



## Council judges merits of each noise problem

Some people are puzzled by council's decision last week to permit a music festival at Prospect Park one day this August, put on by the Acton Minor Hockey Association to raise funds for a tour of Norway for two teams this fall.

On the surface the decision may seem odd in light of the way council reacted to plans for a rock festival outside of town last fall or how it has dealt with the Yugoslav Centre this spring.

However, each case must be judged on its own merit. That's one of council's functions, and there are enormous differences between the AMHA project and either Farmhouse Productions (who brought the rock festival) and the Yugoslavs. Certainly both the music festival at Prospect and the Yugoslav picnics involve the use of loud speakers for music and admission is charged and beer is for sale.

But that's where the similarities end.

First of all the AMHA concert will be held in a public park and public arena, (both of which the Town will receive rent for and thus there's a benefit to taxpayers) not on private property.

Secondly, this is the first request of this kind from the AMHA. If they decided to do repeats in the future and there were noise problems and complaints from Fairy Lake neighbors, then we're confident council would act to solve the problem. The Yugoslavs might have an argument if they hadn't been granted numerous liquor permits in the past.

Lastly, this just one Sunday for the AMHA. While the Yugoslavs most recent-

ly requested just two picnic dates, in the past neighbors have been expected to put up with the noise almost every summer weekend.

There are big differences between the concert AMHA is planning and the music festival council got a court injunction to try and stop last September, only to see it moved to another rural location at the last minute.

In that case it wasn't local people, with any responsibility as community members, putting on the show. It was in aid of only private interests, not a community project.

And the biggest difference, the organizers of the concert in Prospect Park have been totally up front with local government and agencies about its plans. The other music festival was shrouded in secrecy and deception of the authorities was the obvious motive.

Lastly, the AMHA effort will produce positive economic benefits for the Town treasury, as well as the local business community.

The Yugoslavs picnics produce only marginal economic benefits for local business (ie. some tanks of gas) and just regular tax revenue from the property. It has also been a drain on the Town treasury with legal action and staff time consumed. The rock festival last fall only produced marginal economic benefit to the local economy too, no more Town revenue, and in fact was another expense to local taxpayers for police and Town staff time.

We believe after assessing the merits of each noise producing event, council has made the fair, wise and correct decisions.

## Bid for ambulance worth the effort

Acton's drive to get an ambulance service of its own seems to have met with an early demise.

Let's hope the same fate doesn't await efforts to bring VIA here.

It would seem to be hard to argue with the Province when their figures don't make a good case for Acton having its own ambulance. There just isn't the demand.

And while it would be nice to still have our own ambulance, maybe it isn't as necessary as it would have been before all this happened.

Councillor Dave Whiting said he's heard very favorable reports from people using the ambulance in recent months. People are being taken to the hospital of their choice.

He thinks, because of all

the discussion by councillors and citizens and reports in the press, that the province and ambulance workers have become more aware of Acton's feelings and are being more accommodating.

In other words, by spotlighting the issue and local concerns, much of the problem may already have been solved.

Also, Whiting sees service improvements looming on the horizon with the new central dispatch out of Mississauga.

If this all turns out to be true, that by raising the concerns they've at least partially been solved, then the effort has all been worthwhile for Acton and the early rebuff doesn't seem as painful.

## Thanks to rescuers

Dear Sir:  
I would like you to print the following letter of thanks. Thank you.

Yesterday, May 10, I was working in our garden when I had an accident with the roto-tiller. I was pinned under it and I needed help.

