

# Mature Jodie heads home, exchange program ends

by Helen Murray  
It's been an exciting and enlightening year for 17-year-old Jodie McFarlane, but she admits she's glad to be going home to Chelsea, Australia.

Jodie is in her final few weeks of a year long stay in Acton as part of an Acton-Chelsea Rotary exchange program. She's become a member of four local families, and seen more of Canada than most Canadians see in a lifetime. She's even lost a lot of her Australian accent and says the familiar eh? every now and then. But, as exciting as the year has been, hardly a day goes by lately that she doesn't think about going home to her own family.

Her first night in Canada was the worst, Jodie recalls. She had been on the road for almost 50 hours, with very little sleep, and by the time she got to her first home, that of John and Anna Arnold she was exhausted, and not a little frightened and apprehensive.

It was very early in the morning when she arrived and crawled into bed. Jodie remembers asking herself what she was doing in a strange bed in a strange house in a strange country. She missed her family terribly and thought of how afraid she was as she cried herself to sleep.

But it wasn't long before the Arnolds made her feel at home, and she became a member of family, and called them Mom and Dad, something she did at all her "adopted" families except the Cooks, where she is now staying.

School was difficult at first, Jodie says. Some of the students stared at her, making her grateful of those who went out of their way to be friendly.

The first three months were spent getting herself oriented. By the time she went to her second home, Don and Linda McDonald, Jodie was well involved in life at school and in Acton. She took part in the Charlie Brown play, and as a member of the high school band went to North Bay as part of another exchange program. She also joined the Midget girls softball team and a soccer team. She went camping with the Outers and spoke at various meetings around town.

Jodie credits Don McDonald Jr. with her coming out of her shell. She explains that because they went to the same school, it was more like at home in Australia with her own brother.

For several months, Jodie admits, she went through a stage where Australian homelife was not part of her life. She disconnected herself from her homeland and became a total Canadian, she says. However, whenever she would get mail from friends and family, she would slip back into her homesickness mood. But, by keeping herself too busy to dwell on her homesickness, she was able to survive.

Jodie feels she experienced the most typical Canadian family during her months with Dave and Marnie Manes near Ospringe. It was a large family, compared with the other two families she stayed who only had one child apiece. She recalls

"bombing" around the farm on the lawn mower tractor and having lively meals. The farm was also big enough that she was able to go for long walks by herself and just take in the quietness and solitude.

It was while at the Manes that Jodie took a few weeks off and travelled to Nova Scotia with the Arnolds. At Peggy's Cove she smelled the salt air for the first time since she left home. She lives a couple of blocks from the ocean and is used to the salt. It was also while out east that she realized she was exactly half way around the world from home, her family being 12 hours ahead of her in time.

She also went to Tobermory with the Manes, and the Beaton's cottage in Haliburton and the Fread's cottage in Collingwood. Both Bill Beaton and Doug Fread are Acton Rotary members.

Once school resumed, Jodie made her final move. She was scheduled to stay at Ray and Lynda Nellis' home. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, her plans were changed, and she moved in with Bill and Monika Cook, her only family without other children.

Her months with the Cooks have been different still, Jodie confesses. She explains that she was very good friends of the couple before she lived with them, and thus never did call them Mom and Dad. Also she thinks it must be difficult for them to go from having her as a guest to having to tell her what to do. But with the Cooks she has

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Jodie McFarlane's year as a Rotary exchange student from Chelsea Australia is drawing to a close. As she looks back at the past 11 months, she realizes what good friends she has made and how she will miss them all. Of the four families she stayed with all very special to her in different ways. John and Anna Arnold were his first "family."

# The Acton Free Press



A Metroland Community Newspaper

One Hundred and Eighth Year—Issue 22

ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1982

Forty Pages—Thirty Cents



Halton Regional Police began their annual spot check program for the Christmas festive season last weekend. The program, designed to check for impaired drivers and the mechanical fitness of vehicles on the road also looks out for the violating

—Photo courtesy The Canadian Champion

## Add \$20,000 for studies of complex

by Gord Murray

The outgoing council invested more like \$30,000, not just \$10,000, so the new Halton Hills council can decide if the Stevens' Estate in Georgetown is the place a future municipal complex.

