

Brass angers Martha

by Helen Murray

The Toronto Maple Leafs are in danger of losing their longest and one of their staunchest fans if all the magement vs. players hassles don't end. Two of her favorite players were traded this season and she's pretty angry with management.

Martha Jackson, 98, of Maple View Lodge, R.R. 2, Acton, has been a fan of the Leafs since they were first formed, even before they were known as the Leafs. She and her husband use to gather around the radio and listen to a bright, young commentator by the name of Foster Hewitt describe plays by the likes of Sid Smith, Syl Apps, Babby Baum, Hap Day, Turk Broda, George Armstrong, Teeder Kennedy, John Bowcr, etc.

She was such a Leaf nut that in over 50 years of watching the team on television, or listening to them on the radio, she missed only one game because she had company—and she was quite put out. That's changed this season.

On her 96th birthday, Mrs. Jackson expressed, in a Free Press article, how she felt about Darryl Sittler, her favorite in the team's history. The line of Sittler, Lanny McDonald and Tiger Williams was her all-time favorite.

On her 97th birthday, Mrs. Jackson was taken to a Leaf practice where she saw her idols in action, and spent several minutes talking to her favorite players. It was the thrill of her life.

However, things have changed at Maple View Lodge.

She was beginning to tire of all the problems, and their constant losing streaks, but she still

considered the team number one. That was, until the day Lanny McDonald was traded. That day she was devastated.

It was another Harold Ballard folly, as far as she was concerned. He was the one who should be traded. Mrs. Jackson said, not one of the team's best players, and certainly not a man who had just one year ago asked her out for a date.

Mrs. Jackson was recently in the hospital for a month, and was much too ill to even care about the Leafs during her stay away from home. When she arrived back home, she learned Tiger Williams had been traded.

She glanced at the hockey stick in the corner of her room with the name Tiger Williams on it, a birthday gift she received from Tiger himself. Her faith was crumbling.

First Lanny, now Tiger. Her contempt for owner Ballard and general manager Punch Imlach was affecting her admiration for the team itself. Breaking up the best line the team had ever had. What next?

She decided if they ever traded Darryl, she would have to carefully reassess the team. She could not just change her loyalty to the team Darryl went to, as she had always been a Leaf fan, and considered herself too old to change in mid-stream. Mrs. Jackson concluded she'd have to take a long look at her passion for the sport of hockey itself.

Well, the trading deadline passed and Darryl, who had been playing superbly in recent weeks, is still a Leaf, but Mrs. Jackson is still hearing trade talk regarding Sittler being gone by next season. She's plenty worried.

She just doesn't know what to do. After over 50 years, maybe even 75: she has a hard time remembering when she first became a hockey fanatic; Mrs. Jackson doesn't care anymore if the television is tuned into Hockey Night in Canada on Wednesday and Saturday nights. She doesn't care if the Leafs win or lose. She doesn't care who Ballard decides to axe next. She doesn't care about keeping her scrapbook up to date. She just doesn't give a hoot about any of them.

She assures everyone it is not her age which has made her change her mind. At 98, she is still fairly spry, and after leaving the hospital was put on bed rest for three weeks. After three hours of lying around however, she was up and raring to go. If the Leafs are upset they lost their most loyal fan, they can be assured it is not personal. Her disappointment is with Ballard and Imlach.

"They didn't want Imlach first time around, why did they take him back?" she asks. "It was the stupidest thing they ever did," she stated.

It's been a good season for hockey in spite of her Leaf problems. She was "tickled pink" when the Montreal Canadiens suffered the longest losing streak in the team's history. "They needed to be knocked down a few pegs." As for the Philadelphia Flyers, she was thrilled when they put together the longest winning streak ever in the NHL history. She hopes they win the Stanley Cup this year.

"I guess even if old Harold (Ballard) was tradeable, no one would want him," she giggled. "So the Leafs, and unfortunately the fans are stuck with him. No wonder he and Punch get along so well."



