

The Acton Free Press

Founded in 1876

Don McDonald, Publisher

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EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

Editor: Hartley Coles
News Editor: Helen Murray
Reporter/Photographer: Eric Elstone
Sports Editor: Robin Inscow

TELEPHONE (519) 853-2010

Business and Editorial Office



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Advertising Manager: Bill Cook
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Make it a park

Ontario Municipal Board arbiters are going to need the wisdom of Solomon to sort out the Leishman Park case they heard last week.

In a nutshell the case is this: The Town of Halton Hills would like to use the unused park on Mill St. for housing, and its extra assessment, trading it to a developer for land near Fairy Lake. The town thinks the parcel is an unneeded frill—an empty space fulfilling no function.

Approximately 45 families in the neighborhood of the parks want the town to keep the land, and develop it into a passive park. They feel the town was deeded the land for a park and a park it should stay.

Twice before the people have won their case before the OMB. This time the town is suggesting the neighborhood has enough park land. The municipality counts land along a Bovis drainage ditch

as a "linear" park.

The people of the neighborhood just laugh at the suggestion that the Bovis land could be a park. But they also know Leishman Park is not a park either using the common meaning of the word. It is just an empty 448 x 52 foot lot. It has never been developed.

The municipality looking at the school grounds in the area thinks there is plenty of room for recreation in the Leishman Park neighborhood. And there is. But school grounds are not parks. Leishman land was dedicated to the town as a park.

If OMB representatives have their thinking caps on straight they'll settle the matter once and for all. It makes sense to trade the land for more adjacent to Fairy Lake as the Town desires but a real park is needed in that section of town. It should be developed and kept as a park. There's room for houses in other parts of Acton.

Going to school a big step!

For the child facing school for the first time it can be a great adventure, albeit a little frightening. It's a whole new environment peopled by strangers.

Most children look forward to that first day with excitement. It's a great step. No longer will he or she be just a "kid". They'll be going to School!

There are new disciplines to be learned, new people to meet, a whole new and strange society to face.

What your child learns during the first few weeks of school will in many ways affect the rest of his life. His world is expanding and requires a new set of rules to cope with it. Perhaps you've already walked by the school with him several times. That's a good idea! You are sharing this experience.

You may even have planned to take him to school the first few days and meet him afterward. But remember, you will not always be able to do that. He'll have to find his own way one of these days.

Work out the safest route to the school and accompany your child along that route to make sure he knows it. It's a simple thing to bring up pedestrian safety practices during these walks—obey traffic lights, cross at crosswalks or corners, look all ways before crossing, stay away from parked cars, and don't run or play on the street.

And by all means remember that children learn from example. If you disregard the rules of the road...so will they.

So watch your step...and theirs.



Garage sales have been numerous in the Acton area this summer with both buyers and sellers benefitting. Free Press cameras recently scanned the area. This is what they found: Allan Ellerby discussed the hedge shears he has for sale to Marie Musselle. John Cavioic takes a look at a set of tanks at a Bower Avenue Sale while young Amy Oates seems a little bored. Amy got all she wanted at the sale, a doll, and now she's ready to go home.

Back issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Acton Free Press of Wednesday, August 27, 1969

Close to 600 fans watched professional wrestling in the Community Centre Thursday when there were four action-packed bouts.

Playground leaders are relaxing after tending 160 children for six weeks. Leaders were supervisor Don Price, swim instructor Louise McElroy, senior leader Jo Marie Marchmont, Dolores Jordan, Susan McGilloway, Mary Ann Freuler, Susan Marchmont, Mary Frances Marcoux, Cathy Dunn, Sharon Ellerby, Tim Coles, Jeff Cooper, Larry Quinn, David Lee and Ellen Wissenz.

Anne McArthur, newly elected reeve, says Nassagaweya would prefer to stay as a unit with Acton in regional government. Allan Ackman was named to fill the vacancy on Nassagaweya council.

