

Free Press Editorial Page

100 years ago

It was exactly 100 years ago this week that the Free Press moved to a new location on Mill St. . . where the Old Free Press building has just now been completed. What a round figure to celebrate! One hundred years on the same spot!

The building we moved into then was the old tin shop, which had been occupied by T. Stewart and Co. There were quite a few nifty improvements made for the move.

The Free Press started out in Matthews hall, above what used to be Hotchen's Bakery. That building was torn down this year to make a parking lot.

Next the Free Press moved to a small frame building on Mill, near the Mill-Willow corner, which later became the first post office. We were there for just a couple of years. The post office at that time was in Matthews store.

In 1904 a new facade was placed on the building and this is the appearance that has been so successfully reconstructed in the present rebuilding program.

The new building will bear the name "Acton News. The Old Free Press Building", to commemorate the reason for the special effort that was made.

The building has a special place in our hearts.

In 1904 the Free Press exulted: "Since the first of April the home of Acton's popular local journal has been in the hands of the builders. Architects, masons, bricklayers, carpenters, plasterers, metal workers, tin smiths, engineers, steam fitters, electricians and painters have in turn been in charge of the premises, and the result is certainly a complete transformation. The office has been practically rebuilt and every vestige of the original building where the Free Press was housed for twenty-five years has been entirely obliterated.

The constantly growing business of the Free Press necessitated accommodation and the new office

has more than doubled the capacity of the old building—the premises now being 28x58 on two storeys. The exterior now presents a very handsome appearance. The design, which represents a massive cut stone front, with pilaster columns between the three plate glass windows in the main office and heavy cornices and pediment, and rock-faced sides, was prepared by Mr. J. A. Ellis, Architect, Toronto, and worked out by the Metal Shingle and Siding Co. of Preston. Mr. J. B. Mackenzie had the contract for the carpenter work and roofing and the appearance of both exterior and interior reflect credit upon his skill and workmanship. The fittings for the editorial and business office, which are fitted in hardwood, are especially handsome. The painting was executed by Mr. W. H. Walker, and this also adds materially to the general attractiveness. The interior walls are covered with burlap, and with the neatly contrasting colors, maroon and terra cotta, worked out by Mr. Walker, and with the chair rails and mouldings, the effect is at once, clean, cosy and restful.

"The stone, cement and brick-work were done by Mr. N. Forbes, the thoroughness of whose work is everywhere appreciated. The new boiler room and coal room are models of safety and convenience. During the progress of improvements Messrs. Speight and Brayd, Georgetown, installed a new six h.p. steam boiler for heating and one of their splendid gasoline engines of good capacity for motive power. The new premises are thoroughly modern in all appointments and the Free Press is now comfortably housed in one of the most attractive and complete printing offices for a journal of its class in the province. We are now at home to our thousands of patrons and will welcome a call from any of them any time."



MEMBERS OF THE ENNISCLARE hunt await the masters' word Sunday as hounds cast for scent of the Town Line just east of Acton. The local hunt is in its second year and is enjoying full fields of enthusiastic equestrians and good weather every Sunday this fall. They have not, as yet, seen a fox but they have accidentally treed an amused raccoon.

The Free Press Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Wednesday, October 23, 1968. Deputy-reeve of Nassagaweya, William A. N. Hoey announced this week he will be seeking election as reeve of the township in the December election.

An open letter: Dear Sir: The reaction of your paper and many of the citizens of Acton to our announcement that we had decided to stop blowing the whistle after more than a century was surprising to say the least. We actually felt it no longer served any useful purpose and that perhaps we were intruding on the privacy of many individuals. On Wednesday morning, the whistle will blow again". Sincerely, Beardmore Tannery.

A large Mill St. store changed hands this week and pharmacist Bill Yundt is taking over the location and stock of Newton's 5cents to \$1 store. New name is "Dollar Daddy" store. Mr. Yundt will continue to operate Acton Pharmacy.

With little debate and surprising unanimity Halton County council moved Tuesday to indicate a desire for regional government. Council petitioned the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to proceed with the transition to regional government in the county.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, October 30, 1958

The first case of polio this season has occurred in the district. Mrs. Harry Dekens, R.R. 3, is in hospital in Toronto suffering from the disease with paralysis of the lower limbs.

A stolen car from Guelph crashed into the home of Mr. and Mrs. Doug Wilson, 240 Elmore Dr., Lakeview subdivision, Tuesday evening following a chase by OPP constable Bob Moreau of the local detachment. An estimated \$2,000 damage was caused.

