

Free Press Editorial Page

Pride in the industry

If a leather theme is adopted for Acton—and we certainly hope it is—the people of the town will have to make a mental switch.

For many years we have been somewhat defensive about the leather fact in town.

"What smell?..." Or... "It smells like money!"

It was surprising to read in the Business Improvement Area study that 575 people are directly employed in the leather industry here. This includes Beardmore, Superior Glove, Marzo Glove and the Frank Heller and Co. plants.

They are proud of their craftsmanship and their products and it would be great to pass this pride on.

Many of their neighbors are no doubt unaware of all that's involved in this specialized industry and of all the products that are produced.

If the concept of a farmers'

market for Acton appeals, why not drive down to Milton some Saturday morning and see how the market operates there? It's in a vacant lot near the jail.

Reaction to the report of suggested improvements for Acton has been very good. But some people misunderstand the method of payment. All the improvements are to be paid for by businessmen in the downtown area, through increases in their business taxes. The first increase produced the interlocking sidewalks and the Anthrogram report which is producing so much comment.

The business people have undertaken this project themselves.

In Milton, the Business Improvement Area is just being implemented.

Georgetown similarity

It is interesting to note that in Georgetown the downtown curbs will be flared out into the road to permit planting of trees. This is one of the recommendations for Acton in the Business Improvement Area report.

The Georgetown downtown merchants are thinking the same way as Acton's, at the same time. They decided they preferred the flared curbs over planters, which do not look as permanent. It will be

next spring before any of the work can begin.

The merchants there are also planning a big sign welcoming people to downtown Georgetown and development of the traffic island. New signs will be another sure thing. Their report recommended big banners.

Merchants there have also contributed \$20,000 in additional taxes for the improvements.

Best use of money?

The estimated cost of \$200,000 for building a second storey on the fire hall comes as a surprise. There was \$100,000 in the town budget for the project.

The \$200,000 tag brought to mind the bill a fellow publisher paid for his recently new building. For the same sum he bought the land and erected an 18,000 square foot, fully-air-conditioned plant with which he was very much satisfied.

He explained to us the system of building he purchased—a systems

building whose components come straight from the factory, right ready to be erected. It is not built brick by brick but steel walls and roof are hoisted into place.

Everything is pre-planned. You pick your shape, your look, your color.

Inside, partitions can be moved at will. Everything fits in components.

The newspaper people there are happy with all the space and are glad to show off their new plant.

We are held for ransom

The untold complications of the air line traffic controllers strike are horrid to consider. Few families would not know of some travellers who are affected, in the peak of the summer season.

With a country as vast as ours, air travel has become a necessity.

Frieght is being looked after, we understand. Members of parliament can command the armed forces planes.

As usual, it is the ordinary people who suffer. We are being held for ransom. Something must be done about strikes in the public service.



THE RECEPTION ISN'T TOO GOOD but the squirrels don't mind anyway. It might work better if the owner plugged it in and set up an aerial and maybe even brought in cable T.V. for his set. As a

matter of fact, even taking it in where the rain can't get at it would help. The picture was taken while the photographer was lost in Nassagaweya.



Sugar and spice

by Bill Smiley

My wife loathes and despises the idea of my retiring some day. She is firmly convinced that after a busy and useless life, I would be completely at loose ends should I retire, and would just wither away.

And every summer I do my level best to convince her that her fears are unfounded, that I have never been bored in my life, that I am a master at the art of the trivial, and that retirement would be a breeze, with not enough hours in the day to accomplish all the things I want to do, and avoid all the things I don't want to do.

Here's a typical summer day, and I leave you to judge. I'm up every morning late, but I stay up until 3 a.m. watching the late, but I stay up until 3 a.m. watching the late movie, to make up for it. I can't do either of these things in the other ten months of the year, so I figure I'm entitled.

Carefully wash and shave—never go downstairs with a grizzle of beard, one of the first signs of deterioration. While I'm lathering up, I skim a chapter of the novel on top of the toilet tank. Not a second wasted, you'll note.

