

The Acton Free Press

Founded in 1875

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Don McDonald, Publisher

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Sprackman tactic not new

Plaza developer Gerry Sprackman has demonstrated he isn't a good corporate citizen of Acton.

Sprackman builds plazas throughout Ontario and wants to build one, containing a Zehrs supermarket and five other stores, on the east side of Acton.

Citing planning reasons Halton Hills council rejected Sprackman's proposal, despite the fact the developer showed there is considerable public support here for a plaza.

His next step was to take the issue to the Ontario Municipal Board, a justifiable move.

While it may be a somewhat costly, time consuming method of settling a dispute between a developer and municipality that is what the OMB is for. It exists to ensure municipalities, developers and citizens all have the chance to voice their points of view before an impartial body. It ensures everyone is treated fairly and hopefully good planning is the result.

However, regardless of which side of the issue you support, all Acton should be disturbed by the latest development in the battle.

Halton Hills council has rezoned about 70 acres of rural land for industrial development north of the CNR tracks and west of Highway 25. It will add more industrial land to Acton and could be important in attracting new firms here.

Sprackman has asked for an OMB hearing on this item too.

It means it will be some time before the rezoning can be approved by the province and the development of the property can proceed.

During this delay countless firms which might like to locate in

such an industrial development will set up shop elsewhere.

Sprackman is opposing the industrial development on the grounds sewage capacity he needs for the plaza may be eaten up by the new industries.

This seems unlikely.

If Sprackman's decision is the start of a pattern he will oppose every major development in Acton until the question of his development is settled.

It is not a new tactic. It is a favorite of many developers and they employ it in many towns. It is also perfectly legal and Sprackman is well within his rights.

He is in effect telling the municipality he'll prevent any development and halt progress until such time as the town fathers view his project more favorably.

It could be years before the industrial land is rezoned or the issue of the plaza is settled.

While this tactic is legal it is far from fair.

There is no question Acton badly needs more industry and in the present economic climate is difficult to attract firms here.

While there is unused industrial land in the town the industrial development Sprackman has opposed is still needed. The more options the town can offer a firm the more likely it is manufacturers will choose Acton.

Sprackman has demonstrated he doesn't care about Acton or the town's future. Acton is just a place where he can make a profit by building a plaza.

This move could well erode some of the support he has received from citizens for his proposal.



Madness seizes the nation every Spring

Spring actually sprang this year, instead of limping in with a bad cold, its customary wont, in these climes.

Usually, in this country, we don't really have a spring. We leap from the lingering frigidty of a cold and wet April, rather similar to an English winter, into a hot spell in May that leaves us dizzy, stunned, stupefied.

And before we know it, we're into a humid June, complete with mosquitos and things, including young ladies, busting out all over.

This year, after one last wild blizzard near the end of March, Spring decided to live up to her name. A sunny winter, a mild March, and suddenly, one looks out, and there is no snow on the picnic table.

One hurls one's clumsy rubber boots into one's closet. One disrobes from the massive, blanket-like contraption in which one has hidden one's frozen bones for the past five months. One skims one's hat into the top corner of the closet. And one comes down with one's annual spring cold, snuffling and sniffing toward summer, that apogee of the Canadian psyche.

Deep in that Canadian psyche lurks the suspicion that possibly, just possibly, this year the winter will never end, and that we shall go through a summer of frozen branches etched against a gray sky, frozen ground under foot, no flowers, no foliage, no hot summer sun to peel the skin.

At least that's the way I feel, and I'm an average (My wife would say ordinary) Canadian in every way.

Perhaps that's the reason Canadians go winging off to hot places all winter, at phenomenal costs. When it comes to getting away to the sun, we have no equals on earth, except perhaps the Scandinavians.

I know couples who, if they were having you for dinner, would argue about whether to give you the hamburger barbecue or the tuna casserole, the cheap plonk or the expensive wine with a body. Yet they'll blow a couple of thousand dollars for a week in the sun, living and leeching and drinking and browning for seven days, and returning to the gray, grim landscape they left. It's insane.

But then there's something insane about all Canadians, when they feel they are escaping, once again, the icy talons of winter. They go cuckoo.

Just the other day, I saw an old lady, wrapped to the ears so that she could scarcely move, out raking leaves, simply because the sun was shining, and the calendar, though not the temperature, told her it was spring. She should have been in by the fire.

Before the snow has even begun to melt, our department stores have packed away their winter stuff and are flaunting bikinis that would make a stripper blush.

Boats are hauled out before the ice on the bay has begun to melt. Ardent curlers stash their brooms and dig out the golf clubs, though they would sink to the hocks on the fairways.

Trout fishermen, who have been chained to the arduous ice-fishing for perch during the past few months, get a wild gleam in their eyes, go out and buy a small fortune's worth of new tackle, and rush like lemmings to the choice spots on Opening Days, elbowing and struggling with thousands of their ilk to get a line in the water.

