

Mini-Comment

Where has the summer gone? Many people are asking that perennial question already when we still have over a month of the sunny (?) season left on the calendar. Most people seem to feel the summer has gone when school goes back in, nights are cooler and days are shorter. Often the fall is the most beautiful season with its bright, sunny days. Perhaps the Weathermaker has a good one in store for us this year.

Visitors from Scotland who spent part of their six week stay in Acton were very much impressed with the town and countryside. They visited the North and spent some time in the U.S. but thought people in Acton and area were the luckiest folks in the world, a few minutes from cities and a rural countryside at their fingertips. They also thought the friendliness of Acton merchants and residents was a treat, and had no hesitation about telling others.

The number of fatal accidents and untimely deaths in this area has brought gloom into many homes, reminding us again of the uncertainties of life. We ponder over many problems where the issues are minor and don't mean very much and it seems that we leave the big questions unanswered, with shallow references to the unkindness of fate.

For those who wonder why there is so much labor unrest it is interesting to note that some families in Toronto have only one dollar a day to spend after paying for housing, credit and medical costs. Typical families among 524 students in Toronto's east end had only 50 cents per day to spend on food. The Ridgeway Dominion comments that statistics like that (from Statistics Canada) give us something to think about in our affluent society. Of course. But for the three out of 10 families who earn under \$5,000 a year, these are hard, cold facts they have to live with and thinking offers little consolation. They would like to see action and some way out of the financial pinchers that have them in an increasing squeeze.

We wonder how long the School Creek will retain its neat, natural look now that the students in the Opportunity for Youth project have done a pretty thorough cleaning job. The first clean-up had to be partially repeated because some people continued to use the waters for a waste bin.

Love your enemies but keep an eye on them.

The Financial Post notes that the Toronto-Buffalo region is ripe for a big league amusement park along the lines of Disneyland and rumors within the business suggest that some agency is close to announcing plans for such a park.

If you have any information concerning the Fort Edmonton Journals of Daily Occurrences during the 1840's the Free Press has an appeal from the City of Edmonton, Alberta, for it. The city is preparing to make an authentic reconstruction of the post but the journals between the years 1834 and 1854 are missing, perhaps in a private collection somewhere. Much of the knowledge of the Hudson Bay post is derived from the journals.

A bachelor has been defined as a man who makes mistakes without marrying one.

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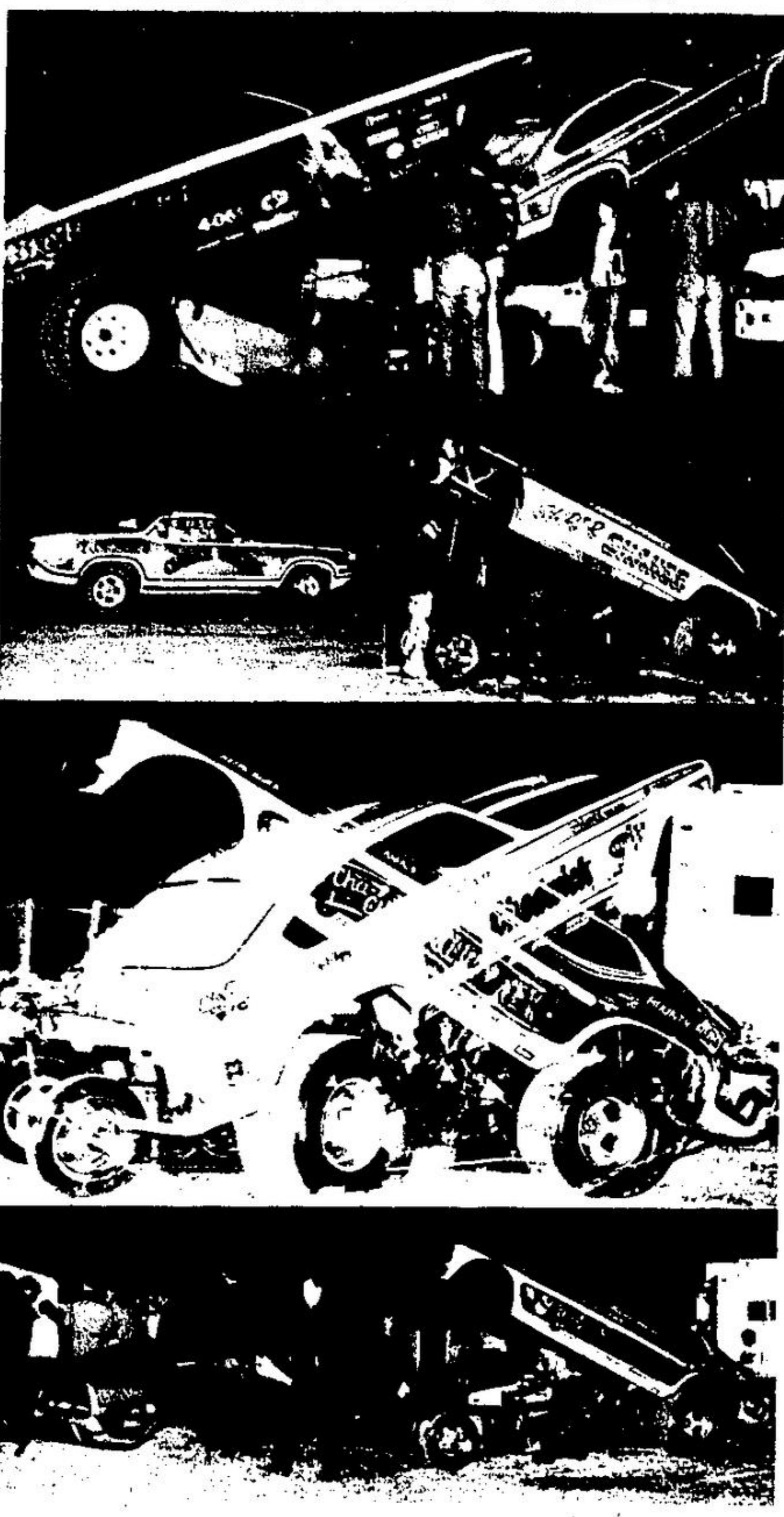
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Free Press Editorial Page

