

'Good ole days' in sports collection

That old shoe box filled with baseball cards, ticket stubs and other sports material collected during your youth may be just sentimental junk taking up space to you. But to Morley Leeking, it may be a treasure chest of memories to add to his astounding collection.

Leeking, an English teacher at Georgetown High School and an Acton resident since last November, dates his sports memories back to 1888. Of course they aren't personal memories but one of the rare ball cards which he has collected during his few years as a serious collector of sports memorabilia.

Ball cards first appeared on cigarette and tobacco packages in the last century. In 1913 cards became available with candy and in 1932 were included with bubble gum packages.

He has over 200,000 cards, including some of the immortal hall of famers like Babe Ruth and Ty Cobb.

Leeking says he has always been a bit of a "pack rat" and as a youngster collected baseball cards, building up an incredible collection by the time he was 12-year-old. "I saved those cards with a passion and later when I was at university the cards fell prey to my mother's housecleaning whim."

According to Leeking, when major league baseball came to Toronto his spirit for collecting was reawakened. He had finished university, settled in a teaching position and home, was raising with his wife Trieneke two children and had more time to delve into a hobby, and delve he did.

He sent away for a complete set of the 1977 major league baseball cards and his collecting was on.

Morley explained there are four areas which most collectors fall into. Some collect cards, others equipment and non-paper items such as coins, some collect paper items such as magazines, articles, programs and post-cards while some stick strictly to autographs.

Leeking is an all round collector, he has over 100,000 different items besides ball cards jammed into the den of his Cobblehill Rd. home, with material from all categories in his collection. While his pride and joy is his mammoth collection of ball cards, Morley also has hockey, football and basketball cards, Bee Hive hockey pictures, Jello hockey coins, ball Hall of Fame Coins, cards from cereal boxes, autographed photos and baseball bats, little ball statues, autographed baseballs, posters etc. He even has a Fred Lynn-Tom Seaver lit-

ter bag and a Pittsburgh Pirates beer can.

Full-time, serious sports memorabilia collectors in the United States number about six million. In Canada the Acton Collector is one of about 200.

He is well known in trading circles. Americans contact him wanting to acquire sets of Canadian gum cards. "I don't have to do much calling, I'm sought after." His pile of letters is phenomenal.

Attending American conventions for collectors in places like Michigan, Ohio and New York State, he often takes along the whole family for a vacation south of the border. He's going to a convention in Michigan soon and plans a big trip to a California convention in the future. At conventions he says he has met some "really nice, quality people." His wife and children get involved in his collecting. Daughter Andrea helps him sort cards, she's five, and toddler Paul eats them.

Like many other types of collecting, the best buys are often in amongst the junk. He says he has had great success at flea markets and garage sales and so has his wife.

He watches the trade magazines, often advertising through the classified section of answering ads. He had an article he wrote on

hockey memorabilia and pictures from his collection published in a Toronto magazine, Canadian Collector.

If any Acton residents have sports material they want appraised he's only too pleased to co-operate, he has appraisal reference books. He's always in the market to buy material too. He makes up entire sets of Canadian cards for sale or trade at American conventions.

Talking about ads he runs he explained "From 10 calls three want to get an estimate on their material, three want you to make an offer, three have very recent material and maybe one has something you can use."

Although he has gone into the four major areas of collecting, baseball cards are the biggest item in his collections. Through conventions and scrounging he is gradually filling in the gaps between 1880 and now, looking especially for pre-1950, material.

Leeking's enthusiasm for sports doesn't end with collecting. He goes to games, has even tripped down to Florida for the Blue Jays' camp, and has three trips to Cooperstown under his belt. He plays industrial ball in Georgetown and coaches sports at his high school.



Morley Leeking with some of the sports memorabilia from his incredible collection.

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Friends-in-Deed members Emily Price and Anne Dodds try out ActiVan which made its maiden trip from Acton to Georgetown this morning.

Police launching crackdown on mini-bike riding in Acton

Halton Regional Police are launching a crackdown on children and youths racing around town on mini-bikes.

District One commander Inspector Matt McPherson said in an interview this week he met with a group of concerned Acton residents about the mini-bike problem last week.

Police have received complaints about mini-bikes and trail bikes in Prospect Park, other local parks

and playgrounds, and vacant land near Lakeview. Also, McPherson said, there were complaints from the Glenlea and sewage plant areas last year.

Mini-bike riders rip through Prospect Park, across the foot bridge, around the lake behind Lakeview subdivision homes and up into a vacant field behind Elmore Dr. The bikes are tearing up grass in parks and on private property.

Police have had problems stopping mini-bikers because they can't go on private property and lay charges.

However, they have now secured permission from owners of land where bikers congregate and will be stepping up patrols and laying trespassing charges. Town bylaws prevent mini-bike riders using parks and playgrounds.

Not only will police increase patrols but they also have a trail bike of their own for field pursuits. The trail bike will be brought to Acton and used by of-

ficers "if worse comes to worse," McPherson declared. All of the officers assigned to Acton have been advised of the problem.

He said residents have "legitimate complaints" not just because of property damage caused by mini-bike riders but also the noise. "We have received sufficient complaints to be concerned."

The onus for stopping this growing problem with youngsters under 16-years-old is on parents, he said.

Crime prevention officers Scott Pringle and Dave Wallace noted parents can be held responsible for their children.

"If you are parent of a youngster begging for a motorcycle, or if your son or daughter already has one, consider that you could be liable for several fines by permitting them to operate it illegally. "Please don't allow them to operate it without your supervision in a proper and legal place," Wallace urged.



