

On the Leavell

With Helen



The fight to restore the Town Hall has reached the national level, thanks to a letter published in the Globe and Mail last week from George Elliott.

Last Wednesday, a letter from George and a picture of the hall appeared on the letters' page of the Globe, which according to the Letters' Page Editor was in the national edition, receiving coruscation from Halifax to Victoria, B.C.

It was under the heading of: "Hall doomed?" and read:

"Acton, a part of Halton Hills since regional government will probably lose its historic old Town Hall (1881). Why? Some Georgetown and Etobicoke councillors, the rest of Halton Hills, are determined to tear it down to make a parking lot for 10 cars. Outnumbered Acton councillors want the hall turned over to a local group who have raised about \$40,000 for restoration but their pleas are ignored.

"A hearing will be held shortly under terms of the Heritage Act to determine if a municipal historical building designation should be removed to permit demolition. The outcome doesn't matter to councillors opposed to Acton's wishes; the hall will be torn down anyway, or so they say. Council could ask the people of Acton what they want done with their Town Hall through a plebiscite and then act accordingly. However, our regional government is not noticeably sensitive to local feelings in this matter.

"The nearby town of Milton is going to keep every one of its historic buildings; but once proud Acton will not even be asked about the fate of its one remaining historic public building. Regional government may be the greatest thing since taxes in Queen's Park, but in grass-roots Acton, it doesn't have many friends.

And in the same week, Acton also made the front page of the Edmonton Journal.

Former Acton area resident Lucille Cooksley, now of Edmonton, sent me the front page of the August 14 edition of the paper and circled a story entitled "Mall gets through—24 years late".

The story was about a man, Ernie Lyall now of Yellowknife, who got some unexpected mail—24 years late.

"The letter was from RCMP Sgt. Clayton Fryer, who was stationed at Spence Bay in the 1960s. It is dated Oct. 6, 1968, and is post-marked Acton, Ont." the story read.

Apparently Ernie was living in Spence Bay, 1,300 km. north of Churchill Manitoba, when Fryer who must have been home on leave, sent the letter and a parcel.

"Back then," the story explains, "Spence Bay had no airport so the Air Force parachuted baskets filled with supplies and mailbags to the tiny settlement."

In November, 1968, Lyall got a call from the

pilot of one of the planes saying a mail bag had accidentally fallen out of the plane. A search by dog sled turned up nothing, until a few weeks ago when an Inuit hunter found the remains of a mail bag out on the tundra, 30 km. south of Spence Bay in the eastern Arctic. Fryer had also sent along a model airplane for Charlie Lyall, Ernie's son, and an arrow for another son David and his friend James. The story continues "Mr. Lyall said he plans to try to trace Sgt. Fryer to thank him for the letter."

Does anyone in Acton know where Fryer or family members are now? If you do, let me know and maybe we can help Lyall. I'm sure my relatives in Yellowknife (yes, I have them all over) will help pass on the message.

One thing I can't figure out is—how on earth did the post office know Lyall was in Yellowknife, when the letter was addressed to Spence Bay.

Mrs. Cooksley says she and husband Ron are enjoying Edmonton very much, having moved there in June. She misses "all my lovely friends in Acton." She asked me to say hello to everyone for her.

Edith Hillman needs some help. Edith, along with Eldon Comfort, and a handful of other Halton Hills people, is working on the local Vote Yes, Nuclear Disarmament campaign. That's the Halton Hills portion of a planet-wide drive to take the threat of nuclear war out of our lives.

A plebiscite will be held in the municipal election on November 8.

Edith and her group are having leaflets printed to be handed out at the Acton Fall Fair September 17, 18 and 19. But, she needs volunteers to help distribute them. Anyone who can spare even an hour of their time, or several hours if they like, is asked to call Edith at 653-2388.

Volunteers are desperately needed for the local Meals on Wheels program. People are needed to drive to Milton to pick up the meals, made at Milton Manor, only one day a month, or however often they want to drive. August is covered.

Anyone interested is asked to call Peggie Balkind.

This story, I'm told, is no bull. Seems Free Press advertising sales person Sue Stone was turning off a road over in north Nassagaweya last week onto 25 Sideroad. She received quite a scare.

