

The Acton Free Press

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Business and Editorial Office

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Decade of Town, region nothing to celebrate

1984 is a year to celebrate. Celebrate the 200th anniversary of the settlement of Ontario. Celebrate Acton's 110th birthday. Down the road people can celebrate Georgetown's 120th.

We hope though that no politicians get too carried away with celebrating and extend the joyous mood to marking 10 years of Halton region and Halton Hills.

The notion of commemorating a decade of regional government was bandied about at the region last year and the idea could raise its ugly head again. Darn few citizens of Halton, not just those of Acton, will feel much like celebrating 10 years of a government which is no closer to solving its garbage problems on a permanent basis now than it was at its birth or a government which gave us a \$1.1 million deficit. The building of the green monster is nothing to celebrate either.

In fairness, the region hasn't been all bad to Acton. We have received quite a bit of water and sewer work and help from the south in paying the cost of the system through equalized billing. If people think water-sewer bills are high now, they'd have been even higher without equalized water and sewer billing.

But this and the few other benefits we've received from regional government in exchange for the dollars we've put into it is hardly worth the frustration and aggravation it's caused this community.

Halton Hills is another

matter. It hasn't been as remote and unfeeling towards Acton, on balance, and there have been financial benefits too. But there are still times when even if all of Acton's councillors are behind something they can come out on the short end of the stick and that's not something many here would feel is worth celebrating.

Taxes have gone sky high since regional government, and while it's fair to say the school boards and Queen's Park, with its continual cuts in grants for education and municipalities, have done more than their share to push those taxes up, it's still arguable whether or not they'd have gone as high without regional government. Certainly the school boards and Queen's Park had nothing to do with the region deficit we all had to help remedy.

Acton gave regional government a pretty rough ride the first few years and then seemed to swallow the bitter pill and try to make the best of it in the late 70s and early 80s.

However, in the past year or so the fires of anti-region and anti-Halton Hills feelings have become as hot and bright as they ever were.

1984 isn't a year to celebrate a decade of this system so many detest, it's a year to hope the people at Queen's Park and the two local levels of government work hard to see what can be done to make it more palatable and for the rest of us to hope it eventually gets better.—G.M.



Back issues

10 years ago

January 16, 1974
Mrs. Patricia Ann Woloshyn of RR 1 Rockwood received a police commendation after a nightmare rescue. Mrs. Woloshyn was credited with saving the life of a 13-year-old Winnipeg boy after his arm was severed by an extractor in a laundromat. Mrs. Woloshyn helped slow the boy's blood flow through his wound and later the severed arm was reattached at the Winnipeg Hospital. All building permit renewal requests submitted to Halton Hills inspector Douglas Sargent will, at least for a while, be referred to council. Another brief has been submitted to the Solandt Commission objecting to the proposed hydro line route through Esqueving township along the Fifth Line. "Things will work themselves out," promises Alf Duby, when asked about changes due to the amalgamation of the Acton, Esqueving and Georgetown work forces.

20 years ago

January 16, 1964
In a three way contest Halton County Council chose Burlington Reeve Gordon Gallagher as its 1964 Warden. A 61-year-old Polish woman presently living in the Russian occupied Ukraine will soon be reunited with her husband and daughter in Acton after 35 years. Peter Fedirko last saw his wife 35 years ago before he came to Canada. Twenty years later he saw one of his three daughters, Emilia, when she arrived in Canada with her husband. Under the direction of Dan O'Meara, field supervisor of the Ontario Credit Union League, Acton Community Credit Union held its final meeting before opening for business in the old Post Office on Main St. Trustee Douglas Manning was chosen to head the Acton Public School board when members met for the 1964 inaugural meeting. He succeeds veteran member Tom Watson who retired at the end of last year following a 14 year stint on the board.

50 years ago

January 11, 1934
The ice harvesting is making a busy scene at Corporation Pond these days. Mr. W. Evans has adapted machinery to the cutting and loading operations that have speeded up the output and cut down on manual labor. A power saw and a new loading device are very efficient in their operation. The meeting of the Public Utilities Commission was held and Mr. L.G. King, the elected member of the Commission, took the declaration of office. On Saturday some young boys purchased some licorice sticks and were eating them while running down the street. Herbert Cook, one of the lads, had two pieces of the hard substance lodge in his throat and almost choked to death. He fell on the sidewalk and was unable to explain his plight to his companions. The boys immediately summoned medical aid and the doctor was able to dislodge the pieces of licorice from the boy's throat.

75 years ago

January 14, 1909
The Club House at Acton Aquatic Club was formally opened Thursday evening. The President, Mr. A.O.T. Beardmore, welcomed the guests to the well-appointed quarters. At nine o'clock the company sat down to dinner. The premises include a commodious club room with furnishings, a boat house with accommodation for ten boats, a bathing room, and a delightful balcony overlooking the pellucid waters of Fairy Lake. Mr. Beardmore said that the club brings young men together and assists them to be mutually helpful. Too much professionalism in sport is harmful and to be deplored. The true British spirit should be inculcated whereby all sports are conducted in a fair manner. Rev. Barker pointed out the club stands for manly men and clean manly companionship.

