

Another wonderful fair

The fine weather that always graces Acton fair seemed chancy this year, with drizzling rain both Friday and Saturday nights and upsetting weather reports of low clouds and Celcius.

But come noon, the skies cleared up each day to entice the crowds down to the park.

Again, Acton fair proved to be a community event rather than one geared just toward the farming community.

There is plenty of entertainment and it's suitable for everybody, of all ages and occupations. And "everybody" is who went to the fair! Friends met friends - children met animals. It was a couple of days for reunions and chatting, as well as for enjoying the many exhibits and competitions.

The three-day format proved more successful than last year. More attention had been lavished on the Sunday program. And no

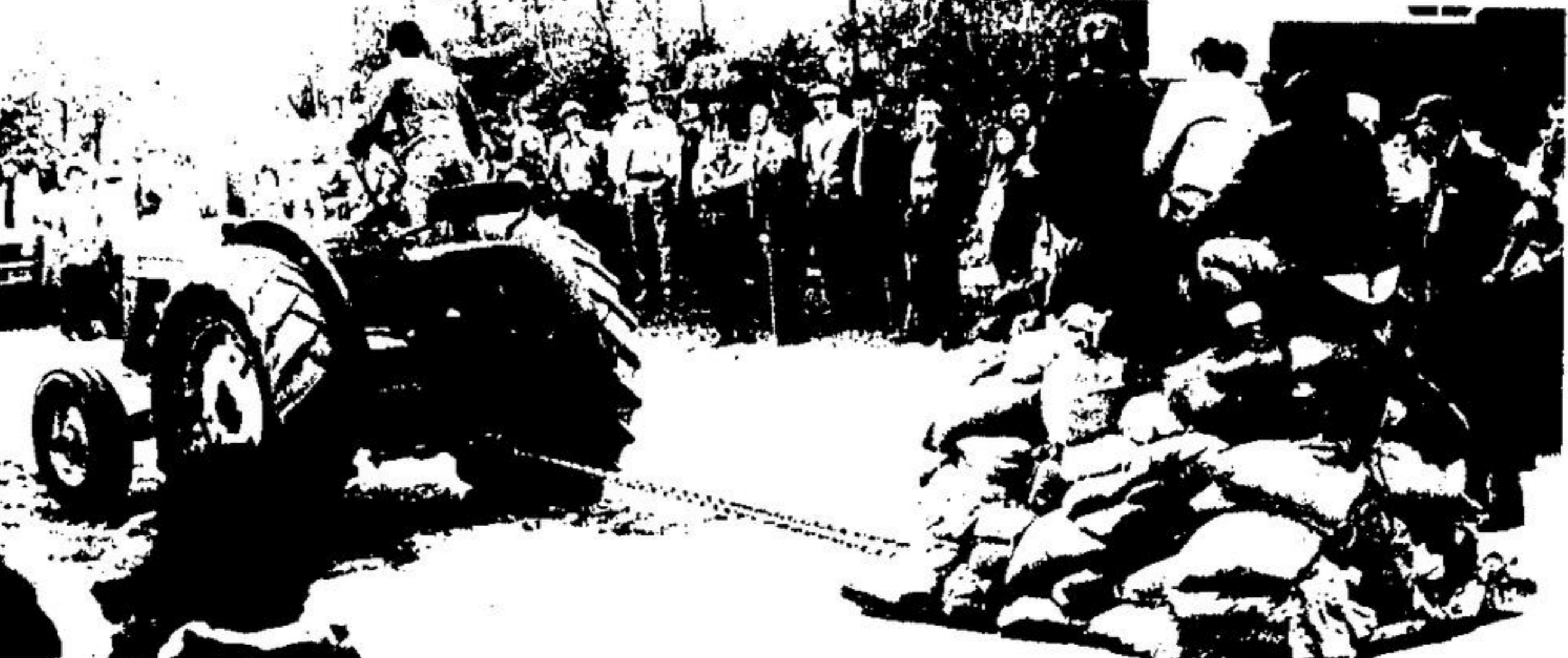
doubt in other years it will be even better, now that it is well established as a part of the fair. There was plenty of time Sunday afternoon for a leisurely presentation of the fiddlers contest and talent show in the arena and more room and time for the English and Western horse show outdoors.

The Miss Acton Fair contest has become a great drawing card. The girls are great sports to enter their names, and all say they enjoy the experience very much. All 19 were really winners.

Of course there were difficulties for the fair board members, who work more gruelling hours than ever with three-day fairs. There were the inevitable snags.

