

Election night in Acton

Jelinek wins, but no Tory joy

by Diana Waltmann
Otto Jelinek won Acton and the riding but Acton Conservatives didn't feel much like celebrating Monday night.

A few minutes after 8 p.m. things began to liven up. For one thing, bars could open again, the weather was milder and Party workers were racing from poll to poll to headquarters with the early results.

At and Sharon Foster's home on Lakeview Street was turned into NDP command post for Acton.

Campaigners had mixed feelings about the results they brought in.

Their man, Doug Black, did not win, but he did capture two polls, if only by a few votes, and came close in several more, sometimes beating Liberal candidate Bill Perras.

Supporters turned their attention to the national scene to watch CBC's Knowlton Nash predict a Liberal majority around 8:45 p.m.
Ed Broadbent NDPers were falling victims to

the Maritime swing to Liberal and the Foster's reaction wasn't joyous.

Acton Liberals chose to watch the returns at Perras' Milton headquarters. No one was around the five Acton command posts to see Perras capture seven polls and tie the Conservatives in three others.

It was all gloom and doom at the Progressive Conservative headquarters on Mill Street. Results of the polls were almost all in, giving

incumbent Otto Jelinek a victory in Acton, but not by much.

P.C. campaign manager for Acton, Brian Cargill, was worried. He called the Oakville headquarters several times to find out results from the rest of the riding.

Other Acton Tories gathered around the portable television set to watch the national results.

They could not believe their eyes and ears. Canadians in the east were voting in a Liberal majority defeating the

government the supporters worked so hard to elect only months earlier.

Most Acton Conservatives were predicting disaster for the country.

"Gas won't rise by 18 cents now," said one. "It will rise by 30 cents."

"We may as well welcome in gas rationing, because that's what Trudeau said he'd bring in," another warned.

early, and most workers went home.

Brian Cargill summed it up for all of them when he said, "Well, we did our best. There is nothing more we can do. At least our man got in."

He said he was going to get signs made up and carry them wherever he goes.

"Don't blame me, I voted Conservative."

Acton vote

Jelinek majority reduced

Progressive Conservative candidate Otto Jelinek topped the Acton and Esqueving polls in Halton riding on his way back to Ottawa in Monday's federal election, however his majority in this area was reduced.

Jelinek collected 1,812 Acton and Esqueving votes (according to unofficial results provided by the local Tory campaign office), down 468 ballots from his total of 2,317 last May.

Rookie Liberal candidate Bill Perras came in second with 1,529. He improved on '79 candidate Dr. Frank Philbrook's total of 1,406 by 123 votes.

Third place finisher was New Democratic Party candidate Doug Black with 973 votes, 103 more than he drew in this area last May.

This newspaper couldn't obtain a break-down of votes for the other three candidates: Robert Ritchie-Independent, Karen Selick-Libertarian and Charles Shrybman, Marxist-Leninist. The three candidates lumped under the heading of Others attracted 22 votes, three less than the same trio picked up last year.

The turnout was down a little, 242 from last May when 4,618 ballots were cast in Acton and Esqueving. Monday 4,376 people voted.

Jelinek won 16 of the 25 polls, which included one split poll and the advance poll, while Perras captured seven polls. The Conservative and Liberal candidates tied three other polls. Black won two Acton and area polls. Perras came second in 14 polls, Jelinek in five and Black in

three. Jelinek ran third in one poll, Perras four and Black 20.

Following is an unofficial poll by poll tally:

Poll Number	Perras	Jelinek	Black	Other
252A	82	82	27	0
252B	86	75	41	2
253	62	102	49	3
254	87	83	34	0
255	76	80	44	3
256	74	93	41	0
257	61	68	51	0
258	54	60	32	0
259	26	19	29	0
260	58	65	31	2
261	54	54	31	1
262	59	59	32	1
263	69	100	45	2
264	57	54	35	2
265	57	63	42	1
266	76	79	54	0
267	39	34	17	3
268	22	44	37	0
269	65	83	75	0
270	46	70	53	0
271	82	116	35	0
272	61	130	40	0
273	63	73	30	0
274	34	35	38	1
Advance	79	128	30	1
Total	1529	1852	973	22

Vukovich fund over \$1,100

Over \$1,100 was raised before the New Year for the Vukovich family, a trustee of the fund, Gary Barton, says.

A trust fund was set up for the family following a tragic incident last October in Iowa in which one of Dr. Joseph Vukovich's sons was killed and

two other sons seriously injured. The family moved to Iowa from Acton last August.