100 years ago

January 17, 1884
Bread has been reduced to 13 cent a loaf. A good old-fashioned January thaw would be acceptable as water is very scarce and a number of wells in town are dry. Messrs. G. and A. McDonald, of the Fourth Line, brought to market two pigs both having five toes on their front feet.

From the editor's desk

Ottawa mayor has way out of region

Someone has actually come up with a solution to this mess called regional government which would get all of us in Ontario out of it and bring back lock.

It's no secret that Acton, and in fact Halton, aren't the only hotbeds of discontent over this system Queen's Park dreamed up and then forced on people. I've read in the dailies of complaints from councillors and regular people in Niagara, Hamilton-Wentworth and Durham.

I never knew the good folks of Ottawa-Carleton, one of the earliest regions, were unhappy until just a few weeks ago. Marion Dewar, mayor of the capital city, went to the Royal Commission on the Economy, that travelling show that former finance minister Donald McDonald runs for \$800 or so a day, with a revolutionary idea.

She urged Canada be expanded from 10 provinces and two territories to 20 to 30 or more provinces. Her idea makes sense. One of the major reasons the province created regions was to do part of their job, so we wouldn't need regions if the provinces were just smaller.

Dewar, it was reported, felt if there were more and smaller provinces then authority for local decisions could be returned to truly local governments.

Under her proposal big centres like Ottawa or Burlington would be back on their own, just as Acton, Esqueving and Georgetown would again be separate municipal governments and not just communities welded together into a larger political unit.

The report on Dewar's idea didn't say it, but I imagine with Ontario divided up into smaller provinces we might not even need county government either.

Her proposal, which was given just a short mention in one of the papers (Helen threw it out before I could clip it out so I'm going on memory), would see Northern Ontario, which she felt relates at lot more with Manitoba than we southerners anyway, become a separate province.

Then southern Ontario would be broken up into several smaller provinces centred around a



by Gord Murray
Free Press editor

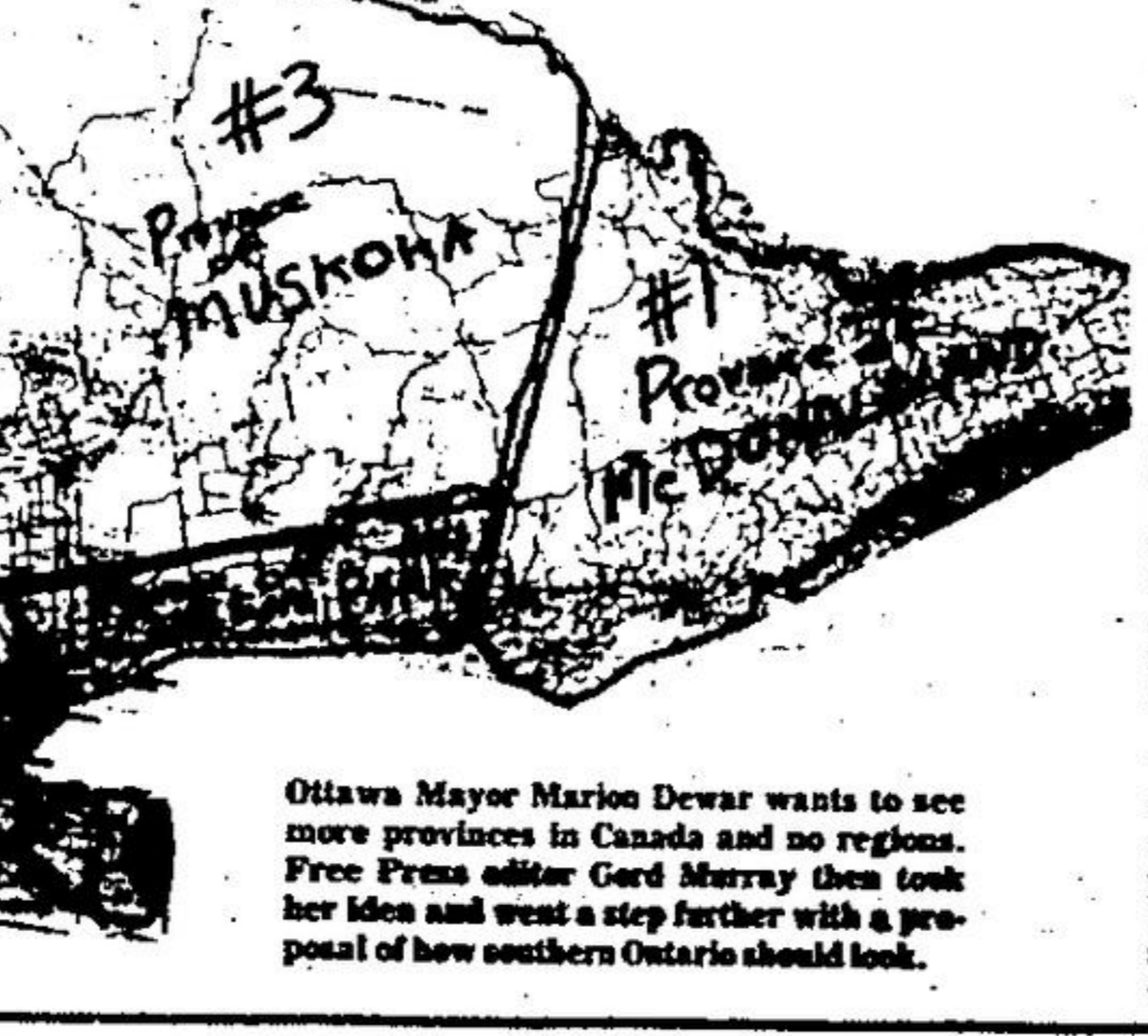
regional government or several regions. The article didn't explain what dividing boundaries she had in mind, so I've decided to come up with a few of my own. Let's start by saying there will be six new provinces made out of southern Ontario. Eastern Ontario from Trenton north to Pembroke and east to the Quebec border would be one province. The capital should be Kingston. Ottawa would be the logical choice, but no city should be inflicted with two sets of politicians and bureaucrats, especially one as lovely as Ottawa. Province number two? Well, let's make it a big chunk of Western Ontario. The eastern boundary will run from Port Burwell on Lake Erie north to Owen Sound and the Bruce. The western boundary will be water. Chatham's kind of in the middle between London and Windsor, so it can be the seat of government.

