

# Free Press Editorial Page

## Seek consensus on Mill

It's always difficult to get a good response from a questionnaire.

However, that's the best way a group of Chamber of Commerce members could think of, when they planned taking their case on Mill St. reconstruction to council January 26. They want to know what other Acton people think.

Do Acton people want an improved downtown section? Would

they object if parking were banned on Mill? Would merchants be willing to pay higher taxes to help pay for off-street parking?

The Chamber hopes very much that quite a few people will take the time and trouble to assist them in preparing their case for council.

The Chamber of Commerce is one group in town in which everyone can participate. Please try.

## Out-of-country postage up

A 100 per cent increase in postal rates, effective January 1, forces a huge hike in cost of subscriptions to the Free Press out of the country.

Postage on papers which had amounted to about \$10 a year will now be \$18 a year, causing a new subscription rate of (hold your

breath) \$25 a year out of Canada.

The Free Press has been losing money on mailing these papers for some time, but the increase in postage this year makes a re-adjustment necessary.

There are about 30 Free Press subscribers effected and personal letters are going out to them.

## A part of history missing

It's very unfortunate no old pictures of the Beardmore houses in Acton have been located. The feature story in a recent Free Press about the Beardmore home in Toronto underlines the fact there have never been reprints in the Free Press of pictures of the beautiful old family homes in town.

Gordon Beardmore's home was located on the property where the Church St. apartments are now; Robert Little had his first school on

that site before, and the school building was altered to create the beautiful house.

Billy Beardmore's house was on the lot which became the bowling green, behind the present Canadian Tire store.

If anyone could locate pictures of these houses The Free Press archives would be greatly enhanced. The photos would be re-photographed and returned unharmed.

## Start of last year

Councillors are starting their third year under regional government—the last year of their three-year term. There will be an election next December to determine area and regional councillors.

What a terrific number of changes there have been in the past few years! The Acton, Esquesing and Nassagaweya representatives have had their hands full taking part in larger councils, and seem to have done well for us.

## Of this and that

January 11 to 17 is National Education Week on smoking. The Halton TB and Respiratory Disease Association has lots of

literature if you want it...184 Balsam Drive, Oakville, 845-0858. It's a service that's provided free thanks to Christmas seal donations.



PERCHED ON A FEW branches not far from their feeding station, sparrows patiently wait to receive their daily ration of grain from an Acton family. Several of our feathered friends are finding this winter

weather difficult for food. Any bits of suet, bread or any amount of grain will not be wasted when fed to the birds.



## Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

This is the time of year when instant experts and fallible fools such as newspaper columnists make idiots of themselves by predicting what the next 12 months will bring.

Looking into a New Year is rather like looking into an old rubber boot. It stinks a little, you can't see anything in there, and the thing probably leaks, heel and toe.

I prefer to do a little looking back and a little looking forward, make some hasty generalizations based on the arthritis in my big toe, and hope everybody will have forgotten what I said by the following week. Which they will.

Let's look back—1975 was the year of The Big Strike. Everybody who was somebody, and a great many who were nobodies, went on strike at least once.

As a direct result, Canada's credibility as a producing nation, a reliable nation, a prudent, sensible nation, took a nosedive.

Foreign investors were heard saying things like: "Migawd, I'd be safer betting on the exact hour and minute of

Napoleon's return from Eternal Exile than I would be putting money into that Crazy Canada."

It was also the year of the Grand Gimme and the Chronic Catch-up as everyone and his elderly aunt, clad in sackcloth and ashes, moaned piteously, heat besoms and scabbled tooth and nail to get a bigger clunk of the national foot than everybody else and her elderly uncle.

It was the year the Montreal Olympics could no more have a deficit, according to that reincarnation of Moses misleading his people to the unpromising land, Mayor Drapeau, than a man could have a baby.

It was the year in which the Thanksgiving roast turkey was transformed by our Grand Guru into boiled seagull.

It was the year of election upsets, political promises, union threats, dire warnings, insane headlines and callow assumptions. In short, it was a year much like the one before it and the one that is coming after it—at amusing and horrifying record of man's moral and mental weaknesses.

But that was the bad news. Now for the good news. It was also a great year, in some respects for you and me.

Personally, I had a fine year. Just listen to this list, and yours is probably better if you think back.

I discovered a bracing, healthful new sport, crosscountry skiing, and within a month was known as The Terror of the Trails (by two old ladies of 86 and 89).

