

Free Press Editorial Page

## Fairs are popular

Apparently interest in local fall fairs is booming all across the country. Stanly Duncanson, president of the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies, says that from a low interest in fall fairs seven or eight years ago there has been a steady increase in crowds.

Both town and city people are showing more interest in country activities.

Also the fairs provide inexpensive entertainment for the whole family.

More and more fairs, like Acton, are adding Sunday programs. Fergus had a Sunday show the same day as Acton, of course also hit by rain.

Milton tried Sunday shows for the first time this year, only to meet

with dreadful weather on both days.

Tractor pulls are becoming popular everywhere at once. It was a good show here which held crowds of people at the park until 6.30 on the drizzly Sunday afternoon.

Acton's three day fair has grown to the extent it can now be classified as a higher ranking fair - Class B - making more government money available. This judgement is based on prize money awarded in specific agricultural classes.

There seems to be involvement of all segments of the town and rural areas in the fair. It's become a real community event.

We look forward to another great weekend next year.



Bounties of harvest

Eden Mills United church was lavishly decorated for anniversary services Sunday. Above, the altar with bread, grapes, and pews decked with ears of corn. Left, a sunny window trimmed in wheat and vegetables. Right, grain and gourds by the lectern.

## Our ties to Guelph

Georgetown hospital is calculating the possible population of all of Halton Hills in its plans for expansion of the hospital. There are 80 beds there now, and a \$5 million, 180-bed expansion is planned. This is based on population projection of between 60,000 and 65,000 people in all of Halton Hills within 20 years.

Expansion would be done in two phases. Halton taxpayers would be expected to contribute \$1.7 million directly and the rest of it, \$3.3 million, indirectly, from the pro-

vincial government. The fact remains that the vast majority of Acton people go to Guelph hospital, and our doctors are associated with Guelph hospitals.

We trust the Georgetown planners are not considering a change in this tradition, which has us travelling a similar distance to two large hospitals. Guelph hospitals have already assured the Acton doctors there is no problem in having out-of-county patients accepted there.

## Region needs overhaul

Regional Chairman Ric Morrow's whirlwind tour of Halton councils was an attempt to establish better communications between the municipalities and the region. As a public relations measure it has much to commend it, but as the Oakville Journal Record opines there is clearly an indication in his speech of an increasing push to centralize control—in effect a one-tier system of government, which would reduce local municipalities such as Halton Hills to mere rubber stamp outfits with no real control over their own destiny.

Mr. Morrow pointed out that where there had been eight separate councils with eight staffs in Halton, there were now only five. There were five police forces where there is now one. He felt the functions delegated to the region by the province such as the approval of plans of subdivision, as a move towards greater self-determination.

He stressed the serious need to reorganize local government from the 100-year-old county system, criticizing the attitude of those members of council who want to return to the "old" system when it was too complex an apparatus to solve today's and future problems.

The chairman is right in insisting that many of the improvements to the old county system of government were long overdue but his contention that the present system of regional government has solved most of the problems leaves something to be desired. It has indeed centralized the system more and left municipalities with less power than they had under the old system,

but there are areas where it could be more effective and where events would seem to indicate more power should be returned to the municipalities.

Water and sewers is one area where some major rethinking needs to be done. Morrow says the regional takeover of water and sewers was necessary so development does not outstrip the servicing capacity. The municipalities still actually financially control it through the chargeback system but the implementation rests with the region and there is where the extra costs seem to lie.

There is a good case for returning water and sewers to the old municipalities and no doubt an independent Bill 151 committee could find other areas where problems could be handled as well if not better at the local level than at the region.

Thinking from the Region that if everything is centralized into one powerful bureaucracy it will be good for Halton may be backed with figures but faceless bureaucrats will never be appreciated at the local level.

It is true as the Journal Record says that bigger governments and bureaucracies are by nature less responsive to people and that's where the region builders need to brush up their techniques.

If the Halton chairman wants to give local municipalities more confidence in regional government then the better tack to take would be regular meetings with the four local councils in Halton to come up with ways to make the system more adaptable to people's needs.

## Of this and that

The safest way to double your money is to fold it over once and put it in your pocket!

These days a miss is as good as about 1.6 kilometres.

A sign in a pharmacy window stated "We dispense with accuracy."

Heard the latest definition of golf? The hoof and mouth disease. You walk for miles and talk about it for the following week.

The constant rain has gardens, roads and cellars awash. Acton fair

day was the best day, weather-wise, in weeks.

It's bottle saving time again! High school students are planning to resume their collections on the first Saturday of each month.

It's not true that you can't do anything about things that concern you. People can be heard, but it's not easy. If you feel strongly about something local, let your councillor know. Or write a letter to the editor. No use complaining without passing your opinion on to someone.

But we have a timely letter on vandalism this week which is unsigned, so cannot be used. Contact us, and your thoughts can be shared.



