

The Acton Free Press

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Consider peoples' needs, not just dollars, cents

It would appear Halton Hills Hydro Commission plans to leave Acton billing arrangements in limbo for much of the summer before telling us finally what will definitely happen.

We hope citizens will maintain a close eye on this situation and not let the matter slide just in case some commissioners start entertaining thoughts of still trying to slide through the radical changes proposed by staff last month.

We'll certainly be keeping our ears to the ground to see what they have in mind.

This has been something of a smozzle from the start.

Changes, other than moving one staffer and a computer terminal head out of the Acton office and replacing the staffer with a summer student, weren't approved by the commission. Even moving the employee and computer to Georgetown was handled sort of through the back door, via a motion to hire four students. But as Murt Allison said Friday the intent of the motion was clearly understood, first step towards making major changes in Acton.

Less than a week after this decision was made by the commission word was filtering around town.

When it reached our ears we called Doug Mason. He in turn arranged for us to talk to chairman Bill Smith, with manager Jerry Trudell along to supply him with information.

We've never been completely convinced the whole thing wasn't just a case of sending up trial balloons to see how the community would react. They wanted coverage of the staff proposals to see if Acton would go along with them.

The summer billing arrangements were supposed to be a trial period, but unfortunately Smith used the phrases "phasing out" and "phasing in" period more often than trial period during the lengthy interview.

Also his tone and words made it sound that all the changes, such as no staff at the Acton hydro office to handle billing matters and no mention of paying bills elsewhere in town, were the new policy as of September.

We suspect had Acton and mayor Peter Pomeroy not raised a stink they would have been policy. Changes needing formal commission approval sounds like it was almost an afterthought, an escape route, if the new ideas didn't go down well with the community.

We can appreciate the commission's desire to save money and make business-like decisions. What some staff and the commission seem to fail to remember is that changes which are noticeable and impact on the public should be considered more than from a purely business standpoint.

Halton Hills Hydro is a government body as well as a business. People concerns must be weighed against business concerns.

Acton is sensitive about change, over the past 10 years there have been many changes in government services in this community. The community is worried about a loss of identity, of being swallowed up.

Local government bodies and our sister taxpayers in other areas of Halton Hills and Acton must be prepared to spend a few extra dollars now and again even when it may not make complete sense from an economics standpoint, to make this community feel like it is still alive and part of the grand scheme of things.

If this type of attitude, taking care of one's smaller sister's needs, doesn't prevail, all politicians in Halton Hills and the region had best be prepared to ride out a lot more storms in the years ahead.

It will be a long time before Acton lies down and keeps quiet.—G.M.



From the editor's desk

Almost anybody but Mulronev

Well, my prediction was wrong, the wicked wit of the east didn't win the Tory crown in Ottawa. But if I were John Crosbie I'd hang in there and not quit politics. I'd also spend a lot of time learning French.

I fear the Tories have made a worse choice in Brian Mulronev for leader than if they'd let Joe Clark continue in the job.

Mulronev makes me very nervous and I have a sneaking suspicion not long after the next federal election the PCs will be gathering someplace again to replace him.

Some are already predicting that Clark will be hanging around Ottawa to wait to get his job back. It will never happen for Joe, but Crosbie could well win the prize he missed Saturday in about three years' time.

If I'd been a voting delegate I'd have been an AABM (Almost Anybody But Mulronev). After hearing the speeches, attending policy sessions, reading reams of candidate literature, and following the campaigns in the media for a couple of months I'd have chosen Mulronev over only two other candidates, John Gamble and Neil Fraser.

The convention didn't change my top pick, but it sure lowered Mulronev on my list. David Crombie, Peter Pocklington, Michael Wilson, even Joe again, would have been better than Mulronev, I think.

I know I'm not alone in my suspicions. Mega media commentators are scared of him too and obviously less than 30 per cent of the delegates thought he was the best man for the job judging by his first ballot support.

If I had to be labelled politically, I'd say I'm an Independent. Federally and provincially I've voted Grit and Tory in the nine times I've gotten to cast a vote (There was a by-election in one riding I lived in years ago.) I even

voted NDP once, though that wasn't a vote for the party but the individual candidate.

I've made no secret of my disdain, or disgust is maybe a better word, with Trudeau and his cronies in recent years. People who do things like set up conflict of interest rules for themselves and then break them and don't pay a price because after all they are just guidelines, not law, shake my faith badly. Judging by the polls, I'm far from alone in this regard. I don't blame Trudeau and the Liberals for all of Canada's woes, I reject them for their "hang onto power at any cost" and "do as I say, not as I do" attitudes.

