SPECIAL EDITION

The Acton Free Press

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Will Open $1,125,000 County Building Saturday

When Warden C. A. Martin snips the pretty red ribbon to officially open the new Halton County Administration Building on Saturday afternoon, the event will mark the climax of a two year struggle to provide Halton with modern administration facilities.

At least two years in the planning and construction stages, the $1,125,000 building was first used just over two weeks ago when the administration and registry office staffs moved in from the century-old court house on Brown St., Milton. Court facilities were first in use in the new building last week.

Best of Five Sites

The site, the former Ted Harrop property on the Base Line north-east of Milton, was felt the best of five studied by the property committee. It comprises 10 acres.

Following several earlier drafts of plans, the 1961 county council headed by Warden F. A. Phillips of Trafalgar instructed architect W. H. Armstrong to proceed with a building estimated to cost $924,000. Prior to this the councillors had been shocked at a $1,300,000 estimate for a fancier building.

A fancy entrance was soon shaved off the building plans, to give an additional 900 square feet of floor space and cut down on elaborate construction costs. Oakville Deputy-Reeve Herb Merry objected strenuously — he's still objecting — to the lack of a front door, for he feels the removal of a front entrance destroyed the appearance of the building. Instead of a front entrance, two side entrances are used, one from each of the twin parking lots.

Order Elevator

Later that year it was decided an elevator was needed, so one was ordered, at a cost of $31,000. Deputy-Reeve Merry objected again, for you have to walk up or down about a dozen steps to ride the elevator up one or two floors.

November 10, 1961, the Ontario Municipal Board approved the county's $1,000,000 debenture issue, and three days later, Tope Construction Co. of Hamilton moved in with men and machines to begin the big task. On November 16, county officials gathered in the rain, fog and mud to dig the first sod, an honor bestowed on the new Judge G. E. Elliott, the property committee chairman Reeve J. Hargrave of Acton, and 1961 Warden F. A. Phillips.

Hard to See

The photographers could hardly see the gleaming shovel through the fog.

Construction progressed on schedule, and on March 12, 1962, the Warden, Wilfrid Bird of Esquesing, laid the cornerstone of the building. Once again the weather was uncooperative, and the skies poured forth rain as the ceremony began.

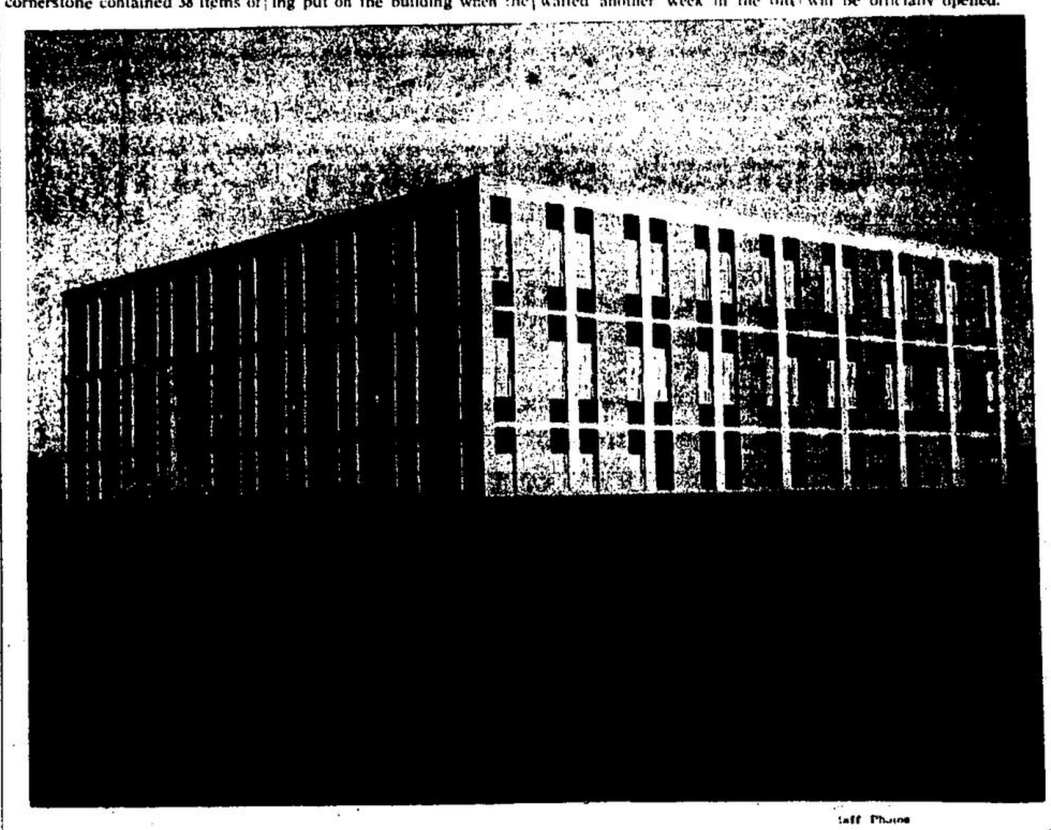
Guests that day trod lightly through four inches of mud to get to the corner of the building, and raincoats, rubber boots and old hats ruined the looks of officials in the official photographs of the day. The copper box inside the cornerstone contained 38 items of valuable historical interest.

