

# The Acton Free Press

Founded in 1875

Don McDonald, Publisher

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Published every Wednesday by Inland Publishing Co. Limited at 59 Willow Street, Acton, Ontario, L7J 2M2. Telephone (519) 853-2010. Subscriptions: Single copies 25c each, \$12.00 per year in Canada, \$30.00 in all countries other than Canada.

The Acton Free Press is one of the Inland Publishing Co. Limited group of suburban newspapers which include The Ajax/Whitby/Pickering News Advertiser, The Brampton Guardian, The Burlington Post, Burlington Weekend Post, Etobicoke Gazette, The Georgetown Independent, Markham Economist and Sun, The Milton Canadian Champion, The Mississauga News, The Newmarket/Aurora Era, Oakville Beaver, Oshawa This Week, Oshawa This Weekend, and The Stouffville Tribune.

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## Wood's defeat Acton's loss

With the defeat of Ed Wood in the recent municipal election the community has lost a caring, hard-working man who will be sorely missed at both regional and Halton Hills councils.

Had the results been reversed the community would have still lost. The winner, Dave Whiting, is an equally concerned, caring citizen. We suspect had he lost in his third try for public office Whiting might have decided to quit politics altogether and we think that would have been a loss for the town, the same as Wood's defeat has been.

Besides honing his campaigning skills in the three elections Acton's new regional councillor has given both local and regional issues a lot of consideration and study and we have high hopes that with experience and more study he will develop into a good councillor.

In his low key, quiet way, Wood was a good councillor. He and his colleague Terry Grubbe and Ross Knechtel have carried the wishes of Actonians to local council and kept in touch with the ratepayers. In some cases they have been successful in having measures pushed through for the benefit of residents. One regional observer noted Wood "always voted right", he supported positions advantageous to North Halton.

Politics at any level is something of a crap shoot. Wood, like regional councillors in other areas of Halton, was swept out of office on an anti-region tide. Most observers believe this anti-region tide is the result of voters' frustration with the region's financial woes and personnel problems. Also, as the incumbent and thus the perceived front runner, Wood was hurt by the pathetic voter turnout in Acton.

Since coming to Acton and establishing a growing business,

Wood has been very involved with the community.

He was a strong voice on the now defunct Acton-Esqueusing recreation advisory committee prior to entering politics.

During the past two years he has been a hard working, conscientious councillor who gained considerable experience and knowledge of local government and concerns.

As Wood pointed out during the campaign, the community has made a two year investment in his municipal education.

While he won't be able to pay a dividend at council Wood can still serve the community well.

In the next few weeks council will make a number of appointments to boards and committees. Wood's former colleagues on council would be well advised to consider him for one or more of these posts, for example a seat on a conservation authority or land division committee, if Wood is interested. His knowledge and experience especially with regard to planning matters, would be an asset to the community in an appointed position.

Wood and his wife Pat have been in on the ground floor of the new Acton Beautification Committee and their involvement should help not only that group but the entire town.

It is indeed fortunate that Wood has indicated he will continue to maintain his interest in the community during his at least two year vacation from council.

Wood is to be thanked for his efforts and dedication to Acton. He demonstrated in office and in the campaign that he is a man of integrity and principle. He faced the issues head on, formed his positions on concerns based on facts and not political consideration, and did his best to make the region work for the benefit of Acton.

## Our readers write

### Businessman raps police

Dear Sir:

Sometime through the night of Friday, November 14, someone came on my premises, jacked up a truck and removed all four tires and then they even brought along their own cement blocks to drop the truck on. The police were called the next morning, they recorded the problem and suggested we call our insurance. We will pay the first \$250.00 and our insurance company the balance. Justice has been done. To our knowledge our neighbors were not asked if they saw or heard anything, definitely no finger printing, that only happens in the movies. Just another successful petty crime. Perhaps one of dozens happening every week in Acton.

In the past few years we have had apart from the above:

—front torsion bars and steering linkage removed from a new Bronco—the hoods of three cars smashed one evening—wheel covers stolen from a used truck—one or two break-ins—batteries stolen from new vehicles—countless gas caps stolen—gasoline from cars on the lot—hood ornaments broken or twisted off.

It has got to the point where we don't bother to call the police unless we need a report for insurance purposes.

