

Free Press Editorial Page

Units for Acton — now

Talking with the various people involved in the planning of senior citizens apartments in Acton, it seems apparent everyone agrees the building should proceed here as soon as possible...except for Ontario Housing.

These officials who make the decisions infer they are not convinced there is a need in Acton. They don't feel any urgency to proceed.

Councillors who were expecting to see construction start in the spring realize now that more action is going to have to come from Acton, if the hopes of expectant older people are to be filled.

If we have to prove a need here, we can. But no one had ever indicated to us we would have to do it.

The idea has come as a result of individual concerns from people who were asked if they would move 12 miles away to live, instead of staying at home as they had expected.

Obviously the officials have given little concern to the feelings of people of this age, some of them with legitimate worries about finances in these days of ever-rising costs.

Remember back when the Legion offered to sell its old building for a "steal"—\$50,000—to provide downtown accommodation for seniors? The Legionaires finally gave up in disgust, doubled the price and sold elsewhere.

Now, although a site on Elizabeth Dr. is ready, Georgetown's building is getting priority.

In the matter of senior citizens housing, Halton Hills should not be considered as one town. This seems to be emerging as the rationale behind asking our senior citizens if they would be willing to move to Georgetown.

Some impetus for Acton will result from Monday's special meeting.

Plastics—the future

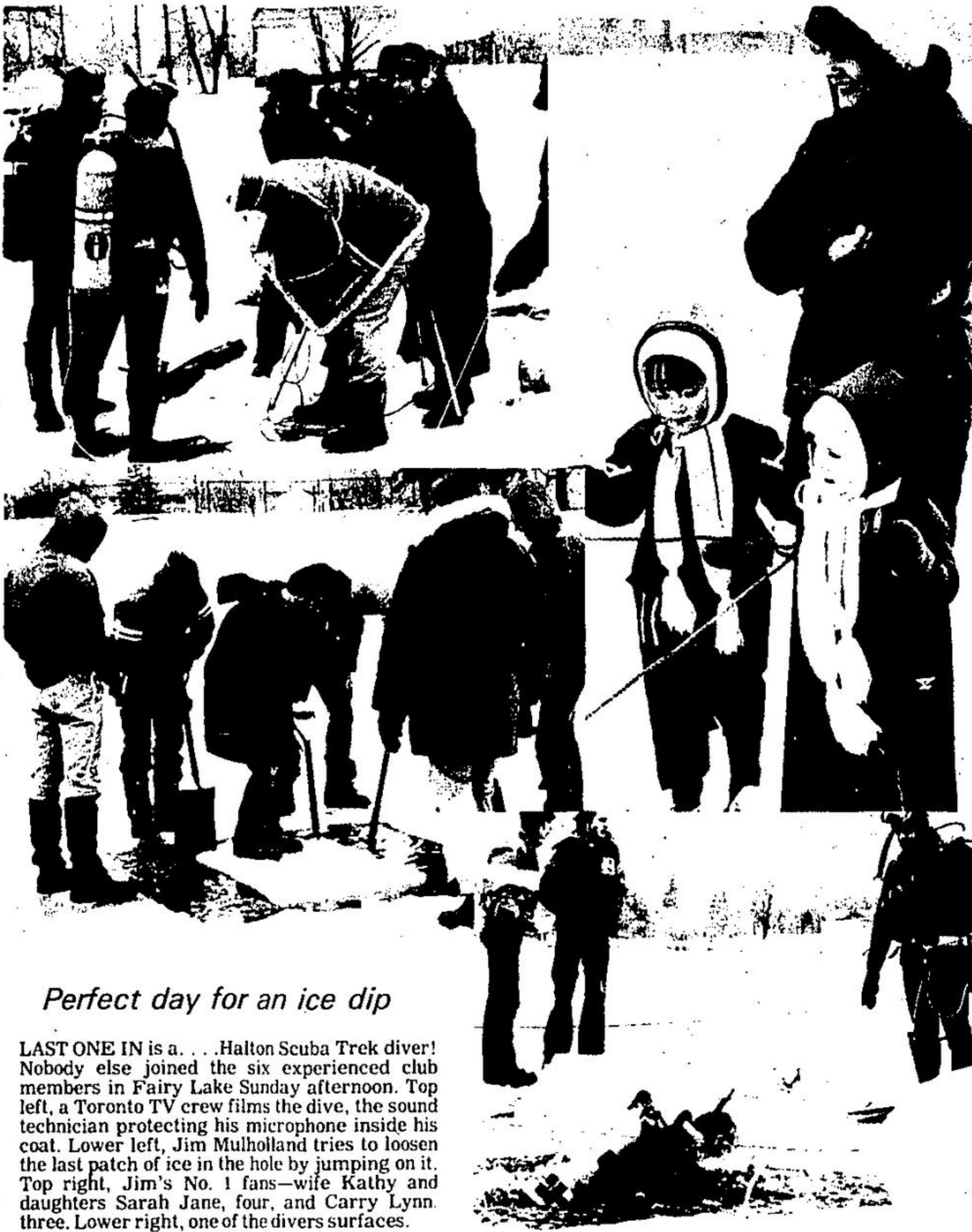
A blow to the community is the closing of a second plant within a couple of months. The plastic pipe division of Building Products is being phased out immediately putting about 30 people out of work.

