

# Fireworks on Sunday

An advance note of thanks to the firefighters and Rotarians who are planning the Dominion Day celebration for the town. It will wisely be on the Sunday, when most people can participate.

Youngsters can spend a day of optimism in the fishing derby. In the evening there will be the fire-fighting display and then the high-light, the fireworks.

Food booths will be open. Even though the Rotary club has given up on its chicken barbecue, supper can still be purchased there if families wish.

The Dominion Day program is an event for the community of Acton and district, and we don't have many of them. Good weather will guarantee a good crowd.



THIS FAMILY THOUGHT some photos following the memorial service at Eden Mills Presbyterian Church would be appropriate. The photographer on the left drove from the United States for the service, and

returned there later Sunday. Many parishioners placed flowers or plants in the cemetery next to the church after the hour-long afternoon service. The Presbyterian Church was built of stone in 1887.

## Free Press Editorial Page

### Make opinion known

There is to be another free vote in parliament, this time on the air safety issue. Surely this is an excellent idea which should be followed more often. After all, we have the expectations that our Members of Parliament represent us. Just where their loyalties are split between their party and their people

is hard for us to tell. We'd like to think our wishes mean much to them.

So if you have a firm opinion on the airline issue, now is the time to write Dr. Philbrook and tell it to him. He can't represent people he doesn't hear from.

### What is a block parent?

It would be nice to think that every child is surrounded by neighbors who would be always willing to help. In many instances that is so—but not always.

Times are changing; there are many newcomers without relatives or friends here. No longer does a child know all the people on a street.

So people are trying to organize a block parent program for the fall. They need support in their plan to benefit our whole community.

Perhaps there are many who are uncertain what a block parent does. Here is some information, obtained from the Guelph program.

1. What is the Block Parent Program? A Block Parent Program consists of several homes in each block displaying a Block Parent sign. This signifies to a child that protection and responsible assistance in an emergency is available at that home when the sign is displayed.

2. The main purpose of the Block Parent Program is to discourage troublemakers (safety of your children).

3. When should children go to these homes? Children are to go to

these homes ONLY in cases of emergency, such as: Alarmed by Strangers; Accident; Illness; Bullies; Vicious Dogs and other emergency incidents.

4. What will the Block Parent do? In emergencies involving child molesters, the Block Parent will call the police and parents while offering protection to the child. In emergencies involving physical injury or illness, the Block Parent will be advised to contact the child's parents. If the parents are unavailable, the Block Parent will then contact the Police Force, if warranted. Each Block Parent home has a list of emergency telephone numbers for reference.

5. The Block Parent is not expected to: Give food and beverage or render first aid or provide toilet facilities. Leave his home to break up fights, though the appropriate authorities should be contacted if deemed necessary.

6. A Block Parent has no legal status except his or her natural status as a private citizen. He or she is simply a volunteer who has agreed to act as a sensible, responsible adult in an emergency involving the children of your community.

### Of this and that

Reporters who cover public school events all year long saw their young friends as ladies and gentlemen last week at the graduation banquet. What a fine looking group they were! Healthy, happy, mannerly and enthusiastic. They'll be an asset to the high school and then to our community.

The Free Press has only heard of one suggestion of a new name for the middle school, due to begin operation in the fall. Any more ideas?

A few children have been harassing mother birds on their nests, and destroying eggs at the lake this spring. They need talking to.

Acton is fortunate that need for repairs to the arena were foreseen and looked after. The repairs had been a long-range project, initiated by Acton council. At one time they were part of the town's plans to celebrate our centennial.

Dominion Day - is there any other country you'd rather complain about? No... Canada is our favorite, strikes, taxes, closings and all.

Golden Age club members would like to have their shuffleboard court set up somewhere. Apparently it is at the arena awaiting a suitable spot. Club members have suggested it go beside the tennis courts, so it will have the same night lights. Good idea.

How come none of the arenas closed are in the Toronto area?

Isn't there plenty of snow there in the winter?



## Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

As we all know, especially those who have ever engaged in sports, there's a very thin line between being a hero and being a bum.

