

Our readers write

Chief defends force

Mr. H.L. Doberthien, President, L. and L. Ford Mercury Sales, 45 Main Street, North, Acton, Ontario, L7J 1W3

Dear Mr. Doberthien, I regret that, like many other residents of this, and any other municipality, city, town or village, you have joined the ranks of those who have become the victim of crimes. Regrettably, because of the type of business you conduct, you have suffered on more than one occasion.

As a citizen and victim of crime, you have every right and justification to be concerned and I would assure you, Sir, that your concerns are shared by the officers and men of the Halton Regional Police Force. In my capacity as Chief of Police, I feel it my duty to give account of the quantity and quality of police service delivered to the community, to anyone who might ask it. I am prepared to discuss the response of this police force to your needs at any time and, hopefully, from that discussion will come a better understanding of each other's situation.

I must confess to concern at the manner in which you chose to bring these matters to my attention. Many members of the force are convinced that you are not, in fact, writing to me but to the local media and that, in doing so, you have demonstrated that you were more intent upon fanning the flames of discontent than you were in obtaining a police response to your concerns. Be that as it may, I accept your expressed concerns as a citizen as I do my responsibility to respond to them. However, let me state in the plainest of terms that I do not, and will not, accept your erroneous allegations that my officers are not a part of the community nor your inference that they are not "sweated, laughed and grieved with the rest of us". I take that to be an undesired malicious slander upon the character and reputation of all officers of the Halton Regional Police Force and, in particular, those officers who serve in the No. 1 Police District area and, more particularly, to the 27 officers who live with their wives and families within the Town of Halton Hills and the other 7 officers, their wives and families who live in the County area nearby.

You might be interested in the following list of community activities in which those officers have willingly participated for the benefit of the community in which they live and in which they serve:

1. The Army Cadet Corps.
2. The Air Cadet Corps.
3. The Board of the YMCA-Acton
4. The Board for the Association for the Retarded
5. The Board for the Legal Clinic
6. The Boy Scouts
7. The Red Cross Emergency Response Team
8. The Volunteer Fire Department
9. The Volunteer Ambulance Department
10. A variety of community programmes such as:
 - (a) Swim programme for retarded children
 - (b) Visit to Lion Safari for retarded children
 - (c) Bicycle licensing programme
 - (d) Service or Service Clubs

On each of these committees do you serve, Mr. Doberthien? At the invitation of the Acton Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Business Improvement Area, Inspector John Barratt, as my representative, attended a meeting at the Acton Library to discuss the posture of policing in the area. When Inspector Barratt left, he did so on the understanding that the membership would call similar meetings whenever they might perceive the need. To date we have had no such request. We note, Sir, that you were not present at that meeting.

The fact that a copy of your letter was sent to the media generated the production of a cartoon which refers to the Police as "ghosts". In 25 years of police experience, I have never witnessed a greater piece of journalistic irresponsibility. Sad will be the day when humor would not be an important part of our lives, but the men at whom the cartoon was directed do not see it as humor, nor do I. Police officers and responsible members of the community have called me to say that they view it as an invitation to the criminal to come and commit crime.

Having said that, Sir, I will, again, express the belief that both the public and the media play a vital part in the development of its police service. Public comment, support and, indeed, criticism, are vital to our needs. I would assure you, and the many citizens who share your concerns, that we hold ourselves accountable to the public for the quality and quantity of policing that we are required to deliver within the bounds of available resources.

I look forward to meeting you, Sir, so that these matters can be discussed to the full satisfaction of us both.

Yours faithfully,
W.I. James Harding,
Chief of Police.

Review town fire alarm panels for industry

There could be a fire alarm panel and fire dispatcher in Acton some day.

Monday Halton Hills general committee received a report from fire chief Mick Holmes calling for a staff study of the present fire panel

operation in Georgetown and possible expansion of the service to Acton.

Holmes noted the town has a fire alarm system to serve industrial, institutional and commercial firms made up of two separate panels owned by a couple of firms. The

panels are in the fire dispatch office in Georgetown and the town handles the calls.

The panels are designed to give an early warning of a fire, detect a drop in water pressure in a sprinkler system or warn of a malfunction in alarms.

