

The Acton Free Press

Founded in 1875

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Keep Barratt tops in north

Halton Regional Police made a personnel change Monday which needs commendation. John Barratt, an Acton resident and a long time Halton Hills peace officer, was appointed acting Inspector and assumed temporarily the duties of District One Commander, replacing Inspector Alexander Terrell, who has left to take over as head of the Burlington district. Hopefully Mr. Barratt's tenure as commander won't be temporary. A local man running the local police makes sense. District One covers Acton, Esquesing, Nassagaweya, Georgetown and urban Milton. When the regional force was born in 1974 District One consisted of only Georgetown. The following year urban Milton was split off from District Two, Oakville, and logic prevailed with its joining of the north command. In ensuing years the regional force moved into first Acton and Esquesing and later rural Milton. In its early history the regional force was directed in the north by men who came from the north. Initially, former Milton chief Ray Andres, and later ex-Georgetown chief Floyd Schwantz were the commanders. Also most of the officers were veterans of the old municipal forces and many lived in the north. However, during the force's five year life, which has been punc-

uated by controversy over morale problems and complaints of ineffectiveness from the public, transfers and resignations have resulted in most of the old, familiar faces being replaced by new people. Many of the new officers and brass have been from the south. More often than not when a policeman has been sent up here from the south, just about the time he or she was getting to know the area and the people they were supposed to be serving they were transferred, either to another north detachment or back to the south. An excellent step towards improving police-citizen relations here would be to post as many officers as possible with experience in the north. These people are most familiar with the area, residents and the crime problems our urban-rural mix produces. Police work in the south is naturally much different from what it is in the north. Making Mr. Barratt's appointment as commander in the north permanent would be a wise move. He has worked in both Acton and Georgetown for many years as a detective and staff-sergeant and so is familiar also with Esquesing. He can relate with both the people and area better than any replacement from the south, no matter how qualified, ever could.

Improve debate format

Negotiations and jockeying have begun over the format for whatever type of nationally televised debate or debates take place during the federal election. It can only be hoped, for the voters' sakes, that there isn't a repeat of the performance last spring. The two hour program with the leaders of the Progressive Conservative, Liberal and New Democratic Parties left a lot to be desired. The format was itself to blame and not the three participants, though they must shoulder some of the fault since they obviously agreed to the format. Topics were decided by a panel of broadcast journalists with each man squaring off with his two opponents once, as well as making prepared opening and closing statements. Viewers had to tune in for the entire 120 minutes to find out how the leaders and parties felt about the issues voters were concerned about as individuals. A number of important issues, for example energy, were completely ignored or brushed over far too quickly. At the same time topics of less importance were discussed. Far too much time was wasted by the television pundits framing questions, complete with background and veiled opinions. There were more than just three men on

the set trying to grab the limelight. A series of three one hour debates with a single moderator would seem to have merit. Each program could be devoted to two pre-announced topics. One night could be devoted to the economy and energy. Another might combine federal-provincial relations and constitutional reform. A third debate could feature social policy and related topics like marijuana and abortion. This system would allow viewers to tune into the programs they are interested in and skip the others. It would also ensure issues got a more thorough airing than they did in May. One commentator on the set, to ensure only that the rules were followed, would reduce the time wasted on pundit posturing and give more time to the politicians for the cut and thrust of debate. However, the suggestion by Liberal leader Pierre Trudeau that the series of debates shouldn't focus exclusively on the leaders but should also involve ministers and front benchers should be rejected, if for no other reason that the motive is partisan. It is designed to divert attention away from the Grits' sticky leadership question, not to ensure voters are informed. Leaders can espouse caucus and party positions just as well as ministers and front benchers.




"... MISSED TWO CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS AFTER THE CHRISTMAS OF '66' - THAT'S HOW IT HAPPENED..."

Politicians New Year spoilers

I will not think about the election. I will not write a word about the election. I will put the election right out of my mind. I am not about to let an election spoil my new year.
There. How do you feel about another election? Probably much as I do. Another six million dollars out of our pockets to pay for the thing, and when it's all over, we'll have another bunch of liars, or the same ones, back in the House. It makes one puke.
Silly sods. Our glorious leaders. The arrogance of those in, and the lust for power of those out, is no new thing in our Canadian political history, but nowhere has it been better focussed upon than in the past few years.
Clark's Tories, who favorite epithet for the past decade has been "arrogance," walked into the House of Commons, after six months of non-government, stinking of the stuff.
As though a divine light had suddenly fallen upon the party, they immediately broke most of their election promises, and superciliously informed the nation, and parliament, that it was going to have to bite the bullet; more inflation, more unemployment, more taxes. A little power is a dangerous thing.
Like a toothless lion, the Liberals, leaderless, in disarray, and informed only last May that nobody wanted them to govern the country, or at least that a great many didn't, pulled the new boys with its clawiness, but powerful, paws.
Like jackals, the NDP with nothing to lose, ran yelping in to tear off some choice bits of meat from under the nose of the toothless lion.

