

# Free Press Editorial Page

## Here's your chance

Since a couple of people feel strongly that Actonians should have a chance to express their personal opinion on fluoridation of our water supply, a ballot appears in today's paper for that purpose. The ballots may be brought or mailed (if possible) to the Free Press office. The results will of course be apparent to our regional councillor, G.W. McKenzie. He has pointed out the decision to fluoride Acton water can of course be changed.

Lack of completely believable information again bedevils the question. Two of our readers add to the confusion this week.

One reader brought us two copies of Consumer Reports, which report on fluoride in two, long detailed parts.

The magazine said the charge that fluoride causes cancer proved baseless. It also disproves other claims, such as the popular one that fluoride is a poison. You'd have to drink several hundred gallons at one sitting to get a lethal dose. Fluoride does not produce birth defects or mongolism, or cause allergic reactions, or heart disease. "Of all the numerous ills that have been attributed to fluoridation—from cancer in humans to constipation in dogs—none has ever been shown to be valid." One city which discontinued fluoride in the water found a remarkable increase in tooth problems four years later. The article concludes "The simple truth is that there's no scientific

controversy over the safety of fluoridation. The practice is safe, economical and beneficial. The survival of this fake controversy represents, in Consumer Union's opinion, one of the major triumphs of quackery over science in our generation."

And now for the bad news! The very next day we received a note from Lulu Wade of Guelph, who wrote a long Letter to the Editor opposing fluoride. She sends along a copy of a letter from The National Health Federation (of the U.S.) and the Coalition for Pure Water, which reports on a successful lawsuit of citizens against their water authority in the Allegheny Court of Common Pleas.

The letter says "This decision will culminate the most extensive hearing on the issue of water fluoridation in history. The pro-fluoridation establishment called in its top experts from around the world but were unable to refute the evidence. . . Simultaneously, we are preparing a lawsuit related to a series of two libelous articles in Consumer Reports, . . . which promoted the party pro-fluoridationist line with distortions, misrepresentations and deplorable attempts of character assassination. We must not allow such libel to stand unchallenged."

So what do we make of all that!

Anyway, the ballot appears today. OK, you people who asked for it. What are you going to do about it?

## No place for houses

It doesn't seem reasonable to allow housing close to Beardmore and Co., as company officials have argued. Perhaps a commercial or industrial use would be better on property where houses will apparently go before long.

In Toronto, houses are to be allowed near Malton airport, despite the knowledge there will be complaints of noise.

Beardmore's has a product that produces an odor at times, and despite the fact they have installed a

new disposal system, odor there will likely be.

In a letter to council Beardmore questioned the wisdom of building homes so close to the industry having regard to noise, odor and other factors.

"If council wishes our company to progress, our government and planning bodies should exercise more concern regarding existing industry," the letter said.

Acton's largest and oldest industry (after the usual mill) should have consideration.

## Safety spirit

Ghosts, witches, goblins and other Trick or Treaters are getting ready for the big haunt. The Ontario Safety League has some suggestions to help you recognize safety-conscious spooks when you see them. Look for:

**Glowing Ghosts**—That Halloween spook with the eerie glow is probably a wise young ghost sporting reflective tape or material. If you're driving, you'll be sure to spot this . . . even on the blackest night.

**One Sider**—A Trick or Treater who glides up one side of the street at a time. They never criss-cross the street.

**Maskless Marauder**—This one knows it doesn't take a lot of make-up to put on a scary face. It's safer than a mask that could interfere with vision and hearing. Even masked marauders can increase their safety by making sure eye holes are large enough and hearing

is not blocked.

**Non Burner**—This one never carries a candle, and the costume is made of flame resistant material.

**Night Lighter**—A flashlight in the hand is worth more than a candle in the pumpkin . . . it's safer too.

**Ghastly Grouper**—A group of frightening Halloween haunters is much more scary to look at than a single spook. And young children should be sure to go out with an adult.

**Boundary Boo-er**—Parents set boundaries for their children and the little spooks stick to them. They also know what time to come home and are never late.

Now you know what to look for on Hallowe'en. If you want to haunt your neighbourhood, or if you're a parent with children who are planning to take up the tradition, think of safety first and get into the real 'spirit' of the occasion.