But the happy throngs of people didn't know anything about the problems...just the pleasures.

Thanks for the fair board for another great weekend.



Horsepower in two shapes

HORSE PULL was an innovation for the fall fair program Sunday. It was held on the track, with chilly spectators applauding the four plucky teams of competing horses. The straining winning team is pictured as it moves its highest weight, 8000 pounds. This amounts to two tons per horse. After the contest, assistants piled all the sandbags and themselves on the skid to see if Brent Marshall could pull them with his tractor. He could!



Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

Just a few more notes on my trip to Saskatchewan. If you are bored, turn to the classified ads.

That's not just a wisecrack. A western publisher who runs my column, said: "You're right up there with the classified, when it comes to readers."

"Thanks a lot," I muttered rather dourly. Turns out it was a compliment. The classified ads are the best-read part of many weeklies.

Anyway, perhaps the nicest thing I can say about Saskatchewan is that I'd love to go back, 30 years younger, and with two or three months to spend.

After I got home, I discovered I have a horde of cousins in Saskatchewan, and they're going to be sore as hell when they learn I was there for a few days and didn't call them.

But that's my problem, and maybe I'll see some of them at the great Thomson family reunion at the "old homestead" on the Calumet Island in the middle of the Ottawa River next month.

It's easier to get from here to England than it is to get from here to Calumet Island, but I'm going to bust a gut trying to make it. My grandfather was slidemaster there in the great days of lumbering on the Ottawa, and most of my western kinfolk sprang, originally, from his stalwart loins.

Speaking of loins, I didn't see any in Saskatchewan. But I did see a bald-headed eagle, as well as a few bald-headed editors.

Either it was a bald eagle, or a dirty great crow who had just had his hair dyed blonde. As far as I'm concerned, it was an eagle, just as that pike I caught not weighs just under 16 pounds.

And those western crows! I spotted a vast black bird skimming through the spruce. "What in the name of dear Heaven is that?" I enquired. "Crow," muttered our laconic guide, Ovide, rather contemptuously.

Later I learned that these "crows", which look about the size of a Canada goose, are really ravens, about three times the size of a common, or eastern crow.

I also heard some wolves, but they turned out to be young Indians, and the wolf calls were directed at pretty young Indians of the opposite sex.

Ovide, the guide, didn't, I am sure, realize that he was named after a famous Roman poet of erotic verse, but he had some of the characteristics. "Caught a real big fish last night," he averred, straight-faced, outlining with his hands the shape of the fish, which was more of a bird than a fish, to my thinking.

Let's see, what other great adventures did I have? Oh, yes, I met a prairie farmer, in his seventies, who was up for the fishing. German background, solid type, figured to be a gentle man, and he had the most appalling string of profanity I've heard since I left the air force.

Did you ever see a law student try to change a flat tire on a big bus? Nice lad. Had been in the Mounties, couldn't stand the crap of the upper echelons, who are still in the Victorian age, had quit, was going through law school, and then was going back into the Mounties, to try to do something about it. Stout chap and I hope he makes it. But he sure had a battle with that tire, while we stood on the road and watched the perfect Vs of geese starting their long trek south.

Away up there in the northern wilds, where the call of loons and the sport of a moose are to be expected, I was startled.

Went to a lodge with the rest of the gang and wound up playing shuffleboard and shooting pool with a great fire in the fireplace. I felt sort of disconnected.

It ain't cheap up there. Brought a rate card home with me. A modern cabin runs \$120 a week. Boat, about \$50 a week. Motor, about \$60 a week. Plus gas, bait, fish filleting, fish freezing, and food. A fishing guide is about \$20 a day, but worth it. I had all this for zilch money, thanks to the government of Sask. and my good hosts, the Martins.

But on the other hand, it's not really expensive, if shared by a group. That cabin held eight people, or could have, and was completely furnished and heated. A crummy cottage in Ontario, on an overcrowded beach, with no fishing, could cost as much or more.

Back to Saskatoon after a 10-hour-bus-ride, and everybody exhausted. Some of those crazy, intrepid westerners took off for home. "Oh, it's only 280 miles."

Got wangled into a lobster dinner, when all I wanted was bed and a warm glass of milk. Ordering lobster in Saskatoon is like going to Halifax and saying: "Bring me a big western steak." Stupid.

Missed my flight home. Called the old Trouble 'n Strife, who was expecting me that night, 1,200 miles away. Cost me \$13. Woke up in the morning with a heavy chest cold and a feverish feeling that I'd been off to another planet for a week.

