

Town's centennial project, library opens to public next week



Facilities, new hours, regional group will serve education, culture, pleasure

Next week Actonians will have their first look at the town's ambitious centennial project — our long-needed library. Three years ago planning began; government approval was received and government grants assured. The first sod was turned by Mrs. R. P. Watson, librarian for over 40 years.

Last Friday Mrs. Watson and her two regular assistants, Miss Madge Chapman and Miss Esther Taylor, served the public for the last time in the cramped quarters of the room at the Y.M.C.A. This week the books are being moved to the roomy, bright \$76,000 building in a shady corner of the Robert Little school grounds. Next week, business will resume in the new location with greatly expanded facilities and far longer hours.

Centennial project committee,

council, library board and librarians have followed to its culmination this project, chosen after a public meeting for the hearing of presentations.

With increasing pride the citizens will see for the first time what their representatives have been creating, with such vision and enthusiasm.

The library will become a true community centre of culture and education, created for adults as well as children. As well as becoming a more valued educational asset, it will increase pleasure in reading and learning, and will provide a cosy meeting room.

With South Central Regional Library Services, supervised by a new fieldman, Actonians will have available to them a much greater inventory of books.

Improvements will no doubt re-

sult in immediate boost in town memberships, and will also increase the area from which rural and village readers will come here.

The official opening will be early in June, but the Free Press has chosen to issue a special four-page section today, to prepare the 800 library members for what they will see and to enthrone non-members.

The history of the library, accounts of changes over the years, how the building was conceived and financed and other interesting articles appear in this four page section. May we suggest that you slip it out of your copy of the paper today, and save it?

The opening of our town's centennial building is a milestone in our history.

Needed project fired imagination Want to help? happy conclusion in reach gifts cited

Commenting on the town's centennial project, Mayor Les Duby says, "To begin with, we must remember all of the people, who in their wisdom, helped us to determine which of five proposed projects would be our accepted Centennial Year commitment.

"The obvious need for improved library facilities, and a desire to provide a better service to our people, fired the imagination of all members of the Library Board, Council and the resulting Centennial Project Committee to carry through our plans to the happy conclusion that will be realized on March 6, when we open the new building to serve the general public, and will be even more significant when we hold our official opening on June 3 to commemorate confederation here in Acton.

"For many years the Library Board has been held to a low rung on the municipal financial ladder with budgets around \$3,000. It will now require more like \$13,000 annually for total and efficient operation.

"We neglect to realize that a local library service is a most important phase in our municipal overall education program. Today, more and more adults realize the need to keep on learning, as you can only do through books, and more books.

"Pre-school children can also be

better prepared to begin school, when parents select the type of books available today for this group of youngsters. With our new facilities it will be possible to hold story hours for pre-schoolers.

"It was with all earnestness and sincerity, and a realization of the urgency, that your council has supported this project which will become more and more a focal point of interest and importance.

"Today, more than ever, reading and intensive study are vitally important and necessary. There is a tremendous benefit and advantage to be derived by all people (young and old), from the reading of good books, periodicals, articles and the like.

"And from the writings of Thoreau: 'Read the best books first, or you may not have a chance to read them at all'.

"Gifts have already started to come in by way of specific donations to the library. Many more have been offered and we have a list of things prepared, that will be welcomed and appreciated if others are so inclined to contribute.

"The construction of our Library (as was the case with the Hydro Commission building), has been one of the most efficient building programs carried out in Acton, from the standpoint of progress and completion dates."

- Gifts for the town's centennial project will be gratefully received, board members have announced.
- Already they have been given an Ontario flag from the Orange Lodge and flag and picture of the Queen from the Lakeside chapter of the I.O. D.E. George Harrap will be presenting a Gideon Bible.
- A list has been compiled of possible donations. These items would be ordered, in most cases, by the board for conformity or to avoid duplication.
- four easy armchairs
 - sets of reference books
 - coat rack for downstairs
 - typewriter
 - 30-cup coffee urn
 - movie projector and slide projector
 - records player and records
 - vacuum cleaner
 - filing cabinets
 - cups, saucers and plates for the servery
 - oil paintings (of Canadian scenes)
 - book cart
 - ash trays for assembly room
 - entrance plaque
 - lawn mower
 - bushes for lawn.
- MEET AT LIBRARY**
The library board will meet from now on in the downstairs assembly room of the library. A board room table has been ordered.

The Acton Free Press.

Ninety-Second Year.—No. 35. ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 1967. Second Section.