Both panels are old and filled to capacity. Holmes said the town can lease or buy new equipment or ask the existing panel owners to expand the system and continue as the fire department has been operating with the panels. Arrangements are made by the panel

owners directly with firms interested in hooking up. Only one Acton firm, Building Products, is hooked into a panel system.

Holmes reported there is an advantage to the town to have its own panel and while it would be primarily for Georgetown it would be possible for Acton industries to hook in if they pay the additional line costs. The main problem in Acton would be needing someone to provide this answering service.

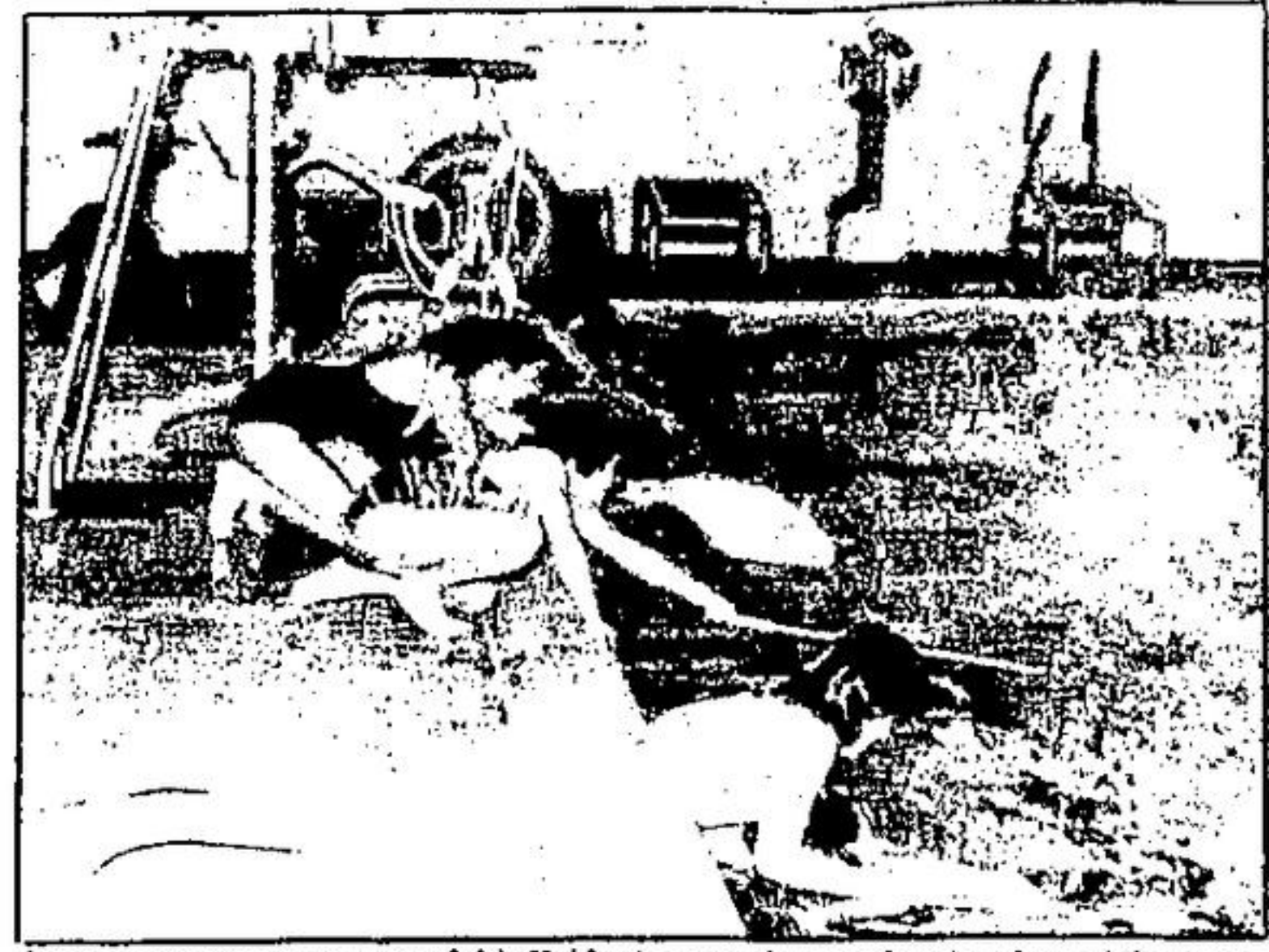
from Councillor Terry Grubbe. Holmes said all Acton industries may not be aware of the fire panels.

