The Acton Free Press

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Signs up, but need fence

Three large signs have been erected warning children and adults to stay off the thin Fairy Lake ice in the vicinity of the iceless area by the foot bridge where the ducks, geese and swans are wintering.

The signs went up nearly two weeks ago, after Robert Jennings fell through and had to be pulled from the icy waters by a friend who was with him.

Unfortunately, the signs weren't enough of a warning for Craig Cadenhead who fell through the ice a few days after they were posted. Craig was also pulled out by a chum who was with him when he tried to feed the water fowl.

We commend the town for quickly putting up the signs after the first youngster fell in.

Last week we called for a fence or barrier to be put around the area where the ducks are located, to help keep children away from this obvious danger.

Some people, though, have suggested a fence won't help a bit, it might in fact make the problem worse.

One town official reasoned a fence to the children will be like waving a red flag in front of a bull, it will only make them more intent on reaching the ducks. A fence or barrier will be an invitation to climb over.

Another concern is people might think the ice outside the fenced area is perfectly safe, when in fact it might not be. Lastly a snow fence would be extremely difficult to install now and remove come spring. These reasons for not putting up a fence or barrier seem somewhat valid. At the same time it is obvious the signs, which are unusually high off the ground and might not be noticed by short youngsters, weren't sufficient warning at least once. Who knows how many other youngsters have ventured onto the ice in the vicinity of the ducks and luckily not fallen through.

It would appear, based on the second near drowning incident, that something more than warning signs is needed.

Possibily the town could look at ways of installing a high, permanent fence would could remain year round. It could be put a good distance away from where the ducks are this winter, far enough away that the ice would likely be solid around it. Steps could also be taken to ensure the water fowl winter there in future years. The ducks are in the same spot they were in last winter, the water being kept open by their movement. Previous winters they stayed over by the dam where Beardmore operated a bubbler to keep the water unfrozen.

Regardless of what the town does to keep children out of the area where the ducks are, it won't be enough unless children are educated to stay off the ice.

The job of educating youngsters of this danger rests with their parents and the schools.

From the start of winter they should hear repeated warnings at home and from their teachers to stay off the ice, with specific reference to the dangers in the

area where the ducks winter. Signs and fences wouldn't be so necessary if a better job was being done to educate youngsters of the dangers of stepping onto ice they aren't certain is good and thick.

"THANK GOD FOR THAT CHIMNEY FIRE OR WE NEVER WOULD HAVE FOUND HIM!"

All in all it's been a jolly fine winter!

Usually, it is a drear time of year, February freezings followed by March madness.

As a rule, at this time of year, everyghing is frayed: your rubber boots, your patience with politicians, the body of your car, and your own body.

But this year, thanks to God or Pierre Trudeau, who are sometimes indistinguishable, Canadians can face it with more verve than usual. We have had a winter with a maximum of sunshine and a minimum of snow.

This combination has lowered the suicide rate, the oil bill, and the horrendous amounts you pay for snow removal.

Municipal councils who normally spend a quarter of their works' department hudget on shovelling mountains of snow into people's driveways, are exuberant. Now they'll have enough money to go out and tear up some roads, cut down some

trees, cover a piece of green with asphalt. But, as always in this country, one man's meat is another man's porridge.

This year, in early February, I received a hill from the guy who plows my driveway. It was for 10 dollars. Usually, by that time. I have squandered about sixty dollars, just so that I can get my rotten old car out of my skinny old driveway so that I can drive to work and remain unhealthy by not walking.

Multiply that by 100 customers, and the snow removal man is hurting badly. Almost as badly as I hurt when I have to pay him forty bucks a month. Let him

Ski resort operators are crying the blues, and, in Ontario, had the colossal effrontery to ask the province for a subsidy, from the taxpayer, to make up for their lost revenues. Let them sweat, in that beautiful winter sunshine. They'll make it all up next year, and more, by jacking up their prices.

But I am not heartless. I do feel sorry for the model who can't ski but has spent three hundred dollars on an apres-ski outfit, and there ain't no snow.

I do feel sorry for the boy next door, Wilson, who shovels my walk and takes me for about forty bucks every winter. He's had a lean year. But the grass will probably grow with the abandon of marijuana next summer, and he'll make up for it by cutting my lawn six times a week.

There is one area in which I am heartless. It doesn't bother me one whit, what ever a whit is, that the snowmobilers have been cruising most of the winter on grass and pavement. Long may their tracks rot. Another great plus about the sunny, low-

snow winter is the lack of envy and depres-

Every time I climb out of bed in the pitch dark, clobber into my heavy clothes and boots, lumber out through a blizzard to the garage, and can't get the car started. I commence cursing rich people, who have gone south for the winter. I mutter things like, "I hope all your pipes burst," or "I

This is un-Christian, and this winter I've been able to choke back such curses, merely hoping that the weather in the south was unseasonally chilly. Or very

hope your roof falls in, under the weight of

And that depression. Normally, about the middle of February. I am as low as a caterpillar's crawl. Dark, cold, snow, wind, freezing rain, rotten, snuffling kids. crabby wife, and the furnace gulping like

an incredible bulk. This year it's like taking an upper, instead of a downer. The ice crashes off my roof with earthquakian rumbles, but the sun is doing it, not some bird at twenty

dollars an hour. You can go down into our basement without wearing a parka. You can go up to the attic without a winter survival kit. All in all, a Jolly fine winter.