It is alleged that Dr. Vukovich's wife, Gail, stabbed seven-year-old Michael to death and also wounded Matthew, five and Jonathan, age four months at the time of the

incident. Mr. Barton reported the fund raised more than \$1,100 and at the request of the family remains in the Bank of Nova Scotia, pending a decision regarding its use.

Mrs. Vukovich has been in custody in the psychiatric ward of St. Francis' Hospital in Waterloo, Iowa, since the incident. She recently appeared in court and pleaded not guilty to the first degree murder charge and two counts of

attempted murder. Prosecutor Jim Sheerer said he expects Mrs. Vukovich will offer an insanity defence. She goes on trial in April.

Dental week in April

The week of April 13 to 20 will be dental health week in Halton Hills. Monday night council supported the Halton-Peel Dental Association's request to proclaim the week in April Dental Health Week.



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We praise the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides of this community... for working together to expand their ideas, sharing their pastimes and fun times and partaking in worthwhile projects.

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Over the past few years wells in the Sarnia area and along the shores of Lake Erie have been uncapped and are producing again, with handsome financial results.

But there's a difference between the wells down by Lake Erie and the ones in North Halton, Bryant points out.

The difference is in rock formations and where the oil and gas are found.

In other areas on Ontario, where gas and oil are being pumped profitably and new discoveries are being made, there are several sedimentary levels where fossil fuels are found at just one level, 1,800 or 1,900 feet down. "Gas is found at a deeper level in other areas. Often at different levels. But there (North Halton) the different formations just aren't there. You just get one chance to find the gas, at just one level," Bryant explains.

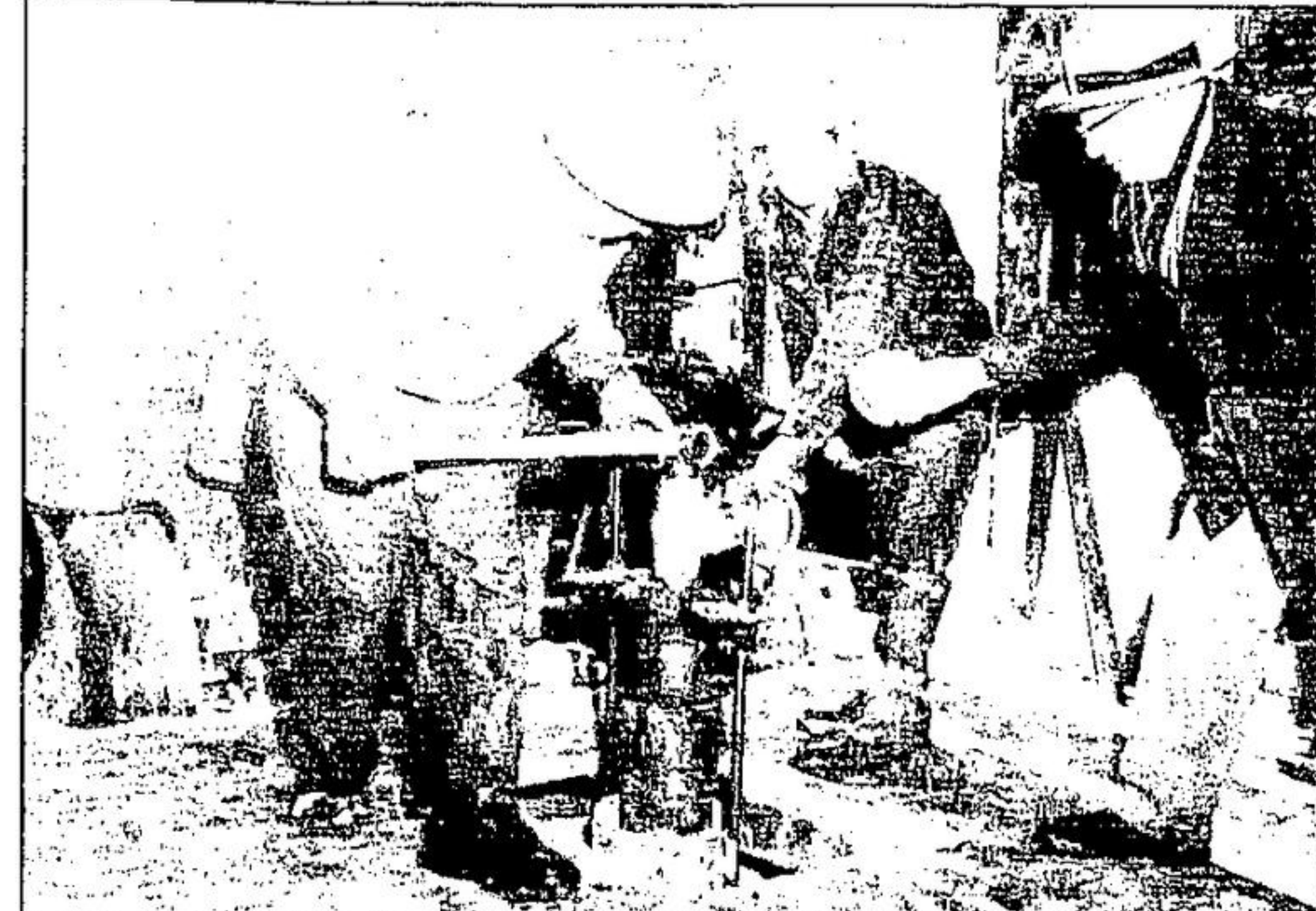
University of Guelph geologist Ward Chesworth, also doesn't think there's enough gas left in the Acton area to make it commercially viable. He suspects most of the gas that's in the ground has been found already and there isn't much left in the wells.

