

We must tend our flocks

The birds on Fairy Lake have become a delight in the past couple of years. To walk along the shore and watch these charming birds is a refreshing experience at every season of the year and in all kinds of weather.

However, it appears more advice is needed in feeding and perhaps preventing hybrids.

That our wildlife sanctuary has run into problems should be no surprise. It was an inexperienced group who undertook the project with the best of intentions.

From all we learned at school, we all thought birds with unclipped wings would fly south in the fall. But it just didn't happen. Our birds are still with us, perfectly content despite the weather and calendar.

At Kortright wildlife sanctuary in Guelph, director Mrs. K. O. Hammill says their birds stay all winter. If the birds have open water and feed, they'll stay. Kortright makes no attempt to persuade their boarders to head south. And they don't do anything about the obvious hybrids, either.

They have a feeding formula which includes wheat and duck pellets. Corn, says Mrs. Hammill,

is pretty fattening for the birds and is only fed there for part of the year. Ducks in particular are greedy and will gobble all they can get, the officials at Kortright found. However they figure they feed a little under a pound of feed per bird per day, with feedings twice a day. They don't allow visitors to feed the birds, and frown on bread which is too hard for the birds to digest.

At Fairy Lake, the large birds are fed one half to three-quarters of a pound of corn and the ducks a quarter of a pound of corn daily by the town staff. Esther Taylor and other neighbors add their own to the supply. Esther Taylor also sees to it that the feeding goes on despite holidays. She guesses she adds about 20 pounds of feed of her own daily.

The whole town has an asset in the birds, and owes a debt of gratitude to Esther Taylor.

More advice from other sources is needed. If more feed is required, certainly the town should pay for it, not Esther Taylor.

If we are to have protected wildlife, we must look after them seven days a week and all year.



Free Press Editorial Page "Stopping by the woods on a snowy evening"

A good way to start

A pat on the back to motorists, who gave the police so few problems over the holiday weeks.

In fact, our local police detachment found Actonians a pretty good group all year. And the on the street poll in last week's paper

also discovered that Actonians like their police.

A good feeling and a good way to start a new year that just may bring us a new police force via Halton region.

Of this and that

In a year-end interview, M.P.P. Hon. Jim Snow has predicted a study in Acton for Ontario and possibly building of units this year. Yet the Legion couldn't manage to interest O.H.C. in the needs here when the old Legion building was available as a perfect downtown location.

A new needs study will of course again reveal people who want senior citizen housing. But where will such a fine site be found?

Education Week on Smoking is here from January 11 to 18. The Halton County Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association has plenty of literature available they'd like to give to anyone interested. They can be contacted at their main office, 184 Balsam Dr. Oakville, 845-0858.

It's a service provided free of charge through contributions to the Christmas Seal campaign.

The problem firefighters have with numbering of rural roads could be very serious indeed. The fire chiefs have told H. Ton Hills administration committee that some country roads have two or three names, and it's confusing for people phoning in fire alarms.

Working out a solution will be an important move.

Just when Actonians have become accustomed to saving their newspapers and glass for collection, The Outers have decided they must discontinue the service. Their project was an excellent one. It provided the school group with funds. But it also involved all the community in a project that everyone agrees is needed.

The day will surely come when papers and glass are collected separately with the regular garbage collection, for automatic recycling.

Wheeler's Glen focal point

By John McDonald
It was 1924 when Benajah Williams and family, from Lincoln County, settled in what is now known as "the Glen." The hamlet was named Williamsburg after its founder until post office was established and the name changed to Glen Williams in 1946.

The very enterprising Williams family was responsible for the early industrial development of the community including the erection of saw and woolen mills. Usually the "hub" of any community in earlier times was the general store, much like modern plazas are today.

The general store was not merely the place you could buy a pair of trousers, hat or some stove polish, it was also a community centre where meetings were held after supper or after the chores were done. A storekeeper was someone you could talk to because you probably knew about his family and background as much as he did yours. This approachable friendly manner was not uncommon at the store in the Glen known as "Wheeler's".

Andrew Wheeler worked for a John Moore in Lincolnton managing a sawmill before moving to

Glen Williams in 1893 and purchasing the store and postoffice. The familiar red brick store was built by Charles Williams in the late 1830's of hand-made brick. The walls are three bricks thick and the beams two foot square. The building was sold to Mr. McCrea who was appointed village postmaster and later sold to Andrew Wheeler.

Andrew Wheeler is remembered as a fine old gentleman who loved to talk of the old days and share a story with the customers. Andrew wore a gaiter which he would tug at all day while leaning over the large counter in the middle of the store.

John Alexander Wheeler, born at Lincolnton in 1874, was almost ten years of age when his father Andrew bought the store and therefore had an opportunity to grow up with the business which he took over in 1912. He is well remembered for his musical talents and more especially for his avid interest in photography.

