

COMMENT

The way we were



All aboard!

The railway line serving Acton dates back to 1856, with the Grand Trunk Station, as shown, constructed in 1908. CN closed the train station in the late 1960s, however, the stop continued to serve VIA Rail and GO trains until the early 1990s. With the return of the trains in 2013, intermittent GO service to Acton appears here to stay.

Text courtesy of Heritage Halton Hills; Photo courtesy of Esquesing Historical Society

From our readers



SPELLING LESSON REQUIRED

Someone could definitely use some tips on spelling Nassawagaweya. Patrick Brooker snapped this photo of the boundary signpost. He wonders, "who is responsible since it's on the town boundary of Milton and Halton Hills..."

Have a photo you want to share? Email — with details — to cgamble@theifp.ca

Grandsons and concrete— an interesting mix

All my life, I've had a love-hate relationship with concrete.

I hate the work involved in building and preparing the forms, calculating the amount of concrete needed and then, when the truck arrives, pouring it into a wheel barrow, and wheeling it to the forms.

But on the love side of the equation— man, when it's set, it's permanent.

Over the years, the barn has had numerous concrete projects, the most recent project was pouring the stable gutters level, to make it possible for the skid steer loader to run around in the barn, and not bounce over the gutters when doing so.

These days, most concrete jobs are patch jobs— usually to fill a hole in the floor that some ambitious rat has created. I'd come down to the barn in the morning to find another spot were they'd picked out the mortar, and dug out the dirt under the floor.

It sounds like a simple fix— mix a little cement, and patch the hole— right?

Well, it ain't. Rats are ambitious, and even if I patch the hole in the morning, they'll dig out the concrete from below, before it completely sets.

Last week, I had my two oldest grandsons, Andrew, 10, and Adam, 7, with me for the day.

After the required 'Grandpa Breakfast' (refer to last week's column), the boys and I headed to the barn, to do chores.

Whenever I have them for the day, I usually plan some project, so they have a feel of living on a farm—and I get some free labour.

This day, it was concrete.

Andrew is the one who has to figure out how something works. I recently purchased a cement mixer, so he was quite excited to see it work.

Adam, on the other hand, wasn't the least bit interested, except to annoy his older brother.

I mixed the first load and we poured a small load into the wheel barrow, so Andrew could try moving it. He did okay, and Adam figured it was his turn.

If you've worked with cement in a wheel bar-

row— well it's heavy.

And a seven-year-old is a bit shy on strength.

Adam quickly lost interest— back to tormenting his brother.

Addressing the rat digging out the concrete before it's set issue, I cut out some welded half inch screening and laid it into the hole, then poured concrete over it. The rats couldn't get through the screen, so it was a reinforced patch.

Andrew was totally impressed.

"Is this the last one?" whined Adam.

"Nope, it's the first one," I said, "There's about five more to do."

Adam wasn't impressed.

Next thing, Adam decided to 'play' with the cement mixer.

A mixer has exposed bevel gears, the right size to nip off a seven-year-old's finger if it should be placed in the wrong spot.

"It's not a toy Adam," I said, "Leave it alone."

Next time Adam was pulling the belt drive with his hands.

"Adam!"

He backed off.

Then the final one— Andrew was about to dump some of the premixed cement into the drum, and Adam headed to the plug, to start up the mixer.

He thought it would be funny.

Grandpa wasn't so nice this time and Adam knew it— next time he'd be on the bench until we finished the entire cement job.

Message received.

I like to make sure there's a reward for the effort they've expended, and typical of all cement jobs in the barn, the boys got to mark their names in the wet concrete. That was the highlight of their day— and I told them their names would be in the concrete in the barn, so long as the barn remained.

They were pretty impressed.

And now, when they walk into the barn, they can point to the patches, and proudly say,

"I helped Grandpa with that!"



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