The Honourable Fred Cass, Minister of Highways for Ontario, officially opened the new bridge in Rockwood on Wednesday afternoon during a half hour ceremony that saw nonagenarian Mrs. Donald McNeil cutting the ribbon.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Freeman received callers on the occasion of their 25th wedding anniversary. Although Churchill United Church is 120 years old, they were the first couple to be married there. They were presented with a Bible from the church commemorating the wedding.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, October 25, 1928

Last Wednesday evening, Mrs. R.P. Watson and Miss Emma Robinson entertained at the former's home at a towel shower for the booth which they are conducting for the Junior I.O.D.E. bazaar.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Glendinning, who conducted a meat shop in Rockwood a few years ago and moved to Eden Mills to carry on business there, moved back to Rockwood last week and are now located in L.R. Guild and Son's store building on Main St. Mr. Loren R. Guild and office staff vacated the place and are in another building near the former's residence.

Mrs. C.C. Speight and Miss Bertie spent the weekend with friends in Kitchener.

Mr. and Mrs. McKay of Toronto spent the weekend at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Murray.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, October 24, 1878

The next issue of the Free Press will be issued from the building next door to the Methodist church which was formerly occupied by T. Stewart and Co as a tin shop. This building has been fitted up expressly for us, windows have been put in, a partition pulled down and other necessary accommodations have been put in. Subscribers who call at the office for their papers will please bear in mind to call at the above place.

Parties who have requested us to take wood in payment of their subscriptions to this paper are desired to bring it along at once, before the roads break up.

The oyster season is fast approaching. By proper exertions on the part of some of our leading citizens, there should be no difficulty in getting a respectable cemetery somewhere outside the village limits. The dilapidated condition of the present burying ground and the injurious effects from continuing to inter the dead in so close proximity to the centre of the village are palpable reasons for warranting the council in purchasing a site.



Sugar and spice by Bill Smiley

About this time of year, reporters for community newspapers are sniffing around the town hall, trying to drum up a hot story about the coming municipal elections.

It's about as rewarding as looking for diamonds in the Arctic. All they come up with are pompous clichés, evasions, and half-truths.

Almost invariably, the Mayor, unless he's been caught with his hands in the till, or been discovered in flagrante delicto in a motel room with somebody else's wife, is going to run again.

"Yes, I believe I owe it to the people of our fine town to carry out the many progressive programs inaugurated during my years in office."

Translation: I like having my name in the paper every week, and if those jack-

asses of councillors would stop arguing with me, we might be able to screw enough money out of the government to start building that new community centre, which will be called after me.

Reeve Dimlylit: "What we need in our fair town is leadership at the top, something we haven't been getting. Yes, I will probably be a candidate again for municipal office, but I do not yet know in what capacity."

Translation: If that turkey, the Mayor, has a heart attack, I'll go after his job. He gets the chain of office, the cocktail parties, the headlines. I want them.

Deputy-Reeve Dumly: "There seems to be a strong ground-swell, among the voters, for new blood at the top, a vibrant leadership that would make Pokeville the thriving community it could be. But I have not decided yet. Let the people speak."

Translation: If the Mayor makes a terrible boo-boo, and the Reeve succumbs to cirrhosis of the liver, which he's working hard at, I'll go for the top, if I can find two guys to nominate and second me.

Councillor Doaks: "Yes. Well, as the voters of Ward Four well know, I have been their ardent representative whenever their best interests were at heart, and I know they are behind me 100 per cent."

Translation: I voted against every improvement in town, unless it was in Ward Four, and I squeaked in the last time by four votes.

Councillor Blank: "Well, I just don't know whether I'll run again. The position takes a terrible toll of your time and energy. I'd like to spend more time with my family. But you do feel a sense of responsibility to keep Pokeville progressing."

Translation: Jeez, I only missed three committee meetings last month. Holy Moses, if I'm turfed out, I'll have to stay home with Gladys and those rotten kids every night. Please, Lord, don't let Joe Glutz run against me. He'd wipe me out.

Councillor Klutz: "I honestly haven't decided yet. I have served the good people of Ward Two for twenty-eight years, unstintingly, regardless of race, creed or color, and I believe, with all due modesty, that I have served them well. Look at the new sewage line on 11th St. Remember the maples I had cut down to accommodate a fine new service on 8th St. And don't forget the modernization I brought to Ward Two: a barber shop, two pizza parlors, and a chicken palace. I stand on my record."

Translation: Some of those dang communists are still sore at me for cutting down those 25 maple trees. Some of them others is mad because they get pop cans and pizza plates all over their front lawns. If anybody runs against me, I'm dead. Otherwise, I'll be back on the band-wagon.

But we must avoid being cynical, mustn't we? Those municipal politicians are more to be pitied than scorned. If they fail to be elected, it's a serious blow to the ego. If they succeed, they are stuck with two years of mind-numbing meetings, and the constant obloquy of the public they serve.

