown shopping area?

Well, sir, all the paint, flower boxes and decorations aren't going to solve the problem of Acton and district consumers spending money out of town. Not as long as Acton stays a tannery town and the Canada Packers Co. are permitted to expel the emissions from their tanning process over the area.

Although old-timers will continue to shop in Acton, newcomers won't tolerate the stink that floats into every nook and cranny, and that includes every store in Acton.

It is much more pleasant to shop in either Guelph or Brampton in fresh air.

If I don't like it why not move?

I'd love to, but as soon as any prospective buyer gets a whiff of that rotten sulphide odor, its "good-bye" and I don't blame him.

Yours truly, Sheila O'Rourke

When we let government take over, we lose our rights

From The Dryden Observer

One of the common remarks today is "Let the government look after it". Or to phrase it in a slightly different way, "The government should take charge of these matters".

Indeed, it has become almost a general trend for individuals and communities to slough off responsibilities on to the shoulders of those in the provincial legislatures or the federal parliament. They, in turn, hand over the matters to executive secretaries, to commissions, civil servants and other non-elected personnel over whose decisions the people have but little control.

The process is not peculiar to people under any one particular type of government. Across this country from west to east one can examine the procedures under each of Canada's four leading political parties: Social

Credit, NDP, Conservative and Liberal. A comparison of the records of federal Conservative and Liberal policies shows little variation in the methods of dealing with controls and responsibilities handed to them.

Those who would turn matters over to a higher power are failing to see that in so doing they are inevitably decreasing their own individual freedoms. The one who carries the responsibilities will naturally want to exercise the controls.

Over the past several years there has been an increase in centralization, much of it done in the name of efficiency. Government officials tell the people that it is more efficient to have expert trained personnel look after matters than to leave them in the hands of inexperienced persons or those with limited education and training.

Hair raising episodes . . .

Remember when one of the chief topics of discussion was the long hair on some young men? asks the St. Marys Journal-Argus.

Remember when school principals sent students home until they consented to have their long locks trimmed?

It seems almost a decade ago, comments the Journal-Argus but there are still people who make a big thing out of long hair and if the opportunity arises don't hesitate to "hassle" a fellow with hair of different length than their own. These "Archie Bunkers" still cling to the habista and customs of the past and feel theirs is the only right thinking.

The St. Marys editor says he can remember one young man returning from church getting told off in a "very uncomplimentary and insulting way" for wearing his hair long, by an elderly man sitting in a car. It was suggested he had no right to have long hair.

However, the Journal-Argus feels the hair hassle could almost be over and the public is ripe for another move by the younger generation that will get their elders into a big flap.

"Come to notice it—the top students in Metro Toronto who achieved over 96 per cent in the grade 13 standings were both boys. Both also had shoulder length hair and were outstanding athletes."

Criticize that if you will, the St. Marys editor challenges his readers.

As a long time fence sitter on the subject of long hair, we couldn't agree more with the St. Marys editor, with some reservations. We have always felt it did not matter how long the hair was as long as it was neat.

That remark leaves us wide open for some roundhouses from the barbers and those who figure it is indecent to let your locks grow over your ears, but it is doubtful that the length of one's hair has anything to do with the kind of person you are.

But if we must split hairs it may have a lot to do with the kind of person you'd like to be.

Growth exacts penalties . . .

The Oakville Journal-Record took a look at nearby Georgetown and did not like what it saw.

"Highway 7 just outside downtown Georgetown is starting to look like a slice of swaggering post-war Metro, with its big flashy plazas and space designed for cars, not people," the Journal-Record comments.

"Just down the road, though, further east on Highway 7 you hit Norval—which, to a visitor anyway, still has that friendly, together feeling to it. Its "downtown" is a small-scale, with big old shade trees and narrow streets that people on foot can feel good on. Norval seems able to remain a community, while neighboring Georgetown carelessly throws away that warmth just to put on some Metro 'Cool'," the Journal-Record charges.

"Georgetown has become, like it or not, another piece of the ever-spreading torontoglob," the paper goes on. "We've talked to quite a few people lately who think Georgetown is fast becoming an innocuous commuter suburb, no longer a real community at all."

Hard words. The Oakville daily has taken only a superficial look at our neighboring town, just now recovering its equilibrium after growth unparalleled in its history, and in the history of most small towns.

Growth has its payments to exact, one of the most costly being increasing impersonalization. But this is to be expected in a community which has sprung from an approximate 2,500 in 1945 to its present-day 17,000. The tight-knit, highly personalized relationships which can exist between a relatively small population, often with many blood ties, is not possible when numbers grow, and school-factory-office relationships are severed.

New residents no longer work in the community, but rather commute to jobs in Toronto and its suburbs, creating an estrangement that can only be turned back into the community by social intercourse.

It is true the east end of Georgetown has changed from the quiet dairy farmland which once sprawled over the landscape into slick plazas and big parking lots, bounded by sleek new

industries on the north. At the same time we know many communities who would welcome this type of development in one part of their town.

And that is only one part of Georgetown.

There is also the Georgetown of quiet residential streets where the core of the old town exists, where relationships still go on and prosper despite changes.

We are not so critical of the commercial development as we would be of vast rows of subdivision homes with no parks, small corner stores and places where neighbors can meet and develop a sense of community. To our mind this is the greater "sin".

Georgetown, or any town faced with sudden, dramatic growth, needs a moratorium on growth every few years so they can develop the sense of community which goes unnoticed in the excitement and frustrations of development.

But our neighbor to the east is a long way yet from being the pariah described by the Journal-Record.

I've suddenly discovered that my wife isn't such a lazy bum after all, and that most women aren't appreciated by their husbands.