But I wouldn't have missed it, for the world. It's not every day you see a bald-headed eagle.

Campaign manager comments

A number of people have approached me since last Thursday, with the idea that Gary Dawkins didn't win in the election because the community of Acton failed him. In reality, the population of Acton, like people in many other areas, chose not to support the P.C. party.

I feel that our campaign committee made a serious misjudgment in not recognizing this feeling in Acton. We were well aware of the same sentiment in the other communities which make up Halton-Burlington.

We knew the election was going to be very close and we hoped that Acton would give Gary a plurality of more than 1000 votes which would ultimately make the difference between winning and losing. I personally felt this was going to happen until I saw the results on Thursday night.

In addition Julian Reed spent a great deal of time here. At the time, I questioned the logic of this strategy because all of my contact with people in Acton led me to believe that we were too firmly entrenched.

But as everyone knows, the only relevant poll is taken on election day. The results show that Reed and Johnson together got almost 60 per cent of the vote in Acton. Dawkins took slightly more than 40 per cent.

The overall results in Ontario were not good for the P.C. party but they were a disaster for the Liberals. The Liberal party which led all of the pre-election day polls actually is the third party in the provincial parliament.

The prospects of improving this position in an election now expected for 1976 are not great. I cannot speak for Gary, but personally I want another try!

Thank you, Fred Dawkins, Campaign Manager.

The Free Press Back Issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, September 29, 1955.
At the high school field day Bill Killing and Frances Oakes are the senior champions of the school. Intermediate champions are Wendy McKenzie and Frank Cooper, and junior champions are Ruth Landborough and Bob Cox.

Four Y Ladies' bowling teams were organized when those interested met in the Y on Tuesday. Gwen Price was named the president of the league with Tilly McElderry the treasurer. The four team captains are Janet Rogers, May Gervais, Olive Cairns and Lulu Sinclair.

Bishop's Gra-Y club held their charter night at the Y. Members are Max Haggitt, Mike Churchill, John Molody, Don Harris, Paul Wolfe, Keith Dunk, Ed Hubble, John Cripps, Edwin Spicer, Pat Churchill, Reg Dunk, Peter Newton Y secretary is Bob Brayshaw.

Mrs. Lena Mason is the new president of the Scout and Guide Mothers Auxiliary, vice-president Nan Hurst, secretary Mrs. Edith Jennings, treasurer Mrs. Ethel Haggitt.

It was exactly 20 years ago that Acton's Y building was opened. It was a \$20,000 bequest from the late A. J. Murray that made Acton the smallest village in the world to have a Y.

Winners for decorated bikes and huggies at the fair were Carole Candler, David Hyder, Sandra Hargrave, Roelof Groeneweg, Gwen Bran, Lynda James, Sally Wilson, Gordon Mason, Brian Barbeau, Sandra Cripps, Wynne Wilson.

Special trains have been running through town on their way to the Billy Graham crusade in Toronto.

Work continues on the dredging at the school creek.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press September 21, 1925.
The Acton Ladies Softball team journeyed to Guelph on Saturday and defeated the All Stars by a score of 12-9.

One of the oldest businesses in Acton changed ownership this week when Mr. D. H. Lindsay purchased the stock and business of the grain elevator at the Canadian National Depot from Robert Noble, Ltd. Mr. Lindsay has rented the elevator and will use it as a storehouse. This elevator was built about 20 years ago, and has been owned during this time by Robert Noble, Ltd. elevator to the erection of the present elevator a small building to the south was used for the Noble business in Acton.

The Ladies' Aid of the United Church held a chain tea last Thursday afternoon from three to five o'clock. The school room was very prettily decorated with flowers. During the afternoon Mrs. Charles McArthur, of Toronto, contributed several soprano solos, which was especially enjoyed and Misses Edna Johnson and Edna Henderson rendered piano solos. Lunch served and a pleasant time was spent. Altogether it was a very enjoyable occasion.

In numbers of places about town and quite frequently the Messrs. Beardmore and Co. has given benefactions which are greatly appreciated. The latest evidence of their interest in Acton and Acton's activities was shown the past week when Mr. G. T. Beardmore had delivered to the fair grounds sufficient exhibition poultry.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday September 27, 1900

Toronto City Council is taking steps toward the inauguration of a scheme for the building of a system of electric radial railways covering central Ontario and radiating toward Toronto. On the map showing the plans, Acton is named as a junction point.

