

The Acton Free Press

Founded in 1875

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A day to remember

Sunday is the day set aside to publicly remember the dead of two world wars and the Korean conflict. The Royal Canadian Legion will be conducting services at the Acton cenotaph.

The service is similar to other years, with the traditional hymns, sounding of the last post and reveille, the reading of names of those who died in the wars that were fought to end all wars. Wreaths will be laid, symbols of grief for those who fell.

Appropriately, November provides some of the gloomiest weather of the year as a setting for the ceremonies. Sometimes there is thin sunlight and the splashes of colour from veterans' medals glint as they swing along in orderly file for the annual rites.

It's a solemn occasion and it should remind us that our way of life, our freedoms, our agreements to disagree about many things, were not bought cheaply. Few families in town or district have escaped the scourge of war.

Take a few moments on Sunday, even if you can't attend the ceremonies at the cenotaph, and think of those who made the supreme sacrifice, or were affected in any way physically or mentally by wars. Then say a prayer for them and for Canada that she never has to go to war again to preserve freedom.

Our readers write

Air views on playground

Dear Sir:
The article dealing with the installation of playground equipment in the green-space adjacent to Division Street is poor journalism at best. The piece is fraught with innuendo regarding the attitude taken by property owners whose homes border the area in question. At no time, has the Free Press attempted to talk to the directly affected homeowners, to obtain their opinions and concerns, but has seen fit to print an article based on second hand and obviously biased information.

Town Officials to advise and consider those individuals who would be directly affected by the installation of the playground equipment.

Particular exception is taken to Mr. Shepard's comment that the residents are taking a selfish attitude, and dislike having the space put to use. Perhaps he is not aware that children have been using the park these past years for football, baseball, soccer, kite-flying, and many other pursuits that did not involve climbing a 12-foot structure? Possibly there is something wrong in allowing children to pursue spontaneous and imaginative recreational activities without the psychological stimulation provided by program equipment? The installation of this piece of equipment has verified what residents had predicted in that it has attracted many older children and teenagers from various areas of Acton with younger children forced to stand back while the bigger ones take over, throwing sand and using abusive language to anyone who attempts to check them. Several children have been injured already, after falling or jumping from the structure which is often overcrowded thereby increasing the possibility of a serious injury. Judging by your quote in the article, Mr. Shepard does seem to have a somewhat flippant attitude toward the possibility of a serious injury occurring as a direct result of the installation of this equipment.

Your quote attributed to Mr. Dunn should also be put into context as he does not occupy property directly adjacent to the site and is an employee of the municipality. How many busy mothers would agree with his comments concerning smaller children and the fact that they require supervision, where none was necessary before, because the town installed a potentially dangerous facility? It is apparent that the Free Press has attempted to depict the residents on Division Street directly affected by the installation of playground equipment as selfish child haters. Your motives can only be arrived at through conjecture, but your credibility as a community newspaper that could be relied upon to provide accurate and complete accounts has been seriously damaged.

G. Hassler, H. Hassler, Linda Webster, Vic Webster, Rick Gooding, Deetra Gooding, Rick Sleep, Liz Sleep, John Barratt, Audrey Barratt, A. Irwin, Mary Irwin, Valerie Irwin, Margaret Box, Les Lockwood, Karen Lockwood, Fraser Reid, Lynda Reid, Robert Finlay, Em Finlay, Mr. and Mrs. C. Jago, Mr. and Mrs. D. Pratt, P. Trotter, Nick Trotter.

At this point, it should be noted that we realize our position ed by the change in status from green-space to playground. What should concern them however is the "carte-blanche" adoption of any consultant report without due consideration to other priorities and requirements, and the attitude of some town officials towards anyone who questions their programs. The equipment did not grow there, whatever its cost, it was paid for by tax dollars.

In spite of what appeared in your article, the only notice residents directly affected by installation of the equipment received was when Councillor Knechtel approached one resident, known to him personally, shortly before the equipment was to be installed. It soon became apparent that many of the residents were displeased by the poor planning and design that went into the initial package of works.

Residents went out of their way to re-arrange schedules on three occasions when they were told that Mr. Shepard would come to the site and discuss the situation, however to their chagrin the meeting was not forthcoming.

