

Free Press Editorial Page

Sign up for Acton

"What can we do about regional government?"

That's been a question we've heard regularly since even before the new system of government was laid on Halton by the province.

At first it seemed incredible that Acton would be joined with its old traditional rival, Georgetown, in one sprawling town. But it happened.

Our council was dissolved, and instead of nine people doing Acton's business we send three people to Halton Hills council. Esquering felt the same loss, and also sends three people. From Georgetown there are six, plus the mayor.

We no longer have planning board, library board, parks and recreation committee.

Even our town workmen come from Georgetown.

This for a town which ran its own affairs successfully for well over a century!

Acton, in effect, is now run from Georgetown.

It has long rankled.

Actonians for Action committee is simply a group of people who sat

down together to figure out something concrete. They have been meeting all winter and spring, and when Halton region asked for submissions on Bill 151 which set up regional government they knew the time had come.

Their brief is ready. It is submitted this week.

And now all of us in Acton and Esquering and Georgetown who have felt resentment and loss of identity these past long years have a chance to do something specific, too.

The petition sheets will be out in stores and will be taken door-to-door.

How far new boundaries would be altered in Esquering and Nassagaweya is yet to be determined, but of course these neighboring residents are vitally concerned, too.

Sign, by all means!

The petition obviously wants Acton and Georgetown to be two separate areas, within the region of Halton.

But the petition only asks for a study - surely the only possible course.

On showing the flag

The persons who enjoyed themselves by stealing our flag at the Free Press had to climb up on the roof to do it. It must have been quite a challenge, all right. Big fellas.

Hope people aren't discouraged from flying flags. The library and Legion in particular have had a series of bad experiences. The library has abandoned its flagpole altogether. The post office now has a new pole, with the flag harder to reach.

Dominion Day is coming soon. Flag flying time. Maybe patriotism could inspire these show-off thieves to replace the flags.

Where do they hide them, anyway?

Local people are wondering why the federal government ordered the huge flag that was recently especially made for it at Erin. "Maybe it's a jubilee present for the Queen," was one suggestion. "She could put it in the back window of her van," replied one wag.

Of this and that

Fellow workers here at the Free Press were deeply saddened by the death of our friend Dora Ryder. This patient and cheerful woman had suffered from multiple sclerosis for many years but above that contracted another illness which proved fatal.

Our admiration for her courage was extended to admiration for her family, who provided such dedicated care and support over the years.

The faithful contributor of the Eden Mills news, Mrs. Georgina Wright, has died. We appreciate her contribution over the years

very much. It's the kind of job that is taken on by someone with a genuine interest in the community, rather than any desire for fame or fortune. We will miss Mrs. Wright.

Another long-time contributor, Mrs. Fred MacArthur has been ill, and we send best wishes and our thanks to her.



WE ALL WANT TO CHANGE THE WORLD BUT WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT DESTRUCTION DON'T YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN COUNT ME OUT!

—LENNON & MCCARTNEY '68



IT WAS A WET GOLF GAME SATURDAY as Acton Open played through its twenty-second annual tournament. The weather did little to

dampen spirits at the game, as golfers were exuberant to the point of actually enjoying the weather.



Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

This was supposed to be a probing inquiry into what laws Canadians break most, and why they break them. But it's too dangd hot.

What a country! Just a few weeks ago, you could get free ice-cubes from those 10-foot icicles hanging from your roof. Today the refrigerator can't keep up with the demand for them.

That horrible heat wave we've experienced coincided with a visit from The Boys. The combination practically put Gran and I on our knees, and we're just now recovering gingerly from an ordeal that would have put us in our graves, had we been 10 years older.

It's not that we can't stand the heat. And goodness knows, The Boys are a treat. But because you can stand driving doesn't mean you want to drive 800 miles a day. And because you enjoy ice cream doesn't mean you want to eat nothing else for two weeks.

Mother of The Boys, our Kim, was in the process of writing the last of her university essays and thought she'd pop up home, have a visit, get some free baby-sitting and finish her essays. A nice thought.

But The Boys had other ideas. After being cooped up in a city apartment for the winter, they wanted some action, and there's always action at Grandad's, at "the big house," as it's known.

Little Balind, the younger, was supposed to be quiet and convalescent after a serious illness. Little Balind, after about one day, was as quiet and convalescent as a Mack truck with Dr. Jekyll's alter ego at the wheel.

After about three days, he had pulled a lamp over on himself, put a permanent gouge in the coffee table, knocked over the fire screen (twice), fallen off a bed on his face, lost a knob off the TV set, sprinkled a can of talcum powder over the entire upstairs with a triumphant grin, and smashed several dishes by hurling them to the floor from his high chair, his signal that the meal was over.

Of course, after his illness he had practically no appetite, so feeding him was no problem. It only took the three of us adults, one cooking, one shovelling it in, and one cleaning up the debris, to stave off his hunger.