At the Judge's court of revision here last week 35 names were struck off the Acton lists and 15 names added. The tanneries strike was largely the cause for the numbers struck off.

The electric light at the corner of Frederick and Agnes Sts. which was almost surrounded with trees, has been moved to the centre of the street.

The Boer army is no more. It has degenerated into a few marauding bands.

Major Grant, the indefatigable secretary of Esquimes Agricultural Society, was in town on Tuesday and stated that the exhibition here next Thursday and Friday will undoubtedly be one of the best ever held by the society. The demand for the prize lists is unprecedented.

Messrs. Henderson and Co's fall millinery opening yesterday was favored with beautiful weather and the ladies of the town and country attended in large numbers. This is Miss Riach's first season and she must feel justly proud of the success of her first opening. Nearly all the hats are trimmed low and feathers are in greater favor than ever for trimming. Soldier shapes have almost entirely supplanted the sailors. The showrooms give a most attractive appearance.

Election trend hits

Ontario Progressive Conservatives were sapped of their strength in the legislature Thursday in a rebuff of Davis rule, and Halton-Burlington candidate Gary Dawkins was one of those who went down to defeat.

He polled about 460 votes less than victorious Liberal Julian Reed, and the electorate here now find themselves in the unusual position of having a representative

who is with the house minority.

Dawkins and his disappointed supporters blame his loss on the general trend in the province. Dawkins says probably they underestimated the strength of people's distaste for the imposition of regional government, the green belt corridor, the hydro line due to slice so close to us, control to be enforced by the Niagara escarpment commission, and other issues.

A choice for ourselves

Acton people have been complaining about regional government being foisted up on us. About a lack of control. About our work force coming up from Georgetown daily. About school decisions. About garbage collection.

About what Acton has lost. Last Thursday Acton lost its chance to have a member of parliament in the government in power and this time Acton people made the decision all themselves.

Sixty per cent of the people in Acton voted against their home

town candidate, M.Z. Bennett school principal Gary Dawkins. Forty per cent voted for him.

And this after what all party workers agree was a strong campaign.

A supportive, cross-party-line vote in Acton could have put him in the house.

But it was not time for forgetting party loyalties and party politics.

The trend was against the government. Especially, here, against regional government and against Davis as leader.

Here are the figures

The voting in Halton-Burlington was 72.1 per cent. above the provincial average, showing the candidates had stimulated interest here. The voters went out fairly well despite the day-long rain.

Voting trends show that the new riding, formed from the former riding of Halton East and Halton West, split along the same line with former Jim Snow territory going Liberal and former George Kerr country going Conservative.

In his native Acton Gary Dawkins won the most polls, plus Nassagaweya and apart of Burlington.

Julian Reed took the most polls in northern Oakville, Milton, Esquimes and Georgetown.

The former Kerr riding included Acton, Nassagaweya and Burlington.

The powerful Liberal upsurge here exceeded the provincial average while the NDP vote was below the provincial average. The Conservative vote was about even with the provincial figure.

In this riding the Liberals took 39.13 of the popular vote, while taking only 34 per cent provincially. Conservatives took 37.5 per cent here and 36 provincially. The NDP took 23.37 here and 29 per cent provincially.

Dawkins supporters started election day confident their man would be victorious in his home town. By the end of the day they knew better, even if they didn't know why for sure.

Acton provided him with only a 409 vote plurality, while in Esquimes Julian Reed had a 633 vote lead. Apparently Reed won all down the proposed hydro line route.

Bill Johnson rolled up NDP support through out the riding with a number of close polls. He won three polls in Georgetown, two in his native Nassagaweya, two in Acton and one in Milton, but he tied or exceeded the Conservative vote in another 13 polls. He tied or exceeded the Liberal vote in 12 polls. This NDP showing is strong and reflects the provincial swing.

Representative in opposition

It's a change for this riding to have a representative in the opposition. Recently the riding has had a member with the government in power, but this could have been due to the preponderance of voters in the south end.

It will remain to be seen how Halton-Burlington's new voice will be effective at Queens Park as the province changes to minority government. There are already predictions of a short span for them all, before another election is called.

Passing comments

Another meeting scheduled for this week will see progress toward the opening of the multi-service centre in the Y. The group's very

commendable aim is to "increase the availability and effectiveness of Social and Health Services to the Acton and area residents."



CAN ANYONE identify these neatly-dressed young women, all with pleated skirts, tucked and trimmed blouses, high collars, swooped hair and tight lips? How about this guess: Clara Moore's Sunday School class.

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