

# Free Press Editorial Page

## Library now debt-free

Acton library, our town's centennial project, is now debt-free. The ten-year debentures are all paid off.

The attractive building cost about \$80,000, with \$1 per head of it—\$8,280—contributed by the provincial and federal governments. The remainder was paid by Acton taxpayers. The library had been situated before in cramped quarters in the Y building, and the centennial project was one to be proud of.

Now, ten years later, Acton is part of Halton Hills and another library is going to be built. It's in the much larger centre of Georgetown, and the cost, so far, appears to be ten times greater than that of Acton library.

Council has approved building and furnishing of the library in Georgetown at a cost not to exceed \$750,000, but the library board is talking about other ways of raising money, too, to cover additional

expenses. Acton library is due to be changed, as well. The chief librarian is recommending that the children's section be moved downstairs, which will require the building of a stairway and special window fixtures for an emergency exit, and obviously more supervision. The need for a road to the library for frequent deliveries and wheelchair users is being considered. The board room is to be panelled.

It's interesting to see that money will be spent on Acton library at the same time as the new building is built in Georgetown. But we can't help but wonder if the time is right for more expenses. In either town. The library serves us well and is not overcrowded often.

Spending to provide ourselves with the very best of everything has apparently become the accepted way.

But is it the only way?

## Smiles and such

From the Indusmin publication, we share a smile:

An elementary school teacher recently prepared a humorous article for an aircraft industry publication, based largely on information gleaned from his young students' essays and examinations.

In commenting on the duties of a flight navigator, one youngster wrote, "The navigator figures out the latitude and longitude. Latitude tells him where he is, and longitude tells him how long he can stay there."

And did you know, as one youngster advises, that the three principal crewmen on a plane are the pilot, navigator and percolator?

Asked if they knew what two navigational aids were, one youth replied, "I know what a sextant is, but I had rather not say." And another answered, "a gyroscope is something only encyclopedias know for sure." This is the teacher's favorite: "A visa is a passport that lets a person fly to another country. For round trips, you need a visa versa."

## Of this and that

If all the economists on earth were laid end to end, they wouldn't reach a conclusion.

How to avoid being billed for water at the new, higher rate... see Lorna Clarke's helpful letter to the editor.

Intriguing old class pictures have been appearing in the Free Press on the editorial page the past couple of weeks. Bert Hinton, who loaned them, has a good idea to pass on. He suggests people with old pictures, letters, documents, etc. could write on them that if they are not wanted by the heirs, they should be given to The Free Press or the library.

There are some things that, try as you may, you cannot change. You cannot change the weather, you cannot change the past, nor can you change another person against his or her will. Be smart, save your energy. Stop trying to change things and people accept them as they are.

Things we can change we should, especially ourselves. We can change our attitudes, our personality, we can change bad habits into good ones, you can change your job. Yes, we can all change ourselves to be better persons.

If you're on to energy conservation, here's another angle. A clean 60-watt light bulb is more effective than a dirty 100-watt one!

In Huron county, the Board of Education took an unprecedented step to cut costs. They did away with the supervisory positions of superintendent and an assistant to the administrator, and returning the two men concerned to schools as principals. The move came at the time of retirement of two principals, and there is also declining enrolment in the district. The decision at least makes more sense to taxpayers than the Halton dispute over chairmanships or department heads, which also involved money.



SKATING CARNIVAL highlights... Above, one of the few spills of the show came during The Best of Disney's Indian number when one of the natives hit the ice. Lower right cowboys gather at the bottom of the stairs before making their grand entrance into the spotlight. Lower left, the Seven Dwarfs carefully circle Snow White. The arena was packed for the two performances.

## Movie Nostalgia . . . on ice



## Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

I was so mad when I began writing this column yesterday that there was smoke starting to come out of the typewriter keys, so I stopped and let them cool off overnight. They're still warm, but just touchable.

Reason for my rage was that I had been royally shafted three times in a row by three different service stations owned by three different oil companies, to tune of about \$200 and a great deal of personal inconvenience.

In each case the ineptness of the so called "service" was equalled only by the rapacity of the operators.

My first impulse was to name names and lay the sordid facts on the line. But I was boiling so buoyantly that there was no way I could have written an honest, objective account of the piracy I was subjected to, so I'm glad I slept on it.