## Sugar and spice by Bill Smiley

Friends of mine in all walks of life can't understand how I can stand teaching as a vocation. With striking originality, they ask: "How can you stand it?"

So, with another 10 months of my chosen way of life under way, I thought I'd look at it, and try to give them an answer.

Perhaps we could start with elimination. It would take an act of God, or a change of sex, or something equally dramatic, to make me an engineer. I have just completed the job of trying to change a typewriter ribbon. It took me 39 minutes. I wound up with ink all over my fingers, my face, and a clean shirt.

And guess what came out when I began typing? Red words. It was one of those half-red, half-black ribbons, and I'd got it upside-bass backwards. The only reason you are reading this in black is that it is being

reproduced by someone else.

My lack of engineering skills precludes my making a fat living where the real money is these days: as a repair man. If you have a son or daughter pondering a career, for the dear goodness' sake, steer it into fixing things—plumbing, electricity, TV, cars.

Took my lawnmower to a repairman the other day. It wouldn't start. Picked it up three days later. The bill was \$41.16—one dollar and 16 cents more than half what I had paid for the new machine a few years ago. The bill for labor was \$27. You could have a baby for that not so terribly long ago.

I've never wanted to be a scientist. Can't see spending my life in a lab trying to find a new additive that will make clothes whiter than white or a new chemical that

will make deodorant dryer than ever.

Medicine, since I have never had a secret desire to be God, held little appeal for me. It's a noble profession, and you can make a pile of money by peering into people's apertures, probing their flab, making their blood spurt, and writing prescriptions among other things. None of those things turn me on, though.

Dentistry, ditto. I can see no particular charm in standing at an angle most acrobats couldn't maintain for 10 seconds, gawking at gums and crumbling renovations. One look into my own mouth would give me nightmares for a week. To heck with the \$50,000 a year.

Then there's the law, of course. There's a great deal of poppycock about the majesty and integrity of the law. All of it stems from lawyers and judges. But I wouldn't care to be associated in a profession where there is, despite all disclaimers, one law for the rich and another for the poor. Shakespeare said it nicely: "Let them hang all the lawyers."

Another field that brings in a mighty good buck is accounting. But where's the future in that for a fellow who can't even account to his own wife for the way he behaved at the party on Saturday night?

Quite a good career these days is "working for the government." Certainly you'll never be fired, unless you turn up drunk four days in a row and rape four different secretaries. Even then, you'd probably just be "transferred to a less sensitive area," or put out to pasture on a pension.

When I was a student, we used to say scornfully that if you couldn't do anything else, you went into the ministry. This was a base canard, of course, but the delights of the paragon never really get me excited. I wouldn't have minded pounding the old pulpit a bit, but I couldn't have stood the old biddies and the back-stabbers and the constant mendicanting.

What I thought I might be was a professor of English. Sit around in a book-filled study, dispense wisdom to awed students and give the occasional brilliant lecture. Well I've since met some of my old friends who chose that path. They're more boring than the guy who comes to fix my furnace.

What I really and truly wanted to do when I was young and romantic was to become a foreign correspondent. Influenced by movies, I wanted the works; trench coat, snap brim felt hat, bylines from Hong Kong and Nairobi.

Nearest I got to that was editing the country correspondence from contributors to a small-town weekly. That wasn't a bad vocation, except that you worked 60-odd hours a week and never made any money.

I guess my secret desire for years was to be a writer. Preferably a pipe-smoking, enormously popular, immensely wealthy one, several times divorced, a world traveler, a lecturer in great demand, yet with a depth, a plus quality in my novels that would put me up there with Hardy, Conrad, Hemingway. With three or four of my novels turned into smash hits on Broadway and in Hollywood. And all my own hair and teeth.

Only trouble with that wish was that I was too lazy. Oh, the talent was there. No question about that, as we novel-writers manqué can assure anyone. So instead of becoming a Hemingway, I became Bill Smiley, a chronicler of the tribulations and the trivia of the mid-20th century. And not a whit bitter or disillusioned about it.

That wasn't quite enough to keep a body alive, so I became a teacher. Not only because most other professions fill me with nausea or loathing. But because I like young people, words, ideas, and two months holidays.

### OUR READERS WRITE:

#### Thanks for wonderful time

The Acton Free Press, The Editor:  
Dear Sir:  
Last week my family and I spent the weekend in Acton enjoying the Fall Fair. We have been regular visitors to Acton during fair time for many years.  
Once again the Acton Fall Fair was a delightful success!  
We would like to extend, through you, our congratulations to the individuals involved in planning the activities and would also

like to say a hearty "thank you" to the citizens of your town who have always made visitors feel so welcome.  
I know that we will return next year and I know too from experience that the weekend will be as well planned and enjoyable then as it has been in the past.  
Thanks again for a wonderful time.  
Wm. S. Sinclair and family,  
81 Winding Way,  
BRANTFORD, Ont.