One day you're at bat, three runs behind, three runners on base, the count three and two, and you smash a homerun. Two days later, in exactly the same situation, you strike out. Same man, exactly. First time, you are cheered to the echo. Second time, you are booed out of the park.

I'd like to report that most of the time, my wife thinks I'm a hero. But this column has always been noted for a dedication to veracity. Most of the time she thinks I'm a bum.

Not just an ordinary bum. I quote: "Bill Smiley, you are a lazy, procrastinating bum!"

Don't think I just sit there and take it. Oh, no. I point out with some gusto that she's never held a steady job in her life, except as a mother and housewife, that no guy who teaches all day and runs an English department with 10 teachers in it, and writes a weekly column, can be called lazy.

But it seems we're not talking about the same lazy. She's talking about evading, short of anything worse than a threat of death, cleaning up the basement rather than playing golf. I'm talking about the higher things in life.

As far as the "procrastinating" goes, I'll admit, honestly and openly, that I procrastinate.

But only in a limited way. I am not an across-the-board procrastinator.

I'll confess that, from time to time, on certain occasions, I have been known, all

things considered, by some suspicious people, who are themselves too aggressive, to procrastinate.

But the third term in that pejorative remark, "bum", I will not accept, not even from the Old Battleaxe.

A bum is one of two things: a rear end; a person who refuses to work. I am not the former, though I have a few enemies who would question it. I am not the latter. I have worked since I was a stripling. But I started work cleaning out lavatories, and I don't intend to finish work cleaning up the basement.

All this is merely preamble to the happy note of this column. Last weekend, for almost 72 hours, with only a couple of relapses, my wife thought I was a hero, not a bum.

It was time for one of our semi-annual safaris to the city. These are usually pretty ghastly. I talk vaguely about going to a good hotel, seeing a couple of top shows, and eating a gourmet dinner or two in posh restaurants. She thinks it's all set.

Comes the weekend. I've forgotten all about it. The trunk of the car has sprung from backing into a telephone pole. No hotel reservation. You couldn't get a ticket to the special show if your initials were P.E.T. And we have to stand in line for an hour for that gourmet grub, which is one step better than the local greasy spoon, and eight times as costly.

Relations are strained. We go back to our second-rate hotel, burping garlic which has covered a multitude of culinary sins, and sulkily watch a TV show that we saw, as a re-run, last November.

But this time. Ah, this time. It was like a honeymoon. A week before, driven by

knows what buried guilt, I sneaked to the telephone one evening, and laid everything on. Best hotel in the city. Room overlooking the lake. Tickets for two shows. Dinner reservations. Next day I got the car washed and gassed. Sneaked away early from work.

The Old Girl couldn't believe it. Everything worked. They hadn't screwed up our reservations for once. Traffic was murderous, but only one bus driver really went out of his way to get us. The shows were terrific. Dinners were excellent, no waiting.

And the weather was splendid. I think his Awesomeness had finally decided to let poor old Bill Smiley be something other than a bum, at least for 72 hours.

As I sat on the 26th floor, looking over the lake, while my wife was shopping next morning, and wondered what the poor people were doing today, I couldn't help thinking that God was in His heaven, for once, and all was right with the world.

But wait. It didn't end there. Going out of the city, we dropped in to see our grandsons, with appropriate gifts. They wanted to leave their parents and come home with Gran-Dad and Gran. How about that?

And one final frosting on the case. We got home. Lo, And Be Hold. The storm windows had been taken off, and the windows polished. The lawn had been cut, and the place looked great. (I'd forgotten to tell the storm window man and the boy who cuts the lawn that we'd be away.)

I didn't let on. Just said: "Well, I see the varlets have been at work, as instructed."

You won't believe this, but the old lady actually said, "You know, sometimes, Bill Smiley, you're not a lazy, procrastinating bum." How's that for an accolade?

## OUR READERS WRITE:

### The plight of the ducks

Editor, Acton Free Press. The lakeside sign behind the arena is plain enough: Please do not feed the wildfowl. Although the sign is not bilingual, almost everyone will be able to read it, except the creatures involved, who alas, are no longer wildfowl.