I didn't want to label all Sunoco, Esso and Gulf service station operators as highwaymen, because that would have maligned a couple of local operators who have not, to my knowledge while I was watching, mugged me. They were not involved.

Suffice it to say that the next time you see Wayne and Shuster doing one of those commercials in which you are assured that a big American oil company's only aim in life is to give you the best possible service at the lowest possible cost, switch to a soap ad. At least the soap merchants can you blatantly, and take you the cleaners literally, rather than figuratively, as the oil companies do.

And I thought plumbers were rough! After tugging with a few "mechanics" in a few days, I could have kissed an honest plumber who chanced along. He'd probably have charged me five bucks for the privilege of kissing him, but he'd have looked good after those various greasemonkeys who seemed more interested in rape than kissing.

Nobody wants to hear my troubles, but I don't care. I have to purge myself of this bile or I'll be sour on servicemen all spring. I don't want to go through my life hating mechanics. Some of my best friends are mechanics. But I wouldn't want my daughter to marry one. On second thought maybe I should. She'd certainly be financially secure for life.

Now, the sad saga. It was March blowing itself out like a polar walrus. Bitter cold, wind gusting to about 50. We were on our way to the city for a couple of days. Stopped for coffee at one of those big, drive-in restaurant-service stations which have nothing going for them except a monopoly.

Their coffee is lousy, their food is swill, their staff is surly, slovenly, stupid, or all three. You know the kind I mean. Terrific architecture with nothing inside. You've been stung before and sworn you'd never do it again, but there's nothing else for another 40 miles.

Drank the lukewarm dishwasher they call coffee. Turned the key to get going. Nothing. Couldn't be the starter. Had just had a whole new unit put in, two weeks before, at a cost of \$70. Must be the battery, in that very chill wind.

No problem. Get a boost. Walked around to service centre. Nobody home. Out front three young gas-jockeys pumping fuel like mad. Tried to get some help. Was almost completely ignored. Finally, one of them told me with some delight that the mechanic was on holidays, that the tow-truck was away somewhere, and that he personally was too busy to even lift the hood.

Mounting frustration and seething anger commencing. But I'm a patient man, a reasonable man. Finally, kid arrives with tow-truck. Gives battery a boost. I turn key, with relief. Horrible screeching sound. No more. Everything dead. The kid reckoned my new starter unit had just

stripped its guts out. He was just guessing, of course.

A little background music here. We were on our way to hear our daughter play in a concert. Her mother had brought a complete new corduroy outfit, made by hand, for the girl to wear at the concert. And there we were stranded at a wind-swept "service" station 40 miles from anywhere.

Only by dint of great forbearance and awesome threats of law-suits did I get one of those turkeys to call a garage in the nearest town, and arrange to have the car towed there and repaired.

We hitched a ride down the road with two lovely women from up north, bless their good souls, and they took us into the city, getting themselves thoroughly lost in the process. Taxi to concert site. Daughter doesn't want new outfit. Missed concert. Taxi to hotel. Total taxi bill \$14. OK. No sweat.

Next morning, phone garage to which car towed. Sure he can fix. No problem. "You pick up tomorrow. Before noon. I quit noon."

Next day, taxi 45 miles north (no bus) to garage. Car fixed. Bill \$99. Garageman won't accept credit card though sign in window says he will. Borrow enough from cabbie to get car out of hock. Decent cabbie, took cheque, was sympathetic. His cab bill, \$40.

Drive car all way back to city. Something wrong; doesn't steer right. Whole day shot. Arrive hotel, no parking space left at the inn.

And I'm skipping over the bad parts. I'm sure this bitter little tale has mechanics everywhere slapping their knees in hilarity. But I'm afraid it left a slightly rotten taste in my mouth.

One service station made a mess of the job in the first place. The second one advertised service and gave none. The third guy hosed me to the hilt because I was comparatively helpless, and was ugly about it into the bargain.

I'm sure there are some good service stations, somewhere. I'd like to come across one. And maybe there is one among the many American oil companies operating in Canada which is more interested in good service than selling gas. Maybe.