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Super Funny night at dragway

MIKE BURKHART CAMARO and the Kelly Chadwick Camaro (top) load the trucks as they prepare to leave the summer invitations at Toronto International Dragway last Wednesday. The Cloake and Coates Barracuda, (centre left) one of the 16 funny cars present at the nearby track, passes through the pits en route to the track. Mechanics go over the Super Shaker Camaro (centre right) after its finished a quarter mile run up the track. Kelly Chadwick's Camaro and the Cha Cha Muldoney Mustang cross each other in the pit area (centre). Mr. Norm's Challenger body (bottom left) lays prone on the ground as mechanics tear down the high powered engine. Cha Cha Muldoney's Mustang (bottom right) gets last minute check before taking to the track. —Photos by Dave Pink

OUR READERS WRITE:

People, not merchants must wake

Dear Mr. Coles:

My name is John Coniglio. I am writing to you concerning your article on Acton's business centre.

I was one of the business men interviewed by your reporter, Dave Pink. My picture and 1/2 an hour of my time taken to contribute to your survey. Therefore, I was extremely disappointed when no mention of my name or comments appeared in the Free Press. I feel that you have to belong to a club or organization in this town before your viewpoint is even considered.

Before a town problem can be solved, everyone in the town should be asked and listened to. What is the sense of asking people what they think if it isn't really going to matter anyhow? If only society could get together and try to understand everyone's problems by listening to each other.

In 1969, I was approached by a merchant in town and asked to join the Chamber of Commerce. I was supposed to serve for two years but I resigned after the first. The reason for this was that they used to let me do a lot of listening and nothing else. When I was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, I found I had to do a lot of agreeing if I wished to get along with the other members. When I make a friend, I do not do it for his looks, his money, or the type of car that he drives. I make friends with him because I feel I am like him. So far, I have not found such a person.

I have in my store a petition that was taken up last summer. It has about 95 signatures of people complaining about the terrible odor in town. Of course, it went no further.

Will I be ignored again this time?

Sincerely,
 John Coniglio,
 32 Mill St.

Old wine in new bottles

The similarity of present educational trends to the era of the old one room school house has been noted by more than one observer.

The St. Catharines Standard comments that experimentation has always been part of education but that sometimes the experiments seem to take us backwards.

"The Lincoln County Board of Education was told at its last meeting about an experiment at Woodland School where pupils from various grades are being grouped together. For example, children from grades 1 to 3 were grouped together in classes, and the officials say the result indicates that the project has value."

