

*Answers the Brethren of Messiah*

The Acton Free Press.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Although answers have already been given to the Brethren of Messiah concerning their Yule questions, perhaps I may add a little more.

Question 1: Exchanging of gifts?

Answer: Christmas originated with the giving of the greatest gift ever offered—God's plan for the redemption of a lost world. It was the ultimate in love and sacrifice.

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of a baby. The Wise Men brought Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh and it is our custom still to welcome a new-born child with a gift.

So love was born with a Baby's cry and a gentle woman's tears and, as love begets love and sends out vibrations like offshoots a plant, so it grew and flourished and spread. We give our children gifts because we love them. We buy our friends some cherished thing which they would not buy for themselves. Because of love the Salvation Army was born and the Star Santa Claus Fund and the Star Fresh Air Fund and the many similar projects which ferret out the lonely and unfortunate ones.

The apostle John wrote: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."

"He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is Love."

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

Surely the Brethren of Messiah do not interpret this admonition to apply only to members of their own group.

Question 2: Installing a tree inside a house?

Answer: What do we expect of a tree? Is it not fruit? Then what better place to hang our gifts, to be plucked with delight from its branches? A tree is beautiful. Only God can make one. It is a decoration and its spicy odor fills the house.

Queen Victoria was the first person in Britain to have a Christmas tree. Her husband Prince Albert, brought this custom from his native Germany, to please his Queen and the idea soon spread from palace to cottage. A charming custom, surely!

Question 3: Decorations of various sorts on houses, store windows, streets, etc.?

Answer: Who did not thrill at Christmas time, to the beauty of our town with its myriads of coloured lights? It was like coming suddenly out of darkness into Fairyland. Should we, like Scrooge, cry, "Bah! Humbug!"

Question 4: The interest in mistletoe, yule log etc?

Answer: The yule log dates back to very old times when the evenings were spent in stimulating conversation, games and jollity, around a blazing fireplace. Today, at Christmas, everything assumes a festive air, even to milk bottle caps and I presume that for a special time the people of long ago, too, wanted everything to be special.

As for the custom of hanging strips of mistletoe about, under which unsuspecting or premeditating ladies might receive a kiss, it was just the exuberance of a holiday

spirit. What holiday? Does it matter? We are not keeping a pagan holiday. We know what we celebrate.

Question 5: Consumption of particular foods such as fowl, plum pudding, nuts, candies, etc?

Answer: These foods are peculiar to Christmas only in that they have always been the best we can provide.

Question 6: What is the exact relationship between Jesus and Santa Claus?

Answer: There is none whatever. The birth of Jesus Christ is an historical fact. Santa Claus is a fantasy. Little children live in a world of fantasy. They believe in fairies, elves, gnomes, the tooth fairy, goblins and Santa Claus. To deny him this to deny him his birthright and I have yet to know of one child who later chided his parents for their deception.

Question 7: What is really meant by the phrase, "Merry Christmas?"

Answer: I quote from Billy Graham: "During these days millions of people are saying to each other, 'Merry Christmas.' A man once wrote me a scathing letter denouncing Christians who use the word 'merry' in connection with the celebration of the birthday of Jesus Christ. He felt that we should say, 'A blessed Christmas to you,' or, 'A glorious Christmas,' but that we should never use the phrase, 'Merry Christmas.'"

I went to my Bible and looked up this word, "merry," and found out that my friend who wrote the letter was wrong. "Merry" is not a word of which we are to be afraid. It is a good Bible term that is used over thirty times in the Authorized Version. Other related terms like "cheer" are used 14 times. The word "mirth" is used 15 times. The word "laughter" appears 39 times, as do many other less frequent expressions such as "happy", "joy", and "gladness", all of which express the joyousness of life. Certainly the Bible teaches that God means that his children are to be merry-hearted."

Question 8: If Jesus was born on the 25th of December, how can it be proven?