Back **Issues**

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Wednesday, March 11, 1970

The bell which tolled the hours in Acton for over a half a century from the post office tower will soon be mounted on display at the home of Hillis Rowland, R.R. 3, Brampton. He is a campanologist with a collection of 400 bells. He says he will pick a prominent spot for the Acton

Energy and Resources Minister George Kerr spoke to the students at Acton High School about pollution control and also addressed a special dinner meeting of the Y's Men's club.

The purchasers of the Seynuck property bordered by Mill and Wallace will likely proceed with residential development.

Acton Hydro Commission employees are now unionized. Harold Townsley is Acton Tanners'

scoring leader, followed by Kevin Hall, John Mason and Jan Riddell. Lakeside chapter of the IODE decided to

name a bursary after Clara Grindley, the popular high school teacher who was killed during a holiday trip.

A new company, Lavoie Knitting will do the actual knitting of socks in the Acton Industrial Centre.

A rink from Acton won first prize in the Business Girls' Bonspiel in Oakville, Helen Otterbein, Ruth Leatherland, Mae Durnarsh and Willa Hewitt.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, March 10, 1960

Installation of dial phones for an estimated 1,800 Acton and district customers has been announced.

For a two month trial period, hydro and water meters will again be read by one meter reader.

Almost 700 cold, shivering spectators braved the near zero weather at the arena to watch Galt Figure Skating club perform during Booster Night. There were also hockey games and draws.

Sixty years of married life were observed by Mr. and Mrs. Howard Masales. A plaque was presented to grades 9C and 9D at the conclusion of "Gentleman's

Day" at the high school. Bill Stuckey and Brian Cargill accepted the trophy jointly from student council president Jean Moffat. There was an excellent attendance at the Chamber of Commerce Civic Night, designed to foster good relations in the area. W. J. Beatty, Aldo Braida and C. F.

Leatherland were panelists to whom questions were given, to be directed to the proper person for reply. Mr. and Mrs. F. Dawkins enjoyed their

first ride on a snowmobile scooter, at their cuttage in Muskoka.

50 years ago

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

A committee of businessmen met with council to arrange for a night watchman to patrol the streets. A number of applications were received. Mr. E. Harrop was engaged at a salary of \$730 per year or \$2 per night. Mr. Harrop was to be sworn in as a special constable under Chief Mac-

Three 250 K.V.A. Transformers were unloaded for use at the local hydro station. The station now has a capacity of 560 horse power and the new transformers will then all be outside. This is the third change that has been necessary in the local station since 1918 when the present superintenedent, C. S. Wilson, took charge of the

"The Shenanigans of the Casey Family" was presented by St. Joseph's players at the town hall Monday and Tuesday. Father McBride trained the cast, N. Harrop, A. Dunn, R. Bolger, M. Harrop, I. Dunn, Mrs. A. Cormier, N. Gibbons, C. Byrne, L. Byrne, L. Gibbons and A. Cormier.

Miss M. Z. Bennett gave an interesting lecture on the League of Nations to the Duke of Devonshire chapter of the IODE at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Kennedy. Rockwood Presbyterian church

alterations are completed. Two classrooms behind the platform were taken out and a new platform built.

100 years ago

Taken from the Issue of the Free Press Thursday March 4, 1880

The Board of Education approved appropriating the sum of thirty dollars to replenish the library.

The Ministry of Education has approved an amendment to the School Act. The school year shall consist of two terms, the first of which shall begin on the third day of January and end on the seventh of July, and the second shall begin on the eighteenth day of August and end on the twenty-third day of December.

The trial of the alleged murderers of the Donnellys continues. Excitement over the case still runs high.

Some scoundrels entered Grace church, Milton and damaged the chushioned seats and even the communion table.

Band trip boosts unity Acton was the setting recently

dollars at work promoting national unity. Acton High School's band and this community played hosts for a highly successful visit here by

musicians from the Ross Shep-

pard Composite High School in

for a fine example of federal tax

Edmonton, Alberta. It was the first leg of a cultural exchange funded partially by Open House Canada, a program of the federal Secretary of State designed to bring Canadians closer together. The exchange will conclude this May when the Acton

Based on this one exchange it would appear Open House Canada is one of the best national unity tax investments around.

band travels west.

That isn't to say exchanges of this kind will keep Alberta, or any other province for that matter, from separating from Canada if political development in the months and year ahead dictate that is the will of the majority in a province.

However, at the same time, these exchanges can't help but assist the national unity cause.

Besides learning about life in a small Ontario town the westerners went home with new knowledge of what life is about in much of Ontario through tours of Toronto and Niagara. The tours undoubtedly wiped out some misconceptions about Ontario in the students' minds.

More importantly the Edmonton youths became friends with their Acton counterparts and spent a good part of their seven day stay with Acton families.