by Bill Smiley



Like looters in a riot, the people who sell gas and cigarettes, and everything else that would raise taxes, joyfully hoisted their rates, before the budget had passed, adding the tax and a little more, to make it come out in round figures, a favorite game for years.
Like so many hyenas, the stock markets of the country, rejoicing in a swing to the right, sang hosannas while stock prices soared. And went to the wailing wall when they collapsed, after the so-called "government" fell.
If you feel like me, you'll be muttering, "A curse on all their houses."
So, exhausted politicians will stagger back into the harness of the campaign trail, mouthing the same old clichés, trying to stir something in the dull, sullen pond of the Canadian voter, who has never been more disillusioned.
The media, which feeds on disaster as cancer feeds on cells, will have a field day. And you and I, Jack, when the smoke has cleared, will pick up the tab, as usual.
Every vindictive bone, and he had a lot of them, in John Diefenbaker's buried body must be chuckling, as he watches Joe Clark make an ass of himself.
Even the dust of Mackenzie King must

be stirring a bit as he overviews his beloved Liberal party putting sticks between the spokes of the government's wheels, a tactic at which he was a master.
Mike Pearson, wherever he rests, will be chortling and relating the whole thing to a baseball game he once played, in which the biggest bat on the team struck out, with the count three and two.
Rene Levesque is probably smoking eight packs a day, furious because his tame pussy-cat, Joe Clark, has upset all his referendum plans by turning into a mouse.
Robert Stanfield must be weeping into a pair of longjohns, and shaking his head, slowly and sadly, as he contemplates the asininity of the party he once led with grace and dignity.
Ed Broadbent, the people's hero, who was thoroughly rejected by both farmers and industrial workers in the last go-around, is probably and desperately searching for a formula that will get some votes from the middle class.
Pierre Trudeau picking up the torch that everybody else dropped when it burned their fingers, is probably thinking, "I wonder what that bloody Margaret is going to say to screw up this one."
If nothing else, the election fits the season. January sales are up for grabs, along with cheap power, political.
Oil prices rocket, while our "leaders" tell us that we have lots, or there's going to be a shortage, whichever fits the matter of getting votes.
And worst of all. We're going to be subjected to a winter of lies, hot air, cold comfort, and a complete stagnation of our country.

Letters

Memories of Jennifer Yaworsky

Dear Editor:
I'd like to tell you about a friend of mine... Last year when I started my first figure skating lessons, there was a little girl in my class and her name was Jennifer. She was six then and she told me that she liked figure skating a lot, and as we tried to stay on our skates without falling, all the way around the arena, we held hands to sort of prop each other up. We talked a lot. When we came out, her mom, Jackie, would tell me, jokingly, that Jennifer would talk anyone's ear off if she was given half the chance. Jennifer cared about people, she

treated me like one of the kids and I appreciated it. We passed our Beginner badge at the same time... she was happy for me and I, for her. One thing she always told me was that she always tried her very best and I know she did. At the end of the first season she tried a badge and didn't make it but she told me she had tried her best... I didn't see her all summer.
This fall, our second season, when I walked into the arena for the first class, Jennifer met me at the door. By then she had decided skating was her thing and she even got a Dorothy Humill hair-do. She would be taking private lessons, she said, and then she would pass her badge better. She was seven years old and in the second grade. She passed her badge just before Christmas and we were both back in the same group again, we were both glad about it.
When I got back to skating today, after the Christmas holidays, I found out that Jennifer and her Mom were killed in a car crash last week. I've felt weepy all evening and even cried off and on. I'm so sad, I ache. Mostly I'm sad because I'll miss her.
I figure God knew that Jennifer always did her very best and Jennifer wanted people to know she did her very best. I don't know quite how to say goodbye to her, but it might help me if I wrote to you and let you know, so that you can let people know that once there was a little girl called Jennifer who certainly did always try her very best... and she was seven and she was my friend.
... And I'm all of 36 and I miss her very much...
Sincerely,
Eva Sansom
RR4, Acton.