"It was explained that, once the students were put together, the emphasis was put on the pupil learning, rather than the teacher teaching. The stronger students helped the weak, and the older helped the younger."

"In most cases," said the report, "it resulted in children having a greater sense of responsibility."

"Somehow it all seems more than

fairly reminiscent of the little old one-room schools where six or eight grades might be lumped together and which are now being wiped out as rapidly as possible in the name of improved education," the Standard notes.

It smacks somehow of the moral in the story about the Emperor's new clothes in the old reader. No one in education seems to have the courage to point out that he had no clothes on, for fear of ridicule. So we continue to label new trends progressive, when in reality they are old ideas in new garments, or old wine in new bottles.

We've got "rock" in our heads

An experiment in the United States has revealed that three hours of rock music a day "shrivelled young squash plants, flattened philodendron and crumpled corn," and in less than a month.

Other experiments at Temple Bell College, Denver, with hundreds of plants from geraniums to beans, showed the plants tried to escape the sound by leaning away from it.

Petunias and Zinnias refused to bloom, leaned away from it and then finally succumbed by dying.

But other petunias "listening" to semi-classical or church music blossomed. Zinnias taking part in the experiment grew straight and tall.

The lesson behind the experiment is obvious.....high volume rock music is not good for you. Plants tend to lean away from it.

But it also proves the present generation is obviously not a race of plants.

They are attracted by rock. Judging by the enthusiasm they put into dancing when it is belching they thoroughly enjoy it as much as their parents enjoyed Glenn Miller or the rhythms of Gene Krupa, which this writer recalls were also the target for unflattering remarks and caution about adding the brain.

Although we are not fans of the rock music makers we realize it is almost impossible to stop the youngsters from being exposed to it. It's a fad and for any parent to buck a fad is tantamount to downright meanness.

Turning the volume down is another indication that you are the meanest parent they've ever encountered.

So what do you do when the youngster turns up the rock?

Don't will like a geranium or a petunia. Listen to it for as long as your brain will allow and then suggest in a kind, tender voice that perhaps Junior or Mary would appreciate a little Beethoven or maybe some soothing country music, perhaps the Boston Pops belting out Beetle tunes.

And if that doesn't work?

Tell them to turn the darn thing off or you'll turn on some of the old records your mother or father used to groan about. That should straighten everyone out.

Random notes this week.

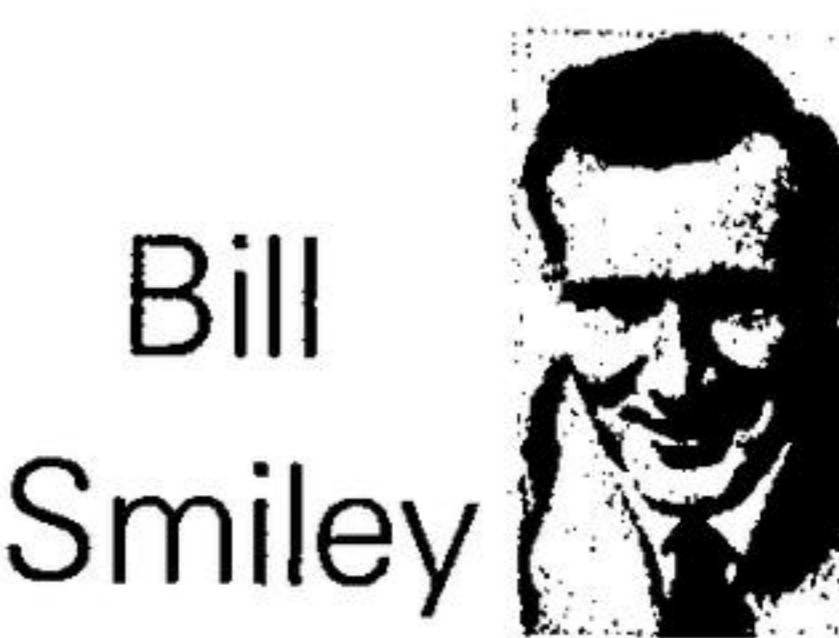
Could there be anything more silly than writing a column about your silly old wife breaking her silly old ankle, and four days later going out in a swim and breaking your own silly old big toe? Well, I did both.