I called the police department a few weeks ago and spoke to the staff sergeant about my concerns. I was cordially received, but got the impression that although they sympathized with me he felt they were doing all that was necessary to maintain law and order.

Sir, with all due respect, the people in this town pay a lot for good police protection and I, at the moment, do not feel we are getting it.

Halloween night we had no problem, because the police were very visible. However the next night our cars were splattered with eggs, which unfortunately ruins the paint unless removed immediately. Which would lead one to think police work is an every day job.

I have yet to see or hear of the doors of my establishment being checked. I can go into my building at any time of the day or night and never be questioned, and yet only a few of the officers would know me.

A fellow car dealer near Georgetown tells me that if his neighbors hear a

strange noise and call him he will try and get there immediately because the police are invariably a half hour late and arrive with sirens and flashing lights. He apparently has been successful on his own in apprehending one set of break and enter thieves.

The one local policeman everyone knew, Constable Bob Andrews, has apparently been transferred out of town. Perhaps he wanted to go or maybe it was a promotion, but who could take his place that would know the town and people as he does.

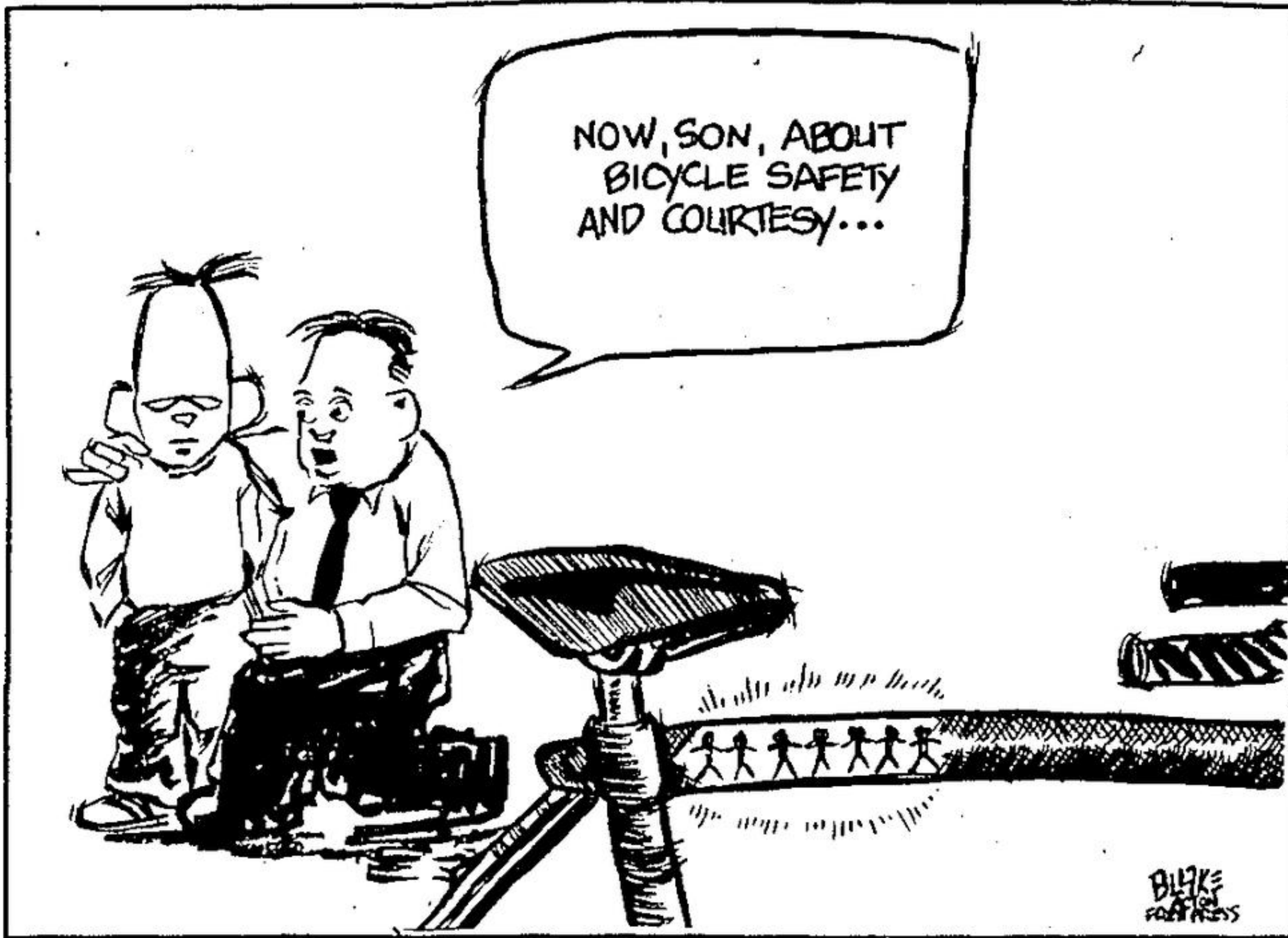
One day we checked a car for a customer and felt it was very unsafe to drive. We advised the customer, but he said he would drive it anyway. Afraid someone would get killed, I got in touch with Bob Andrews and knew it would be checked out with some discretion. Perhaps the next constable would do as well, but you don't know them and you wouldn't be sure.

