



A DISMAL SWAMP, a world of grey which the sun barely penetrates. This one, near Speyside, provides sanctuary for gnarled limbs, limp reflections in a placid pool dotted with clumps of vegetation. Stephen

Borowsky caught this fantasyland through the lens of his camera near his own home on 15 Sideroad, Esquesing.

Free Press Editorial Page

6 The Acton Free Press, Wednesday, July 11, 1973

Back Issues of The Free Press

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, July 16, 1953.

President Mac Sprowl and Clarence Denny of Acton Fair Board proposed to council that the fair board would repair the grandstand in the park and buy the required material. They pointed out the loss of the stand would greatly interfere with the fair program. Council had only received one tender for removal of the stand for \$15, and it was not accepted.

Councillor Tyler asked council consideration for a wider territory for phone service from Acton.

Eleada Britton and Charles Thompson were married July 4 with bridesmaid Betty McIntyre.

Lorraine Mullin and Charles Kingsmill were married July 4. Attendants were Rachael Mullin, Jean Sinclair, Donna Hennick, Kenneth Allan, Herb Rennie and William James Monteith.

Miss Emma Hawthorne was the "good friend and neighbor" honored on Alan Mailland's Roses from Rose Brand program on CJBC recently. The letter about Miss Hawthorne was sent by Mrs. Frank Wale, the former Ruth Jennings of Acton.

Two cases of poliomyelitis have already been reported in Halton this year. In 1952 there were only six cases with no fatalities, and a total of 21 in 1951.

Sonny Jocke has been working on "The Breeze" in his spare time and now it is a beautiful picnic site.

The tender of J. B. Mackenzie and Son for \$136,900 was accepted for the building of a new high school in Acton by the North Halton High School District Board at a meeting in Stewarttown Thursday. That school will have seven rooms. Tenders for Milton and Georgetown were not accepted being considered excessive.

The junior swimming pool will open soon.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, of Thursday, July 12, 1923.

The members of the Orange Order held their annual parade to St. Alban's. Led by Acton Citizens' Band, the Orangemen and Lady True Blues numbered nearly 200 and filled the church to the door.

It is quite a number of years since there was work done to improve the roadway of Church St. The street has an excellent foundation but the top is worn down to the flake stones. Councillor Harrison has persuaded council to make an allowance in the year's expenditures for the repairing of this street.

Acton Public School again had the gratification of seeing all the pupils who wrote at the examinations for High School pass.

Eleven passed with honors. This result is a high compliment to Miss M. Z. Bennett, the principal, as well as to the pupils. Among them: Irene Dunn (Hon.), Audrey Gervais, Margaret Grindell, Frank Kelly, Wilda McMullen, Franklin Bauer, Florence Barr, Dorothy Cordiner, John Dron, Charles Gibbons, Frank Gibbons, Clarence Henderson, Olive Precious, Jessie Young, Augustus Clifford, Gordon Huffman.

One of our citizens remarked the other day that it will be a good thing when motor cars will all be run by steam instead of gasoline, the cars nowadays (at least those old ramshackles that make more noise than a Gatling gun when they are running) make such an infernal racket on our streets.

In Burlington complaints were received that some persons played lawn tennis on the courts on Sunday morning.

The Ladies' Ball Team are to the fore in sportdom. They played two games and won both. An outstanding feature was a fine running catch by Miss Marguerite Ryder. Home runs were made by Misses Hazel Mason and O. McLaughlin. Miss Hazel Mason pitched steady games.

Acton Jubilee celebration August 4, 5 and 6. All old home folks will be cordially welcome.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, July 7, 1898.

There were five drowning accidents on Lake Ontario Sunday.

The first 20 miners to come out of the Klondike this season have gold dust and drafts estimated at \$375,000.

The new Free Library opening Monday evening was a most encouraging success. For nearly two hours there was a procession of citizens down the corridor of the town hall to the library room and the courteous and attentive librarian Miss Etta Laird was kept busy in receiving applications for membership. The library will be open every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday evening from 7 to 8.30 o'clock.

Mr. R. Holmes, drover, informs us that during the past six months he has paid the farmers of this vicinity, for stock shipped at Acton station, \$37,000.

During the hot summer months pastor McLachlan of the Methodist church purposes giving twenty minute sermons and services within the hour. No objections to the arrangement were heard.

A wheeling party in charge of Misses Leona Holmes and Ada Hynds made a very enjoyable trip to Georgetown Tuesday evening.

The scholars of the Baptist Sunday School were entertained to strawberries and cream at the home of Mr. John Warren.

A new issue of postage stamps has been made. It was found the lack of a figure indicating a denomination caused confusion among English-speaking people while among the wholly French the new stamps were unintelligible. The new series remedies the deficiency, the maple leaf design being replaced with Arabic figures.

Miss Rhoda F. Featherstone was engaged as teacher in the third department at a salary of \$275 per annum. The school will be cleaned and whitewashed during the summer and the closets put in sanitary condition.

Progress? - split, get married again

Replies to the Free Press request for a name for the new town in North Halton have been coming in dribs and drabs. The majority of them have either favored Esquesing, North Halton, or a composite, to designate the three municipalities of Acton, Esquesing and Georgetown.

Some new names have also been suggested such as Scotsdale, Norhalltown, Norhall, Ontario City, Granada and the Town of North Halton such as used in Montreal for the Town of Mount Royal.

All have merit and should be given consideration by the combined councils of the three municipalities when they pick the name for the new town.

We have gone on record as favoring Esquesing as the name for the new town because it has always been associated with the area.