The sketch of the proposed works subsequently provided was basic in content and devoid of detailed information. The posting of this letter-sized sketch on a bulletin board on Main Street would not seem to negate the obligation on the part of

near the house. Too embarrassed to run, (though I sure wanted to!) I froze. I was holding my little girl by the shoulders, in front of me; my 6-year-old I had by the hood (till I noticed he was trying to shed his coat to get away) yelling all the while. My 8-year-old, meanwhile, had, in those few seconds, made it four houses up the street, running for his life.

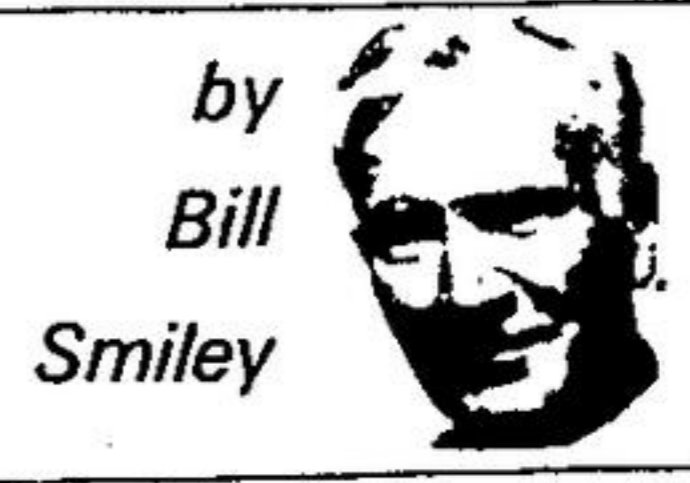
Deserted, Laura and I stood. Silently, the creatures waited, only their white faces showing in the darkness. The hunchback beckoned, his cape swirling, and I gently pushed Laura forward. He darted close, dropped a treat into her bag, and after a few swoops towards the people on the sidewalk, the two of them glided back into the house.

To the wonderful couple who gave their evening for the enjoyment of the children, (and also many parents of the neighbourhood.) I must say your performance was horribly spine-tingling, a real thrill for everyone who saw it. You have the real "spirit" of the occasion, and not only did you teach the children the real meaning of Hallowe'en but I'm sure you helped more than just a few adults return to the Hallowe'ens of our childhoods.

Jeff and Sheryl Wodemire
94 Cobblehill Rd.



Smiley's heart goes out to city dwellers in the Fall



This is a time of year when my heart goes out to city-dwellers. It's a time when rural or small town living is immensely superior to that in the concrete canyons, the abominable apartments, the sad suburbs of metropolia.

In the city, day ends drearily in the fall. There's the long, wearying battle home through traffic, or the draughty, crushed, degrading scramble on public transportation.

The city man arrives home fit for nothing but slumping for the evening before the television set. And what greets him? The old lady, would up like a steel spring because she hasn't seen a soul she knows all day, there's nothing to look at but that stupid house next door, exactly like their own, and the kids have been giving her hell.

He's stuck with it. For the whole evening. That's why so many city chaps have workshops in the basement. It's much simpler to go down cellar and whack off a couple of fingers in the power saw than listen to Mabel.

Life is quite different for the small town male. He is home from work in minutes. He surveys the ranch, says, "Must get those storm windows on one of these days," and goes in, to the good fall smells of cold drinks and hot food.

His wife saw him at breakfast, again at

lunch, has had a good natter with the dame next door, and has been out for two hours, raking leaves with the kids. She doesn't need him.

Instead of drifting off to the basement, the small town male announces that this is his bowling night, or he has to go to a meeting of the Conservation and Slaughter Club, and where's a clean shirt. And that's all there is to it.

While her city counterpart squats in front of TV, gnawing her nails and wondering why she didn't marry good old George, who has a big dairy farm now, the small town gal collects the kids and goes out to burn leaves.

There is nothing more romantic than the back streets of a small town in the dark of a fall evening. Piles of leaves spurt orange flame. White smoke eddies.

Neighbors call out, lean on rakes. Women, kerchiefed like gypsies, heap the dry leaves high on the fire. Kids avoid the subject of bedtime, dash about the fire like nimble gnomes.

Or perhaps the whole family goes to a fowl supper. What, in city living, can compare with this finest of rural functions? A crisp fall evening, a drive to the church hall through a Hallowe'en landscape, an appetite like an alligator, and that first wild whiff of turkey and dressing and the

juices flow free in your cheeks.

