

The Acton Free Press

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Leathertown group seeks our heritage

The whole idea is only a couple of months old at best, but Leathertown has been launched, and launched in fine style.

After just two meetings it looks like the 30 odd businessmen, community leaders and citizens who have tackled this huge project mean business.

Last week they showed a determination to bite the bullet and make decisions. They aren't going to allow this community promotion idea, another in a long list to be studied to death.

The steering committee, after some debate, approved preliminary plans for a nifty logo. It's now being refined and could be given the final stamp of approval, following public input and comments which hopefully will make it even better in the next couple of months.

It's not inconceivable that by the time the big Back to Acton Days celebration rolls around the Leathertown logo, a great tool to enhance community identity and the image of Acton, will be stuck all over paper, wood, plastic etc. throughout the town and even spreading outside Acton.

Work has already started on developing not just a Leathertown attraction but potentially dozens of them.

Instead of a simple museum the committee is aiming to develop a walking tour through Acton's leather heritage, complete with story telling plaques on buildings and homes, small exhibits of leather memorabilia and photographs and some larger displays.

The mechanics of reaching this goal have been set in motion.

All over town, tucked away in closets, attics and basements of homes and business is this community's leather history.

Even more valuable are the memories of our long time residents, recollections of the leather industry.

Donald Rankin, with assistance from Gord Murray, have started a probe of the leather industry in Acton. Already they've recruited some helpers for the mammoth job, but they'll need lots more help. The many sources of information are almost incomprehensible.

Anyone with ideas for stops on the tour, what should be on plaques, old photographs, leather artifacts, anecdotes to relate etc. is urged to contact Janet Fleming, the Leathertown secretary, at 853-0925 and share the wealth of information.

The committee hopes to have the initial research far enough along in the next few weeks to put together a display in one or two locations around the town similar to what Actario did in the window of the downtown Family Cleaners outlet. It'll be a hint, or teaser, of what is to come.

Interest seems to be building. During a workshop at Monday's Chamber of Commerce annual general meeting in which over 60 people participated, enthusiasm for Leathertown was running high. Almost every idea for improving the quality of life here somehow involved the Leathertown theme.

Hopefully this is a sign of things to come, because it's going to take many, many people to make Leathertown a reality.

A big plus in this concept's favor is that it hasn't, despite the high level of enthusiasm exhibited in the early stages, left the organizers looking at Leathertown with dollar signs spinning in their eyes.

Certainly Leathertown will have its economic benefits. It could easily result in things like Acton attracting nationally known restaurants and shops, a resort hotel, further development of Fairy Lake and recreational facilities, downtown refurbishing, a movie theatre, development of small malls or plazas on vacant commercial property downtown. All things which our present, and in the foreseeable future, population simply can't support, but is very possible with an infusion of tourist and out of town shoppers' dollars.

But Leathertown can do much, much more for Acton. It can give us back our identity, restore our pride in the community, give us, particularly newcomers and youth, an appreciation of this town's heritage and provide us with bubbling confidence for our future.



On the Leavell

With Helen

A display made by Keith Aitken won third place at the annual convention of agricultural societies from across Ontario recently.

The display was made up of photos taken at the Acton fall fair in a barn window and on barn board.

It was the first time in many years the Acton society's display had been entered in the competition.

Miss Acton Fall Fair 1980, Lisa McGrath had a chance to meet with other fair queens before meeting again at the CNE's Miss Sweetheart of the Fairs contest in August.

Mrs. Agnes McEnery has a real rarity in one of her flower pots at home. She has a 12 bloom amaryllis! (For those who wonder what's so special about that, an amaryllis usually has just one or two blooms.)

Wee Katharine Ellsaa Tuitman, daughter of Elly and Len, was welcomed into the Trinity United Church Sunday by holy baptism, with Rev. Charles Beaton officiating. Mom and Pop are the owners of Tuitman Garden Centre, Highway 25.

Leaders and boys of the second Acton (Trinity) Sea Scout Troop were invested in the "Beardmore" Ship Monday evening. Congratulations to all involved.