Plastics were the product of the future when Micro Plastics began production here about 1948. The material of the future brought problems with its future, too. Union workers were told there are 134 plastic pipe plants in Canada and only one of them showed a profit last year.

A few years ago there were 200 employees at BP. It's down to about 80 or so now, with 30 of them due to leave soon.

Micro Plastics was established by Jack Reid, Alf Long and Jock Sault in a building on Wallace St. since used for storage. Mr. Sault left and Neil Bowles came into the company. It was sold to Jack Kent Cooke, to Building Products and subsequently Imperial Oil, owned by Stanard Oil of New Jersey.

Carlon plastic pipe was one of the early products along with wetting for the shoe industry, lacings and the once-famous hula hoops. It was one of the first plastic extruding plants in Canada.



Perfect day for an ice dip

LAST ONE IN is a... Halton Scuba Trek diver! Nobody else joined the six experienced club members in Fairy Lake Sunday afternoon. Top left, a Toronto TV crew films the dive, the sound technician protecting his microphone inside his coat. Lower left, Jim Mulholland tries to loosen the last patch of ice in the hole by jumping on it. Top right, Jim's No. 1 fans—wife Kathy and daughters Sarah Jane, four, and Carry Lynn, three. Lower right, one of the divers surfaces.

Restore our town hall

The price tag of \$130,000 to repair the town hall seems a high one, but there are more things to be considered than money.

In the same issue of the Free Press that records the estimated cost of repairs, houses were advertised at anything between \$48,000 for a brick bungalow in town to country houses at \$129,000 and \$156,000.

Certainly our old brick town hall is well worth more than one or even two single-family houses. It belongs to the community.

It is an obvious subject for loving

care, in these days when more and more people are paying attention to their past.

A current favorite volume is one containing photographs of weathered old railway stations, some of them in use as restaurants or craft centres now. Enough said about stations...

Not many of our old houses are intrinsically beautiful. We don't have too many buildings worth spending money on to preserve.

Certainly the town hall is one of them, rotting wooden bell tower and all.

