

Great welcome for Santa

A happy community event was the Santa Claus parade, which brought out crowds muffled in their warmest clothes on Saturday afternoon. The weather was perfect for the parade, and even though the paving wasn't finished, the arrival of Santa was done with a flourish.

Many participated in the parade, and many worked in preparing for it.

Three churches took part, and that was an important part of the parade. Many other groups made a special effort, in cold weather, to contribute to the affair.

The construction crews weren't able to have the road paved, but they were certainly able to cooperate. They did all they could to

prepare the road surface for the big event.

The set-up in the Y was perfect; there was plenty of room for parents to take pictures of their own tots, and Santa took plenty of time in talking to the wide-eyed children. There was none of the rush of the big department store Santas, where the main goal seems to be to sell pictures.

Hours of meetings, phone calls, plans, donations, and decorating were behind the smooth-running parade.

Organizers say sure, things went wrong — but nothing that the people along the route would see.

The people along the route saw a great parade, and pass along their thanks!

Meetings open to public

Elections are over now until December, 1978.

A problem is pointed out in The Municipal World, a magazine which circulates to elected officials. An editorial argues that in the elections on December 6, the voters, lacking in knowledge of the complexities of local government, may have voted into office persons who have no greater knowledge than they themselves of the duties required of them.

There is no particular way in which a newly-elected official can obtain a good, quick grounding in the work facing him or her.

Retiring councillor Joe Hurst has passed on his voluminous files to newcomer Peter Marks and this will be a great help to him.

But some people who will be started new in posts in January have seldom even attended

meetings of the group they now belong to.

There is no better way to know what area and regional councils are doing than by attending the public meetings. It would seem very reasonable that any people remotely considering running for office two years from now should begin attending meetings now and observing.

Any persons interested in a particular problem could do no better than attend committee and council meetings to listen to discussions on this matter and others. There are fewer "pat" answers to specific problems when people realize all the angles to be considered.

We reporters, representing the public, are usually the only people at meetings who are not councillors or staff people. We get lonesome.

The high-pitched Christmas

Jet plane engine noises are pitched so high that they cannot be heard by the human ear. Of course, there is the familiar jet roar that does get through, but most of the sound is beyond our range.

The community is filled with the sound of Christmas carols. Radios, T.V.'s, street-corner speakers, churches, school rooms and a thousand common dwellings all vibrate with the sound of familiar Christmas songs. Part of the carol gets through but part of it is beyond our range.

The happy melody gets through. The power to awaken memory of by-gone days gets through. The plain homely images of the manger, the star, the shepherds, the wisemen, the mother and the lovely sleeping child are reinforced by our singing of the carols. Almost any ear can catch these sounds. But there is more. At a higher frequency that only the heart can hear there is born in upon us the assurance that our world is wrapped in love. But this word is high-pitched and is entirely lost on those who hear only the obvious.

"No ear may hear His coming; But in this world of sin, Where meek souls will receive Him, still

The dear Christ enters in."

Perhaps this is why at the first Christmas it is said that the carols were sung by a chorus of angels. The Christian message is more than a group of people chattering theology or school children singing carols. It is the subtle sound of God's compassion. It is assurance at depth that human life has immortal meaning and joy is rooted not in colored tissue paper and escapist celebrations but in the presence of a hardy, holy love to which we can commit ourselves. "Joy to the World! the Lord is come." In the occasional moments when any man has the confidence that this is really so, it is as if an angel bending o'er the earth had touched a harp of gold. The higher frequency becomes audible. Confidence in God and his yearning over man is the high-pitched word that sounds in every simple, pleasant carol we sing.

Listen for it now.



SNOW TRANSFORMS THE township dump, now vacant, its scars healing. The former Esquesing landfill site looks very Christmassy and picturesque these days.

'Tis the OUR READERS WRITE: season . . .

Next week's Free Press will contain many greetings ads from merchants, businessmen and friends. We hope you have time to enjoy reading it.

