

Acton Citizens' Band

Plays prominent part in town's musical life

With its own music centre, burgeoning membership, training program and plans to provide accommodation for girls, Acton Citizens' Band is a worthy representative of Acton in area and local events.

Scarlet coats, shining brass, martial music — everyone loves a parade and every town should have a band. Acton's band has been playing and parading since about 1875. There is some doubt about this exact date, it may well have been earlier, but solid evidence places the band's beginnings not later than 1875.

Thus Acton Citizens' Band is one of the oldest and most venerable institutions in the town and today, it is still active and thriving, producing musicians for tomorrow.

The band was founded by a real musical enthusiast, John Hill, away back in those early days. John Hill operated a store in Acton and for many years, apparently, bandsmen, musical instruments and trade goods competed for the space in his premises. In later years, he moved the band to more adequate quarters in the Sons of Temperance Hall for the regular practices.

It was here that he instructed many of the boys of the town in the finer points of playing a musical instrument. One story from his days as bandmaster tells of Acton Band taking first prize at the county fair against competing bands from Norval, Milton, and Oakville. The coveted first place was won in part through a special arrangement of The Queen's which John Hill had prepared for the event.

Another story tells of him catching a young lad pounding on the door of the hall during a practice; he would-be mischief maker was subsequently converted into one of the finest drummers the band ever had.

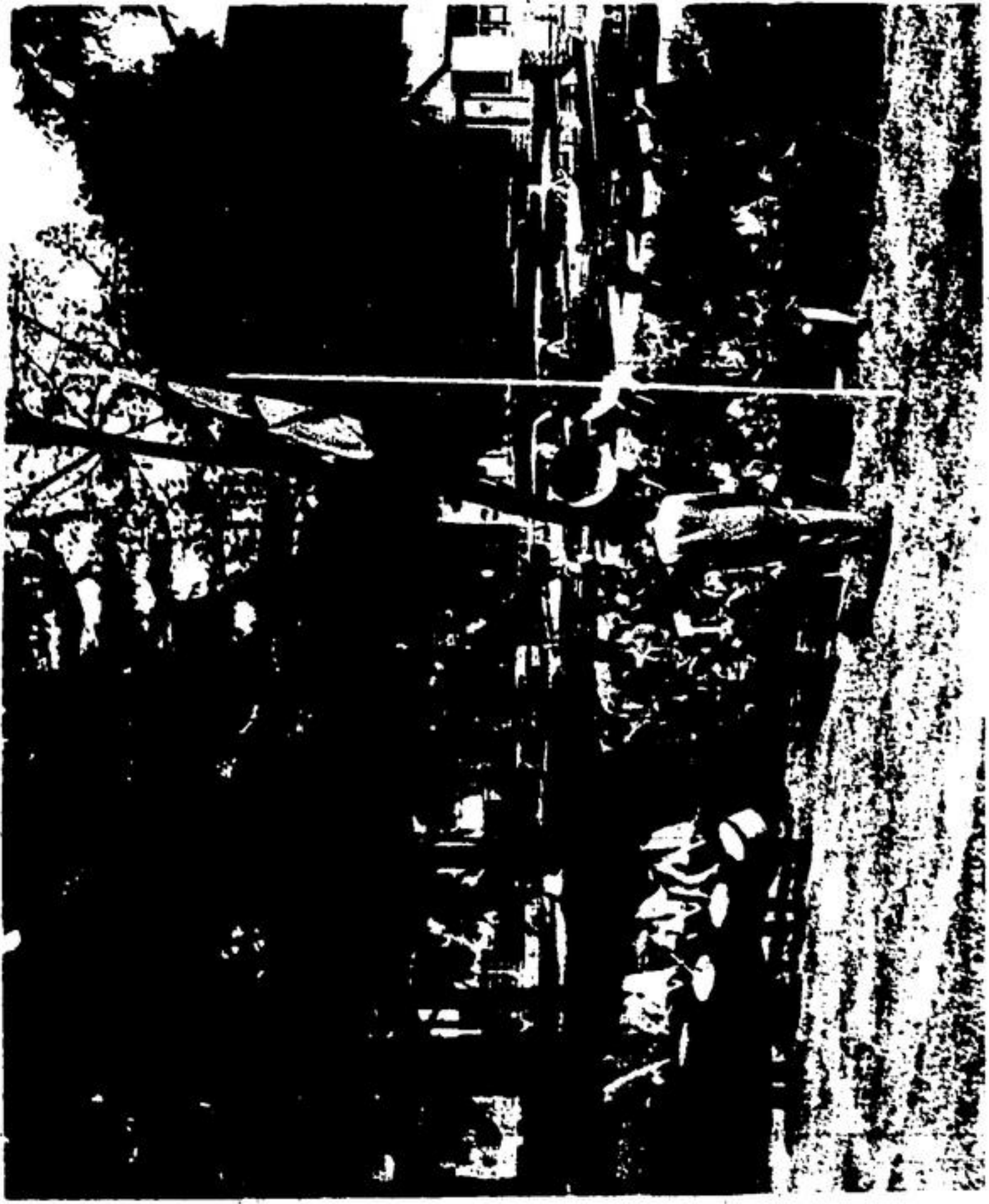
The foundations John Hill laid were solid ones and many of this band's members today are men who have passed along John Hill's will fresh, so that these young players are well served.