Dr. T.B. Moore appeared before planning board with plans for a new medical centre. Two apartment buildings on Church St. on the old Beverley House property were approved. A proposed commercial development of five stores was also approved for Main and Church Sts.

Display night was held following the Vacation Bible School at the United church. About 60 children attended.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Acton Free Press of Thursday, August 7, 1959

Prominent businessman Earl Cooper passed away. He came to Acton in 1944 to take over the drug store purchased from A.T. Brown.

School board chairman C. Bradley, accompanied by Mayor W.H. Cook, laid the cornerstone at the 12-room Robert Little school addition. Construction continues at a rapid pace.

Home economics courses will be added at Acton high school.

Martin Marks, 20, has received his commercial pilot's license.

In an attempt to relieve parking problems on Mill St., a one side parking ban is proposed by council.

A good percentage of Halton residents have received Salk anti-polio shots.

The Highway 25 overpass over Highway 401 was opened to traffic this week.

Installation of the heating unit at the town hall is being completed.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Acton Free Press of Thursday, August 29, 1929

The annual garden party of St. Alban's Church was held on the beautiful grounds of Beverley House, the home of Mr. and Mrs. G.T. Beardmore. The delight of wandering through the gardens was a pleasure in itself.

A very pretty wedding was solemnized when Ellmere Papillon and Arlington White were married. The happy couple left on a trip to Welland, the bride wearing a tan and sand ensemble, with hat to match.

Mr. and Mrs. John Mellon and Miss Minnie Mellon received a surprise when their brother James arrived from California. They have not seen him for 43 years. They had not heard from him and feared he had been lost in the earthquake of 1906.

Mr. D.H. Lindsay has been making some good wins this year with his trotting horse, Baron Gratton.

"Talkies" will soon be coming to Acton according to Mr. Gregory, manager of the Wonderland Theatre. His announcement was greeted with cheers from the audience.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Acton Free Press of Thursday, August 28, 1879

Delegates from all sections of the country attended the Temperance Convention in Milton on Monday. The Scott Act, which would put us on the road to Prohibition, was discussed at length. Late in the afternoon, each speaker was limited to five minutes. In the evening a mass meeting was held when the Hall was exceedingly well filled. Excellent addresses were given on the Scott Act.

On Thursday night it was discovered that the new store and dwelling of Mr. B. Haslett was in flames. The alarm was at once sounded and citizens hurried to the scene of the conflagration but the fire had gained such headway before being discovered and everything in the construction of the building was of such a dry nature that it was at once evident to all that no effort could save it. The contents of neighboring houses were removed and blankets, rugs, etc. placed on the roofs and with a free use of water to keep them wet the consuming fiend was kept off. The fire must have been started by some diabolical person. The furniture and household goods of the neighbors were considerable damaged by their hasty removal. They were also busy as a watch, and other valuables are missing. We understand Mr. Haslett intends to replace the building with a brick one. His loss will be about \$1500, insurance in Waterloo Mutual \$500.

Editorial notes . . .

Nothing like old pictures to kindle the imagination and memories. A picture of the Dominion Hotel on this page last week which the editor speculated was taken in either the 1920's or '30's was lent by the former Sinclair sisters. There's a baby in a buggy in front of the main door of the hotel. Occupant? It was Frances Chew, now Mrs. Jean Marcoux, of Tidy Avenue, Acton. The picture was taken in the '30's and the hotel was called the Dominion Inn then, according to the sign, Mrs. Marcoux informs.

Typographical errors are often embarrassing for newspaper people, especially the

one that cropped up in a headline last week. The headline read "Lending her car for the volunteer," A story about Beth Newell who said she would be willing to listen to people about volunteering. Obviously the headline should have read: "Lending her ear for the volunteer". Hope Miss Newell hasn't had to lend her car out too much this week.

Keep your eye open for the Halton Hills recreation department's fall brochure which will be distributed on Wednesday, September 5. It will feature the fall activities of many community groups in Halton Hills as well as listing contacts for organizations and

programs available in town. It will be mailed to Acton urban and rural residents.