I developed into Canada's most nauseatingly proud grandfather, as Pokey and I cemented an already firm friendship, culminating in an orgy of mutual admiration this past Christmas when the little devil got at least eleven-seven presents. I love him because he is bright, lively, handsome, and a real hell-on-wheels kid. He loves me because he can get me to do anything, literally, that he wants me to do. In this league I am known as The Spoiler.

While we're all in the family, other things made it a good year. My wife and I stayed married, and together, a rather unusual combination after a quarter-century. We even like each other, which is almost incredible, after what each of us has put up with.

My daughter, apparently celebrating Women's Lib year, or something, got herself pregnant again and I am expecting my first granddaughter (daughter underlined) any day now. Notice I said I am expecting. It used to be the mother who was expecting, but things are all cock-eyed these days.

Still in the family. I met a whole gaggle of cousins from the West I'd never seen before, cousins from the East I hadn't seen for 25 years, and sisters and brothers I hadn't seen for a couple. A great reunion, enough family stuff to do a fellow for the next decade.

There were many other high moments for me during 1975. Did some Auld Land Syne-ing with newspaper friends. Caught a big pike and rode in a tiny Aeronca over the brooding, empty wilderness of northern Saskatchewan. Caught a big cold and rode in a taxi through the brooding, teeming wilderness of Toronto.

Beat my wife two-out-of-five in golf. Ignored the postal strike by writing 52 columns, even though some will never see print. Teetered through another three terms of teaching. Discovered that in another few years I would be eligible for a category-F pension. F stands for Five cans of pork and beans a week, which such a pension will provide.

All in all, a jolly good year, one for which I wouldn't trade for anything, except a chance to do it over again.

Now for a brief look into the dim distances of 1976.

Last year we were bored silly by Women's International Year. I predict that this year we will be bored right out of our skulls by two mountains of ennui—the American Bicentennial and the Canadian Olympic Games.

Not much else can be glimpsed there, in the murk and muddle. Unlun will go on threatening, politicians will go on promising, the rich will get richer and the poor will get babbles.

But gloriously, people will go on being people; despicable and noble; anguished and triumphant; hating and loving; being born and dying. It's a great life, and the only one we have.

You go on doing your thing, and I'll go on doing mine. At the end of 1976 we'll make out our lists, and compare notes. I predict right here and now that we'll have just as many ups as downs, and will remember the ups and forget the downs.

Sincerely,  
Stella (McLam) Adamson

Editor's Note: The date 1811 in the news story was a misprint. The date on the note was, of course, 1911. Thanks for writing!

## Class on side of the wolf

The following is a copy of a letter sent to councillor Ern Hyde by Acton high school environment science class.

January 2, 1976

Mr. Ernest Hyde,  
Councillor,  
Halton Hills, Ontario.

Dear Sir:  
My fellow classmates and myself are very concerned at your recent statement, that you would like to have the Wolf Bounty reinstated in Halton Hills.

Our class spent half an hour taking down points on why you would suggest bringing the bounty back on wolves and points against bringing it back.

I agree it would cost the taxpayers quite a sum of money to pay for the sheep lost by farmers. But what bothers us is how do you know that it is the wolves who have been killing sheep? Do you have evidence? We would like evidence. How do you differentiate between wolves and wild dogs? Have you had professional conservationists on the scene to investigate these happenings?

Our class is very much on the side of the wolf. We believe the wolf is an endangered species. Environmental Science Class 201 made an intensive study of the wolf. Our

study makes us question if it is the wolf or wild dogs. We suggest a solution. If it is the wolves - trap and transport (there would be plenty of room for wolves up north since they have been cruelly slaughtered on the basis they were man eaters).

Kill if chasing sheep. (This is better than a bounty since a bounty would encourage men walking the forest and blasting anything that moves.)

Can we not compromise with nature? Do we have to kill every animal that gets in our way? Is killing the answer? Why did God make the wolf? All animals have an important part in this world we live in. We have already disrupted this intricate chain, so why ruin it more.

If it is possible, our class would be very happy if you showed the film, Death of a Legend, at one of your council meetings. This film is about wolves and how they are persecuted and how they play an important part in a world which is trying to get rid of it.

Death of a Legend; National Film Board of Canada, 51 min. The Halton Board of Education, Instructional Media Dept., 2650 Guelph Line, Burlington, Ont.

Acton high school  
Environmental Science  
Class 201.

## Recognizes names on note

The Acton Free Press,  
Halton Hills (Acton).