But it's on weekends that my pity for the city-dweller runneth over. Not for him the shooting-match on a clear fall Saturday, with its good-humored competition, its easy friendliness. Not for him the quiet stroll down a sunny wood road, shotgun over arm, partridge and woodcock rising like clouds of mosquitoes.

It's not that he doesn't live right, or doesn't deserve these pleasures. It's just that it's physically impossible to get to them easily. If he wants to crouch in a duck-blind, at dawn, he has to drive half the night to get there.

Maybe on a Sunday or holiday, in the fall, the city family decides to head out and see some of that beautiful autumn foliage. They see it, after driving two hours. And with 50,000 other cars, they crawl home in late afternoon, bumper to bumper, the old man cursing, the kids getting hungrier, the mother growling owlier.

Small town people can drive for 15 minutes and hit scenery, at least around here, that leaves them breathless. Or they'll wheel out a few miles to see their relatives on the farm, eat a magnificent dinner, and sit around watching TV in a state of delicious torpor.

Yup. It's tough to live in the city, in the fall.



On the Leavell

With Helen

Speside resident and former NHLer Pierre Pilote donned his skates recently for the Chicago Black Hawks Oldtimers, when they faced the St. Louis Blues Oldtimers. (that's hockey for those less sports-minded than myself). Judging from the Toronto Maple Leaf game I was at Saturday night, Toronto could use some of those so-called Oldtimers.

Acton could soon become a household word around Montreal, and not just because of local travel agent Rick Bonnette's wild weekends there. The Montreal Canadiens have a centre named Keith Acton with the team.

Next week's regional councillor race could go down to the wire—or in this case the hair. Both candidates, incumbent Ed Wood and challenger Dave Whiting sport dashing beards, although they're beards of a different color.

And they say today's generation isn't learning their three "r's"—anybody notice anything funny about ward two municipal council candidate Pam Sheldon's lawn signs. Whoever was the overseer of Mrs. Sheldon's signs seemed not-to-see a spel-

ling mistake. Councillor is misspelled on several signs. If Pam wins, I guess this will make her one 'L' of a councillor.

The ghosts and goblins were out in full force Friday night, to no one's surprise. However, one thing I was surprised about—the kids don't seem as greedy as "in my day".

Local youngsters came trooping to our door carrying plastic shopping bags, orange plastic pumpkins and the all favorite pillow cases. However, there didn't seem to be too many garbage bags full of goodies.

As a youngster growing up in Collingwood in the days of no inflation, our Hallowe'en haul was much more worthwhile. After we were old enough to go out without my older brother and sister, my younger sister and I would take our garbage bags and hit the streets. We had it down pat, up one side and down the other side of each street. We did have some restrictions. We weren't allowed to go past the railroad tracks or down by the bay (Georgian Bay). Past the railroad tracks was too far away, and down by the water was too dark and scary anyway, so we never went out of bounds.

Anyway, once we got our garbage bag full, we went home, dumped the load (hid our Potato chips so our Dad wouldn't eat them), and headed off again. Usually by the time that bag was three quarters full, most people had run out of goodies.

Once in for the night, we sorted out our "loot", quite similar to gangsters going over the night's take. I didn't like the homemade candy, so it went into my brother's pile, but I got all his black suckers. I hated those candy kisses, and put them in Dad's pile. In return, I got to stay up just a little longer.

So this year, when the kids dropped in, I deliberately took note of what they were carrying and how much was in it. Sure is sad inflation has hit the Hallowe'en baskets.

One pointer to the kids for next year—the way to get the most is not to go out at all. It was Hallowe'en, 1962, and I was stricken with measles. That's when older siblings come in very handy. As they went out trick or treating, they told the adults about their poor sick sister home in bed, not able to come out. Sympathy seemed to produce twice as many candies that night. Within a few minutes, they came back with my bag full of candy, and went out again and again.

I've been out trick or treating only once in at least 10 years, and that was in 1974, my first Acton Hallowe'en. And I didn't take any bag at all. Janet Marshall and Carolyn Artem (then Duval) and myself hit several houses in town.