Then it's downstairs, pop on the teakettle, fetch the morning paper from between the doors, open the refrigerator door and think about breakfast, which I prepare myself. This morning, I was torn between bacon and eggs—fuddle the cholesterol—and fresh strawberries, settled for the berries and ate about a quart of them in cream and sugar, with lashings of tea, and hot toast dripping with butter and peanut butter.

Judiciously read the morning paper while I'm sludging down the grub. Again, you see, not a moment or a motion wasted.

Am told, in very certain terms, that the strawberries were for making jam. Shrug it off, asking rather pointedly who picked the ruddy things, and suggesting that if I make my own breakfast, the chips, and the berries, must fall where they may.

By 11 a.m., I am reconvinced that politicians are windbags, that Canada is going to hell in a wheelchair, that I don't really care on this fine morning, and that it's time for some action.

So it's outside, into the backyard, pulsing with life, vitality and strawberries. Me, not the backyard. It is pulsing with life—starlings, long grass, shaggy hedge—but no berries.

Mutterings and recriminations about those strawberries I stole, from the nether regions of the kitchen, where the jars are being boiled for jam. For which we are short one quart of berries.

So, it's a quick look at the hedge, a quick, firm decision that it would be crazy to clip it in the heat of the day, and off to the farm near town to pick another quart of those lousy strawberries. In the heat of the day.

But it's great, picking berries. Down on your knees is the only way to pick. It's earthy. There's nothing malignant or irritating about strawberries. They're just there, fat, luscious, waiting to be raped.

In the next row, there's an old German lady, at least a grandmother, chirping away happily, knees in the soil, hands busy, mouth smeared with juice. You decide she's a lot more sympathetic than your wife, who's a great picker, but not of berries.

You also discover that you forgot to put

on long pants, that shorts are not the ideal wear in the berry patch, and that your knees are turning into two large boils.

Then it's home with the berries, and there's the morning gone. A crafty beer and lunch, then a serious discussion with the chatelaine about when you are going to clean up the basement. You compromise by assuring that it will be the very first day it's too cold and wet to play golf, secretly hoping it will be long, hot summer.

And then it's off for a game of golf, or a swim, or bath, or a fish with an old buddy, or a ride in somebody's new boat.

And suddenly, it's time for a cool drink under the oaks, perusing the evening paper and waiting for the cook to call out that dinner is ready. And before you know it, it's TV time, or off to the movies, and late, late to bed, warm in the knowledge that it's been a pretty full day, and that you have contributed absolutely nothing to the

fate of mankind or your own domestic problems.

Oh, there are lots of variations. Don't think it's as dull as it sounds. Sometimes you go to the bank and josh the girls, all of whom seem to be former students, now married and either pregnant or mothers.

Sometimes you write a letter or spend as much as an hour thinking about the book you didn't quite manage to get written last summer, but will this year for sure.

Sometimes people drop in, ostensibly to visit old friends, but in reality to tell you all the horrible things that are happening to them, no more interested in you than they are in the strawberry festival at Hayfork Centre.

Yes, it's rather a good life. Not exciting, perhaps, but I think my wife's concern about my retirement is a little premature. I think I could hack this life for, perhaps, another three or four hundred years.

OUR READERS WRITE:

Vandalism disheartening

To the editor:
It was interesting to read in the Free Press August 3 of the Utopia described for the business centre of Acton. I believe most Actonites would be delighted if this could be accomplished without too many problems. However, I hope that the workers and planners do not forget Acton has to contend with a great deal of theft and vandalism by

punks who break, burn and steal, turn over seats, pull flowers out of the ground, and break off tree limbs.

Other towns have flowers and seats and flags all in perfection. Acton has lost many flags.

It is disheartening to see wilting flowers, and broken trees all through summer. Concerned.

On middle schools

August 6, 1977.

The Editor
Acton Free Press.
Dear Madam:

The deliberations of the Halton Board of Education make interesting reading as reported in the Acton Free Press though I must say that I find Mr. Hinton's reactionary philosophy somewhat disconcerting. But he is entitled to his point of view, too, and knowing it, is an essential prerequisite for intelligent voting.

Notwithstanding Mr. Hinton's right to champion the views of one sector of his constituency, he would represent it better by sticking to the facts in order to make his points. Therefore, I would like to set the record straight with respect to a matter reported in the Acton Press, August 3rd.

