

Humor colors opening of region's building

by Rod Lamb
Humor chastizing the green exterior of Halton's new headquarters was the theme which punctuated the speeches of dignitaries at the official opening Friday, June 1.

Regional chairman Jack Raftis called it "The Green Monster." "The Incredible Hulk" was the term Burlington MP Bill Kempling chose to describe it.

"The Jolly Green Giant," were the words of Oakville MPP Jim Snow, Minister of Transportation and Communications.

Premier Bill Davis, the guest of honor, thought the color "tremendous."

Mr. Raftis led off with the explanations of how the building became green.

Speaking to approximately 400 people on the front steps, he said he was told green was a compromise color.

If a person mixes Tory Blue, Liberal Red and NDP Orange and Black, they get green, he said.

Another story he threw out was that Mr. Snow's department had green paint left over from painting signs and offered it to the region—cheap.

The third story, and the one he gave the most credence to, was the architect had ordered it green because he had noted the region's coat of arms was mostly green.

Oakville Mayor Harry Barrett offered his version of how the building adopted its hue.

He said the committee deciding the color was composed of four Tories who favored blue and four Liberals opting for red. He, being the ninth and deciding person, selected green.

Mr. Davis interjected humor throughout his speech.

He kidded Mr. Raftis, who had said he was going to be brief.

Mr. Davis noted Mr. Raftis was longest winded of everyone.

He said Mr. Raftis had introduced everyone in the audience except for 50 people. And that included all his in-laws.

Taking a poke at Mr. Barrett, Mr. Davis said it was typical of the Oakville mayor to make a non-controversial speech and still end up sitting on the fence.

Mr. Snow came in for some teasing, too.

Mr. Davis said he was three minutes late getting to the ceremony. He said the holdup was on account of construction in Peel. Yet when he passed into Halton, everything was smooth sailing, a sure sign Mr. Snow looked after his own constituents first.

To His Excellency, Bishop James MacDonnell who gave the invocation and blessed the building, Premier Davis suggested some people needed his wisdom. Unfortunately, most would reject it.

Noting Halton MPP Julian Reed was the only Liberal on the platform, Mr. Davis said that was unfortunate. However, he noted he was wearing a blue suit.

When introducing Mr. Reed, Mr. Raftis said Mr. Reed had attended every sewage plant opening since he was elected and the region still couldn't get rid of him.

"You see," Mr. Raftis explained, "every plant has a grit remover."

Mr. Reed, in reply, said he felt like "a rose among thorns."

Mr. Davis used humor as a smokescreen to his speech. "I am in the process of making it up."

Arriving at the serious part of what he had to say, the Premier praised the people who made regional government work.

Problems which exist today were unforeseen. He looked at his own riding in the 20 years he had been elected and noted it was now several ridings because of the phenomenal growth in population.

Mr. Davis and Mr. Raftis unveiled a plaque which commemorates the official opening.

Although the building has been in use since last fall, June 1 was selected as the date to open it after the bugs had been worked out of the structure.

Architect Dennis Peters presented Mr. Raftis with the keys to the \$2.6 million complex.

Tapestries of the four municipalities were presented to the region to be hung in the council chambers.

Milton Mayor Don Gordon singled out Lea Jensen who had done the rug-hooking on Milton's banner.

Marjorie Nazer who embroidered the coat of arms of Halton Hills, was noted by Halton Hills Mayor Peter Pomeroy.

Mr. Barrett, who spoke twice because the regional building is in Oakville, said his city's banner had been the work of the Oakville Stitchery Guild.

Burlington had no tapestry to present.

Burlington Mayor Koly Bird joked his city was so busy attracting industrial development, it didn't get around to doing one.

