

# The Acton Free Press

TELEPHONE (519) 853-2010

Founded in 1875

Business and Editorial Office  
Published every Wednesday by Metroland Printing & Publishing Ltd. at 59 Willow Street, Acton, Ontario, L7J 2M2. Telephone (519) 853-2010. Subscriptions: Single copies 30¢ each, \$15.00 per year in Canada, \$30.00 in all countries other than Canada.

The Acton Free Press is one of the Metroland Printing & Publishing Ltd. group of suburban newspapers which includes Ajax/Whitby/Pickering News Advertiser, Aurora/Burner/Newmarket Era, The Bolton Enterprise, Brampton Guardian, The Burlington Post, The Burlington Weekend Post, The Etobicoke Advertiser/Guardian, The Georgetown Independent, Markham/Thornhill Economist and Sun, The Milton Champion, The Mississauga News, The Mississauga News Weekend Edition, The North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Friday Beaver, Oshawa This Week, Oshawa This Weekend, The Richmond Hill/Thornhill Liberal, The Scarborough Mirror, The Stouffville Tribune, The Woodbridge & Vaughan News.

Ken Bellamy

Publisher

Don Ryder

Director of Advertising

Hartley Coles

Managing Editor

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

Editor: Gord Murray  
News Editor: Helen Murray  
Sports: Dan McGiloway  
Darkroom: Peter Mitts

ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

Bill Cook - Retail Advertising Manager; Jennifer Alton, Kirk Davy, Susan Stone  
Classified Advertising: Carolyn Arsen

BUSINESS/ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Office Manager: Jean Shewell

CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT

Manager: Marilyn McArthur

Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with reasonable allowance for signature will not be charged for but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate. In the event of a typographical error advertising goods or services at a wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell, and may be withdrawn at any time.

Member of The Canadian Community Newspaper Association, and The Ontario Community Newspaper Association.

Second class mail registration Number 0515.



## Ice cream carts in park?

We're looking forward to hearing the presentations and councillors' debate on ice cream carts being allowed in Prospect Park.

We certainly don't envy their job on this one. It will be a tough issue to adjudicate.

On the one hand, there is the ice cream carts which pay a municipal vendor license, provide a service the public obviously wants (though many parents would like to live without), and it creates employment for students.

On the other hand, the snack booth at Prospect Park is a very important fund raising tool for minor ball. Minor sports of all types in Acton are hard pressed to raise the funds necessary to stay alive. They face ever increasing costs for everything, including use of facilities through the user-pay fee system of the municipality. Minor ball pays a good rent to

operate the booth and thus have a monopoly on the selling of snacks in the park. They don't need competition.

Yet councillors will be reluctant to not back private enterprise in the form of the ice cream carts business.

Councillor Dave Whiting says he isn't sure how he stands on the issue. He wants councillors to hear the points made by both sides in the dispute. To get the matter on the council floor after trying to solve it behind the scenes much of this summer, he is introducing a motion to allow the carts in Prospect Park, though he may not vote that way.

Hopefully the presentations will make more points than have been brought out so far.

Councillors must keep in mind their decision on this one could have impact on other similar questions they may have to someday settle. G.M.

## Need microlight rules

It's hard to believe that any kind of aircraft with an unlicensed pilot at the helm could be forced to make an emergency landing and no government level cares.

But that's exactly what happened in Acton last week.

A microlight—a small, very light, single person craft—was forced to land in a grain field behind homes on Churchill Rd. North last week when the pilot couldn't switch the fuel flow from one tank to another.

The pilot in this case had some flying training, though he isn't licensed and doesn't have to be to operate his microlight over farm fields and subdivisions alike. In addition there are virtually no regulations, just some loose guidelines, over design, manufacture, use and

maintenance of these crafts.

Not all microlight emergencies have turned out as fortunate as the one in Acton.

Some people have been killed operating these hobby aircraft and they do put innocent bystanders in peril.

The pilot who landed here predicted it won't be much longer before Ottawa steps in and slaps regulations on microlights.

While we often aren't in favor of more government intervention in our lives, we certainly think controlling microlights in the ways other aircraft are regulated is a good idea.

It's hard to believe there are government controls on say the use of mini-bikes on public property and yet anyone is free to fly one of these things around in the equally public air. G.M.

## Tidy downtown helps

Recently because of the Business Improvement Association program to have the streets swept and kept clean daily there has been a vast improvement in the tidiness of downtown streets.