Answer: It cannot be. Nor need it be. To my knowledge, nobody has ever said that date was Christ's birthday, or tried to prove it. The Queen's birthday is not celebrated nationally on her natal day. If December 25th is coincidental with a pagan celebration, what does that matter? We celebrate no pagan holiday. We know whom we worship.

Question 9: How is excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages (which can and does lead to acute immorality) associated with the birth of a man who would in later years, condemn such behavior?

Answer: The consumption of alcoholic beverages is in no way connected with Christmas. Those who so indulge do so on every excuse for a celebration of any kind.

Question 10: Where does the "Christmas spirit" disappear to on December 26th?

Answer: It does not disappear from the lives of true Christians. Those from whom it seems to disappear never had it. Unfortunately for most of us, although our hearts are full, our purses are pretty empty.

Yours truly,  
Isabel Anderson.



NATIONAL SAFETY Award for Building Products Company was won this year by employees of the Acton plant, who put in more accident free man hours than Winnipeg plant workers who also had no accidents. Building Products president Jim Ferguson of Montreal presented the plaque at a special meeting in the Acton Legion Thursday. Accepting on

behalf of plant employees were Jack Denny and Acton plant general manager Dr. Leno Braida. The Acton plant was fifth in number of accidents last year. Commented Mr. Ferguson "This is a case of number 5 trying harder. It's an achievement that belongs to everybody in the plant." (Photo by D. Gibbons)

**No secrets in Esquering  
Reeve Hill promises**

"There will be no closed council meetings as long as I am reeve and no business will be finalized at committee meetings," Reeve Tom Hill promised at last Wednesday's inaugural meeting of Esquering Council.

Council started meeting in committee every second week during Reeve Hill's recently completed first term and some township ratepayers criticized the procedure at a Meet the Candidates night held prior to the December 4 election.

Deputy-reeve Len Cox explained committee meetings are held to allow members of council to discuss problems that arise, but he added "There has been none and never will be any business done in committee."

Newly-elected Councillor George Maltby, who made reference to the committee meeting system during the campaign said perhaps council should explain the difference between a committee meeting and a closed meeting. He said it appeared to ratepayers the meetings were closed.

Councillor Dick Howitt pointed out that in several municipalities deputations must present their case at a committee meeting.

"Here people can come unannounced to a regular meeting," he said. "For us to give a snap decision on a request at that time is not good for either party."

Press copies  
As a means of keeping the

public better informed, Councillor Howitt suggested photocopies of council correspondence be made available to the press the nights of regular meetings. All correspondence was read aloud by the clerk-treasurer at one time, but last year council decided to have copies mailed out to each member prior to regular meetings in order to have them better informed and conserve time.

Council agreed that copies of correspondence should be available to the press. In conclusion Reeve Hill made it clear that any persons are welcome at regular meetings, even if they just wish to sit and watch council procedure.

**Choraliers  
entertain**

Residents of Wellington county's new home for the aged at Elora welcomed Acton Legion Choraliers warmly on Saturday night. The men sang a program of songs for the appreciative group. Former Actonians, Dave and Flora McKenzie Harris, returned from Toronto to be with the Choraliers again. Mrs. Harris sang solos accompanied by her husband and he sang with the choir.

Sam Hubble is a resident of the beautiful new home, and Charles sings with the Choraliers. His daughter Ruth and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Courtney, also went over for the program.

**Semester ends**

Their first semester over, high school students have three days off the end of this week. They return Monday to new subjects, timetables and teachers.

**Life was exciting in Acton in 1914**

Editor,  
Acton Free Press.

Dear Sir:

A former resident of Acton, I was in your town on October 21, 1972, but found your office closed. I drove around town for awhile, showed my grandson where we used to live on Beardmore Crescent, took a picture of the old house. I think it was No. 36, facing the tannery. I also took a picture of the old railroad station, but was not happy to see it all boarded up. It used to be one of the hubs of social life at certain times of the day when the trains came in. From there to the Post Office to wait for the mail to be sorted.