Unlike their brethren in provincial and federal politics, they cannot put a certain distance between themselves and their masters, such as a secretary. They are apt to be pilloried in the local paper, beligerently confronted in a coffee shop, or phoned at two in the morning to settle a drunken argument. Such is the lot of the municipal politician.

Nor can we blame them too much for being shifty when asked whether or not they are going to stand for election. They have learned that shifty footwork, that sparring for advantage, that gouging and butting in the clinches, from their provincial and federal counterparts.

And they have, of course, that great master of the ringing phrase, the double talk, the double think, the swift change of course, Pierre Elliott Himsself: the man who was going to wrestle inflation to the ground; who abhorred price and wage controls, then clasped them to his bosom; who steered through the end of capital punishment, and now might, just might, hold a referendum on it, provided enough people vote for him in the next election which might, just might, be held next spring. Or next summer. Or next fall.

No, we can't blame our local politicians for issuing evasive or cowardly statements to the press. They've been too well trained from the top.

What others say: Halton Hills costing power consumers millions

Following is the lead editorial from the Toronto Globe and Mail on Thursday, October 19.

People in Ontario were shocked and angered when they were told that Ontario Hydro rates would rise another 10 per cent in January. Not all the increase can be blamed on Hydro.

The fourth unit of the Bruce nuclear power station on Lake Huron is due to be completed late this year and to be capable of full operation early next year. The power it can deliver will be needed throughout Southern Ontario, both to improve the security of the system and to cut costs.

But this power will not be available early next year because the Town of Halton Hills—succeeding a series of other protesters—has been delaying construction of nine miles of the transmission line since early in 1976. It has been estimated that this will increase the cost of power in 1979 by \$1 million to \$3 million a month.

The whole line has been under public assessment since 1972, when the Solandt Commission was appointed to inquire into and make recommendations on the transmission of power between Nanterke and Pickering. The commission in 1974 recommended abbreviating the usual expropriation and land acquisition procedures to minimize further delay, but wisely, this was not done.

The Environmental Hearing Board was consulted and its recommendation accepted. Hearings to determine the necessity of the line were held, approvals for expropriation were obtained, applications were made by owners to the Ontario Divisional Court to have the expropriation approvals declared invalid and were refused. The Niagara Escarpment Commission issued a development permit to allow the line to cross the escarpment. The towers to carry the power line have been erected for all but about 14 miles of the route. A transformer station has been built at Milton—on the other side of the disputed Halton Hills nine miles.

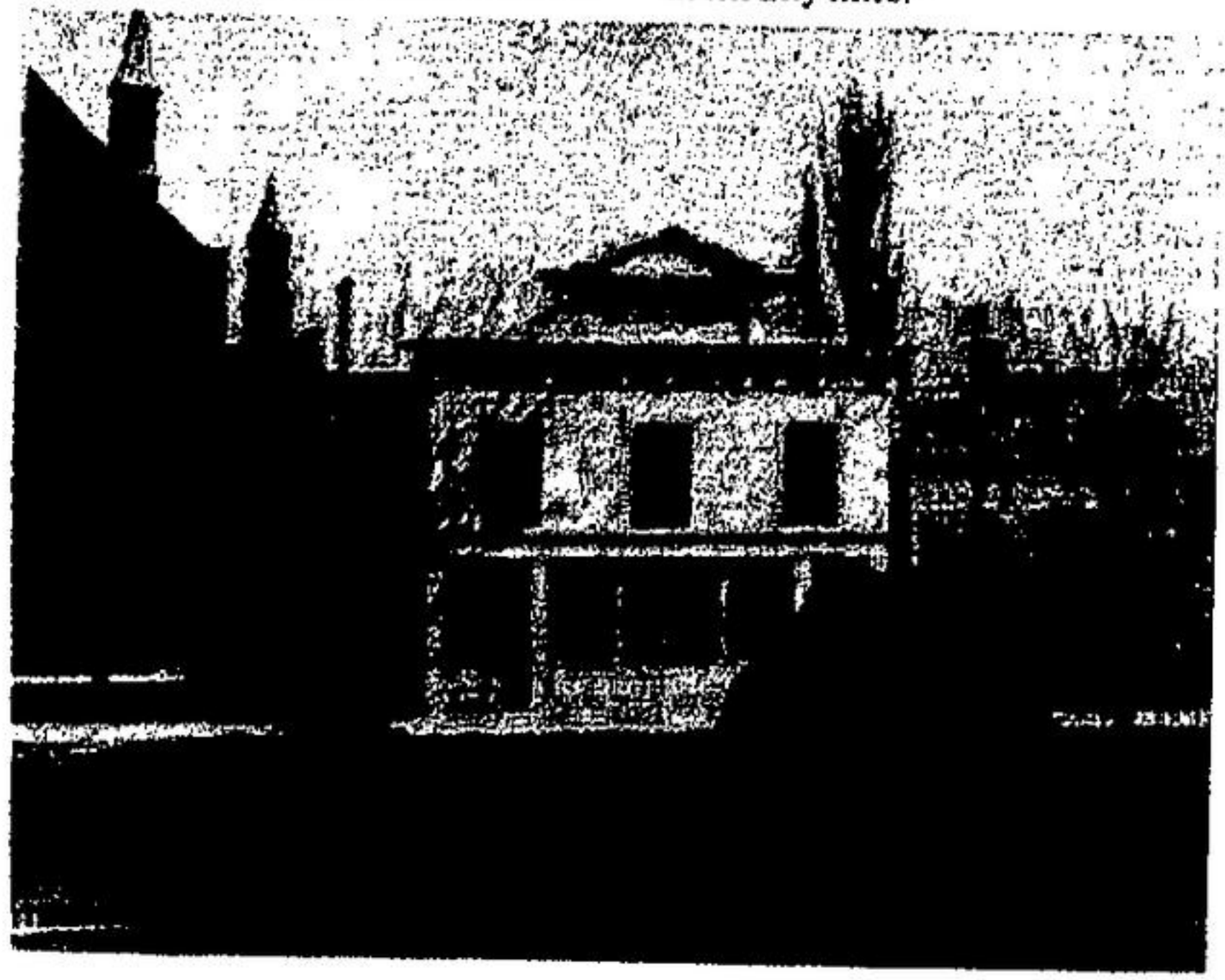
Halton Hills' bylaw does not permit the passage of transmission lines. It refused to amend its bylaw to grant such permission. In March, 1976, Ontario Hydro requested the Ontario Municipal Board to direct the town to amend the bylaw. The OMB refused. In April, 1976, Hydro petitioned

