

The Acton Free Press

Founded in 1875

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Casey won't strike out

It's sometimes hard to believe various agencies in Ontario are really in favor of keeping agricultural land in production. The hassles they give farmers are incredible.

Take Acton area farmer Casey Bos for example.

Mr. Bos had more authoritative roadblocks thrown up in his way of making a living from the land in the past few years than most citizens encounter in a lifetime.

Recently he was summoned to court to answer to charges of growing asparagus without a licence and refusing to allow an asparagus inspector on his land to measure his crop.

In the past Mr. Bos has been threatened with a dump for Toronto's garbage in the quarry

next to his farm. That idea died when someone spilled oil in the quarries and it wound up in Mr. Bos' well, indicating that's where the garbage run-off also would have found its way.

Next came the Ontario Hydro 500kV power corridor across his land. He couldn't win that battle.

Now the asparagus marketing board is after Mr. Bos. He says he hasn't harvested an asparagus crop since 1977, but the vegetable's roots are still in his ground.

Most people would have simply packed it in by now, figuring all this was a hint that he should sell his farm to a developer for houses and retire somewhere in the sun. But not Mr. Bos and his family.

We don't think mighty Casey will ever strike out.

PCs will cut huge deficit

We have to start paying our bills in this country.

For most of the past decade the government's solution to all of Canada's woes was to throw money at the problems.

Ottawa's attitude was to spend, spend, spend; money the government didn't have.

The result, by the time Canadians voted for a change and elected a Progressive Conservative government last May, was an economic mess; high inflation, high unemployment, little economic growth, a weak dollar and a huge deficit.

Under Prime Minister Joe Clark and his economic ministers John Crosbie, Sinclair Stevens, Robert de Cotret etc., the tough job of bringing financial responsibility to the national scene had barely begun when opposition parties forced a costly and unnecessary election.

Positive steps had been taken to reduce the size of the federal civil service and place limits on government spending increases. Cabinet ministers quickly discovered if they wanted to introduce new programs they'd have to make sacrifices in other areas, not just add to their budgets as was the practise in the past.

The young Progressive Conservative government brought in a budget re-electing a new era in federal politics.

Need hanging referendum

The recent murder of OPP Constable Duncan McAleese in Delhi has fueled the long simmering debate in this country regarding capital punishment.

It's not news to anyone that there hasn't been a hanging in Canada since the early 60s. During the late 60s and early 70s there was a moratorium on capital punishment, though killing of on duty police officers remained, in theory though not in practise, a hangable offence. A few years ago federal politicians voted to abolish capital punishment, but the debate has raged on anyway. Ottawa even brought in stiff, mandatory, minimum jail terms for pre-meditated murder to ensure killers are off the streets for at least 25 years.

The story was similar south of the border, but in the past couple of years executions have made a comeback as many states have revamped their legislation to make executions constitutionally legal.

National opinion polls show Canadians support capital punishment, though we are split on how to accomplish it and for whose murder.

Should the ultimate penalty be reserved for cop killers? Should it

be for all pre-meditated murders? Should we continue to execute people by the traditional method, hanging? Should we investigate alternatives like gas chambers, the electric chair, firing squads or painless drug injections?

