

The Acton Free Press

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Second Section

Investigate govt. grants

Acton Parks and Recreation Committee is investigating the possibility of applying for grants from the provincial government to cover labor costs involved in repairs or decorating improvements to the community centre.

At Thursday night's meeting, Councillor Peter Marks reported the provincial government is offering grants to cover labor costs only on improvement projects.

Insulate roof?
Arenas manager Harold Townsley also suggested the committee consider the possibility of using styrofoam to insulate the arena roof and walls. He predicted installing styrofoam insulation would be cheaper than spraying the underside of the roof with an insulating substance. The roof encompasses 18,000 square feet.

Major cost involved in spraying the roof would be renting a "cherry picker" to raise workers high enough to apply the insulation.

Mr. Townsley suggested styrofoam would also brighten up the building.

Hundreds of gun collectors converge on Acton Sunday

Guns are usually looked on as death-dealing weapons, reserved for wars and hunting.

But guns, for Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Sleeth, of R.R. 6, Brantford, mean a new interest in life and a hobby that has opened up vistas they never dreamed of when they were ordinary gunless civilians.

As husband and wife team they are antique gun collectors who showed part of their valuable collection at the Halton Antique Arms Collector show Sunday at the Acton Industrial Centre. They were the attraction of the show that drew hundreds of gun buyers, traders and sellers from different parts of the province, making it the most successful venture yet for the Halton group.

Tax room
Well lighted facilities at the industrial centre—8,000 square feet—were taxed to hold everyone who showed up. Weapons ranging all the way from daggers, swords, shields, slingshots, mortars, small cannons, siege guns to the most sophisticated hunting rifles were among the displays which drew collectors and traders.

In addition, literature could be purchased on almost every conceivable weapon. Books traced the history of the various types of arms in hard back books with covers that ran the gamut from the time of the American civil war to the weapons used in the Middle Ages.

Perhaps the ordinary, peace-loving citizen might be affronted by displays of destructive power. But gun collectors are almost all of the ilk of Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Sleeth. They are interested in the history and the workmanship behind the weapons. They fondle guns and various other weaponry with affection.

Small cannon
One of the more interesting items the Sleeths showed was a small cannon on wheels that was used in Afghanistan—against British troops—by mountaineering peoples of the country.

The small cannon had wheels for pulling along level country but it was light enough to pick up and carry over rough terrain. British cannons were too heavy to roll over the rough stuff and as a

result they were at a disadvantage when fighting the native peoples on rough terrain.

It is history like these Gunga Din gun dramas that attracts and holds people like the Sleeths.

Keeps him young
"It's kept him young," said 78-year-old Mrs. Sleeth of her 80-year-old husband. Their interests also run to antique furniture but youthful-looking Mrs. Sleeth admits guns are their first love.

"Look at this siege gun," she asked the Free Press reporter. "See the curled up end. You could shoot almost anything from it. No need of expensive musket balls. You could use stones, sticks, marbles, anything." The end of the heavy weapon curled like a horn, resembling the firearms used by the Puritans common to Thanksgiving illustrations.

There was another musket alongside with several barrels that all could be fired at once to repel raiding parties on British forts. It had a mount to fit into a pedestal—and looked like it would require two men to lift it.

Offered \$60,000
Mr. Sleeth has been offered \$60,000 for his collection by one representative from an American museum, but he doesn't intend to sell. "It would take more money than that to replace these guns," the enthused gentleman said.

"And we'd miss the company we get by having this collection," Mrs. Sleeth said. It was not uncommon to have people drop in their home from all parts of the North American continent to see their collection. This year a gentleman from Europe without a word of English came to see them and their collection of weapons. "We got along fine," Mrs. Sleeth says, "weapons are a universal language."

Their house, near Brantford, isn't hard to identify. They have cannons on the lawn.

Six shooters
Along another nearby table another avid gun collector

showed a six shooter, common to the early West to another interested trader. "Look at the lines in this," he pointed out. His face was almost a commentary on life in the early West when everyone wore guns for self protection.

At other tables there was ammunition, bayonets, medals, regimental insignias of famous British and Canadian units.