Most merchants are doing their best to keep premises neat and tidy but the general appearance, in some areas is ruined by a few unkept premises. In some places the weeds grow uncut, the paint peels and it gives the downtown an appearance of decay.

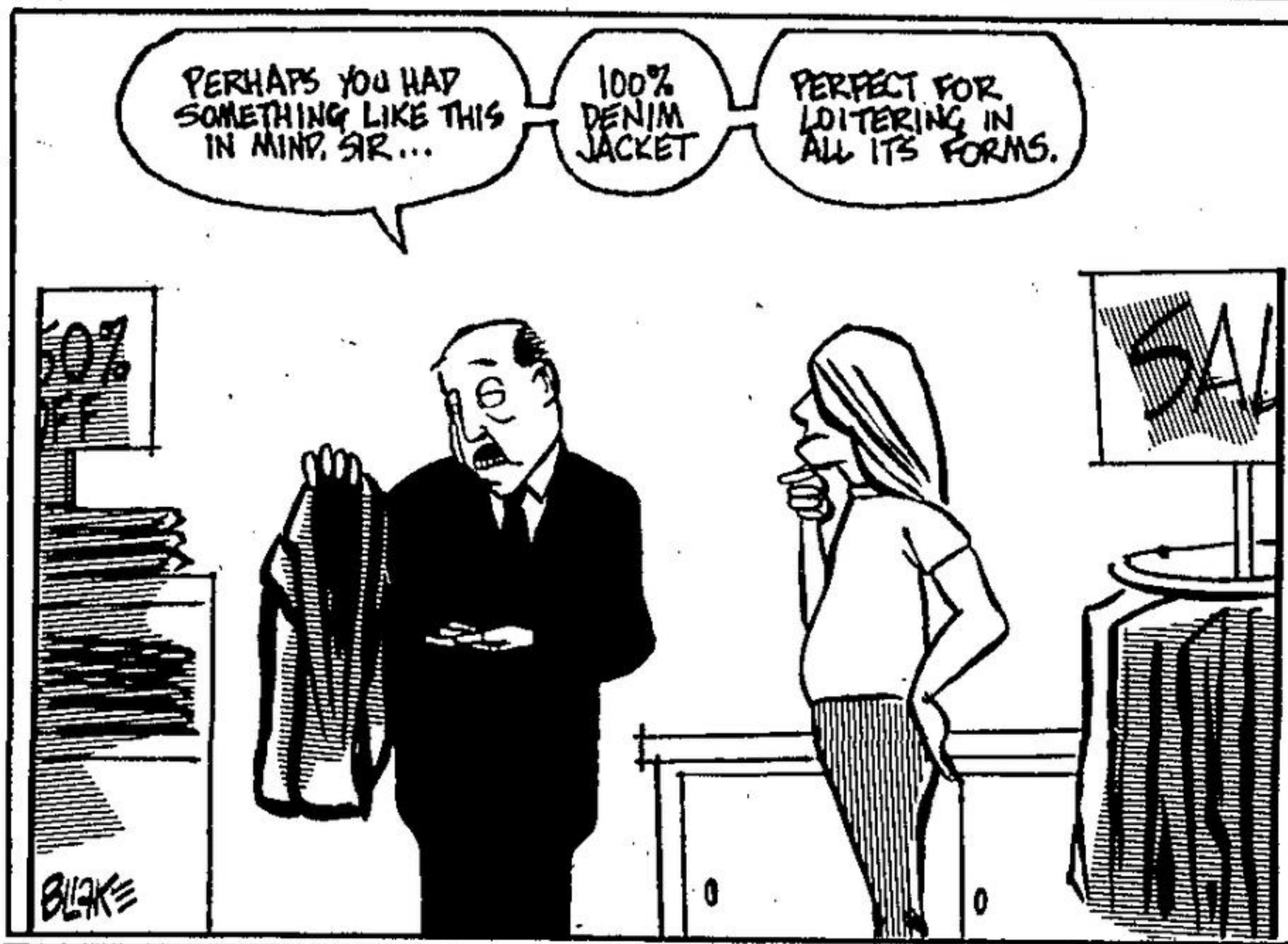
Visitors who have driven through Acton have been charmed by the town and its people but many have commented that loungers on the street gives them the creeps.

