

The Acton Free Press

Founded in 1876

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Forum is good idea

Halton Hills councillors Terry Grubbe, Ed Wood and Ross Knechtel plan to be available to the public one afternoon a week to answer questions, help with problems, or just generally talk about politics or the town.

The afternoon forum is aimed at bettering communications between public and politicians. It was a campaign promise of Mrs. Grubbe's in the municipal by election last month. She felt the more open councillors are, the more trust they will engender.

If the public does not respond councillors will take the opportunity to discuss council business amongst themselves.

unity to discuss council business amongst themselves.

Attempts at providing better communications should be commended. Too many people complain about not knowing where to turn with a problem. Or they find out something has already been approved by council. Mrs. Grubbe's forum may help to shed the old stereotyped thoughts that all politicians are shifty and hide aces up their sleeves.

Once the forum is working residents will have an opportunity to find out first hand the answers they seek.—HJM

Town learns lesson

Halton Hills appears to be learning a valuable lesson from Halton Board of Education about how to recoup money from vandals.

So far this year damage to town property and equipment by vandals cost taxpayers \$8,764.34 according to the tab presented to the general administration committee last week.

Councillors and town officials echoed each other in taking the blame. "We're at fault here. We have to take a harder line on vandals," one representative said.

The board of education recently faced the same problem and decided to take action. The board's administration is implementing requests to the court for the recovery of repair money from convicted vandals where possible. Vandals cost the Halton school

board about \$120,000 each year.

Requests for compensation before the courts have to be made at the time a convicted person is being judged. Part of the Criminal Code permits such requests.

Frustration reflected by Mayor Pete Pomeroy about parents shouldering much of the responsibility for vandalism could be vented if the town took vandals, those suspected of major damage, to court.

Taking vandals to court for satisfaction was considered by Plato in his book appropriately entitled The Laws. That Greek wrote the punishments he thought suitable for citizens convicted "of plundering or attacking" public property. That person must be punished by death. Fortunately for vandals times have changed, making them pay in money, is not too bad.—E.E.



"Take my picture, take my picture" children plead to The Free Press photographers. It's the plea which more often than not goes unheeded because there is no news "value" in such photos. However, there are exceptions to most rules and here they are: Cathy George, Jane De-Rouese, Cheryl De-Rouese and Kim Arnold. There you go kids, your picture is in the newspaper. Photo by Eric Elston

Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the Issue of The Free Press of Wednesday, November 18, 1969

The first five winners in the Santarama draw are Mrs. P. Venn, Mrs. William Price, Mrs. Alex Mann, Mrs. C.W. Taylor and Mrs. Mary Graham.

If a zoning change is approved, a new medical centre will be built at the corner of Frederick and Mill by Acton Medical Group, T.B. Moore, C. Hutchison, D.W. van der Bent and J.A. Omelon.

Hours of laughter and boots of joy were heard at the high school Las Vegas Night. First place winner was Dolores Jordan who chose a wrist watch as her prize. Jack Irwin placed second and Margaret Slaven third. Other winners were Dave Lee, Roger Haggitt, Bob Andrews, Nigel Spicer, Nigel Scott, Neil Anderson, Cindy Lee, Hazel Eastwood, Linda Perry, Steve Van Fleet, Alex Gray, John New, Peter Swim, Jack Vanerkooy, Russell Coutrup and Barb Pratt.

New parish priest for Sacred Heart, Rockwood, and St. Peter's (rustic is Father F.C. Elliott).

20 years ago

Taken from the Issue of the Free Press of Thursday, November 25, 1969

Plans have been finalized for a new church sanctuary for the United Church, to be erected above the recently built Sunday School rooms. The building committee is headed by Al Long. Church services are being held in the V.

