

The Acton Free Press

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Great strides made in police-community relations

Great strides were made last year in improving police-community relations in Acton because efforts were made by both sides.

There's no reason attitudes and relations won't improve further this year too.

In late 1980 tensions between the police and citizens, long simmering away, finally came to a boil when local businessman Lorne Doberthien went public with a long list of complaints and criticism, complaints and criticisms which had cropped up in previous letters to this newspaper from citizens as well as verbalized frequently by residents.

After a period of understandable defensiveness, the force took steps to solve its image problem here.

Chief James Harding invited politicians and businessmen to headquarters in Oakville for a tour and explanation of regional police operations.

Then he announced that for all of 1981 the same 12 officers would patrol in Acton and try and get to know the town.

The police topped off their campaign with an open house at the Legion and Acton responded admirably, over 250 citizens dropped by to meet the "dirty dozen" and force brass.

The foundations of improved relations were laid, but it was up to the 12 officers and citizens to keep things going.

All indications are both sides succeeded in building strongly on the new feelings fostered by the open house.

Harding calls 1981 a "community success story." He believes relations between the police and community have greatly improved based on the fact complaints have plummeted. The north Halton police boss Matt MacPherson and Doberthien agree.

Our reading of the situation is the same. Letters have dropped off drastically and calls to the newsroom about police service have been rare.

It's common to see officers walking the streets now and chatting with residents. Residents can't say they don't know the force's face in town anymore; except for a few exceptions the same officers have been in the cruisers and on the streets all year.

An officer was assaulted downtown last summer by three youths and citizens came to his rescue. Police thank citizen tips for helping them solve more crimes this past year.

This isn't to say everyone is happy. We've heard a few suggestions that the police haven't improved. Some still expect the officers can do something significant about speeding on residential streets when there are only two men per shift in town. There have been some complaints, even justifiable on occasion, of police investigative procedures. Recently an officer was close by when a burglary was committed downtown and missed catching the culprits.

But overall the situation has improved greatly, complaints have been few.

And things can get better, especially if the force receives the funds from the region the Chief is looking for over the next few years for things like extra men so there can be more than two men here per shift and the local station can be kept open longer each day.

However, even if funds aren't forthcoming as quickly as the police and community would like, the situation can be further improved.

The planned open house this year and visits to town by the Chief and other brass will continue to give Acton the opportunity to be heard by the force.

Communication shouldn't be something which takes place just when there is a problem.

Communication won't halt the rise in crime, but it can put a dent in the problem.



On the Leavell

With Helen

Ed Footitt was recently guest of honor at a birthday and retirement party.

Ed turned 65 on January 10, and will be through work at Beardmore next week after more than 44 years of service.

Some 45 people attended the party. A belated happy birthday Ed, and congratulations on your retirement.

Five new families were welcomed into town recently by the Welcome Wagon.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Hellam have moved here from Huntsville, and Mr. and Mrs. Marcus Hunt and young son have made their home here from Victoria. Mr. and Mrs. John Dowell come from Kitchener, and Mr. and Mrs. Brian Lewis and daughter, and Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Foster and two children all have moved here from Brampton.

Even though it is the middle of January, Santa Claus is still keeping in touch with the Free Press. He called me last week to say how pleased he was to receive in the mail after Christmas. It was a card from Amy Jowett, of Acton, thanking him for all the gifts he gave her.

Santa says he received lots of letters from youngsters telling him what to bring but very rarely thanking him. It is little children like Amy who make his hard job worthwhile.

Roland Heigh brought in an old school text book recently. He received an entire box full of them from Vern McQuade, who found the books under the floor in the attic.

Some of the books belonged to Bernice Bracken (now Robinson) who, along with her husband Stan, sold the farm McQuade lives on, some 20 years ago. Some of the books belonged to her husband, while others belonged to friends.

Some of the books are: The New

Century Book of Facts; History of England; The Ontario Readers; and a Latin Book.

There are many loose pieces of paper slipped into the books, some of them obviously notes that had been passed from student to student without the teacher's knowledge.

One of the papers belonged to Mable Jennilla MacGregor, RR 1 Acton. She attended Acton Continuation School. One of the papers in her text book had the school song written out.

Does anyone remember it? Here's to good old Acton A.C.S. A.C.S.

Here's to good old Acton A.C.S. A.C.S. Here's to good old Acton With English, Math, French and Latin A.C.S. A.C.S. A.C.S. come on

Chorus
Breathes of victory, victory
Breathes of victory, victory
Brave boys and maidens
And grand old tales and legends

A.C.S. is quite unique
The crowning glory of Truth
Education through each week
Encircling the sparkling youth

V-i-c-t-o-r-y, v-i-c-t-o-r-y
V-i-c-t-o-r-y the motto of ACS
Here's to good old third form
A.C.S. A.C.S.

Here's to a good old third form
Friendships, mirth and memories warm
A.C.S. A.C.S. A.C.S. third form
Here's to second form
A.C.S. A.C.S.