CBs and the weather

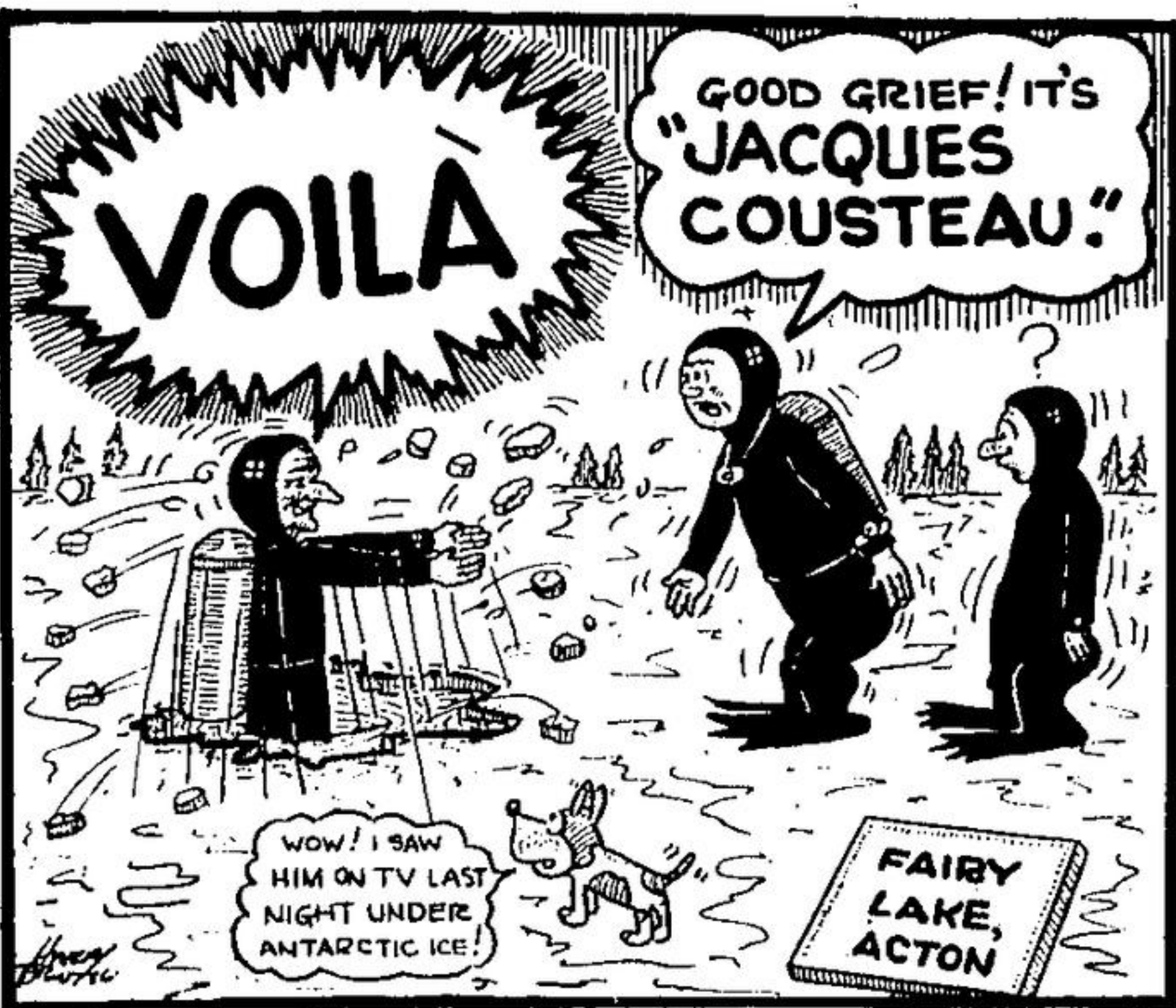
Commuters who have had to face the roads all through this long winter have discovered what a boon their CB radios can be. Many report advice that was invaluable to them—what roads to avoid, what hills were impassable, and when there were accidents ahead.

Certainly the radio weather reports fall far behind the efficiency of the CB flock. City reports cite weather that is absolutely wrong, as far as the Acton area is concerned. A major gap is

the inability to predict impending fog.

The Dominion Officers of the Royal Canadian Legion met last weekend with the Provincial Presidents and Secretaries and unanimously rededicated themselves to the principle of a united Canada and reaffirmed that the Legion will continue to work towards that end in every province and territory of Canada.

O Canada! We stand on guard for thee.



Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

All there's nothing more exhilarating than a good old-fashioned Canadian winter! (Is this the same guy who wrote a glum, lugubrious column last week about the physical and financial horrors of just such?)

We've just had three days of sun and no snow, and all those red-eyed, drippy-nosed, hacking, whining, snow-shovelling Canadians of a week ago have been transformed into virile, vibrant, smiling, sickenly-hearty exponents of the fabulous Canadian winter.

