



Dr. Allan Buchanan, a dentist in Acton for 50 years, died Sunday. He has been a resident of Halton Manor. See story on Page 2.

Mother, two children die in flaming house

A 27-year-old woman and her two young children are dead after fire levelled their RR 1 Orton home early Saturday morning.

Bonnie Hodge, five-year-old Joseph and 16-month-old Janet were trapped upstairs in their Lot 30, Concession 3, Erin Township home after a suspected electrical fire started in the kitchen, Constable Jack Findlater of the Guelph OPP said.

Mrs. Hodge and her husband Michael awoke about 3.15 a.m. to the smell of smoke, police say. The couple went downstairs to investigate and to wake up Mr. Hodge's brother John, who was sleeping on the first floor.

While the two men went outside for some air, Mrs. Hodge returned upstairs to get the children. However, when Mr. Hodge attempted to re-enter the house, flames and smoke forced him back police say.

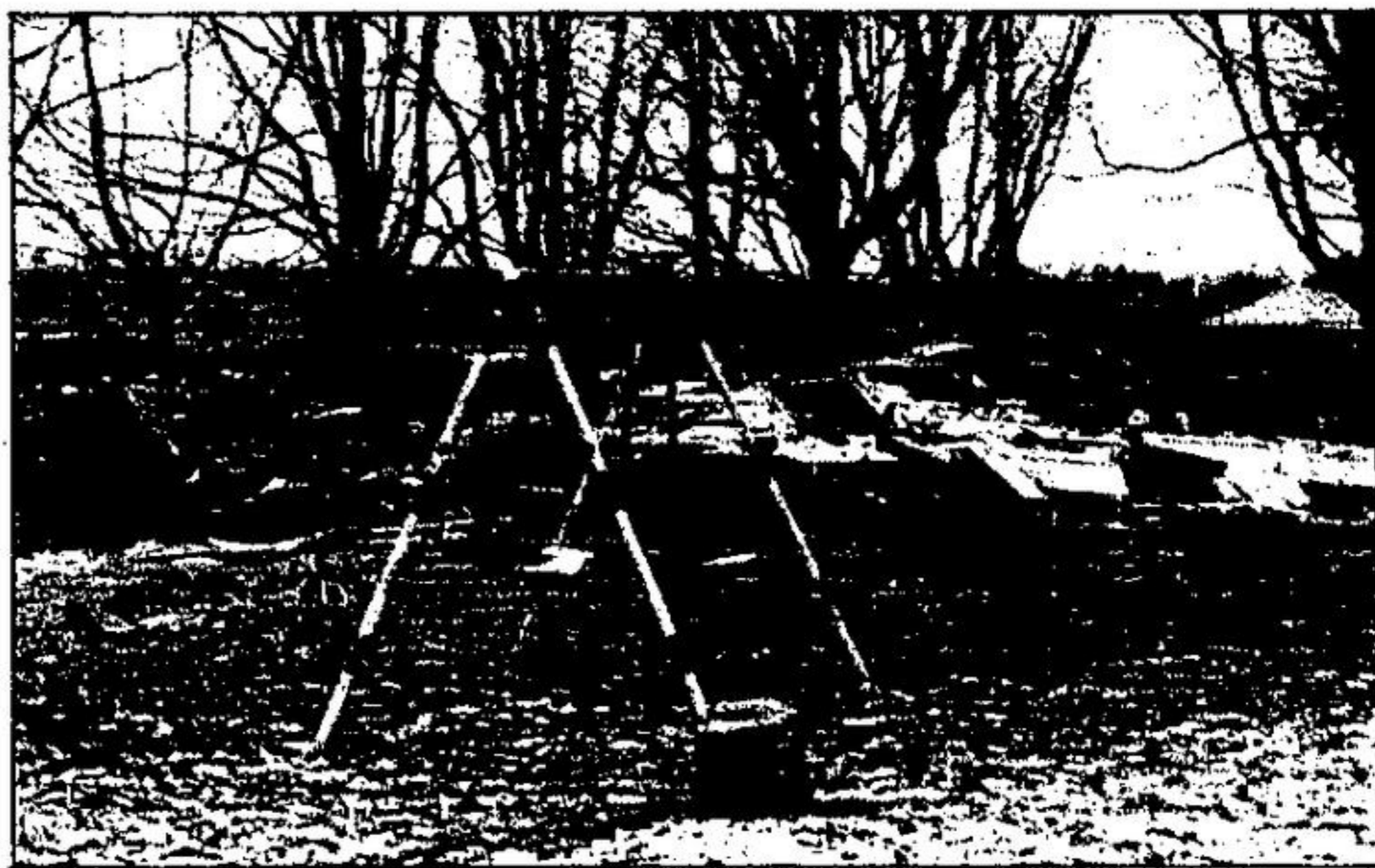
The bodies of Mrs. Hodge and the children have been sent to the Centre for Forensic Science in Toronto where an autopsy was performed.