Here's to second form
A.C.S. A.C.S.
Here's to second form
With wisdom, laughter and hallstorma
A.C.S. A.C.S. A.C.S. great form
Here's to the Freshies
A.C.S. A.C.S.

Here's to the Freshies
A.C.S. A.C.S.
Here's to the Freshies
With high hopes and all their follies
A.C.S. A.C.S. A.C.S. Freshies

The books aren't in the greatest of shape, but are readable. The second printing of some of the books was in 1922.

A local jogger is very concerned about the lack of snow shovelling of Acton sidewalks, especially in the area of Knox Ave.

He was out jogging recently, after a heavy snowstorm, and saw an elderly lady walking along the roadway, because there was too much snow on the sidewalk. She slipped and fell, putting

herself in danger of being hit by a car. The kind jogger carried the lady home and to safety.

500 Club winners for the past several weeks are: December 26, 31 Ed Rivett, 337 Guido DeKline; Jan 2, 474 Danny McGiloway, 490 John Weldon; January 9, 85, Shirley Broostad, 446 Bill Fields; January 16, 228 Ed McMillan, 230 Bev Landriault.

Terry Grubbe was the lucky winner of a \$100 shopping spree at Phylor Fashions, the prize in the Christmas draw of the XI Epsilon Chi Sorority.

The Georgetown Fireflies, an organized group of campers, had a busy Christmas season. Acton residents Joan and Murray Harrison are the presidents of the club, with many other Actonians involved.

Anyone interested in joining can call Murray at 853-1177.

MEANDERINGS
by Mabel Barkman
Magnets

One of the handiest things I bought in Denmark a few years ago was a gadget you attach to the wall near the sink which has a magnet in it. You press a piece of metal that resembles a pop bottle top (in fact you could use one of these) into the soap and it hangs in the air and never suds up the sink. It is extremely handy in the kitchen.

One of my sons is forever taking magnets out of things and I put them to use. One holds pot holders on my woodstove and another is in the side of my fridge where I place the scissors. I am never at a loss to find my scissors now.

I found a delightful toy for my grandson that is also a magnet. It is an airplane and you can put it on the side of a fridge or anything that is metal and it rolls down and then slides across the floor. It can park in some of the queerest places.

Years ago when my youngest child was having speech therapy, she was fascinated by the magnets the therapist had for the children to play with. The alphabet can be bought in magnet form and children can learn to make words on the fridge close to Mother's supervision.

And I suppose most people have little magnets on the fridge in various shapes for decoration or under which to insert a note for a member of the family. I would say that the use of magnets in a household is endless.

Our readers write

What do councillors consider clean streets?

Dear Sir:
I don't know what the councillors consider clean?

I was in downtown Acton, every day last week and our streets were still not cleared.

So, on Friday I called Mr. Knechtel and Mrs. Grubbe and as far as Mr. Knechtel was concerned the roads were not bad at all, he said he had been downtown and talked to the merchants and said they had nothing to say about the streets.

You must have been in another town Mr. Knechtel because all the merchants were really upset about the streets.

You said my previous letter was uncalled for because your colleague had talked to me several times. I hate to inform you we spoke twice. I called Mrs. Grubbe and she called me so the many times were twice.

Then I called Mrs. Grubbe the same day Friday, that I called you. I still get the same old story we have to wait until etc. etc. etc.

I have been calling about my

driveway for 2 1/2 yrs. and what do I get(?), we are finishing a job in Georgetown, when we get it finished we will come and see the problem but it never happens.

Our taxes are up, our hydro's up, water and sewage up and we are not getting what we should get for them.

We are told they have to wait for a heavy snowfall before they can act. I wonder what would happen if our Drs. did the same thing when they are operating on someone, stand back and wait for something to happen.

I don't think that I really am going to get anywhere with this, but maybe this will get some people thinking.

I must thank Mr. Richardson's office for the fast reply to my letter about my coat being torn when I fell on ice, but nothing has been done about my coat as yet.

We, the people in Acton, are not against the people in Georgetown. But we Acton folks would like a little attention for our money.

Anita Ockenden
84 Churchill Rd.

"Real people" of Acton must save town hall

Dear Sir:
Your January 6 issue mentions 100 years ago today "council accepted the plans for the town hall."

Who knows how many months or even years that council agonized over such a commitment. No doubt some of those councillors had the necessary drive and vision to give Acton one of the finest

buildings of its kind which has served us well for a full century.

Extinction means "gone forever" and unless some of Acton's real people get together right now we will be deprived of a property we could never replace.

Paul Deltor,
107 Church St. E.



Outdoors

BY LORNE FLETCHER

The coming weekend should be a prime time for ice fishing. Ice hut operators have their huts out in force on Lake Simcoe. Reports are that Lake Trout, White fish and Blue Back Herring are hitting well.

Every person or group should not forget to take along a good compass. On the larger lakes many huts are miles from shore, whiteouts are frequent on windy days and believe me one can become disoriented very quickly.

Ice hut operators have no better judgement of conditions than you or me and usually operate by the seat of their pants and good luck.

