



Steve and Ourania Halkiades fled from their homes in June, fearing aftershocks from an earthquake which almost completely destroyed their city in Greece. They are now staying with daughter Litsa Pelitis, son-in-law Les and grandson Les Jr. in Acton until they feel they can resume a normal life in Greece. One daughter, and Les' mother and a brother still remain in Greece.

## Earthquake victims now living in Acton

Steve and Ourania Halkiades saw five storey apartment buildings fall like toothpicks. They felt the earth move under them, and heard screams of people trying to escape, only to discover there was no place to run.

An earthquake, measuring 7.5 on the Richter Scale hit Northern Greece in early June, leaving many dead and thousands homeless. The area had been experiencing small tremors for a week, but they never expected the devastation which was to literally fall upon them.

Mr. and Mrs. Halkiades are now safe at the home of their daughter Mrs. Litsa Pelitis in Acton, but for four months they had to live in temporary accommodation, their lives turned upside down.

When the earthquake hit, the city of Thessaloniker the couple were in bed. They looked out the window and actually saw buildings collapse, and prayed for the strength of their own apartment building. Luckily, it sustained only a few cracks.

Amidst the destruction, the couple fled the city to go to a brother's cottage. They were of the lucky few who had a place to go. Many were forced to live in tents.

Daily telephone calls to daughter Litsa and son-in-law Les in Acton soon convinced them to come to Canada for a few

months to forget the trauma they had lived through. Les' mother, also living in the city, both brothers and sisters of the local couple wanted to stay with their homes and try to start life over again.

Mr. and Mrs. Halkiades arrived in Acton in early October hoping to wipe the memories from their minds and calm nerves down. At 78 and 67 years of age, they are not young enough to start a new life, and insist on returning home in March. They realize how lucky they are that they have a home to return to—an empty apartment waiting for their arrival. None of their relatives had been physically hurt, though all had been scared emotionally.

The couple had never been out of Greece before and are finding Canada a wonderful place to be, according to Litsa, who translated her parents' feelings.

Christmas in itself is a new experience for them. In Greece, Litsa explains, celebrations are quiet. There are parades, no gifts, no real Christmas trees. They are all artificial.

It is a different world here in Canada for the Halkiades. However, in spite of the richness they have been experiencing, they will be returning to their own country in March, with memories of a lot of new Acton friends.



Pulling strings

Deanna Berry grabs a quick Christmas kiss from Roger as the 1975 North American Junior Ventriloquist Champion Kerwin Massey looks on. Massey and Roger performed for the youngsters at the Acton Library Saturday.

# The Acton Free Press

One Hundred and Fourth Year—No. 26.

ACTON, ONTARIO, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1978

Sixteen Pages—Fifteen Cents

## In Halton Hills

### Chairman calls meeting approve development

Halton Chairman Jack Raftis proved he was man of his word when he said he would do whatever he could to encourage development in the region.

He called a special meeting Wednesday, Dec. 20, for council to approve an apartment development in the Georgetown area of Halton Hills.

Halton Hills needed the region's approval in order to complete the necessary requirements before a building permit could be issued.

By issuing a permit this year, the town qualified for a \$210,000 incentive grant.

Mayor Peter Pomeroy said he regretted having to ask for a special meeting but the matter had been allowed to lie dormant.

The region authorized the execution of a servicing agreement between itself and the apartment builder, William McNally Construction.

Council also agreed to reimburse the developer for part of the cost of a water-main which is to be con-

structed.

A three-month letter of credit was approved as was a clause to reimburse the region for any penalties or administration expenses.

Mayor Pomeroy said council's approval was "beyond expectation."

He said it was an example of regional government in action.

Not all councillors approved the manner in which the business was passed.

Laurie and Terry Mannell, father and son respectively

from Oakville, questioned the motions.

Mr. Mannell Sr. said, "I'm suspicious of something being radically wrong by ramming it home at this time."

"I just don't like the way this thing is going."

Although Mr. Mannell Jr. questioned the regional solicitor Dennis Perlin on the apartment, the matter was approved by the majority of councillors.

Council also passed proposed plans for condominiums in Halton Hills and Burlington.



Mr. and Mrs. Harry Mainprize celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Boxing Day. Son Jack from Montreal was a surprise guest at a small party held in their honor Tuesday.

### Mainprizes are 60 years wed

Sixty years of marriage were celebrated Boxing Day by Harry and Martha Mainprize.

The couple has been active in community life all their married life and are very well known. They are members of, and active in the Knox Presbyterian church.

Mr. and Mrs. Mainprize were married in Wyevalle on December 28, 1918. Upon moving to Acton, Mr. Mainprize was a barber, and in the past few years of his career, he kept shop in the front of their John St. home.

The couple have three children, daughter Helen Egan of Guelph, Jack of Montreal, who paid a surprise visit on Tuesday, and Bill at home.

A small party was held for Mr. and Mrs. Mainprize

Tuesday. Among the visitors was Mayor Pete Pomeroy who presented the couple with a plaque. They also received a letter from Julian Reed, and a plaque from the Ontario government.