He'd start off with a bababa to keep him from perishing while you were cooking his bacon and eggs. Then it was a scramble to get his toast and honey ready while the eggs were vanishing. Licks off the honey, hurls toast on the floor, stands up in his high chair and wipes hands on Gran's newly-decorated wall. Then out of the chair and on to Grandad's knee for a few more bites of egg or muffin or whatever. This would go on all day, punctuated by apples, cookies, swigs of apple juice and bits of cheese to keep his stomach from rumbling.

I made the mistake of sticking my little finger in his mouth once. Thought he was getting some more teeth and that I'd give the gums a little rub to ease the pain. He dam' near took the end right off my finger. That kid is a natural for the wrestling ring or the football field.

No such problem with the other guy, Nikov. He is a dainty eater, can feed himself, and sits up at the table, propped on a fat book. No problem at all. Except that he won't eat. Meal time is a game. If he gets wieners and beans, he wants milk on it, then it's too cold. If you're out of eggs, he wants scrambled eggs. If you have apple juice and fresh grapefruit, the only thing he can stomach is orange juice. He can make a half-hour ceremony out of eating one strand of spaghetti.

There's no malice in it. He just enjoys manipulating three fairly intelligent

adults, like three puppets, one cajoling, one threatening, and one furious. We took turns.

Occasionally whisked off to bed without any dinner, he'd be quiet for a few minutes, then paddle downstairs and say he wanted chicken, and you'd had stew.

At first they were a little peeved that Grandad had to go off to work every morning. The old one wanted me to take him to the car wash, one of our favorite excursions. The little one just wanted me to take him and yelled. So I instituted "Kiss Time." I lined the whole gang up, wife, daughter, two grandboys, got them to pucker up and went down the line with a kiss for each. Very popular routine. You have to be crafty with kids.

For a few days, the weather was cold, and all they could do was make the inside of the house look as though Attila and his Huns had just laid waste a village.

Then the heat wave struck. Their mother is one of those new-fangled ones who think the children should be allowed to express their creative faculties regardless. The Boys poured into the back yard like the Saracens pouring into Spain, and created.

I'd come home from work, and there'd be two naked tots, soaking, mud from head to toe, watering each other, their mother, lawn furniture and any stray animal, human or otherwise, that came in range.

It took only half an hour to clean up. That, along with two hours at feeding time, and about two hours at bath and story time, and an hour to recuperate, took a fair chunk out of the day.

Now they're gone and I miss them terribly. Nobody to run over, jump on my arthritic foot and butt me in the stomach. Nobody to make me read the longest fairy story in the entire book. I can hardly wait to see them again. Maybe Christmas? For a day?

OUR READERS WRITE:

Constable expresses thanks

To The Editor:

Another successful day to sell bicycle licences was held at the Acton Halton Regional Police Office, 04 June 77.

Many thanks go to Constable Bob Ustryzcki, Helen Murray, "Pop" Main and Lorna Clarke, who helped in the office to sell the licences and handle the cash.

Thank you to Mr. Mike Kinal of Home Hardware, who donated a tent and Mr.

John Coniglio of A & J Place, who donated a T-shirt plus a cash donation. These prizes were won by Connie Youmans and Kim Hagan.

A special thanks to the Acton Free Press for their co-operation and coverage.

Yours very truly,
Tom Roduck
Police Constable,
H.R.P.F.

Memories of the town hall

950 Bank St.,
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Charlie:

Many thanks for sending me the three editions of the Acton Free Press which I have perused with much pleasure. Understandably the local news meant nothing to me now (except, of course, that about the town hall) but I did see that Mac Stewart, who lives in Ottawa, and whose father was minister of Knox church after I had left Acton, had lost his mother.

It was the pictures which I enjoyed the most. The carried me away back down memory's lane until I was almost a boy again. In the one on Page 1, April 27 issue, showing the beer kegs being smashed, I can recognize one spectator with certainty, Neil McNabb and two others almost with certainty but not beyond all doubt, as John Harvey and George Hynds. Perhaps the Free Press might have kept a list of those present for that wasteful occasion. But, since H.P. Moore was then the publisher and editor of the paper, I doubt if such names are on record.

The picture of the town hall taken in June 1898 shown on Page 3 of the same edition is exactly as it was when we moved to Acton in the spring of 1903. The house in the background is that of Dan Graham who was the municipal officer at that time. He was followed by a Mr. Carnohan, who, in turn, was succeeded by John Harvey if my memory serves me correctly. Part of their duties was to ring the big bell in the open tower each day at 7 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. This bell was also the fire alarm but was used in a different way. It was thrilling to hear its rapid and continuous ding dong when announcing a fire at any time of day or night. I well remember the burning of the old G.T.R. station late one summer afternoon and that of Campbell House (Clark's Hotel) late one night. The stone building was completely gutted but was eventually restored and became known as the Acton House.

terraced more or less square mound, which covered a big tank or cistern which was kept full of water for the use of the fire engine to pump water for centre town fires or for the volunteer fire brigade practices. I can remember hearing that this reservoir was connected to Henderson's Pond and so was kept more or less full at all times. But others, scattered about town, had to be filled periodically I believe. When the station burned down, a tank somewhere on Young St. was used. I remember Eddie Gamble went down the track to flag down the 5.10 p.m. train while spaces were dug between the two ties and the hoses were threaded through them and under the rails.

