

# Free Press Editorial Page

## An exciting vision

Surely no one can inspect the draft plan for a Revitalization of the Acton Business Centre without a feeling of excitement.

Here is a plan which for reasonable cost will improve the town immensely, for the good of all of us.

It is for something like this that the Business Improvement Area was proposed. The business people in the blocks involved did not organize to object, and so the formation of this novel group got underway.

First their project was the interlocking sidewalk stones. And next they contracted the \$3,875 study which was received last week and is outlined fully in today's Free Press.

The tasks of the BIA are financed through the business taxes of the merchants and business people (including even doctors) in the blocks of the downtown area. It is not surprising that when the first tax bills arrived, with their 50 per cent hike in business taxes to cover the BIA budget, some of them were surprised and upset.

But with the arrival of the study just a few weeks after, there's no doubt that all of them can join together in looking ahead to a good

future for our town.

Downtowns are drastically different from malls. In a plaza situation, a manager simply tells the stores what will be done. How they will look when they will be open—where the flowers and benches will go outside their front doors. Here, individual store keepers and business people must agree and of course that is never easy.

Through the BIA, though, a good start has been made. The sight of the sidewalks, which cost the merchants money, proves they can work together.

The plan obviously will benefit all of us if it is implemented.

The idea of promoting the town as a leather town is particularly appealing. Can't you see us as a tourist attraction? With stores that specialize in leather goods? Booklets on the history of the industry to be purchased? Small souvenirs in hide shapes to be bought? Craftspeople fashioning leather articles at the Saturday market?

Acceptance of the report is the beginning of a dream that can go a long, long, way.

## Enough is enough

Not only Actonians, Esquimes and Massagaweya residents complain about regional government. Here is an editorial from the Burlington Gazette on Tuesday.

The incredible saga of the attempt to build a new headquarters for the regional municipality of Halton continues to unroll—and it gets more difficult to believe with each new step.

Provincial Treasurer Darcy McKeough has approved an exemption to the Parkway Belt regulations that will allow the region to build its \$2.7 million headquarters building near Bronte Road north of Queen Elizabeth Way. The province sold the region the land specifically for the headquarters site — after two years of council debate over the location of the building — then required the region to apply for an exemption. Does anybody at either level have the faintest idea what goes on at the other level?

The region itself has shown itself to be totally inept throughout the entire process of choosing a site, choosing an architect, and keeping costs within the original \$2.2 million target.

Perhaps the most difficult pill for

taxpayers to swallow over the whole affair is that the region — let alone the province — would be so foolhardy as to proceed with erecting a monument to regional government in Halton after the results of June's provincial election. Surely the province must realize that one of the reasons the Conservative government was returned with a minority and that Dr. Stuart Smith's Liberals were elevated to the official opposition was the regional government issue. People are simply not satisfied with the way it operates.

Burlington South cabinet minister George Kerr said on election night that any area that wanted a review of regional government would likely get it: still Halton batters its way ahead, building a foundation for a structure that may change entirely over the next few years.

It's been almost four full years since the first regional council was elected in Halton. Council has achieved none of its original aims and has thoroughly botched such projects as the headquarters selection, and the attempt to provide adequate garbage disposal for the region.

Enough is enough: let's have the review.

## Happy birthday, Miss Bennett

Greetings—and thanks again—to Minnie Z. Bennett from four generations of students. This woman who was young and lively when she taught her first class of students, will be 97 years old on Friday.

The town appreciates what she did to educate our young people and the way she provided a splendid model for Christian principles and behaviour. She has already been named Citizen of the Year and she has that plaque with

her in Central Park Lodge, Kitchener.

She hasn't been able to come back to Acton for quite a few years now but she is well remembered by hundreds of people of all ages. Some of her students are nearing 80. Others who know her name are the four and five year olds planning to start into kindergarten in the M. Z. Bennett school just a month from now.

What a wonderful span of influence she has had!



What beats me is: who painted the bricks yellow?



500,000 BALES OF HAY tower over their six-foot-tall collector John Andersen. Mr. Andersen makes custom compost for mushroom farmers, and has collected the 600 foot long by 40 foot wide by 14 foot tall haystack since January. He uses hay as one of the main ingredients of his compost.



James A. Taylor

The United Church of Canada  
Does God really want bad things to happen to people? I find that hard to reconcile with a loving God—but some people talk about disaster as "God's will".