the Government to exempt it from the provisions of the town's bylaw. The Government requested Hydro to reapply to the town and if necessary to the OMB. The town refused the amendment and in June, 1977, Hydro appealed to the OMB. A hearing on the OMB on July 31, 1978, was adjourned on request of the Interested Citizens Group. The hearing has been rescheduled for January 2, 1979, and Hydro has been informed that Halton Hills intends to question in the courts the OMB's jurisdiction in the matter.

The manoeuvres of Halton Hills, assisted by the OMB and the Government, have consumed two and a half years. They have cost Hydro consumers money. They are going to cost Hydro consumers a lot more money.

An existing 230 kV system can accept the output of the three generating units at Bruce and a part of the fourth when it comes on line, but only if it is working all out. This is as risky as driving a car without a spare tire. It makes the system unreliable and, when breakdowns occur (as they have), expensive, because more costly fossil-fueled plants must then be brought into play. And the 230 kV system cannot carry the full output of the fourth generating unit. Only the new 500 kV system, which Halton Hills is blocking, can do that.

So early next year from 300 to 500 megawatts of power will be locked up at Bruce, with no means of getting it out. The existing system will be stretched to its limit to carry only part of the power available, and will also be unreliable and costly. The existing system is needed as a stand-by (a spare tire) for the new system. The new system is essential if all the power generated at Bruce is to be delivered. And Bruce, when it is in full operation, is supposed to supply 15 per cent of Southern Ontario's electrical needs.



A century on the spot

For history buffs

Talented local artist Laura Dittrich has a new series of drawings that will delight history buffs, Christmas shoppers and just plain people. She has drawn sketches of the old original school, the old Methodist church, the new United church and band shell.

The old school and the Methodist church have been gone from the scene for years, and the drawings

will bring back memories for Acton old-timers.

Mrs. Dittrich already has other town buildings in the series of sketches, including the old post office, town hall and stone school.

These pictures and hastinotes will be for sale at the Acton Arts and Crafts group show and sale this Saturday.

Of this and that

Last week's Free Press was unusually large and heavy, including advertising inserts from Beaver, Milton Mall, Zellers and Shoppers Drug Mart, as well as our usual Real Estate section. In all, it added up to 100 pages! This made the papers a little late getting on the streets and in the stores. The flyer is a popular way of advertising for large stores and we're glad they choose to get their message into local homes right along with the Free Press. Don't miss reading the flyers! After all, advertising is news, too!

Doris Anderson, Liberal candidate in Eglinton, said she was dismayed at the anger of the people and the way it was turned against the government. She lost out to Rob Parker, formerly of Acton.

About \$400 doesn't seem much for the Beavers, cubs and Scouts to have raised on Apple Day. Many seem to forget they're making a donation, not buying a single apple. The apple is the boys' way of saying "Thanks."

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PHONE 853-2010

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