As Mrs. Claus complained to Santa, "Why don't you save a few of that Ho Ho Ho for home?" It's overwork time, overshoot time, overeat time, overdrink time. In all the hustle, find time for yourself; find time to enjoy. Save some Ho Ho Ho for yourself.

"A prejudice is a vagrant opinion without visible means of support." - Ambrose Bierce.

"Many books require no thought from those who read them, and for a very simple reason - they made no such demand upon those who wrote them." - Charles Caleb Colton.

"Democracy means simply the bludgeoning of the people, by the people, for the people." - Oscar Wilde.

"No person in the world has more courage than the person who can stop after eating one peanut.

"I think there is only one quality worse than hardness of heart and that is softness of head." - Theodore Roosevelt.

Reader left confused

Everton, R. R. 4, Rockwood, N0B2K0

The Editor, The Acton Free Press

Sir: The Hon. Leo Bernier's recent pronouncements regarding the future of camping facilities in our Provincial Parks leave me completely confused.

From what one learns from the news media, one can only conclude that Mr. Bernier is also completely confused.

My separate Sam

Each night I say a little prayer, For my land of milk and honey, Then I pray for Sam, the finance man, Who lends me all the money.

I'm trying hard to conserve and curb, To pay the debts I owe, As you can see, my borrowing spree, Has laid me mighty low.

He digs my soil, and takes the oil, His investment, pays me well While I get rich, he makes the pitch, For everything I sell.

Now, Sammy's bought my Kilowatt,

It appears that he doesn't know from one day to the next what he has said.

If his statements reflect government policy, then we need a change of government. If however, they are a measure of Mr. Bernier's capacity, then what we need is a speedy change of Ministers. Is this the man who proposes to give Reed Paper the right to devastate the Northern forests?

Incidentally, whatever happened to that fellow that we elected from Wellington-Dufferin? He seems to have disappeared. Perhaps Mr. Bernier should follow his example!

Yours truly, W. K. Peirce

Councillor at games

To the Editor of the Acton Free Press

This is written for those who are not Community Centre regulars, for they probably don't know I followed the Junior C Sabres for a full season about four years ago and have frequented the Community Centre on several other occasions over the past 35 years.

I was at the referred to game for two full

periods not a few minutes as Eric Elstone stated in Sports Pulse.

Also my son plays for the Georgetown Gemini's and anyone who knows the line up for the teams could possibly recognize the connection.

My reasons for being there were not political, simply to watch my son play hockey as I am a concerned parent.

Regional Councillor-Elect Russell Miller

Free the parents

Dear Editor:

In reply to Trustee Edna Robinson's remark in the Toronto Star, November 26, 1976, reported in the press to have blamed parents who are the products of the "regimented" school system of the late 40's and 50's, for the destructive permissiveness adopted by youth who reflect the life styles and attitudes of their parents.

Let us be fair about this! In 1968 the Hall-Dennis Report became the gospel of the education system. This impressive Report, if one reads fine print and all, was for one reason alone - to free the children!

The instructions parents received from experts informed them that they no longer had any right to indoctrinate their children with values such as discipline, religion, political learnings and of course, we were not to expect them to achieve!

Due to these pressures, many parents did opt out of their responsibilities because the educators know what is best. Parents that tried to maintain standards were under confrontation by their children. This vacuum which was produced left parents with only one priority - to SILENTLY pay the bills.

Teachers were indoctrinated to believe in permissiveness. They had to enforce it, without their influence the educational reform couldn't be effective. The concerned teachers couldn't express their views - it meant their jobs and promotions. This left the role of the teacher in constant confrontation.

Teachers, like parents, have the most important task in the world. We should be constantly supportive of each other if we are to produce a responsible generation.

Now that we know who is in control - confusion and no answers are the order of the day; the time is ripe for Mr. Dennis to write a report to free the parents!