But I've been labelled a Tory by some Liberals in town (right Peter P.) based on the things I've written in this space. But I have written some nice things about Liberals in the past, it's just been that since I've been at the Free Press the Trudeau gang has run roughshod over decency and ethics. In the same 3½ year time period I've had some almost equally disparaging things to say about the Tories at Queen's Park.

Anyway, I went to Ottawa expecting to see the PCs pick the person who I'd be voting for to lead our next government.

Now, I'm not so sure. I'll be watching Mulronev closely, and if he isn't a lot different than the man who I saw in Ottawa, I might just vote Liberal.

If Mulronev seems to be the same phony, cardboard cutout with no substance I think he is now, once he is in the House of Commons, and the Liberals pick someone who isn't involved in the present regime then I could well back the Grits.

Should the Liberals choose Alan MacEachern or Marc Lalonde for the job, I'd go to Mulronev. Better the devil I don't know that well than the devil I know all too well.



by Gord Murray
Free Press editor

I'd also reject Donald McDonald even though he's not part of the present government, he's guilty too for taking that ridiculous pay for his silly Royal Commission.

That seems to leave John Turner. A Turner who goes in and cleans house, brings in a new cabinet team and then goes to the voters with a new Liberal platform would, I think, appeal to more Canadians, including myself, than Mulronev, despite the fine team he has around him.

Why does Mulronev worry me so much?

In the policy sessions I witnessed on Friday he evaded questions. I want someone in the top job in Ottawa next round who gives straight answers to straight questions.

After Pocklington went to Mulronev following the first ballot I watched Peter Puck being interviewed. He said the deal he struck was a Royal Commission with him heading it to look at his 20 per cent income tax proposal.

Then I heard Mulronev asked about the deal. He didn't confirm the arrangement. He made it

(Continued on page 5)

Back issues

10 years ago

June 13, 1973

More than 100 participants pranced and sang around the stage during Acton School of Dance's annual Springtime show.

New officers were installed at Acton Legion. President is again Bob Angell, with first vice-president Gord James, second vice-president Fred Allen. Secretary is John Chapman and treasurer Gord McCutcheon. Sergeant-at-arms is Ted LeBlanc.

Acton's town employees walked off the job in protest Friday, returning only after they were assured a committee would look into their grievances. Employees said they are concerned about the newly created position of town foreman. John Dunn, CUPE local representative, and union representative Sam Tennant met with Acton council to discuss the matter.

Bicycle license regulations caused a run on licenses according to police. An additional order of 200 licenses on top of the original 400 has nearly run out, police say, and more are on order. Acton's bicycling population has burgeoned.

20 years ago

June 13, 1953

Boy Scouts gathered 9,000 pounds of newspaper on their annual paper drive last weekend.

Hamilton Industrial Shoe Ltd., Acton's newest industry, should be in production within a week. The company expects to hire 30 in the Acton area.

A 300-bed extension is proposed for Halton Manor, the county's home for the aged.

Robert Little and M.Z. Bennett Schools report 91 children have registered for Kindergarten.

Raymond Braida has successfully completed his third year of medicine at the University of Toronto.

Rev. A. H. McKenzie was awarded the J. Bert Wood Trophy for the low gross score after shooting an 80 in the Acton Open Golf Tournament at Hilltop Golf and Country Club in Erin. Andy Nolan and John Goy also picked up trophies.

50 years ago

June 8, 1933

Three times the parish hall was filled for the play Cabbages and Orchids with all the parts taken by girls and young ladies of the church, Lillian Perry, Irene Flowers, Olive Rooks, Phyllis Mackie, Esther Taylor, Barbara Taylor, Alice Taylor, Hazel Bridges, Irene Elliott, Velma Blair and Clara Bauer and Mrs. Violet Knight. Rev. Sawyer provided musical numbers. Mrs. (Dr.) A.J. Buchanan was director.

There was a fair crowd at the town hall to hear the speakers of the C.C.F. expound the principles of this new movement. Mr. C.O. Plant was chairman.

Mr. and Mrs. Amos Mason were honored by the employees of Mason Knitting Co. on their 25th wedding anniversary. Mr. Charles Kirkness read an address and they were given a silver flower basket containing 25 roses.