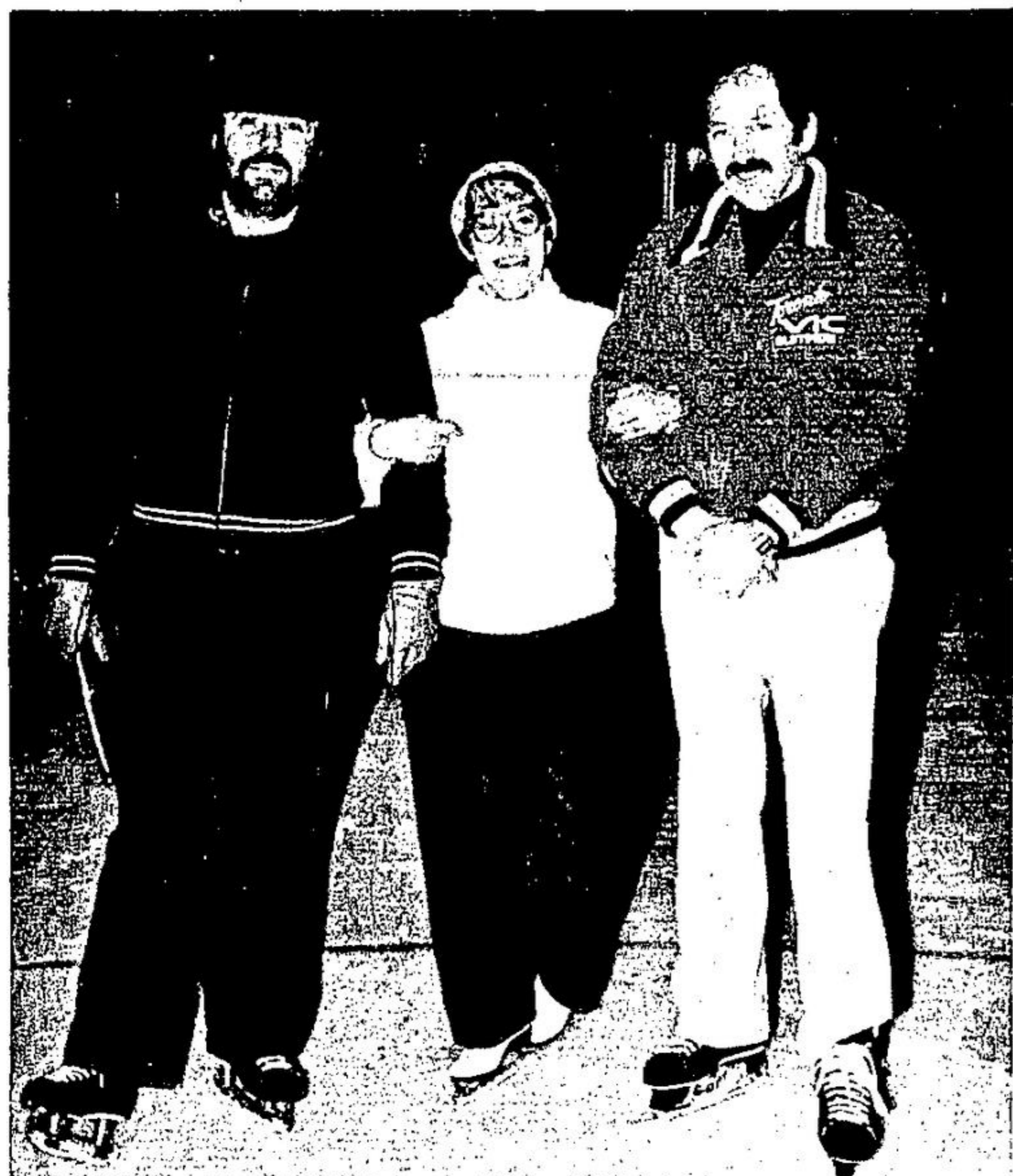
Longtime Leaf fan Martha Jackson misses two of her three favorite players, Lanny McDonald and Tiger Williams, very much. Both players were traded by Punch Imlach and Harold Ballard this season and she's mighty put out with Leaf management. She's glad they didn't peddle her favorite Leaf of all time, Darryl Sittler, but is concerned he'll be dealt before next season. Mrs. Jackson figures Ballard must have a copy of this picture and be throwing darts at it to see who he'll deal next, Darryl or her. But if she is next, she says she won't report to her new team. This photo was taken when Mrs. Jackson was the special guest at a Leaf practise on her 97th birthday in November, 1978. Photo by HELEN MURRAY

