

10 years ago

Taken from issue of the Acton Free Press of Thursday, January 17, 1968

In recognition of his service to the town and nation, Mayor Les Duby was chosen by an independent committee to receive the lone centennial medal conferred by the municipality. The mayor's wide interests and work for the town made him the 'logical choice', the committee agreed. Postmaster Gord McKeown and publisher Dave Dilla also received the medals.

A record \$784.35, up \$500, from last year, was collected by Acton Firefighters for the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada during their campaign in November and December.

Hugh O'Rourke was elected chairman of Acton Legion Chorallers at their elections last week. He succeeds Jim Higgins.

The Y's Men's Club made a donation of \$600 to assist the Y.M.C.A. board in the operation of their program. The motion to make the donation passed unanimously at the regular meeting.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Acton Free Press of Thursday, January 23, 1958

Two former pupils of Miss M.Z. Bennett and now school board officials, Tom Watson and Murray Smith, made the address presentation to the former principal of the Acton Public School at the official opening ceremony of the M.Z. Bennett School named in her honour. Joe Hurst listed the special gifts. Miss Bennett spoke of her teaching years and mentioned 11 former students are named on the centopah.

Acton council Monday night agreed to amend the store closing by law following submission of a petition by the Chamber of Commerce, represented by F. Terry, indicating 74 percent of Acton merchants favored closing all day Monday.

The highest expenditure for prize money on record was announced by W.A. Woodburn when he read the financial statement of Acton Agricultural Society at the annual meeting in the town hall last Saturday. William Thompson is the new president of the Society. Other officers elected are first vice-president, Lloyd McEnery; second vice-president, Nino Braida; secretary-treasurer, Mrs. C.W. Swackhamer; auditors, W.A. Woodburn and G.M. McKay.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 19, 1928.

Joseph Fellows Adams, who was a son of Rev. Zenas Adams, one of the founders of Acton, and born here 91 years ago, died at St. Clair, Michigan. He was a veteran of the United States Civil War, having entered the navy. He saw considerable action. In 1877 he settled in St. Clair, his sister Agnes, who was a school teacher in Acton in her young womanhood, residing with him. She is the only survivor of four brothers and seven sisters.

The annual meeting of Acton Fall Fair was held yesterday afternoon and reports were most encouraging. R.J. Kerr was elected President.

Town hall rentals were set by council: for dances \$12, local concerts \$8, ordinary meetings \$8, concerts from outside points \$12.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 17, 1878.

Such weather! Business is poor in town. The merchants intend closing their stores at eight o'clock every evening except Saturday night.

At present the whole country is swarming with tramps, perhaps the most miserable of human beings. Some days there will be as many as a dozen in our village. They will not work to earn a meal but prefer begging. Some of them, we believe, are objects upon which to bestow charity but others are good-for-nothing loafers. This class are fit subjects for the Central Prison. There have been a number of females who are perhaps the most uncivil and vicious of the whole tramp tribe.

Perhaps it is time we had a lock-up here, in which tramps could be lodged. They could break stones for the streets to help pay for their keep. We hope council will discuss the matter of a substantial lock-up.

Knights of Pythias brethren of Mr. J.H. Hacking, late editor of the Free Press, tendered him an oyster supper on his removing from Acton to Guelph. Ample justice was done to Mr. Leavens' excellent spread which was an strict temperance principles.

Died— Annie Dalton, age 30; Mary Kennedy, age 41.

Free Press Editorial Page

No plaque for Acton

A building on Yorkville Ave. in Toronto may become a landmark to honor the famous Canadian writer Mazo de la Roche. She lived in a flat at 86 Yorkville when she wrote Jalna.

The Ontario Heritage Foundation and the Toronto Historical Board are considering plaques on front of the building.

No one ever thought of a plaque for Acton, although Mazo de la

Roche lived here as a talented young teenager. Her father at the time ran the Dominion Hotel. They were known as Roach, and lived in the first house north of Jeanette's home for senior citizens, on Main N.

Mazo added "de la" to the family name, and changed its spelling to something classier.