The OPP officers used to live in town, they knew what was going on. You also knew who to go to for help. They were far more visible on and off duty. Fewer men could do the job. They sweated and laughed and grieved along with the rest of us, and if in the course of duty they had to arrest a friend, they did it and the town understood.

What we have now is commuter policemen. What do they know of our problems? What is the answer? Perhaps the answer is in better training for our policemen. Perhaps encouraging them to live in town and become one of us. Perhaps a full time police office. Perhaps like the old west, a vigilante group of concerned citizens who only want a safe place to live for their families and are willing to fight for it. Perhaps the answer is asking the OPP to come back and opt out of Regional Government. Perhaps the answer is in better public relations by the police department. Maybe about our friends and do care about Joe Public. Perhaps the answer is a part of all of the above.

I may be reading the police department wrong and someone will tell me of all the good points I apparently missed. They would find me a very receptive audience and I could start thinking positively about our police force.

H. L. Doberthien  
President, L & L Ford Mercury Sales.



## Smiley has lots of successful buddies

by Bill Smiley



I sometimes wonder if my college contemporaries are as happy as I, or happier, or less happy and just walking the old treadmill until they reach the end of the road and the dust to dust business.

My wonder was triggered by a recent letter from no less a body than Sandy Cameron, the Ambassador to Poland. He seems happy, but that's only on paper. We used to kick a football around when we were ten or twelve until we were summoned home in the gathering dusk.

He's since returned to Ottawa, after three years in Yugo-Slavia and two in Warsaw, and has invited us to drop around. I shudder at the cost of that, if my old lady thought she was going into ambassadorial regions. Can you rent a mink coat for an evening?

Another guy I knew at college has emerged into a fairly huge job, much in the public eye. He is Jan (now John) Melsel, a former Queen's professor who has been appointed head of the CRTC and is determined to move that moribund body. Jan is, as I recall, a Czech, gentle, brilliant, fairly frail but strong in spirit.

Let's namedrop some more. Jamie Reaney is a playwright, poet, novelist and professor of English at Western. Two Governor-General's Awards for literature, but he's just the same sweet, kooky guy he was at nineteen, a real scholar, absorbed in children's games, yet a first-rate teacher and writer. Alan Brown has been a dilettante with CBC, producing unusual radio programs from faraway places, and lately emerging as a translator of French novels. He came from Millbrook, a hamlet near Peterborough. How we small-town boys made the city slickers look sick, when it came to intellect.

George McCowan was a brilliant English and Philosophy student who was kicked out of school for writing an exam

for a dummy who happened to live around the corner from me when I was a kid.

He went off to Stratford as an actor and director, and suddenly disappeared to Hollywood, after marrying and being divorced from Frances Hyland. He is now on his third or fourth wife, has an ulcer, and directs Grade B movies.

I knew Don Harron casually. His first wife was a classmate of mine, who later married that Hungarian guy who wrote In Praise of Older Women, made into a movie. Harron, with lots of talent, energy and ambition, has parlayed his Charley Farquhar into a mint, and is still producing a lot of creative stuff.