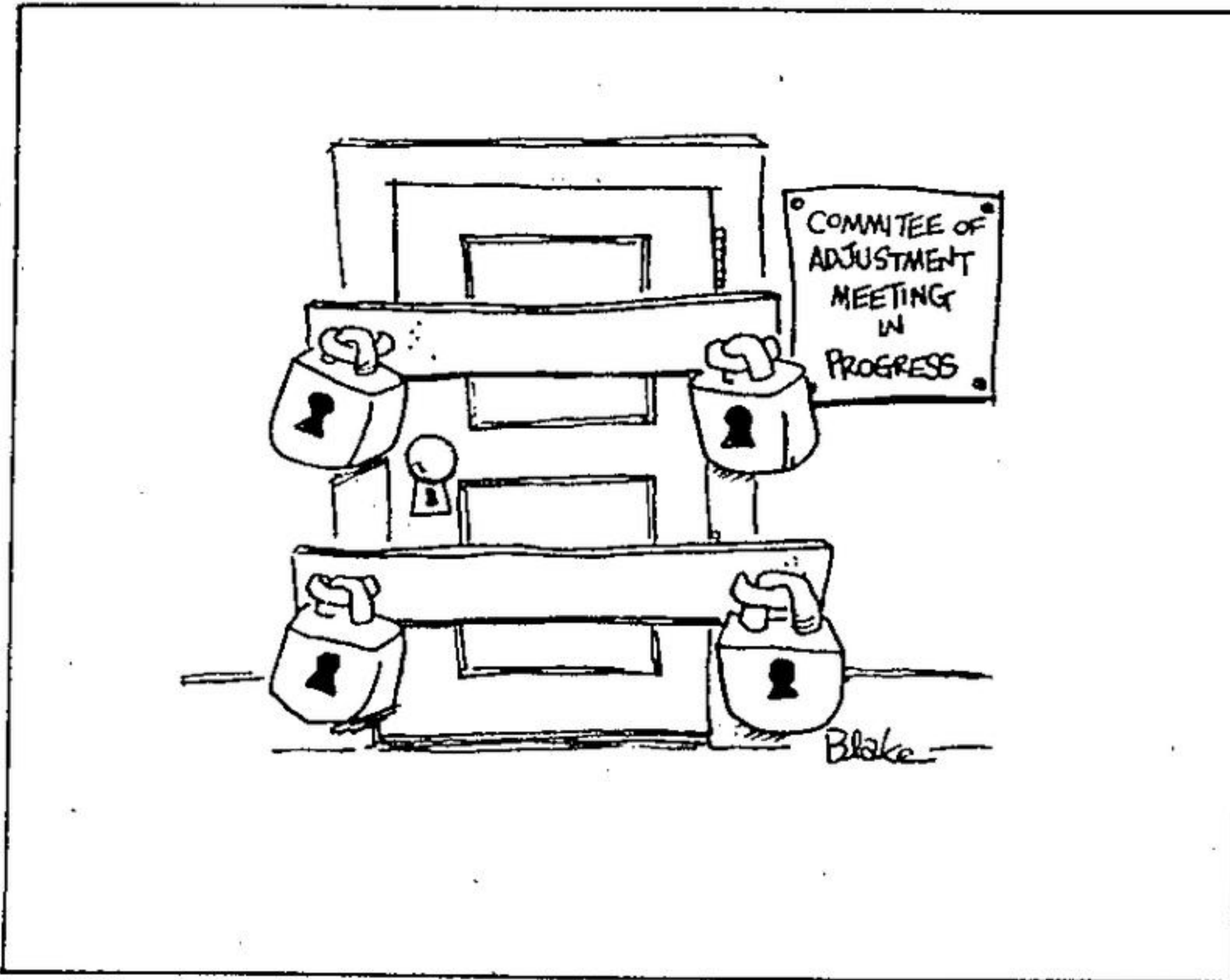
I called to a woman on the sidewalk and she called to another woman and they came to my rescue. I think they also stopped a car and I believe another woman must have called a fireman who came very quickly with another

man. All of these people were very helpful! One of the women phoned for help, one brought me a knife from the kitchen so I could cut my pants and free myself and the fireman drove me to the medical centre.

I don't know any of their names, but I want to thank them all! I have a very bruised leg, but no broken bones or even deep cuts.

It is reassuring to know that Acton has these kind of people.

Sincerely,  
Bruce A. Brillinger



## From the editor's desk

### Oates family pays and pays

by Gord Murray  
Free Press editor

It seems to me that the Oates family keeps paying, paying, paying. I'm speaking of course of Kevin Oates, widower of Colleen Oates, and their two children, Amy and Shane. To a lesser degree Kevin's parents have been paying and paying since that fateful October 1981 morning too.

Before that evening and morning nearly three years ago, Kevin and Colleen and their kids were a typical young family.

They were working towards a dream, a home of their own. Kevin and Colleen knew it would mean some tough years and sacrifice, but they were prepared to wait and work for their dream.

Some neighbors came by one late fall '81 evening, including a really new neighbor, Eric Howard Kellar. Most everyone was drinking, especially the newest Bower Ave. neighbor.

Eventually Kevin had to go to work in Bramalea and while he didn't like the idea, Kevin left his wife and family in the company of near strangers.

Later when the other guests left, the quite drunk Kellar apparently lingered behind.

He was to confess later that when he stayed behind he butchered Mrs. Oates. The rest of the story, his flight, eventual capture, trial, conviction, etc., are history.

Mrs. Oates' murder was a heinous crime. It struck at the heart of not just this young family, but this entire community.

Two weeks ago when Kevin and his lawyer went before the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board of Ontario they weren't looking for the goose that laid the golden egg, they were looking for justice and fairness.

