

Free Press Editorial Page

### Remember business people

The long-drawn out construction on Main, following a similar problem on Mill, is creating concern for business people in the area. Loss of business on Main is obvious, and perhaps fellow Actonians could give special consideration to the plight of the people who make their living in that area of town. Some of them are losing a great deal of money.

The whole area is enveloped in dust on dry days, as the work inches northward.

On Friday, when the tie-ups were particularly bad, it took as much as an hour to get past the flagmen at the construction site.

It's a place to avoid if possible - as the businessmen are finding out. Don't forget them.

### Signs of the times

Exeter is another town that has just started restoring its old town hall. The exeter Times-Advocate reports that the cement in front of the building is being replaced with landscaping, new washrooms and furnace are being installed, the belfry being rebuilt and the brickwork cleaned and repaired.

This old town hall included an old clock similar to that in our former post office, and the clock faces were removed for repainting. The clock's works will also be repaired.

A committee is planning fund-raising there, too. The paper reports consideration given to concerts, a canvass, celebrity auction, operating a food booth at the fall fair, rodeo and sidewalk sales days. Senior citizens are consider-

ing a craft shop in the restored town hall. A new Horizons grant would pay for the installation of the shop and provide funds for equipment and materials. Commercial space in the hall will be rented.

As in Acton, the council used to meet there and the building formerly housed the police offices. It also housed the fire hall, but the paper doesn't indicate where the fire hall has been moved to.

The restoration of town halls and old buildings is obviously a common occurrence throughout Ontario.

We understand Halton Hills is to appoint a local heritage committee which would determine which buildings should be saved. It's a sign of the times.

### Fire hall addition expensive

How ridiculous can we get? Halton Hills council wants to spend \$200,000 for an addition to the Acton fire hall which the firefighters don't want. Firefighters told council last week they felt \$200,000 is too much to spend for an addition which would provide no more parking which they think is a prerequisite for any Acton fire hall.

"We're only getting two more fire bays for \$200,000," spokesman Phil McCristall told council. He said if the cost had only been \$100,000 then the firefighters might have been more amenable to the addition, but the \$200,000 figure was too much for the facilities it would provide.

We realize the firefighters have waffled some on the question but it does seem ridiculous to go ahead on the \$200,000 project if the firefighters are willing to wait until better suggestions are produced to solve the space and parking problems.

They suggested the town-owned land near Acton high school might be better for an entire new fire hall than adding to the present building, an adjunct to Acton's historic old town hall, which citizens are trying to restore. And they also suggested the cost might not be any more if council is going to spend that kind of money.

Council, according to Councillor Pat McKenzie could sell the land they own for building lots, which could net the town as much as \$175,000. They'd rather keep the firefighters where they are and

come up with adequate parking, although the fire hall is in an area where there is sure to be an increase in business places and a need for more public parking spaces.

It is hard to follow council's reasoning although we can understand their irritation at the firefighters with whom they have been dickering for months. The firefighters' request came as bombshell to council, especially those who had been working on the proposal.

However, it would be folly just to pursue the project because of inter-council squabbles and miffed attitudes about the citizens' committee which wants to renovate the old town hall affixed to the fire hall.

Looking into the future it seems reasonable to assume the fire hall is going to be more and more of a handicap in its present location, as Acton grows and business swells. Surely it makes more sense to hold up the tendering as Councillor Maltby suggested and send the proposal back to the works committee and the firefighters to come up with a solution to the impasse.

The firefighters have come up with a legitimate reason for not pursuing the project at this time. As taxpayers of Halton Hills we should all be concerned about the value we get for \$200,000.

Two extra fire bays is hardly good value. And discontented volunteer firefighters drops the value further.

-The Independent Georgetown

### Kilometres are coming

All the 13,000 miles of provincial highway will go metric on September 6. Conversion of 42,000 signs will begin on that day. Replacing existing speed signs will take about two weeks.

Kilometres will replace miles and metres will replace yards. In the United States, the public was asked to comment on conversion to metric system there. The replies came in - 98 per cent against the change.

In Canada, we didn't get the chance to comment. And now the change is upon us, bringing us, they say, in line with many countries outside North America.

Expect for Manitoba. And Manitoba simply opted out. Great Britain still goes by the mile, too.

Like it or not, here's how it works.

1.6 kilometres equals a mile. So, using this as a conversion factor, you simply move the decimal point one place to the right, and you see that 16 km equals 10 miles.