Trinity United Church has a special day planned for this Sunday morning when a Mission Festival is planned. Church goes will start the event with the morning service when they will experience African culture, music and worship. After the service, the celebration will continue downstairs with African food for all tastes, displays and guests. Missionary guests will be Rev. and Mrs. Jim Kirkwood, from Toronto and Mr. and Mrs. Allan Slater, from Lakeside, Ontario. Rev. Kirkwood is presently head of the Division of Mission for Africa and the Slaters are dairy farmers and were in Zambia from 1970-1974, working to teach ranch management.

"Sharing our Faith" was the theme of the 15th Annual Meeting of the Brampton Presbyterial held on February 4 at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Brampton. Acton is a part of the group.

Call to Worship and Prayer were by the President, Mrs. W. Young.

The W.M.S. Hymn "Faith in Action" was sung. Devotions were taken by Mrs. S. McClure of Norval W.M.S. reading from Hebrews Chapter 11 and followed by two Poems written by Mrs. McClure based on "Faith".

Rev. John Duncan from the Board of Congregational Life spoke on the principles of Church Growth and how they relate to the W.M.S. Society. In order for Church Growth, you have to have a purpose, realistic goals, developed strategy, clear plans, shared decisions, commitment of people, which all are not beyond the capability or Power of God. A question and answer period followed.

Delegates to Synodical Annual Meeting at Georgetown, April 28 and 29th for Brampton Presbyterial are from Acton and Dixie Presbyterian Churches.

Rev. Graeme Duncan from St. Andrews Church, Brampton installed the new Officers and pronounced the Benediction.

Ted Tyler and my hubby Gord have made their mark in Florida—at Uncle Sid's to be exact.

Ted and his family just returned from a two week vacation at Bonita Beach, a small resort between Fort Myers and Naples. We were there for the first week of his holiday. On Ted's recommendation we had supper at Uncle Sid's Barbeque Pit. As we were leaving the restaurant I noticed a large bulletin board with hundreds of business cards of past patrons. One such card jumped out at me—it was Ted's. Not to be outdone by a travel agent, I made sure a Free Press card was nearby—matter of fact, right underneath. Now there's two little pieces of Acton in Florida.

Other folks at the Jack Tarr Beach and Tennis Resort were Ted's wife Dolores, daughters Tracey and Angela, mother Gwen and Mr. and Mrs. James Higgins, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Shultis and Mr. and Mrs. George Marshall.

This spring like weather we've been having lately has mother Nature's creatures a bit confused. Reports are in that some Actonians were out gathering dew worms on the weekend. One man supposedly dug a hole a foot deep before hitting frost.

But don't take those snowtires off your car yet. I predict a lot more snow to come. Seems every time I head home to Collingwood to visit family, there's a snowstorm either closing roads before I leave to head south or closing just as I pass by. I plan a trip in the near future, so don't put your snowboots away.

Back issues

10 years ago

Wednesday, February 24, 1971
 Chris Brunelle, a pretty brunette, was crowned Miss Snow Queen at Acton high winter carnival Oopkik II. Other finalists were Lynn Dunn, Lynne Bender, Ann Whatmough and Judy Thibodeau.

Robbie Ellerby gobbled up 53 cupcakes in 30 minutes to win first prize. Jim Frizzell was second with 37 cupcakes.

A coffee house dance was held Thursday and variety show Friday. Blazing torches lighted the Oopkik parade. Ken Marshall won the dog sled competition.

An addition to Knox Church was turned down at the annual meeting. Ingrid and Edgar Bendicks have opened their delicatessen here.

20 years ago

Thursday, February 23, 1961
 George Lee was appointed chairman of the library board, succeeding Peter Dunham. Charles Kirkness is vice-chairman.

Rev. James Rudd was guest speaker at the World Day of Prayer service. Acton fair prize list was judged best in Class C Fairs, president Nino Bratida announced.

The need for artificial ice was emphasized when the Lions club had to cancel their carnival due to soft ice.

Over 200 attended the annual night school display. A fashion show was a highlight.

A county-wide industrial commission was approved by county council. Trafalgar industrial commissioner Ron Cookley outlined proposals.

50 years ago

Thursday, February 26, 1931

A New Legion Post for Acton was organized at a meeting of ex-servicemen in the Council Chamber. Comrade Padbury was in the chair and outlined the problems of the ex-servicemen and finding employment for disabled returned men. The election of officers followed: President W.J. Gould; 1st Vice-President, J.M. McDonald; 2nd Vice-President E.G. Arnold; Secretary-Treasurer F.L. Wright; Advisory Committee Rev. H.L. Bennie; Comrades F. Roney; W. Eccleshall, A. Padbury, and W. Britton.