Last week I wrote an idyllic column about how peaceful and beautiful it was at Granddad's, out in the country, overlooking the bay, quiet, restful and all that guff.

It wasn't guff at the time, but it is now. It's neither peaceful or quiet around here, though it's still beautiful.

Yes, we're still here. On the eve of our departure, my silly old woman stepped out of the car, twisted her silly old ankle and broke the silly old thing.

We didn't know it until next day. I thought it was probably a bad sprain. But on the morrow it was the shape and colour of a fully matured beet, so off to the hospital for X-rays.

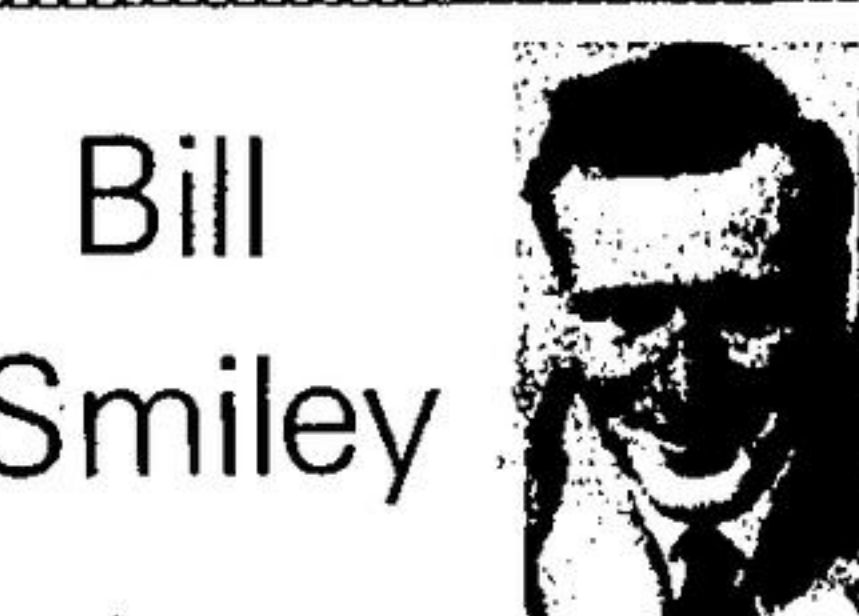
That was quite an experience. It was one of those dripping hot days, and also a Saturday. Normally, a small-town hospital is a pretty quiet place. But on a Saturday afternoon in mid-summer, in tourist country, the emergency ward is a bit of a mad-house.

We were lucky. The girl at the desk had gone to school with my wife and had our names written down before I could open my mouth. Another school friend is a nurse, and though off duty, came in and helped in many ways.

There was one doctor and one medical student on the job. In poured the patients, and I couldn't help admiring the way the staff coped, in the appalling heat.

I hope Doc Leeson, another old friend, had his breakfast that morning, because he certainly didn't have any lunch. Here's an Indian girl with a sick baby. Here's a 12 year old boy being carried in by a worried father. The boy has cut his leg badly. Tourists.

Here's a young kid who has burned his hand badly. Here's a young fellow with his



Bill Smiley

hand all mangled. Here comes a very pregnant lady.

I see the doc in the office, a cup of coffee he's trying to snatch held in one hand, phone in the other. I know it's a bad one, because he's lost his joking, jovial, personal manner and looks grave.

Two orderlies and the medical student tear down the hall in the direction of the ambulance garage. Running, flat out. Sure enough, it is a bad one. Plane crash just a few miles out of town.

The doc can't leave. He has to read X-rays, bandage wounds and deliver a baby. But he phones for help at the accident scene and goes right back to work. He's disturbed, because he's a flying buff himself.

But he doesn't show it. He goes right on toiling with ailing humans, joking, calling them by their first names, doing six things at once. (Later he told me there were two killed, father and son, in the crash.)

He finally got a look at my wife's X-rays, cheerfully told her yep, it was broken, and swiftly and skillfully made and slapped on a walking cast.

The nurses, though running in all directions, found time to put her in a wheelchair, get us out to the car, and loaned us a walker, a thing you push ahead of you, hopping on one foot.

What a difference from the

impersonality, and even inefficiency so often found in a big city hospital. There too, there are dedicated people doing their best, but there's a mass of paperwork, a coldness, a lack of intimacy that is rather off-putting.

Well, I've digressed, but the hospital scene impressed me deeply. It's the way a hospital should be: friendly, concerned, and with a minimum of red tape.

Anyway, the old girl is lying on the chesterfield with her leg propped up and feeling furious and frustrated. She's the type who does everything in the house at about 80 miles an hour, and the speed at which I do them, about one-tenth of that, is driving her insane.

Every time she remembers that she's going to be hobbling for six weeks, can't go swimming or play golf, can't get at her washing, she gets angrier. I try to cheer her up by saying she's lucky she isn't in a full leg cast, in traction for six months. It doesn't seem to help. To her, immobility is anathema.

Meantime, I'm re-learning a lot of the things I used to do when the kids were little, but have sloughed off, ever so casually, over the years.

Cooking. Last night for dinner, small new potatoes, boiled in their skins, buttered young carrots and beans, sirloin steak and salad. Tonight, sausage, broccoli spears and whatever else turns up.

Housework. I've made my bed, after only three days, vacuumed the rug and done about 8000 dishes. Just finished washing out a brasserie and some socks.

I'll cope.

However, it will be a joyful day when the lady of the house can get off her backside and get back to doing all those things that take her so short, and me so long. Housewives of the world, I salute you. I'll never again ask, "What in the world do you do all day, when I'm at work?" Never. Now I know.

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