I am referring to the issue of middle schools where Mr. Hinton is quoted as

saying, "North York would like to get out of middle schools." For his information this level of schooling is alive and well in North York. There were always arguments pro and con in that borough and therefore the school board appointed an ad hoc committee to review the tri-level system after 25 years of operation. They were to examine it from two points of view; philosophy and economics. This committee has reported on the first aspect and pronounced the system is sound educationally. Their report on relative costs has not been announced at this point in time.

The source of my information is a lady who has served continuously as an elected member of the North York Board of Education since before junior high schools were instituted in that borough.

Yours sincerely,
Eldon B. Comfort.

Of this and that

We notice as we read other weekly newspapers that the editors join us in annoyance at the proposed television series Fit to Print.

When a medical series is developed the doctors don't use herbs as cures. When a series is developed about police, the police aren't armed with muskets.

Why should a modern-day

weekly newspaper series be put in an antiquated setting?

So if you see Fit To Print, don't imagine our plant is like that.

Funny things happen in this business of course. We can't imagine any business more varied or more interesting. But a funny series could be built around accuracy, surely.

The Free Press Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Wednesday, August 9, 1967

Miss Joan Ramsden has successfully completed her Canadian Society of Laboratory Technologist exams and is now a registered medical lab technologist. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bing Ramsden, R.R. 4, Rockwood, she is working at St. Joseph's hospital, Guelph.

Brian McCristall is still spreading himself pretty thin. While he lived in Acton, he worked on the Milton paper, played ball for Georgetown and spent a lot of his social life in Guelph and Kitchener. Now he lives in Abetstford, B.C., writes for the Chilliwack newspaper, plays ball for Mission City and goes to Vancouver for entertainment. Three Acton friends, Terry Wilson, Bob Dennis and Jim McDonald visited Brian and Bill Dawkins when they took a motor trip to the west coast.

The Watson family held a picnic at Niagara Falls on Sunday and Watson's restaurant was closed while the family all attended. Family visitors in town who also went to the picnic were Mr. and Mrs. Norman Todd, Steven and Susan of Pontiac, Michigan.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, August 15, 1957

The announcement made over a month ago by Mayor Tyler that Acton would soon have a new industry entered the final stages this week. As intimated last week, Mr. J. J. Stewart who is a former reeve of Acton and an ex-Warden of Halton County has disposed of his entire 70-acre farm in Acton to the town of Acton and the new industry. In an interview with J. J. Stewart, land owner, he revealed the buyers of this property to be H.K. Porter Company (Canada) Limited, Toronto. He further stated finalization of the land purchase had been completed with H.F. Nunn, vice president and general manager of the company.

Bruce Andrews of Acton, running for the Guelph Legion Track Club continued his great running as he placed first in the juvenile one mile under 18 years at the Fifth Annual Emile Begley Memorial Track meet held in Toronto on Saturday.

Rev. Charles J. Jolliffe, retired missionary of Rockwood, recently celebrated his 81st birthday. His maternal grandfather was Robert Pasmore, Rockwood's first postmaster.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press of Thursday, August 9, 1877

Mr. Little, school inspector, was requested to lay before the county council any statement he wished to make regarding the establishment of a model school in the county. It had been found that normal schools at Toronto and Ottawa were overcrowded with the lower grade of teachers. It is proposed to establish another normal school at Milton.

The Bracebridge Gazette gives an interesting account of the new tannery premises being erected at that place by Messrs. Beardmore and Son, proprietors of the Acton tannery. Twelve carpenters, four masons and an average of 10 laborers are employed on the works and the whole concern when finished will make so big a hole in \$20,000 that the residue will be nowhere. About 450 cords of tanbark have been delivered on the piling grounds on the opposite side of the river. The Beardmore tannery will probably be the largest tannery in Ontario and certainly the model tannery in the Dominion.

Now is the time to make your soap. Save time and money by buying McGarvin's steam-refined lye, 25 cents a box.

Bad boys and young men still persist in gathering around the Methodist church during Sunday evening services. They should either take seats inside, behave themselves or be sent to jail.

Two big bears and two dirty clowns amused the children yesterday by their street antics.

