

## Bill Smiley

Now that we've all settled down after that abortion of an election, we can get back to the important things of life: what's for dinner; our burials; raking the last of the blasted leaves; dusting off the curling boots; and worrying about our kids.

Just before we bury the whole unpleasant mess, however, may I promise that I will make no more election predictions? Oh, I was right. I warned that the Canadian people are among the most volatile in the world when it comes to politics. They proved it.

And I prophesied that the Tories and NDP would gain, and that it would be the Liberals again with a minority government. But they didn't have to take me so seriously. I didn't mean that size of a minority. From now on, I shall desist from making forecasts, as it seems to put the hex on things.

However, I take back none of what I said. Mr. Trudeau never did have the common touch, the politician's instinct. Mr. Stanfield still sounds as though he'd got both feet into one leg of his long-johns. And Mr. Lewis was never more smarmy than when the returns were coming in.

Despite my disenchantment, at the last moment I decided to vote Liberal, chiefly because of fear that what did happen might happen. A ship of state with no rudder, two wheelmen fighting for the wheel, and the winds of change blowing up into a typhoon.

Some riding results were of particular interest to me. I was glad to see that my old friend, Ross Whicker, with whom I shared a couple of campaigns when we were mere boys, was one of the Lucky Liberals to squeak in.

I was sorry to see another old friend, Perry Ryan, who represented Toronto Spadina for years, get the axe. He made the political mistake of standing by his principles, and quit the Liberals for the Tories when he couldn't agree with policy. A pity.

I was also sorry to see Paul Hellyer elected. He is a politician whose ego seems equalled only by his ambition. The record: Ran for Liberal leadership. Beaten. Liberal cabinet minister. Quit. Founded Action Canada — a flop. Joined the Conservatives. He may have great abilities, but I'll never forgive him for unifying the armed forces.

You see how little our vote depends on reason. I mentioned those three to suggest what a fickle creature the average Canadian voter is. I'd have voted for Whicker, Liberal, for old times' sake. For Ryan, Conservative, because he's a good man. And against Hellyer, Conservative, because of his many-colored coat.

There's an old-fashioned idea that Canadians are a reserved, conservative people, because we live in a stern and rigorous climate, and aren't given much to either dancing or rioting in the streets.

The idea is completely unfounded. True, we don't do much of anything in the streets for six months a year, except scuttle along, cursing, noses dripping.

But behind those steady, grey facades that others see live the real Canadians: pulsing, passionate; not grey but purple. In fact, sometimes that purple peeps through, usually in those same noses.

Perhaps the most obvious example to illustrate the wild, emotional, inner Canadian is the Canada-Russia hockey series of recent fame.

When our team was getting clobbered, most of us went around in a surly, cynical, almost vicious mood, snarling at wives and children, scoffing at our players, denigrating that vast, philanthropic institution, the NHL. You see, we were suffering. Our pride was hurt in the way that the pride of no mere Latin could be hurt.

But when our team began to win, we showed our true selves, exuberant, friendly, joyous, actually cheering out loud, throwing our arms around complete strangers.

Oh, it did the heart good, I can tell you, to see the Canadian character as it really is. None of this "good losers" nonsense of other northern races. Our hearts were in every cross-check, and every one of us was there, at least in spirit, as our boys, at the winning goal, kissed each other and hugged each other and slobbered over each other.

Show me another nation that can boo its "boys" in defeat and cheer them in victory, as we did, and I'll show you another nation with real heart.

And that's what we're like in elections. All heart. No brains. Give us a brilliant, colorful prime minister and we cheer him to the rafters. As long as he's winning. We're a funny lot.



TO THE MOTORIST, snow is slippery roads, pedestrians shun it and children love it but the photographer sees the white stuff as a work of art when it settles around thorny bushes such as these. The season's first snowstorm descended Tuesday catching most of us unaware but Free Press photographer Jim Jennings saw it as soft, billowy cotton in this picture.

## Mini-Comment

The Free Press has had some problem with delivery of papers in the large cities such as Toronto but nothing so drastic as what happened to the Brussels Post recently. A large post office bag containing several hundred copies of the Post disappeared and despite frantic efforts to locate them there was still no trace of them on the Tuesday after the paper was published. Subscribers naturally were gnashing their teeth. If post office officials want to downgrade their public relations there is no quicker way than to lose the weekly "blabs" from all over the country. Many people, of course, base their opinion of the post office on the speed with which their favorite weekly reaches them.