President Gould promised to do all in his power to advance the good work of the Canadian Legion in Acton. Every cent of the Poppy Fund and other contributions will be used for the benefit of ex-servicemen and their dependents. Col. G. Brown moved a vote of thanks to Comrade Padbury. Applications were received for charter memberships. The volume of applications was so great it was decided to leave the list open for another week. Later a banquet will be arranged with speakers.

75 years ago

Thursday, February 22, 1906

The school room of the Methodist church was packed with a joyful congregation for the discharging of the last of the church's mortgage. On the walls were portraits of deceased pioneers, among them Mr. Asa Hall who often told of the first sermon preached to the settlement in a log house on Main St., preached by the Rev. Zenas Adams, from whose family the community was first known as Adamsville. Mr. James Moore, oldest member of the original board living, recalled when the congregation met in the old school house and of getting out the timber for the new frame church at the corner of Church and John Sts. Successors of early families spoke, among them A.T. Brown and H.P. Moore. Rev. Barker presided for the time of great rejoicing.

100 years ago

Thursday, February 23, 1881

It is our sad duty to announce the death of the wife of Mr. Lewis Fox, accountant of Messrs. Storey and Son, after one short year of happily wedded life. She was attacked with a severe illness about a week ago. (The birth of her daughter was listed in the previous week's Free Press.)

The Public School inspector has informed the Board of Education that additional school accommodations must be provided. The third department has from 25 to 30 more pupils than the number allowed by law.

The entertainment in the Temperance Hall by the ladies of St. Alban's church, consisted of a number of excellent tableaux and an exhibition of Mrs. Joly's War Figures.



Agnes McEnery shows off her amaryllis, which has 12 (count 'em) blooms. Mrs. McEnery is a resident of Mapleview Lodge.

Our readers write

Boosts Cher Rest Home

Dear Sir:
 I think it is about time for someone to speak up for the Cher Rest Home.

Ever since they have opened someone has been trying to put them out of business.

They have complied with every request to do any work and make changes and have gone so far as to do things that weren't asked for to upgrade the home.

They have replaced fire extinguishers with the best they could obtain. Now they want them replaced with ones that aren't any better than the garden hose—this according to a by-law not yet passed.

The patients are clean, well fed and given kind, loving care.

I speak from experience because my mother was there for several years. I had taken her out of two homes because I was not satisfied with the care or conditions in these places. One was a large government run facility. I found smaller homes gave more personal, and better care. I have eaten meals at Cher's and saw no reason for complaint. They were the same meals given to everyone.

I have been there early in the morning and at night and have found the same

conditions.

You are lucky in Acton to have such kind, caring people as Mr. and Mrs. Cheroniak running this home. It is hoped in the future they will be given credit and appreciation shown for what they are doing instead of the kicks in the back they have been getting in the past. I can not be too thankful that there was a place like this when I needed a home for my mother.

It would be a good idea for some of the ones causing her trouble to go and spend at least part of a day at the home and see what goes on in a rest home. It is easy to sit behind a desk and say what should be done and criticize.

But most of the people who are doing this haven't a clue of what it is all about—maybe never even visited one. The only thing a lot of people who are running some of these places care about is collecting the money. They have little or no feeling for the ones in their care.

All homes should be treated alike and one not picked out to run down. Things that are going on in some places are never mentioned.

Margaret Rae,
 Erin.

Lake at post office?

Dear Editor,
 Walking to the post office I discovered there was no road or pavement or pathway.

There was a lake. The post office should dry up the lake.

John P. Brownlee,
 131 Mill St. W.



Students from Acton schools competed in a public speaking competition Friday morning at Speyside School. From left to right, Michael Vranic, McKenzie-Smith, Jeff Potten, Speyside; Cynthia Donston, St. Joseph's; Dana Richardson, M.Z. Bennett; and Tracey Perry, Robert Little.



M-Z Bennett held their public speaking contest last week. Contestants were: Dana Richardson, who came in first, Jennifer Knappman, Jason Medland, Richard Vranic, David Thorpe, Andrea Johnston, who finished second, Lori McDonald who came third and Jennifer Marr.