Sincerely, M. G. Harris, (Burlington)



Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

My wife and I had a terrific fight the other night. She's always reading articles and watching television panels. One week it's how you can guarantee that your baby will be a boy (or a girl). The next time it's how to avoid dying in your sleep by positive dreaming.

As you can imagine, some of these topics don't really send me, and she gets quite annoyed when I don't wax sufficiently enthusiastic.

I try to participate in the monologue by reading her one of my favorite articles, something like, "Is The Real John Turner Just a Shy, Humble Little Boy Underneath It All?"

She just retorts, "Who cares?" and goes relentlessly back to her own article, which this week was about battered wives. The article was entitled "Couples That Batter Each Other Matter to Each Other," or something equally ridiculous. Its gist was that married people who fight, even physically, are far happier than those who hold in their resentment and become psychologically warped as a result.

For once I made a stand. I told her, in words to that effect, that that was a lot of women's magazine, soap opera crap. I went on to cite some of our friends who used to batter each other regularly and are now happily divorced from each other and remarried to non-batters.

For some reason this irked her. I don't know whether it was the male chauvinist crack or the fact that some of her friends are happier with a new mate, but she started a fight.

Her article hadn't said anything about battered husbands. I'll draw a veil over the next few minutes, for those with tender sensibilities who have never been hit by a sneak punch from a woman when they weren't looking.

Anyway, when I had picked myself off the floor, wiped the blood from my nose, and locked myself safely in the bathroom, I issued an ultimatum. "If you ever lay a finger on me again, I'm leaving. I'm going home to your father."

Her reply "Go ahead, you crumb! If you walk out of this house, you'll never get back in. It's in my name. So's the car. I'll clean out our joint account, garnishee your salary, hire a lawyer, and put you on Skid Row, where you belong."

I needn't tell you here that she had recently read some shyster's article about how to go about doing just that to your husband.

I was so mad that I was adamant for quite a while. If there'd been a phone in that bathroom, I'd have called the police for an escort and walked right out of there. But there wasn't.

I ignored her further taunts, all of them on a similarly low, despicable level, and maintained a dignified silence. She calls it sulking. Fortunately, there was a good paperback novel on the back of the toilet, and I was soon absorbed.

She can't stand this. Bitter invective, coarse comments, even bad language rolls off her shoulders. But she nearly goes out of her skull when there's nobody listening to her.

Finally, "Do you want a cup of tea, you cowardly bum?"

I didn't make a sound for a full minute, then grunted, "Maybe. What else?" I meant a full apology and an abject admission of her guilt in instigating the donnybrook.

"And a piece of apple pie," she snapped. "With cheddar cheese." I gave up. How can you reason with someone like that?

"Well, O.K. But no more battering, baby, or I call the cops."

After a while, we had cooled out a fair bit, and she got me an ice pack for my nose. I was willing to forget it, but underneath I was still simmering, and I entertained thoughts of cashing my two \$100 bonds the next day, skipping off to the Canary Islands, and leaving her high and dry.

But, like every woman I've ever met, she wanted to "talk things out." That's one of the most disgusting phrases in the English language. Right chaps?

It was finally decided that we'd each make a list of our worst faults, let the other have a look at the list, then try to do something about it.

I worked away assiduously for what seemed hours, my tongue stuck out of one corner of my mouth. My list went some-

thing like this: a) too ready to forgive wife; should be firmer b) too generous with my children, must be tighter c) too fond of grandchildren; must be sterner d) complain too much about arthritis; should complain more about hemorrhoids e) too ready to see good side of others; must be more realistic.

Well, my list went on and on and on. I didn't realize what a truly rotten guy I was until I started to put it down. My wife finished fairly quickly, and resumed her overt affair with her sewing machine (one of the things that are driving us apart).

Handed over my list. She started to read it with a benign smile. The smile began to curl down on the corners. Her face got red.

"Why, you tawny little cockroach!" she exploded. I didn't point out that she was being redundant.

I'd like to tell you this little marital drama had a happy ending, that it wound up in a clinic.