On the subject of post offices, the Free Press often receives letters addressed to the Action Free Press but this week one was received addressed to the Acton Free Press, Acton, Ontario. We are willing to take either one or the other and if they make the same mistake twice there won't be any squawks from this corner.

Warden Jim Swanborough's efforts to dress up the annual warden's dinner by indicating whether you would wear "black tie" is likely a sincere effort to upgrade the office and the dinner but we wonder if it isn't also "putting on the dog". Our foreign correspondent

assures us, however, that councillors and officials across the county are paid well enough to rent a "tux" if they can't afford to buy one.

One Milton newsman asked when the editor was going to write an editorial about Milton's proposed four region Halton with facts instead of fancy. Last week's was called an "exercise in creative writing". According to him it pictured Milton as the county ogre, swallowing township chunks instead of pretty maidens.

This newsman also suggests the real reason we want Milton in the North Halton borough instead of all by themselves is because we need them. He's right. The north does need Milton to balance voting power. Somebody up here likes 'em.

Reeve Anne MacArthur is one of few town or township heads being challenged for the "top job". Mayor Les Duby was returned by acclamation in Acton, Erin township reeve Lloyd Long and Eramosa reeve Warren Parkinson were also acclaimed as was Mayor Norm Jary of Guelph. Mayor Brian Best of Milton has a race on with reeve Ron Harris. Mrs. MacArthur's post, a feminine preserve for two terms, is sought by two males, deputy-reeve Don McMillan and former councillor Gordon Agnew.

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## We support outdoor rinks

Last year when the Board of Parks and Recreation Committee announced it would go ahead with plans to establish outdoor skating rinks in Acton, these columns were elated at the prospect, urging the twin-hatted board to proceed.

We were also aware of a great deal of interest from skaters in town and district who envisioned a winter of skating in the great outdoors.

Unfortunately, somewhere between the promise and practice there was a

lull and the promised rinks never did materialize, to the disappointment of a number of people, young and old.

This year we notice that once again the committee is going to investigate the feasibility of two outdoor rinks, one at the west end and another at the east end of town, on the suggestion of board member Diane Spielvogel.

Again we commend the idea. Providing the weather co-operates we can see no reason why they could not be established. Georgetown has had

success with the outdoor rinks, which also take some of the pressure off the arena's busy schedule through the next four or five months.

We think the skaters of Acton and district would really appreciate outdoor rinks especially if they can allot time and space for skaters only. Much of the time at the arena is taken up with organized hockey while skaters are literally out in the cold. While they are out there, they might as well be skating.

## Free Press Editorial Page

B4 The Acton Free Press, Wednesday, November 15, 1972

## The real drug problem

Statistics published in the last issue provide at least some evidence that the drug causing the most problems in Canada comes in a bottle, rather than as a pill.

In his Faith and Life column Rev. Bill Perry quotes the LeDain Commission's report as saying, "alcohol dependency is 100 times more prevalent in Canada than narcotic addiction, and is thus our most widespread drug dependency problem." In fact, other studies indicate that as a public health problem, alcoholism ranks third after cancer and heart disease.

Of all of the statistics quoted in the column, perhaps the most interesting and "surprising" pertains to the type of people who are alcoholics. Mr. Perry points out that a study on alcoholism in the United States claims to have put to lie the conception of the alcoholic as an unemployed derelict. That study shows only three per cent of the alcoholics on

"skid row" while 97 per cent are employed and so-called "family oriented individuals." The same study found that 70 per cent of all alcoholics "hold white collar, professional or managerial jobs and 50 per cent attended or graduated from college."

Perhaps the message to be learned from these statistics applies most of all to the "social drinker." The drinker who readily recognizes a tendency toward alcoholism in others, but refuses to think of himself as anything more than a "take it or leave it man" who just happens to take it more often than he leaves it.

So, while the younger generation is bombarded with facts, figures and warnings about illicit drugs, many from an older generation are content to warn the young people and ignore their own special drug problem.—The Chilliwack (B.C.) Progress.