Mayor Peter Pomeroy revealed it cost the Town "approximately" \$20,000 for three studies conducted late last summer to determine the suitability of the nearly 30 acre parcel on Maple Ave. in Georgetown. Soil testing, a land survey and a water and sewer servicing study, which also looked at "potential servicing problems" in the Georgetown Hospital-Princess Anne area, were carried out.

During a lengthy interview Monday, Pomeroy commented on about 20 questions dealing with this issue. He suggested nothing "underhanded" was done by council in its handling of the issue. Pomeroy added the media was making a big deal out of the deposit being placed on the property at the first and only meeting of the old council after the election just to sell newspapers.

Pomeroy said in "all fairness" the four new councillors should be briefed on the old council's actions, timetable, and motives in this issue "which has become contentious through the newspapers." The mayor noted he doesn't want to make a public presentation in the papers, after the new councillors are brought up to date there will be a public presentation.

The municipal complex debate dates back to 1977 and 1978 when council previously wrestled with the issue and set up a reserve fund for the project. All monies placed in this fund have come from lot levies paid by developers. Pomeroy pointed out this fund was set to "specifically answer the long term administrative space needs of the municipality."

Since the reserve fund was established some time ago and councils have been "working" on the municipal complex issue for several years, everyone knew something would eventually be done.

Bob Nicholl of Longmore Construction, Markham, approached the Town in the summer or fall of 1981 wanting to help the municipality solve its central administration building problems but didn't receive any kind of commitment, he was doing everything on "spec."

Besides the Stevens' estate, Nicholl also looked at the Lambert property near the Moore Park area of Georgetown, the Moore property near the White Bridge in Georgetown and the Dominion Seed House property, also in Georgetown. He came back to council in June and recommended the Stevens estate was the most promising.

When he returned with results of testing in August, council learned part of the Stevens estate site couldn't be developed because of Conservation Authority restrictions and some time later the price council was willing to pay for the land dropped from \$750,000 to the \$650,000 council offered in its option to purchase.

In September all councillors in a "straw vote" during an in-camera session backed the plan to pick up Nicholl's \$10,000 deposit on the property, as well as pay Nicholl over \$600 in interest. Between September and November 22 when council publicity passed a bylaw authorizing the spending of the \$10,000 and the mayor unveiled the pro-

posal as it now stands, the agreement between Nicholl and the Town and the Stevens Estate was being "finalized." Pomeroy noted one holdup was the Stevens Estate is "complicated."

The issue was raised November 22 because it was something which had to be dealt with in public, council had been dealing with it for some time, council wanted to "set direction" for the new council and give the new council the chance to make the final determination.

The old council was taken through this "process carefully" and the mayor said he is sure they understood the sequence of events. He rejected suggestions that councillors thought the municipal complex subject wouldn't be raised until January or February, adding the issue couldn't be held up until then.

Noting this issue has been hanging for some time, Pomeroy said given the municipal complex's past history of controversy it was important that this proposal be brought along slowly or else council will never be able to settle its long term space needs. Pomeroy emphasized even if council votes to buy the site it doesn't mean a building will spring up next week or next year. Part of council's responsibilities is to solve the municipality's long term space needs, he said.

There are no specific drawings or plans for the building or the site, though there are "conceptual ideas" for the property.

No decision has been made regarding what might be done with any surplus land, though some ideas, including selling the extra property for housing development, have been discussed. Pomeroy said the Town wouldn't be involved in building a subdivision.

The road access and servicing problems in the area of the hospital are key elements of this proposal. Access from the hospital to Maple Ave. and Trafalgar Rd. is important if the hospital is to ever become "a vital component" of the health care scheme of Halton Hills.