Both the Acton and Hornby area fields are reservoirs of a "particularly geological structure called an anticline, a fold where the two sides slope away from each other," Chesworth explains.

In the anticlines around here "aporous limestone containing the mineral dolomite (calcium magnesium carbonate) is trapped between two types of impervious rock. Oil and gas migrate upwards through the porous limestone and collect in the apex of the fold, where the non-porous cap rock prevents them from going any higher. Only by drilling a well can they be extracted," Chesworth said.

So, while the higher prices for gas and oil and new technology is once again making Ontario, in a small way, a producing province, prospects aren't good for the wells in the Acton area. So far industry has determined there aren't sufficient reservoirs to justify the expense of putting them back in production.

Investors lost a lot of money in earlier years and nobody is coming forward to chance more losses on what looks to have been just a dream.



Tony Seynuck is pictured here inside a drilling shed in Esqueving in the mid '50s with workers Warren Hippol and Lorne McKillop, left and centre. Seynuck made a number of natural gas finds in Esqueving and sold the fuel to Union Gas for many years.

Gas riches may await . . .

(Continued from page 1)

By July of 1955, Seynuck had four wells in operation, a fifth pending and had started work on a sixth, located a mile-and-a-half east of Guelph on A. Koens' property.

Beginning in August of that year Seynuck found himself in a long struggle against Halton Natural Gas and United Suburban Gas to obtain the franchise for the three towns. In March, 1956, the decision was finally reached and United Gas won and Seynuck was something of a winner. United Suburban, forerunner of Union Gas, had to buy his gas or it wouldn't get the franchise.

At the start of the excitement over Seynuck's discoveries he had leased well rights over an area of 10,000 acres, 48 square miles, in an area bounded by Eden Mills on the west, the Fourth Line on the east, Speyside Road on the south and Erin Township boundary on the north.

From press accounts of the many hearings during the battle to bring natural gas service to North Halton comes indications of the optimism of Seynuck and his associates for the future. He figured his firm could be ready to distribute its own gas from its own wells within a year of obtaining the franchise.

Councillors were worried about Anthony Gas ability to produce enough gas to serve the area but at the same time wanted local gas used. The two competing firms had arrangements in place to supply gas from larger companies, which could get gas from much larger wells in Ontario and from Alberta.

Officers of Anthony Gas showed councillors at one meeting a "comparison table" demonstrated the present volume from the four producing wells were capable of supplying more gas than the total consumed "by different Ontario municipalities now using natural gas."

"There's lots of gas in this area," Ruddick told the town fathers of the day. He told them there was enough "on tap now" to serve the likely needs of all of Acton, Georgetown and Milton for the first year of service.

The favored firms were willing to enter into agreements to buy Seynuck's gas but he refused to answer their letters and at one hearing vowed to never sell gas to Halton Natural Gas. At every opportunity he publicly objected to applications by other firms, stating his local gas should be used to supply homeowners first. Seynuck thought since his firm had gas it should also handle distribution. Ruddick repeatedly pointed out that until natural gas was found in the Acton area nobody seemed interested in supplying Acton, Georgetown and Milton.

In 1956 Hugh Wharton, an officer of Seynuck's firm, proclaimed confidently they could produce 800,000 cubic feet of natural gas daily. He noted natural gas was being used since the second gas strike to heat workers' shacks, for cooking and for heating water used in the drilling operations.