## Of this and that

Start saving your pennies . . . and your nickels, too. The youngsters out for goodies on Hallowe'en will be collecting for UNICEF, too. It's a very worthwhile cause, and one that many of the children seem only too happy to add to their evening's happy program on October 31.

Our Nassagaweya neighbor Arthur Maloney won't be easy to replace. He is retiring after three years as the provincial Ombudsman and is returning to his criminal law practice. He initiated the post with flair and has certainly made the office and its new task well-known. The Ombudsman's office acts as a watchdog for us all, and Mr. Maloney deserves our thanks.

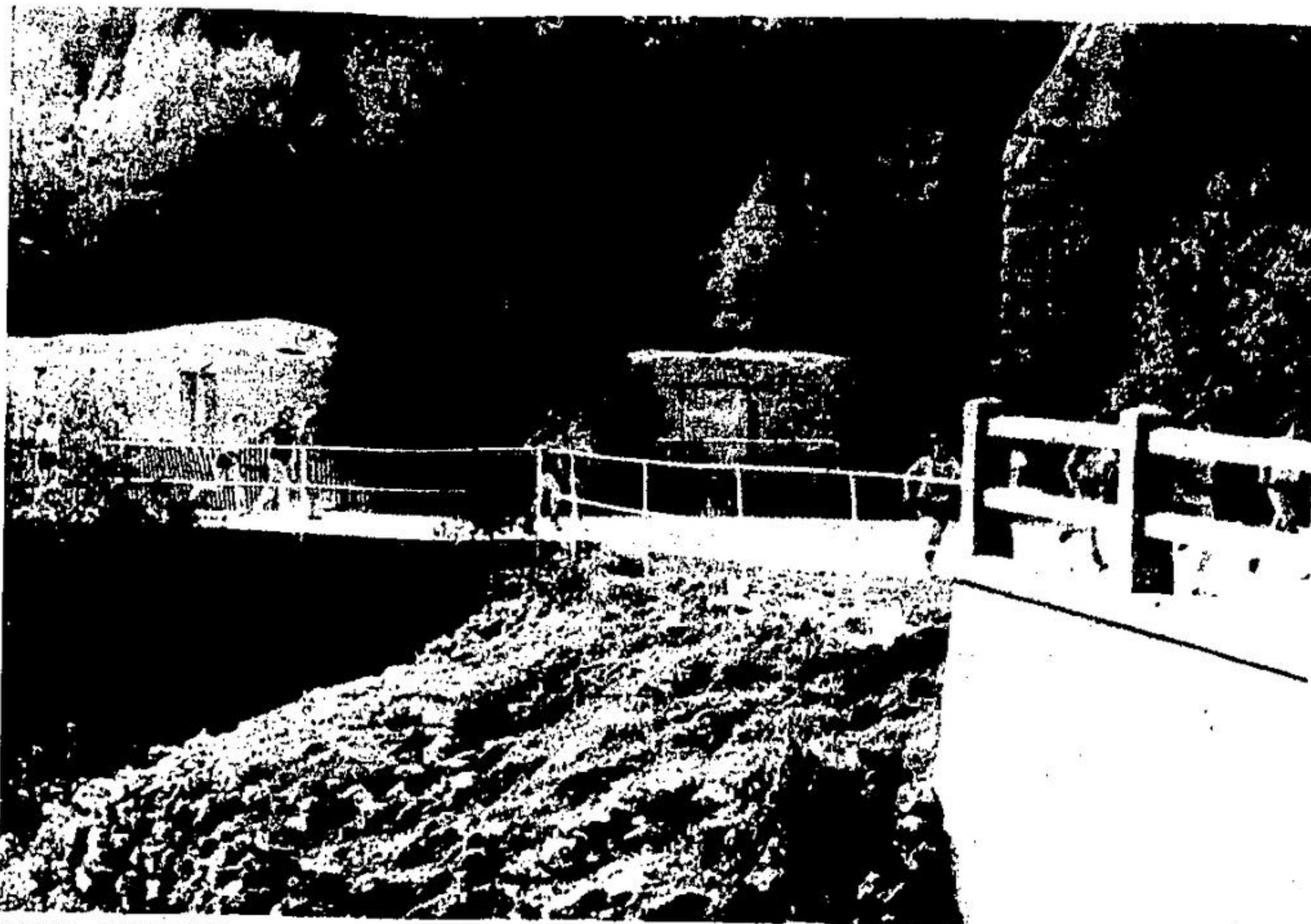
Acton friends followed Rob

Parker's election campaign with special interest in parliament, too. The former Acton resident looks like a winner, all right.

