

Bill Smiley

We all have to stand up and be counted sometime, even though we manage to duck sounds. People who express their honest opinions are not always popular, but I never aimed for that, so here goes. My opinions on some of the burning issues of the day.

Open winters. I'm in favour of them. We've had a beauty this winter, with only a few cold snaps, only a few feet of snow, a peachy January thaw, and lots of sun.

I'd like to say my heart goes out to the skiers and snowmobilers, but it would be a lie. I don't care if their snowmobiles sit in the back yard and rust, or if their skis warp into pretzels. I have normally moved about 12 feet of snow from one place to another by this time of winter. This year I've moved only about three feet, and I'll settle for that.

Men's clothing. Modern trends nauseate me. There's nothing in the stores but yellow and purple shirts, hideous ties that would go with nothing except a wino's eyes, and checkered pants with a flared bottom.

What ever happened to the white shirt, the modest single-shade tie, and the well-cut gray flannels?

Most of all, I hate those great fat ties. They're about four inches wide and made of stuff as thick as a great-coat. Trying to tie one in an elegant knot is about as easy as trying to lace your shoes with half-inch rope.

Nieces and nephews. I'm all for them. We had some of ours for the weekend and it was a delight to see their minds and talents developing. Jennie and Sue played a ripping flute duet, as well as their piano pieces. Little Steven spent the weekend chasing our cat, who was just as anxious to avoid his carresses as he was to give them. Finally, in perplexity, he said, "Hey, Uncle Bill, do you know what kind of cat this is?" I muttered something vague. "She's a scary-cat" he stated triumphantly.

Toilets and tires. It never fails, but they do, nearly always when you're expecting guests and need both. Saturday morning, armed with huge shopping list, went out and found a flat tire. The garageman raised his eyes when he had to clamber over two loaded golf carts to get at my spare, in February. Sunday morning, with seven people on deck, the toilet blocked. No plumbers available.

Now that we've dealt with major issues, let's take a look at the minor ones. A great deal of ink and hot air is being squandered these days on two of them: the Montreal Olympics and capital punishment. I'm against both.

First, the Olympics. Isn't it rather significant that the last two Olympics have been held in the countries with the most booming economies in the world, Japan and Germany? Maybe they could afford them. Canada, in my opinion, cannot.

Our population is too small, and our national debt too big, to take on an international extravaganza noted chiefly for its bickering and back-biting. Not to mention murder in Mexico and Munich.

Who needs the Olympics, anyway? It's a great spectacle, but so were the Roman games, with their chariot races, throwing lions to the Christians, and such thrilling events.

Canada needs the Olympics about as much as it needs another set of Rockies. And they'd cost about the same, and be of as much use. The chief difference is that the Rockies remain, and we can look at them. The Olympics will be here today, gone tomorrow, with nothing to show for it but a big, fat bill.

We had our day, with Expo. We showed the world that we could put on a really big show. And we're still paying interest on the money Mayor Drapeau didded out of the federal government for that one.

You don't see Britain or France or even the U.S. scrambling to get the summer games. They can't afford 'em. Nor can we.

Prime Minister Trudeau has said that Montreal will not get more than a token support from the Federal government. That is so much you-know-what. There are ways and means and the wily M. Drapeau knows all of them, and some haven't been thought up yet.

And the whole concept of amateurism is an international laugh, what with totalitarian countries employing their best athletes in the armed forces, where they can train all year round.

It's probably too late to stop the juggernaut, but it's not too late to throw some sand in the wheels.

If the citizens of greater Montreal were told that they, personally, had to foot the bills for the games, M. Drapeau would probably wind up at the bottom of the St. Lawrence River, with all the other sewage dumped in it.

Oh, yep. I'm against capital punishment, too, but I've run out of space. Maybe next week.