One of John Hill's boys was Charles Mason who was an active bandsman until shortly before his death. He has a special place in the memories of many present day band members.

Back in the early 1940's, the band almost ceased to exist. Younger men had gone off to war and other members of the band found it too difficult to carry on all by themselves. Charles Hill gathered together a group of band instruments and a small donation from Council, and given its blessings, started a band.

With much courage and energy, a great deal of patience and hard work, and a gentlemanly "damn" or two, he made a band. This Boys' Band soon became a "Boys' and Girls' Band" and it played for many a parade and garden party in Acton and the surrounding countryside. The crowning achievement of this band and Charles Mason's work came when he led it to a first place in its class at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1947.

Unfortunately, as always happens, the boys and girls grew up and left town for schooling and work. These boys and girls, however, had received a priceless legacy of training. From Charles Hill's boys have come a veterinarian, a doctor, two lawyers, two Ph.D.s in science, two chemists, a newspaper editor and a Lieutenant in the Navy, to mention a few. The others, boys and girls, have become worthy city



ACTON CITIZENS' BAND PLAYS AT OPENING OF LIBRARY

The band is dedicated to two purposes. Its first and most important one is that of offering in the community, musical recreation for those citizens, young and old, who enjoy and profit from it. Its second and perhaps no less important function is that of supplying music for parties, civic functions and concerts in the community.

But what of the future? The band has completed construction and development of a Community Music Centre and Park, a junior band of 25 or 30 players is envisioned. The instruction program, as it is now being developed, makes use of many of the regular band members as beginning instructors for three to five players for a period of a year.

At this time, the bandmaster takes over and develops the whole group of beginners to seniors in its unfinished condition. The band has also discussed ways in other types of musical activities which might be sponsored and encouraged; perhaps this will be a field for future expansion of band activities.

As the band enters its 92nd year, its members cannot help but feel that if John Hill could return among them, he would soon be at home in his old band. His work has been carried on; today we have Acton Citizens' Band, an organization proud of its past and full of enthusiasm for the challenges of its future.

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Opening of new hydro building highlight for Acton Commission

Opening of the new hydro building on Alice St. this year is the culmination of years of preparation and planning by members of the Acton Hydro Electric Commission.

Most boards would be content to sit back, take off their shoes and look back at the work they have done. Not the Acton Hydro Electric Commission.

Chairman Ted Tyler anticipates the erection of a new substation will be necessary and of course, rebuilding of lines when the demand exceeds the present capacity.

Instead of waiting until these needs are right on the doorstep, the commission intends to plan ahead. This way they hope to avoid making the issuing of debentures necessary.

"We'll do it the sensible way and save the taxpayers money," lines, the works department as-

Development commission promotes Acton, industry

The Acton Development Commission is a group of interested citizens appointed by the Town Council to consider and make recommendations on the future development of the municipality. They are particularly concerned with present industrial relations and prospective industry.

At the present time, the commission serves 1,247 domestic, 71 commercial and 40 industrial customers with a staff of six. The system now includes two transformer stations and 19 miles of line within the town limits.

Commission members attend conventions during the year to keep abreast with the hydro program and discuss problems with other commissions which are relevant to problems encountered here.

The work force also attend "workshops" in order to keep up-to-date on the latest techniques in coping with power installations and all phases of their work.

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