### Christmas eve house fire

The Christmas spirit went up in smoke for the family of William Maxwell as fire caused extensive damage in their R. R. 5, Milton home Christmas eve.

According to Halton Hills fire chief Mick Holmes, an estimate of damage could not be released. However, he did say there was extensive smoke and fire damage throughout the house.

The Milton fire department responded to the call.

### Brampton man fined on fatal car-bike crash

The memory of a fatal traffic accident haunts a Brampton man who was convicted in Milton Provincial court for careless driving which resulted in the death of an Acton woman.

Judge John Robinson fined Jozef G. Hermans \$200 Thursday, but the judge made it plain the penalty is solely for the error in Mr. Hermans' driving and does not reflect the gravity of the result.

"It's haunted him since September 5 and quite honestly I think it will haunt him for the rest of his life," defence lawyer K. R. Harris told the court.

The victim, Darinka Moskun, died of injuries she suffered after the bicycle she was riding to Acton on Highway 7 was struck from the rear by the car driven by Mr. Hermans. Miss Moskun, 22, was on her way to work at the Frank Heller and Company plant when the mishap occurred at approximately 7:15 a.m.

"I didn't see the bicycle until I hit it," said Mr. Hermans on the stand. From testimony from witnesses and Mr. Hermans the court learned he drove about 650 feet, until he hit the bike, with light from the sun in his eyes. Meanwhile he was paying extra attention to a line of oncoming vehicles. Mr. Hermans told the court he was keeping to the right of the road as much as possible. He stopped immediately after the accident.

Mr. Hermans, 34, was driving east from London, Ontario. The sun had bothered him earlier in the morning so he flipped the visor down. Guelph OPP constable Jules Blouin, who arrived at the accident scene soon after, said he was not bothered by the sun too much once he got over a small crest west of the scene.

Defence counsel Harris introduced evidence from witnesses that there is glare off dark pavement and that the highway was freshly surfaced with asphalt.

Investigating officer Terry Flight, from the Milton detachment, said there were no lines on Highway Seven

near Crewson Corners. Visibility was clear, according to the officer.

"It never entered my mind to expect a bike there," said Mr. Hermans.

"Why did you not brake when you could not see the right portion of the road," asked Crown Counsel Brian Calhoun.

"I should have sir, I should have," replied Mr. Hermans from the stand.

The definition of careless driving under the Highway Traffic Act used the the crown is driving without due consideration of other per-

sons using the highway.

The Milton OPP officer described Mr. Hermans as being despondent and, during the investigation, co-operative.

Keith Hill, 31, of Georgetown, was one of the drivers in the westbound lane who witnessed the accident, and who with others stopped to help. Someone went to a nearby home to beg blankets and phone police.

Miss Moskun, who had attended Acton High School, died in Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital about an hour after the incident.

### Town hall group pleads for pledges

Every mail box in town was the target for the Acton Town Hall Committee last week.

Residents received a one page olive colored plea for funds to save the 19th century hall on Willow Street.

Halton Hills Council, according to the committee, gave the people of Acton until year's end to prove they want to keep the red brick structure. The mailing came so late in the year, according to committee member Doug Fread, Bower Avenue, because the committee was reluctant to interfere with campaigns conducted in the fall.

The town hall hosted much

of Acton's late 19th century and 20th century history.

Acton is the only community in Halton Hills without a municipally owned public hall, according to the appeal. A senior citizen drop-in centre is suggested as a use for a restored building as are the following: a meeting all for civic groups and service clubs, a central hall and municipal office space.

"Restoration will cost \$236,000. Grants could cover all but \$50,000 to \$75,000 of this sum. People of Acton must pledge this before these grants can be obtained," states the pledge form.

### Treasurer indicates tax rise of 3 per cent

Halton taxes could be going up 3.4 per cent in 1979. Speaking at the first meeting of the finance and administration committee Wednesday, Dec. 20, regional treasurer Don Farmer said an initial study of next year's costs indicated an increase of 3.4 per cent could be possible.

However, the forecast doesn't include the projected cost of policing, conservation and roads.

Committee chairman McLean Anderson of Oakville said the committee is committed to a maximum of three per cent.

Chief executive officer Ernie Reid said the three objectives he has been studying with regard to the budget are: examining existing services, planning for the anticipated cost of existing staff levels and preparing the budget on a net as well as a gross basis.

When asked, none of the four mayors on the committee had solid figures on next year's budgets.

### Early morning blaze guts Crewson Corners building

Fire gutted a three-room frame building at Crewson Corners early this morning. Acton firefighters were called at 12:45 a.m. to the building owned by William A. Darroch, Lot 32, Concession 7, Nassagaweya.

Cause of the blaze, which resulted in about \$5,000 damage, is unknown, according to Fire Chief Mick Holmes who was on

the scene. The building is within Milton's fire area, but the Acton crew arrived on the scene first and brought the flames under control.

The frame building was used for storage, according to the fire chief.

Mr. Darroch, who lives with his wife in their home to the rear of the frame structure, said he first knew of the blaze when the fire truck arrived. They have no telephone, he said.