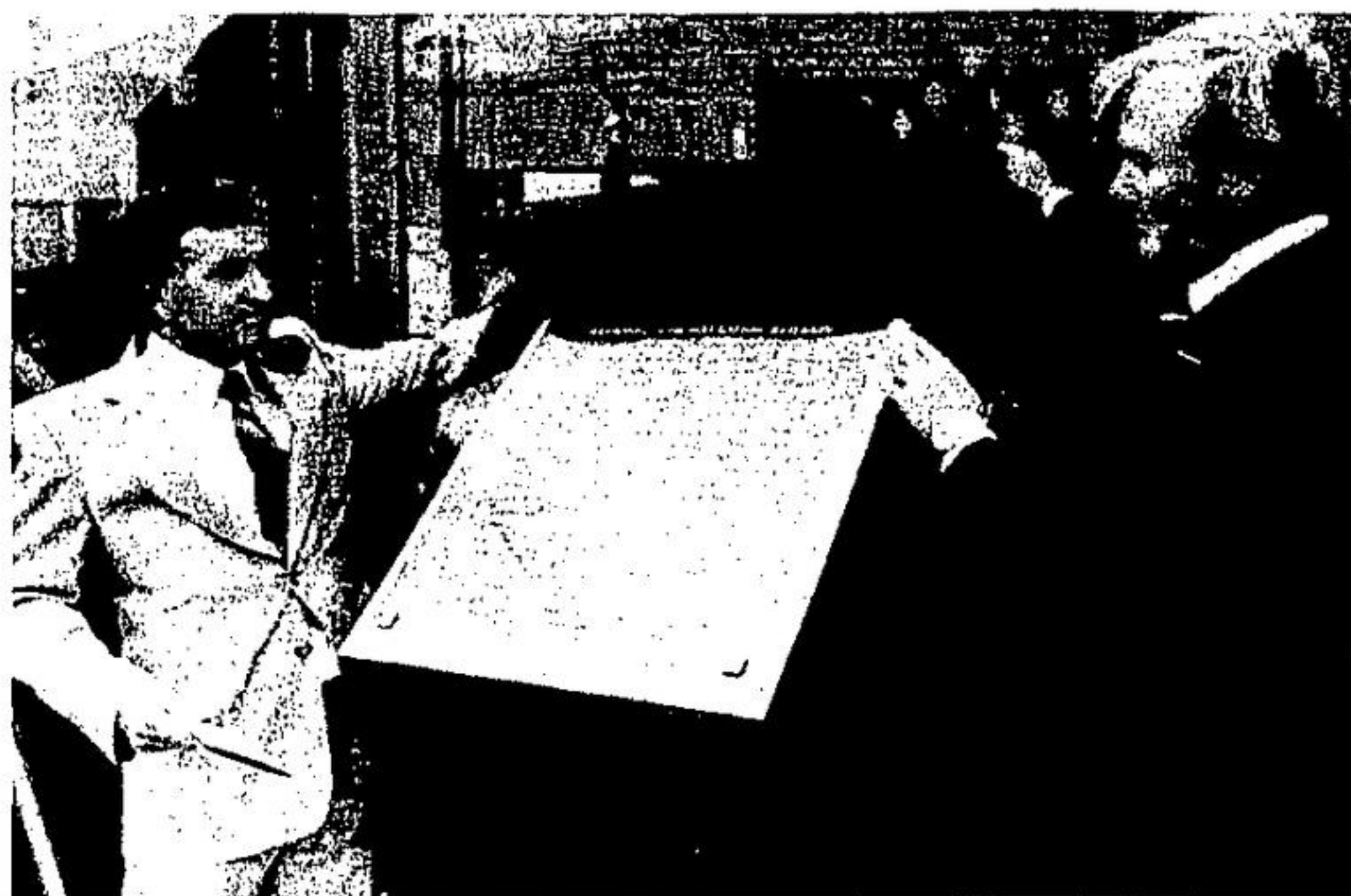
In the regional council chambers was the city's poster. It was sitting on a chair. All four coats of arms as well as the region's, had been designed by Dorothy Stone of Halton Hills, who was in attendance.

The Burlington Teen Band attended. In red jackets, blue trousers and shakos, the colorful procession played prior to the beginning of the ceremony.

The Anwabi Quartet of the Oakville Symphony performed in the council chambers during the reception.

Guests had the option of enjoying wines and hors d'oeuvres under a green and white tent in the courtyard or sampling pastries and coffee in the foyer during the reception.

The building was open to inspection. Displays by



Unveiling the plaque celebrating the official opening of Halton's new headquarters Friday, June 1 are regional chairman Jack Raftis (left) and Premier Bill Davis. Approximately 400 people attended the ceremony which was held on the building's front steps.



Halton MPP Julian Reed, the only Liberal among the platform of dignitaries at the opening described himself as "a rose among thorns."

The regional police, development department, health and social services, public works and the Grand River Conservation Authority were on show.

The building has 48,000 square feet and houses 218 employees. Situated on Bronte Road north of the Queen Elizabeth Way, the modern structure is the first permanent home for the region.

MPP George Kerr noted the fact in his speech. The grounds are landscaped and there is now an illuminated sign at the entrance.

The shallow, rock-lined moat which surrounds the council chambers, now has fountains. Complimenting the quartet's performance was the sound of running water which came in through the open doors.

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Among the guests at the official opening of Halton's regional headquarters Friday, June 1 was Dorothy Stone, designer of the region's coat of arms and those of the four municipalities within it. To the left is Halton MPP Julian Reed and on the right, Premier Bill Davis.

Executive elected
Last Tuesday evening, the Scout and Guide Mothers held their annual elections at the Scout Hall conducted by Mrs. Ann Norton.

As of September the executive will be: President, Mrs. Virginia Russell; vice-president, Mrs. Kathy McGillivray; treasurer, Mrs. Marie Pruter; secretary, Mrs. Leslie Johnston. The group appreciates those who donated their time, effort and enthusiasm on the previous year's executive. The first meeting of the fall will be announced in the Coming Events column of the Free Press in August.

Robert Allan turns 90

A small birthday party was held May 24 in Hyde Park Nursing Home, Guelph for Robert Allan, who turned 90 years old.

Mr. Allan was born May 24, 1889 on the Second Line of Erin, a son of Sarah Kennedy and Robert Allan. Except for a few months when a young 15 year old adventurer moved to Acton to work in the saw mill, Mr. Allan lived on Lot 2, Con. 3 most of his life farming the land in 1964, Mr. Allan moved in with son Grant, on Lake Ave. for nine years. He then moved to St. Joseph's and and later to Hyde Park.

In 1914, he married Alice Storey of Nassagaweya, three years his senior. She died 18 years ago, while he was still on the farm. Even at 90 years old, Mr. Allan enjoys good health, although he is frail. He never had any hobbies, son Grant says. Farmers don't have much time for such luxuries. Attending last week's party were son Robert, Hamilton and Grant, their wives, six grandchildren and one great grandchild. Son George, in Erin, was unable to attend.

Total Immersion open house today

Participants of the Total Immersion program, at Acton High School are holding Open House for the 1979 Down to Earth Program, this afternoon (Wednesday) until 6 p.m.

This special day has been set aside to show the group's accomplishments and to give you more insight on what the program is all about.

The Total Immersion program is made up of 16 senior high school students who spend a great deal of time outside of the school from February until the end of June. Main ideas of study include pioneer skills, ecology and outdoor lifestyles.

Part of their curriculum has them actively involved in the community.

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