Milton, a town which is undergoing a rapid metamorphosis with so much new housing construction, is planning a mini-Caravan called the Milltowne Festival of Countries Saturday, September 15. A la Toronto caravan passports are being issued worth \$2.50. Pavilions participating are: Armenian, Chinese, Canadian, Dutch, English, German, Greek-Cypriot, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Latvian, and Scottish, all reflecting the racial origin of many of Milton's citizens. It's an imaginative program and we wish our neigh-

bors success in this new venture.

Last week's note about letter writers who do not sign their real names and want letters published drew one angry retort from a writer whose letter appears this week. The writer said she did not understand the paper's policy and certainly wasn't afraid to sign her name providing she could use a pen name. Letter writers must sign their real names and preferably use them for publication. If there's a good reason a pseudonym can be used. In this case there was good reason and the letter is signed "Anti-Union." The lady had the courage of her convictions.

Most residents will welcome the news Halton police will be cracking down on speeders—at least until they get caught. Few drivers haven't been guilty of it at one time or another. However, most motorists observe the speed limits when they are in built-up areas except for a few who often terrorize the elderly and frighten people with children. If we aim to crack down on their speeding we are going to have to help police by coming forward with licence numbers, car and driver descriptions, times and dates—and appearing at court at conviction time. So the ball's in our court now. Then it is up to the police.

Fourth Estate

by Eric Elstone

For much of Monday morning two Halton Regional Police sergeants and I engaged in "personal contact and interaction with a view to securing a meaningful relationship."

To protect the innocent I'll keep the sergeants' names private. They were, after all, only following the wishes of Halton's Acting Chief of Police James Harding and his new General Order 12.

The securing of a "meaningful relationship" is what the acting chief had his men doing, however. I was just going about my normal business of nosing out as much information about weekly crimes and traffic accidents. I didn't know I was being engaged in "personal contact and interaction."

On a "meaningful relationship" with police

In General Order 12's eight pages Acting Chief Harding spells out what he wants to be the relationship between his officers and newsmen.

I'm selecting from the general order what I believe is the principle behind the acting chief's action: keeping the public informed.

"The public will best be served by the provision of accurate and responsible reporting of events which may be of interest to them when, the agencies responsible for providing and publishing that information, do so in an environment of mutual trust and understanding of each others roles."

The key to any relationship with the press hinges on the definition of what is

news, and Acting Chief Harding recognizes this in another paragraph when he hopes "mutual trust and understanding" will reduce the conflict between what people in the news business and police think news is.

The practice of the new news policy places the definition of what amounts to news into the hands of the man who wears the blue uniform.

What's changed? The week before General Order 12 came out, I and other news people could go to the local police headquarters and get a copy of the week's crime sheets. Included on the sheets was everything in the criminal code ranging from mischief, break and enters to auto theft, assaults, plus liquor and dope of-

fences. Any more serious crimes—murder and arson for instance—were subjects of separate press releases.

Also reporters could talk to investigating officers at crime or accident scenes. These talks often filled in details and led to future stories.

All in all, much of society's crimes, tragedies, follies and what's called human interest were reflected in these pages.

The advantage to the reporter of getting the week's crime sheets was that one could take time to examine them. Take time and then follow up with other stories.

Under General Order 12 a sergeant or an inspector has to read the reporter the news. Of course, the officer has other duties besides informing the press. The

officer will ask: Are you interested in liquor violations? And probably not, just by reading the one or two. We do get the break-ins and auto thefts. And we will likely get what police call major crimes.

However, it amounts to the police telling the newsmen his job. And that is not right.

Returning to Acting Chief Harding's principle, as I've selected it. "The public will best be served by the provision of accurate and responsible reporting of events which may be of interest to them..." So far I've determined the police decide what is of interest to the public.

If, because of General Order 12, the public will get responsible reporting, does

(Continued on Page 5)