Or that verse in St. Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome. "In everything God works for good."  
Quoting that to someone who has just gone through a marriage separation, or lost a job is like pouring a glass of vinegar for someone dying of thirst. It's not what Jesus would do. He didn't tell the blind, or the lame, or the woman caught in adultery, that their affliction or punishment was for their own good. He agonized with them, forgave them and cured them.

And could you say to someone whose child had just been pulped by a hit-and-run driver that "in everything God works for good?" If you can, what happened to

sympathy and compassion?

And yet there are times when that verse makes sense.  
Take Richard Harrichand. Or rather, take his parents.

A couple of years ago, Richard came to Canada from Guyana, the former British colony in South America. Last spring, his parents and his brothers and sisters decided to join him.

They bought their tickets. They obtained visas to be landed immigrants. And on the great day, they walked out to the jet at the airport in Georgetown, Guyana.

The plane's doors closed as they reached it. They had tickets but they couldn't get on board. They were never given an explanation.

Their baggage was on the plane. All they had was the clothes they were wearing. They couldn't go home; it had been sold to buy the airplane tickets. The family had to

be divided up, among friends and relatives.

That was when something clicked in the father's mind. The visas. He had forgotten them. They were still in the desk, in the church where he used to be minister.

Had they gotten onto the plane, without those visas, they would almost certainly have been turned back by Canadian immigration. They would have had to reapply from Guyana. "For my size of family", said Mr. Harrichand, "that would have cost me another \$4,000, which I did not have."

Their visas expired May 9th. That same day, they caught a substitute flight to Toronto. At 11 p.m., one hour before the time of expiry, they cleared immigration. And Richard and his wife were waiting to welcome them to their new country.

In that case, maybe God was working for good, in what seemed to be a tragedy.

## Stranded in the airport

## OUR READERS WRITE:

### Has a personal project

Editor,  
Acton Free Press  
Sir:

As has been already well publicized, The Hon. Premier Hatfield of New Brunswick had appointed me to the Royal Commission organized to investigate the Jail Fire at St. John, N.B. which took 21 lives. I had accepted that appointment as I felt I could be a contributive factor in the investigation due to my previous practical experience of 42 years incarceration.

However, meeting with several

parliamentarians in Ottawa last week on matters involving penology and the Martin McGuigan House of Commons Subcommittee involving the Canadian Penitentiary System, I find it necessary to decline the New Brunswick appointment to enable me to pursue my study and reply to the House of Commons through the Minister of Justice and the Solicitor General of the said report currently submitted as recommendations to the House of Commons.

Further, I am too preoccupied with the

preparation of my biography from which a movie will be produced, and I will leave Acton in the next few days for Winnipeg at the invitation of the Provincial Government there to confer with officials in Manitoba on Corrections. Also, I am in the process of obtaining a Charter to found a Canadian Boys Town on the National level. It is expected I will initiate this program in this area subject to approval of the Regional Council.

The estimate cost of these projects is estimated to be about 50 million dollars within a period of the next five years, and I will utilize the capital acquired from the biography and movie for this cause toward my efforts to curb Juvenile Delinquency and Vandalism everywhere, but all especially in this Region. This will be a long dreamt of personal project.

Sincerely yours,  
Arthur J. Meunier, A.A.  
14-A John Str., S.  
P.O. Box 65,  
Acton, Ont.  
Phone 853-3422

poontoon or Bailey bridge. It would be good training for them and would take less than a day.

Yours truly,  
John P. Brownlee

### Call in the army

131 Mill St. W.  
Acton.

Dear sirs:

Just a suggestion on the road bypass (on Main St. N.) Why can't they call in the Army Royal Engineers? They can build a

### Think of it

The Ontario Humane Society has sent out a press release to newspapers urging motorists not to leave their pets in parked cars during the hot summer months. The society notes the sun can quickly heat up the interior of a car so it resembles the inside of a furnace and the result for an animal locked inside may be tragic.

Criminal charges could be laid in such cases where animals must be removed from locked cars. In most cases it is just a matter of neglecting to think of the animal's well-being, which impels motorists to leave pets in cars and the law is rarely implemented.

Well-meaning pet owners may think the problem is solved by leaving the car windows rolled down slightly, but this often does not provide adequate ventilation.

The Humane Society advises motorists when they go shopping or elsewhere in the hot months to leave their pets at home.

