



Free Press file photo of murder victim Colleen Oates who was a Mr. and Mrs. Bowling League award winner in May of this year.

Acton mourns Colleen Oates, recall her devotion to children

Murder victim Colleen Oates has been described by friends, neighbors and fellow players in the Mr. and Mrs. Bowling League as someone who would "do anything for you" and "devoted" to her husband and two children.

Many people have talked about how dedicated she was in caring for her family, particularly her seriously ill 15-month-old son.

Bowlers recalled she placed second in league voting for the bowler of the year award, an award which had nothing to do with her ability on the alleys. The award is emblematic of the esteem

Fund open for Oates

A drive to raise funds to help Kevin Oates, the widower of murder victim Colleen Oates, and their two children Amy and Shane has been started in Acton.

Friends of the Oates, Wayne and Lynda Ruse started the drive this week.

After consulting with Mr. Oates, who said with his son's serious health problems and the burden of being a single parent he would appreciate the community drive, the Ruses opened up an account in Mr. Oates name at the Bank of Nova Scotia. Already money has been deposited in account number 4139689. Cheques for deposit should be made payable to Kevin Oates.

fellow players hold someone in for their friendliness, spirit, pleasantness, etc.

In fact one player said Mrs. Oates would have won this award except she was too quiet, it was hard to get to know her.

"She didn't have the ability to make people angry, you couldn't imagine her offending anyone. Everyone really loved her."

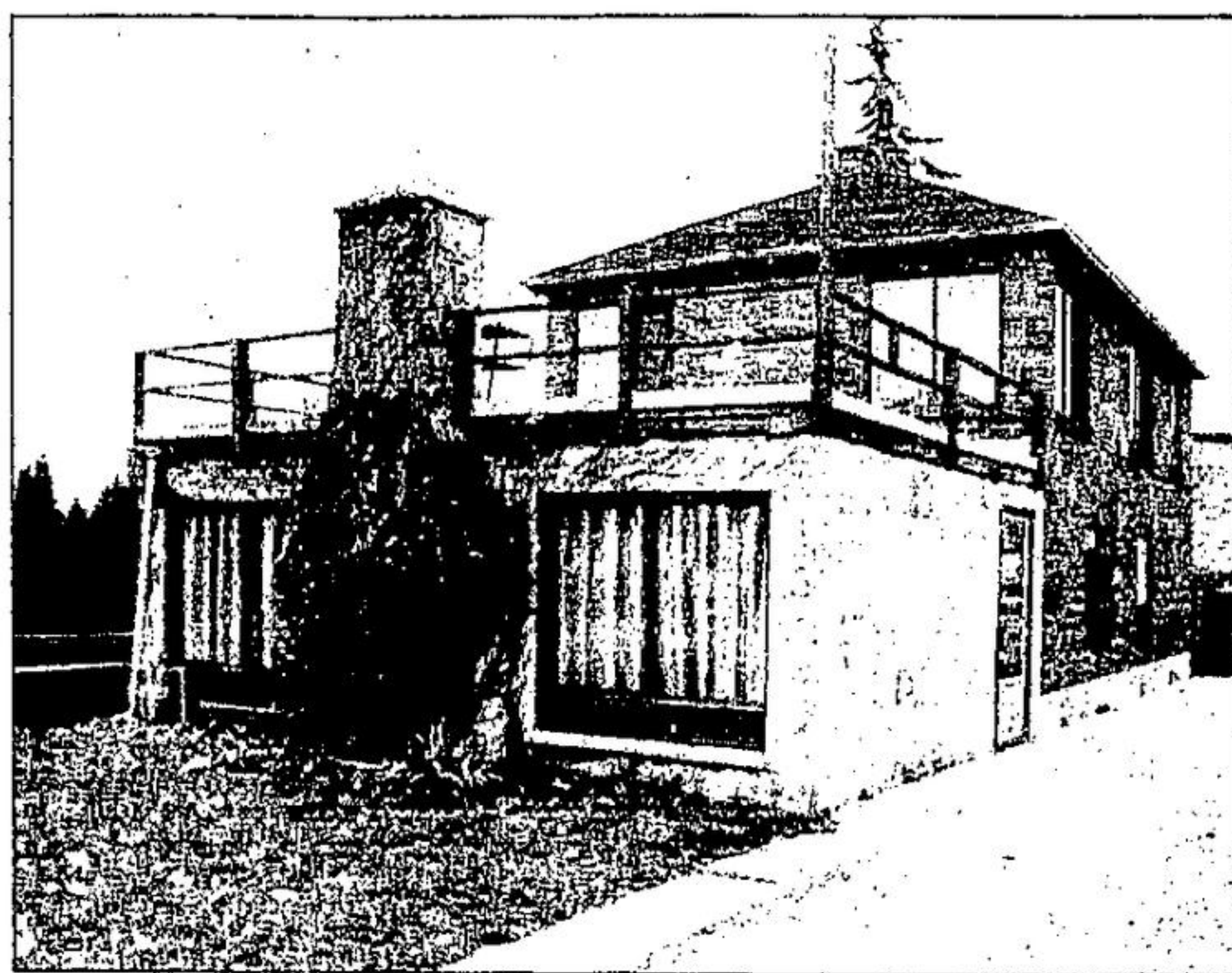
Bowlers said the reason Colleen wasn't in the league this year was because she was staying home caring for her son Shane who shortly after birth was discovered to suffer from spinal meningitis and chronic asthma and required constant attention. The league collected \$140.36 for the family.

