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Sports museum for part of town hall?

The death of Clayton (Dude) Lindsay this week after a lengthy illness points out the lack of suitable recognition for personalities who made Acton a well known name in Ontario Sports circles.

"Dude" as he was familiarly known in hockey and baseball annals of the province starred on championship baseball and hockey teams of the '30s and '40s in Acton. When his playing days were over he gave unstintingly of his talents as a coach and manager to minor, industrial and Ontario Baseball Association teams. He loved sports of all kinds and left his mark on an era when amateur sport was alive and kicking like a healthy mule.

But this isn't a paean to "Dude" Lindsay and others like him who made this community a more pleasant and interesting place with their sports efforts. This is a plea that they not be forgotten with the generations who saw them play.

In Georgetown a number of people have formed a Hockey Heritage Committee to preserve the history of the great Raider teams of the past. A similar project in Acton to include all sports would be not only appropriate but give the present generation and those to come a picture of past sports personalities and the part they played when Acton was a much smaller town and sports was endowed with vigor, an everyday part of community life.

One suitable place for such a look into Acton's sports past would be the old town hall, which a public-minded committee is trying to preserve.

Several suggestions for a renovated town hall have been made, all of them admirable. Why not a local sports hall of fame in one corner or part of a larger museum preserving artifacts and memorabilia of all kinds of the past?

Other communities have taken the lead in keeping the past alive with "museums", a word we don't especially like. "Museums" conjure up a vision of dusty rooms and displays of the same ilk. We think of well lighted displays that would bring the past alive and convey some appreciation of it to people today and tomorrow.

It's thought for those who may feel the old town hall should be demolished. Saving it would not only preserve part of Acton's heritage but give this community a place to stand.

Legal gambling beneficial?

If you want to lay a few bucks on your local bookie, the government has a surprise for you—fines and/or jail. But, at the local race track, you can legally blow your financial brains out.

There's a full-fledged law prohibiting penny-ante poker on the CNR. But you can buy Loto Canada tickets at most train stations.

The law says you can't run a Bingo game for cash. But you can buy lottery tickets from almost any of the provincial governments. And at least two provincial governments are seriously considering legalizing casino gambling.

We've reached an interesting point in the social development of this country. No longer is all gambling deemed to be the work of the Devil. Now only private enterprise gambling is officially labelled as sin. State-run gambling is now condoned as socially beneficial.

This sort of convoluted thinking comes naturally enough to a government which wants to spend more than it figures it can raise in taxes.

A similar sort of thinking takes place during wars when, rather than tax the public directly for the