They are not prudes. The people commenting noted some of the loungers were hardly any covering. Some dump cigarette cartons, wrappers and other debris on the sidewalk or on the road with no thought of being charged with littering.

The downtown section of Acton is on two major highways. Like all downtowns it is like the living room of the home with a giant picture window. If the appearance is bad trade suffers and business does not prosper as well as it should.

A neat downtown, kept tidy and clean, attracts the shopper and enables business to offer the variety they want. Best of all it keeps business it town.

—H.C.



## From the editor's desk

by Gord Murray

We recently had a visitor to the newsroom who had a very interesting, almost scandalous story to tell.

Unfortunately, the sketchy details about this incident you are about to read is about all that will ever appear in print.

The gentleman, we never got his name though we did learn he lived in the rural area somewhere, claimed he was treated rather rudely when he went to a Halton Hills facility by a member of staff. He was also concerned about safety measures.

That's about all I can tell you about the incident.

The man feared harassment of himself and his family and refused to give us his name so we could do a story. In fairness we weren't about to write a story tearing a strip off a town staffer without this fellow backing it up with even his name.

We offered to print a letter from him and withhold his name. Then we'd invite the municipality to respond.

He wrote the letter sitting in the office, but when I told him he'd have to sign it, though his name wouldn't appear in print, he refused to turn over the letter.

I explained company policy was that while we would withhold his name from publication I had to know the identity of the writer. It's protection for the paper and the letter writer, as well as whoever or whatever the topic is about.

I've never felt entirely comfortable about running letters without signatures, but it is a common policy with papers in small towns where everyone knows everyone else. If we didn't have this policy then we'd miss out on a lot of letters. But it is absolutely essential that we have the writer's signature.

Often we get anonymous letters on a whole host of topics. There aren't return addresses so we have no way of tracing the writer so we can ask for a signature. If you have ever written a letter and never seen it published and didn't give your name now you know why it wasn't printed.

Anyway with the gentleman who came in with a horror story about conduct at the municipal facility, while he was still here I placed a call to Mayor Peter Pomeroy who in turn chatted about the incident with the citizen. He had no more luck finding out who the man was than I did.

The Mayor said he was interested in pursuing the matter, but the citizen decided he wasn't.

At least he was understanding about neither the paper nor Pomeroy wanting to probe the incident when we didn't have a name to back it up.

This wasn't an isolated incident either. We're always having people ask us to fight their battles for them while they maintain a cloak of anonymity. They're unhappy with the way the teacher or coach is treating their child, they feel they were ripped off when they had their car fixed or something like that; they aren't happy with the selection of merchandise in some store in town; "my neighbor's yard is a mess and I have a photo I want in the paper to embarrass him"; working conditions at a factory or office aren't perfect, not unsafe, just not satisfactory, etc.

Many of these types of things are slander, we just can't do anything about your car not being fixed properly. It's the customer's word against the garage owner's and it's slander to humiliate someone in print, to say nothing of highly unfair.

Some of these anonymous items are investigated, some actually turn into excellent stories. So don't get me wrong, we still want the calls and letters. This is intended only as an explanation of why it appears nothing has been done on some matters.

On another front, there are some types of stories we just don't want to do, and in fact won't do.

I had an annoyed caller contact me about why the Free Press had nothing on a suicide a few months ago.

I was a little taken back. I thought everyone knew why suicides aren't covered, but apparently not.

I don't know of any papers or media which routinely cover suicides, it's sort of an unwritten rule in the industry.

If the unfortunate soul is a public figure or celebrity, then their suicide is news.

Also a public suicide is news, jumping from a building or standing on railway tracks while a train is coming. But sitting in your garage with the door closed and the car running, taking pills, or blowing your brains out in the confines of your own home just won't be covered.

The victim and their family have a right to some dignity and privacy in a matter like this for one thing. Also some warped mind might just do

it so they can go out in a blaze of glory on the front page.

Well we aren't going to be an accessory in a case like that. Acton like any small town, is full of rumors every week.

We hear them and follow them up. Sometimes by the time they reach us they are so embellished it's almost embarrassing to check them out, but we do anyway.

Some of the tales we've taken to the police have given them a good laugh, like the one a few months ago about two teenagers abducted at knife point in front of a variety store. The cops had never heard of it. If it happened their parents must not have noticed they haven't come home.