The tiny booth that replaced our station at the railway tracks disappeared one day, but to add insult to injury, the platform was torn up this summer. And the last freight shed was lost to fire. There's no hint left there now of the good old days, when train travel was important.

Good news! A couple of out-of-town Free Press subscribers report receiving their papers on Thursdays lately. One's in Mississauga, one in Hamilton.

Humanity is fortunate, because no man is unhappy except by his own fault.—Seneca



CROSS COUNTRY runners paced through the autumn splendor of the Rockwood Conservation Area last week. The beauty of the changing colors had

some of the athletes gasping in awe, as others panted for that extra breath!



## Sugar and spice

by Bill Smiley

One of the deepest satisfactions in writing a column of this kind is the knowledge that you are getting into print the angers and frustrations of a lot of other people, who have no recourse for their resentments, and consequently take them out on the old man or the old lady.

How do you know this? Well, because people write you letters cheering you on to further attacks, and other people come up to you, perfect strangers, shake hands warmly, and say, "By the Holy Ole Jumpin' Bill, you really hit the nail on the head."

This can be a little disconcerting, as you are never quite sure which nail they are referring to. If the congratulator is a woman, I smile weakly and change the subject. Because sure as guns, though she thought you were one of nature's noblemen for your assault on male chauvinism last week, she'll turn on you like a snake when she reads tomorrow's paper, with the column exposing female chauvinism.

Speaking recently to a class of potential writers in a creative writing course, I tried to pass along the personal satisfaction one gets from this type of personal journalism.

I emphasized the "personal" satisfaction, because there's a lot more that involved than there is of the other kind, financial satisfaction. Columnists and freelance writers have no union working for them, nor any professional association, as have doctors, lawyers, teachers.

They have only their own talent and wit and perseverance with which to penetrate the thick heads and thicker skins of editors and publishers.

But it's a great feeling when you vent your wrath, say, about the rapaciousness of mechanics, and you are button-holed six times in the next three days by people with horror stories about mechanics you can scarcely believe.

Trouble is, they all want you to write another column about mechanics, and put some real meat into it. This means, in effect, that they would happily stand in the wings and applaud when you were sued for libel.

Some readers would like you to be constantly attacking whatever it is that they don't like. Capitalist friends are

aghast when you refuse to launch an assault on capital gains taxes. Welfareist friends think you are a traitor and a link when you won't attack the government for not providing color TV for everyone on the take.

I am not by nature an attacker, and I think there is nothing more boring than a writer of any kind who tries to make a career of being a "hard-hitting" journalist.

Once in a while my gently bubbling nature boils over. Throwing caution and syntax to the winds, I let my spleen have a field day and try to throw some sand in the grease with which many aspects of society are trying to give us a snow job. And that's one of the finest paragraphs I've ever written, if mixed metaphors are your bag.

Fair game for the hard-hitter are: garage mechanics, plumbers, postal workers, supermarkets, civil servants, and politicians. Most of them can't hit back, and everybody hates them, except garage mechanics and their wives, plumbers and their wives, etc. etc.

Smaller fry are doctors, lawyers, teachers, used car salesmen. They all squeal like dying rabbits when attacked, but nobody pays much attention to them except doctors and their wives, etc. etc.

There are a few areas that even the hardest-hitters avoid. When have you, lately, read a savage attack on greedy farmers, callous nurses, or unloving mothers? And yet, there are lots of them around.

One of these days, perhaps, one of the hard-hitting writers will muster enough guts, after about five brandies, to launch an all-out attack on the audacity of women, thinking they're as good as men. Boy, that fellow will learn what real hard-hitting is all about.

Personally, I can't stay mad at anybody long enough to be a voice of the people, or a public watch-dog, or any of those obnoxious creatures who try to tell other people how they should feel.

The only constant in my rage is the blatant manipulation of self-seeking politicians who will twist and warp and wriggle and squirm and bribe for self-perpetuation in office.

