

# Free Press Editorial Page

## Please keep listening

The growing gap between the people and their politicians was evident at last week's meeting at the Legion arranged by the Rotary Club. MPP George Kerr was a special guest with Halton and Halton Hills councillors and the general public.

Acton people earnestly asked questions about their problems. They were a particularly knowledgeable group of townspeople — many had already served on councils or committees.

But the replies they received proved the widening chasm between the people's wishes and the workings of the professional staffs of the county and the majority of Halton council.

Yet the Acton people repeatedly proved they had a concern and great ability which could help solve the problems they were voicing.

For instance, a couple of people asked about the problem of water. There's no shortage that I know of, said regional councillor Jack Raftis. We all knew that. We were concerned about the vulnerability of Fairy Lake with that new well there.

Will there be enough water for the plans of subdivision that cross my desk, asked the first chief. We wondered, What subdivision are these? — Acton subdivisions? Apparently. Have we heard about

them in the paper? Vic Bristow, a former planning board member for Acton, and Halton Hills planning advisory committee member, wondered where citizen input is to come from, since both these groups are disbanded. Halton planning chairman Mary Munro knew nothing of the former advisory committee, now defunct.

Perhaps this group would have had prime ideas on a future subdivision to balloon Acton's size.

In the course of his comments Jack Raftis told those there there will be a huge addition to our sewage disposal plant. Why? When? How come? It was the first we knew of it.

Surely that indicates great subdivisions can be approved by council.

Alf Duby commented on the soaring costs of installing sewer laterals and water meters since the region took over the work he used to do in Acton. He knew he could still do it for far less. The people clapped; they believed him. But the new rates are with us.

Thanks to the Rotary for giving us a chance to speak.

Our member of parliament, five regional councillors and two Halton Hills councillors heard us.

Please keep listening.



TOGETHERNESS DOES have its problems. While mother cat and one kitten doze contentedly between two dogs, a second kitten fights a losing battle for its small share of rug.



## Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

Every year about this time, I turn a deep green, almost a turquoise shade, with pure, unadulterated envy.

This is brought about by that fairly new occasion in school life known as "Winter Break." It is a week's holiday during March, in which the poor, ground-down students, near a state of total exhaustion from not doing their homework, skipping school, and sleeping at their desks, have a chance to recharge their batteries for the terrible, grueling term ahead, during which they will be worn to a frazzle from not doing their homework, skipping even more school because the weather is better, and falling in love because it's spring.

It's not that I have anything against winter break as such, or holidays in general. Far from it. If I had my way, we'd also have a fall break and a spring break and school four days a week for the rest of the time.

My envy is churned up by the seemingly limitless opportunities the rotten kids have these days to see the world, something I have desired fiercely since I was about four, and have never been able to fulfill.

You should hear the young blighters, in the classrooms and the corridors.

"Hi, Liz. Where y' goin' winnerbrake? We're go'na Greece."

## A quick smile

They say it is better to be poor than rich and miserable. But couldn't something be worked out, such as moderately rich and just moody?

"Hey, great. We're there lasyear. Snot bad. Lotta statustuff. We got lina the wine. Terry puked all overtha teach."

"Hey, great. But wearyn goin' this year? Yer navagunna jis stay homen get moody, arya?"

"Helno. I'm gonna Spain. Sounds great. Bullfighters and flamenco. Hey, whilso flamenco? Trouble in, we got ole Droopy-Drawers unis wife for chaperones, and he allus wants goda museums an all that."

"Yeah, tough. Oh well, he'll be dead by ten o'clock anya can sneak outa the hotel and hit the vino joints ana bullfighters anal."

"Ya. Hideoen. Hay, juvnee trouble geddin bread for your trip?"

"Na. Worked three weeks last summer an saved twenty bucks, before they fired me. Tole the oleman iddus discrimination caws lse bedder lookin than the head waitress. He bleevied me. Then I tole im. Sse gonna goda Manpower and geddanother job. He bleevied me. Tole Manpower I wannad a job as a go-go-girl. They didden havnee. So he put up the other four hummert. He allus wannada travel himself, poor ole slob. He never even godda cross the border."

"Ya. Minesa same. He's allus tokkin bout South See Islands anthat. Antha Depression. Antha War. Drag. Putt him on a south sea island with a coconut in one hand, a broad in the other, ana lagoon in front ofim, an he wooden know which to take a bite out. Kinda sad. Hey, where's Timmy-nthem goin'."

"Oh, they're gonna Russia. Good deal. They goddan extra week off school. Swurth the extra hundred bucks."

Now, gentle reader, it's not as though our students actually talk like that. It's just that they sound as though they talk like that.

And I guess you can see that the foregoing conversation reflects quite vividly my bitter envy of these young punks who take off for Moscow and London and Rome with about as much awe as we used to have if we were going to spend a Saturday night in the nearest big town.

Aside from those who are flying to faraway, exotic places that you and I have only dreamed of, there are the others. Ask them what they're doing during winter break.