Trinity United and Knox Presbyterian churches combined to present an enthusiastic rendition of the Biblical story of Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego at Knox Church Sunday evening. Some of the members in the musical—It's Cool in the Furnace—are: going left to right Rev. Chuck Benton, Helen Robertson, Paul Moore, Gretchen Sankey, Nancy Allan, Miriam Beaton and Kathy Brewes. Turn to page 3 for more photos in This Week Through the Lens.

Actario lives on

Town hall grants problems crop up

A council committee, Actario and the restoration committee are working against the clock to keep hopes for provincial grants for restoration of the Acton town hall alive.

A number of questions and problems regarding grants have just come to light and must be solved by August. Also costs of restoration have escalated beyond original estimates.

In a related development it has been decided to keep Actario alive for at least another year, maybe even longer. (See story inside.)

Councillor Terry Grubbe chairman of Halton Hills council's town hall restoration sub-committee held a special, emergency meeting, Monday night and will hold another meeting next Monday with committee members councillors Harry Levy, John McDonald and Pam Sheldon, town hall restoration committee chairman George Elliott, Actario chairman Ted Tyler, recreation director Tom Sheppard and clerk-administrator Ken Richardson.

The topics of the meeting will be the grants, fund raising situation and provincial grant criteria.

Local fund raisers have a deadline of June 30 to match the municipality's contribution of \$40,000, the amount of money earmarked by council originally for demolition of the closed building.

Another deadline is August 1. The town and groups must meet various criteria, which Grubbe believes hasn't been done yet, to keep the Actario grant file open for another year. There are also questions surrounding if there will be a Heritage Fund grant.

Costs for restoration have escalated, nobody seems to know how much, and there haven't been any reports since a consultant looked at the building in 1977 and pegged restoration at \$240,000. Grubbe says the amount costs have escalated must be determined and a decision made on who will pay for the shortfall.

Grubbe notes its never even been decided if the town hall will be a community centre or strictly an historical building.

Grubbe would like to see what money has been raised so far in Acton—and that figure hasn't even been firmly established, somewhere between \$30,000 and \$40,000 by Actario and the restoration committee—and the money the town set aside used to do some immediate work on the exterior of the building to prevent further deterioration. Tyler supports this idea. But, all concerned groups must agree and no work can be done until the grants issue is settled, the province says.

"I'm optimistic all the problems can be worked out," Grubbe said, adding a lot of work must be done in a short period of time.

A letter outlining the criteria was sent to town official Richardson last August by a Wintario of-

ficial. A copy of this letter was also sent to Elliott.

There appears to have been a breakdown of communications between the town, restoration committee and Actario so necessary actions haven't been taken by any of the three groups.

Another problem is the town has been told to secure a Heritage grant Queen's Park must designate the town hall a building of historical significance, something which hasn't been done yet, and possibly wouldn't be done because it is just another old town hall in this province. Grubbe says more answers are needed from provincial officials on this issue.

"Much more information is needed and we have to get all interested groups together," she said. The situation is certainly confusing right now.



Elaine Petkoff and Jennifer Rowe are elated with a blackjack at Friday's Monte Carlo night. Story and more pictures on page 5.

Launch protest mosquito spray cut from budget

An Acton woman who gathered over 700 signatures on a petition last spring calling for mosquito spraying program in Acton will mount another protest since Halton Hills council has decided not to spray this year.

Christina Houston Churchill Rd. North said in an interview this week she and others wanting mosquito spraying were under the impression council all but approved spraying for this year when she took a delegation to a meeting last summer.

The money for spraying \$7,750, was in the budget but was among cuts made before it was passed earlier this year, Councillor Terry Grubbe explained.

She hopes to appear at council next week to protest the decision.

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It's Respect for Law Week. See story on Page B10.

Acton Guides need leaders. More on page B4.

The Citizens' Band received a Wintario grant. Story and photo on page B6.

It's Education Week. Turn to page B9.

Sprackman may drop IGA plaza objection

Landawn Shopping Centres and its president Jerry Sprackman is expected to withdraw his objection to the Ontario Municipal Board of the Halton Hills rezoning of a small piece of land downtown for the new IGA plaza.

The objection was lodged just a few weeks ago, but Monday planning board chairman Mike Armstrong told councillors he expects it will be withdrawn.

He said he has spoken to both Sprackman and the developer's lawyer and "I understand the objection will be withdrawn. Let's hope this all turns out favorably, and I'm sure it will."

Armstrong explained afterwards he was told IGA owner Dave Manes and Sprackman have reached an agreement. Sprackman will withdraw his objection to the rezoning for the new plaza and Manes won't lodge an objection to Landawn's proposed plaza on the east side of Acton, which includes a Zehrs store.

Manes, who is away on vacation, couldn't be reached for comment.

Doug Fread, who is developing the IGA plaza on the Dominion Hotel site said he has only heard it is possible Sprackman will withdraw his objection. He hasn't talked to Manes recently, Fread

said, and the last time he talked to Sprackman the developer hadn't said anything "one way or the other" about the objection.

Sprackman's objection to the IGA plaza would delay the start of construction, slated to begin next month, three months or more.

Despite the fact he thinks Sprackman will withdraw his objection Armstrong still put forth two motions at Monday's council meeting dealing with the objection. Council will inform the OMB that the IGA plaza plan does conform to the Acton Official Plan and that after receiving and considering the objection council forwards the rezoning bylaw to the OMB for final approval.

Armstrong noted the two resolutions being sent to the OMB hit at what Sprackman is "hanging his hat on."

A letter from Sprackman's lawyer states the objection is based on the rezoning bylaw not being accordance with the Official Plan, rezoning is inappropriate and not good planning and the addition of "further commercially zoned property in the municipality could prove damaging to the entire commercial infrastructure of the Town of Halton Hills."