



After years of planning, months of building and expectation, Acton and district curlers started using their new curling rink on Churchill Road this week. The first stone in league play was thrown Monday night and although the building is still not finished curlers are delighted. See pictures on page . . . . . 5

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## Music festival plots new future to include all performing arts

North Halton Music Festival didn't die Monday evening as some of the Association members feared when the general meeting began. Instead, it got a transfusion of changes that will give it a whole new lease on life.

Next spring the festival will again be held in the same way. However, a committee will be working on sweeping changes that will likely transform the traditional competitive music festival into a showcase for all the performing arts, both competitive and non-competitive.

The special meeting of the North Halton Music Festival Association was called following the distribution of detailed questionnaires about the festival's fate to all north Halton schools, parents representatives, organizations which give donations and interest individuals.

The well-attended meeting was held in the Robert Little school staff room in Acton.

At the last meeting of the Association in October those present had agreed that despite a healthy bank balance the festival could not continue in its present form. Replies to the questionnaire from schools agreed, but a majority of sponsoring groups sent replies which indicated they would like the festival to continue in its present form.

The problem had arisen with the disappearance in some schools of the "itinerant" music teacher, and some sponsors replied they would like to see these music specialists returned, rather than a consultant supervising the classroom teacher. Several sponsors indicated the decision on changes should be made by the teachers and schools concerned.

There were 22 north Halton schools and 20 other groups or individuals which replied to the questionnaires.

The principals' school reports showed 14 opposed to continuing the festival in its

present form, one in favor with reservations, and four with no opinion. (Not all these schools had participated previously.)

Yet in reply to the question asking if their school would compete in the next festival, eight schools said yes and 12 no. The schools willing to participate had taken part in past years and represented about 3,000 students.

From these facts, the interested members of the Association devised the scheme of continuing the festival this year stressing the non-competitive concert following the usual competitive music classes. To the evening concert, schools which had not sent singers to compete could send singers.

Discussed were the inclusion of an art display, orchestra, rhythm band or gym team.

The new executive was named with vice-president Ray Morrison moving up to president. Past president is James Zehr. Ralph McKeown

rejoined after several years as vice-president. Returned to office were Mrs. Glenda Benton as secretary-treasurer, Mrs. J. Frost as trophy convener, and Mrs. S. Brunelle and Mrs. K. McPhail as assistants to the trophy convener.

When volunteers were sought to serve on the committee to plot future changes in the festival, those who promptly indicated their willingness were Jack Reed, Ken Trowbridge, W. D. E. Smith, Mrs. Frost, and Mrs. McPhail. They have the power to add to their number for advice in specific fields, such as adding art or drama to the festival.

For the festival next spring, classes and place must be changed due to the mechanics of accommodating numbers. It was stressed any schools which wished could enter the competition.

Mrs. Benton pointed out quite a few respondents to the questionnaire—other than principals—had been in favor of competition.

It was in part the decisive replies in favor of a festival which prompted the group to wish to continue. Principal Smith of Acton especially mentioned the support of the general public garnered over the years.

Principal Trowbridge of Brookville felt it was important to proceed in a familiar environment, and not try to include too many changes at once which could replace the usual competence at festivals with a "mish mash".

Present at the meeting were principals, teachers, parent representatives and group representatives with Ken Sell, superintendent of program for the county; Ed Thorndike, co-ordinator of creative arts for the county; George Houdander, assistant co-ordinator of creative arts and Ken Harrison, North Halton music consultant.

Two representatives of Georgetown schools were present although Georgetown schools withdrew from the festival

some years ago.

Mrs. Benton reported on a very successful meeting held in November, when the executive met with officials of the county. D. S. Lawless had said the association should decide its own future, but promised official support. He had indicated transportation costs could be arranged. He also felt parents should assist if they desired. He saw no reason why the festival should suffer because there are no itinerant music teachers, and that with the guidance of consultants the teachers should be able to succeed.

"The meeting cleared up that the festival is not disappearing because of the new county board," she concluded.

Jack Reed expressed thanks to president Jim Zehr for a capable job during a "trying" year and a half, and Mrs. Benton for a "terrific job."

Another general meeting will be called as plans for the festival progress.

## Refer plaza plan back to committee

Acton council turned back a recommendation from Planning Board and No. 1 committee for approval of a small plaza at the corner of Queen St. and Churchill Rd. until more study can be given the project.