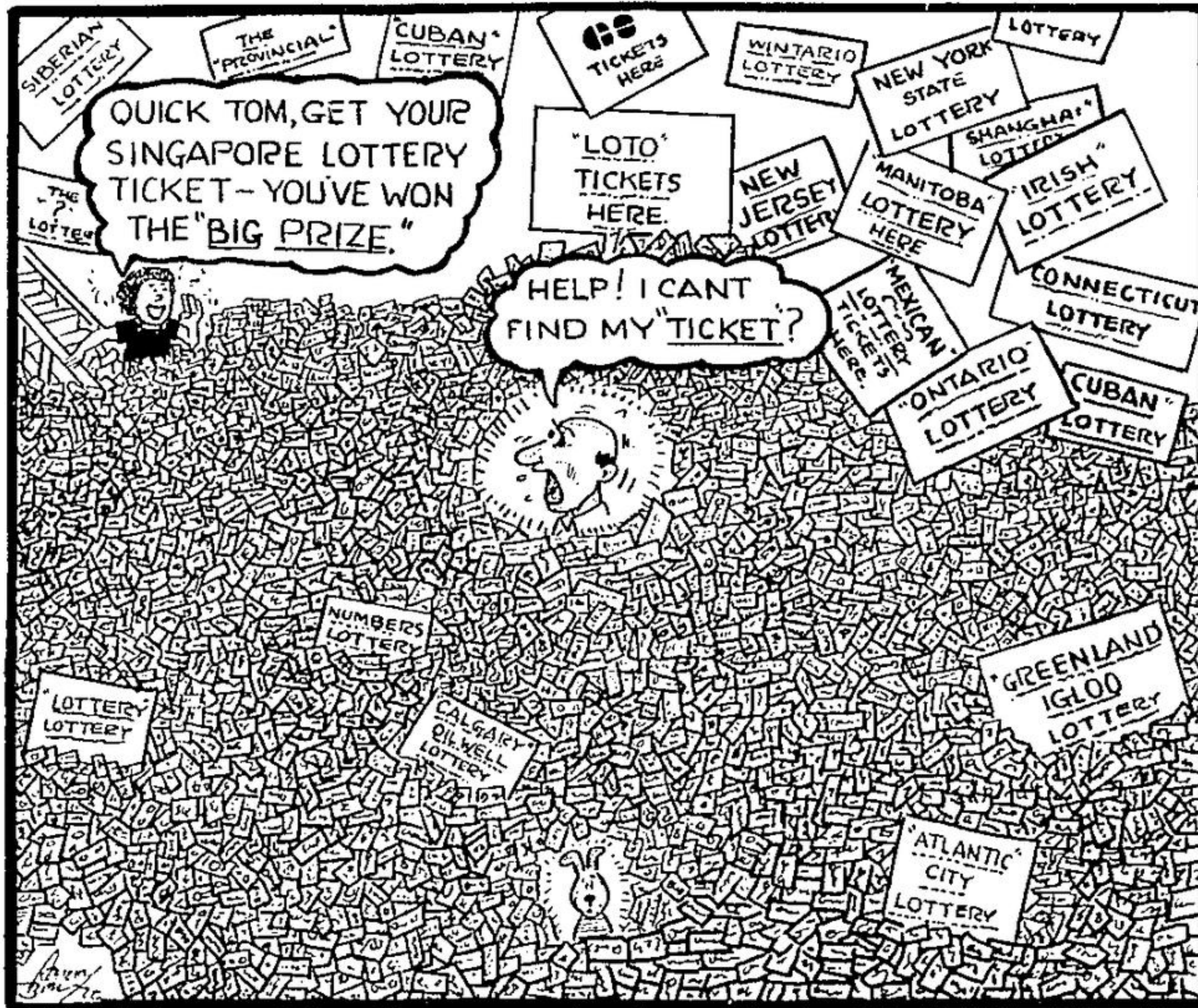
full cost of the campaign and risk losing public support for the war effort, government prefers to print money and tax the public more subtly through inflation. Almost anything—as any politician knows—is preferable to a tax which is highly visible.

In lotteries, all sorts of governments have discovered an almost unlimited gold mine. The same people who hate to pay taxes love to lose their money on games of "chance" where the odds against success are high enough to make a bookie blush.

This vast supply of money means that government doesn't have to take the full rap for its spending. Since taxpayers are not really aware of the total revenues which government is taking out of the public pocket, there is less opposition to the government's programs.

The case for lotteries might be a lot stronger if the money was being used to offset the deficits in essential public programs. Instead, the lottery departments are running around trying to find new projects which can be funded through the gambling revenue.

—The Canadian Federation of Independent Business



I plan to become an eccentric

by
Bill
Smiley



With a whole new year extending itself lubriciously before us, perhaps it's time to wonder what we are going to do with the next 10 or 12 months.

My plan for the next 12 months is to become an eccentric. This may not seem much of an ambition, but I've always admired eccentrics, and secretly desired to be one.

My wife and other close friends have already suggested that I am a bit weird, but that's their problem. After almost 20 years as a teacher of English, I'm gonna spell "er like she is, the way my students do.

That's only one of my eccentricities. I am also going to grow hair in my nostrils, not to mention my ears. No more of this to the barber, "Yes, give the ears a little trim, and the eyebrows." I want hairy ears and eyebrows. I want to look like an ancient Jewish prof.

If that isn't enough, I'll grow flurd in my belly-button. You know what flurd is, I hope. It's that cottony stuff that grows in your belly-button.

Flurd was the real cause of the American civil war. The Northerners were growing more flurd in their belly-buttons than the Southerners were on their plantations.

But enough of flurd. And who ever heard of a "civil war"? A war may be full of fiendish cruelty or dreadful atrocities or monumental indignities but there is nothing civil about it. A civil war occurs when you see your neighbor to tear down the fence that is bowing over your begonias.

Back to my eccentricities. Every summer, until now, I have eschewed the wearing of a tie. And I know my dignity has suffered. I've heard people say it. They say, "Look at his dignity. Did you ever see such suffering?"