Well, it did wind up in a clinic. I had her arms so tied up that Muhammad Ali couldn't have thrown a punch in the same situation. So she kneed me you know where.

When I had stopped grunting, and got to my knees, I picked up her list of faults, which she'd thrown in my face as I lay prostrate.

I half expected that she'd write something like, "My only fault is that I don't appreciate what a wonderful husband I have."

It was a little shorter than that. It just said, "None."

The Free Press Back Issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, December 13, 1956.

The mild weather has ruined the coating of ice underway in the arena, causing cancellation of the Junior Hockey game for tomorrow evening (Friday). Town employees had ice shaping up well two weeks ago but higher temperatures changed the picture.

Despite all the changes and increased cost of living in the past 50 years, hydro power cost here has only doubled. An item in the "50 years ago" column this week reports councillors discussing entering into a contract with the Hydro Electric Power Commission for power for the town. At that time, Acton was generating its own. Council learned that power could be delivered from Niagara Falls at from \$21.12 to \$23.33 per horse power per annum. The cost now, exactly 50 years later; \$46.25 per horse power per annum!

The Christmas meeting of the Acton Women's Institute was held at the home of Mrs. Holloway, Main St., Mrs. George Fryer presided and welcomed the large turnout. Miss M. Z. Bennett as the guest speaker, brought a lovely Christmas message based on the motto, God gave us memories that we might have roses in December.

On his way back to Montreal from a business trip to the United States, Jack Mainprize stopped over to spend the weekend with his parents Mr. and Mrs. Harry Mainprize and Bill Mainprize.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, December 18, 1926.

Every succeeding commencement of the high school has features of special interest to the students of the year and their parents and friends. The one of last Wednesday evening in the town hall was equal to any of its predecessors. Trustees Hartley Harrison, George Mann and Ebenezer Beswick graced the platform. Miss Marjorie Switzer played the piano. Miss Helen Ostrander recited a negro melody. Mr. W. K. Campbell and Mr. L. B. Shorey made the presentation of field day medals to Doris Campbell, Fred Cook, Mary Chalmers and George Mason.

Mrs. Mew, the popular principal of four years ago, presented diplomas to Misses Clara Savage, Olive Cooper, Addie Hurst, Jennie Wiggins, Muriel Crossman, and Messrs. Charles Kirkness, Neville Harrop and Archie Kerr. Neville Harrop was the valedictorian and his address was an excellent one. A sword dance by Jack McGeachie was cleverly done.

The unfair and undesirable condition existing whereby Canada is flooded every week with United States magazines is attracting the attention of Canadians everywhere.

Sheriff Webster's office in Milton Jail was the scene of an interesting wedding when a Presbyterian girl from Scotland married a Roman Catholic. D'Angelo was dressed in civilian clothes for this important event and not in his prison garb.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, December 14, 1876.

Municipal matters are still quiet. No new names are mentioned for next year's council, either in the village or neighboring townships. Nominations on Friday of next week. Hurry up, gentlemen, and show yourselves.

The Lion, Guelph. No place like the Lion for cheap goods. Blankets, very large stock, \$2.75 a pair, very cheap. Quilts, great variety. \$1. Bed comforters, \$2, cheaper than ever before. Sheetings, bleached and unbleached. Cottons, grey and white, splendid value. Largest stock of hannels in the province. Our buffalo robes are famed throughout the whole of Western Ontario. Estray steer - dark red steer rising three years old, at the farm of Wm. Scott, Esquesing.

Speyside Shingle, Stave and Heading Mill. Best quality shingles. P. and H. Sayers.

Tenders will be received by the Acton School Board for the supply of 30 cords of good dry hardwood, two feet long, cut from green timber. All the wood to be split and free from rough, knotty pieces. The teachers of the Second and Third departments are re-engaged for the ensuing year - Miss McKellar at a salary of \$275 and Miss Moore at \$250, the latter being an increase of \$25 over last year's salary.

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