Speed limits will be based on

units of 10km/h. For example: 40 km/h replaces 25 mph; 50 km/h replaces 30 mph; 80 km/h replaces 50 mph; 100 km/h replaces 60 mph.

Get used to the change now and you'll be a kilometre ahead of everybody else around here on September 6.

### Of this and that

There have been quite a few people riding horses in town this summer. If they have to cross Main, perhaps it's the fastest way.

Appreciation to the playground and day camp leaders, who provided a happy and busy summer for so many children this year. Holidays are just about over and many of the youngsters seem just about ready to head back to school.



WHAT HAPPENED? When I went to sleep there were dinosaurs all over. Now there are cars and funny-looking two-legged things that talk a lot. I don't understand this. We need a return to the good old days, when a flying whatsit like myself was free to be a flying whatsit, like myself.



### Sugar and spice by Bill Smiley

This is being written from a hospital bed, where I am in traction and under heavy sedation. Don't worry. I wasn't in a car crash. I just had a five-day visit from my grandboys.

It seems that my daughter was moving and it was going to be awfully difficult with the boys underfoot and it was a great chance for Grand and Grandad to really have a good visit with their favorite people untrammelled by the interventions of parents.

What can you say? "Sorry, but we like to play golf in the afternoon, spend a quiet evening, and get up when we feel like it in the morning, during holidays?"

Of course you can't. You burble something like: "No problem, dear. We'd love to have them. It'll be a real treat." And then you hang up the phone, look at your better half, and mutter mournfully, "Good Gawd, the kids are coming."

They came, they saw, they conquered. And that's why I'm writing from hospital. As soon as I get out of traction, they're moving me, permanently, to a place called Autumn Daze, a home for chronic grandfathers to eke out their last few months, exchanging semile horror stories about grandchildren.

Oh well, it may not be so bad. My wife says she'll come and visit me regularly, except during the golf, skiing, fall and sewing seasons. That means once in March and once in November. She promised to bring me a drink on each occasion, because my nerves are shot to hell, too. But that's a long time between mickies.

It isn't that my grandsons are bad kids. They're not. It's just that they are three

and a half and one and a half years old, and their favorite sport, indoors and out, is tormenting the living daylight out of each other.

First few days weren't bad. The Old Lady has a way with them. She can change a diaper on one and carry on an incredibly complicated conversation with the other without getting a hair out of place. She can sit at the sewing machine, with one on each knee, and actually sew, as they try to poke their fingers under the needle.

When she's cooking, she plops them up on the counter beside the stove, where the older one asks 84 questions, all beginning with "why," and the little one opens the cupboard doors and bangs his eye on them and shrieks.

During this period, my role was a fairly passive one. All I had to do was get them their breakfast. Nothing to that. I give them each a can of yogurt and half a banana. For dessert, I open a can of peaches and get the ice cream out.

It may not be your standard, unimaginative cereal breakfast, but the boys go for it and seem to thrive on it.

And then, of course, when they've finished breakfast and are in a great mood, there's not much for me to do. Except let them play around, on, and over me, break up eight fights over whose ball or shovel it is, and serve as a trampoline when they line up at the far end of the living room, run as hard as they can, and hurl themselves head-first into Grandad's lap, almost invariably knocking heads together, with subsequent recriminations, howling and both of them on my knees being comforted.

But before you know it, lunch is over and

it's nap time. No. 2 goes down happily with a bottle. No. 1 requires six stories if I read the one about Flicka, Ricka and Dicka one more time. I'll go out of what is left of my mind.

But it works. He gets groggy. Just as he's drifting off, No. 2 hurries the bottle out of his crib, leaps up, rattles the bars, yells for action and both are wide awake ready for More Fun And Games With Grandad.

Afternoons in the backyard are comparatively peaceful, except for one thing. For some misguided reason, I have only one lawn hose. Did you ever see two boys with one hose between them? Older is stronger. He wrests hose from Younger and squirts him with ice-cold water. Younger bellows, runs to Grandad, soaking from head to foot, and jumps up to be loved and petted.

Older forgets hose and starts to climb gate. Grandad yells. Meantime, Younger has picked up hose and gleefully squirts Grandad.

Grandad yells again, unprintably. Younger drops hose and runs, square into square corner of picnic table. Great welt on forehead. Gran will be furious with Grandad for not watching boys properly.

Those were the good days. Came Tuesday, and Gran was committed to a golf tournament. Dubiously.

"Are you sure you can cope?"

"Who me? Course I can cope. No sweat. I can handle these two with one head tied behind my back."

"Well, maybe...but..."