Another of the drifting mob was Ralph Hicklin, a dwarfish kid with rotten teeth, and a wit with the bite of an asp. He still owes me \$65.00, because he had no scruples about borrowing money. He became a movie and ballet critic, and a good one, but died in his late forties.

There were other drifters in and out of the gang, including my kid brother, who was mainly there for the girls. And boy, I'd better not start on the girls, or I'm in trouble.

I was the only one who was about half jock, that twenty and anomalous name that is pinned on Phys. Ed teachers today. I played football, and my intellectual friends had nothing but scorn for this. I loved it.

And I made some friends among the jocks, or the hangers-on, the sports-writers. Notable among them was Dave McIntosh, who still writes a mean letter to the editor from Ottawa, and spent most of his adult life working for The Canadian Press and newspapers.

I also had other friends in the college newspaper. I was a couple of years behind the bumptious Wayne and Shuster, but knew Neil Simon and others whose names

appeared as bylines from all over the world.

What I wonder is whether I would trade places with these bright guys I used to hang around with. I think not.

I doubt if three of us are still married to the same woman, not that that is any big deal.

I don't have the ego to hustle myself as some of them have done, nor the brilliance that many of them had.

When I go up and shout at my noisy Grade 10's, or try to coax my four-year eleven into some sort of intellectual movement, I simply haven't time to wish I was the Ambassador to Poland, a director of B's in Hollywood, a translator of rather obscure French novels, or the head of the CRTC.

I haven't time. Tomorrow night I have to drive 140 miles and give a speech about "honor" to the Honor students of another school. To orrow I have to go to a Department Heads' meeting where we will, for the fourth time this year, discuss "Smoking" in the school. Tonight, I have to call my old lady in Mooseonee, tell her I've been a model bachelor and have only burned six holes in the rug. Thursday night, I have a Parents' Night, at which the parents of bright kids will come to have me praise them and the other parents will stay away.

I bought the paint for the back stoop, but it's been too wet to paint. Yesterday, I had two young lady visitors, who caught me in my pyjamas, bare feet, and dirty dishes all over the kitchen.

No. There's no way. I just haven't time to be an intellectual, a success, a good father, or a good husband.

But I'm going to keep an eye on all those old friends of mine, and if they stutter or stammer or stagger under the load, I'll be laughing.

pal Pat McKenzie has been travelling coast-to-coast presenting scholarships for the Y's Men.

The scholarships are to "financially assist young people dedicated to serve the YMCA". Any expenses Pat claimed, he donated to the scholarship fund.

Another former politician I haven't heard from lately is former Halton MP Dr. Frank Philbrook. Dr. Philbrook lost out to Otto Jelenc in the May, 1979 Conservative sweep of Ontario.

Not one to sit idle, Dr. Philbrook is chairing a conference on "Education for Jobs", Saturday, November 22 at Erindale College in Mississauga.

Among the speakers will be Halton's Director of Education Em Lavender and Sheridan College's president John Porter.

Despite the sale of Dills Printing and Publishing to Inland Publishing Co. Limited two years ago, the Dills name is still widely known in newspaper circles. Steven Dills, son of Jim Dills, formerly of Acton, and now of Milton, has made a name for himself in newspapers right across Canada, something which makes us all here in Acton proud.

Steven, grandson of Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Elliott on Bower Avenue has recently been appointed publisher of the Drayton Valley

Western Review, a weekly in northern Alberta.

The Western Review is no stranger to Acton residents, as that was the newspaper former Free Press columnist and dark room technician Wendy Thomson worked on for several years after her move west.

A graduate of Ryerson, Steven worked as a reporter in Woodstock, New Brunswick, then served as assistant to the executive director of the Canadian Community Newspapers Association in Toronto.

Steven's introduction to the west came over a year ago, when he was appointed publisher of the Highway 43 Tribune at Onoway, Alta.

Steven's aunt, Kay Dills, former editor of this newspaper is busy working on the CCNA newspaper, "The Publisher". Steven's father, Jim Dills, former co-owner of this newspaper, is executive director of the CCNA. Dave Dills, former publisher and co-owner of this paper also has his finger in the business as he just finished editing "Community Market Canada", the CCNA's biggest sale tool.

Belated birthday greetings are extended to Eugene Braid, who turned 94 years old recently. Halton Hills mayor Pete Pomerooy presented a letter to Mr. Braid on behalf of the town.