Delay for Courts

Although councillors hoped to be using the building in the early fall, construction was delayed and finishing touches were still being put on the building when the first of the staff moved in October 29. There was a delay in moving the court facilities from the old Brown St. court house, because the arrangements did not suit the court officials, so they waited another week in the old building while carpenters and furniture suppliers made hurried changes in layouts and colors. Last week the move was completed.

And this weekend the building will be officially opened.

Halton's First Court House



Staff Photo

HALTONS NEW ADMINISTRATION BUILDING located on the Base Line in Esquesing Township just outside Milton's north-east boundary is scheduled for an official opening on Saturday afternoon, and the public has been invited to open house there from 2.30 to 5 p.m. on Sunday. The building, which was first occupied by the county's administration, registry office and court house staffs on October 29, cost an estimated $1,125,000

Old, New County Crests Pose Problem of Origin

Mystery Crest . . . Original Crest

Halton County is using a new seal and crest these days, even though it is really older than the county.

The strange case came to light last year when county clerk Garfield Bown noticed that the crest the county was using wasn't the same crest used on the first county by-law. This first by-law was passed by the provisional council that preceded Halton's first county council back in 1854.

On searching the records he couldn't ascertain just when or why the crest was changed and nobody else can recall a reason either. So with councils permission, engravings and seals of the original crest were made and have been put back in use.

The crest features a shield divided into four sections and each of the sections contains an emblem representing — it is believed — to a separate township. In the top left corner is an agricultural harrow, representing Nassaga weya. Down in the lower right corner is a sailing schooner which probably represents the Chisholm family which first settled in Trafalgar Township. The other two symbols are still a mystery, but it is believed the walking plow in the lower left corner stands for Nelson Township's agriculture, and the hog in the upper right corner must represent Esquesing Township's livestock farming.

(One strange note — the hog has a ring through its back!) There seems to be no explanation.

Oak Leaf Cluster

Around the shield is an oak leaf cluster, probably representing the White Oaks for which the southern portion of the county is known. Above the crest stands a sheaf of wheat, probably representing the agricultural aspects of Halton's early days. The words "Corporation of the County of Halton" are strung around the shield.

The mysterious crest which somehow crept into the picture sometime in the intervening years featured some different symbols, however it carried the same Latin motto.

Different Symbols

In the upper left corner is a Maple Leaf, upper right has a sheaf of wheat, lower left has the walking plow, and lower right has a large Oak tree. Above the shield is an animal that looks like a lion carrying a broken spear. Its origin and meaning are still a mystery.

At the end of 1960, copies of the new (?) crest were presented to past county councillors and these are now being worn on navy blue blazers by many of the councillors.

The Halton County Crest

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED

TO ATTEND

OPEN HOUSE

AT THE NEW

HALTON COUNTY

ADMINISTRATION

BUILDING

BASE LINE, MILTON

ON

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1962

2.30 P.M. TO 5.00 P.M.

40 Work There

List County Officials, Staff

A staff of 40 is employed in Halton's new administration building.

In the clerk's administration office are Clerk Administrator Garfield Brown, deputy clerk James C. Andrews, secretaries Mrs. Kay Loomis and Mrs. Betty Stearns, switchboard operator Mrs. Norma McKercher, relief switchboard and office help Mrs. Greta Thompson and part time office help Mrs. Betty Golden.

The Sheriff's office includes Sheriff Andrew W. Frank, deputy sheriff Gilbert McDowell, Mrs. Vera Hanson, Mrs. Joan Harris and part time helper Mrs. Mabel Greenhead.

Engineering

The engineering department includes engineer and road superintendent Roy F. Smith and bookkeeper Mrs. A. Hooker.

Treasurer Miss Margaret Mavrolias, Mrs. B. Harris as chief assistant.

In the County Court Clerks office are clerk and registrar Gordon Madill, deputy clerk and registrars Robert Shourd and Mrs. Marg Gilbert, Mrs. R. Berry and Miss Marlene Mason.

Crown Attorney

Crown Attorney P. K. McEwen and secretary Mrs. Dorothy Burns occupy the crown attorney's office.

Assessor is J. Ford Rogers and with him in the department are assessment clerk Wayne Hardy and clerk Mrs. A. Jackson.

Registrar Office, Registrar of Deeds and Master of Local Titles is William Mattocks. Deputy Registrars are Miss Eva Houston, Mrs. Jean Martin, Miss Ariel Mitchell and clerks Alex Howitt, Mrs. Olive Massey and Miss Lorna Grasson.

Judge G. E. Elliott and his secretary Mrs. Nora Sargent work in the third floor of the building. It is expected a second county judge will be appointed in the near future to ease the load of work.

Lloyd Young is building superintendent and his maintenance and housecleaning staff assistants are William Tipping, Maurice Coulson, Robert Brown, Mrs. Rosa Vascotta and Miss Geraldine Lee. Part time helpers are Miss Barbara Lemon and Mrs. E. Common. Neil McCallum works as watchman part time.

Dr. of Township of Nelson, [illegible] is part of Burling[illegible] one of the richest parts of Halton settled.

An 1817 report indicates that there were 44 inhabited houses, 176 persons, two grist mills and [illegible] in Halton County.

Halton County is geographically the second smallest county in the province of Ontario. It is also one of the most important. Strategically located at the western end of Lake Ontario its modern waterways highways and railways are the main arteries supplying the metropolitan areas of the province.

George E. Elliott — Halton County Judge