Gentlemen:  
I am sure that some older Actonians, like me, read with interest "Uncover history with note in bottle" in the January 7th issue. I well recall the Caswell family and a boy about my age name little George or Charlie and wonder if perhaps his father built this house in 1911 rather than 1811. Scene Street was pretty poor in those days. Camp coffee was a real treat! It was about the consistency of molasses and you put a spoonful in a cup of hot water. Cream and sugar were already in.  
This perhaps accounts for the oily paper. I feel that the boy put the paper in the

bottle as I can identify most of the names and we sure didn't help build the house! Douglas O? Lucie Edwards (Mrs. Harvey Walters). Josie McLeod (Mrs. Kéntner) deceased. Gladys Huffman, in Toronto. Stella C. (McLam) Adamson, Galt, Joe Hynds, in U.S.A. Johnnie Mc?

We all lived within a block of each other. There were two McLeod boys. One was Gordon, perhaps the second was Johnnie, but it doesn't ring true.  
Perhaps you will hear from someone else.

Sincerely,  
Stella (McLam) Adamson

Editor's Note: The date 1811 in the news story was a misprint. The date on the note was, of course, 1911. Thanks for writing!

## The Free Press Back Issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press January 19, 1956

J. Newton succeeds S. Tennant as local fire chief, following recently announced officer's appointments by the Acton Fire-fighters Association.

Slight damage was caused about the chimney well at the home of Lorne Mullin, on No. 25 highway, two miles south of here, when fire broke out Wednesday shortly before noon.

Winner of Saturday's Treasure Chest draw at the post office corner was Mrs. Ella Morton, the first and only name called.

Over a dozen relatives and friends enjoyed a turkey dinner Saturday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. McEachern. The occasion was the birthday observance for both Mrs. McEachern and Miss Nellie Hall.

Two more cases to add to the rash of burglaries that has been bothering this town in recent weeks were reported this weekend. As in the earlier break-ins, the "take" was small, but, also like the earlier burglaries, few clues were left for police to follow.

Sunday school awards were made at St. Alban's church last Sunday morning. Presented with Bibles for proficiency were Heather Withers, Laurie Dudy and Danny Holmes. Hurst St. Stories of the Bible were awarded to George Ware, Leslie Anne Dudy, Sharon Bradley and Katherine Higgins. Bible pictures were received by Shirley Barratt.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 14, 1926

The 28th annual meeting of the Board of Acton Free Library was held Monday at 10:30 a.m. in the office Police Magistrate Moore. Rev. Mr. Baugh, the chairman, gave a resume of the year's activities. He spoke of the efforts of the Book Committee to select the best books available which they have catalogued and available for the readers every three months. Occasionally a book would creep into the number selected which the committee felt was not desirable reading for the younger patrons of the library and these were immediately withdrawn.

The need of a new library building was freely expressed. The members live in hope that at no distant date such a library building may be a reality in Acton.

A steam shovel is at work on the high bank on the right-of-way of the Canadian National Railway at Dol's Varden. Earth is being excavated, loaded on cars and transferred to Georgetown. New piping and new fill-in is being placed near the viaduct there to widen the railway and at the switches at that point.

The annual skating party of the members of the Young people's league of the United church and the Young People's Guild of the Knox church was held Monday. The party, which numbered over a hundred, spent a couple of hours skating at the rink and at ten o'clock proceeded to the School Room of the United church where a substantial lunch awaited them. After lunch an hour was spent in social intercourse which proved very pleasant. Rev. Mr. Stewart and Rev. Mr. Zimmerman hobnobbed with the young folks during the service. Acton Citizens' Band provided a rink band for the occasion which supplied suitable music.

Mrs. J. A. Mowat gave an interesting address on The League of Nations at the meeting of the Women's Institute.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 6, 1876.

A stranger passing through the village of Rockwood on Tuesday evening would not have been long in coming to the conclusion that there was something more than usual on the tapis. Hotel stables were crowded to their capacity and in fact the whole place seemed to be alive. The reason of this unusual state of affairs was the occasion of the holding of a grand concert under the auspices of and in aid of St. John's church. The concert took place in the town hall which was crowded to excess. The concert was under the conductorship of Mr. Matland of Guelph and consisted of songs, dramatic performances, dialogues, recitations and piano selections.

Three young ladies were nominated for the cake contest and the price of a vote set at ten cents. Miss Mary Smith was the winner having received 128 votes and the next highest receiving 62. Miss Smith expressed a desire that the cake should be sold by auction. The cake realized about \$25 and the concert about \$130.

Mr. Alfred Anstee then entertained some of the guests from out-of-town at a sumptuous feast after which amusements, dancing, etc. were entered into with spirit until after the "wee sma hours."

The absence of sleighing at this time of year has had a very depressing effect on business.

## THE ACTON FREE PRESS

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Business and Editorial Office



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