The fact is most of the ducks living on Fairy Lake are domesticated, almost as tame as barnyard fowl. Whether the ban on feeding will force them back into their natural mallard mould, is debatable. No one hopes more than I that this will be the main result of a plan aimed at the restoration of migratory instincts, which our ducks lost after five or six years of semi-sanctuary living.

I hope they take a broad hint. I hope by late fall our Fairy Lake fowl will have flown off for warmer and more hospitable environments. I shudder to think of another ulcerating winter of watching the lake gradually freeze around our duck population.

Even when our so-called sanctuary was operating under civic approval, no provisions were made for winter conditions. Year after year, the same crisis developed, causing recriminations and buck-passing. At the last minute, the fowl were either moved to the dam, or as in the past winter—trapped and housed in the poultry barn.

The truth is the sanctuary that never really was got started without any thought of the consequences. The experts did not get into the act until two winters ago, when we witnessed and heard the fiasco of the hybrids.

The controversy resulted in the death of some ducks, how many the general public, myself included, never knew. It also caused the exile of two pet geese, Gandy and Peep and their four young, a heart-break-

ing (for me at least) move which was quite unnecessary as those domesticated geese would not have hybridized.

All this of course is past history revived only to prove that our handling of something which began merrily as a wildfowl sanctuary, left much to be desired.

My prime concern this week and for the rest of summer is the plight of the ducks who will no longer be fed. I will be haunted by the knowledge that a flock of 50 or 60 birds will be waiting around supper time for a familiar figure toting two feed bags. Or to put it inelegantly: an old bag carrying bags.

Expecting to comply with the no-feeding edict, I started an experiment at the end of winter. Instead of two daily trips morning and evenings as in past springs and summers, I limited my feeding jaunts to one per day. Late afternoons or evenings.

I reasoned the ducks had all day to forage for food. If they were still hungry by day's end, there was not enough natural food in the lake to sustain them. The way it turned out, the flock awaited me obviously hungry and ready to gobble everything in sight.

I have frequently heard the argument that fowl eat for the sake of eating at any time. This may be true for some fowl, but NOT our Fairy lake ducks. There is a marked difference between gluttony and hunger.

I question the theory that there is plenty of natural food in Fairy Lake. If such is the case, how come the lake attracted few wild fowl in past years before the welcome sign went up?

As a Free press reporter put it earlier: We have to be cruel to be kind. The new signs are up. As a reasonably law-abiding citizen, I expect to comply. However, this does not stop me from wondering and

worrying about creatures which other people and I have helped to tame.

For example, what will happen to the white farm duck with the badly-injured leg. Can she forage for herself? I doubt it.

In short, I think we have a problem, which one season may not solve. For myself in order to obey the ban, I may have to stay away from the park, because if the ducks spot me, they will come running hopefully.

I'm going to miss little white Dunder, a two-year old hybrid, with a brood of eleven babies plus four orphans. I am going to miss Big Ding, a comical, large domesticated duck, who with her drake (long since

gone missing) made an appearance this spring.

I hope our ducks and two families of Canada geese survive the summer without too much hardship. I hope they all fly off in the fall. Then, I will no longer be fretting about their welfare.

I realize only too well that there are many more pressing problems in these troubled times. But remember the old childhood hymn about "you in your small corner and I, in mine?" Sadly, my small corner includes a flock of ducks who are no longer wildfowl.

Esther Taylor

### Man of dynamic inaction

To the Editor, Acton Free Press, Acton, Ont.

Dr. Frank Philbrook is faced with a dilemma in the dispute over Bilingual Air Traffic Control.

He could take the side of the controllers, pilots and the majority of his constituents

and risk his political career with the Liberal party or he could side with the government and make a sham of our democratic form of government.

Being a man of dynamic inaction he has done the predictable. Nothing!

Frank Richards, Speyside.

### Restoration of town hall

Your pictures and comments about the "Old Town Hall" brought back many happy memories and I don't consider myself an "old timer". High School "At Homes", I.O.D.E. dances, community plays, Public School Operettas, New Year's Eve dances, municipal meetings are but a few of the many activities that were held in the "Old Town Hall". The building certainly deserves special consideration.