## Back issues 10 years ago

November 18, 1970  
Top award winners at the Junior lacrosse banquet were Fred Barons, the team's rookie of the year, Bob Gowland, Bob Turkosz, Dave Cooksey and Bruce Murray.

A crafts exhibit was held at the home of Mrs. Jean Denny in Esqueusing, with crafts displayed by Mrs. Denny, Florence Wilkin, Laura Dittich and Sisko Kockx.

Eden Mills senior ball team, winners of the Eramosa-Pushinch league, received their trophies at a banquet in the Presbyterian church. Rodney Bell presented individual trophies on behalf of the Community Club.

Fire has destroyed the King Calcium plant at Campbellville.

After a career on council that dates back to 1927, George Currie, 80, decided to step down, even though he was nominated as reeve of Esqueusing.

## 20 years ago

November 17, 1960  
The new United church sanctuary was dedicated with a crowd of 500 attending. Folded chairs lined the aisles; the junior and senior choirs filled the front of the new church for the first time. Rev. Dwight Engel and Rev. R. A. Brook took the service. The keys to the church were formally presented to Mr. Engel by the chairman of the building committee Alf Long and building supervisor Tom Gordon. Others involved in the new building were Orwell Johnson, Mansel Nellis, Kenneth Allen, Walter Woodburn, W. J. Beatty, J. McGeachie, H. R. Force, Dick Bean, Jim Ledger, Bernard Veldhuis, Gordon Beatty, Bruce Shoemaker, Frank Prouse and Cyril Leighton.

The former Churchill home next door to St. Joseph's church, is being demolished to make way for the new Bell Telephone exchange.

North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded president Gerry Addison announces a \$2,000 site at Hornby has been purchased for a school for the retarded.

## 50 years ago

November 20, 1930  
In Georgetown arena the Acton Ladies showed a crowd of ardent rooters why they are leading the intercounty softball league, when they defeated Brampton Knox Church. Finals Friday for both the ladies' and men's teams.

A report from Miss M. Z. Bennett, Principal, showed school fees in arrears of over \$100 from non-resident pupils.

There are 50 residents who have registered as out of work. Council will discuss the matter of unemployment relief.

Rockwood Mill Ltd., which took over the Harris Mills, is now well into production. About 30 hands are employed.

A public meeting was held in Rockwood United Church in the interests of Prohibition.

The Ladies Aid of the Baptist church served a bountiful supper, filling the tables three times. Churchill orchestra played, Margaret Brown, Harold Swackhamer, Leslie Swackhamer, Roy Johnston, Archie Kerr, Anson Thurston, B. McCausland and C. W. Landsborough.

## 75 years ago

November 23, 1905  
Mr. Robert Sprowl has received an award for wheat from the World's Fair at St. Louis.

Rev. Matthew Wilson is the new rector of St. Alban's.

There have been some very fine deer shipped to Acton from Muskoka the past week by Willie Stalker, Percy Wilson, Fred Wilds, Harry Sayers and C. A. Easley.

Mrs. J. E. Corry has disposed of her splendid residence on Queen St. to Miss Bella Gordon. Miss Gordon no doubt will eventually change the name from Corry Hall to Gordon Hall, the name of the family homestead at Barrockburn.

The first parade of the teams enlisted in the Wheeled Transport of the Canadian Militia at Acton was held at the drill shed. Five teams were declared well suited for militia and 15 more are sought. The teams belong to Councillor J. M. Warren, Donald Mann, George Roszell, A. T. Mann and Richard N. Brown.

## 100 years ago

November 18, 1880  
The great rowing race in England between Hanlan and Trickett for 200 pounds sterling was an easy victory for Hanlan. If gambling be a vice, the whole world was full of gambling. Every Canadian heart is filled with pride and pleasure.

The sidewalk on Main Street is in bed condition. The council should have the planks repaired at once.

The days are now getting considerably shorter and the cost of light at the present high prices is no small item.

The Georgetown Herald has greatly improved since the new proprietor got hold of it. Several hotel-keepers have stopped taking the Herald, owing to the firm stand it takes with reference to the temperance question.

The latest winter pastime is roast apple sodas. Don't go on the pond skating yet, boys.