The Ontario Fire Marshal's Office investigated the blaze, which caused about \$60,000 to the home. Constable Findlater explains the Fire Marshal is always called in when a death occurs.

Early issue

To enable the staff of The Acton Free Press and Metroland Printing and Publishing an extended Christmas holiday and to give advertisers complete circulation, The Free Press will be published one day early next week.

The advance in time will mean deadline for next week's paper will be advanced by 24 hours. To ensure submitted material is published it should be at The Free Press office no later than 12 noon Monday, December 20.



A deserted swing set is all that is left of the home of Michael and Bonnie Hodge, RR 1 Orton. Mrs. Hodge and her two children died in the weekend blaze which levelled their home.

The Acton Free Press

A Metroland Community Newspaper



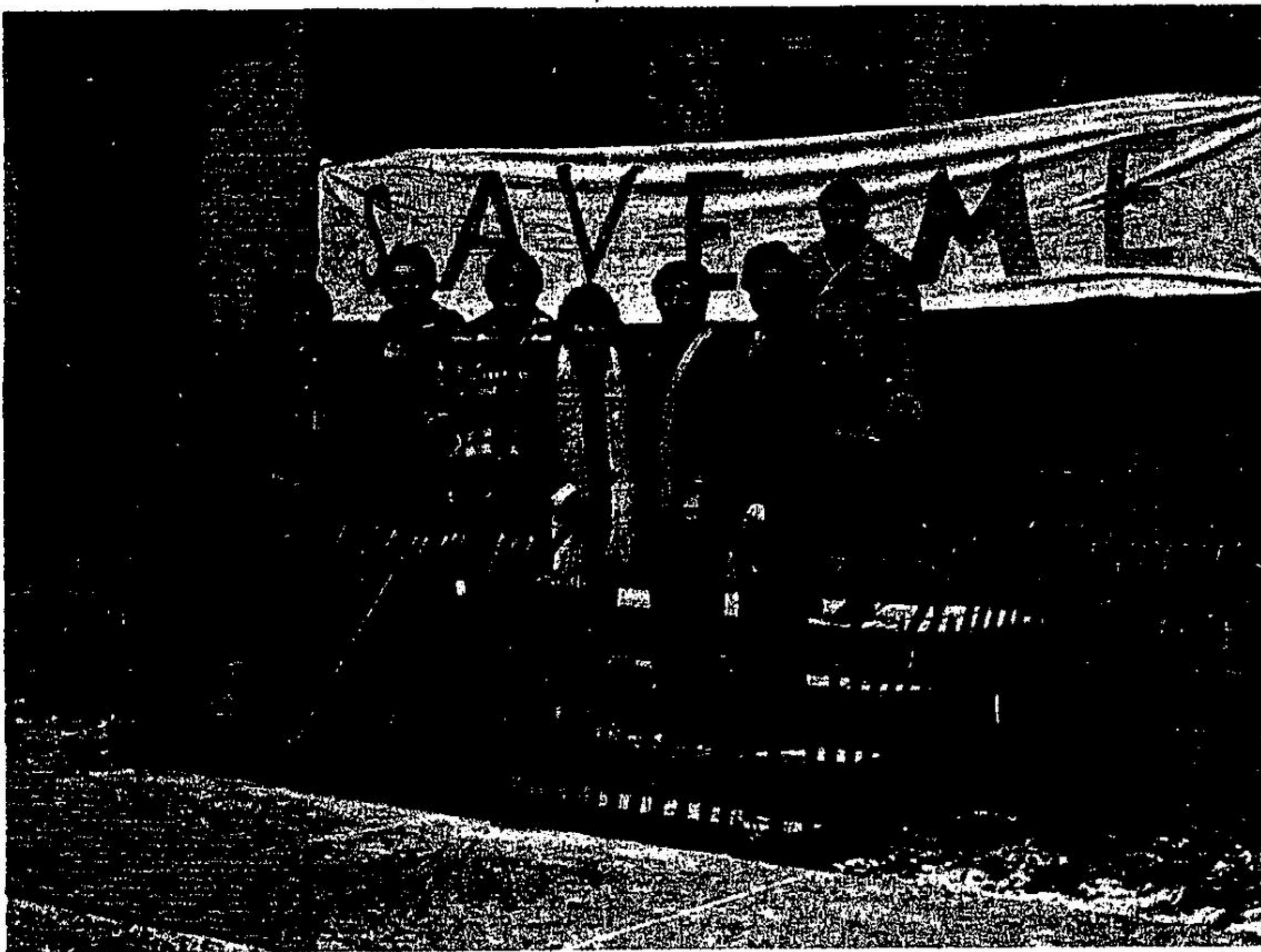
One Hundred and Eighth Year — Issue 23

ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1982

Forty-Two Pages — Thirty Cents

Review Board rules

Historic designation to stay on town hall



Acton Town Hall Restoration Committee scored two major victories this week, bringing them closer to their goal. A bright orange "Save Me" banner was strung across the front of the century-old building last Wednesday, the day of the Conservation Review Board. Ardent hall supporters are, left to right, Dr. George Elliott, Tracey Tyler, Kathy Sanford, Alice Duby, Gord Chapman, Angela Tyler, Ted Tyler, Jake Kulken and Doug Fread.

A Conservation Review Board looking into the possible lifting of the historic designation on the Acton town hall has ruled that the designation remain the same, it was announced yesterday (Tuesday).

Last Wednesday during a hearing the Review board heard conflicting evidence of the cost and extent of restoring the Acton town hall. The town of Halton Hills wants to tear the 100-year-old building down and make a parking lot.