## Mini-Comment

A lady subscriber with an ear to the radio often chuckles over disc jockey comments such as the sign on a car wash which guaranteed satisfaction or your dirt back. Another one noted was a sign in Northern Ontario declaring, "For Sale—This Property and Cow".

Don't forget to vote in Acton's plebiscite on liquor Monday, November 20. There are two questions on the ballot which could have a bearing on the kind of town you want and it is up to residents to signify their wishes.

Remembrance Day observances this year were greeted with leaden skies and spitting rain, weather traditionally associated with November. This was followed by the season's first snowstorm which should be followed by Indian summer — we hope.

## Back Issues of The Free Press

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, November 25, 1897.

The Guelph hotelkeepers have adopted and published the following tariff: Owing to the advance in the price of liquors, the hotelkeepers have adopted these prices: brandy, rum, gin, Scotch and Irish whisky 10 cents a glass or 3 for 25 cents. Ginger beer and whisky 10 cents and ginger ale and whisky 10 cents. Collins drinks 15 cents or 3 for 25 cents. All hot liquors 10 cents. Indulging at these prices will surely be considered too much of a luxury for ordinary pocket books. Aftaltn now. The butcher and the baker and the merchant generally will give you more for your money than offered above.

Today is thanksgiving — a statutory holiday.

Mr. Philip Kaley has returned home from the Western States. He has many compliments for Wisconsin lumber camps. Tommy Turner of Milton has put up his pipe having smoked for half a century without missing a day. He says tobacco is too high in price and not as good as it used to be.

An experienced man tells how to cure Klondike fever. When the mercury is below zero shoulder a pick and go into the woods before breakfast; dig a hole 15 feet deep; come back to the house at night and eat a small piece of buffalo robe, and sleep in the woods. Repeat as often as necessary.

Anticipation of Christmas good things is having its effect in swelling the attendance at the Sunday Schools.

Mrs. Christina Sinclair has purchased for \$150 Mrs. James McLennan's house on Young St.

A subscriber writes from Vancouver to thanks us for interesting and spicy news in the Free Press.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, November 23, 1922.

Last Wednesday evening the members of the Acton Junior Baseball Team were tendered a sumptuous banquet by the Junior I.O.D.E. on their winning of the championship of the league. About 150 or 175 citizens sat down to the banquet in the town hall which was a most elaborate one.

White sweaters with the club crest were presented to George Jiggins, catcher; Neil Gibbons, pitcher; Ell Masters, Laid McDonald, Leonard Dore, William Kaley, Grenville Masales, Elmer Drone, Arlie White, Walter Bayer, Hector McDonald, James Ewing, Earl Cooper, William Holloway and Norman Wilds. Misses Olla Armstrong and Alice Johnstone assisted in the presentations. The boys of the club presented their manager Mr. Robt. Scott with a box of cigars. The history of baseball in Acton was outlined by the veteran, R.M. McDonald, who traced Acton's career from the Amsterdams which he first played with until the present. He pointed out this was not the first time Acton won a championship.

Reeve Barber pointed out council had done little lately but planned to spend about \$500 in the park including the diamond. Little Miss Helen Ostrander with her Scotch songs was a delight. Mr. Amos Mason in a cornet solo, and with his sister Miss Lottie in a cornet duet as always were appreciated. Miss Hazel Mason accompanied them. Miss Betty Lowrie sang accompanied by Miss Lauretta Grey. The tables were cleared away and dancing was indulged in for a couple of hours.

David Robertson of Everton in partnership with his cousin Lorne Matthews opened the Five Pointed grocery in Guelph.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, November 27, 1902.

Setting a new high in attendance, Acton citizens heard complete reports of municipal activities during the past year and registered 29 nominations.

Nominated for mayor were V.B. Rumley, Dr. F. Oakes, J. Hargrave and B.D. Rachlin; Dr. Oakes is mayor by acclamation. Nominated for reeve were C. Rognvaldson, J.J. Stewart, W. Coon and J. Hargrave with Mr. Stewart acclaimed. Nominated for deputy-reeve were R. Thompson and J.J. Stewart with Mr. Thompson acclaimed. Councillors were J. Greer, A. Irwin, C. Lindsay, W. McLeod, E. Tyler, L. Weick. Others nominated were L. MacSwain, C. Rognvaldson, G. Barbeau, A. Fryer, R. Thompson, W. Roszell, E. Foutitt, G. McCutcheon.