Plans for the corner which now encompasses a large gully, call for six stores, including a Becker's Milk jug store.

Project planners, planning consultants for the town, would not approve of the proposal and told Planning Board they could not support it if it came to a hearing.

Councillor Coats suggested council should heed the planners' advice and not just jump at the first opportunity to develop the property which he acknowledged was an eyesore now. He thought a restaurant would be more in line with development and keep commercial development from

spreading all over town. Mayor Duby wondered why the planners threw the plan out since a commercial strip existed there now.

"They are professionals," Councillor Marks retorted, suggesting they knew best. "I'd like to see the town kept as a hub rather than spread helter-skelter."

We'd better take this back to committee and find out Project Planners' objections and talk to Planning Board, suggested Councillor Greer.

"They're no little tin gods," remarked Reeve Oakes, suggesting the planners could make mistakes, too.

"If we haven't got confidence in the planners then for heaven's sake let's get some planners whom we can have confidence in," said Mr. Coats.

Council agreed to refer the matter back to committee.

## Break-in, malicious damage charges against five youths

Charges were laid against five Brampton youths Friday who had broken windows at the new curling club and entered the Christian Reformed church.

Three young members of the church detected the out-of-town intruders and informed Cons. Kresler. He located them trying

to push their car out of the ditch on Churchill Rd.

They were charged with breaking and entering the Christian Reformed church and malicious damage at the curling club.

Two officers from the North Halton detachment assisted in apprehending the quintet.

## Music appreciation lacking

We'll never play Acton again! That was the fervent decision of an out-of-town music group after a fracas Saturday night at the Dominion Hotel that involved seven police officers before peace was restored.

One of the musicians became so incensed at patrons' remarks he drew a knife.

Cons. Roy Wood was called, but fighting kept breaking out and he summoned his North Halton confederates who patrol the countryside around Acton. Six reinforcements arrived.

The musician was charged, appeared in court in Milton Monday, pleaded guilty and drew a suspended sentence.

Not only will they never play Acton again, but the group also thinks they'll just disband altogether. Too much trouble playing hotels, they concluded—

with Acton providing the worst incident they've encountered so far. Reportedly, their instruments are now up for sale.

## Unprintable joke cause of fight

It was all caused by one short and dirty Newfie joke, and it ended up a fight on Mill St. Friday night with about 50 spectators. The insulted former Newfoundlander and another youth were charged with drinking under age and taken home.

The joke was reported to the investigating officer, Cons. Roy Wood, during the explanation of just what happened to cause such a row. (And it's not printable.)

## Chamber circulates shopping questionnaire

Members of the Chamber of Commerce are busy this week circulating a confidential shopping study to every other house in Acton.

Purpose of the survey is to determine how well the retail merchants in town are meeting regular shopping needs. Participation is entirely voluntary. Opinions of individuals and associations will not be revealed.

Among the queries are some on store hours, parking, street lights, public transportation, pedestrian crossings, store train to Toronto if it was available? Would you participate in an adult educational program? Would you like to see Mill St. turned into a pedestrian mall?

answers on rating rest rooms, eating places, entertainment, after-hours lighting. Sales people will also be rated according to knowledge, attitude, handling complaints and telephone manners.

Cost, service and courtesy of the Bell Telephone company are also under scrutiny and the survey asks if you are in favor of expanded services to Guelph, Milton and Toronto. Are you in favor of an emergency telephone number? it asks.

Would you use a commuter train to Toronto if it was available? Would you participate in an adult educational program? Would you like to see Mill St. turned into a pedestrian mall?

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## Ice ditches fire truck

It was lucky the fire wasn't serious Sunday afternoon, because the fire truck never did get there.

It slid on ice right into the ditch at the corner of 17 Sideroad and the town line in Exquising, and it was three quarters of an hour before the town truck could haul it out.

The Jackson family on 20 Sideroad, which had reported their chimney fire to the wrong brigade in the first place, later called back to say they thought the fire was out.

They had mistakenly called Milton instead of Acton brigade, and the call was relayed here as a mutual aid call.

To top the aborted run, a carload of detruked firefighters couldn't make it up an icy hill returning home. They had to get out and push the chief's car.

GAILY DECORATED HOMES reflect the happiness of the season. This giant Christmas tree, outlined in lights, is at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Patterson and family, Church St.—(Staff Photo)

## Sight buck on Churchill

Mrs. Bob Marshall was called to the living room window by her little granddaughter, Lisa, Friday afternoon.