Sometimes by the time we get to the bottom of a story some time, a week or two has passed.

For example there was an alleged crime this year which was common knowledge about town. Everyone seemed to know who was involved.

We immediately contacted the police, talked to the detectives involved in fact, and learned the investigation hadn't even progressed to the stage where they were sure there had been a crime committed. There was nothing to write.

The following week we were able to report yes there had been a crime and it was being investigated, but no charges yet so no names.

A few weeks later we reported charges had been laid and gave the names, the same names which had been rumored around town weeks before. Since the names were printed the case will be followed in court.

I heard a number of comments about our handling of that story. We were late, by the time we reported it the story was old news, that sort of stuff.

All I can say is if it was you or someone in your family even though your name was already been talked about around town in connection with a crime, would you think it was fair to report it in the paper before you were even charged? I doubt it very much.

Everyone wants news in the paper, but not about them or their family if it's not good.

Anyway this is just one of the numerous columns which will fill this space in the weeks and months ahead on a periodic basis in which I'll explain why we do things the way we do and the paper's policies.

Policies can be changed, feel free to talk to us about them if you don't agree.

## Back issues

10 years ago

August 16, 1972

Hugh Patterson has been engaged as assistant clerk for the town offices, his duties are to begin August 28, 1972. Specials this week at the A-B Supermarket are: 14 oz. tins of corn 5 for \$1, catsup 11 oz. bottle 2 for 39c, smoked sausage 79c a lb., 32 oz. bottle of corn oil 89c and round steak or round steak roast \$1.19 a lb.

The Acton Ramettes, this town's only undefeated team chalked up their eighth consecutive win, when they trounced the Huntsville Hawkettes 10-2. Joshua Thompson, who has been a patient in Guelph General Hospital, celebrated his 90th birthday on Sunday, August 13, with Mrs. Thompson being present and the family.

Kevin Parker, of RR 1, Campbellville, skated to higher and further laurels Sunday by winning the Juvenile Men's championships held at the Lakeshore Arena in Metro Toronto.

20 years ago

August 16, 1962

The search for a recreation director-arena manager has ended. Tuesday evening, council accepted the recommendation of the Parks Board and engaged Jim Casburn of Scarborough. He will start on September 17.

This week's specials at the IGA are: 32 oz. jar of salad dressing for 49c, pk. of 30 tea bags 29c, 10 oz. tin of mushrooms 29c, 6 qt. basket of peaches for 85c, 2 lbs. of grapes for 35c and short rib roast 55c a lb.

Bill Erskine, Acton's new assessor, hopes the 13th is a lucky day for him. He began his duties in the municipal office Monday, August 13.

Karl Schubert and Gerry Ockenden just may be crowned "King and Queen of the Twist". They were chosen winners on Channel 11's Club Dance Party last Saturday and are in the dance finals Friday, August 31.

Miss Isabel Ritchie will leave Acton for a year's teaching in London, England. She goes by train to Montreal then sails Friday morning on the Ivernia for Southampton.

50 years ago

August 11, 1932

The United Church Ladies Aid will serve a corn supper on the Parsonage Lawn on Thursday, August 18 from 5 to 8 o'clock. Admission is 25c.

Specials this week at the Red & White Stores are: 6 apples for 30c, 4 lbs. of raspberries for 25c, 5 lbs. of tomatoes for 25c, 1 lb. side bacon and 1 skillet for 45c and pure lard 12c a lb.

Acton Fair is out to cater to the crowds. The admission price this year will be the popular quarter.

Playing this week at the Gregory Theatre, on Friday, "Michael and Mary" starring Edna Best, on Saturday, "Man Wanted" starring Kay Francis and on Monday, "Tenderfoot" with Joe E. Brown.

75 years ago

August 15, 1907

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Statham went to Toronto on Tuesday to attend the annual convention of the Canadian Master Bakers' Association.

Beardmore and Company are bringing in large quantities of St. Mary's crushed stone for use in making cement blocks for additional new buildings and other cement construction work.

Mr. Chas. Davidson is making arrangements for rebuilding his barns. The foundation walls of the former building are in fairly good condition.

Dr. and Mrs. Bell returned home from a very pleasant visit with friends in New York on Saturday.

Principal and Mrs. Stewart and children left last week to visit friends at Bluevale and other points in that vicinity.

100 years ago

August 10, 1882

The bricklayers are now busily engaged on the town hall, after being delayed waiting for window and door sills.