Many of the better historical photographs not only of Glen Williams but of the region are by John A. Wheeler. If there was a garden party at the Beaumonts, a group of soldiers returning home from World War One, or a spring

flood in the Glen, John A. would be on the scene with his camera.

The Wheeler store carried dry goods, groceries, footwear, hardware, patent medicines, confectionery, fruit and vegetables. There was never any "Bargain at Wheeler's Store" which served not only the village but also the surrounding farm community. John A. offered his goods at prices that were fair and right every day and therefore there was no need for any "gimmicks".

In 1943 John A. Wheeler's son Harold took over the business. John A. did not but instead opened up an ice cream parlor which was formerly a general store owned by "Slick" Lyons.

The building, just around the corner from the Wheeler General Store is now a Beauty Supply Shop, and is the one in which Timothy Eaton served his apprenticeship under Mr. Lyons as a junior bookkeeper clerk.

Harold Wheeler was born in the village in 1906 and was raised at the store in which he worked and worked until his death in 1971. He was the third generation of the family to be postmaster of the village and is remembered as was his father and grandfather for his sincere kindness to customers, especially children.

Harold Wheeler refused to believe that there was a bad child. If two children came into a Wheeler store and only one had money they would both leave with some candy or ice cream. It was the village children who lost a friend when Harold Wheeler died.

Halton sketches by John McDonald

Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

This is being written in that pre-New Year hiatus. And I am writing it in the prenatal position, the hiatus between being happy and being alive.

It's rather awkward, as my elbows keep hitting my knees, and vice versa.

However, I'm alone, with the lights out and the doors locked, so it's worth it.

My wife has been away for three days, so that life has been rather peaceful in the domestic confrontation field. On the other hand, we are plagued with that infernal, eternal thing invented by Alexander Graham Bell, and at any moment I expect to leap with nerves at its shrill, and hear the beloved but expected voice on the other end, pleading, "The house is an absolute mess, isn't it?"

As a matter of fact, the house looks as though a ship-load of Vikings had spent the weekend, before going on to loot and rape somewhere else, but I am equal to these occasions and reply firmly, "I've just finished the dishes, dear."

Brunhilda, at the other end of the phone line, doesn't know that this means I've just drooped and smashed a huge trayful of Beleck, Spode, Worcestershire and fine old Woolworth's Japanese.

But she senses something. Some people have a great sense of smell, or taste. My wife has a great sense of sensing. "You sound funny," she'll say. "What are you up to?"

"Well," I chuckle, "It depends on what you mean, dear. At the moment, I'm up to the phone. In the fairly recent past, I've been up to the bathroom, and up to the dairy to get some milk."

This goes over like a ton of feathers. "Just as I thought," she'll say. "The house is an absolute mess." She seems to get

some strange, vicarious satisfaction out of this idea. If the house is a mess, our marriage is good and solid and I am to be trusted.

"You are quite right," I retort, knowing the formula. "Your daughter and your son-in-law have just left and your son has just arrived, and he is going to Paraguay to pioneer the faith and Paraguay is full of snakes and tortillas and enchiladas and Menonites and the Green Hell and he wants money."

"Don't give him a cent, until I get home," she commands.

This is what is known as intercourse, between married people. Both parties know what the next move is, and there is no confusion, clumsiness, or frustration. I shudder to think what it must be between single people.

Well, that was an imaginary, if verisimilitudinous, conversation with my wife. The rest of this column is cold fact.

My daughter was home with Pokey and that other fellow she hangs around with. I changed his diapers six times (Pokey's), while his father slept and his mother played contemporary music (slabs and chords) on the piano.

The kid and I had our usual super time. I must be getting old and sick and stupid and queer because he's the only person I have any fun with any more. We wink solemnly, smile gravely, crawl under the dining room table and bump our heads, and hold out our arms to each other when everything else fails. He likes whisker-rubs and I like satin checks.

According to his grandmother, he and I have the two sets of most beautiful eyes in the world. His are like two huge, dark grapes with a devilish light in them. Mine are blue, blood-shot, fallen-angel type. We

also share an affinity for doing things other people think we should not do. He rubs the cat the wrong way. I ruffle my wife's feathers.

I'd have liked to have had him for Christmas but his other grandfather was apparently pacing the floor, hitting his head against things, and threatening to call out the Mounties if he didn't see his grandson, so I had to let him go.

However, I was not to be left alone and lonely loitering, as I had so much looked forward to, during the holidays. My son Hugh arrived. My son is a bird of paradise or a bedraggled sparrow, depending on how you feel.

I was a bit in the sparrow mood, following the receipt, a few days before, of his bag and baggage, to the tune of \$46.00, express, collect.

Yes, he is going to Paraguay to spread the faith. Yes, last year he went to the Holy Land. The Arabs didn't get him. Neither did the Yews. Yes, he is broke.