If you must take your pet with you leave the windows wide open.



CLASS PICTURE taken May 12, 1925 at Acton public school was donated by Ernie Broughton of Bracebridge. Front row, left to right: John Kerr, Bill Williams, Stewart Lantz, Herb Woods, John Barber, Howard Switzer, and Charles Holmes. Second row: Gordon Babcock, Bob Hall, Gordon Hansen, Thos. Gibbons, Glen Ryder, —Taylor, Jim Hurd, Terence O'Shea, Ernie Broughton, and Frank Winters. Third row, unknown, Isobel Bruce, Clara Bauer, Olive Rookes, unknown, Velma Blair, Irene Cross, —Hall, Kathleen McComb, Lois Atkinson, Katherine Stewart, and unknown. Fourth row, Nora Waterhouse, Beryl Tucker, Mary Gibbons, Phyllis Lasby, Doreen Masales, unknown, unknown, Mrs. Moore, (teacher), Willa Lasby, Gordon Reid, —Anderson, Gordon Currie, and unknown.

## The Free Press Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Wednesday, August 2, 1967

Within a month, work will begin on the repaving of Highway 25 from the Macdonald-Cartier Freeway to Acton. The project will take approximately three months and includes a two-foot widening of the stretch between the 401-25 cloverleaf and Campbellville sideroad. A surface similar to the present one will be applied, a spokesman said.

Residents looking for a centennial project of their own are getting ideas from the Burlington Public Library. The library is urging citizens to donate a new book to the library, on which the donor's name will be inscribed. The gift books are expected to help stock a new main public library which will be underway next year.

Mr. Victor Wells of England is on a lengthy visit with his daughter Mrs. Janet Bird, 180 Tidey Ave. Mr. Wells and Mr. and Mrs. Bird are flying to Houston, Texas next week to visit his eldest daughter whom he hasn't seen in 23 years. This is a retirement gift from all the family in England.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, August 8, 1957

Bruce Andrews, 16-year-old son of Mrs. and the late Hank Andrews, emerged top runner in the two-mile road race on Monday held at Melgrove. Bruce defeated the two first class runners in Canada when he crossed the finish line in nine minutes, 58 seconds, with Ed Graydon of Hamilton close behind at 10 minutes and four seconds.

The way was cleared for development of a 65-acre parcel of industrial land when Acton council Tuesday approved purchase of an estimated 10 acres of land for roads and future water site; approved extension of water and sewer lines and called for specifications on a culvert necessary to install the extended McDonald Blvd. road.

A. B. and Mrs. George Ware of Shelburne, Nova Scotia are visiting with his parents Mr. and Mrs. H. Ware, Acton.

Mr. and Mrs. Mickey Holmes made a visit to Huntsville this week after taking their daughter Julie, Dorothy Duffield and Marilyn Lemon to the Glen Mhor Presbyterian camp near Beaverton.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, August 2, 1877

One of the most serious abduction cases that ever happened in a civilized community occurred in Guelph a few days since. A well-known widower lured a young girl into a snare and forced her to marry him. (A full column and a quarter of small type follows, with all the details.)

Now is the season for sunstrokes but for protecting the head against the rays of the sun a wet folded handkerchief is better than a brick.

A drunken tramp who was using pretty strong language on Saturday evening got what he well deserved. He got a good sound horsewhipping. If the same thing was meted out to more of these fellows, possibly the country wouldn't be afflicted with so many of them.

The "Agent" is on his travels and with unequalled pertinacity fails to neglect Acton. At first there meanders through this section a book agent, then an insurance drummer, then a tree man, a patent medicine individual, then two tramps, a thief or two, then a salve man, then half a dozen duplicates of each, and finally the wire clothes line fellow, and then the lightning rod demon incarnate.

Last week the Kilbride woolen mills with all their contents were destroyed by fire. A promising young man of this village, who wears auburn curly locks and parts his hair at the zenith, is not in the hands of the Philistines but in the hands of her "Whose Bright Smile Haunts Me Still."

A report was current in the village last week that The Free Press had changed hands, and that a young man who was hanging around here was the purchaser.

We can assure our friends and all others concerned that there is no truth whatsoever in the report. The stranger referred to gave his name as H. S. Harcourt, and who no doubt set the story afloat, proved himself a loose-tongued falsifier as well

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Business and Editorial Office



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