I made my stand a day or two after last week's column. I thought to myself "Screw this," or word to that effect. "I'm gonna go berserk. The Old Lady is getting weird. All my friends are either depressed or eerie. I'm gonna make the great escape."

So I did. A certain group of young punks to whom I am forced to refer as my colleagues, have been after me, slyly and maliciously, for about two years, to attend one of their poker evenings. They knew perfectly well that my wife wouldn't let me go, even if I told her it was a group of Sunday School teachers, and we were only going to play for matches.

They got after me again last Thursday. Maybe it was the weather, but something snapped. I said "Right. What time?"

They started to snicker, and poke each other with their elbows. This is known in their circle as humor. "Sure you won't have any trouble making it? We sometimes stay up as late as midnight, you know, Smiley. How ya gonna get through the next day's work?" And so on. I treated this juvenilia with the respect it deserved.

There was only one more hurdle, and you know what that was. But there was no real problem with her. All I had to do was get out and check all my insurance policies, make sure the cars and the house were properly signed over and promise not to have a drink before dinner, in case I had one at the poker den, and the Old Battelaxe caved in. Oh, not completely.

As I went out the door, she was yelling: "And don't expect the door to be unlocked when you get home, and if you're not here by midnight I'll call the police."

But that was nothing. In the old days, when she really loved me, and was really jealous, she'd get physical. She'd throw her arms around my neck and her legs around my waist, and I'd have a hell of a time getting through the door before I could brush her off against a tree, or dump her in a snowbank.

Anyway, the boys picked me up, and off we went into the wild night. The last of the

blizzards was just easing off, but it was blowing great curtains of snow off the mighty banks. I thought we were going a couple of miles, in town. Turned out we were heading for a chalet out in the hills, about 18 miles away, and the driver of the Datsun in which I was ensconced fancied himself as a contender in the Grand Winter Rally of Montenegro, or something. Had to call on the old steely fighter-pilot's nerves to refrain from screaming, "Lemme Out! I wanna go home and watch TV!"

However, true grit prevailed, and six hours later I was home, steady as a rock, about even on the night's poker, and ready for a few hours sleep.

I wouldn't bore you by telling you what kind of poker these aging juvenile delinquents play. Almost no stud or draw poker. They play what we used to call, before the male chauvinist crap began "Women's Poker". Games like Twenty-seven skip to My Loo ninth card wild anything in your armpit doesn't count and split the pot four ways. It took three times as long to describe the game to be played as it did to play it.

Had a Mississippi gambler, or even an old cowhand, been asked to sit in on just one of those deals, he'd have pulled his derringers, or his 38, as it might be, and started shooting "poker" players right and left.

I hate to mention one more detail. But, old enough to be the father of most of them, I was at work the next day bright as a shiny new dollar, teaching with my usual superb elegance, and looking askance at some of these bleary-eyed young "gamblers" who thought they were showing the old boy a big night out.

Migawd, I was in rougher games than that when I was 17.

However, I forgive them their misconceptions, and if they want to call a hangover being "down with the flu", that's their problem.

Point is, I had made the big breakthrough of the winter blah's. On Saturday morning, was up at the crack of noon, and off skiing in the bush with my wife. She fell five times. I fell once.

Sunday, off again skiing with a gang. My wife fell four times. I fell once. Followed this with an apres-ski party with old friends. Dandy fire going. Wizard mulled wine. Massive injections of hot homemade soup and home-baked bread. And home to bed a ten o'clock with a tremendous sense of physical and moral rectitude.

I've been feeling good about winter ever

since, and all depression is gone. Why don't you try it?

You don't have to begin with a poker game out in the wilds. Especially if you happen to be an 80 year-old lady.

But do something. Kick the cat. Give your grumpy old husband a goose. First thing you know they'll both be chasing you around the house, and your winter blues will vanish

Of this and that

The Ontario Safety League notes that a translation of one of China's road signs reads as follows: "Go soothingly on the greasy mud, for therein lurks the skid demon."