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Hundreds of youngsters and some people who are just young at heart participated in Sunday's annual Acton Rotary Club Skate-A-Thon at the Community Centre. Dave Whiting, Terry Grubbe and Carl Hymers did their 60 laps just like the kids. For more skate-a-thon photos turn to page 5. Photo by GORD MURRAY

"Small" lay-off at Beardmore

There will be some lay-offs at Beardmore next week.

In an interview Monday Donald Rankin, Beardmore personnel manager, said there will be a "small" lay-off. Between 25 and 30 people are

expected to be laid off. "We don't know how long they'll be laid off. Hopefully it will be for as short a time as possible," Rankin declared. He added Beardmore doesn't think it will be a long lay-off.

He noted the entire tanning industry is operating under capacity and that problem is affecting Beardmore too. Rankin said the firm must trim its labor force, numbering about 500 now including office workers, to

reflect the fact the plant is operating under capacity. Rankin said the lay-offs will hit every department. There was a lay-off of approximately 10 people two months ago at Beardmore.

Citizen of Year deadline Friday

Actonians have just two more days to submit nominations for the Citizen of the Year.

Nomination ballots appear in today's paper and can be sent to Acton Chamber of Commerce, Post Office Box 416, or dropped off at the Community Services Centre. The deadline for submitting nominations is midnight Friday, March 14.

The recipient of the award will be named next Tuesday night, March 18, and the winner honored at a dinner at Acton

Legion on April 12. The recipient will be Acton's 23rd Citizen of the Year. Previous winners have included G.A. Dills, Amos Mason, Dr. W.C. Kenny, Bill Coon, Madeline Gibbons, John Goy, M.Z. Bennet, William Middleton, Fred Wright, George Musselle, Charlie Thomson, Steve Papillon, Ted Tyler, Sr., Dave Dills, George Elliott, Les Duly, Isabel Watson, Dr. Frank Oakes, Acton OPP, St. John's Ambulance, Acton Firefighters and last year's winner Rev. Andrew McKenzie.

Two readers share their memories of Ireland. Turn to page 4.

McKenzie-Smith students are presenting Anne of Green Gables tonight and tomorrow. See story on page 3.

Acton GO bus fares will likely go up next month. See how much on page 3.

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Halton high school teachers Strike vote Thursday

by Eric Elstone

Halton is heading for its first teachers' strike. Halton high school teachers are set to hold a strike vote Thursday, under the supervision of the provincial Education Relations Commission.

A five-hour attempt at mediation last weekend failed. In the words of mediator Martin Teplitsky "serious differences of principle separate the parties."

The recommendation by Teplitsky that the Halton Board of Education and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) seek either arbitration or mediation and arbitration was accepted by the board's salary committee chairman Bill Lawson.

OSSTF provincial negotiator Neil Munro, however, rejected arbitration because "we feel we've not gotten a realistic offer from the board."



Ron Ness

Tomorrow Halton's 1,165 high school teachers will take their first ever strike vote, a tactic the provincial OSSTF hopes will spur the board back to the negotiating table.

According to Munro, if the weekend meeting with mediator Teplitsky had been productive, then teachers would have postponed or cancelled

the vote.

There are four questions dividing teachers and the board: wages, benefits, retirement gratuity and staffing.

The main stumbling block appears to be retirement gratuity. Retirement Gratuity is a lump sum payment to a retiring teacher. The most it can amount to is half the final year's salary.

"It is the most significant difference in principle" Lawson said, referring to retirement gratuity. Retirement gratuity, however, is a point the OSSTF "is very firm on".

The board predicts that in five years the cost of this benefit will be in the millions, however, teacher representatives say they are puzzled by the board's insistence on cutting the benefit because no other board in the area has made retirement gratuity an issue.