New library as centennial project first recommended three years ago

It was exactly three years ago — in March, 1964 — that the library board sent notice to council it would like to send a delegation to propose a new library as the town's centennial project. This was the first group in town to heed the government's call — and offers of money — and make a firm proposal here.

They reported then a steadily increasing circulation and the "urgent need" for more space.

Within a few months, a University of Toronto graduate school study was undertaken on Acton which seconded their statement of the town's need.

In June, 1964, a public meeting was called to discuss the town's centennial project. Representatives were there from council, the library board, I.O. D.E.'s, Rotary, Lions, W.I., Senior Citizens, the Citizens' Band, Legion, Y's Men. And about a dozen "interested citizens."

Charles Kirkness presented

the library board's request. There were other suggestions made then, too.

Aldo Braida had a proposal for a band hall and music centre. (Although this was not accepted the band went ahead and built their hall themselves).

Guy Ross, representing the Y's Men, recommended a swimming pool.

Improvements to the park were suggested by Brendan Ahearn. Another suggestion was a chapel at Fairview cemetery.

A committee was named — to add to itself as required — Mrs. W. L. Sproston, Bob Drinkwater, Jim Gunn and David Dills, with four members of council, Alex Johnson, Eric Johnston, Bert Hinton and J. Bert Wood.

Later the committee named to prepare the precise proposal for council was Mrs. Sproston, Mr. Drinkwater and Roy Kirkness (then a member of the library board).

July 14 council accepted the committee's proposal for a new library. It was unanimously recommended, as it would benefit the most people.

With no central building lots available in town, and the prospect of purchasing a building to tear it down and rebuild on the site quite costly, the offer of the public school board to sell a shady corner of the R. L. grounds for \$1 was accepted with alacrity and much pleasure.

By October, the architect's sketches were done and the zoning approved.

Application for government grants went forward in November.

Approval came in due course with the federal government to contribute \$4,144 and the provincial government \$4,144 — a dollar per head of population each.

Tenders were called in June 1966 and Kerr Construction got the green light.

Long-time librarian Mrs. Isabel Watson turned the first sod one misty morning in July to symbolically begin the construction. Just two days before, a hunk of old plaster had fallen from the ceiling in the old library, covering one section of books with fine dust.

It seemed time to move.

Grants cut library cost

Symbolically and aptly sprinkled with the digits of "6" and "7" for centennial year 1967 are contract price and estimated cost of the new library. The tender price was \$72,392.67 and the estimated total cost of the building is \$76,192.67.

The architect's fee is an extra \$4,800. The bridge cost \$1,275. Cost of equipment and furnishings, ordered from various companies and not all here yet, is between \$9,000 and \$10,000. A bare minimum of equipment was purchased; some of the items suggested as gifts could be considered necessities.

Cost of landscaping is unknown at the present time.

Provincial and federal special grants for centennial projects amount to \$1 per head of population each — \$3,226 for a population at the time of application of 4,144. A mandatory \$125 plaque, to be installed at our expense, records the government's assistance; this is a requirement for all centennial projects.

Remainder of the capital cost will be financed by the town of Acton.

Annual budget of the library board will naturally increase sharply this year. Council's budget committee has received the suggested budget from the board. It is estimated the annual requirements will be between \$12,000 and \$13,000. Regular government grants are received. It is anticipated that government operating grants to libraries will increase in 1968.

Y's Men sharing the load of "Operation Book Shift"

Operation Book Shift is underway this week, as Y's Men are transporting 8,900 volumes from the old, crowded library with its sagging wooden shelves to the steel shelving of the fine new centennial building.

Volunteers went section by section through the old library, measuring books for transport. Y's Men are trucking them in boxes and cartons over to the new building, where the new shelving is measured and designated for the specific lot.

Board members and librarians are overseeing the giant transfer, making sure each volume goes in its proper spot.

A certain number of books are being moved each evening this week until the job is completed — then, Friday evening, the library board has called a special meeting to assess the situation and check on the success of their well-planned book shift.