In weeks like these, it's nice to look back to the summer-time. Sure. Remember it? Nine rainy weekends in a row?

Books

It's driving me wacky, it's sending me crazy. This thinking, this writing, all this creating I get no rest, with no relief in sight!

It's called learning.

The accounting laid out in neat little columns. It has not balanced for days I've been struggling. This torture, this agony! when all at once it jives!

It's called learning.

The teacher said "write ideas" use your materials! It's amazing, your brain numbs like a puff ball. You fuss and panic to spark one tiny idea

It's called learning

Mathematicians, poets, artists and engineers all. Went through this crazy phase of life I'm sure. Will we make it over the top. What if we do.

It's called learning.

A Rockwood Student

The Free Press Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 1, 1967. Eddie Bush coach of the Hamilton Red Wings of the O.H.A. Jr. A series, was a guest along with the juvenile hockey team at Acton Lions' dinner meeting Monday night. The dynamic speaker kept the meeting entertained for almost an hour with anecdotes and advice on hockey as well as answering questions. Juvenile coach Howie Leader, Manager Riny (Pop) Schuts, Mr. Bush, captain Barry Elliott and Lion Chief Dave Hunter were among head table diners. As a parting shot Bush invited the juvenile team and the Lions to the next Red Wing game Thursday at the Hamilton club's expense.

A constable with the Acton O.P.P. since January 1966, Peter Campbell received word he has been transferred to the Oakville detachment effective March 1, 1967. Corporal Ray Mason announced this week. O.P.P. constable Robert Hildreth of the Oakville detachment will take Constable Campbell's posting here.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, February 28, 1957. An early evening blaze completely levelled the barn on the farm of Murray and Clarence Coles Friday, a mile and a half east of Acton. Possible cause was reported as electrical by Chief J. Newton. Damage estimated at \$20,000 was reported by fire chief Newton, who explained the estimate would not cover replacement. Rescued from the blaze were 36 pigs, a dairy herd of 46 cattle including calves and some horses. A tractor as well as harness and milling equipment were also saved. Spring is coming. Mrs. Jessie McEnery, R.R. 2, reported the first robins to the Free Press. She spotted the welcome birds Tuesday—when the weather was balmy. Maybe Wednesday's cold sent them south again.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, March 3, 1927. The Community Glee Club's concert last Wednesday evening was a real community event. The club is a fine male chorus of forty voices, and when they faced the packed auditorium at the Town Hall, they must have felt that their efforts were backed by the town and vicinity en masse. Weeks of practice had been gladly spent by the club in preparation of the programme they presented, and their efforts were certainly well appreciated by the citizens, who were fortunate enough to be in attendance at this first concert.

Following the programme the club members, their wives, the assisting artists, and other guests, enjoyed a banquet in the Parish Hall, where brief speeches were made, and a basket of roses presented to Miss Gray as evidence of the club's appreciation of her valuable assistance.

The net proceeds of the concert are to be devoted to community work and the club is to continue and will start immediately to rehearse for another programme which will be presented sometime in the spring.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, February 8, 1877. Sketches of the leading industries in Acton were carried in this issue of the Free Press.

W.H. Storey and Co. Glove Works - The establishment was commenced in Acton by Mr. W. H. Storey in 1868. At that time the operations were not very extensive, being principally confined to the manufacture of harvest gloves and the coarser grades of men's wear. But now all classes of goods are made here, comprising over 60 different lines, and embracing the finest quality. In the year 1872 Mr. Storey entered into partnership with Mr. James Marore and with Dr. McGarvin in 1873, when the operations were increased... a tannery was built for tanning and dressing the skins... The sale of Acton gloves extends from Halifax to Winnipeg. The present tariff operates to the great disadvantage of our manufacturers. The wholesale value of gloves made here the past year is \$35,000. From 35 to 50 hands are employed and wages average about \$50 a month, paid every Saturday evening. The firm has two travellers constantly on the road. (The entire process of making gloves is described.)

(The Storey Glove plant was razed to make room for the new post office on Bower Ave.)

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