

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Growth or not?

The day after Spring officially arrived The New Tanner had a headline questioning whether Acton was on the threshold of a boom.

There had been a plethora of development news, spurred not only by the news that Magna International was very interested in locating a plant in Acton but from the large number of inquiries the town's economic development officer, Allen O'Neill, had received from large and small industries interested in locating in Acton.

Also, ABT Co. announced they were considering building a 188,000 square foot expansion to their Acton plant on Main St. N. Following this, old Hide House president Steve Dawkins outlined ambitious multi-million dollar plans to redevelop vacant land on both sides of Eastern Avenue.

Mr. Dawkins noted the olde Hide House has attracted about four million visitors since it was opened 21 years ago. He visualized the existing store, once the cutsole and warehouse for Beardmore and Co., as an anchor to 35,000-square feet of retail/commercial space in two buildings.

Last week IGA made their plans public to locate a large new supermarket off Highway 7 in the east-end of Acton. It's the start up of a large real estate development in the east-end of town which is fast becoming the commercial centre of Acton, much to the annoyance of some who live in the west end.

Indeed, the complexion of the downtown has been gradually changing over the years. There are still a number of excellent businesses anchoring the downtown, but the lack of space necessary for larger businesses to expand has hampered growth. It has also been inhibited by the width of Mill St. which early Acton settlers never envisioned as a commercial street. The fact that the railway station was in the east-end contributed to commercial growth on Mill St. since transportation was a vital factor in the early days.

It has become so again as traffic downtown continues to escalate. Large trucks are becoming more frequent and bumper-to-bumper traffic at rush hours extends beyond the town's borders. One day - hopefully soon - traffic will have a bypass alternative.

Not everyone is happy with the rapid growth, preferring that Acton remain a smaller town and avoid the excesses in larger centres. However, let's face it. If we want the facilities and shopping available in other larger centres, we need expansion.

Development officer O'Neill perhaps makes the case best for growth. He told members of the BIA that because Acton doesn't have many large industrial sites and there are constraints on the sewage system, Actonians can have the best of both worlds.

"You're going to get very, very healthy economic growth, very, very healthy job creation, and yet you're going to be able to maintain a relatively small town atmosphere."

In any event this corner, like many others, will wait until all this growth materializes before we get too excited. Pardon the cynicism but too often we have seen grand plans become fact on a much smaller scale.



The real meaning of Easter

Although Christmas is celebrated with more display and sentiment this is the most important time of the year for Christians. It's Holy Week when the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is commemorated around the world, the central core of Christianity.

Local churches will be crowded on Easter Sunday as the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is celebrated. But not before the solemnity of Good Friday when Jesus' death on a cross is remembered.

In Acton, a Parade of the Cross from Churchill Community Church will start at 6 p.m. on Good Friday and travel from there to Trinity United Church for an ecumenical service at 7:30 p.m. People may join in either at Churchill or anywhere along the walk to the service.

Easter also marks the end of Lent, the 40 days of penitence which pave the way for the feast which marks Christ's resurrection on Sunday. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to his disciples. The empty tomb and the vacant cross have become symbols of a faith that has exerted a tremendous influence on events over the last 20 centuries.

The meaning of Easter, an Anglo-Saxon derivative of the Teutonic "Eastre," an ancient German goddess of light, really has changed since the early days when it cel-

ebrated the rites of spring. Early Christians knew Easter as "Paschal time," derived from the Hebrew Passover. Obviously the German goddess has nothing to do with the Christian celebration which changes from year to year.

Easter in the western tradition, always falls on the first Sunday after the full moon after the 21st of March. Orthodox Christians and those who follow the Julian calendar celebrate Easter two weeks later.

A controversy about the right time to celebrate Easter was recorded by Eusebius, a Christian writer in the year 190 AD. Diversity already existed among Christians some 70 years before he wrote. Some followed the Jewish date of Passover but Pope St. Victor and the bishops of the Church wanted the feast on Sunday, the day Christ rose up from the dead. It's the reason, incidentally, why we still keep Sunday as a holiday (holy day).

Belief in the Resurrection has been a stumbling block for many people who seek the truth, not just in this skeptical age, but through the centuries. Often the daily secular press will give much publicity to those who deny the physical resurrection of Jesus. They usually pay scant heed to those who martial evidence to defend it.

Belief in the actual resurrection

was certainly basic for the early Christians, those who knew Christ. It was certainly essential to Paul, "apostle to the Gentiles." He wrote: "If there is no resurrection from the dead then even Christ did not rise; and if Christ did not rise, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith also in vain." He believed strongly in the faith and was beheaded by the Romans.

It so happens that Easter coincides with the arrival of Spring in this country when nature becomes alive again, when everything that looks dead comes to new life. It also comes at a time when people of Jewish faith celebrate Passover.

Like Christmas, people have clouded over the true meaning of the holy day (holiday) with symbols like the Easter bunny, decorated eggs and certain foods prepared only for Easter. Often they have religious significance such as for hot cross buns, which represent the fruits of the earth.

These myths are harmless in themselves and add to the celebration of Easter, especially for the little children. But Christians are not celebrating the arrival of the Easter bunny, cute little fellow he is, nor the rites of Spring when they throng churches on Good Friday and Sunday. They are celebrating the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Acton Blood Donor Clinic to be held on April 12th

Acton will be holding its Canadian Blood Services Blood Donor Clinic on Thursday, April 12, 2001 at the Acton Legion Hall. Clinic hours will be from 4:00 - 8:00 pm. Donors are asked to bring their donor card or photo ID. Eligible donors are between the ages of 17 and 70.

Please take an hour to give the gift of life. For more information, please call Julia at 853-4896.

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