TOWS AT the Glen Eden ski area near Milton were operating in high gear on the weekend, as skiers took advantage of sunny skies and excellent snow conditions. (D. Gibbons photo)

OUR READERS WRITE:

Suggests solution looking for problem

Dear Sir,
While acknowledging the fact that Acton Lions Club has the interests of the town at heart in their latest endeavor, relocating Acton CN station in the park, I can't help thinking they have a solution looking for a problem.
Too often well-meaning misguided groups are all too keen to "improve" conservation areas and parks. Take for example the Rockwood Conservation Area, where we have a conglomeration of artificial additions, including a massive pavilion ruining a natural and picturesque beauty spot, giving it a kind of honky-tonk type of atmosphere.
The bay adjacent to Lakeview subdivision must surely be one of the prettiest spots within at least a hundred miles of Acton, especially now that the lakeshore has been seeded. I have seen people from all over

Acton and surrounding areas enjoying this tranquil spot.
With the growth of Acton accelerating almost daily we are going to need every square foot of parkland we can retain and I believe that most people prefer natural grass, trees and water, without artificial bits of nostalgia such as railroad stations, which only tend to turn parkland into Disneyland.
Destructive criticism is all too easy to provide. My constructive suggestion is for the Lions Club to put their hard earned money to furthering the extent of our parks, maybe extending the park further around Fairy Lake, and not plugging up our existing public land with unwanted architecture.

V.S. Morris,
113 Elizabeth Drive,
Acton, Ont.

Will water be filtered through garbage?

Dear Sir,
We, as residents of Esquesing township, are very concerned with the dumping of Toronto garbage in the Indusmin quarry. They have stated that this recycled garbage, or fill as they call it, is pollution free. If this is the case, why can't they dispose of it in Toronto? Why must they dump it here and leave us to cope with the pollution factors?
If it is pollution-free then why, may we ask, does the quarry have to drill wells in order to check the pollution? After they have dumped millions of tons of garbage here and then they find out it isn't pollution-free, what will be done then? In some countries in Europe this recycled garbage is used for manure on the land. Is manure pollution free?
A few years ago Indusmin came up with a beautiful plan. They were going to put top soil back on the rocks and make a recreational centre with a 30 acre lake and golf course, etc. Why? Because they were concerned for the public? They came up with this idea when they wanted to remove part of the 22 Sideroad and Third Line so they could quarry through and not have to worry about traffic.
Do you suppose they are eager to get the garbage here from Toronto to help the Government, indirectly, so the Government will allow them to rezone their land for quarrying? If this is the case we plead to the Provincial Government to rezone their land

without polluting our water. We would much rather have the first plan. Why? Because we need more water than garbage.
This area rises up because we are part of the Niagara Escarpment. We have rocky ground with a watercourse underneath. What happens when it rains? The run-off of the recycled garbage will not soak into the soil but it will run off into the small streams polluting our water. It will run into the cracked rocks caused by the dynamite explosions at the quarry and pollute the underground streams. This in turn will eventually pollute our wells for miles around.
The people who want this garbage dumped here have no real concern for us. They don't care how this garbage will affect us because these people just sit back and rake up the profits. They don't live here. They don't have to watch our beautiful heap of garbage grow and grow. They say they want to do us favors. The only time they do favors is when it is profitable to them.
So people of Esquesing township and whoever else in this area might be affected, what are you going to do? Are you just going to sit back and let this happen? Want to do something about it? If so come to the public meeting at Stewarttown hall, Wednesday February 28 at 8 p.m. Please be there since this concerns us all.

Casey Bos,
R.R.4, Acton.

Celebrate anniversary on centennial

Acton Centennial:
I came to live in Acton in April, 1900, a girl of eight years, lived there until I married in 1914, when I went to live in Nassagaweya. The last 25 years have been spent in Guelph. I have always thought of Acton as my home town.
My grandfather, Rev. R.B. Cook, was the minister of the Baptist Church there. He passed away just before the little brick church was opened.
Not a very large contribution but hope it will help some and the memories prompting the little gift are very dear to me.

The names I have sent are my husband, myself and those of our two children.
Best wishes for a successful campaign financially, also successful in many other ways to all citizens.
If my husband and I are spared, we will have our diamond wedding anniversary in April of 1974, the same year Acton is celebrating its Centennial.
Best wishes to all who are working for this project.
Eva McLaughlin (nee Cook)
16 Bagot Street,
Guelph.