100 hop pickers wanted at James Matthews hop yard Monday next. The hop crop in this vicinity is said to be excellent.

THE ACTON FREE PRESS

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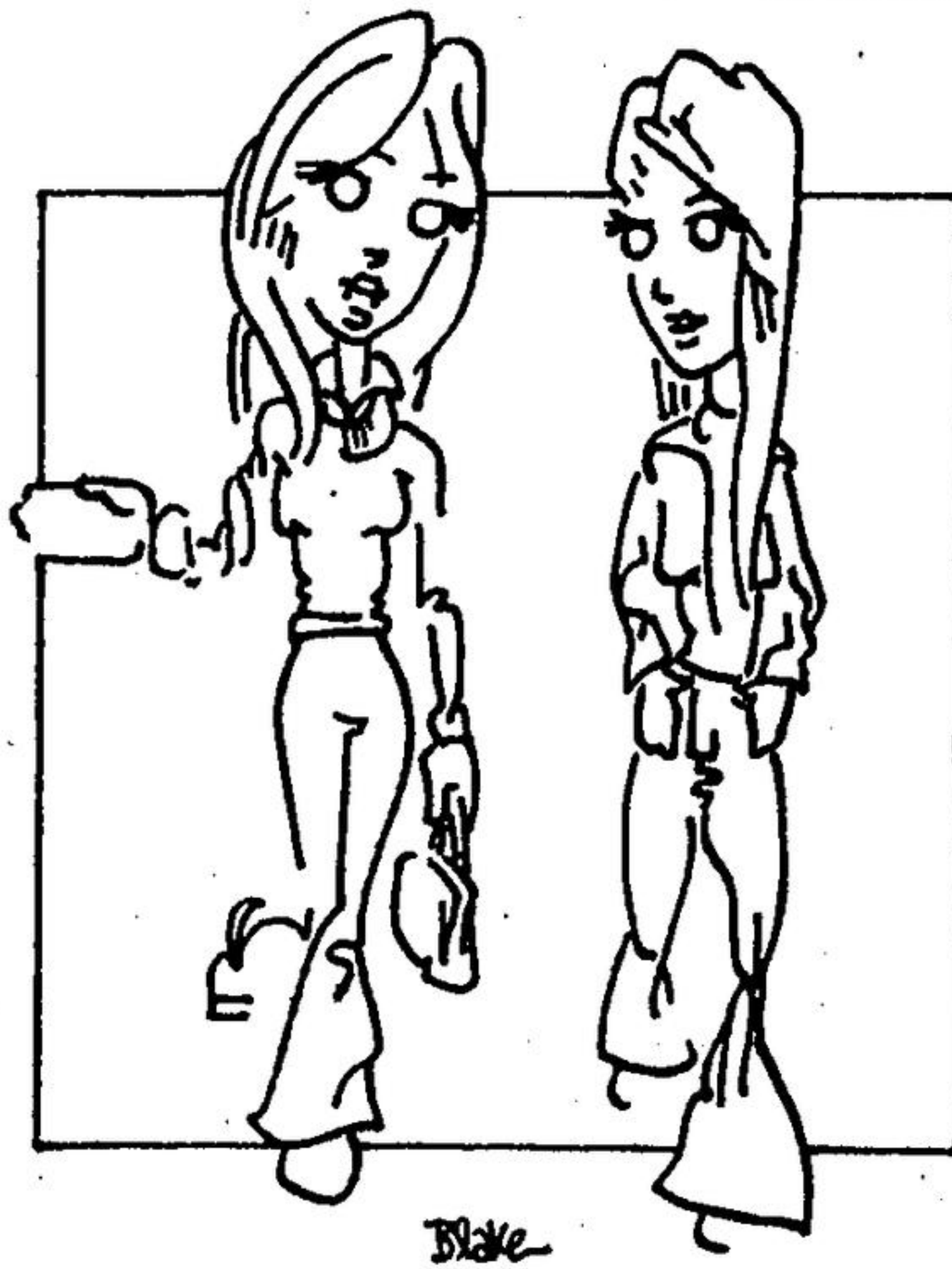
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Blake

"...and when I say I'm from Halton Hills, they ask me if it's nine or eighteen holes."