75 years ago

June 11, 1908

The 17th annual convention of Esqueving Sunday School Association was held at Ballinfad last Friday afternoon and evening.

Dr. Nixon was re-elected in Halton as the Conservatives swept Ontario. Acton voters returned Nixon over Warren 188 to 148, voting at the town hall and Speight's shop.

The annual garden party under the auspices of Knox Church Ladies Aid was held at the home of Mr. Robert Campbell. Miss Laura Gray accompanied the musical numbers and Acton Citizens Band enlivened the proceedings. Tea was served on the lawn from 6 to 8 o'clock. Owing to the cool weather, the demand for ice cream was not as great as it would have been.

Mr. John Firstbrook and family of Toronto have taken up quarters at the Fish Pond for the summer.

100 years ago

Janr 21, 1883

Not more than one section in 10 in Halton can supply a house for a married teacher.

The General Session and County Court were held in Milton, but due to the absence of crime there was no business to be brought forward.

Many juvenile immigrants are coming to these shores from England, for adoption or hire, chiefly as farmers. Many applications accompanied by good references have been made.

Stoves taken out of sight for the warm weather should be thoroughly cleaned.

Cricket, baseball, lacrosse and croquet are all included in for evening entertainment now.

Coles' slaw

Some live in retirement immune to age

One of the better parts of an editor's job is the opportunity to read newspapers which reach us from all parts of Canada as part of an exchange operated by the Canadian Community Newspapers Association. There are often interesting articles about conditions in their part of the country and they make one think how much alike Canadians are although geography can be very different.

One I enjoyed recently came from the Camrose, (Alberta) Canadian, in a column written for weekly newspapers by the Alberta Medical Association. It concerned a man and his wife who had been married for 64 years. When he was 82 he underwent "desperation" surgery. But he surprised the doctors by living until he was 95. Dr. Bob Young, the writer, said the man "foiled us all."

"I'll let the doctor tell it: 'I had looked after him for 25 years; he was one of my first patients. During this time he had moved from a large house to a smaller one and then, at age 80 when the gardening became too much, to a condominium. It was there that I went to talk to his wife after he died.'

"Three days previously, when I admitted him to hospital, I knew that he was about to die. Most

physicians develop an ability to recognize a patient who is terminal, even if the patient is conscious and able to converse. Laboratory tests and such merely confirm the impression.

"Mr. X, as I have called him, was like the wonderful one-horse shay. When he collapsed all his parts stopped functioning at the same time. Fortunately, this was obvious to the specialist and myself, and heroic treatment was regarded as both useless and inappropriate.

"I must admit that I expected that his wife would accept the advice that death at 95 does not represent a failure of medical science. Initially she could not; the loss was too great and too recent. She felt guilty that she had not called the doctor sooner. She was upset that she had left him, very ill but stable, 10 minutes before the end. She was angry with physicians, hospitals and the world in general.

"She was depressed and even discussed suicide. I had, of course, encountered all these reactions many times before, and I was beginning to question my apparent inability to "assuage the anguish of her bereavement." Listening to the widow helped me understand.

"Mrs. X married Mr. X when she was 16. That was 64 years ago.



by Hartley Coles
Managing Editor

They had been inseparable, and their companionship had increased as the years went by. He had worked, by choice, until he was 80. They had become even closer since his surgery, partly because she was pleased to be able to help with his care, and partly because most of their friends had passed on.

"Of course she is distraught. She will need help to get through the grief, anger, guilt, remorse, and other expected and necessary stages of bereavement. But first, she needs a little time."

Why am I referring to this article aside from its human interest side? Because there seems to be some sort of gloomy foreboding sweep-

ing the land that life ends when you collect a pension.

Of course, it depends on the person. Some people lose interest in life before they retire. The smallest setback makes them retreat even further from the vicissitudes of living.

Others keep a keen interest in living all their lives. They shrug off setbacks, big and small, and keep on living to the fullest.

I suspect most of us are somewhere in between these two extremes. Some small things get us down. Others, which would fell a horse, are tossed off like a green salad.

As we get closer to retirement it is refreshing as well as fortifying to know how well some people deal with it. It boils down to personal strength and the ability to bend with the situation.

And I suspect there are many stories like the foregoing which never get told.

Jack Johnson, MPP for Wellington County, recently noted in the Legislature that he has watched with growing dismay the attitude of confrontation which has developed between Ontario Hydro and the farming community, although the goals of both "are in many respects, mutual and com-