From the editor's desk

by Gord Murray
Great Wednesday isn't it. Most people live for weekends, I live for Wednesdays.
You see, Wednesday is the day the paper comes out. That's the day we produce a brand new product. It is also the day we start to produce another brand new product for the next Wednesday.
I'm a committed community journalist. Of all the media, I believe community papers fill the greatest need and offer both the people who produce the paper and the readers the greatest satisfaction.
I'm also one lucky son-of-a-gun.
I'm getting to work on one of the finest broadsheet community papers in the country. I'm frankly, excited about coming here. I feel just like a rookie again. And that's a great feeling.
The most exciting years I spent in Georgetown

time I lived in Acton. Helen and I made our first home after marriage in Acton and stayed a couple of years here before the lure of a house we could afford in a hamlet, (we both had long dreamed of life in a small village) dragged us off to Norway.
We are looking forward to once again taking up residence in Acton, this time for many years, as soon as possible, though the economy in general and the real estate market in particular, being what they are these days it could take a little while.
On balance though, I'm a stranger to the area and have a lot to learn about the people in Acton and district.
Now, this may seem like a strange admission from a reporter, but I'm a little on the shy side. Reporters are generally thought of as being a pretty aggressive, noisy bunch. Not me, I find it difficult to just barge up to people, thrust out my mitt and let strangers know who I am.
So please give me a hand and help me break the ice. I'm very approachable.
I suspect I'll grow to feel comfortable here in Acton and at the Free Press.

Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press Wednesday, January 14, 1970
The future of railway stations in Moorefield, Elora, Hespeler, Preston, Rockwood and Acton will rest with the Railway Transport Committee in Ottawa, following a public hearing in Acton council chambers. Up to bat for the town of Acton, the Chamber of Commerce and the Development Commission were Halton M.P. Rud Whiting, Mayor Les Duby, Paul Nielsen and John Goy, and Marianne Coles representing the students of the high school. They claimed in a combined brief and testimony that service had deteriorated since the inception of the master agency and traced a phasing out process beginning when the first passenger trains were cut off in 1959.
Three newcomers to the parks and recreation board are Diane Spielvogel, Gil Malcolm and Art Gordon.
Objections filed to the senior citizens and geared to income housing on Cobblehill Rd. were rejected by council.
Barry Inscoe and Don Van Fleet will be helping their pee wee hockey teams with a bottle collection Saturday.
Acton's oldest lifelong resident Mrs. R. M. MacDonald celebrated her 90th birthday.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press Thursday, January 14, 1950
E. G. Tyler Sr. was elected president of the Acton Chamber of Commerce. Vice Presidents are Bill Benson and Norman Braida; director Bill McKay, Fred Gordon, Dave Manes, Jim Ledger, Ted Tyler Jr., Jack Holmes, O. Chapman and Henry Deveau.
The first meeting of the First Acton Billy Middleton Hover crew was held in the Scout hall with leader Ron Smith. Members of the crew are Ken Gardner, Brian Otterbein, Bob Hinton, Laurence Duby, Peter Newton, Michael Homer, David Peal and Ricky Currie.
Murray Smith was elected chairman of the public school board, with members T. Watson, C. W. Bradley, E. Marks, D. Manning and W. Wolfe. Principal McKenzie suggested an opportunity class.
A series of crippling ice storms have left communities isolated, trees ruined, hydro lines completely destroyed and sand stockpiles nearly depleted. Superintendent Doug Mason, workers Dorson Frizzell, Ralph Hodgson and Don Anderson worked many overtime hours.
Sheila Paul begins a new career with the WRCNS.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press Thursday, January 9, 1930
The inaugural session of council was held Monday evening. Councillors Harrison, Hanson, Nelson and Theford and Reeve Mason took the oath of office. Clerk Farmer was present again for the first time since his illness.
Attendance has been unusually large at the union Week of Prayer services.
The weather man has been most unkind to the hockey schedules in the OHA. The junior games have been postponed.
A meeting is being held in the town hall hall tonight for local hockey leagues for the new arena. Captains of the local teams are Harry Statham, Walter Kentner and Grenville Masales.
Voting for the Eden Mills police village trustees resulted as follows: D. H. Wilson, N. S. Marshall, Jns. Gilbertson.
Pupils started one of their longest terms on record, for Easter does not come until April 20.
It took a special radial train as well as automobiles to take Acton fans to the hockey game in Georgetown Monday.
Twenty-six new members were received by Rev. A. C. Stewart at Knox church.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press Thursday, January 8, 1880
A ballot was taken on the By-law for the purchase of a new cemetery, on Monday last, which resulted in its defeat by a majority of 8. On the day of the election considerable excitement was manifested, and those not in favor of the By-law worked all day against it and eventually succeeded in its overthrow. Among the many absurd reasons for voting against the By-law, given by electors on the day of polling, the following are a few:
1. It is a bog hole.
2. Not sufficient land.
3. It is too high and dry.
4. Too much land in the site.
5. Too close to corporation limits.
The elections of the various municipalities of Ontario were held on Monday last. The following is a list of those in our vicinity:
Acton—Reeve, D. Henderson. Councillors—W. H. Storey, D. Christie, N. McGarvin, C. S. Smith, elected by acclamation.