Bill Lawson

Retirement gratuity has outlived its usefulness, as far as the board's concerned. Once it helped teachers' incomes when pay and superannuation were lower. That was some 20 years ago.

One of the "differences in principle" keeping the sides apart relates to wages. The board wants

to maintain the parity in wages that exists between high school and public school teachers, according to Lawson. Parity would help in transferring teachers. OSSTF meanwhile sees wages from a different angle.

In comparing Halton with other boards, Halton's offer in dollars and cents to its most experienced teachers is at most \$1,000 less than that offered by neighboring boards of education, according to OSSTF.

One issue which offers some flexibility is staffing. OSSTF states it is prepared to move on staffing. The board meanwhile is of the opinion it already has quality education without having to adopt the provincial pupil-teacher ratio of 10.9:1.

The board has softened its position regarding the length of the contract. During the February 27

meeting the board dropped its efforts to make the contract non-retroactive.

There are 26 articles in the collective agreement. "Most strikes are settled by arbitration; therefore, if we go to arbitration now it would be the most responsible move by everybody," said Acton-Esqueing trustee Betty Fisher.

"To go ahead with a strike vote is, as far as I see, what they want. I think they should realize it's tough for the board to go to arbitration. The decision could go against the board. Who knows?"

Under mediation-arbitration a third party would bring the two sides as close as possible to an agreement on as many issues as possible. When no further progress is possible, the third party makes a binding ruling on the outstanding questions. And that's that.

Old post office bell displayed at Snelgrove collector's home

by Gord Murray

The bell which tolled the hours in Acton for over half a century from the top of the old post office tower at the corner of Mill and Willow Streets is today the most impressive piece in a Snelgrove area man's huge collection of bells. It's safe, sound and beautifully displayed.

It's 10 years ago this month since the old federal building was demolished and the beautiful bell was acquired by Hillis E. Rowland, RR 2 Brampton.

Rowland, a campanologist (student of bell lore) had a special bellfry or bell-tower constructed on his property to "properly display" the Acton bell.

"I'm proud to own it. It's an excellent bell and the largest bell in any collection," he said in a recent interview.

Rowland has been an insurance agent for 22 years and it was on a call to an Esqueing customer in 1976 that he found out about the Acton bell.

He quickly contacted the Guelph wrecker who was demolishing the old post office and after some bargaining was able to acquire the bell. He won't divulge the price he paid for the piece of this community's history, but it didn't come cheap.

Rowland had the big bell transported to his Highway 10 farm, needing hydraulics to lift it. It sat for a time until he found a way to properly display it.

"In order to make the bell look good I had to have it in the proper setting and properly displayed," Rowland explained. While he made plans for displaying the Acton bell "immediately" it took some time to put his plan into action.

He bought British Columbia fir from the Dale estate in Brampton when it was being demolished. The Dales were famous for their autographed roses. Dale was stamped on a leaf of every rose, and the timbers were part of the sorting room.

Once he had the timbers, Rowland found a carpenter to build an "authentic" bellfry or bell-tower. The tower doesn't contain a single nail, it's completely mortised and pegged.

There aren't any markings on the bell, which is 47 inches across and 34 inches high, but he assumes it



Hillis Rowland poses with the beautiful bell he bought which used to cue the time for Actonians for over 50 years from the top of the post office building tower on Mill Street. It has been 10 years since Rowland, a bell collector from the Snelgrove area, acquired the Acton bell. He built a bell-tower for it and has it displayed prominently on his farm on Highway 10.

was made in the United States.

The wider the mouth and thicker the bell, the better, Rowland says. Acton's old post office bell is both thick and wide. It weighs two tons.

A good bell's sound has a lengthy ring, the longer it rings, the better the bell is.

The Acton bell is a great one. One bang of the striker produced a ring for over 30 seconds.

"I spared no expense," Rowland said, referring to the purchase and displaying of the Acton bell. "I did the very best I knew how to display the bell so it would look good."

"Bells rule your life from the time you're born until you die. Think of it for a while and you'll see what I mean," Rowland explained.