Reeve Pat McKenzie of Acton, who has not committed himself to any name as yet, did a little research on Esquesing, and he notes that the "Land of the Tall Pines" was first settled in 1819 and many of the early settlers' names are still scattered through the township and the two towns. They include names such as Hume, McDonald, McPherson, McColl, Standish, Reed, Watkins, Nickell, Thompson, Fraser, Stewart, Laidlaw, Dobbie, Neilson, Campbell, Barbour, Kennedy, Robertson and Swackhammer, most of them were from the British Isles and Ireland.

The first "town" meetings were held in Thomas Thompson's tavern on the Seventh Line (now Halton Road 3) on January 1, 1821, with the clerk, Col. John Murray. First members of council must have found the tavern refreshing because subsequent meetings were also held there. At that time Esquesing was part of the "Gore" and governed by the Gore District Council.

Population of Esquesing in

1821?—424 hardy souls.

June 4 was designated as training day and every male 18 years and over was obliged to present himself for drill. This was a time when the threat of American invasion was still present. The settlers recognized the need for defence, although quite likely weapons were limited to scythes and farm implements which could be used for clobbering an opponent.

Esquesing was also a hotbed of sympathy for the red-headed agitator William Lyon McKenzie, fiery advocate of responsible government and foe of the notorious Family Compact. The area known as the Scotch Block seethed with "rebels," who were really men with more liberal views than those who controlled the province at the time, through privilege and heredity.

It was to the Scotch Block that MacKenzie came when he visited Esquesing. It was also there that the first Presbyterian minister came in 1832. The Rev. Peter Ferguson later moved to Milton.

In 1840 the Congregationalists erected a church on "Swackhammer's Hill" and as a result the area became known as Churchill. The church is still in use and the Swackhammers (now with one "m") still live nearby, on land the family settled.

The first reeve of Esquesing was John McNaughton, deputy-reeve was Ninian Lindsay and councillors were Jim Young, R. S. Hall and William Thompson. Henry Fyfe was the first postmaster, his post office was located on Lot 9, Concession 7, below Ashgrove, but was moved to Stewarttown in 1840 still known as "Esquesing."

Georgetown, the first incorporated municipality which came out of the township, was settled by George Kennedy in 1820 but in 1837 there were still only three families—the Goodenows, Garrisons

and Kennedys. Known as "Hungry Hollow" it was later christened Georgetown after its first settler. It was part of Esquesing until 1864 when county council passed the by-law incorporating it as a village. The first reeve was James Young. The village grew after the Barber Brothers opened a woolen mill, harnessing the waters of the Credit River to supply power.

Known earlier as Danville after a clerk and Adamsville after the first settlers, brothers Zenas, Rufus and Ezra Adams, Acton was incorporated as village in 1873. A post office was established in 1844 and it was then Robert Swan, an Englishman, sponsored a motion that passed designating the community as "Acton."

The first reeve of Acton was W. H. Storey and the council was composed of John Speight, Asa Hall, C. T. Hill and Dr. McGarvin. The Halton county Atlas notes that Acton at the time had one of the finest public schools in the county, built of stone and opines, "There is no subject in which the inhabitants take more interest and are more liberal than in the education of the young, which has ever been in a high state of efficiency."

The growth of the tiny community was stimulated by the tanning industry and the manufacture of gloves and ploughs, making it the industrial town of the north.

Since the three municipalities split and went their own way, there has always been a link and a competitive spirit which appeared mainly at sporting events, but it has never really had the combativeness that has marked other feuds. The early settlers and those who came later spread out through North Halton and often it was a case of cousin against cousin or even brother against brother in the hockey, baseball and lacrosse wars.

It is ironic, perhaps that just over 100 years after the three communities started to split they should once more be gathered into one municipality.

But that's progress.

New roads not for speed

Residents of Acton welcome council's decision to resurface the streets around town before another winter rolls around. Frost damage this year was extensive and the patches on some streets exceeded the amount of original pavement.

In a highly mobile society such as exists today, good roads are important. Smooth surfaces cut down on dust, are easier on vehicles and add to the general appearance of any community.

However, there are also temptations for drivers to exceed posted speed limits when roads are smooth and unencumbered with bumps and potholes.

Some car jockeys use the streets to race up and down after dark now, screeching tires with standing starts and revving powerful engines through deep-throated mufflers designed to keep everyone awake. We undoubtedly will see numbers and noise increase when the roads are in better shape.

It has been said that the prime social blotch on the middle ages was smell. People threw their garbage out on the streets and the resulting stench led to disease and foul odor which must have been hard to bear. Today's society is afflicted with noise, in much the same manner.

We become immune to most noises through years of being exposed to it, but for light sleepers there is nothing more nerve-racking than being awakened by a throbbing engine, screeching tires and speeding vehicles through long, warm summer evenings.

Some streets in town such as Church and Bower have more than their share of noise and speed violators. Residents are getting sick of it.

It is time motorists in town had some consideration for those who are trying to sleep. If they want to race and thrill to the speed of a powerful engine let them take cars to a track and get it out of their system against those with the same ambitions.

Mini-Comment

We find it difficult to catch the meaning of those political figures who say regional government will be more efficient and then in the next breath observe, "but, of course, it will cost the taxpayers more in the first few years." If it is more efficient it should cost the taxpayers less.

One reason why it could be more costly is salaries paid to appointed heads, which immediately are adjusted so they attract the top men. For instance, in the region of Waterloo it was discovered salaries for appointed officials came to \$240,000 a year. The chief administrator receives an annual salary of \$32,000, the commissioner of health and social services and medical officer of health receives \$36,000, the commissioner of engineering \$27,500 and on down the line to the director of finance who gets \$17,250, the same salary he received as clerk of Waterloo County.

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FREE PRESS CARTOONIST Dave Waddell suggests it wasn't a timetable which kept the Queen and Prince Philip moving when they passed through Acton recently.