Grubbe observed that for an Acton firm to hook up there would be a hefty fee since wire would have to be run to Georgetown.

Councillor Roy Booth pointed out Bell would charge by the quarter mile to run the wire to Georgetown from Acton.

Holmes said part of the study will be a review of Building Products' costs, adding there isn't capacity for Acton firms to tap into the system so there would have to be a separate line from Acton to Georgetown.

Clerk-administrator Ken Richardson said costs would be a big factor in Acton firms hooking into the system and Acton having its own dispatcher. Acton costs will be part of the report which will look at a number of alternatives for the municipality in serving Georgetown.



A water rescue scene, part of this Friday's seventh annual water show at the Acton Lions Indoor Pool. Pictured here are Lori Fountain, Tommy Scott, Cathy Tost, Brenda Looyenga, Linda Kilpatrick, Len Fisher, Dave Quinn and Edwin Naber.

Water show Friday

This Friday night the Halton Hills pool staff will stage their seventh annual water show at Acton Lions indoor pool at McKenzie-Smith

School from 7 to 9 p.m. The show will feature competition swimming, diving, synchronized swimming, water safety and rescue demon-

strations, water skis and appearances by celebrity swimmers. Admission to the show is free and even Santa will be there.

Daughters of Knox

Hold progressive dinner

The Christmas meeting of the Daughters of Knox took the form of a "Progressive Dinner" on Monday evening, Dec. 1.

Everyone gathered first at the home of Vivian Swallow, for hors d'oeuvres and punch. There was almost a full attendance of members, as well as one new member. Before moving on to the next home, group photos were taken by Mr. Swallow.

The main course of the meal was enjoyed at the home of Mrs. John Robertson.

The brief meeting was held at Kae Hansen's

home. The devotional portion was conducted by Georgina Van Fleet and her group, and was taken from the Christmas Service in the Glad Tidings magazine.

Betty Ashley and her group were in charge of the entertainment por-

tion of the evening. A very humorous game, causing much laughter, was enjoyed by all.

The gift exchange followed, and a special gift presented to Kae Hansen, in appreciation of all the work she did in promoting so many new

Golden Agers

Enjoy trip despite storm

An extremely windy and snowy night greeted a number of Acton Golden Age members when they returned to their bus after an evening at Burlington Senior Citizens' Complex.

This was a definite contrast to the damp afternoon when the club held their December meeting at St. Alban's Hall on Dec. 23.

Opening with the singing of O Canada and the hymn sung, we welcomed two new members George and Emily Barrett to our club.

The Birthday song was sung to Theresa Matheson and Marvin Paton. Laura Dennis reported that the bus trip to Turkey Point was a

sell out with a waiting list. We are leaving London Hill at 3 p.m. early on Dec. 16.

The members were reminded of the Christmas Dinner on Wednesday, Dec. 10 at First Presbyterian Church at 5:30 p.m. Any members that haven't been contacted, please call the secretary.

Bobbie was enjoyed with the winners being Laura McEachern and Helen Pickett. Walter Hug and Mae Fountain. Lunch was served and a social half-hour followed.

ABC to tour creeks in town

A tour of creeks in Acton by the Acton Beautification Committee (ABC) was rained out Sunday. The tour will be rescheduled.

The ABC which advocates creek clean-up as well as development so the creeks and Fairy Lake will be used more for recreation, decided before seeking support of

other groups they will examine the creeks closely to see what exactly is needed.

At their monthly meeting last Wednesday night it was decided Ed Wood will look into how the group can have signs placed at the entrances to Acton giving the name of the town and other information.

Bill Coats will be examining ways of having business directory signs erected at the entrance of Highway 25 to the industrial park.

The next meeting of the ABC will be January 7.

More news
B4, B6, B7

OUR CHRISTMAS TREES HAVE ARRIVED AT ERAMOSIA FLOWER MART (the purple place on Hwy. 7, 3 miles west of Acton) See our good selection of Christmas Plants

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Citizens meet Harding Dec. 18...