They found neither.

Just because his partner in the dream is gone, doesn't mean the dream of a home of his own for his children is gone. Kevin clearly wants to continue on and provide the type of home for Amy and Shane he and Colleen were dreaming about when she died.

But, how can he? Will he ever get behind the economic eight ball?

After Colleen was killed, Kevin and the kids moved in with his parents in Erin.

His mother had to give up her job so she could stay home and care for her grandchildren. Kevin has been paying her \$100 a week.

Kevin and his mother went to the compensation board looking for something quite reasonable, help in paying for the child care. Not forever, just until Shane, now 3, reaches age 12, when he can come home from school and not require help and supervision. They wanted \$100 a week, for 52 weeks a year, for eight or nine years, as well as some funds to cover his mother's loss of pay for giving up her higher paying job with a union.

Manpower told Kevin it would cost him in pay and room and board nearly \$800 a month for a live in nanny, or for full-time, at-home, child care service.

The board rejected their request for child care funding, claiming it was Kevin's mother's obligation to care for her grandchildren, and also claiming Kevin would have had to pay to support his wife while she cared for the children, had she not been killed.

Well, first off, I doubt it would have cost Kevin anywhere near

\$800 a month to feed, cloth and house his young wife, or in this case live-in child care worker.

And what about loss of her potential of income for their dream in the years after both Amy and Shane were in school all day?

And does it really seem fair that Kevin's mother and father be penalized economically for having stepped into the breach after this tragedy?

No. Even the award they did receive, a \$2,000 trust fund for Amy for witnessing her mother's death, or at least some aspects of the crime, and a little over \$3,000 to cover the funeral and other incidental expenses derived from Mrs. Oates' untimely demise, seems inadequate.

Heck, the slightly over \$3,000 award barely covers the actual cost of the funeral, let alone the incidentals.

It does seem obvious that Kevin's correct when he says if his wife had lived after the vicious attack, if she'd been an invalid and vegetable for life, Kevin and the kids would be better off. Then he'd get some help with the child care costs. No, she wasn't left like that, she mercifully wasn't put through further pain. But her family has been.

If all this sounds a little mercenary or cold hearted, then I suggest you look at it in the following light.

As a new first time father, I shudder at the thought of what my life, including financial, would be like if the same thing suddenly happened to us, that heaven forbid, touch wood and all that, Helen were suddenly killed. I shudder at the thought, and after just a month what do I know about child rearing or costs, anyway?

The purpose of this board, as I see it, is to compensate citizens for the injuries inflicted upon them by one of society's bad apples.

Now it seems to me that the degree of society's responsibility for the incident should be a factor to be considered.

The Province of Ontario, it would seem to me, is extremely responsible in this case.

At the trial it was made clear that Kellar was quite deranged. He had been looking for help for some time. The government should have known this kind of result was eventually coming from his track record of sexual violence.

That night in October in 1981 he wasn't a complete stranger, he had been seen around the neighborhood visiting his sister several times in the previous months on weekends.

When he was released that fall from the Brampton Correctional Centre, he had served about half of his sentence for an almost as heinous, though not fatal, sex crime. For my money the sentence was too light for the crime, as it was, let alone his only serving half of it.

It may be oversimplification, but it seems to me that the Province of Ontario and probably the federal government too, (I'm not sure where the jurisdictions begin and end in this case, it would likely take a month to find out, and besides who cares which level is at fault and to what degree) put a time bomb on Bower Ave. just as surely as if they'd picked out the town, street, house and victim for him.

The man had given enough warnings that he didn't belong out with society, yet the powers that be in our penal system had just kept foisting him back up on us.



by Gord Murray  
Free Press editor

So there he was, sitting there on Bower Ave. ticking away (knowing alcohol did strange things to him). I can possibly see such unfairness from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, they have to be careful with the taxpayers' money, if this had been the result of action by someone out of the blue.

But since it was virtually inevitable that such a tragedy should happen because Kellar needed help but was out among us, and he had just been released from jail, it seems society owes Kevin, Amy and Shane more. Society was asking for this to happen and society's agents (the government) permitted it, so the financial penalty should be steeper.

There's no compensation for the Oates family for pain and suffering which just never ends.

What price a human life, anyway?

## Pam makes good points

I had a lengthy and interesting chat with Councillor Pam Sheldon after the Tuitman's grand opening Friday afternoon.

We were talking about our editorial of last week, and while she didn't succeed in changing my view entirely, and I certainly didn't succeed in changing her view either, her comments do deserve public airing.