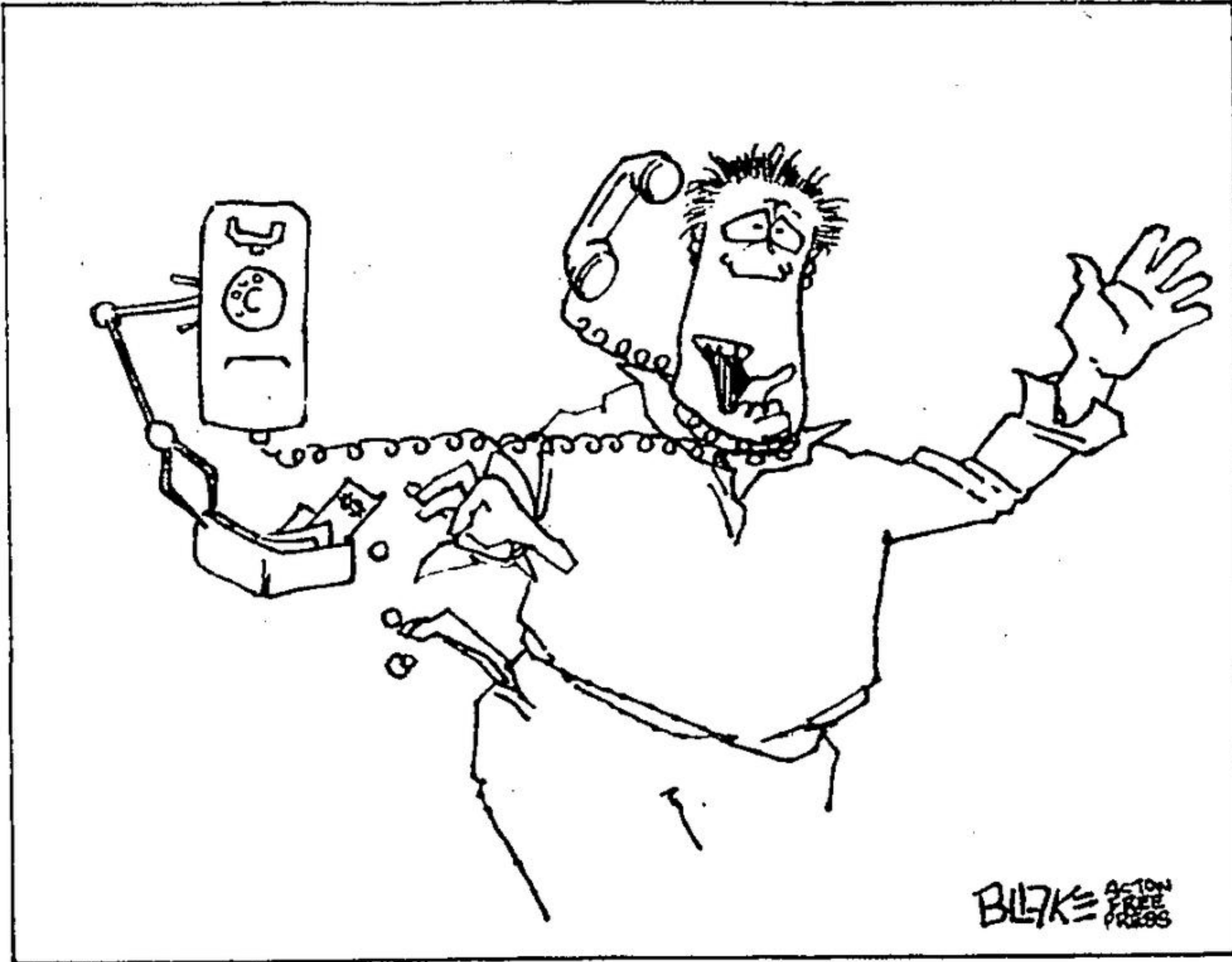
And even those polls may not tell the true story, since they are only samples.

It is becoming increasingly clear that most politicians not only don't really want to settle the question but is it really fair to ask 265 of our fellow citizens to decide such a serious issue, especially since they have only the guidance of citizens' comments and samples of public opinion?

Soon after the federal election, Ottawa should set a date for a national referendum on capital punishment. A two month campaign, with financial support from the government is needed so all sources of information and opinion can be explored and aired.

Only a national referendum will allow all Canadians to voice their opinion on if there should be capital punishment as well as the method of execution and what types of murder should be punishable by death.

Before the issue goes back to Parliament, our politicians need our guidance.



Ma Bell strikes again

Trough patrol—duty teachers abhor!

One of the favorite extra duties of a high school teacher is "trough patrol." The euphemism for this is "Cafeteria supervision."

It's such a lively, colorful and varied activity that you get teachers vying for it, offering to trade off one dance supervision for a week of trough patrol.