## Our readers write

### Read water meter now

Dear Editor: The new water rates which we are told, will come into effect on July 1, could hit some residents unnecessarily hard. These are people who have inside water meters, are not home when the meter reader calls and either fail to return the meter reading card at all or do not realize there is a space on the card for the water meter reading. They are charged a minimum bill until such time as a correct reading is received when all the accumulated consumption is charged. This often causes some consternation at any time but if it should happen just when

the new rates are introduced it could cause unnecessary hardship. Therefore if a meter reading card is left at any home during April for May the customer should make certain that the water meter reading is filled in and the card returned without delay, not forgetting that these cards now require postage if mailed. This should avoid any gallonage being held over to be charged at the new rate. Yours very truly, Lorna J. Clarke 124 Elizabeth Drive, Acton, Ontario April 13, 1977



HERE'S ANOTHER of Bert Hinton's old class pictures, so pick out who you know! Front row left to right: Bill Johnston, Carney Burns, unknown, Jack Skilling, Ted Harrop, Chris Swackhamer, - Precious, Bert Hinton, Gordon Leslie; second row unknown, Kathleen McComb, Isobel Smith, - Smith, - McKeown,

Kay Stewart, Lillian Perry, Isobel Bruce, Barbara Guthrie, Eileen Clarridge; back row unknown, unknown, Bill Harrop, Gordon Cooper, Miss Frances Hurst, Miss Margaret McDonald, Miss Bertha Nephew, Isobel Lantz, Clarice Morton, Katie Molozzi. The date is 1928.

## The Free Press Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, April 19, 1967

The long-awaited stop lights installed at the Mill-Main St. corner will be turned on Monday morning at 9 a.m. At the same time, parking regulations as posted by signs will be enforced.

Burned bed, ruined bedding and a damaged room resulted from a fire Wednesday last week at the home of Rev. and Mrs. R. McMurray, Jeffrey Ave. Children playing with matches were blamed for setting the bed on fire.

Preparing to meet the exciting challenges that are fast developing in the construction industry, Building Products of Canada Limited is making significant capital improvements to its plant at Acton. Already the largest plastics extrusion plant in Canada, the Acton complex will play a key role in the future of the company as a leading manufacturer of building materials.

The Dominion Hotel, threatened by a destructive blaze which started in a chip fryer and surreptitiously crept up wall participations, was saved from destruction Friday night by a well-drilled team of Acton firefighters.

Sunday afternoon, Acton firefighters had a run to Ballinfad where a bon fire had burned out of control. The flames were soon confined.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, April 18, 1957

Leslie Ann Doby and Margaret Davidson, both aged 12, placed first with 85 points to defeat seven other entries in the duet class at the Georgetown festival.

The Acton Branch of the Canadian Legion has purchased the Burns property adjoining their present site. The new property will be used immediately for parking facilities to relieve congestion. A through-way can now be provided from Main to Willow Streets.

Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Hinton returned from Toronto where they were visiting Mr. and Mrs. C. O. Burns and family and friends.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Wood and Mr. and Mrs. D. G. Ryder and David visited on the weekend with Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Wood in St. Catharines.

Mr. and Mrs. Bud Anderson and Mr. and Mrs. Colin MacColl attended the dog show in Buffalo over the weekend where Bud's dog won first prize.

E. E. Barr returned from a vacation in Florida on Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Arnold returned from a vacation in Florida last Saturday.

Mrs. Wm. Van Norman, Mrs. Jack Morell and Mrs. Gordon Adie, Guelph, visited friends here last Wednesday.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, April 19, 1877

The steam whistle at Speight's shop may again be heard, as of yore, at morning noon and night. We hope it will keep good time. Fashionable tweed suits made to order, \$12, at East End Clothing Store, Acton.

Acton now boasts of five lodges of secret societies. They comprise the following orders, according to seniority: Sons of Temperance, Free Masons, Grangers, Knights of Pythias, and Odd Fellows. All of them are said to be in flourishing condition. An able-bodied man who is not a member, or about to become a member, is now difficult to find.

The stone hotel, corner of Main and Mill St., has been occupied the past few weeks by Mr. McQuarrie, recently of Rockwood, who is awaiting the decision of the Licensing Commissioners respecting the granting of a hotel license. If the commissioners see fit to grant the license we have no doubt it will be kept in a respectable and orderly manner.

Mr. James Gordon, whose remains were buried in Acton recently, was one of the pioneer settlers in this vicinity. He was a great lover of Canada which he knew in its infant state. He had his share of trials and privations of the early settlers but lived to see the land developed.

He was one of the now few survivors of the marked type of men that form an important element in the Presbyterian church linking as they do the present with the past and whose place when they all disappear can never be filled again.

## THE ACTON FREE PRESS

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