Situated on top of the mound mentioned was a band stand used by the Citizens' Band to give summer night concerts. Charlie Mason was the bandmaster at the time we arrived in town but I am under the impression that he had only recently succeeded John Hill as such. Besides being the bandmaster, Charlie played a cornet well and sometimes played a cornet solo at the summer night concerts. The sight of the old stage and benches brought back nostalgic memories of good times and events.

Of course I easily recognize Laura Willes among the protesters who attended the regional council meeting to present their case of saving the old town hall as an historic building. The years same to have been good to her and to Ruby Clark as well. I think the petition was well presented and I sincerely hope it is successful in saving the old building. But my guess is that it won't do more than delay its demolition for perhaps two to five years.

I believe my grandfather was a bricklayer for the contractor who constructed the building in 1881 and most likely worked on it during its building.

I only hope the building is left standing until 1981 at least so it will have stood for a complete century.

Yours sincerely,
Wm. E. (Bill) White

The Free Press Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Wednesday, June 21, 1967

Brian Robertson, son of Mr. and Mrs. D.G. Robertson of Ospringe, has graduated in Industrial Management from Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology. He attended Ospringe school and later Erin high school. He is now employed with Northern Electric, Montreal.

Sharon Buck, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Len. J. Buck, Ospringe, graduated from St. Joseph's Hospital school of nursing, Guelph. She attended Ospringe school and Bishop Macdonnell, Guelph before training at St. Joseph's.

Firefighters were called to the home of N.E. Armstrong on Esquering-Nassagaweya town line Monday afternoon to squelch a furnace which belched out clouds of smoke. The brick farmhouse at the end of Killy Springs was filled with smoke and firefighters used smoke ejectors to clear it out. There were no flames.

The name of Miss Linda Braida was inadvertently omitted from the list of teachers at the M.Z. Bennett school published in the Free Press last week.

An advertisement of special interest to many this week will be that of Sheridan College of Applied Arts and Technology, or the community college as its more commonly called. This is the first official notice we've had of registrations for the opening of the new type of school.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, June 27, 1957

A drowning fatality was avoided at Acton Park last Saturday when Donald Thomson, R.R. 1, Acton, was rescued by S.A. Rainford, 215 Wynford, Place, Acton. Like many others, Mr. Thompson had entered the waters of Fairy Lake to cool off during the heat wave and not being a strong swimmer, he apparently stepped out beyond his depth and soon found himself in difficulty. Mrs. Rainford, sitting on the bank watching the swimmers noticed someone in difficulty and called to her husband who was in the water at the time. Being an average swimmer, Mr. Rainford swam to the spot where the young man was going down for the third time and grasping him by the hair, pulled Mr. Thompson from the water. Several by-standers assisted in hauling the unconscious lad onto the shore and applied artificial respiration immediately.

A quiet birthday celebration took place at the home of Mrs. J.W. Middleton, 227 Mill St., last Sunday, when her mother, Mrs. J. W. Dutton, celebrated her 90th birthday. A teacher at Brock Ave. School, Toronto, for the past 40 years, Miss Bertha Brown retires this week. She attended school here before moving to Toronto and is a frequent visitor. The Board of Education, Home and School Association, teachers, and former pupils held dinners, presentations and social evenings to honor Miss Brown during the past month.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, June 14, 1877

A good way to kill potato bugs is to wash them between bricks.

Re-opening of Baptist chapel next Sunday and the Solree in the Drill Shed on Monday evening following.

A rare curiosity may be seen in Major Allan's garden. A graft that was put on an apple tree this spring is now sporting two good-sized blossoms. This is precociousness rarely witnessed.

Stafford Zimmerman is appointed collector of Statute Labor Tax for the current year.

At the meeting of Esquering township council, a number of applications to have the names of young men placed on the assessment roll, as farmers' sons, in order to give them votes, were taken into consideration. Added to the roll as farmers' sons were John Patton, John McTavish, Duncan McTavish, John N. Miller, Judah Centre, George Michie, Neil Stewart and W.H. Cross.

Editorial... The past few years have certainly been trying ones, and many have been despairing of the future of our country.

The government has established a new post office on the property of Rev. Mr. Gillespie, Esquering, which will be known as Mansewood. Until the mails are carried by rail, a tri-weekly stage will visit Mansewood. The people of that vicinity are much pleased with the improvement.

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Business and Editorial Office



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