

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

'Shocking' power

Several local residents have expressed shock at the amount of the electric bill they received from Halton Hills Hydro this month. In many cases the amounts were considerably higher than the same period last year, with just four more days of use.

The concern is real. Costs have increased steeply under the new system. It's all itemized on the hydro bill, unlike the method used before May of this year when all electric charges were lumped into one sum.

In this scribbler's case the September charge for power in 2001 was \$129.47 for 1,390-kilowatt hours (kWh). This year's September statement is asking \$180.69 for 1,470 kWh - an increase of \$50.00 for 80 more kWh.

Scrutiny of the statement shows there's \$10.29 going to the debt retirement of the former Ontario Hydro. There's another \$5.55 charge simply listed as "losses." The Ontario Energy Board has approved this charge, which accounts for the lost consumption between the supply point for Halton Hills Hydro and the customer's meter. Actually, it means you are paying for power you never received.

Then, of course, there's the distribution charge of \$13.82 for the cost to maintain the distribution system such as billing systems, customer care and administration. Then there's a monthly service charge of \$27.61 for the distribution system in Halton Hills. It's based on your monthly consumption.

Don't quit yet. Next comes the Market Service Cost of \$9.11 which is required to maintain the Independent Market Operator controlled grid. Then there's the \$8.38 Transmission Network charge for the high voltage transmission system that brings electricity from the generators to the municipal boundaries. Ah, but you're not finished. Then there's a \$7.35 charge for connecting Halton Hills Hydro to the high voltage system.

Finally, there's the actual cost of the power, which is only \$98.05 just over half the size of the total bill. To add insult to injury they added another 53 cents for an SSS charge to bring the total to \$180.69.

This doesn't include the \$14.70 for renting a 40-gallon water heater or the GST of \$13.68, which the federal government requires.

All the changes at Ontario Hydro were made under the inference the new system would be considerably cheaper for consumers. Judging by September's statement it is considerably higher. Some people on fixed incomes will find the increased costs prohibitive. Even if they cut down on their use all the extra charges associated with the use of power is going to keep their bills much higher than they were before Ontario Hydro was broken up.

It's obvious we've been sold a bill of goods.



Another great Fair

Congratulations to president, Hank Walsma, the executive and all the volunteers who made Acton's 89th annual Fall Fair another success.

The crowd was down from last year and gate receipts took a tumble, but it didn't deter from the Fair's appeal to all ages.

One lady passing through the main gates, towing two tired small children, said it all, "thank you for a great time."

One could see it in the sparkle of the eyes of children as they glimpsed the midway for the first time, or the pride on the faces of those going home with trophies and prizes for the many events which filled three days of fun and competition.

There was some confusion over the Fair dates, since it came a week earlier than usual, and the threat of rain perhaps kept people away, but it is all a challenge to the executive and board to make next year's bigger and better.



4-H SHOWMANSHIP: Members of 4-H show their Holstein heifers at the Acton Fall Fair cattle show on Sunday afternoon while the judge inspects their animals. Jessica Lutz and Christine Cunningham were one, two in the class which drew seven entrants. - Submitted photo

Dreaming of wearing a tiara!

When I was five, I had dreams of becoming Miss America. Or maybe when I was five I wanted to become Miss U.S.A. or Miss Canada? Or was it one day I would become Miss Acton Fall Fair?

Actually, when I was five my heart burned with a passion to be a famous singer. The reality was my spotlight only dimly shone once as I danced during a Joyce Carpenter tap dance recital. I, with my favourite red dress with its white collar and a rainbow of fish in the pattern, stumbled through the three little fishes song and routine.

However, the pursuit of the crown has always intrigued me. I find myself in a hypocritical state about the whole thing. Although people judging other people is done daily, what is the need for a young woman to parade around on a stage being judged on her looks and hoping they also notice her intelligence?

On the other hand, after hearing the search for Miss Acton contestants last year had stooped to scouring the aisles of the old IGA store I felt the newspaper needed to 'pump up' interest in the contest a little earlier.

Last week as I looked over the double page of former Miss Acton Fall Fair photos my thoughts went to the memories of what I like to think of as the glory days of the pageant. It was the late 1970s. The gals were always the high school

By
Angela Tyler



seniors with big 70s hair and shiny disco dresses. Being so young and looking at the contestants on the stage was like waiting to see a super model.

Friday night was the night to go to the fair. The reason you went was to see Miss Acton. Before the contest you could only speculate who would enter and who would win. Plans with family and friends revolved around the pageant. The girls would show off their numerous outfit changes and hundreds of people would roar with applause after each of their introductions.

The only thing better than Miss Acton was going to the CNE. In the coliseum, my family and I would go to the display case to find our Queen's picture. As we looked at the other pictures, we would point to ours with pride.

The competition has changed now. Perhaps a result of not having a building. However, the one factor that hasn't changed is the Saturday morning buzz around town wondering who had become our Queen.

The answer was soon to be revealed during the parade. There she was... the girl who dreamed of

wearing the crown... and her royal court. With their toothy smiles and sparkling eyes, they waved the royal wave to the crowds and to the little girls who would be dreaming the same dream after a day of carnival rides and cotton candy.

I had noticed two things. First, seeing the pictures I counted there were more brunette winners than blondes. As well, the crown for Miss Acton had changed numerous times throughout the years. At first I thought perhaps a former Queen had kept a crown, but later disappointingly discovered it was plastic and given to each winner. The cape, on the other hand, they had to relinquish.

My mission while taking pictures was to find Miss Acton. I wanted to know more about the crown. Moreover, I wanted to find out what the Queen did with her crown that night.

Success was found near the super dog's show where I took the trio's picture. As I told them I wanted to ask a few questions, the princess's looked distraught and the queen proclaimed they could not speak without a committee member present. I pleaded my case; all I wanted was to know about the crown, and with reluctance they spoke to me quickly while looking around hoping not be caught.

I wasn't sure what I was looking for about the crown, but in a way I

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