#### Solid line will remain

Rockwood, Ont.  
Sept. 24 '77  
The Acton Free Press,  
Acton, Ontario.  
Dear Editor:  
I wondered if you had room to insert in your valuable weekly my opinion on the present reconstruction of No. 7 Highway between Acton and Guelph.  
Improvement on No. 7 Highway between Acton and Guelph has been needed for many years, with so few safe places to pass another car under ideal driving conditions. Numerous accidents, some fatal, have occurred over the years on this stretch of highway.  
Anyone familiar with the highway between Guelph and Acton, knows that the solid white, centre lines cover more than half of the distance.  
When reconstruction of this hilly unsafe

section of highway was announced to be done this year we were led to believe the hills would be removed and the hollows filled in.  
If the present reconstructed portion between Acton and Crewson's Corners is any indication of what the result will be, then we are wasting a lot of taxpayers' money. Some of these grades are reduced so little compared to the picture I first envisioned.  
Why waste money when a safer and better highway could be ours to drive over daily?  
The pavement may be made wider but it looks like the solid painted centre lines will remain.  
Yours truly,  
A disillusioned Commuter  
H. Lloyd Dyer  
Rockwood, N0B 2K0  
P.S. Here's to improved highways.



This is a new experience. I've never played quadruples before.

## The Free Press Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, September 27, 1967  
Plans to close both Acton and Rockwood Canadian National Railway Stations for keeps was revealed to The Free Press this week by a representative of the C.N.R. It is expected they'll be shut on November 6 this year along with stations in Hespeler and Preston.

Halton M.P. Dr. H. Harley phoned the Free Press just before the paper was put to bed to say he had written to Mr. McMillan, head of the C.N.R. and the Minister of Transport Mr. Hellyer asking for a thorough study of the transportation system in Acton. The Halton M.P. felt that the heavy concentration of industry in Acton warranted a thorough study of the situation.

Pets entered by C. McCready family, Milton won firsts for bantam rabbits, and "any other" class at the fair while runners-up in the rabbit section were owned by Harry Lawson, Acton and Muriel Holmes, Acton.

Mrs. Mabel Symon celebrated her 91st birthday Monday at her home on Willow St. Neighbours and members of No. 2 Unit of the United Church women called to make the occasion a happy one for Mrs. Symon who is a regular church attender.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, October 3, 1957  
Halton County Game Warden Bob Reed announced this week that Fairy Lake in Acton had been stocked with 5000 small mouth bass recently. The fish range in size from 4.5 inches, stated the game warden.  
The Acton public school board announced a change in library book distribution for the school children this week. Once a week the school children will obtain their library books from the librarians at the Robert Little and the M.Z. Bennett schools, where a junior library has been set up.  
Corporal R. Mason of the local O.P.P. detachment revealed 48 speeders were charged in Acton last Saturday when the radar was posted on Queen St. and Young Streets.

Mr. and Mrs. Archie Papillon were pleasantly surprised at a party given them by their children on the occasion of their 30th wedding anniversary. Following a turkey supper, they were presented with a hostess chair and blanket. Guests were present from Brantford, Kitchener and Acton.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, September 29, 1927  
The annual Field Day of Acton schools was held Wednesday afternoon. G. Cooper and Marjorie Switzer were the senior champions and A. Marshall and Meryl Grindell were the junior champions.  
The Junior Daughters of the Empire presented new benches for use at the park and cemetery.

On Saturday our girls' ball team journeyed to Brampton and won the softball tournament there. To our Mary Chalmers much credit is due for the nerve and fighting spirit she showed by her work in the pitcher's box.

Miss Jessie Young won the public speaking prize at Georgetown fair. The frosts have been quite severe several nights this week.

100 years ago

Taken from the Acton Free Press of Thursday, September 27, 1877  
The glories of a September sun could have been sung with full effect last Friday, while the sturdy lads and handsome lasses of Nassagaweya blended their way on foot and in carriages to the annual fair of the township. They were there in full force—so were the "old man" and his buxom spouse.  
The township hall was well filled with a fine display of ladies' handiwork, dairy produce, fruits, roots, grain, and other articles too numerous to mention. In the field, there was an excellent show of horses and some very fine cattle, sheep and pigs, a fair show of poultry.

A couple of street fights relieved the monotony of things last Friday evening. Considerable pummeling was done, but we have not heard that anybody was much hurt. No arrests were made.

Last Friday night was made hideous by the shrill voices of two disreputable females one partially blind and the other a mulatto girl, both from Guelph who paraded the streets at unseasonable hours. Earlier in the evening the younger of the two endeavored to buy a bottle of whisky at one of our hotels but was refused, whereupon she poured forth a torrent of abuse and was turned out doors.

### THE ACTON FREE PRESS

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Business and Editorial Office



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