And boy, it hurts, boy. Trouble is, there's not much the doctor can do about it. Had it X-rayed. He took a look at the plate, didn't even look at the toe, and cheerfully informed, "Yes, Bill, you've broken a chip of bone off it, but you can't put a cast on one toe, so just wear a comfortable shoe, wiggle the toe so it won't get stiff, and sweat it out." I'm sweating with every step. I didn't realize how many things you could bump your toe against. It hurts even when I kick the cat, which I don't do, but will, if she comes near my toe.

Enough about toes. Watch out for those bees. While waiting for the doc to talk about (guess what) my toe, two large and husky men came into emergency ward swelling like balloons from bee stings. One was the local veterinarian, six feet six and about 280. His right hand and arm were almost completely numb and it was spreading into his chest. He was disgusted. How could a silly little thing half an inch long do this to him?

And speaking of bees, how about those two headliners. Bobby Hull and Bobby Fischer, hockey player and chess master, in that order? Has ever so much media space been devoted to a couple of guys who are doing well what they enjoy, and getting rich at it?

And speaking of Bobby Hull, what do you think of the World Hockey Association? It has stolen Hull and another half-dozen top hockey players from that far-from-benevolent monopoly, the N.H.L. Good luck to the W.H.A. I love to see a big organization kicked in the groin, or the pocketbook, in this case. Particularly by its own slaves.



Bill Smiley

Why shouldn't a hockey player, a good one, make more money than a movie star? He's often a better actor.

And speaking about hockey, which is rather silly in this weather, have you ever read or heard anything more silly than the bleating of sports-writers, and even editorial writers, about the series with Russia?

The whole thing is getting rather sickening. It's just another symptom of our inferiority hang-up. We can't beat the U.S. at money. We can't beat the Chinese at ping-pong. We can't beat anybody at the Olympics, except maybe North Wales or West Tanzania. (With the notable exception of those horse-jumpers, who are pretty good.)

Why don't we just relax and enjoy it, as Confucius did not say?

Why don't we forget the years when other countries were wobbling-ankled on skates and every red-blooded Canadian boy had a Simpsons catalogue on one leg and an Eaton's catalogue on the other and could shoot a frozen horse-ball through a hairnet, and we won the world championship 28 to one every year?

Except. Remember that dreadful year (about 1936) when the British, of all people, beat our team in the Olympics? Their team, of course, was made up of Canadians living in Canada. Or Englishmen who had grown up in Canada. One of them was an English kid I went to school with. Another, so he claimed, was an old friend of mine, Squire Tanner, attending Cambridge. Another was George Hees, doing much the same, before he got into politics. But, oh, the shame of it!

All this, of course, is prelude and masquerade to a secret hunch of mine that the Russians are going to lick us in the forthcoming series, if it ever fortuitously comes.

My hunch is based on the fact that the games will be played under international rules. Take away the body checking, high-sticking, elbowing, slashing, boarding and gouging from the game, and your average Canadian player is lost. I can visualize clearly five Russians descending on some hapless Canadian goalie, with all the other Canadians in the penalty box.

Enough. This column is about summer silliness. How's this? An aunt of my wife, who was born and reared near Belfast, but has lived for a number of years in Canada, went back to Northern Ireland for a visit this summer. We're watching the obituary columns.

My kid brother, who is a colonel in the air force, is being posted to Germany in a few weeks. What, in the name of all that is silly, are Canadians doing in Germany? Who are they guarding? Against what? And with what?

I know I've come a long way from my broken toe, but somewhere, in some secret little niche in my mind, there is a connection linking all these summer sillinesses. Or maybe I just got too much sun when I went to the beach the other day with Kim and her husband. And broke my toe.