Life was exciting in Acton in 1914. My father was the electrician in the tannery (harness leather) and I was his helper. Brother Vic worked there, too. He was helper for Jack Mallon, steamfitter in the sole leather department. I saw Jack Mallon in 1939 when on my way home from a visit to Sudbury. Jack was not able to move around very much. His son had a grocery store near the Dominion Hotel. Jack lived across the street.

Sincerely,  
Charles E. Lane, Sr.  
Williamsville, N.Y.

**Departure of Murray McLaren regretted**

The Editor

Dear Sir:

It is with deep appreciation that I write this letter, on the departure of Murray McLaren from the post of village superintendent in Rockwood.

I am sure every homeowner will have recognized his willingness and kindness in doing his duty, yes, more than his duty. I will remember being in distress one day when Murray called to read the meter. Not being of a mechanical turn in any manner,

shape or form, I was unable to put a piece of furniture together, try as I liked, but Murray fixed it in a few minutes.

Many things he did for many people, but the five long hills and sidewalks proved too much for him to sand alone, and now he is forced to withdraw.

Good luck, sir, wherever you are, and may you retain your kindly usefulness. If the door of heaven is rusty from non-use, I am sure Murray will fix it up.

Yours truly,  
Millicent Milroy,  
Rockwood, Ont.

**Use judgment on snowmobiles**

Jan. 21, 1973

In answer to Mr. G. E. Jackson's letter of Jan. 15, 1973 --

We have 2 ski-does in our family and we are in agreement that visibility while driving a "snowmobile" is not as good, even when wearing "ski-goggles" as driving in a car.

In a car you are seated that much higher and the wind, snow, etc. is not hitting you in the eyes! We are also in agreement in our family, that on snow machines we cannot possibly bring them to a stop as quickly as we can stop our cars.

Since a snowmobile runs on a "caterpillar" tread, it is very clumsy in manoeuvring a turn!

A car with its four wheels may be turned much more easily to avoid an object.

I am amazed that Mr. Jackson has

exposed himself so openly to criticism! He boldly admits that he was travelling at 30 MPH on a foggy night on a snowmobile!

Wasn't he going much too fast?

Yes! For the weather conditions he was. The question arises here (to quote Mr. Jackson), what are horses doing running loose on the road at night?

We may also ask the question of Mr. Jackson -- what are people on snowmobiles doing running loose on the road at night? What would have happened if Mr. Jackson had rammed into a parked car? He might not have been so lucky!

Instead only a poor horse was killed. Try to use some judgment next time, Mr. Jackson, and perhaps save your own life.

Yours truly,  
J. Sinclair,  
Erin, Ontario.

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**Metro dump site  
might be derailed**

MPP John Root (Wellington-Dufferin) has said he will disqualify himself if an application for a Metro Toronto dump site in his riding comes before the province's Environmental Hearing Board.

Mr. Root is chairman of the Environmental Hearing Board, which would have to hold public meetings on any land fill application.

Residents in Harriston and area have banded together to fight the CP Rail proposal to dump 400,000 tons of Metro Toronto garbage in their area. The scheme envisages using 300 acres of farmland as a dumping site identified as being within five miles of Harriston.

In approving the CP Rail bid Metro Toronto council rejected a competitive offer by Canadian National Railways to dump dry, odorless blocks of processed garbage into Indusmin quarries near Acton.

Cause pollution  
A Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph health unit inspector has said that a Minto township landfill site

would cause pollution to water and wells in the area near Harriston because the water table is only about two feet below the ground. He also predicted rats would infest the site.

The Derail Dump Today committee formed at Harriston to combat the Metro Toronto-CP Rail proposal received unexpected aid from another quarter when the new mayor of Toronto, David Crombie, sent a telegram assuring them of his support to change Metro council's decision.

"I share your concern and I uphold the provincial slogan 'Keep Ontario Beautiful,'" Crombie said.

A spokesman for CP Rail said that technical studies are not yet complete, no land has been purchased or optioned in the Harriston area in which to dump the garbage. He said provincial approval would be needed before the railway can go ahead. The headquarters of the Maitland, Sauguen and Conestoga Rivers are in Minto township.

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