Kids go goofy. They like winter, but spring drives them right around the bend.

Now after all this time, Davey wants the people of Acton to remember his honesty, in hopes of discouraging would-be thieves.

Davey found the wallet while hiking back from a morning fishing trip. He challenges all Actonians to perform such an honest deed.

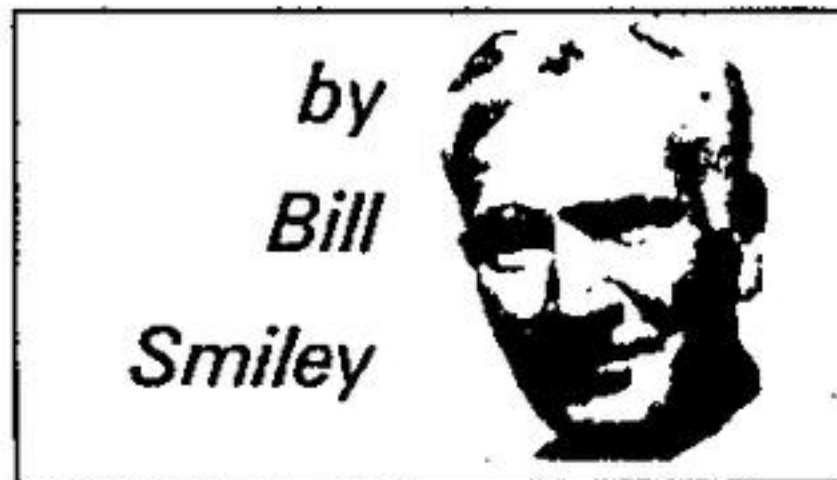
Last summer, an unidentified resident of Knox Ave. showed her honesty when she found a lost wallet in Prospect Park. Inside was \$600.

The owners, a family of tourists traveling through town discovered the wallet missing several hours after leaving the Park. The Actonian who found the wallet waited for the family to return. The tourists notified the Acton Free Press and wanted the finder properly commended.

Acton's Indusmin made it into the inter-company newsletter The Indusmin Link again last month, this time with almost a full page of pictures of their recently completed office renovations.

Here we go again with another "Homecoming". This time it is the Hanover Memory Lane Homecoming, July 1 to July 5, 1981. Former residents of Hanover can write to Memory Lane Homecoming, Box 308, Hanover, Ontario. N4N 3H6 for input into the weekend.

For those who really are from Hanover and may remember a few names, John Kirkvaag is Publicity Chairman, Marilyn Schlabein, chairperson, Jack Binkley co-



by Bill Smiley

Pilutti donation significant

Is Halton Hills becoming one town, other than just at the political level?

The donation of \$200 to the Acton town hall restoration fund by Georgetown developer Al Pilutti is a hint that Halton Hills might just become something more than a political unit in the years ahead.

For this reason Pilutti's generous contribution is far more significant than just a \$200 donation to town hall fund.

"We're one town and I'd like to show it, and hope others will follow suit," Pilutti declared in making his donation. He feels it is time more people in the larger urban partner in Halton Hills showed an interest in Acton.

He is correct. It is time for people in both urban areas of Halton Hills to take a greater interest in activities in each other's communities.

This is not to say Acton should give up the fight to maintain its own identity.

But that can be done at the same time strong bonds are built between areas in the amalgamated municipality.

Halton Hills is a long way from being a perfect marriage of Acton, Georgetown and Esqueping.

At the same time many good things, for each area, have happened because of Halton Hills.

Far too often people rap regional government without differentiating between the Halton Hills kind of regional government and the Halton region breed. Even some councillors who beef about the region will grudgingly admit Halton Hills hasn't been so bad.

"Maybe when a building of historical importance needs saving here in Georgetown, the people of Acton will rally round," Pilutti hopes.

It's a hope we share. And maybe it doesn't have to wait until an historical building needs saving down the road in Georgetown.

When plans are in place to raise funds for the town hall restoration people in Georgetown should be given the opportunity to help out financially.

This year Georgetown has a major fund raising project. More money than is needed for the town hall must be raised there to help the municipality pay for a new library-theatre complex. The people spearheading that drive should look beyond their community, they should look to Acton, for some financial help.



On the Leavell With Helen

Former Acton and district residents Bill and Pat Wilson were closely involved with the visit of Princess Alexandra to Toronto the past week. She is the Colonel-in-Chief of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, and was here for the 120th anniversary celebrations of the regiment. Lt.-Col. Wilson is the Commanding Officer of the Queen's Own, Canada's oldest existing regiment.

The Wilsons were presented to the Princess when she arrived and also took part in the special events—an inspection of the regiment at Moss Park Armouries, dinner at Harbour Castle hotel, church service and regimental parade.

Bill and Pat Wilson and their three daughters lived near town for several years, moving recently to Mississauga.