They probably went back to Edmonton with an understanding that the people here are a lot like they are in every other corner of the country.

Likely the Edmonton musicians now know that Ontarians aren't the enemy but, like Albertans, are simply Canadians.

Hopefully when the Acton band members visit Edmonton they'll come home with the same understanding.

The knowledge we gain about our fellow Canadians in exchanges like the Edmonton-Acton band trips will help kill misconceptions steeped in history.

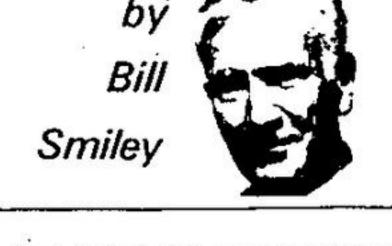
The benefits of interprovincial cultural and athletic exchanges go far beyond the participants. The knowledge and understanding the youngsters gain on trips to other parts of Canada slowly filter through the entire community. If the feeling of being Canadian is enhanced through exchanges in enough communities across the country it will help keep the nation whole.

Whenever young people gather for interprovincial or international sports or cultural exchanges someone points out the young people are the future of the country or the world. Bringing young people from different corners of the country or the world together is supposed to help solve many of the problems facing both.

If in fact that theory is correct, then despite the importance of government spending restraints, Open House Canada should continue to be funded strongly.

Anything which might keep Canada together, even if just a little, must be supported financially by Ottawa and treated as a prior-

Interprovince visits by young people might just make it harder for people to give up on Canada.



Carried to its logical conclusion, this sort of thing would have you and me subsidizing commercial fishermen, farmers, merchants who haven't sold many fur coats, and people who don't want to take an outside job because it's too cold. Most of which we do anyway.

I have no objection to sharing the wealth with a guy who is out of a job, and genumely wants to work, but I grow cold with fury when I am helping to support, via pogie, a fisherman who has made a killing in his short season, a sailor who is knocking off more than \$20,000 a year for ten months work, or a heavy machinery man who gathers in the gold in the summer then puts his feet by the fire and draws enough unemployment insurance to pay for his board, bingo and beer.

However, let us be urbane. It's been a grand winter, partly due to my subtle challenging of Mother Nature, the old strumpet, about our weather.

I wrote a late September column about the toys of sunny October. Thirty days of rain. I wrote a late-October column about the deadly duliness of November in Canada, Twenty-four days of sunshine.

I didn't dare fool around again until early January, sunny and mild, when I wrote a column predicting a vicious, freezing winter that would last into August, Result? More sun in Jan. and early Feb. than for 40 years. This is known as reverse psychology, avidly practised by bridge and poker players.

by Gord Murray

Our Ballinafad correspondent, Winifred Smith, tells us Perrin Beatty was Ballinafad's choice in the recent federal election. There were three Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe polls at the Ballinafad Community Centre and the man who last June became Canada's youngest cabinet minister ever. votes, Liberal Larry Davies 47, New Democrat Cecil Chambers 25 and

won all three. In poll 103 Beatty drew 48 Libertarian Watson 1. Beatty beat Davies 84-74 in poil 104 while Chambers attracted 43 votes and Watson four, Beatty really, cleaned up in poll 105, drawing 82 votes to Davies' 48, Chambers' 20 and Watson's

Speaking of the popular young veteran of four election victories, at the ripe old age of 29, I wouldn't be surprised if Beatty someday heads the federal Tories and even becomes prime minister at some future date.

In fact, if the Conservatives do dump Joe Clark before the next election, expected in

four or five years, this area could produce two leadership candidates.

Beatty has nine months of cabinet work as Minister of State to the Treasury Board under his belt and undoubedly learned a lot about politics at the elbow of veteran Sine Stevens who was president of the Treasury Board. Stevens, himself a leadership candidate a few years back who threw his support behind Clark after a few ballots, wielded the big spending cuts knife in Ottawa.

Halton's Otto Jelinck might also have a crack at the leadership and could draw a lot of support from the small "e" conservatives in Tory ranks.

Considering he has 10 years to do it. Beatty, if he ever wants to be PM, might be able to break Clark's mark as the youngest first minister in the nation's his-

The Ontario Arts Council (O.A.C.) has announced Lynda Mair of Erin has been awarded a writer's grant. The grant is for up to \$4,000 according to O.A.C.

Halton region is still looking for a replacement for Dr. Joe Chamberlain, who retired just before Christmus as the region's Medical Officer of Health. Dr. Gordon Inglis of Burlington has been serving as interim Medical Officer of Health. A candidate was interviewed last month, following advertising and a search for applicants by the University of Toronto. However, the lone applicant withdrew. Dr. Inglis will continue until a permanent replacement is found.

Halton Board of Education has also given out some raises recently. Non-union personnel like supervisors, bus drivers and media department staff will earn six per cent more this year, retroactive to January 1, while secretarial and clerical staff and school business managers receive a five-and-a-half per cent wage hike, also retroactive to the start of the year. Swimming pool staff, auxiliary and casual help will have to wait until this fall for the same percentage raise as secretaries.