The Darrochs have lived at Crewson Corners about 21 years. Their home is a distance south of Highway 7, just west of the railway bridge.

To help combat flames, firefighters set up a portable pump to draw water from a nearby stream.

### Trustees trim funds

A motion to step up energy conservation in Halton schools was approved by Halton School Board Thursday, minus any onus to spend money.

The original motion from Oakville trustee Len Auger called for funds to help the board follow through with cutting energy use in schools. "The cost of any such measures initiated has to be less than the estimated cost of the energy saved over a period of four years," states the written motion in part.

If the motion was approved

as presented, money would be sought by the energy management committee for consultants who would look at two or three schools which waste heat and light.

The Oakville trustee watered down the consultant steps and Auger agreed as long as the following measures are taken: while keeping an acceptable learning environment, minimize the consumption of energy; provide the chance for students to participate in activities that will teach them to appreciate and protect natural resources.

### Free Press 20¢

The price of the Acton Free Press increases to 20 cents next week from the present 15 cents.

Publisher Don McDonald says the increased cost of material and labor made the increase imperative.

Most weekly newspapers increased their price to 20¢ and 25 cents several years ago, he said, but the Free Press has been able to hold the price until now. However, inflationary trends and increases in all areas for material and labor makes the five cent increase necessary. Some of the increase will be passed on to carriers and retail outlets.

### Year end review

## Over \$400,000 damages in six fires plagued 1978

Acton volunteer firefighters saw their hardest year ever with almost \$400,000 in damages caused by six fires.

The biggest fire was the destruction of the Canadian Tire warehouse on the July 1 long weekend. Five families were left homeless in five separate blazes, one of which also destroyed a family business—Elissa Shoes.

It was also a year of change in the town, as the following synopsis of 1978 will show.

January 4: Rockwood's

Ron Waples who two weeks ago became the first harness driver to win more than \$1 million in purse earnings in one year of driving in Canada, broke a second mark in racing as he won his 300th race of the year driving Katoomba A to victory in the ninth race at Greenwood.

January 11: Peter Dunham, president of the Tanners Association of Canada and of Beardmore and Co., is harshly critical of those importers and retailers who have been objecting to quotas on footwear imports

announced by the federal government December 1.

January 18: The fight opposing the proposed 500 kV hydro power corridor from Bruce to Milton is "not dead by any means" according to Interested Citizens' Group spokesman John Minns.

January 25: A year's extension will be given the Acton townhall restoration committee to give members time to determine what funding may be available on a pledge basis.

February 1: One of the

most intense storms in a century drove furious winds and snow through the district. Accidents were common, many people were stranded. Schools and stores and businesses closed early. The storm circled a hub of low pressure that set a record for the years they have been kept. Winds reached up to 113 kilometres an hour.

Tow truck owner Frank Toth lost a leg in an accident during the storm. Mr. Toth had been called to pull a police cruiser out of the ditch. He was working at the rear of

his truck when a northbound car, blinded by the driving snow rammed him into his truck. Off duty police constable Alex Fishbein and Ken Chappell rushed to the scene and transported Mr. Toth to Guelph General Hospital in Mr. Chappell's station wagon as they could not wait for an ambulance.

February 8: According to a draft of the regional budget, taxes for regional purposes will range from an increase of 34.1 per cent in urban Georgetown to a decrease of 15.7 per cent in the former town of

Acton.

February 15: Damage is set at \$100,000 following a fire which completely destroyed Elissa Shoe Store, Mill St., at supper time. Forty firefighters from Acton and Georgetown fought the flames for six hours. Electrical wiring is blamed.

Another blaze less than 48 hours later on the same street forced Mr. and Mrs. Cory Van Merkesteyn and son Shawn to flee from their home about three a.m. as flames engulfed the entire house. The three had been forced to jump from

a second floor balcony. Mr. Van Merkesteyn sustained back injuries in the jump and he and his wife were transported to Georgetown hospital in ambulance. Damage was estimated at \$63,000.

February 22: Halton Hills has decided to buy the former Hochen's Bakery on Willow St. S. for downtown parking.

March 1: Fire ripped through a townhouse owned by Mr. and Mrs. Colin Brackenridge causing \$50,000 in damages.

March 8: Ontario Energy Minister Reuben Baetz placed the fate of the unfinished parts of the controversial Bruce-Georgetown Ontario Hydro corridor at the top of his priority list after a meeting in Toronto. In the meantime, construction of hydro towers of the Colbeck to Limehouse lines has reached Highway 24.

March 16: The Acton town hall has been declared "unsafe" by the Ministry of labor and the building has been condemned.

Neither the 500 kV hydro corridor or the Ontario cabinet are being moved by a plea for a rerouting of the line to cheaper and what some experts consider a better route than the proposed route from the Bruce generating station to Milton.

March 22: The Province and Halton Hills have agreed the huge Acton East development east of Churchill Rd. will have to be put on hold. Sewage capacity was cited as the reason.

March 29: Alexander "Sandy" Best, former Halton

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