Yes, there are enchiladas and Menonites in Paraguay. The enchilada is a corpulent scorpion. If you step on one while he is resting in your shoe, and squash him, you must eat him, and this results in a disease called enchiladitis, which calls for the roof of your mouth to cave in.

And, of course, if you step on a Menonite in the course of spreading the faith, you get Menonitis. This does not cause the roof of your mouth to fall in, but the front, including teeth.

There are shots for the former, but not for the latter.

At any rate, Hugh and I dined in lonely state on Christmas Day, from a capon. We weren't lonely, but he was. He was the only castrated rooster in the joint.



MAIN STREET in Glen Williams during the 1890s shows Wheeler's Store behind the team of horses which is drawing barrels of some kind of produce. To the extreme right is the old frame hotel

OUR READERS WRITE:

My Little Blue Gown

They took my clothes and panty-hose. Then sat me in a chair. I tried to cover up some things Then I gave up in despair.

My modesty departed When I donned the pale blue gown. They dropped the curtain up in front And promptly laid me down.

I was open then for business. I didn't need to run. There was room for my magnesia. To have its little fun.

But I got to like my skimpy wrap.

It needed less attention. When I felt blue, and had to do. The things I dare not mention.

Now they have taken back my little gown. I don't need it now you know. For I had to cover up some things Before they let me go.

But they promised to keep one for me. If I slide off the track. And there'll be lots of ventilation. Especially round the back.

Victor Smith
R.R. 2, Rockwood.

The Free Press Back Issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press January 13, 1955.

There was so much ice at the public school grounds on Wednesday last week that a skating party was organized for after school. Not only did the youngsters bring their skates to school, but some of them skated all the way on frozen lawns and sidewalks.

Seven grandparents were present at the christening of little Carol Ann Somerville, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Eyle Somerville, in Knox church last Sunday morning. They were Mrs. William Frank, Georgetown; Mr. and Mrs. Tom Storey, Rockwood; Mr. and Mrs. A. Frank, Campbellville and Mr. and Mrs. George Somerville of Acton.

Inaugural meeting of the town's first five-man Public Health Commission was held last week when business for the new year was initiated at the hands of three members of the P.H.A. Commission and two newly named members to the former three-man body.

Dr. V. G. Baker, P.H.A. chairman, was again chosen to conduct the town's public utilities as the commission's first magistrate. E. Hulphart, also a P.H.A. member, was named vice chairman. Mayor E. Tyler again represents the council as the third commissioner while E. Everett and former trustee F. T. Stewart are the two new councillors.

Harry McEadden, who had found a home in his leg, recently, had returned home from hospital with his leg in a cast and other nice feeling fine.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press January 15, 1925.

The annual meeting of the Acton Fair last Wednesday afternoon was gratifying in several respects. The secretary's report showed that the fair was financially a success. All prizes were reported paid and a substantial surplus remains in the treasury.

The members of the Young Peoples League of the Methodist Church and of the Young People's Guild of Knox church had a very pleasant evening together at a skating party on Monday evening. Notwithstanding the downfall of snow the ice was good and the skating was enjoyed. Acton Citizens Band discoursed music during the evening from their new stand on the north side of the rink. At ten o'clock the company left the rink and proceeded to Knox church where coffee, sandwiches and cake were served. The guests of the two churches were interested members of the company.

This is the information gleaned from the columns of the News of the World of London, England. As a result of the assistance promised by the Minister of Health, a number of steel house schemes have been brought from their experimental stage into public light.

Messrs. Beardmore and Co. have arranged for a section of their works to be utilized at Acton for the construction of these new houses. The coincidence is that this Beardmore Co.'s headquarters is at Glasgow, Scotland, and the steel houses are to be built at Acton, England.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, January 11, 1900.

The friends here of Mr. Robert Anderson, who was some years ago, a salesman with Henderson and Co. will regret to learn of his death from Typhoid fever, at Lindsay, on the 20th of December, after an illness of a few days. Mr. Anderson was head salesman for M. J. Carter, Lindsay. He was a great favorite.

Mrs. John Cripps, of the Maples, Crewsons Corners, has just returned home after visiting her brother William Coleman and family in Brantford, also her brother Sanders in Galt who we are sorry to say is not improving in health.

Knox Church was favored with a visit last Sabbath from Rev. Dr. Robertson, Superintendent of Missions in the North West. His sermons were much enjoyed and his relation of the progress of the church in the newer sections of the west were very encouraging. The Dr. is a nephew of Mrs. Janet Anderson, Main Street, who is justly proud of the important position occupied by her kinsman.

Mr. Thomas Brunt has been appointed caretaker of the Methodist Church. His predecessors, Mr. and Mrs. Allen Mann were in charge of the church for twelve years. Mr. William Brown, Acton, was last week offered the handsome figure of \$9,500 for his fine farm on the fourth line Esquing.

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