Evidence the Scott Act (preventing the sale of liquor) is doing good, is the marked improvement in several families in town. When intoxicating liquors could be obtained freely the children in these families were clothed in dirty rags, the weekly wages, beyond what was spent for the scanty food for the family, being spent on whiskey, and the home was but a wretched hovel. Now the children are well fed and comfortably clad.

A raspberry social was held in the lecture room of the Methodist church with raspberries and cream, good wholesome bread and butter, cakes etc.

The most unhealthy season of the year is now at hand. Our citizens should pay strict respect to sanitary rules.

## Coles' slaw

by Hartley Coles

On the subject of sermons in football season one of the best I've seen on paper was borrowed by a minister way out in Drayton Valley, Alberta, obviously ticked off by the response he gets from people when asked why they don't attend church.

The original came from a news letter from Emmanuel Lutheran Church, and, of course, it is allegorical. It goes:

"Why don't I go to the football game?"

"First of all, they always have the games at the wrong time. I need my rest you know. After I'm done with a hard week's work how can anyone expect me to go to a football game? If they changed the time maybe I would go more often."

"Secondly, all they ever want is my money. Have you ever been to a football game where they didn't want your money? Football games have become a racket! Money, money, money! Why don't they forget about the money and just let people give what they want—then more people would come."

## Why ministers turn grey and how I got that way

"I stopped going to football games because they're too long. Sixty minutes and all those interruptions! By the time it's over it's usually too late to go visiting. And why do the seats have to be so hard?"

"I used to go to football games, but no one would talk to me. Not once did anyone come over and shake my hand or introduce himself. I would probably still be going if people weren't so stunk stuck up."

"Besides this the coach never visited me even though I have lived here for over five years."

"I had too much football when I was young. My parents made me go. Every week they would drop me off and sometimes I even had to walk. My wife still does go now and again—especially if it's a big holiday game. She says she enjoys it. And we do want the children to go. It won't hurt them and it might even help to make men out of them."

"Of course you can be a football fan without going to the games. I can read the sports page at home. And if I want I

can get all I want on TV. In fact don't you sometimes get upset at some radio stations? Football—morning, noon and night—especially on weekends! Somebody ought to do something about these fanatics!"

"But, if I'm honest I do have to admit it. The reason I no longer go to football games is simply because I don't believe in football anymore."

Substitute football for church and you get the message.

I've discussed the typographical error before, the slip that passes in the type, which make editors and staff tear out what hair they've got left. Typos can be embarrassing and even hilariously funny.

It is especially annoying when the error appears in a friend for life's name. He or she sometimes turns a cold shoulder and hot tongue at us newspaper serfs.

Other times, to our considerable embarrassment, the power of advertising is blunted by a wrong word in the

wrong place or the right word in the wrong place, or words left out.

Thankfully we have not yet been plagued with the series of typos that haunted a small daily newspaper. It started with the following classified advertisement on a Monday:

FOR SALE—R.D. Jones has one sewing machine for sale. Phone 958 after 7 p.m., and ask for Mrs. Kelly who lives with him.

The next day the following appeared in the classified columns. NOTICE: We regret having erred in R.D. Jones' ad yesterday. It should have read: One sewing machine for sale. Cheap. Phone 958 and ask for Mrs. Kelly she lives with him after 7 p.m.

Wednesday the newspaper came out with a bold face notice in the classified columns. It said: R.D. Jones has informed us that he has received several annoying telephone calls because of the error we made in his classified ad yesterday. His ad stands corrected as follows:

FOR SALE—R.D. Jones has one sewing machine for sale. Cheap. Phone 958 after 7 p.m. and ask for Mrs. Kelly who loves with him.

The final smashing sequence came out in the newspaper the very next day. It read:

NOTICE—"I, R.D. Jones, have no sewing machine for sale. I smashed it. Don't call 958 as the telephone has been taken out. I have not been carrying on with Mrs. Kelly. Until yesterday she was my housekeeper, but she quit."

Both the publisher and editor of the newspaper were rescued before they jumped off the top of a one storey building. They must have gone through purgatory and part way into hell.

However, typos do make the readers who look for mistakes happy. It proves those idiots down at the paper are human after all. Anyway, they make a complete recovery when someone phones, comes in or yells, "MY I enjoyed the paper last week!"