(Continued from page 1)

rapers Doberthien for taking his views to the paper and for saying officers don't live in the community and aren't involved. The chief wrote that 27 officers live in Halton Hills, another seven close by, and outlined some of the community activities they are involved in. He questioned Doberthien's community involvement.

Harding asks where Doberthien was when Inspector John Barratt spoke to Acton businessmen about policing last year and described a cartoon in this newspaper which referred to police as "ghosts" "journalistic irresponsibility." He added he has heard from officers and "responsible members of the community" who view the cartoon as an invitation to the criminal to come and commit crime.

The chief said he is concerned about crime here and the views of Acton and invites Doberthien to meet with him and discuss the matters he raised in the letter more fully.

"He (Harding) won't help matters with this letter," Doberthien observed. "It will just get people more upset." He felt Harding didn't address the issues, only defended the force.

Doberthien said he'd like to see something constructive come out of his letter to Harding and the reply.

He said he has received considerable support, both in calls and a letter, from fellow Actonians who share his unfavorable views of policing here. "Unfortunately, I haven't heard from people who think our police are A-1, only people who share my view. If there are people who are positive about the police I'd be open to hearing from them."

It's time, he said, for both citizens and police to put their differences aside and get to know each other so residents can help the police do a better job. "To far too many people in Acton officers are 'just a face in a cruiser. Maybe they should be trying to introduce themselves to the business people and other people in Acton who care about the town.'"

Doberthien wants to see officers out walking the beat more, checking doors at businesses at night. Again this past Friday thieves hit his business, L & L Ford Mercury, stealing the free wheeling front hubs off a vehicle. The vehicle was parked right beside the sidewalk on Main St. North and the thieves would have needed 10 to 15 minutes time to remove the six Allen Head Set studs on each of the two front wheels. He said the thieves would practically have to sit on the sidewalk to remove the hubs. "It would be nice to know they (police) are patrolling, check-

ing businesses and sometime find out you've been hit before coming to work in the morning."

"Now that this has been opened up we should do something positive. It started as a letter of frustration. I don't know what the answers are and I'm certainly not going to tell the police what to do. Obviously there is a problem," Doberthien declared, adding he didn't find any answers in Harding's reply.

In his letter he suggested vigilantes might be the answer to reduce crime in Acton but he isn't in favor of citizens running around with guns taking the law into their own hands. He does think some people living here who have CB radios would be willing to help patrol the streets and could report crime to police if the force monitored channel 9 like the OPP does. Doberthien realizes there would have to be controls so the police wouldn't be sent on wild goose chases while crimes take place elsewhere, but he does believe residents can help the police.



Lorne Doberthien points out hubs were stolen from this four-wheel drive vehicle Friday night, right beside the sidewalk on Main St. North. He is concerned about police protection in Acton.

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WHETHER YOU DRIVE IMPAIRED, FAIL THE BREATHALIZER, OR REFUSE IT, YOU FACE A CRIMINAL CHARGE.

IF CONVICTED, YOUR LICENCE WILL BE SUSPENDED FOR AT LEAST THREE MONTHS, AND YOU WILL BE FINED UP TO \$2,000.

YOU WILL HAVE A CRIMINAL RECORD. YOU COULD GO TO JAIL.

YOU FACE INCREASED AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE RATES FOLLOWING A CONVICTION. AND IF YOU CAUSED AN ACCIDENT, YOUR INSURANCE DOES NOT COVER YOUR PERSONAL INJURIES, DAMAGE TO YOUR PROPERTY, OR YOUR LOSS OF EARNINGS.

IF CONVICTED OF A SECOND DRINKING-DRIVING OFFENCE, YOU WILL GO TO JAIL FOR UP TO ONE YEAR.

YOU COULD KILL SOMEONE - FAMILY, FRIENDS, INNOCENT BY-STANDERS, YOURSELF.

IN 1979 MORE THAN HALF OF THE DRIVERS KILLED IN ONTARIO HAD BEEN DRINKING.

COLD FACTS

IF YOU DRINK, DON'T DRIVE.

Ontario
Roy McK. Murphy, Attorney General, Solicitor General
William Davis, Chairman