At a council meeting in January, 1956, Seynuck noted he'd spent 27 years looking until he found "the finest gas." Out of nine holes drilled he'd found gas in seven.

By March, 1956, Anthony Gas and Oil had leases on 60 square miles of Esqueving land and six wells were in production. Two more exploratory wells were being dug. There were other wells, not in production too.

Anthony Gas and Oil would concentrate on exploring and producing, Seynuck decided, since it wouldn't be distributing gas.

In May, 1956, what was described as "high grade" oil was found near well number eight, south of Acton. An oil expert, one D.R. Murphy said the oil find "could prove to be one of the richest finds in the country." That was obviously wrong. Only tracings were found. In February, 1957, Seynuck found more gas near Acton, describing his find as his "biggest" yet.

Seynuck kept exploring, moving a little further south and made major gas finds in the Hornby area in 1956 and 1960. One well, which came in in 1960, was on the Lloyd Marchmont farm south of Highway 401 and east of Hornby. Seynuck hit the gas at 1,700 feet and estimated the flow would be 250,000 cubic feet a day. Another Hornby area well was on land owned by former MPP Stan Hall.

One reason for all the optimism about oil and gas riches in North Halton was the fact the Trenton Limestone, or Ontario Arch, rock formation begins just north of Acton and extends southwest under Lake Erie, into Ohio and Indiana. By the mid-50s, 610 million barrels of oil had been pumped out of this formation in Ohio and prolific wells were in operation in Ontario along the shores of Lake Erie.

Anthony Gas and Oil began selling natural gas to United Suburban and later Union Gas in early 1956. Some of it undoubtedly heated homes in North Halton since in the summer of '56 gas went into service here.

According to Bob Lewis, Union Gas spokesman, they kept buying gas from the local firm until November, 1973, when Anthony Gas and Oil was sold to Anthex Industries of London. Seynuck died in 1967, prior to the sale of his company.

In January, 1974, the contract was cancelled. The pressure in the wells was gone and Anthex couldn't meet its supply quota of a minimum of 75,000 cubic feet a day. Anthex wasn't producing any more than 42,000 cubic feet a day. Lewis notes that isn't much gas since the average household uses 125,000 cubic feet of gas a year.

was gone but because they didn't have the capital to invest in new equipment to bring up more gas.

There might be a lot of gas left in North Halton, maybe even some oil, too, Ron Bryant, head of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources' petroleum resources branch admits. But it will sit there until the industry finds it an economically viable project to drain existing wells and search for more.

Even though there's chance there could be more gas and Canada is supposed to have an energy crisis, the province has been plugging the long abandoned wells that were simply left to deteriorate by the previous owners.

After Anthex went into receivership the province took over ownership of the wells and invited landowners to buy them for a nominal fee. One farmer took the offer and uses the gas for heating his own farm buildings. The rest declined and now the province is in the process of having the wells plugged. Bryant notes some of the wells are still in good condition and haven't been emptied, so if anyone's interested . . .

If a firm wanted to produce the gas deposits commercially Bryant thinks they'd have to first spend a considerable sum "stimulating" the existing wells and of course do a lot more exploratory drilling.

The present energy situation could make the Halton deposits important in the years ahead so the province is certainly not against more exploration, he said.

Unfortunately, there is no guarantee, he says, that there is any commercially recoverable gas left in the area. While traces of oil were found it was mostly natural gas, so hopes of finding higher priced oil are even slimmer than discovering more gas.

Two or three oil and gas exploration and drilling firms have made enquiries about the leases, which are probably null and void now, Bryant says, but because of Anthex's receivership status have a cloud over them. These companies carried out some studies and then backed away, Bryant notes. "Ultimately" the wells will likely be plugged, a task costing anywhere from \$5,000 to \$20,000.

He noted many of the dozen or so wells out in Esqueving aren't drained and the province doesn't want to see them capped when there is still gas down there.

Bryant explained, to get the remaining gas out might cost \$100,000 to \$200,000 for a compressor and other equipment but a firm might recover just \$10,000 worth of gas.

North Halton's gas deposits are an expensive gamble.

"I'm not saying there isn't a lot more gas which could be recovered but you have to assume they (Anthex) looked for more gas, didn't find any and went broke doing it," Bryant observed. Since then, Bryant said, industry has looked at the wells and examined the chances of finding more gas and backed away, so that indicates they didn't think they could get enough to offset the huge costs.

The first successful commercial oil well was sunk in 1958 in Ontario near Petrolia, and since then oil and gas have been brought into production in a number of areas. As cheap oil came in from Alberta fields, many wells in Ontario were closed down.

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