Yes, Mazo de la Roche lived here!

The eggsact facts

Eggsactly how many people tried to stand their eggs up on end on Egg Day last Tuesday? It was the one and only day of the year for it, and if you missed out, you'll just have to remember the date till next year. It falls on a Wednesday.

Eggs are good for a lot more than fancy tricks, too.

With Egg Day just over, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food sent out a bulletin on eggs to all weekly newspapers. And didn't even mention Egg Day.

A serving of eggs (2 grade A large) is an excellent and economical source of high-quality protein and a good source of iron, phosphorous and Vitamin A.

Canada's Food Guide states that eggs may be used as a meat substitute.

The nutritive content of the egg yolk does not change with the varying colors of the yolk (ranging from pale yellow to orange). The colour is determined by the grains fed to the hen.

Eggs are graded according to weight and sold by the pound. For

example, a dozen large eggs weigh at least 1 1/2 lbs. or 24 ounces (minimum of 2 ounces per egg).

To produce tender egg whites, use low to moderate temperatures when cooking. High temperatures and overcooking cause egg whites to become tough and the protein to shrink.

Use the freshest eggs from your refrigerator for poaching and frying, where shape of the cooked eggs is important.

Use eggs that have been stored the longest in your refrigerator for hard-cooking, since they peel easier than fresh ones.

Cool hard cooked eggs in cold running water immediately after cooking, to prevent a dark layer forming around the yolk and to make peeling easier.

Purchase eggs from refrigerated cases and store them in the refrigerator at home. They lose quality rapidly at warm room temperatures.

Store eggs large end up, ends the Ministry's advice. (And don't forget Egg Day next January 10!)

It was eggstraordinary

The Georgetown Independent had this to say about Egg Day:

"Well January 10 was the day of the egg again, and at the Independent office eight of them stood at attention on a desk while silent tension filled the office as there was a try for an even dozen.

"Eight was as far as patience and time would allow on the day the egg allegedly chooses as the one day to stand up for itself and become eggalists.

"The reason for eggstraordinary behaviour has never been explained, eggzactly but may be known

to eggheads all over the country. The theory has been put forward that it is the tilt of the earth's eggis on this day, but our readers are much too hard-boiled to go along with this scrambled tale.

For the past three years The Independent has followed the eggcentricities of the eggs, despite scoffers who maintain eggs can stand up any day of the year, but are simply lazy.

"So this year we're leaving the readers to come out of their shells and unscramble the phenomenon, so get crackin'."

Of this and that

Someone has called the Free Press to relay her concern that thoughtless people may be deliberately injuring cats in her neighborhood. Sad to think anyone could get "kicks" that way.

Noted in a month-old paper, The Georgetown Independent:

"Georgetown Choral Society teamed up with Acton Citizens' Band in a joint Christmas program at the McKenzie-Smith middle school in Acton and an appreciative audience, which braved some of the winter's worst icy weather to attend, went home delighted local people could produce such enjoyable music, vocally and instrumentally.

"The band, which has never been recognized fully in Acton, showed a depth and polish under the baton of Conductor George Elliott and his assistant Dave Sale."

Is it true that our band is "not fully recognized"?

Canadian weekly newspapers have an exchange system, which brings us two different weekly newspapers each week. They make most interesting reading and we see how other reporters and printers do things. This week we received The Aylmer Express and what's on the front page? Council discussing a feasibility study of their town hall. The building was erected in 1880. Various towns are going the route of restoration, as we see by these other weeklies.

While the members of the Business Association are dis-

cussing remaining OPEN Thursday nights as well as Fridays, their predecessors of 100 years ago decided to close early every night except Saturday. They intended, according to the Free Press files, to lock their doors at 8 o'clock! Saturdays they would have been open till 10 p.m. or later. How times change!

Thanks to J. P. Brownlee, who sent us a copy of the Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser from Perthshire. This interesting paper calls itself "your brightest weekly" and Mr. Brownlee adds the "Acton paper is the best I have read over here nearest to our own."