Jim: "Oh, I'm jis gonna smash around in the snowmobile a liddle an maybe hit the pils a few nights." The snowmobile cost more than his father had saved in eight years for the first mortgage on his house.

Jeff: "Well, a few of us are gonna Colorado to ski. Snot bad. Just three hunnertnady bucks for a week." This is just twice what his father earned a month when Jeff was born.

So. Mixed with my envy is a good solid streak of rage. Rage that I was born at the wrong time, in the wrong place, in the wrong economic climate.

It took me 21 years, and a lot of hard, cheap labor, and the risking of my life many times, to get out of this country and see some of the great cities of the world, only to find them bleak and blacked-out.

I've been busting my butt ever since, raising a family and paying off mortgages, too busy and too broke to travel.

And yet... and yet... I feel almost sorry for these kids. It's all too easy. None of them can ever have the heart-thudding thrill I had when I first rolled into one of the great stations of London, England.

And none of them can ever have the heart-thudding thrill I had as I rolled out of one of the great Berlin stations, the bombs falling happily behind me.

## The Free Press Back Issues

20 years ago

Taken from an issue of the Free Press, March 10, 1955

A complete tour of Buckler Laboratories (photo Acton) preceded the March meeting of the Acton Women's Institute at the home of Mrs. George Fryer. After the hour was completed the members returned to Mrs. Fryer's and proceeded with the meeting.

Plans to purchase additional property for public school purposes were confirmed Monday evening at a regular session of council where two public school trustees appeared with a resolution passed by the Board which proposes to buy over eight acres of land in the eastern section of town, near the high school.

When the Principals' Association of Halton county entertained at a dinner, Mr. Wm. Middleton and Mr. Tom Watson of Acton were among the guests. Principal G. W. McKenzie also attended.

Two escapes from Bowmanville Training School led local and district police in a speedy chase in the wee hours of Friday morning, starting at Georgetown and ending in Acton where the two boys, both 15 year old, were nabbed by local constables Cook, Harness and district O.P.P. officer George Moore.

50 years ago

Taken from an issue of the Free Press, March 12, 1925

Mr. and Mrs. James O'Neil of Lamehouse, celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their wedding on Sunday, February 8, at the home of their daughter, Mrs. Arthur Conroy, 147 Wright Avenue, Toronto.

On Friday evening, March 6, the Acton Troop of Boy Scouts held their first meeting in their new club rooms in the basement of Knox church. These fine quarters, of which the boys are justly proud, were officially declared open by Scoutmaster R. (Bob) Thomas, of the 75th Troop, supported by Assistant Scoutmaster Harry Wood, of the 26th Troop, both of Toronto.

A week's mission will be held at St. Alban's church, from Sunday, March 22 until Sunday, March 29. The Ven. Archdeacon MacKintosh, B.D., of Dundas, will be the missionary. Sunday services will be held at 8 a.m., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.

At a meeting of the Deaneys of Halton committee on the Annual Choral Festival at the Rectory, Burlington, it was decided to hold the Chorus Festival this year at St. Luke's church, Burlington, on Thursday, May 14. It is expected about 150 members of the Anglican choirs of the county will participate.

The Shoemakers Athletic Club will hold a St. Patrick's Day Dance in the Town Hall on Tuesday, March 17. The Windermere six piece orchestra, of Toronto, will provide the music. Dances will be arranged for old and young and silver cups will be presented for the best lady and gent dancer.

75 years ago

Taken from an issue of the Free Press, March 8, 1900

Mr. A. Hatelman, late of Mitchell, and Mr. D. Kopman, Acton, have formed a partnership and under the firm name of Hatelman & Kopman, will hereafter conduct a general dry goods, grocery and boot and shoe business here. They have leased the store until lately occupied by Messrs. Symon Bros. and will open their new business sometime during the month.

A brief session of the Municipal Council was held on Monday evening. Steve Pearson was in the chair and all members were present except Councillor Wallace. The only business of the evening was the passing of the accounts of H. Grindell, of \$11.90 repairs and supplies and Canadian General Electric Co., of \$59.40 for electric supplies. These, upon motion of Councillors Williams and Clarke were ordered to be paid.

Mr. D. Henderson, M.P., arrived home from Ottawa on Tuesday. He arranged to come home Friday night and secured his berth in the pullman, but afterwards decided to defer his visit. He transferred his berth to W. McCleary, M.P., of Welland. The train was wrecked at Pontypool and Mr. McCleary was somewhat seriously injured. Fate was certainly kind to Mr. Henderson on this occasion.

Mrs. John B. Cameron left on Tuesday for Gloversville, N.Y., after spending a couple of months with Acton friends. She was accompanied by Miss Ida Grindell and Mr. Wm. Smith Sr., who will spend a few months in the American glove centre.

## Citizens are acting

In Burlington a committee of concerned citizens has been formed to consider their growth problem. Members are observing Halton region with special emphasis on cost, growth and development of the community.