Usually one may rent the basics in tackle to be used, however, most of the tackle is heavy and rather crudely made to withstand rough usage.

If you are a novice to the sport you should contact a sportsman who is an avid ice angler and has an hour to spare talking to you. An hour talking to an ice fisherman will more than pay off in enjoyment of your trip.

I recommend that each person take along at least one tip up rig plus one jigging rig. These need not be expensive. They are hardly more than a stick with tight line attached. Also take along a spoon that one would use in the summer. An ice auger or ice pick is a nice add-

ition if one likes to walk away from the hut and try new areas. This equipment is a necessity if one is fishing on open lakes such as Georgian Bay where there are few huts available.

Reports are there is good open water fishing for Pickerell and Rainbow Trout at the mouth of the Thames River near the hydro station. Warm water from the hydro station apparently makes for good fishing in this area.

Check your fishing regulations for ice fishing, some small lakes are closed this year due to over fishing.

We have wonderful new visitors to our bird feeders in this cold weather. Cardinals and Grosbeaks, plus the usual sparrows etc. are at the feeder. A small amount of feed pays great dividends. Don't forget to feed the birds.

Back issues

10 years ago

January 19, 1972

Discovery by federal planners that the Orangeville district would not be a suitable site for the proposed new Toronto International Airport has again focussed attention on Acton and district as the preferred site for the new facility.

Mayor Les Duby's suggestion that Acton's antique council chambers in the town hall were long overdue for renovations received almost instant response.

Acton's 1974 centennial may be a long way off but for huckster Jack Carpenter and his centennial commission, an unorthodox group assembled to promote the town's 100th birthday, it helps to receive municipal approval—even if it is only in principle.

Mr. and Mrs. William Varcoe marked 50 years of married life at a celebration last Saturday at Brookville Hall. They have lived in Rockwood for 28 years.

EDITORIAL—We have to go along with the Fergus News-Record which editorially called the rise of first class letter rates to eight cents on January 1 as being psychologically ill-timed.

20 years ago

January 18, 1962

Randy Daly, 16-year-old grade 10 high school student brought honors to his school Monday evening when he placed first in the Regional Public speaking contest in Guelph.

During Acton Hydro Commission's inaugural meeting Thursday evening January 11, Gordon Beatty was returned for another term as chairman. Appointed vice-chairman was E.G. Tyler, Sr., a veteran of the former public utilities commission and hydro commission.

New executive of Acton Curling club: Jack Ridley is president; Jim Hibbitt, vice president; Jim Ingles, secretary; J. Cutting, treasurer; Alex Zbeetoff, by-laws and constitution committee chairman; Vic Patrick, draws committee chairman with Ivan Kibbey, Cliff Bradley and Mrs. H. Holmes; Ted Tyler Sr., social and refreshment committee convener with Charlie Kirkness, Mrs. Lois McKenzie, Mrs. Frank Van Wyck, Mel Jordan and Jim Graham; Frank Van Wyck is membership convener with Bruce Shoemaker and Mel Blow. Bill Coon is property chairman with George Cooper, Andy Nolan and Johnny Krapek.

50 years ago

January 14, 1932

The council elect for the Township of Esqueving for the year 1932 met at 11 o'clock a.m. on Monday and having subscribed to the oath of office took their seats as follows: George Currie, Reeve; W.G. Appelbe, deputy reeve; L.L. Mullin, Wesley Murray and N.A. Robinson, councillors.

Two sales of farm properties are reported this week by R.J. Kerr, real estate agency. The farm and its complete stock and equipment of Johnstone and Co., known as Lakeview Farm has been sold to Mr. C.W. Nelles and son of Toronto. The farm at lot 22, concession 1 in Esqueving township has been sold to Mr. A.E. Haugh of Weston. It would appear that the movement from the city back to the land had actually commenced.

Mrs. R. Bennett and Miss Minnie Z. Bennett spent New Year's Day at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Bennett, Georgetown.

75 years ago

January 17, 1907

There will be held in the Town Hall next Tuesday evening under the auspices of the ladies of St. Alban's church, a spinners' tea and the young ladies will enforce rules which will require all the wits of the young men to observe. For instance, any gentleman found taking tea with his right hand will be fined five cents.

The annual meeting of Acton Cornet Band was held in Matthews Hall. Heavy expenditures for the past year included \$45 for putting up a new bandstand from which to give free concerts during the summer. The annual grant from the town is \$25. A vote of thanks was tendered to bandmaster C.W. Mason.

No fear of failure of the ice crop this season.

100 years ago

January 19, 1882

Two of the councillors who were elected have declined to take office. The two candidates who stood next also declined. A new election will be required. Our municipal matters are in rather a badly muddled condition.

At the last meeting of Guelph city council, \$10 each was granted the reporter of the Herald and Mercury for reporting council meetings during the year.

A tramp, under the influence of liquor, fell off the G.T.R. bridge at Rockwood and was killed.

We would like to see more honest men, more handsome women, more Acton damsels who do not "bang" their hair, more people with sufficient intelligence to read and appreciate the papers and be more prompt in paying the printer.