She and her husband were married over four years ago and moved to Acton, living first on Church St. and then moved to Bower Ave. about a year ago.

Mrs. Oates was 22, her husband Kevin is 23 and daughter Amy 3.

Besides her husband and children, Mrs. Oates is survived by her parents, June and William Walker of Erin, as well as sisters Kate Hillier, Acton; Cheryl Pritchard, Erin; Kelly Sharpe, Guelph; and brother Mark Walker, Guelph. Her father and mother-in-law Alfred and Lorraine Oates, also of Erin.

Mrs. Oates rested at the Weddell-Butcher Funeral Home in Erin, funeral mass was held at St. John Brebeuf Roman Catholic Church in Erin Monday afternoon. Interment was at Erin Union Cemetery.



Colleen Oates and her two children were in the lower level of this Bower Ave. home Thursday night when she was murdered.

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Intensive Acton investigation

Nab murder suspect after 105 hour hunt

Even after Police had information tracing murder suspect Eric Howard Kellar from Acton to the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop, then to a hotel and later a warehouse in the Durham Region where he was apprehended Monday, they never dropped their intensive search of the Acton area, continuing to "verify" he had not returned.

The hunt for the sole suspect in the savage, murder of 22-year-old mother of two, Colleen Oates, lasted approximately 104 hours and 45 minutes.

It began with the arrival of officers on the scene of the murder at 136 Bower Ave. at 4:08 a.m. Thursday and ended with the 31-year-old ex-convict's arrest in a Pickering warehouse Monday at about 12:45 p.m.

Ex-convict

At a press conference Monday night Halton Regional Police deputy chief Bob Middaugh, Staff Sergeant Ron Southgate, and Sergeant Paul Williamson refused to confirm reports Kellar, who they said had lived with his sister at the house next door to the Oates residence for only about the last two weeks, had been released



Murder suspect Eric Howard Kellar had been living in this Bower Ave. home for only a couple of weeks with his sister.

Suspect remanded

Eric Howard Kellar, who has been charged with the first degree murder of Colleen Oates last Thursday in Acton is being kept in custody in the Hamilton-Wentworth Detention Centre.

Yesterday morning, (Tuesday) Kellar was to have appeared in Milton Provincial Court for the first time after being charged.

However, Tuesday the Crown Attorney, James Treleaven, ordered Kellar brought before a Justice of the Peace at the Halton Regional Police Station in Georgetown, where the suspect was held in custody Monday night, and his transfer to Hamilton was ordered then.

Kellar is slated to appear in Milton Provincial Court next Monday at 9.30 a.m.

from Brampton Correctional Centre earlier this month. Police haven't admitted Kellar is an ex-convict, but a photostat photograph of him distributed to some people in the Acton area (i.e.: school bus drivers, motel operators, etc.) who were interviewed by police were clearly mug shots. Along the side of the photographs it said "inmate record." Police had said he was not on parole or mandatory supervision to their knowledge.

The murder shocked and horrified the community of Acton. Chief James Harding said Friday police have talked to many residents who said they were afraid and frightened at the thought of such a brutal crime happening here and the suspect being on the loose. He noted he had heard concerns from many citizens, understandably predominantly women. Police knew of citizens who were taking extra precautions to secure their homes and staying in more the past few days.

Woke up neighbor

Mrs. Oates' husband Kevin woke up Larry White, who lives across the street, around 4 p.m. after discovering his wife's body near the back door of the lower level apartment of the two level home where they had lived about a year and called police. Before going to the Whites he had found his three-year-old daughter Amy and 15-month-old son Shane asleep and unharmed in a bedroom. The children are presumed to have slept through the attack.

The Whites confirmed Mr. Oates was in a state of shock and mentioned he should have returned home from his job in Brampton sooner after receiving a call from his wife around 2 a.m., when she said she was frightened. Mr. Oates never told the Whites why his wife was afraid.