There staring little Susan and her small truck in the face was a big bull. Susan says she was raised on a farm so she knows a bull when she sees one. Reports there were horns and all the other important parts too.

Anyway she naturally stopped and then slowly started forward figuring the bull would move. It moved alright, right at the truck. She went to reverse then, but there was a car coming over the horizon.

Susan decided to put on her emergency flashers. The bull started to head for the side of her truck and then she leaned on the horn and the huge animal backed off. Susan sped off.

"It was scary. I was really nervous."

Our readers write

Reader defends youths' vandalism downtown

Dear Sir: This letter is in regards to last week's front page—business—the 25 boy scouts Henry Stachyra of First Line TV mentioned as being out of place and blocking up the streets of Acton.

If the 25 boy scouts were going into his TV store with money to buy TV's; or Paul Nielsen's with money to buy clothing, they would be welcomed with open arms. Why don't Henry Stachyra and Paul Nielsen admit it?—they don't like teenagers.

Both these men emigrated to Acton because of greater opportunity in a free Canada. Have they ever done anything to contribute to a place downtown where these future citizens of Acton will have a place to meet and associate without harassment?

Does Henry Stachyra realize why five big store windows of his TV store were smashed this summer in a matter of ten days?

The reason these teenagers are behaving so badly is because of the pressure the merchants have put on the Halton Regional Police to ticket them. The broken windows are a sign of protest. What other way have these teenagers to speak out?

A teenager who stood on these streets in my generation became

principal of Acton elementary schools. Six others run two food stores, a real estate office, a barber shop and a gas station in downtown Acton.

Paul Nielsen said the BIA have always been for taking buildings down for more downtown parking. How about taking some buildings down to make a small park with benches to sit on where the teenagers can meet?

If the A and B was a licenced arcade, the arcade on Main Street with the windows boarded up with plywood would have some business competition.

The man who applied for the Arcade Pool Room and Coffee Bar Licence has owned the A and B building for 32 years. He is in a large arcade business with locations all over Toronto and surrounding areas. If any man knows how to run this business in Acton, I think this is the man.

In next week's Free Press it would be nice to see the opinions of these teenagers and possibly a list of all the tickets being handed out by the Halton Regional Police.

An Acton businessman that still enjoys meeting friends on the streets of Acton.

Ed McMullen

Retired teacher enjoys tributes to Miss Bennett

Dear Sir: I do want to thank you for sending me a copy of your Acton Free Press with your very lovely coverage and editorial—a fitting tribute to the dedicated life and service of Miss Minnie Bennett.

As a retired Kitchener teacher, it was my happy privilege to have

known Miss Bennett during her past years, in Kitchener.

Thank you sincerely for expressing your tribute (and ours) so beautifully in your well chosen words.

Very gratefully,
Ivy Austin,
Hanover, Ont.



Simos Fraser and Gregory Cox make clay mice at the Library's Mousetrap day last week.

Mr. Music turns 80

Acton's Mr. Music turned 80 years old on Friday.

Ray Agnew was born August 20, 1902, in Acton. He has spent his entire life in this town and has more than earned his nickname.

Mr. Agnew worked for Mason Knit; fixing sewing machines, for 49 years. He also was employed for a few years for Beardmore and Storey Glove.

Music was his real love though. He played in the Acton Citizens' Band for about 50 years, and the Lorne Scots Military Band for 15 years. It was through this band that he joined the Acton Legion. He also played with the boy scouts band, the old Mason Orchestra and the Charles Mason orchestra. Charles Mason, and former Acton mayor Amos Mason, were his uncles. Mr. Agnew also sang in the old Methodist Choir

and the Chorallers for eight or nine years.

In 1970, Mr. Agnew retired from Mason Knit, and also eased up on his musical performances. He retired his trombone, clarinet, saxophone and drums. But in spite of his busy musical schedule, he found time to marry Grace McMullen in 1937.

Mr. Agnew has one son, Bob in Huntsville and a step son Darryl, in Tottenham. He also has eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Over 80 people attended an open house Saturday at the Band Hall put on by son Bob and Grace Agnew.

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