Is it economical to restore it? Is there an interested group in town to initiate the idea? The Brookville and Glen Williams

halls are excellent examples of what can be done when public interest is aroused. There are grants available to help with their work. It is hoped that someone or some group will pick up your suggestion and start the wheels in motion that will breathe new life into a building which was the centre of the community 40 years ago.

G. W. "Pat" McKenzie

MORE LETTERS ON PAGE B5

## The Free Press Back Issues

### 20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of June 28, 1956 Donald William Kelley, 18, of North Bay, who ran away from a farm gang at the Ontario Reformatory Tuesday was recaptured by reformatory guards yesterday alongside the railway tracks at Acton. Kelley would have been eligible for release in October. Canadians will be celebrating the country's 89th birthday Monday, and the newspaper office will be closed from Saturday noon until Tuesday morning.

No opening ceremony to salute Acton's new \$70,000 Maria Street bridge is in the offing. A dozen girls dressed in white with white veils and 13 boys in dark suits with boutonnieres and armbands, made their First Holy Communion at St. Joseph's Church, on Sunday. It was the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. The children were: Wolfgang Lorenz, Bohdan Dyc, John McGilloway, David McMillan, Robert Holmes, Phillip Sargent, Michael Sargent, James Cooney, Andy Dyc, Gregory Prystasz, Peter Van Hoekelen, Mary Breen, Linda Gervais, Ella Seelen, Catherine Stroyan, Margaret Holmes, Madeleine Drew, Ann Bennett, Susan Fleming, Rita McCrea, and Theresa Marzo.

### 50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday July 1, 1926

On Saturday afternoon the farmers of this community with their families and friends held a very enjoyable picnic at Stanley Park, Erin. A good program of games was held and three baseball matches.

On Monday afternoon the teachers of the public school had a motor drive to Erin and a picnic in Stanley Park in honor of Miss Craig, principal of the high school, who is about to terminate her engagement here. Regret is felt at the severing of the warm ties which have subsisted between the teachers and Miss Craig.

The improvements at Prospect Park are apparently much desired. Representatives from the Women's Institute, Acton Citizens' Band, IODE chapters, Chamber of Commerce, the Baseball Club and the Acton Fall Fair were all present at a meeting last Friday to discuss this project. Mr. C. E. Parker presided. The suggestion of purchasing the Bell property and Storey Grove Co. lots on Bower Ave. was ruled out of order. The improvements suggested were the rounding out of the entrance and connecting of Knox and Park Aves., the erection of a band stand, the procuring of seats and providing facilities for a molar camp. The election of an executive committee to handle these improvements in a co-operative community way resulted as follows: president Chas. E. Parker; Vice-President Mrs. Jas. Dobie, secretary Geo. R. Agnew, treasurer Mrs. V. B. Rumley.

### 100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, June 22, 1876

This issue of the Free Press completes the first year of existence. We are pleased to be able to say the business of the office has proved to be successful and that we feel warranted in continuing to expend more labor upon the paper in the effort to make it more valuable to the readers. Our advertisers have been most liberal in their advertising patronage but we calculate in future to be able to crowd the advertisements into less space, by using smaller type, so as to enable us to give a larger share of reading matter. We hope all our present patrons and many more will come forward with their dollars for their coming year's subscription. The Free Press is in its infancy; it cannot grow and be vigorous unless it is well nourished.

The drill shed has been secured by some of our young men and it is being fitted up for strawberry festivals and promenade concerts during the summer. (Then located on Bower Ave. the drill shed is now the poultry building in the park.)

Dominion Day in Nassagaweya—A grand picnic will be held on the beautiful grove on Mr. Jackson's farm two miles west of Hallowville. There will be dancing, for which prizes will be given, also baseball, races, jumping and other amusements. Mason's Quadrille band has been engaged. Tea is half past two o'clock.

Our American cousins have been on the tiptoe of excitement over the Presidential nomination.

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