The third province will be the new northern Ontario, with kind of an all over the place boundary. On the east and west the boundaries will be the previously mentioned pair of new provinces. The southern boundary of province three will run on an upturning line west from roughly Arthur to Lindsay. The northern border would be just south of North Bay and Sudbury. Bracebridge is a nice spot and located about the middle, so it can be capital.

Province four will have Lake Ontario as a southern boundary, eastern Ontario on the east, new northern Ontario on the north and Elobicoke north to Caledon East as a western boundary. Since there's already lots of buildings there, this province can make its headquarters at Queen's Park in Toronto. Halton, Peel, Niagara and Hamilton-Wentworth can form the fifth province. We'll put the capital in Norval (you'll see why later on).

The sixth province will be what's left over, Haldimand and Norfolk; Brant; Waterloo and parts of Wellington County, including Guelph. We'll make Kitchener the capital there.

If you need a clearer explanation of the new boundaries see the map I doctored up below (this is the famous Ontario roadmap which doesn't show Acton but shows Halton Hills and its capital,



Ottawa Mayor Marion Dewar wants to see more provinces in Canada and no regions. Free Press editor Gord Murray then took her idea and went a step further with a proposal of how southern Ontario should look.

Our readers write

Most councillors are negative to nuclear weapons free zone

Dear Sir:
HAND, the Halton Hills anti-nuclear group met Monday evening at Trinity United Church Acton. In the future, regular meetings will be on the third Tuesday of each month alternating between Acton and Georgetown. The group finalized its "Guidelines"—a statement of aims and procedures. There was discussion about pursuing with the local council the idea of declaring Halton Hills a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone and having a public debate on the issue. A preliminary lobby revealed that at this time most of them (Russ Miller, Ross Knechtel, Dave

Whiting, Rick Bonnette) were negative to the idea and only Pam Sheldon would react positively. It was decided that public awareness about all the implications of the nuclear war threat would need to be raised as a first priority, before resuming the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone question.

HAND will continue its self-education focus and build up the resources (literature, speakers and AV materials) that would be required in mounting a public-awareness program.

The next meeting will be in Georgetown at St. John's United Church, Tuesday, February 21 at 7:30 p.m. The public is invited to see an AV (audio/video) presentation and participate in discussion.

Eldon Comfort

Promotions

Halton Regional Police have released the following list of transfers and promotions—
Const. Ken Cormier promoted to Sergeant and transferred from District 1 (Milton, Georgetown and Acton) to District 2 (Oakville) uniform; Const. Jim Drennan promoted to Sergeant and transferred to District 1 from District 2; Sergeant Peter Whittaker transferred from District 2 to District 1; Cont. S. McLaughlin transferred from District 1 to District 3 (Burlington); Sgt. Al McQueen from public relations to District 1 uniform; Const. Bill Gall promoted to sergeant and transferred to public relations; Staff-Sergeant Les Graham from District 1 CIB to Intelligence; Staff-Sergeant Roy Smith from District 1 uniform to District 1 CIB; Staff-Sergeant Roy Teague transferred from intelligence to District 1 uniform; and Const. Danny Farr transferred from District 1 to regional CIB.