The members report that the more they analyse the problems, the more they realize the tremendous influence of the provincial government and the results of the Toronto-Centred region plan.

It's their conclusion that citizens will suffer as a result, irrespective of which level of four

governments is finally held responsible.

They believe councils should have input from citizens and they are presenting a brief to Premier Davis at Hamilton Place today (Wednesday). So is a group from Milton.

We think these people share the feelings that were expressed at last week's meeting with MPP George Kerr in Acton. Here too the people feel they can contribute, are aware of problems and have the intelligence to contribute.

Perhaps a similar small group could be formed here.

## Mayor's father

# Tory, sportsman, cabinet-maker, hotelier T.J. Hill was colorful Glen character

Thomas Jefferson Hill, named after the president of the United States who authored the Declaration of Independence, was born in the State of Kentucky in 1855.

At the age of eleven he left home to run away with the circus and eventually chose cabinet making as his trade and worked in Toronto. Thomas entered the hotel business in Toronto and at one time owned the Gladstone

Hotel which stands at the corner of Queen and Dufferin Streets, still operating.

T. J. Hill came to Glen Williams about 1916 and purchased The Glen Hotel from Timothy Cunningham who had operated a feed and stable business in Hamilton prior to taking over the hotel in 1913.

The Glen Hotel had 12 bedrooms, a dining room, a bar room and stables which could

accommodate 15 horses. Every room had its own wash basin, water pitcher, soap dish and brass bed. Accommodation was \$2 a night which included a hot breakfast.

The bar room was considered one of the best in the area. A (pint size) glass of beer could be had for a nickel. Those were the days when you could go to the hotel and fill up a five pound honey pail

with beer and then "go home to your world".

The beer was probably well utilized, especially Friday and Saturday nights, when the two crews from the Logan and Huest quarries came into the village to add another episode to their feud. A strip of wood is still missing from the bannister inside the old hotel from the night T. J. was "escorting" an over-anxious patron out the door.

Thomas J. Hill's hotel superseded all standards a hotel had to meet in those days. Hotel and tavern proprietors today have the Ontario Liquor Control Board to contend with, but even back then periodic checks were made by government representatives.

One Sunday afternoon an officer and his driver pulled

up in front of the Beaumont residence, around the corner from the hotel. The driver was sent in to purchase a box of cigars. When the driver returned to the car with the cigars, T. J. was charged with opening his bar on Sunday. The charge was withdrawn and T. J. retained his integrity when it was revealed the cigars were given to the driver and no sale took place!!!

T. J. Hill was a physically large man and was always active in various sports. He belonged to the Toronto Scullers Club and it is said that T.

J. won a race against the famous marathon runner Tom Longboat one time on Toronto Island. His first love was his horses. T. J. was the official starter for a number of years at the Dufferin race track and at the local fairs. His stables at the Glen Hotel were used by Seagram Distillers to house their potential runners for the Queen's Plate which would train at a farm near the present Sheridan Nurseries site.

T. J. had his own favourite trotter "Black Diamond" which he ran in many races. He also took pride in his two Black Labradors used for hunting. T. J. Hill was a founding member of The Caledon Fish Club.

Prior to his arrival in the Glen, T. J. was a sergeant with the York Rifles and was presented with a medal for his service during the North-West Rebellion of 1885. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge, Toronto, and locally. Thomas Jefferson Hill married a young Welsh girl Gertrude Hewitt, who came to Canada in 1904. Two sons Irwin (Bud) and Tom still live in the area. Tom, the eldest son, is the first mayor of the Town of Halton Hills. He entered politics in 1963 when he sat on Esqueving Council for three years, served a further two years as deputy-reeve and then four years as reeve.

T. J. Hill was never active in politics but was a very staunch Conservative. It is said that during one election the Tories won in the Glen by one vote and the last man to cast his ballot was T. J. who had gone to the polls on crutches.

The Glen Hotel ceased business when prohibition was declared just prior to 1920. Thomas continued with his cabinet-making trade and operated



Thomas Jefferson Hill 1855-1935

a boarding house in the hotel building.

When prohibition was repealed in 1927 the Glen Hotel didn't resume business. Apparently temperance groups in the area were prepared to petition the reopening.

Thomas Jefferson Hill died in July 1935 at the age of 80 at the Glen Hotel building. His wife Gertrude moved to Tweedie Street and sold the hotel building which remains a private residence today.

Gertrude, who sang in St. Alban's Anglican Church Choir for many years, died December 5, 1942. She was active in the operation of the hotel and supervised "the help" and worked in the kitchen.

Although the Glen Hotel and T. J. Hill are gone, the eldest son, Tom, keeps the dignity and influence of the name Hill in front of the community.

## Halton Sketches by John McDonald

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HORSE IN A BAR ROOM? Apparently not unusual at the Glen Hotel where patrons and bar tenders pose bowler-hatted and moustached for a typical turn of the century picture. The spittoon in the foreground was not there for the horse.

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