It was Meen business

When A.K. Meen did not show up for a scheduled meeting with councils of North Halton last week it was supposedly because he was tied up with more pressing business.

Pressing business it may have been but to many councillors from the four municipalities in North Halton it was a snub, suggesting the counter proposals they had for the Government weren't worthwhile listening to. Acton council had postponed a regular meeting so all could attend and several of the other representatives had better things to do than listen to the coterie of civil servants sent in place of Mr. Meen, no matter how well intentioned.

There probably were matters of information councillors could have picked up from the civil servants but they were not in the mood to participate in preliminaries. They wanted the main event, a showdown

the Government seems anxious to avoid.

The Government's proposals for a regional government in Halton have not been acceptable to most North Halton representatives, principally because they feel Queen's Park has created an artificial fourth borough and justified it with only vague comments about "community of interest", which could apply to any of the four municipalities in the north.

The annoying thing about it was that it was done against the express wishes of the rest of the county, which opted for a three borough Halton. Some county councillors will settle for the fourth borough, of course, provided boundaries are adjusted to correspond more to the original outlines of the county system.

Although some of those who defend the Government's proposals seem to

think boundaries are not really that important, they negate their reasoning by defending the boundaries the Government has proposed.

We think the boundaries proposed for the North Halton borough are unrealistic as well as being unwieldy as the Georgetown Herald has observed. Where, we ask those staunch defenders of the proposal, is the community of interest so fondly referred to in a Milton-centred borough, between a resident of Nassagaweya and Georgetown.

We also question the wisdom of operating one municipality with two sizeable communities eight miles apart.

It would make more sense to have five, rather than four municipalities in Halton, if the Government won't settle for three.

Free Press Editorial Page

4 The Acton Free Press, Wednesday, February 21, 1973

Why not fifth borough?

A five unit Halton has been proposed before, of course, but we wonder if the Government has given any thought to creation of a community of interest taking in the northern half of Esquesing and Nassagaweya, Acton, and the townships of Erin and Eramosa, or part of them?

Although there are areas which might tie in better with Guelph or Orangeville, we feel a strong urban-rural community could be created

using the area as far north as Highway 24 which would not create any special problems if government grants were equalized to compensate for sparseness of population as has been suggested by Queen's Park ("the more sparse the area the greater the grant").

Originally we believed the government was serious about the number of municipalities which they would have to deal with in a regional

set-up but it is obvious from their Halton plan they are not as concerned as they would have us believe.

In any event a fifth borough could eliminate some of the inequities of the proposed North Halton boundaries, principally the dominance from Georgetown and its immediate area, where well over half the population of the borough would originate, unless some provision is made for more rapid urban growth in Acton.

Wellington in limbo?

Wellington County, including Guelph, appears to be in limbo for the present as far as regional government is concerned.

A large part of the land to the west is already in the new Kitchener-Waterloo complex and the announcement last month of the Halton-Wentworth schemes looks after our eastern boundary.

Will this county be its own little region? Will Guelph be snatched by Waterloo and the rest of the county be either left or joined to territory to the north?

If the powers at Toronto know they are not telling. In the meantime, of course, our tax money is part of the stream being poured into the regions to sweeten the change for the taxpayers of the new regions.

Date set for complete regionalization is said to be 1975. There doesn't seem to be a great deal that communities can do to stop or direct the steamroller but it will be educational to see how, in Waterloo for instance, the new municipalities cope with the differences between town, village and rural standards of service.

The northern part of Halton also will have some of the same problems that the Centre Wellington municipalities will face later.—Fergus-Elora News Express.

It won't be any easier buying your 1973 licence plates during the last few days of February, so you might as well get them now before the big rush is on. Feb. 28 is the deadline and local issuers report the number sold to date this year is away behind last year at this time.

Back Issues of The Free Press

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, February 24, 1953.

Demolition of 29 trees leaves Cameron Ave. with a blitzed appearance. Town workers cut down the trees thought to be dangerous.