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THE TOWN OF ACTON

WELCOMES EVERYONE

TO ENJOY THE NEW, SPACIOUS FACILITIES PROVIDED IN THE MODERN

CENTENNIAL LIBRARY

THIS BUILDING HAS BEEN ERECTED IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC FOR ALL TO USE AND ENJOY

THE NEW FACILITIES WILL BE OPEN

MONDAY, MARCH 6th

PLAN TO JOIN IF NOT ALREADY A MEMBER

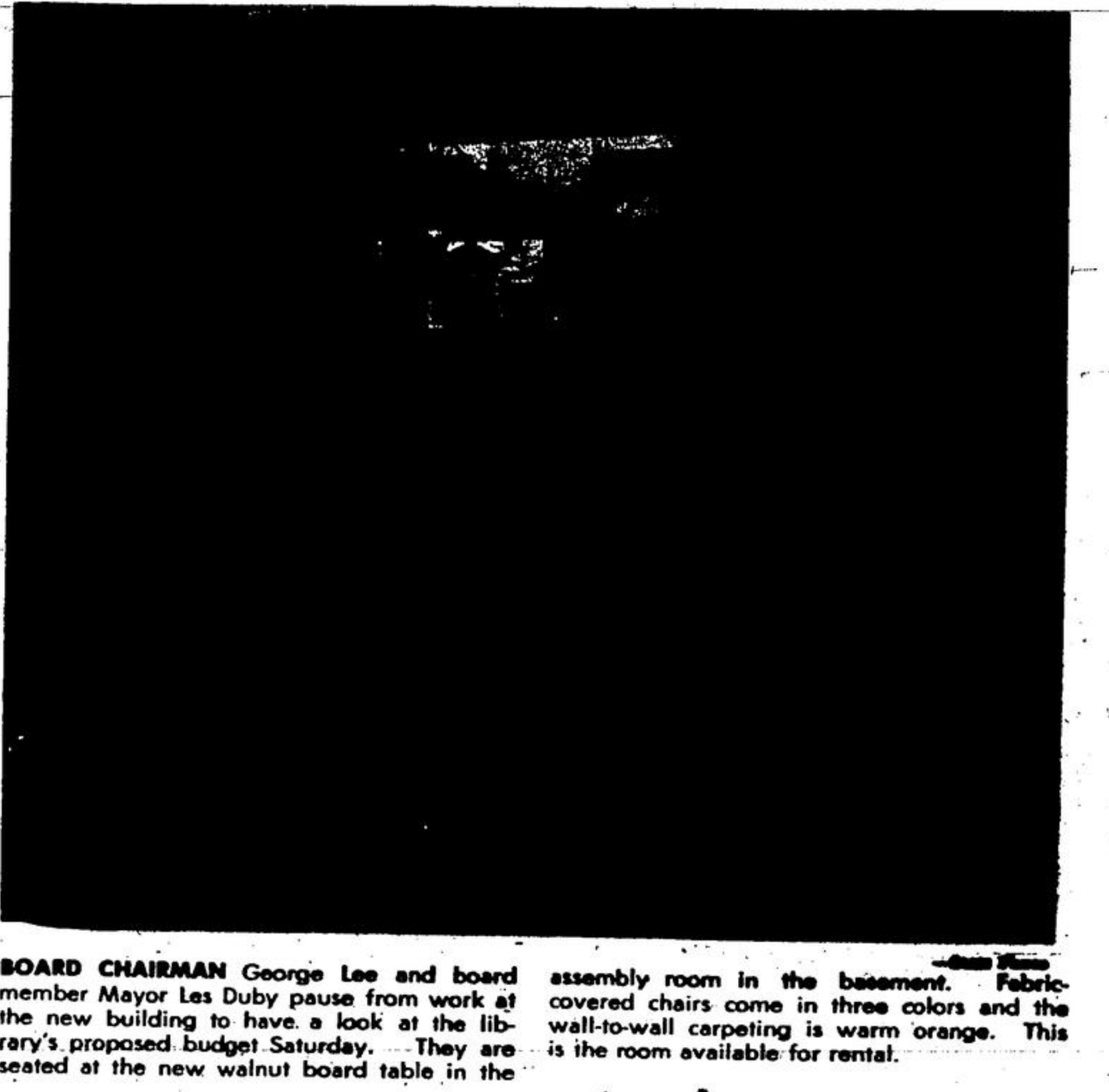
Mayor and Council
of the Town of Acton

"Official" opening on Saturday, June 3

Official opening ceremonies for the new library will be Saturday, June 3 at 2.30 p.m. — the day before the annual Decoration Day service. Other plans for a "big weekend" are being considered.

Dignitaries, former librarians and special guests will be invited. The required government plaque will be unveiled and, if there is one, a donated plaque naming present board and staff. A few speeches will be said (perhaps there will be loudspeakers so those outside can hear) and refreshments will be served.

SEEK CARETAKER
Applications are being sought for a caretaker for the new library.



BOARD CHAIRMAN George Lee and board member Mayor Les Duby pause from work at the new building to have a look at the library's proposed budget Saturday. They are seated at the new walnut board table in the assembly room in the basement. Fabric-covered chairs come in three colors and the wall-to-wall carpeting is warm orange. This is the room available for rental.