Pomeroy acknowledged there are some "problems" with the wording of the final clause between the Town and Longmore. This section reads as if the two sides will "negotiate in good faith" for

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## Bennetts leave \$300,000 to St. Alban's Church

by Helen Murray

St. Alban's Anglican Church, Acton, has been bequeathed \$300,000 from the estate of Stewart and Violet Bennett of Scotsdale Farm, Ballinafad.

The bequest was one of many such generous gifts given to various public institutions, including the University of Guelph, and the Province of Ontario, through the Ontario Heritage Foundation, totalling well over \$5 million.

The inheritance for the local church came as a great surprise to Rev. Art Tribe, who said he had expected between \$10 and \$25,000 following the October death of Mrs. Bennett. Mr. Bennett died in August.

The Bennetts were quite active in the Acton church for many, many years, Rev. Tribe said, and were regular worshippers until ill health forced their absence. Rev. Tribe described them as faithful givers, having donated the pipe organ, the pulpit and other furnishings in the church.

Never in the history of St. Alban's has there been such a generous gift, Rev. Tribe stated. And he thinks this is probably the largest in the history of the entire diocese.

A finance committee within the church is looking at the possibilities of investments for the money until such time as it is needed by the church.

Property and cash valued at more than \$5 million was bequeathed to The Ontario Heritage Foundation in what has been described as the largest gift ever made to the agency.

According to foundation chairman John White, the bequest included 540 acres of choice land in Halton Hills, four houses, complete with furnishings and nearly 100 oil paintings, and \$50,000 in cash.

"While being the largest overall donation, it is also the biggest cash donation ever received," White noted. He explained the Bennetts had been working with the foundation for many years to make the gift possible to the province.

The land is located partly in the Niagara Escarpment, and adjoins the Silvercreek Valley Conservation Education Centre. According to the foundation, custody of the land is currently being discussed with the Credit Valley Conservation Authority and the University of Guelph. "It is hoped these talks will result in an equine research centre and a new conservation area bearing the Bennett name," White added.

The Ontario Heritage Foundation is an agency of the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture with a mandate to protect and promote conservation of Ontario's architectural, historical, archaeological and natural heritage.

The University of Guelph has been notified it was mentioned in the will, but at this time they are not releasing exact figures. Don Jose, public relations, said nothing has been received yet by the institution and they are hesitant about releasing figures.

He did, however, say the university has not entered into any agreement with the Ontario Heritage Foundation regarding the care and development of lands bequeathed to the province. Nothing yet has been decided, he warned.

Stewart Bennett was 90 years old when he died in August. He was a vice president of Canada Packers from 1946 to 1965, having started his career with the firm in 1926 when he joined Beardmore and Co. in Acton. He held directorships of many companies, including Dominion Stores. He was also president of the Royal Winter Fair for several years. Mrs. Violet Bennett died in October at 81 years of age. The couple had no children.

## Area woman \$100,000 richer

Mary Jane Madgett, of RR 3 Acton is \$100,000 richer this week after holding the winning ticket in last Thursday's Wintario draw.

Mrs. Madgett says the amazing part of her win is the fact that the week before, she won a book of tickets in Wintario and the \$100,000 winner was in the free book. She purchased the original ticket and received the free ones from Shoppers World in Brampton.

The Erin Townline resident says she has no plans for the money as of yet, and has it tucked safely away in the bank. However, she hinted that with Christmas coming up, she is sure she will find something to spend it on.



St. Alban's Church was bequeathed \$300,000 in Stewart Bennett's will recently.



Walter Stuckless tended to one of the Salvation Army's Christmas cheer kettles on the weekend. Halton police are investigating a case of fraud in connection with Army donations. See Page 5.

### Inside

A lobby group has been formed to fight pits and quarries. See Page 2.

The annual Trinity Boar's Head dinner still weaves its magic. Page 1.

Council stumbled on the complex issue says Gord Murray on Page 4.

Residents are protesting the proposed municipal complex with a Petition. See Pages

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David Marcoux's film wins five awards. C1.

Look for water/sewer rate hikes in 1983. Page C1.

Even new babies must "back up". Page C6.