The little girl saw something unusual. After several attempts to tell the adults in the room she succeeded in getting her grandmother to look.

Mrs. Marshall's first impression was one of awe. Standing looking back at her from the front of their Churchill Rd. N. home was a full grown buck deer, antlers and all.

She called her daughter Charlene and she also saw the buck. Then Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Davidson, next door neighbors, were called by phone. They, too, caught sight of the magnificent animal.

As if on a signal, the buck raised his white cotton flag, cleared the fence across the road and headed back to wherever he came from.

Other neighbors also report seeing the large buck and several other deer in the neighborhood.

## Two draws Saturday

Excitement mounts with only two more draws to be made in the Santa-Rama promotion. The fifth draw will be made at three o'clock Saturday at the Y.M.C.A. At the same time a draw will be made for Eramosa Flower Mart. (Entries are in his ad in the Free Press last week and today, and again next week.)

## Clamp down hard local shoplifters

A very serious increase in cases of shoplifting has resulted in Acton police informing all local shopkeepers of the correct procedure in making a citizen's arrest.

During the past week seven local juveniles were charged with shoplifting.

Many local teen-agers are offenders, the police say. Storekeepers tell them they have warned young people in the past, and let them go without reporting the incidents. Now the police urge them to keep a close watch and to inform police.

"We are going to clamp down on this," the local police insist. Offenders will not necessarily be

charged, depending on the circumstances.

Last Thursday, five young girls, two aged 14, two aged 15 and one just 13, were apprehended. Apparently they had sometimes worked as a team. About \$400 worth of stolen property was recovered, some of it clothing from Acton stores.

Other items recovered came from stores in Milton, Georgetown and Guelph. The tags were still on some of the items.

Two will likely be charged by the Children's Aid Society, police expect, and the other three will be charged by Acton

police for possession of stolen goods. They will appear in juvenile court.

On Monday, investigation followed the report of a break-in at the Norton Home, Church St., and two juveniles were charged with breaking, entering and theft. Questioning also produced further charges of shoplifting, and \$35 worth of stolen property was recovered. The two boys will also appear in juvenile court.

Apparently there is always an increase in shoplifting cases at Christmas time. Out-of-towners go where they are not known during busy shopping hours to augment their shopping illegally.

## Arena's main structure sound but walls weak, council told

Although the walls aren't about to come tumbling down, Acton council has referred the matter of deteriorating walls at the community centre to the finance committee for consideration.

Parks and Recreation Committee put the onus on council to do something about deterioration following receipt of a recently completed engineering study which recommended repairs.

"The whole report and engineering study was given to council to deal with in the urgency they see fit," said Councillor Marks, one of two council representatives on the Parks and Recreation committee.

"You are concerned that if the roof falls in you can say we told you so," the deputy-reeve half-facetiously told councillor Marks.

"No," Mr. Marks replied. "The

letter to council asks repair work to be carried out as soon as possible to ensure the safety of the building and stop further deterioration.

"No, I might frown on the engineer's report but just because we don't agree it doesn't mean we are responsible if walls fall down," Reeve F. Oakes countered.

Mayor Les Duby referred to a survey four years ago which showed the steel structure of the community centre was still "as sound as ever." I gather the problem is with the walls? he asked.

Beams are sagging and a few wooden beams in the west wall should be replaced, answered Mr. Marks. The wall sheathing is taking the stress instead of the steel.

The main steel structure is still sound, the mayor was assured. Cost of the engineering report is \$390 for one day, Councillor Marks told council.

He reminded councillors however, that the engineer was talking "Cadillac and Ford" in the report and his recommendations were meant to put the building in top shape.

## Talk turkey

Council talked turkey at Tuesday night's meeting after a resolution passed authorizing presentation of a Christmas turkey to each town employee.

Councillor Jack Greer, one of two who voted against the resolution, suggested that council settle the turkeys in the contract with town employees.

"This way there would be no Scooper sitting around the council table and we would know where we sit on this," he said.

"I never heard of a Christmas bonus in a collective bargaining agreement before," commented the deputy-reeve.



IT'S SANTA . . . It's a bird? No . . . just ashes. Too early yet, but this little lad will try again - often - before the night he hangs his stocking.—(Staff Photo)