Halton Antique Arms Collectors' secretary Hank Ruppert, of Acton, who was up to 3 a.m. Saturday night preparing for this show, was delighted with Sunday's turnout.

"It's getting bigger and better each show," he said. "We hope to have the biggest show in Canada right here in Acton by this summer."

If interest keeps booming like it has since the Halton group was formed last Spring, the possibility was not only probable, but imminent.

Arise early
Gun collectors arise early Sunday mornings to reach the various shows in the province and by one or two o'clock in the afternoon they are packing up their displays and hitting the trail. Sunday's show here was no exception, but before it ended, Hank Ruppert presented Mr. and Mrs. Sleeth with an engraved plaque in appreciation for their appearance that day. They are much in demand both here and in the U.S. for their displays.



MRS. SLEETH tells a Free Press reporter over \$75,000. The small cannon is from the story behind some of the exotic guns her husband collects in a collection valued at well over \$75,000. The small cannon is from Afghanistan while the swivel mounted siege gun is British. —(Staff Photos)

one hop Easter Shopping

AT

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ACTON PHARMACY

Township education costs up council wants explanation

Nassagaweya Council wants some explanation of why the township's education levy should increase by 5.38 mills when most other municipalities in Halton are decreasing. It is the second

year for a township increase while others declined. Council members Monday agreed to ask the Board chairman and the Acton-Nassagaweya representative to provide the explanations at a special meeting.

Nine mill difference
Reeve Anne MacArthur recalled she had been told last year's jump would be the last necessary to clear up any problems. She suggested this year's rate was actually a nine mill differential because Acton was down four mills and Nassagaweya was up five mills.

The reeve also suggested ratepayers were very disturbed about the proposed closing of the Campbellville school and the plan to move manual training and

home economics equipment from Brookville to Acton with township residents to be transported to Acton for that training. "It's too bad we don't have a representative in Nassagaweya. It seems we only have the bottom half of one".

Mrs. MacArthur observed the next step, after taking away the schools, would be to tell the township they don't need to remain as a municipality.

Was to be closed
Councillor James Watson suggested the old board should have closed the Campbellville School several years ago. Former board member and now a councillor, Art Gibson noted the board had plans to close the school and build new ones at Campbellville and at Eden Mills. Deputy Reeve Don McMillan reviewed the education rates, noting the Board was balancing out an error. He objected, he said, to the Board explanations for the error.

The deputy reeve pointed out that on the average township property assessed at \$7,000 the discrepancy dates back to the 1969 levy. He submitted the following figures: the 1967 levy for education was \$180 and should have been \$250; in 1968 it was \$250 and should have been \$250; but in 1969 the levy was \$280 and should have been \$315; in 1970 it was \$325 and should have been \$340 and in 1971 it will be \$365 and it should have been \$325. The total of the figures are \$1,400 and \$1,410.

Different factor
"In 1969 the Board underlevied the township by \$40,000. The excuse was that they thought the provincial equalization factor would be something different than it was", the deputy reeve reviewed.

In 1970, he suggested the Board thought they would get money back from the province because of a limitation put on the permissible rise in cost to a municipality. The province didn't pay the expected \$51,000. The former board's surplus had been used to reduce this amount by \$36,000 to reduce the total levy.

The deputy reeve was critical of published explanations for the township's rise. He noted last year the chairman said it was because of a deficit in the former township board's operation which had in fact ended with a surplus. This year the chairman is saying the township is making up for a 12 mill reduction it experienced earlier, the deputy reeve noted.

No rep
"This is a perfect example of no representation on the board", Councillor Gibson complained. (Acton and Nassagaweya have one representative on the Board, Thomas Watson of Acton.)

Deputy Reeve McMillan emphasized that in most democracies the people have the right to defeat an official in Nassagaweya there is no way they can elect a township man against the Acton vote. He called for discussions with Education Minister Wells on the need for township representation on the board.

SLOW, NO HOSPITAL
Here are two actual road signs, reported by the Ontario Safety League:
NO U-TURN—In Atlanta Georgia.
SLOW, NO HOSPITAL—At the outskirts of a small town in Oklahoma.

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