This weekend is the annual high school commencement exercises. Most of us have been through it; the reunions with old school chums, the long speeches, the applause of our parents and former teachers', that unending walk across a stage (or whatever), trying to remember which hand you shake with, and which hand you take your diploma with; the special awards that you know darn well are for the others, not for you; the final singing of your school song; and then the end. A goodbye to the people you promise to write to, but never do. But despite all graduations being the same, each one is a special moment to those involved. Congratulations to all the graduates. The road ahead may be rocky at times, but in the end it's all worth it.

Back issues

10 years ago

November 4, 1970

Hallowe'en was quiet, according to generous householders. The subdivisions in particular were thronged with children, many with the now-familiar UNICEF boxes. A couple of signs were bent, firecrackers and eggs thrown.

Pert Pat Kentner plays the female lead in There's A Girl in my Soup in the Georgetown Little Theatre presentation.

Principal Dave Katz kicked off the famous staff-student football game. The fearsome teachers, who won 7-0, were Bill Coats, Jim May, John Cristello, Brian Skerrett, Earl Brears, Keith Black, Wally Rowley and Boris Shean.

Receiving Ontario scholarships at commencement were Marie Timbers, Cheryl Lee, Nancy Morris and Mark Hurst. A record 34 graduated, including Marsha McKenzie and Patricia Last who were granted early admission to the University of Guelph.

Acton's population is up 45, to 4,835. Another in the series of proposals for development of the Sneyneck and Vyse farms came before planning board. Chairman Sid Saitz warned Joe Adanick rezoning could take nine months to a year.

20 years ago

November 3, 1960

About 200 children, gay in the downpour, collected pennies for UNICEF on Hallowe'en. Proceeds to date are about \$150. There was a party at the Y afterward. Costume winners were Brian Binnie, Lynda Harris, Fiona Gidman, John Beatty, Heather McGeachie and Billy Hansen. Transport for the children was arranged by the Rotary, Y's Men and Lions. Scout troops, United Church young people and Rovers patrolled on foot.

50 years of service with the C.N.R. were recognized when Jim Inglis, telegraph operator, was presented with a 50 year pass. He waved the all-clear signal to No. 458 Friday night just before he retired. He was also presented with a gold watch and sum of money by fellow workers.

James Henry Reed, former school attendance officer, passed away. Mrs. Amos Mason, who helped her husband establish Mason Knitting Co. in the former municipal power house, passed away. Her husband was the town's first mayor. Once manager of the Roxie theatre, Bill Leslie has died. Lorne Wick, president of the Citizens' Band, is widely mourned.

50 years ago

November 6, 1930

Hallowe'en provided lots of fun and the property damage was not serious. It was a credit to the young folk.

Knox Church Young People's Guild held an enjoyable Hallowe'en party. The costumed group were taken on a harrowing walk through gloomy corridors. Taking part in the program were Allan Leishman, Marguerite Kentner, Della Van Wyck, Ena Robson, Ruby Smith and Franklin Near.

The remodelled school at Rockwood was formally opened. The alterations and placing of the second storey with the additional classrooms cost \$18,000. There are two classrooms, assembly room and science room for the Continuation School upstairs. There are 52 pupils in attendance at the Continuation School. The Public School has three rooms downstairs and an attendance of nearly 100. The trustees, Mr. Charles B. Harris, Mr. Stewart S. Royce and Mr. George Peal, deserve credit for their part in the welfare of the young people of today.

Many of the factories in Acton are working overtime to keep up with orders.

75 years ago

November 9, 1905

The electrician has reported to the chairman of the Committee on Electric Light that it will be unsafe to install any more lights. He is of the opinion that the adoption of the metre system will relieve the pressure.

Mr. Charles Quantic who is an engineer on the C.P.R. in the Northwest, with headquarters at Dauphin, Man., has been in hospital with typhoid for four weeks, and has suffered a relapse. His father left immediately for the West.

The private telephone system connecting the Reeve's office, the Municipal Officer's residence and the power house has been finally installed and is a great convenience.

J.J. Holland has disposed of the Albion Hotel to Samuel Lasby for the consideration of \$6,300. Mr. Lasby takes possession next week.

100 years ago

November 4, 1880

Sunday night being Hallowe'en the urchins of Rockwood kept it on Saturday night, and on the latter evening bars, bolts and locks were freely applied to doors and gates which were constructed so as to be easily removed, and which might be carried away and hidden from "mortal ken." A good deal of mischief was indulged in, but no serious damage done.

Tam O'Shanter hats are very popular in Acton. They may be fashionable but they are anything but pretty.