At the nomination meeting, 45 people were nominated. Due to withdrawals the list was cut to 22. Reeve J.H. Goy was returned to office by acclamation. J. Hargrave received the office of deputy-revee by acclamation when former deputy-revee J.M. Greer relinquished the position in favor of standing for council. Contesting the office of mayor are incumbent W.H. Cook and G.A. Johnson. Eight candidates seeking the six council seats are G.W. Barbeau, J.M. Greer, W.J. McLeod, L. Duby, E. Pope, H. Lowe, A. Field and E. MacDonald. Highway 401 was officially opened today.

Twenty-seven years of faithful service in Acton were recognized at a farewell party for Wm. Middleton, prior to his retirement as customs officer. Frank Terry read the address and long-time associates Willard Britton, Harold Webster and Herb Helwig carried in a coffee table with cocktail shaker and glasses.

New customs officer will be Murray Harrison from Brampton.

50 years ago

Taken from the Issue of the Free Press of Thursday, November 21, 1929

Only an intermediate hockey team has been entered in the O.H.A. this year. At the organizational meeting in the town hall, G. T. Beardmore was elected president. Peter Smith vice-president, Neil Gibbons secretary, W.K. Graham treasurer, N.H. Gorden manager, Joe Kentner assistant manager and coach, W. Ecclesiall trainer, with the executive committee J.M. McDonald, J.B. Stacey, R. Salmon.

At the lakeside chapter euchre and dance in the town hall, Dr. Nelson was identified as the Mystery Man and the prize for the best waltzing couple went to Miss Elizabeth Orr and Mr. C. Leishman.

The Glee Club elected their officers, honorary president Mr. Amos Mason, president Mr. Wilfred Cules, vice-president Mr. Chas. Wilson, treasurer Mr. C.E. Knapp, secretary Mr. H.W. Hinton, leader Mr. F.J. Salt, assistant leader Mr. Dan Taylor.

The annual meeting of the band was held in the band hall on Mill St. Honorary President is John Hill, bandmaster A. Mason, assistant C. Mason, president John Alger, vice-president Archie Kerr, secretary J.C. Lindsay.

Mrs. (Rev.) C.L. Poole will receive, for the first time since her marriage, Tuesday, Nov. 26, from 3 to 5:30 and 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., at the parsonage, Bower Avenue.

100 years ago

Taken from the Issue of the Free Press of Thursday, November 20, 1879

Of all the positively unbecoming modes now current, the mode of wearing the hair "banged" or combed down over the brow, is probably the ugliest. Banged hair is particularly affected by burlesque and variety actresses, and gives a woman a bold look. Women of really good taste do not bang.

Mr. John Speight is fitting up a shop at the corner of Willow and Agnes, near his carriage shop, where he intends to keep a stock of furniture.

Almost every day, and especially Saturday, several of the crossings are completely blocked by horses tied across the street.

The child of Mr. Z.A. Hall and wife became ill and died within a few hours.

A wagon wheel passed over the body of William Stewart. His body soon became swollen to twice its size and before medical aid could be obtained he expired. It is supposed his injuries were internal.

Who is buying farms?: Q.P.

Questions surrounding foreign ownership of farmland will soon be getting attention from both sides of the Ontario Legislature.

Ontario Agriculture Minister Lorne Henderson is waiting on a survey of foreign owned farmland that is being carried out by municipal clerks.

Henderson's predecessor, Bill Newman started the survey. After a sample of one county and part of another he disclosed less than one per cent of agriculture land is foreign owned. That initial finding is challenged by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

Halton Agriculture

Representative Henry Stanley said about five years ago some land in the south was bought on speculation. About 25 years ago, a fair amount of land was bought by German interests in north Halton, he said.

Meanwhile, two private members bills will be coming up in the

legislature which grapple with the degree of foreign ownership.

A bill requiring all non-resident owners of agricultural land in Ontario to register the holdings comes from Middlesex Conservative Robert Eaton.

"There is a perceived problem in some parts of southern Ontario," said Wellington-Dufferin-Peel Conservative Jack Johnson. Mr. Johnson seconded the Eaton bill.