The location in the park for the junior swimming pool has been staked out. Acton/European flood relief total is now \$433.68 and rising.

Dr. A. J. Buchanan was named chairman to be in charge of a committee for planning how Acton will mark the Coronation in the spring. Lorne Weick was chairman for the meeting and Mrs. Angell secretary.

Two services were held in Acton churches to mark the World Day of Prayer. About 70 attended the service in St. Alban's church when those taking part were Mrs. Ralph Price, Mrs. A. J. Buchanan, Mrs. Vic Bristow, Mrs. B. Veldhuis and Miss Dorothy Simmons as well as representatives of churches. In the evening the Daughters of Knox held a service in the Presbyterian church when the Brownies and Guides attended in uniform. Dorothy Dawkins, Ruth Smith, Peggy and Frances Oakes took part and Miss M.Z. Bennett gave the address.

Interviews over the radio were a highlight of the annual dance of Baxter Laboratories last Friday at the Brant Inn. Mr. and Mrs. Newton Hurst, Miss Jackie Watkins and Meh Blow were interviewed by the master of ceremonies. About 55 attended.

Value of building permits issued in Acton during 1952 reached an all-time high of \$128,310. Boosting the high total were the additions to Micro Plastics and the rebuilt A. P. Green plant.

There were 57 new telephones added in town last year.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, February 23, 1923.

Whenever Dr. Farmer is away on his frequent sojourns he is ever mindful of his friends at home. This week we are favored with one of his characteristic letters, this time from Florida. "What an enigma and contradiction is Florida." A seemingly unmitigated stretch of stunted pine, of cypress swamp and snow white sand; of

scattered, wretched looking negro huts, of impassable roads, half-starved, half-sized domestic animals and barren, unproductive soil. The traveller in the Pullman passes jaugustly through. However at our journey's end we find one of the neatest, most ordered winter tourist cities in the world, St. Petersburg. We meet many friends from Canada here, among them Prof. Zavitz of the Agricultural College. Everyone is talking of a project to build a bridge between here and Tampa which will reduce the distance from 65 miles to 19...."

Miss Mary Claridge has been hired to fill the vacancy in Mr. Farmer's office caused by the resignation of Miss Ethel Starkman who has taken a position in Toronto.

Mr. William Johnstone, undertaker, has had some trying experiences during the past week. He was stalled with his team for several hours in getting a casket to a home where death had occurred in Eramosa. In the evening he had a call to Limehouse, and walked down the track. During the trip he

had his face badly frozen. Oakville Board of Education finds many teachers have been leaving. On interrogation that say they find Oakville too monotonous and lonesome a town in which to stay. In other towns, they say, the school teachers with their natural refinement and education were the most sought after and entertained persons in the community.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, February 24, 1898.

Friday and Saturday will see the climax of the political campaign in Acton. John R. Barber, the Liberal candidate, will address the electors in the town hall tomorrow night and Col. Kerns on Saturday night. The Court of Registration of the manhood suffrage was held before the judge. The enrollment is believed to be about equally divided politically.

For the past month Mr. W. H. Storey, Reeve, has been confined to his residence through illness induced by an internal growth which has recently developed. After consultation with a number of physicians of eminent standing it was decided that a surgical operation would possibly give relief. This course was followed and an operation was performed yesterday morning. Evidence of an affection of somewhat serious character was found but it is hoped that no unfavorable developments will follow. The entire community unites in the hope that the most sanguine expectations will be realized and he will be restored to at least a measure of his heretofore robust health.

A well-known fast young man (name given) was arrested. For the past couple of months he has been running a tobacco business in Mrs. Secord's block with stock supplied by Geo. Adams, grocer. He made no returns to Mr. Adams and packed up for Hamilton. Mr. Adams went to his rescue and to save him being sent down for a term he settled with the young man. About a year ago the man was sent to Central Prison for six months for stealing Mr. Fred Dickenson's bicycle.

The yelling on the streets by the visitors to the ball in the town hall early Saturday morning gives them the reputation of being hoodlums, in the opinion of citizens who were disturbed by them.

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