Of course, dance supervision is pretty dull stuff. All you have to do is check the girls' purses for mickkeys of vodka, look to see who is throwing up in the washrooms, make sure that no one is setting fire to the stage curtains while enjoying a crafty drag, call the cops if you find someone with dilated eyes trying to fly instead of dance.

And there are too many teachers on supervision. We sometimes have 12 teachers to supervise only about 300 dancers. The only real problem with dance supervisions is trying to retain your hearing under the assault of a rock band.

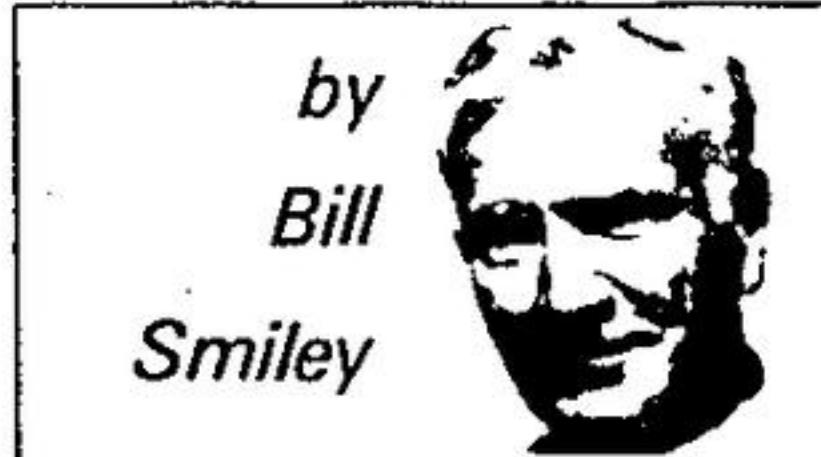
But trough patrol is another kettle of fish. It's exciting, dangerous, and turbulent. Never a dull moment.

Oh, it's demanding. You need the resourcefulness of a Thomas Edison, the judgment of a Solomon, the tolerance of a saint, and the ability to wash your hands of the whole matter of a Pontius Pilate. Not to mention eyes in the back of your head, a strong stomach, and a thick hide.

But that's why we trough patrolers feel we are a special breed. Like the first men on the moon. Or lion tamers. Or sewage experts.

Take a huge cafeteria, once a gymnasium. Put in it 500 exuberant teenagers just released from four boring, monotonous periods in the classroom. Arm them with everything from plastic forks to hard apples. Throw in two teachers, and stir with a mixture of sex, high spirits, the desire to show off, and a hardy streak of latent vandalism. Interesting.

Lively? Oh, yes. Over in this corner, two grade-niners are flicking potato chips drenched in gravy at each other. In the



by Bill Smiley

middle of the arena, a group of seniors is screaming with hilarity at an off-color joke. On another corner a pair of young lovers moon. As you move to break something up, an apple splatters against the wall where your head just was.

Colorful? Well, I guess. Here was a squashed orange, festooned by french fries and garnished by sticky ice cream wrappers. There a trampled banana topped by a dropped, melting ice-cream bar. On the pastel walls some abstract art manufactured by flung apples, peanut butter sandwiches, half-empty cartons of chocolate milk and other viands.

Adding a nice touch of cool are the green garbage bags, surrounded by brown paper bags, thrown, and missed, from as far away as 50 feet. In the garbage bags, bulging, are about 200 lunches, made up in the dark of an early morn by a loving mother. They are intact, including sandwiches, apple or orange, and cookies. The owner is downing his second plate of french fries and gravy, or his third ice cream bar.

Besides the color, there is a great appeal to the senses, something we English teachers try to instill in the writing of our students. For the eyes, there is Mary Ellen, bouncing braless around the perimeter of the zoo, pretending nonchalance and drinking in every whistle.

For the nose, though I can't smell, they tell me there is a pervasive aroma of cooking oil, onions, bodies and feet.