And I'm going to change my whole attitude toward my grandboys. No more love and attention. That's not eccentric. That's bourgeois. This year it's going to be, "Get off my clavicle, you little monster, or I'll give you a good scelp in the lurch." That'll teach them that it doesn't pay to fool around with a relic.

I have some eccentricities in store for my old lady, too. Instead of sitting there reading the paper, I'm going to look up, smile brightly and say, "Darling, that's the most fascinating account I've ever heard of how you made the bed and did last night's dishes and vacuumed the living room." She'll probably go into a state of total oblivion.

There are a few other bad habits I'll have to discard if I want to become the complete 20th century eccentric. (Don't try to say that one unless you have your partial plate in.)

I'm going to stop semi-supporting my kids. No more handouts. Perhaps this seems excessively eccentric (see paragraph above), but at the respective ages of 30 and 26, they are no longer my business. In fact, I wish I had a business, so I could disown them. A nice hardware business, for example, with a net profit of about \$50,000.

I'd just love to say, "I disown you, and I'm leaving the business to your cousin Elwood, who smokes pot, hangs around the pool-hall and doesn't know whether his arm is glued or tattooed." I'd love to see the look on their faces.

Or would I? This eccentric business is not as simple as it seems. And you'd better have your dentures in for that one.

"Dude" Lindsay

Another prominent sports figure of halcyon days

My first memory of "Dude" Lindsay originates in the '30s at Acton's old steel clad arena, I was just a kid plenty wet behind the ears and full of enthusiasm for sports.

This was a sparkling cold night. The ice was fast and hard. The Tanners, group champions of a strong Intermediate "B" league which included teams such as Georgetown, Milton, Fergus, Elora and others, played in front of a full arena.

At one point in a game which Acton dominated, "Dude" Lindsay broke down the right wing, catching a pass from centre Norm Morton, broke around a confused defenceman, challenging the goaltender one on one.

The netminder came out, blocking the angle on the short side. Lindsay, crossed in front of the net, the goalie following, keeping the angle covered. Then, while the netminder expected a shot, "Dude" rifled a one-handed bullet over the astonished goaltender's shoulder that brought the crowd to its feet, applauding.

It was a typical Lindsay goal as Acton

piled up the score on the visiting team and was just one of many highlights in the exploits of Clayton "Dude" Lindsay who this week passed away at Guelph General Hospital, after a long illness.

"Dude" Lindsay was born and raised in the hamlet of West Montrose, a collection of homes on the Grand River between Guelph and Kitchener, with little claim to fame other than its old covered bridge over the Grand River, unique in Ontario.

He played junior hockey in Guelph and like many boys from small towns and rural areas played hardball and softball with enthusiasm in season. He excelled at all of them.

Perhaps like many athletes of that era, products of sandlots, small ponds and ice covered arenas, he would have graduated to professional teams at a later date when opportunities were greater. For small towns such as Acton where many of these athletes gravitated, their presence brightened up the tough economic times of the "Great Depression" and their aftermath.

"Dude", like many others, had his amateur athletic career interrupted when World War II broke out in 1939. Along with other Acton boys, he also played hockey in the old Toronto Varsity League, before signing up in the armed services. The war came when they were in their prime, athletes like Harold Mooney, Ben Bayliss, the Marzo brothers, the Morton brothers, Johnny Goy — to name a few, had athletic careers shortened by the service.

However, their love of sports never left them. When the war was over hockey and baseball were revived with great enthusiasm. As a fledgling sports writer it was my privilege to associate with some of the best teams Acton ever produced. The Tanners had won the OHA Intermediate B hockey championship in 1939, a proud moment for Acton, and they threatened to dominate the competitive intermediate OHA hockey wars again as athletes got back in "civvies."

Although careers beckoned in other direction, most of the athletes preferred to return to Acton. Among them was "Dude"

Lindsay who played wing and defence for the Tanners and made a name with the Acton baseball nine as a catcher and long ball hitter. "Dude" played behind the plate and had a high batting average as the 1949 Acton Intermediate ball team won the Int "C" championship. He had married an Acton girl, Louise Leatham, and was raising a family in this town, including two boys with athletic proclivities.

He also found time to act as coach of the Acton Juvenile baseball club, where I played third base. His knowledge of the game was obvious to our collection of fumbler and weak hitters. At one game in Milton, for instance, where a right handed pitcher, "Poohie" Marshall was bamboozling us with a sharp curve and drop, "Dude" let us have our wings for two innings. When he was sure we were suitably chastened, he advised us to stand ahead of the plate a step and swing at the ball before the curve broke.

