

# Free Press Editorial Page

## So that was centennial

Well, that was Acton's centennial year. It's nearly all over.

It was well over a full year before the auspicious date that a group of keen citizens got together and began to dream up plans. Their ideas were big, different — and fun.

The spoof of Acton bidding to host the Grey Cup game was maybe the best laugh in town during the whole past century. Officials laughed, too, and went along with it.

Another whopper of an idea was a brewery's western show in the park on July 1 weekend. The p.r. man in charge came to the Free Press and said he thought the site was perfect.

So the plans grew. Committees were set up. A history was to be written. A reunion arranged.

What happened? No one can add it all up for sure.

There was complaining. Nit picking. Problems.

The committee resigned. For our centennial year, the town no longer had a council with its own finances for Acton alone.

So the Rotary had their barbecue and the firefighters their fireworks, plus a band and choir concert, on the July 1 weekend. Many came, but were vaguely disappointed there wasn't more to it than that. The Legion coins are the only general-circulated souvenirs, although a few of the centennial flags still fly.

The plaque at the library was a gift of the Province, not a project of the townspeople.

Other towns our size, such as Bolton, had week-long celebrations.

Jack Carpenter's imaginative vision of a terrific celebration with a big dollop of goofiness was brought down.

That was it — our centennial year.

## Can you believe your census?

Once upon a time, there was a writer who liked to tell stories. Often he would link up the events in a story with some contemporary happening.

The writer was a doctor named Luke. One of his best known stories was about a pregnant girl at the time of the first Census.

It was a peculiar kind of Census. There were no mail-in questionnaires. No Census-takers knocked on your door. As a matter of fact, it was the other way around — you knocked on the door of the Census taker. If you insisted upon doing that today, you would likely scare the government out of its Census.

However, the Census takers today have sophisticated methods for collecting data and feeding it into computers along with pension cheques and the time tables of high school students. The government has more reason than ever to be scared out of its Census.

Canada has a population of over twenty-two million. According to

archaeologists, the whole thing got started by Asian tribes who migrated across the Bering Strait. The way we treat the Indians and Eskimos (the descendants of the Asian Tribes) we seem to have lost our Bering.

The world population is about three billion. Every month, we add another six million. We're pretty good at counting people but we're beginning to get concerned about how we're going to educate, clothe, feed and house them, provide medical care, social security, employment and look after their garbage.

In Bethlehem, right in the midst of that first Census, a young couple had a baby.

While the whole country thought the important task was to count people, this child came into the world to tell us that people count.

—Rt. Rev. Wilbur K. Howard, Moderator, The United Church of Canada.

## Jump on that bus!

Merchants and business people are doing their very best to encourage people to shop at home. They've proved it by absorbing the total cost of the town bus service, which Halton Hills council felt it could not support.

People who shop in the big plazas meet Acton friends there often. But one thing these shoppers can do for their Acton friends who are in business here. They can try

here first.

Often merchants say they know of people shopping out of town to bring back the very same article that was available here. And at a higher price, too.

Acton store keepers will order things, will exchange, will repair. They make a living here, and they deserve first consideration.

Jump on that bus . . . shop at home.

## But would anyone go?

Has holding a meeting at Halton Hills council in Acton ever been considered?

Mayor Anne MacArthur arranged a couple of meetings outside the town of Milton. One in Nassagaweya, her old territory, was very well attended. However, few local residents came to watch

council proceedings when they were held at The Boyne.

If a meeting were held here, there's a good possibility the same number of interested citizens would attend as used to come to former Acton council meetings.

You wouldn't need many fingers to count them.

## Of this and that

The nurses in charge of the senior citizens health clinic were very disappointed at the turnout in Acton last Thursday. Free transportation was offered, too. Not very encouraging for the Health Unit staff to return.

enthusiasm for color and gaiety at Christmas.

Home is a castle—and some gorgeous, romantically-lit ones we have too, these days.

+ + +

Our on-the-street polls have become a popular feature since bearded weekend worker Peter McCusker has taken to the streets with his camera slung around his neck.

People are getting to know him and are willing to discuss things with him. He'll be out even more during his Christmas holidays.

Christmas lights are blooming all over town and the district. The fact that the hydro commission isn't holding its lighting contest this year hasn't dampened anyone's



UNITED CHURCH Sunday School presented their Christmas pageant during the morning service hour Sunday. Playing Mary was Wendy Hillman, Joseph Russell Allen; inn keeper Gail Robb; star holder (left) Karen Coats; angels Kathy Coats, Wendy Dedman, Lynda Dunn, Marie Lamarche, Debbie Murchison, Nancy Patterson; shepherds Jimmy

Allen, Kevin Clow, Clifford Dedman, Nancy Frank; kings Corinne Andrews, Gary Dunn, Michele Jones; children of the world, at the front, Ricky Allen, Carmen Clow, Rodney Dunn, Wendy Dunn, Barbie Mellon, Michael Ormsby, Linda Sawden, Ian Sawden; readers Robert Allen, Juanita Andrews, Mark Sawden.



## Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

In the so-called good old days, a great many who are now middle-aged men were in the newspaper business. That is, they had a paper route and made a bit of spending money, even in the depression years.

I was closely associated with a paper route myself, although I didn't exactly have one. My kid brother did. I was sort of his business manager or financial adviser.

Every Saturday night, after he'd made his weekly collections, I would inveigle him into the bathroom, lock the door so nobody could hear, and give him some sound business advice.

I'd remind him that he was too fond of candy and pop and other tooth-rotting confections, that he had no willpower, and that he'd only squander his hard-earned fifty cents if he didn't invest at least part of it every week.

He didn't know much about investments and wanted to put some of his money into a piggy bank. I'd tell him severely that that was no way to make his money grow. He should give it to me and watch the interest pile up.

He'd bawl a bit, but then he'd come around after a bit of arm-twisting, and see the point. The point was that I was stronger than he was.

I'd always let him keep part of it, maybe twenty cents. I'd take the other thirty cents and invest it. I invested it in the Saturday night movie, a bottle of pop and a chocolate bar. It was a wise investment and paid good dividends. The many movies I thus enjoyed enriched my experience of the human condition, enlarged my vocabulary and added to my personal pleasure in life.

It took him about two years to catch on, two of the best years of my life. There was of course, a confrontation. He swore I had conned him out of at least sixty dollars. I scoffed at this and told him it was only about fourteen. But the little devil had been keeping his books.

Last time I saw him, in Germany last spring, he informed me that with compound interest, I now owed him \$44,000 and if I didn't come up with it, he'd be interested in taking it out of my hide. I am still an inch taller than he, but he out-weighs me by forty pounds.

So we compromised. I told him that if he paid all my expenses on my trip, I'd dig up the money somehow. He did. And thank goodness I haven't seen him since.

All this has been brought to mind by a recent development in the delivery of daily newspapers. It is just another sign of our affluent age, when even the kids have so much money they don't have to work.

For years, I've taken two daily newspapers, morning and evening. They take opposite political stands, and both are so warped that if I take a stand in the middle of their polarized points of view, I am right in the temperate zone, which I prefer.

At any rate, it seems that these titans of the press cannot, simply cannot, secure young carrier girls or boys to peddle their papers.

The morning paper has simply given up. No delivery. The evening paper has hired independent agents "operating their own vehicles." This means guys who drive around in their own cars and hurl the paper out the car window in the general direction of your house.

In the good old days of about six weeks ago, I felt a little tingle of warmth when the door-bell rang. "Ah, the paper boy." I would remark wittily. And it was. The boy, or sometimes girl, was faithful and loyal, even in the foulest weather. I knew the country was going to hell in a hand-bell, but I felt that this was one hummock of decency and virtue in the morass of miseries.

Now I feel a very strong tingle, not of warmth, but of rage, at paper-delivery time. It is my custom when I arrive home after a hard day on the assembly line at the pupil factory, to take off my jacket and my shoes, and take on a cold beer before proceeding to peruse my paper.

This entire routine has been spoiled, not to say desecrated, by the new delivery method. I still go through the first parts of the procedure, but the beer tastes flat as I stew around, waiting for the paper. It arrives any time between four and seven. That means I have put back on my shoes and gone out in my shirt sleeves in the winter wind to search around in the snow for my paper as many as four times.

This is not conducive to lowering a man's blood pressure. At least they put the

thing in a plastic bag. But this is covered in three minutes when it's snowing, which it always seems to be when I go out to look for my paper.

To add insult to injury, I receive a letter from the circulation department of the big, fat, rich, lousy newspaper telling me that the price is going up and that "We feel this is a reasonable price to pay for dependable delivery to your driveway six days a week."

Well, let me just say to the circulation manager that I don't want the paper delivered to my driveway, but to my house. My car can't read.

And let me add that the service is not dependable, in its present condition. And let me further add that if you can't do better than that, I will shortly tell you what you can do with your newspaper. Sideways.

This is a direct appeal to all parents. Please cut off your children's allowances, so that at least some of them will be available to peddle papers in the old way. This is a cry from the heart. Civilization is sinking. Must this last vestige of normalcy go down with it?