Ted Tyler of the Town Hall Restoration Committee says he will approach town council Monday evening in an attempt to have the committee named legal sponsor of the building in order that work restoration work may commence as soon as possible.

With the Board's ruling, and the announcement of a \$133,720 make work grant (see story elsewhere on this page), he is optimistic the hall will be saved.

At the hearing, William Bennett and Mrs. K.J. Levison, of the Board listened to Tom Anderson, town solicitor, and Gord Chapman, lawyer for the Town Hall Restoration Committee as they argued their opposing cases.

Town employees Delmar French, deputy clerk, Ken Richardson, clerk administrator, and Tom Sheperd, recreation director, outlined the history of the town's involvement in the five year saga.

French noted that since 1977 motions to have the hall demolished were withdrawn, mainly due to pleas by Dr. George Elliott. In December, 1977, the town hall was designated a historic building.

In 1978, French said, the Ministry of Labor ordered the building vacated, leaving Halton Regional Police and the Senior Citizens' Drop in to find new quarters.

May 2, 1979, the deputy clerk recalled, Halton Hills council allocated \$40,000 for the hall providing that the restoration committee secure the remainder of the financing. In June, 1980, Dr. Elliott made the first application for a Wintario grant.

Over the next few months decision deadlines were extended before council made a final decision to tear the building down.

Recreation director Sheperd told the Board Kleinfeltd Consultants Ltd. was brought in to look into the feasibility of the restoration. He also noted the Wintario application had been made before the grant freeze. "It was remaining as an active file in a inactive grant program." The project became void in December, 1981 when the criteria expired.

A questionnaire distributed randomly around Acton indicated the town was split 45/45 pro and con towards the restoration, according to Steve Blaney, a professional engineer with Kleinfeltd

Consultants. The other 10 per cent did not care what happened, he testified.