We started to belt that pitcher all over the lot and chalked up an astonishing lead over the surprised Milton club, considered

the class of the league under coach Bud Corbett. Unfortunately our fielding didn't match our bats. We lost by one run. However, our respect for coach Lindsay rose by several notches.

"Dude" was never a quiet athlete. His constant chatter on the ball field and on the ice was sometimes interpreted as bravado but it infused the teams for which he played with the spirit that wins games. He also had strong confidence in his own abilities which also was sometimes construed as "boasting" but his detractors were often forced to admit he could carry out his statements.

In later years, "Dude" was plagued with ill health and forced to give up many of the activities he enjoyed. Earlier, he coached Georgetown Giants in the Halton County Baseball League, coached and played softball in Acton until he hung up his tack for slower pursuits.

He was part of an era in Acton—the like of which we may never see again. We'll miss "Dude" but we'll carry fond memories of him for the rest of our lives.

—H. Coles

Back issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 22, 1969

The community was shocked by the tragic death of George Robinson in an industrial accident.

There's no doubt snowmobiling is the fastest growing sport in the district. Already 73 licenses for skidoos have been issued at the local bureau by Edwin Watson.

Bob Drinkwater was again named chairman of the Acton planning board. Contrary to an announcement by the national government, the Acton post office will not be closing all day on Saturdays. Beginning Feb. 22, wickets will be open from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. Mr. McKeown doesn't feel that the change will be a hardship for residents.

Ken Marshall and his Siberian huskies have been competing in dog races.

Cobblehill Rd. residents oppose the locating of geared-to-income housing and senior citizens' units in their locality. A petition was presented to council. They favor single family dwellings for the area.

Doris Cook, Addie Wylie and Grace Townsley were presented with silver trays. The trio recently retired from Beardmore after a total of 72 years' service.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Acton Free Press of Thursday, January 22, 1959

P. Alan Deacon, planning consultant for the town of Acton, advised the planning board that consideration should be given for future planning. He said the board should consider close examination of the central commercial area in order to provide a stimulation of trade with off-street parking, that there should be a park plan for the entire town and there should be a preliminary street plan to cope with future highway extension and expansions in and around Acton.

The park board set its budget at \$3,000 with George Barbeau reviewing expenditures. His mention of the need for more picnic tables was promptly seconded by secretary Mrs. George Fryer. A filtration plant is being considered for the wading pool.

Nassagaweya reeve John Milne was chosen as 1959 warden of Halton county.

Helen Benton was chosen to represent Acton at the Halton County public speaking finals. Finalists chosen were Graham Windett, Lind Parker, Joan Cook and Gay White. Judges were Rev. A.H. McKenzie, E.A. Hansen and Glen Banks.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Acton Free Press of Thursday, January 17, 1929.

The annual meeting of Acton Fall Fair was held in the Town Hall yesterday afternoon. President Kerr spoke of the improvements and progress the fair was making. Fair dates were again set for the third Tuesday and Wednesday in September, as has been the custom. John H. Smith was elected president with first vice president J. R. Kennedy and second vice president Duncan Waitdie.

Excepting the school house and an old stone stable at Brisbane corner, this one-time hive of industry is off the map. The last frame building was destroyed by fire this week.

Father McReavy was re-elected chairman of the Free Library board at their meeting Monday morning.

At the last meeting of Acton Loyal True Blue Lodge, Sister Lappin was re-elected W.M. A number from Glen Williams paid Acton Lodge a visit.

Drivers: Be kind to your horses these winter days. Blanket them when they are standing.

With highways open the entire year, motoring can now be termed a year-round pleasure.

At the annual meeting of the Rockwood Horticultural Society Mr. Walter Thomas was elected president.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Acton Free Press of Thursday, January 10, 1879

More snow. Today's mails are all late. The streets have been lively with sleighs. Stewarttown station is now one of the regular stations on the line of the H. and N.W. Railway and freight can be shipped to and from there hereafter.

The skating rink continues to be the centre of attraction to lovers of sport in this village. It is open every evening and almost every afternoon and the band is in attendance Monday and Thursday evenings.

A sleigh load of Actonians attended the skating carnival in Milton last night. Good time.