## Letters welcome

Yes, your letters are welcome on topics of general interest. Please keep them short and be sure to sign your name. Pen names are acceptable for publication, provided the editor knows the identity of the writer, but they are not recommended.



NOT A creature was stirring, not even a mouse. (Just a slight click from Wendy Thomson's camera.)

## The Free Press Back Issues

20 years ago

Taken from an issue of the Free Press of December 18, 1954

Bag after bag of Christmas mail is leaving the Acton post office this week, but the flood of Christmas cards and parcels which swamps the staff the week before the holiday has not begun yet. Helping the regular staff are Mr. and Mrs. Cam Lelshman, Mrs. Frank Terry and Mrs. John Chapman. All experienced, they are ready to cope with the overflow of envelopes that will deluge the office before long.

The regular meeting of the Acton Junior Institute and Junior Farmers was held at the home of Don Matthews on Wednesday evening, December 8.

Wives of members of the Y's Men's club and the members of the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Y's Men were entertained at the regular meeting of the Y's Men club on Thursday evening last week.

A snow safari was made by about a dozen men on Saturday who trekked out into the bush hunting for a giant Christmas tree for the town. They were recruited by a Chamber of Commerce committee under Ted Tyler Jr.

Last Saturday two junior teams from Acton Y.M.C.A. travelled to Guelph to open their season. Both teams lost to more experienced teams but there were few faults which game experience will not iron out.

A break-in at Garner Motors late Tuesday night or early Wednesday morning via a wide window was reported by local police yesterday. The thieves or thief took some cash, a radio, a considerable amount of ammunition and four guns from a case in the garage office.

## 50 years ago

Taken from an issue of the Free Press of December 18, 1924

The growing business and increasing staff of the Bank of Montreal, under the administration of L. B. Shorey, the energetic manager, has taxed the capacity of the premises at the corner of Mill and Willow streets for months past.

Contracts have just been left for the enlargement of the premises. The partitions at the rear of the block are to be added to the bank's quarters. This will give a length of sixty feet.

As soon as Corporation Pond had a coating of ice last week skating began, at the expense of a cold bath to some. This should have been a warning, but it seems as if venturism is as enticing as the measles. Bert Gibbons broke through the ice but was rescued by Robert McArthur. Then John Robertson got a foot in. The fine nights bring on more skaters. Later Herbert Hughes of Georgetown got in but was hauled out by Campbell Currie. Frank Gibbons then broke in, but managed to get out himself. Mac Symon got a dip as well.

The bazaar in the Parish Hall on Saturday was a good success in spite of the storm. The hall was decorated very prettily and the stage was arranged as a Japanese tea room. The guessing contest caused much fun. An orange was given with each guess and the prize of a handsome cake went to Mr. Jack Chapman who came very near to the exact number, guessing 475, and it was found at the close of the contest that there were 478 nuts in the jar.

## 75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of December 14, 1899

The annual Christmas examinations will be held in Acton public school next Wednesday afternoon, 20th inst. The five departments will be open to the public. The presence of parents of the scholars will be appreciated by teachers and pupils.

President L. Grant, of Georgetown, met with the superintendents and other workers of the various Sunday schools in town, in the vestry of the Disciple's church last evening, to complete the programme for the coming County Convention on the 1st and 2nd of February.

Mr. A. T. Brown, president and Dr. Forster, convener of the Literary Committee, entertained the members of the Epworth League Reading Circle in Matthews' Hall last evening. It was a very enjoyable occasion.

Benj. Harrop of Norval, has sold his farm in Esqueving to George Leslie for \$5,300 and has purchased a farm in East Chinguacousy for \$5,500.

Invitations have been issued for the opening of the new Toronto Western Hospital, on the evening of December 15.

A meteor of exceptional brilliance crossed the heavens last Wednesday evening and was observed by many residents of this section.

Work is progressing at the flour mill and very shortly Messrs. Humphreys and Hawk will commence operations with a first-class mill modern in all its equipments.

THE ACTON FREE PRESS  
PHONE 853-2010  
Business and Editorial Office

Founded in 1973 and published every Wednesday at 39 Willow St., Acton, Ontario. Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation, the CCNA and OANA. Advertising rates on request. Subscriptions payable in advance, \$4.00 in Canada, \$6.00 in all countries other than Canada. Single copies 15 cents; carrier delivery in Acton 15 cents per week. Second class mail registration number 015. Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with reasonable allowance for signatures, will not be charged for but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate. In the event of a typographical error advertising goods or services at a wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell, and may be withdrawn at any time.

Doris Printing and Publishing Co., Ltd.  
David R. Doris, Publisher  
Key Dills Editor Dan Ryder Advertising Manager  
Copyright 1974