"There aren't any real farmers around here any more," a shop keeper told us. So we asked Jennifer Barr to find out. She went hunting, and found Angus McEachern. Hope you enjoy the story as we did.

Drivers are having a challenging winter! The roads alternate conditions between snow, ice, slush, wet, sand... and sometimes bare roads. The works department are having their worst winter ever, too.

A large gentleman squeezed into his seat on a bus beside a small nervous looking type. Ignoring the "No Smoking" sign he unwrapped a cigar and asked "My smoking won't bother you, will it?" "No," the small fellow replied. "Not if you getting sick won't bother you".



CROSS-COUNTRY skiing—the new sport that's being enjoyed by many more people in this area than ever before. This photograph was taken at Cedar

Creek Farm near the Guelph dam. Rockwood conservation area is another popular spot. Last weekend brought perfect weather for the outdoor enthusiasts.



Sugar and spice by Bill Smiley

It must be nice to be one of those people who sail into a new year with high hopes, great expectations, and firm resolves. I am more inclined to back into it gingerly, head ducked as though awaiting a cut from fate.

I think, from experience, that you have to be young and naive, or old and religious, or just plain dumb, to expect the next year is going to be any better than the last.

For example: I know I'm going to be one year older and uglier; I know I'm going to have fewer teeth and less hair; I know I'm going to be utterly flabbergasted at the rampant thievery of the government when I make out the cheque for income tax on the last day of April; I know that more and more of my friends, relatives and colleagues are going to be struck down by cancer, heart attacks, a broken marriage, or the crud.

I know that my daughter won't be able to get a job as a teacher, after a gruelling year of preparing for same and raising two kids on the side.

I am quite certain that my two grand-boys are going to get steadily more difficult to handle. (One of them, not quite four years old, made a dreadful suggestion to a lady in a store not long before Christmas, as my wife and I looked around wild-eyed, pretending we didn't know him or each other.)

I got a raise this year, but am perfectly aware that it doesn't allow me to keep up with inflation. I saved some money this year, for the first time in 30, by continuing to drive a 10-year-old car, but I know every dollar tucked away (and paid taxes on)

will be worth 82 cents when it comes time to spend it.

I know full well that during the coming year I will have to undergo the ordeal of a federal election, in which a bunch of nincompoops try to convince me that they can run the country better than a bunch of turkeys.

I am fully cognizant of the fact that my wife is going to be on my back in 1978 for moral turpitude, physical lassitude, and mental ineptitude, not to mention a number of other things that can't be classified in a family journal.

Economically, the country is, depending on your point of view, either up the creek without a paddle or going over the falls with a motor stuck in high gear.

Next fall, my students will be the absolute worst I've ever had, there will be more of them, eight will be on drugs, six will be alcoholics, five will get pregnant, and I'll be taken off to the funny factory.

Why don't I just shoot myself then, instead of heading into 1978 with all these bogeymen riding my shoulders? You may well ask.

Because life is the life. As my daughter once remarked at the age of six, and which I have since considered one of the great philosophical gems of the 20th century.

Of course I'll be one year older. But I'll be one year smarter, at least in theory. It's not true that I'll have fewer teeth, I'll have more. I'm getting that euphemism called a "partial plate." Less hair, but I can always get a toupee of a fall. Uglier for certain, but there comes a point when ugly starts to become beautiful. "His face has a

lot of character," they say, meaning that you look like something that just swam home from the Crimean War.

Sure my buddies will be stricken with everything from a slipped cervix to a swollen colon, but a couple of them were marked up for the big final registration last year, and came through with flying colors and a heightened love of life.

Maybe my kid won't get a job teaching. Maybe it's a good thing. How would you like to spend your working hours with a bunch of teachers, as I do?

O.K. my grandboys are really rotten. But they aren't any more rotten than their mother was 20 years ago. She's just now beginning to admit to us what she was doing when we thought she was at Sunday School.

I'm slipping behind financially, but who isn't? My prisoner-of-war pension soared by 7.5 per cent on Jan. 1, so I'm on the glory trail. It is now almost 60 bucks a month.