Under the proposed bill non-residents—including people and companies—with a quarter interest in more than 25 acres will have to register their land holdings. Even lands held by a trustee or beneficiary are covered by the bill.

"Failure to comply to the legislation could bring a penalty equal to 25 per cent of the value of the property concerned," according to a Conservative caucus press release.

Mr. Johnson pointed out the bill does not restrict anyone, it is to monitor ownership.

Liberal MPP Jack Riddell, who represents Huron-Middlesex, also has a bill concerned with foreign ownership coming before the legislature. His bill, if it

became law, would require registration of all farm lands. In a telephone interview this week the MPP indicated he believes that much of the small lots—about 25 acres—in the Niagara Peninsula would be viable in the hands of an experienced farmer.

The other difference between the Liberal and Conservative bills centres on the question of who can own farm land. Riddell's bill would permit non-Ontarian Canadians to own land while, he said, the Conservative bill would only allow Ontario owners.

The other significant differences centres on the penalty. Instead of a penalty equal to 25 per cent of the value of the property, which the Conservatives propose Riddell's penalty would be less severe: \$2,000 per person or \$20,000 per corporation.

MPP Riddell indicated foreign purchases of Ontario farm land is common knowledge. "We know this is going on. A lawyer in Exeter tells me there is Dutch money coming over." He used the example of some of that money buying a 200 acre farm for \$2,400 cash per acre.

Delighted to be chosen for Optimist award

Dear Editor: This week I had a unique experience. My parents and I were invited to be the guests of the Optimist Club in Acton for dinner. I had been selected along with Chris Geggel to receive an award from the Optimists who were honouring Youth Week. We were selected not only for our involvement in school activities but also for participation in community activities.

We were honored and very surprised to be chosen. Chris for his involvement

with the nursing home and myself for activities with the Acton Citizens Band serving the community and various other interests.

We deeply appreciate the prestigious award and enjoyed the fun and fellowship of the Optimists' dinner meeting. "The Optimists' main function is to help youth develop, and after reading their very fine creed, we agreed that they are an outstanding group of people.

Sincerely,
Nancy Patterson.

Pot pourri . . .

The energy crisis may accomplish what goodwill and Christian convictions have not, says the United Church Observer in its November issue. It may at last force people to make moral and ethical choices about their use and abuse of the earth's resources. It rates sources of

energy on the basis of their availability, effect on the environment, cost, risk to workers and the public, and efficiency. Solar heating won an A, natural gas an A-. Other energy sources ranked lower with coal getting a D-.

They went away boys and returned men

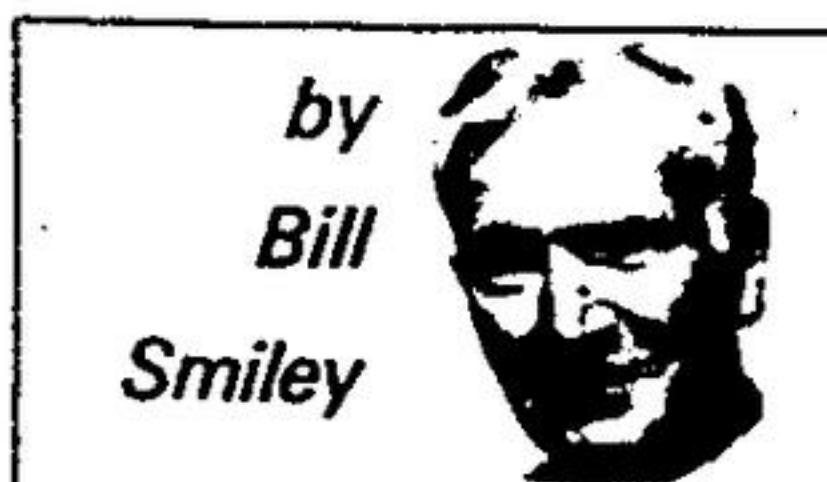
Two or three years ago, I swore I'd never write another column about Remembrance Day. I'd milked every emotion, flattened every cliché, and I thought perhaps it was time to let it fade away, as old soldiers never do.