"Gawn, away wid yez. It'll be child's play."

And it was. Six hours of it. During which: eight fights were broken up; the boys ate all four of the chicken legs I'd prepared for the three of us; we went shopping and I lost one for 60 panic-filled seconds in the maze of the supermarket; the Younger discovered how to unfasten the buckle of the seat-belt; the Older started yelling for his Mommy when I smacked his bum for clobbering his little brother with a ping pong bat, which for some reason unknown to man or God, he had found behind the car seat.

My daughter walked in with a cheery "Hi, Dad!" and found me on the phone trying to call the police department, the fire department, anybody.

She looked at me, shook her head, took the phone from my shaking fingers, and called an ambulance.

### Of this and that

Can you help as a Guide or Brownie leader? Volunteers are badly needed. An advertisement gives the numbers to call.

Congratulations to Acton Citizens Band, who added to their experience by entering the competitions at the Exhibition again this year. They knew they would be playing against bands twice their size, and they felt well satisfied with their fourth place showing. The judges' comments were gratifying, too.

### The Free Press Back Issues 10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Wednesday, August 30, 1967. A former Miss Acton Fair, Linda Ferguson, has completed her grade 13 at Erin high school and will be a nurse-in-training. Starting Tuesday, 37 business places will be participating in Old Fashioned Days. This is the first venture of this type for Acton merchants.

Top honors at Ottawa's Central Canada Exhibition went to the stables of S. G. Matthews, R.R. 2, Acton, when his pony Carousel Torch Swell won the grand championship.

Councillor Ted Tyler Jr.'s proposal to turn Mill St. from Main to John into a shopping mall merits serious consideration from the town's elected representatives. Of the ideal dozen Guide and Brownie leaders, the local groups are starting the new season with just one leader.

Miss M. Z. Bennett this week is moving to Waterloo. Acton has been fortunate in having her as an exemplary citizen for 60 years.

### 20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, September 5, 1957. Acton has reached fame in the movie field with the representation of two German Shepherd dogs owned and trained by Fred Pfeifle, of this town. Prince and Nigger as the dogs are named, are playing in a Regal Film production "A Boy and His Dog", starring 11-year-old Anthony B. Brown of Willowdale. For the past two weeks, Prince has been performing in front of the cameras in the role of a canine hero while Nigger plays the part of the canine villain. A blowout of a right front tire resulted in the complete destruction of a car as it rolled over in the east ditch while proceeding south on the seventh line Monday. The 18-year-old driver, Robert Taylor of R.R. 2, Acton, escaped from the wreckage uninjured, reported investigating officer Constable Dave Hardy of the District O.P.P.

Judy Duby, eight-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alf Duby, Acton, had an unfortunate accident at school yesterday when she tripped over some roots of a tree and fell, breaking her left arm. She was taken to Guelph General hospital and is expected home today.

### 50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, September 1, 1927. A rink of Acton bowlers participated in a tournament at Paris at which 75 rinks were competing. They had three wins. The rink was composed of A. Buchanan, T. Bailey, E. Sweeney and W. J. Gould, skip. The harvest is practically finished. Not before in the hundred years since this district was settled have there been better crops.

The Bronte Ladies' softball team invaded Acton on Saturday and after a close and exciting game nosed out an 18 to 15 victory. Unfortunately Acton was without the services of sterling player Mary Chalmers and the pitcher's work was taken up by Merrill Anderson who had an injured hand. Oral Chalmers and her home run led the hitters and Isabell Cowie scored four runs.

Rev. Charles Jolliffe of West China conducted services at Rockwood United Church.

### 100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, August 30, 1877.

Things have been lively at the hop yards this week. On Monday there were 90 pickers at work in one of Mr. Matthews' yards and 50 in the other. Yesterday picking was commenced in Mr. Sydney Smith's yard and it was the scene of a busy throng of people of all ages.

Mr. Charles Dean, travelling agent for Messrs. W. H. Storey and Co., came home quite ill some days ago. We are sorry to learn that his symptoms are of quite an alarming nature.

Our readers will remember the swindling case wherein Mr. James Gibbons was made the victim of an oily-tongued stranger. George Zimmerman, the sharper, was sentenced to one year's imprisonment.

High living isn't killing many people nowadays.

Mr. Armstrong has reduced the price of milk to four cents a quart.

Best Medical Wines and Brandy at McGarvin's Hall of Pharmacy.



"I believe the storekeeper described them as a matched set of lawn ornaments"

### THE ACTON FREE PRESS

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Business and Editorial Office



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