Otherwise, I get a great deal more joy from touching the individual life than inflaming the masses. When I get a letter from an old lady in hospital, crippled with arthritis, who has managed to get a chuckle out of my column, it makes me feel good.

Recently, I got a letter from a young Scot who has immigrated to Canada. He says: "I have learned more about Canada and Canadians through reading your column than all the accumulated wisdom from the Canadian newsmagazines, novels and TV programs I have absorbed."

Now there is a man with his head screwed on right. If I, as a newcomer, tried to get my impressions of this country from newsmagazines and TV programs, I'd catch the first boat or plane home.

So, I guess I'll just try to go on talking to people, getting sore, having some fun, looking for sympathy in the war between the sexes. That's what life is all about, not plumbers and politicians and other horrors of that ilk.

## The Free Press Back Issues

### 100 years ago

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

The annual Fall Show of the Eramosa Agricultural Society was held on their grounds in Rockwood, Wednesday last. Notwithstanding the light shower, and the dullness of the weather during the forepart of the show, a large crowd attended to see as good an Exhibition as the Society has ever had. The horse show was as usual, first-class, and spoke well for the township. Mr. Jas. Ryder, of Acton, showed a number of excellent carriages manufactured by himself, and succeeded as usual in taking first prizes for all he exhibited. Mr. C. W. Hill, of Acton, had some specimens of his photographs on exhibition, and all agreed that they were second to none.

The annual exhibition of the Halton County Agricultural Society was held on their grounds in Milton, on Thursday and Friday last. The society appears to be generally fortunate in having fine weather for their show days, and no better days could have been chosen than Thursday and Friday of last week.

To be sure it rained a little about dark on Friday evening, but this was too late in the day to prevent any number from attending the show, and therefore an exceedingly large crowd was present. Farmers, merchants, mechanics and other artisans, with their wives, sweethearts, sons and daughters, jostled each other all day long, and all appeared satisfied that the exhibition was a good one in every respect.

### 50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, October 18, 1828.

Mr. Chas. Wilson, superintendent of Acton Public Utilities suffered a broken rib and a badly sprained ankle while trimming trees to clear the hydro wires on Monday. The ladder Mr. Wilson was working on slipped and he fell to the ground a distance of about ten feet.

The new Acton branch of Carroll's Cash and Carry Chain Store will open for business tomorrow afternoon. A staff of busy clerks and supervisors have been occupied since Saturday last in arranging the stock on the shelves and getting the store in readiness for the opening on that day.

On Monday, Mr. William Stalker was felling a tree in the bush on one of his farms when he happened with a rather serious accident. The tree, in falling, hit on the branch of another tree and was deflected from its course and fell in the direction of Mr. Stalker. It struck him on the left hip and fractured the thigh. The leg is also badly bruised by the weight of the tree on it. Mr. Stalker was removed to Guelph hospital where an X-ray was taken of the fracture. LATER—Reports from the hospital state that Mr. Stalker is suffering much from his injuries and his back has also been found to be injured.

### 20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, October 21, 1958.

Four Acton rural mail carriers joined in celebrating 50 years of rural mail delivery in Canada. Longest with rural mail delivery here is Harold Webster of R.R. 4, who has delivered mail for over 33 years. Many times he walked, with a bag of mail over his shoulder, when the snow was too high.

Jack Locker has been with the department 25 years.

Starting the same year as Mr. Locker was Willard Britton, whose route is now delivered by his daughter Betty. For the past 12 years Joe Jocke has been the carrier on R.R. 3.

Acton voters in December will vote on the dissolution of the Acton Public Utilities Commission and the awarding of a half mill grant for Acton Citizens Band.

### 10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Wednesday, October 16, 1968.

Keep the tannery whistle blowing. That's the open message to Beardmore and Co. management this week after half a week without the old familiar sound. Never before when the Free Press asked for comments have we had such prompt and numerous calls. Phone calls coming in and messages given on the streets prompted us to put out lists on Friday at both the plant office and stationery store for people to sign. In just two days, (minus Sunday and Thanksgiving) there were nearly 50 names. A petition in the M.Z. Bennett school started by Sharon Ellerby amassed 245 names.



IT WAS GREAT weather to enjoy paddling through the autumn colors on the Eramosa River in the Rockwood Conservation area.

## THE ACTON FREE PRESS

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