School trustees are C. Bradley, C. Heard, and W. Wolfe. Public Utilities Commissioner is J.R. MacArthur.

Esqueuing township also has an acclamation — reeve George Lealie, deputy-reeve Wilfred Bird, council George Currie, William Schenk, Walter Linham; school board area No. 1 R.L. Davidson, Hector Bird.

Nassagaweya will have an election. Stanley Norrish was acclaimed as reeve. Four council members are to be elected and those nominated are John Milne, Mrs. Lillian Thomas, Edgar Cairns. School area trustees, two to be elected Claude Brinklow, Duncan Moffat, W.M. VanSickle.

Ernest Benham was returned as reeve of Eramosa, Fred Cox as deputy-reeve; councillors Franklin Armstrong, Fred Oakes, Frank Ostrander, village trustees Frank Scheider, John Lloyd and Chas. Heffernan.

## What happened to federal Liberals?

There are many versions of what happened in the recent election that turned the country upside down, but this one from the pen of Andrew Y. McLean, editor of the Huron Expositor, made a lot more sense than that of any so-called political experts. Mr. McLean is a former Liberal Member of Parliament for Huron, so is entitled to speak from his own experience, as well as from his assessment of the situation from an editor's viewpoint.

"The results of Monday's election, particularly those in rural western Ontario, probably reflect a combination of concerns. As Ontario population growth becomes more concentrated in large urban centres the influence of rural Ontario decreases. This too frequently has contributed to a tendency on the part of government at higher levels to regard everything desirable for the cities as equally acceptable for the rural community. There has been a failure to recognize that those living on the farms and in the towns and small cities of rural Ontario have needs and hopes and aspirations just as entitled to recognition as are those of the cities.

There is not the unemployment and welfare requirements in rural Ontario as are present in the cities. The merit of work is not a dead issue in these parts and farmers and the business men in the small towns are accustomed to paying their way and adjusting their needs to their resources. They have difficulty in accepting what they regard as unduly high payments to unemployed and to those on welfare when they themselves often have difficulty in obtaining help. They resented what many suspected was a wide spread practise of quitting or turning down jobs for the benefits of insurance.

"Increasing municipal taxes which, in fact, reflect Ontario Conservative policies in education and assessment have been related in the minds of many to the cost of unemployment and for which the federal government was blamed.

"While the N.D.P. cry of "corporate burns" didn't produce many additional NDP votes in rural Ontario, it did have the effect of raising the question of the credibility of the government in the minds of some voters and was an added factor in their decision to

register a protest vote.

"But what possibly was the major factor in the election results was that too many voters reacted against steps being taken to provide the people of Quebec with the rights and privileges which had been guaranteed them under confederation. In this attitude, unfortunately, they were encouraged by continuing demands by Ontario for more Ottawa dollars which, by inference, were being provided Quebec and other 'have not provinces' at the expense of taxpayers in this province.

"While we would hesitate to think of this as bigotry certainly a number of releases sent out from Ottawa by some opposition MP's for consumption in their ridings have been couched in terms that suggested that Quebec was receiving particular assistance at our expense. Some Conservative candidates exploited the same theme in the campaign. Mr. Stanfield deserves full credit for repudiating such an approach.

"The voters who were influenced by this kind of anti French backlash didn't think of Canada when they voted. They thought only of themselves.

"The fact is, of course, that if we are to continue to have a viable and united Canada it must include Quebec. It is the responsibility of those of us in other parts, including Ontario, to ensure that Quebecers are given those opportunities guaranteed them a hundred years ago and that they are assured of standards comparable to those enjoyed by the rest of Canada.

"The vote tells us many things. We hope for the sake of Canada that it doesn't mean there is a majority in Ontario who want to put down Quebec.

"When an election results in a swing such as that of Monday, the relative merits of the issues and of the candidates in many ridings are lost sight of.

"Without in any way detracting from the merits of those who won and who deserve congratulations on their achievements, there were at the same time many equally capable candidates who were swept away. Their abilities, their proposals were ignored in the larger concern. We hope they will not regard this as typical but will offer their services again."

—The Huron Expositor (Sandwich)

Coles' Slaw



Will return next week.