Stabbed repeatedly

The police began their investigation within minutes of arriving on the scene. On Thursday afternoon they released information that fatal wounds to the victim were inflicted by a sharp instrument. Monday night, police said the murder weapon, which has been recovered but they won't say where or when, was a knife. They wouldn't describe the knife.

Also early Thursday afternoon police announced they were searching for a male suspect who had been observed at the home by a neighbor.

The suspect's identity and the identity of the victim were released later Thursday afternoon by police. They described Kellar as 31, six foot, three inches tall, 235 pounds; heavy build; short brown hair receding in the front; clean shaven; blue eyes; ruddy complexion; wearing a dark blue shirt, blue jeans, heavy boots and a blue

(Continued on page B7)



Acton Library was the scene of some whacky faces on Friday when they put on a face-making day. Margaret Merrin and Bonnie Smith led the two sessions, which kept children occupied during their teachers' professional development day. Photo by DAVE DORKEN

Questionnaire on town hall going to 330 Acton homes

A questionnaire dealing with the Acton town hall will be hand delivered to 330 randomly selected Acton homes this Friday.

The short questionnaire, asking people's "attitudes" about possible town hall uses, will be hand picked up on Sunday.

The consulting firm, Kleinfeld of Brampton is also planning the first of two public meetings for next Wednesday at 7 p.m. at Acton High School.

Kleinfeld is doing a feasibility study and structural analysis of the town hall for Halton Hills.

The team of consultants, Ivor David, project coordinator; Robert Graham, project director; Helen MacDonald and Andy Raitly, research assistants, discussed the study which is to be completed by December 3, with the Free Press Monday after meeting with council's steering committee.

A storefront office has been established at the Halton Hills municipal offices in Acton on Mill St. Residents are invited to drop by Tuesday's 9 a.m. to noon or Wednesday's 1 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. and offer their opinions on the town hall.

The consultants made it quite clear they are seeking the input for their study of all citizens of Acton.

They described the questionnaire as being of a "probability sampling format" and an application of a "marketing model."

Interviews with community groups such as Girl Guides and service clubs regarding where they meet now and their meeting facility needs are being conducted. Nine groups have been contacted already.

Ted Tyler of Actario and Yvonne Rosenquist of the Town Hall Restoration Committee and Actario have already been interviewed by a researcher. Leathertown chairman Chip Petrillo will also be contacted.

Interviews, public meetings and the questionnaire are all designed to allow the consultants to get a handle on the always "slippery" question of "need".

Because they started late, October 16, the study timeline was adjusted. Instead of the final report being presented November 20 to council it will now

go December 7. An interim report will go to the town by November 20 instead of early next month as originally planned.

Every step of the way through the study the consultants will be meeting with council's steering (Continued on page 3)

Yellow-brown Acton water is damaging some clothing

A special meeting of the ward one councillors' drop-in will be held this Friday afternoon from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Y building on Mill St. East to discuss the problem of Acton's yellow-brown water.

While all tests indicate the yellow-brown water which appeared Thursday doesn't present a health hazard it is known to damage clothing which is washed.

Mayor Peter Pomeroy and Acton Councillors Dave Whiting, Terry Grubbe and Ross Knechtel have called this special meeting and will have region water engineers, consultants and Ministry of the Environment officials on hand to answer questions from residents who are concerned.

Also residents are invited to attend and hear discussions regarding compensation for people whose clothing has been damaged by the yellow-brown water.

A press release was issued by the region Tuesday afternoon. It states: "recently the region has received a number of complaints regarding the

inside

There's been a positive response from the province to a local man's call for special parking for the disabled. More on page 8.

There will be three extra policemen patrolling Acton on Halloween. Turn to page 2.

taste, color and odor of the Acton municipal water. "The cause of this problem is a new chemical treatment process introduced into the Prospect Park pumping station very recently. The addition of chlorine dioxide and sodium silicate for elimination of taste and odor in the water and control of iron and manganese was begun on October 21 and within 24 hours the complaints began.

"The whole situation has been reviewed with a consultant and with the Ministry of the Environment research personnel. The opinion of the consultant is that the discoloration is only temporary and (Continued on page 3)

Drowning inquest

An inquest will be held in the drowning death of three-year-old Derek Jones last Tuesday morning. A date for the hearing hasn't been set. Dr. Allstair Macintosh is the coronor in the case which saw the Kingham Road toddler drown in a pond on the Campbell property on Highway 25 just south of Kingham road. Derek was the son of Mark and Louise Jones.



Detective Ron Southgate, Deputy Chief Bob Middaugh, and Detective Paul Williamson answer questions from the press Monday night after the arrest of murder suspect Eric Kellar.