No question, we'll have a federal election. But what's to worry when our Grand Guru, Pierre Himself, says that if we all think positively, the economy will pick up? Who can argue with something as solid as that? Certainly not the poor dope who has been out of work for two years. He's probably not thinking positively.

No doubt, no doubt at all, that my wife will be on my back through 1978 for all the things mentioned, and some new ones she'll think up. But what the hell? I'm used to it; and we're still man and wife, although she might quibble about that designation, or parts of it.

As for my students next fall, they will undoubtedly be the same mixed bag of mixed-up adolescents they have always been, and we'll get along fine once they realize Mr. Smiley is a bit senile and must be humored.

Last year was pretty bad, and this year will be worse, but life is the life, and it sure beats lying there in the graveyard with your hands on your tummy.

Our readers write

Bored reader writes

Box 125, Tara, Ont. Jan. 14, 1978

Acton Free Press Dear Editor:

It's really great to see some interesting letters make their appearance so early in the year. I refer to Mrs. Jennifer Barr's letter re mail service. Incidentally, her column is very readable, also Mr. George Graham's, an old Irish friend of ours.

I, too, remember Father McGreavey, although my best memory of him, as I was just a young girl then, was his courtly bearing and dignity. When he presided at the euchar parties in the parish hall, we kids surely thought it was quite a treat. The ladies brought lunch, did the work, and the men played cards. Us kids? Ate like hogs and tore around the hall, while Father rocked back and forth on his heels and smiled benignly.

Father McBride! Ah, there was a priest for you! He and his great big St. Bernard dog were familiar visitors, summer and winter, but he was not above chastizing an altar boy at Mass, if everything was not to his liking. But a warm compassionate man and fond of children. How we must have tried his patience when he was teaching us the Catechism!

Father Gillen brought much cohesion, I believe, to St. Joseph's and, as a result of his supervision, he got his people to work together for the parish. A very dedicated and articulate man, but sometimes his sermons did seem long.

We left before Father Snyse but friends

from Acton tell me how proud they are of him and I wish him well.

I have to disagree with Mr. Graham regarding self-sacrifice, home and family suffered a setback, etc. There has been no great change that I can see in the youth of today or, as far as that goes, parental guidance. There are just as many happy marriages, modesty and decency still prevail, parents still care for their children, and vice versa.

Living in a predominantly Protestant village, I find my non-Catholic friends and neighbors still set high values on their marriages, care and direction of their children, and hold the same hopes for betterment our parents held for us.

As for Women's Lib, which Mr. Graham seems to disparage, good things have happened through that development. Thank goodness, the days when women were just their husbands' chattels, and totally subservient to them is long gone, and that's great! A man and wife should be equal in all ways, with neither having a dominant role, but totally supportive of each other.

Back to Mrs. Barr! Her column is the first one I read in the paper, and I don't even know the lady, but she comes across as warm, funny, and I am sure, well-liked by her friends, neighbors and readers.

You can tell by the length of this letter it's been pretty boring up in the North Country — too much snow, too cold to go out, hence the letter!

Cheers, Sheila O'Rourke

Only trusts Rockwood

R.R. 4, Rockwood NOB 2K0 17th Jan. 1978

Dear Sir:

Jennifer Barr's letter, published in last week's Free Press, cannot be allowed to pass without comment. Only in a few places does the Royal Mail Service still exist. Now it's a nondescript expensive part of the Government of Canada, unsure, as our government is unsure, whether to call itself Postes Canada, or Canada Post.

We who are served by the Rockwood Post office, despite the controversies that surrounded the construction and appearance of the building (and its total lack of parking space) are indeed fortunate. The old traditions are preserved by a conscientious and helpful staff. If their spirit and dedication were but more widespread, our postal service would once again be a matter for national pride.

This letter, as with many other communications delivered to your office, will be delivered personally. My trust in our postal service does not extend beyond the area served by the stalwarts in Rockwood.

W. K. Petrie

THE ACTON FREE PRESS PHONE 853-2010 Business and Editorial Office. Includes a logo and detailed publication information.