For the ear, there is a cacophony, ranging from a noisy group singing "Happy

Birthday" with some new words, to a squealing, giggling bevy of young girls, to the triumphant shouts of the poker players as they slam down a full house over three nines.

For the sense of touch, there is, of course, the stepping on a banana that shouldn't be there, or the picking up of an empty milk carton only to find a quarter pint running up your arm.

I mentioned some qualities the teacher requires. Resourcefulness. Like knowing how to keep your eye on a group that is going to get up and leave their table looking like a trough, and simultaneously breaking up a fight between two banty roosters from grade nine.

Judgement? You see a kid sitting alone, sucking an ice cream bar, at a table laden with debris. "It ain't mine. I ain't pickin' it up." He may be right or lying through his teeth. Do you act the petty martinet and snarl, "Pick it up, anyway!", or do you mildly do it yourself?

Tolerance? Absolutely. You have to remind yourself continually that some of these kids don't learn any manners at home, and others are just forgetful or careless.

You need eyes in the back of your head or you'll either be beamed by an apple or have an entire group of boys who have eaten about ten dollars worth of junk food move swiftly and silently to another table when your back is turned, leaving something looking like the town dump at their original table.

You need courage, when you see four bearded hoodlums in the cafeteria, casing the joint, and you have a gut feeling they are not students. Tackle them and get a shot in the mouth, or run for the vice-principal? I opt for the latter, it says here in small print.

All in all, a varied life with a myriad of attractions, trough patrol. I only hope that, when I retire, the school board will let me come in a couple of times a week to do it, free, just for the fun of it.

From the editor's desk

Those signs that go up on vacant parcels of land in other municipalities in the area telling citizens what development is planned and where they can go to comment on the proposal will soon be sprouting up in Acton and district.

Following a suggestion of Acton councillor Ross Knechtel, Halton Hills planning board has decided developers must put up signs indicating a development application has been made to the town.

Knechtel saw the signs, common in other communities, as one way of making the public aware changes are contemplated in their area.

Before coming to Acton, recently slain OPP officer Duncan McAleese, was posted for a time at the Milton OPP detachment.

The Simcoe OPP officer was murdered the night of January 23 outside a Delhi sandwich shop after going there to talk to an informant. Constable McAleese was shot nine times and dragged about 25 feet by the truck his assailant fled in.

After joining the OPP in November, 1977 Constable McAleese was stationed in Milton for one month in 1973 before com-

ing to Acton. He was with the Acton detachment until it closed in the fall of 1975 with the arrival of the Halton Regional Police. The detachment was honored as Citizens of the Year.

Better let up a bit on the accelerator. Halton police unveiled a new type of radar unit last week which is sure to nab you.

The cops describe the new radar equipment as the "ultimate" and the units have a range of three quarters of a mile. The radar tracks vehicles going in both directions. What makes this radar most unique is it operates from a moving patrol car, not a cruiser parked at the side of the road.

The first units to arrive last week will be used in the south.

However, that doesn't mean you only have to slow down when in Oakville or Burlington. They'll be used here in the north too in another few weeks.

Halton Helping Hands are looking for volunteers to help with their home-support service.

North Halton supervisor of the agency, Barbara Stevens, says provincial cutbacks

are threatening Halton Helping Hands ability to continue providing services like housework, cooking and cleaning for the elderly and people with chronic disabilities.

"We've been able to offer quality services to these people in the past, but we're concerned about our ability to maintain that level unless we get more volunteers," Mrs. Stevens said. Anyone wishing to help can contact Mrs. Stevens at 877-5920.

Deer hunters should start oiling up their shotguns.

There hasn't been a deer hunt in Halton since 1967, but the deer hunt will return this November.

Region planning committee approved the three day deer hunt for November 3, 4, and 5 because the population of the animal has increased by an estimated 35 per cent per year since the last hunt. While the deer have grown in number so has damage to fruit crops and the number of car accidents involving deer. Deer also spread disease among cattle an expert told the regional councillors.