However, I reckoned without our vice-principal. Each year, for the past three or four, as Remembrance Day approaches, he sidles up and wonders "if I could have a minute of your time?" That means he wants something.

If he wanted to bawl me out, he'd probably say, "Mr. Smiley, I'd like to see you in my office at 3:45." When I reported at that time, he'd likely give me the blast, in front of witnesses, and I'd tell him to go to hell, or shove it where the sun never shines or something equally vivacious and vulgar. Vice-principals do not easily upset old fighter pilots.

But when Dave gives me the old soft soap and asks if I could do something about a Remembrance Day program for the school, I get all soft and gooey and limply agree.

When I joined the high school staff, there were plenty of veterans of World War II. A bomber pilot or two, a navigator, a radar



man, some air force ex-technicians, and a rabble of former navy and army types.

Nowadays, I'm just about the oldest veteran on the staff, so I'm stuck with the Remembrance Day hokum. The oldest veteran is a German, who fought in the North Africa campaign, was wounded, and spent the rest of the war in a prison camp in the States.

It would hardly do to have him talking to the students about "our sacrifices in two great world wars." He might get carried away and say something like, "If it hadn't been for that maniac, Hitler, we would have kicked the stuffing out of you."

So I'm stuck with it. For a few years, we had a full period program with the

students making it up. They were awful. Full of folk songs, like, "Where have all the soldiers gone?" and the local Legion marching around on the stage of the cafeteria getting all tangled up in their flags, and the reading of a List of the Fallen.

For the kids, it was a period off school, and a sort of bewilderment about what these crazy adults had been up to, in a time of which they knew nothing.

So we gradually cut it down. The Last Post was eliminated. I gave such an anti-war talk at one of these sessions that even the students were startled.

For the last two years, I've been asked to write a two or three minute "message" about Remembrance Day, full of meaning, poignancy and sentiment.

I'd never give an assignment like that to a student. It would be like asking them to give a summary of the Bible in 200 words.

However, I'm going to do it again this year, because I am soft in the head, or something. Let us hope that next year, the thing will be reduced to an announcement: "We will now honor our war dead with one

minute's silence. On the sound of the bleep, shut up for one minute. Then go to your regular classes."

Here is a sample of what I write. It is spoken into a mike by a student who doesn't know how to use a microphone and has a bad cold. This is last year's bit:

"When you are young, life is forever. When you are old, Death sits grinning and nodding at your elbow.

"Hundreds of thousands of young Canadians sneered at that old witch, Death, and offered their most precious possessions, themselves, to the bullets and the shrapnel, the mortars and the cannon. They didn't say to themselves, 'I'm going to die so that the students of Blank Secondary School can have gravy on their french fries.'"

"They didn't say much of anything. They just went off to fight against something they thought was evil.

"Most of them were just kids, two or three years older than you are. They had the same hang-ups you have: bad marks in

math; frustrated love; uncertainty about the future.

"Maybe they weren't too bright. Maybe they should have said, 'I ain't gonna get killed in some stupid war over in Europe.'"

"Maybe, but they went. And they were killed, in their thousands. So that you can have gravy on your french fries. And a lot of other things you take for granted.

"Most of us don't want to leave the world without making some little mark on it. Every human being is a precious thing. Whatever you do, you will leave something of yourself behind, even if it is only dust.

"Those young fellows who were killed in France and Holland and Italy didn't have much chance of leaving anything behind.

"But they left a memory. Once a year, on Remembrance Day, we take a silent moment to think about those laughing boys—and most of them were boys—who went across the ocean so that we could have freedom of speech, open elections, letters to the editor, and gravy on our french fries."

What in the world am I going to write this year?