Fifteen years ago, Acton's own Davey Holmes proved himself to be an "honest citizen" by returning a lost wallet to its upset owner, Mrs. Bill Dumarah.

Back issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Acton Free Press Wednesday, May 6, 1970

Acton students raised \$1,000 for the cancer fund in a walkathon. Of the 76 walkers, 45 completed the 40-mile walk and two, Rae Swackhamer and Gary Dobbie, walked 52 miles. Dave Hodgson, Bill Dehaan, Ron McGuin, Scott Watson and Robin Salt were leaders of the group which left from Primrose.

The tulips of the Holland Liberation Society, sold by the Acton Liberation Committee, are now blooming. They commemorate the liberation of Holland, mainly by Canadian troops, 25 years ago this week.

The official opening of Foodland store attracted a huge crowd. Mayor Les Duby cut the ribbon. Store owner is John Edmunds.

Acton Creamery closed up operations two weeks ago, but the small business of making suckers, which was cramped at the back, is now expanding to fill all the space. Doug Coleman, who operated the creamery, is also in charge of the candy business.

The newly-formed Halton Antique Arms Collectors Association will hold its first show in the music centre.

Nine schools sent singers to the music festival in the M.Z. Bennett school.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Acton Free Press Thursday, April 28, 1960

Warmest appreciation for dedicated service of Dr. W.G.C. Kenny and recognition of champion bowler Gayle Hulford highlighted the Citizen of the Year dinner in the Robert Little school Wednesday. George Barbeau read the outline of Dr. Kenny's varied career. An engraved locket was presented by Bert Wood to Gayle Hulford. Chamber president Ted Tyler presided.

The annual Cancer Drive in Acton is being sponsored by the Legion Ladies' Auxiliary again this year, with Mrs. Robert Angell in charge.

Twenty-five years of faithful service to the township of Esqueping were recognized when assessor A.W. Benton was honored by councillors at a surprise party at Hawthorne Lodge. He was presented with a ring by councillor Wilfred Leslie.

The Scottish Dance Club ended their most successful season with a ceilidh in Luxton hall. The Junior Pipe Band, led by Phil Caddick, led off the proceedings. President Dr. Robert Buckner spoke on the club's progress.

The Duke of Devonshire IODE held their second annual delicatessen sale, with Mrs. W.J. Beatty in charge.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Acton Free Press Thursday, May 1, 1930

The Post Office was quite an interrogation bureau on Monday. Time of Closing. Time of arrival of trains. Is my letter on time? Will I get an answer tomorrow? Will the evening mails be distributed the evening they are received? Daylight Saving Time did.

Mr. E.J. Hassard moved his stock into his new store on Mill St. next door to the post office.

Miss Lettie Scott, who has held an important position at Acton Tanning Co. since the removal of Mr. and Mrs. Scott to Kitchener, has resigned and left to live in that city. She was for some time librarian.

Rockwood residents signed a petition for Daylight Saving Time.

The eighth annual event of the employees of Hewelson Co. in the town hall provided a mirth-provoking and social event. Mr. T.E. McCleary was the jovial chairman. The program was all by the men, with Ernie Coles and Frank Conley the "leading ladies."

The tannery and town teams will have the first ball game of the season Saturday. The boys are at practice these evenings.

Several seagulls have been seen around Corporation Pond. It is an unwritten law these birds not be molested.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Acton Free Press Thursday, April 29, 1880

Two children of the village died suddenly this week. The daughter of Mr. Thomas Cameron, 11 years of age, had diphtheria. Other members of the family are now afflicted. The son of Robt. Agner, 10 years of age, was subject to epileptic fits.

A sermon was preached to the Oddfellows in the Congregational church, in honor of the 61st anniversary of Oddfellowism in Canada. Monday evening members and friends to the number of 65 assembled in their tastily furnished lodge room for supper and a social evening. Bro. A.E. Nicklin of the Excelsior Bakery catered the most inviting spread.

Acton Parlor Orchestra will soon take their place on the platform.

A meeting was held of those interesting in settling in Nebraska. The interested parties gave an account of the very superior advantages there.

Our readers write

Maybe plaza the answer

Dear Sir: I now know the complete frustration of shoppers who find they must look out of town for satisfaction.

In the six years we have lived here, apart from the furniture and drug stores we have found Home Hardware and Sweetman's Shoes the most professionally run with quality and money back guarantee.

Our two children have always been fitted at Sweetman's. There have been times when we have actually been told they didn't need shoes. Mrs. Sweetman assured me that two of her employees

would still be there and that service and quality would be the same. Two weeks ago a complete stranger fitted, or misfitted my son. She was pleasant but I'm sure didn't know any more than I did about whether the shoe was the right one for my son.

This means I now have to go out of town for my children's shoes as well as my groceries. Maybe a plaza is the answer.

Just frustrated,
Mrs. E. Higgins,
RR3, Acton.