In the editorial, we mildly chastized the council for rapping the Committee of Adjustment for meeting in-camera, or behind closed doors. They meet in-camera to discuss minor variance applications, before going public to render decisions. However, all of council's working committees aren't public.

We mentioned Councillors Sheldon and Mike Armstrong in particular since they've been the most vocal on the issue, though council by resolution voiced its displeasure with the Committee of Adjustment practise.

We suggested this was a bit of the pot calling the kettle black, that council's house isn't completely in order on the very point on which it wants another house cleaned up.

It would have been nicer if the observation had been completely our own, we acknowledged that this inconsistency was discovered by a small group of councillors who have been talking off the record in recent weeks about lobbying to open up council committees, particularly the budget and property committees, to the public.

We wish them luck in their efforts, and we are well aware the idea was planted on us by the councillors so we could float the trial balloon for them, something we were happy to do.

With region and school board budget committee meetings open to the press and public, we've long wondered why they aren't here and quietly urged the policy be

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## Back issues

10 years ago

May 15, 1974

The 50 outside workers of Halton Hills voted 80 per cent in favor of a strike at Tuesday's meeting of Local 73, Canadian Union of Public Service Employees. The union and the town were five cents apart and neither budged from their position. The town offered \$4.01 an hour for laborers while the union demanded \$4.06 an hour.

Gino Civiero and Paul Nielson of Acton hope to build a mixture of single family homes, semi-detached and townhouses on 12.4 acres of land bounded by Wallace St., Main St. and the CNR tracks, in Acton.

Taking a short cut against orders did not pay off for two Acton Scouts, John Nessel and Dave Haverly who were lost in the Belfountain area and had to spend Saturday night camped out in the pouring rain while Peel Regional Police and scout leaders looked for them.

20 years ago

May 14, 1964

As far as Canada's national flag is concerned Acton councillors are still doubtful. Tuesday evening a resolution to support the Red Ensign went down to defeat with three voting in favor of the motion, four voting against and one member undecided.

Donald Claude Cook, 22, will receive his bachelor of science degree in chemical engineering from Queen's University, Kingston on Saturday.

New teachers for September in Acton are: Robert Little, Ross Farrelly, Mary Golem and Robert Govenlock; M.Z. Bennett, Donna Farrelly, Stewart Cowan and Edgar Leatherland. Mrs. Ena Gibson will teach two full days a week at Robert Little and Arlene Bruce for 3½ days at M.Z. Bennett.

Glen White, 50 John St. will soon be sporting a brand new vehicle, a Honda Motor scooter which he won in a Pepsi Cola contest.

50 years ago

May 10, 1934

Residents of Park and Lake Ave. possibly wondered what was transpiring last evening when Acton Citizens' Band paraded from the band hall in the park to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Landsborough. Even bandsman Landsborough wondered what it was all about when the boys surrounded him at the home playing "Hall, Hall, The gang's All Here." But the explanation was forthcoming. It was a surprise party to pay tribute to Mr. and Mrs. Landsborough on their recent marriage.

A very good crowd attended the euchre and dance last Friday evening sponsored by the Acton Citizens Band. Prizes for cards were won by Mrs. Radcliffe and Mrs. Papillon and Mr. Robert Marshall and Mr. J.M. Harris.

Rev. and Mrs. H. Brillinger moved on Tuesday to Acton from Wainfleet and are now getting settled in St. Alban's rectory.

75 years ago

May 13, 1909

The Acton Amusement Co., which is composed of Morris Saxe, Acton and Able Maldaiver, of Bramford, are arranging to open a permanent five cent moving picture show in the building west of Johnstone hardware store, about the 24th of May.

Capt. Gamble reports that recruits are enlisting in Company F more freely than for years and the prospects are that he will have a full company of picked men at camp in June.

Mr. John Barr has sold his property at the foot of Church Street to Neil Patterson and has purchased the house and lot of William Ritchie on Church Street near the Beardmore stream.

Lorne S. Erwin has purchased from I. Clavel the Acton Laundry. Mr. Clavel is to remain with him for a month.

100 years ago

May 15, 1884

The funeral of Mrs. Donald Mann on Monday and Miss Julia Moore yesterday afternoon were two of the most largely attended that have ever taken place in Acton.

On Monday morning Briggs, 14-year-old son of Mr. Edward Nicklin met with an accident by which his collarbone was dislocated.

The work on the new factory of the Canada Glove Works is progressing. The brick work on the first two stories is almost complete.

Guelph Street, between Mill street and Bower Avenue has been properly turnpiked and graded.

Three tramps lodged in the corporation boardinghouse on Tuesday night.