The Ministry of Natural Resources will select by lottery about 1,000 hunters, one per 150 acre acres, to participate in the hunt. They will be licensed and permits will cost \$15. About 75 per cent of the hunters will be Halton residents and bona fide farmers will be exempt from the lottery.

Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, February 11, 1970

Operation Oopkik—the high school winter carnival—hit a snowy high spot Tuesday night with a torchlight parade, followed by the naming of sparkling Margaret Slaven as the Snow Queen. 9D's snow igloo won first place parade trophy, second place went to 9C for an almost real skidoo race, and third place to 12D with Nanny's Playpen, teacher Nan Hurst and all the little darlings in their pen.

Speculation is rife that there will be a supersonic jet airport in this area.

The high school curling team has advanced to the CWOSSA championships. On the team are George McPhail, Ray Swackhamer, Barry Buchanan and Neil Anderson.

Acton W.I. has donated a clock to the library.

A total budget of \$26,450 was accepted for Knox church. Plans are being formulated for a new addition.

Howard Roszell won the trophy for best actor at the Junior Farmers drama festival.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, February 11, 1960

Acton's fast skating midgeet hockey team hung on to a one goal margin in the last few minutes of a cliff-hanging battle with Milton and went on to win a 6-5 verdict in the final game of the finals, to win the tri-county championship. They will meet Hespeler in the O.M.H.A. playoffs. Team members are Ian Jeffers, Denis Gibbons, John Leatherland, Bill Dawkins, Brian McChrystal, Ron Malcolm, Garnet Roszell, Peter Marks, Butch Dedels, Ron Mellon, Wayne Mason, Terry Waterhouse, with manager Ernie Marks and coach Ben Bayliss.

The Canada Packers building, formerly occupied by Wool Combing Corporation, will have its first tenant since 1957. Refrigeration Services. Citizens of Acton will be pleased to see activity resumed in the building.

A special tabloid section in the Free Press this week traces "A Decade of Development." The community has shown a 38 per cent increase in population, a 90 per cent increase in area and a 156 per cent increase in assessment. Development in the past ten years is the greatest in the town's history. It includes sewerage system, street paving, new schools, three subdivisions, new stores and factories.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, February 6, 1930

In order that the total construction cost of the new arena come under \$15,000 Messrs. Beardmore and Co. and Acton Tanning Co. kindly offered to contribute \$140.

Cooper's Gents' Furnishings was ransacked by thieves.

A successful skating party was held on the Riverside rink at Rockwood by the students of the Continuation School. Music was supplied by Mr. Arthur K. Thomas' radio outfit.

Rev. C.L. Poole, the energetic minister, presided for the annual meeting of the United Church. Receipts from all sources for the year totalled \$8,828. After reports and elections Mr. Daniel Taylor, choir-master, sang; Mrs. A.T. Brown gave a reading, and Mrs. Poole sang, accompanied by Miss Fern Brown.

Not much motoring on the side roads these days.

Work is progressing on the new Harsard drug store building (New Heads').

A Guelph young man attended the dance in the Town Hall on Tuesday night in an intoxicated condition. He will appear in court here on Saturday to answer to the charge.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, February 12, 1880

Mr. W.J. Wilson, of Toronto, has purchased from Mr. J. Warden the Barber Shop and business as carried on in the building opposite Storey's Glove Works.

Many people are not aware that in the vicinity of Acton lives a man who has felt the warmth and sunshine of 104 summers, yet he is tolerably smart. He was born in Scotland in 1777 and when recruits were required presented himself in 1803. His first engagements were against Napoleon's army and he later served under Wellington. Mr. McDonald says the scene at the battle of Waterloo was impressive and he saw the general weep like a child over the dead bodies of his fallen men. In 1832, he emigrated to Canada settling near the present site of Acton. Soon after his arrival death visited his household, taking his wife and one child. Five out of seven children are still living while he has 50 grandchildren and a score of great grandchildren. Owing to the heat of close firing at Waterloo his eyesight became impaired and for the past 15 years he has been totally blind.

He spends most of his time at the residence of Mr. George Elliott, a son-in-law, about a mile from this place.