Back Issues of The Free Press

20 years ago	50 years ago	75 years ago
<p>Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, August 28, 1952.</p> <p>From out of the west came one of the most colorful and entertaining bands to play to an Acton audience. About 2,500 came to the park for the variety concert and program presented by the Swift Current, Saskatchewan Boys and Girls band on Tuesday evening. Welcoming the group Mayor Rachlin paid special tribute to Gerry Candler and to Lorne Wieck of council for arrangements.</p> <p>Word received at press time from the C.N.E. music competitions show the Swift Current band in third place with 225 points. Burlington placed first and London second.</p> <p>Children going back to school in the new addition may well say "school was never like this!" There is a two-tone color scheme, natural desks and seat, drapes, new equipment, and a new communications system. New teachers in September will be Mrs. I. Little, Mrs. Shirley Dills, Miss Joan Kirby and Ralph McKeown.</p> <p>Other teachers are Miss Gamble, Mrs. Wilkinson, Miss Folster, Miss Anderson, Elmer Smith and principal G.W. McKenzie. Prize room of the school is the kindergarten where everything is small size. In the ultra-modern six-room wing is the assembly hall.</p> <p>Shirley Jean Elliott and James Arlof Dills were married in the United church with attendants Jane Elliott and Mary Sirrs, best man David Dills and ushers Jim Spielvogel, Warren Brown, Douglas Buchanan and John Black. The wedding music was played by George Elliott, brother of the bride.</p> <p>Ajax Engineers are now making towers for television antenna.</p> <p>The greatest hydro-electric power development ever built in Canada is taking place at Niagara Falls.</p> <p>Linda Mann, Beverley Smith, Joe Jany and Bill Greer were guests of Kate Aitken at the children's day luncheon in the Rainbow Room, Coliseum at the Exhibition.</p>	<p>Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, August 24, 1922.</p> <p>Another black blot has been made in poor Ireland's political history. Michael, head of the Irish free state, was cowardly assassinated on Tuesday by a sniper in county Cork.</p> <p>Another huge local success in Acton was the Flower Show held Wednesday at Beverly House grounds (where the new Church St. apartments are now) placed at the disposal of the committee by Mrs. Gordon Beardmore. A large marquee was erected on the tennis court. The 350 exhibits were a record for any town in Ontario for its first show. We might refer to the gladioli shown by Mac McDonald and J.E. Gamble; the table bouquet of Mrs. (Dr.) Nelson, amateur lilies by Mr. A. Mochrie, house plants of Mrs. W.J. Reid and Mrs. Norman McLeod.</p> <p>The judges of the gardens and verandahs made many journeys around town before the final decision resulted in a tie in the large garden section between Messrs. John Clark and H.P. Moore.</p> <p>In small gardens the decision was between W.M. Cooper and Miss L. M. Moore. The verandah awards eventually went to Mrs. Jos. Holmes as the best in town with a special ribbon to Miss A. Clarke and Mr. John Kenney.</p> <p>Many extra trains have been added for the Exhibition.</p> <p>Acton Tanning Co. is contracting for another 100 h.p. of current. This will bring Acton's aggregate up to a high figure.</p> <p>Some of the local bowling enthusiasts are trying to locate a place for a curling rink. The great trouble nowadays lies in the weakening of parental authority. (Beginning of editorial.)</p> <p>Messrs. Micol and Allan have purchased the Brampton monument business of W.W. Price. They will conduct this new branch with their Acton business. Mr. Price will be remembered by old friends of Acton. He conducted singing schools here 50 years ago.</p>	<p>Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, August 24, 1897.</p> <p>One of the handsomest carriages ever manufactured in Georgetown has just been made by Culp and McKenzie for Mr. W. H. Storey of Acton. It is painted and varnished in a most artistic manner. The seats are interchangeable and the means of mounting and dismounting are the handiest possible.</p> <p>Monday was delightful for a public holiday for our citizens. A large number took in the excursion to Niagara Falls and it was a very enjoyable outing although it was rather tedious getting home after midnight. Many of those who remained at home spent the afternoon at St. Joseph's Church picnic in the park.</p> <p>There were two driving accidents this week. Mrs. Eugene Sullivan of Campbellville while driving home from Acton met with an accident whereby she had her collarbone broken, and was otherwise injured. The horse took fright at a straw stack at the farm of Mr. James Fletcher and upset the rig. Last Friday afternoon Mrs. McGregor and her daughter were driving up Church St. when the horse became frightened at a pile of rubbish which a resident had carelessly deposited on the road. Both ladies received a shaking up and the buggy was considerably damaged. The rubbish has since been removed.</p> <p>The Commercial Hotel in Milton was sold last week for \$5,200.</p> <p>Mr. A. T. Brown, manager of the Bell Telephone here, has had a cabinet put in his exchange which will afford a privacy in telephone conversations which the business public will not fail to appreciate.</p> <p>With wheat at \$1 and rising it shouldn't be hard to keep the young roan on the farm.</p>