Part of his firm's study looked into potential uses and costs for the hall. Six scenarios were developed ranging from total restoration at a cost of approximately \$400,000 to the demolition of the building.

Blaney showed the Board photographs of the hall and pointed out certain areas of deterioration. Many of the cost estimates, Blaney admitted, depended on the end use of the structure. He recommended air conditioning, an outside elevator for the handicapped, upstairs washrooms and additional exits. A price tag of \$380,000 to \$440,000 would include the complete recycling of the building including the heritage concerns.

Blaney admitted to Gord Chapman that the building is in no danger of immediate collapse, noting it can be reinforced and rehabilitated.

Chapman questioned the need for insulation right away. Blaney counteracted that in order to conserve energy, no one operates an uninsulated building.

Chapman noted insulation, an elevator and air conditioning could be added later.

Robert Graham, also of Kleinfeltd said an office was open in downtown Acton and the public in-

(Continued on Page 7)

Inside

An Acton man is convicted of obstruct police, Page 3.

More names on complex petition, Page 3.

On the Leavell is on Page 5.

Bell Canada has a new system, Page 8.

Beardmore held its Christmas party. See Page 10.

And for the Firefighter's party, turn to Page 11.

Halton Farmer of the Year, Page C1.



Reduced charge

Fendley gets two years for his part in death of Erin township man

Bradley Fendley has been sentenced to two years less a day for his part in the shooting death of Donald Berriau, an Erin Township resident, last March 24.

The sentencing, in Wellington County Court in Guelph on Monday, followed a last minute reduction in the criminal charges against Fendley, a 21-year-old Milton resident, from first-degree murder. Fendley pleaded guilty to being an accessory after the fact in helping David McClean, who allegedly did the actual shooting, to escape.

McClean later shot himself in an apartment at 62 Park St. in Georgetown where he and Fendley had been hiding out. A third man involved in the incident was not charged.

Fendley has been held in custody at Wellington County Detention Centre since March pending his trial. Last Friday, the crown decided to withdraw the murder charge in favor of the lesser charge of being an accessory.

According to evidence, McClean, a Georgetown resident who ran Boomer's Trading Post on Main St., had asked Fendley for the telephone number of someone who would loan him a car to drive to Guelph. Fendley, who does not own a car, offered to get in touch with someone and arrange for a ride. On March 23, Fendley and McClean drove to Guelph with Glen Chapman, driver of the car.

After spending some time drinking at a house in Guelph the three then drove to the house of Donald Berriau, near Ballinafad. According to statements, McClean produced a sawed-off shot-gun of about 14 inches in length while in the car.

Allegedly, McClean sent Fendley into the house first because, he claimed, he was not welcome at the Berriau home. Fendley entered, emerged a short time later, and McClean then went inside, where he found Berriau asleep in the living room. According to witnesses, McClean woke the man and had a short conversation with him. Berriau

(Continued on Page 2)



Blood Clinic next Tuesday

High turnout at the last few blood donor clinics has necessitated the expansion of hours for the next clinic on Tuesday (December 21) at the Acton Legion.

The Acton Unit of the Canadian Red Cross Society and the Acton Lions Club is sponsoring the clinic from 2 to 3.30 and 5 to 8.30 p.m. The additional afternoon hours will hopefully alleviate long waiting periods, and extra staff will be on duty.

"Blood will be badly needed for this holiday season, so please come to give," appeals Alice Schreiber of the Unit.

Santa Claus will again be on hand to entertain the children.

Feds announce

\$133,720 grant for hall

The Acton Town Hall Restoration received a gift from a "fairy princess" last week in the form of a \$133,720 make work grant from the federal government.

The grant was announced on Wednesday at a Conservation Review Board hearing into whether or not the heritage designation should be lifted from the century old building so that demolition may commence by the Town of Halton Hills.

The only conditions on the money, explains Anne Campisi, project officer for the Canada Community Development Projects program, is that a legal sponsor must be appointed, and work must commence no later than February 25. So far, there is no sponsor.

The endorsement of the grant came just hours before the hearing, which was a last ditch attempt by a group of dedicated people to save the hall after a seven year battle. Town council, in the spring, voted to tear down the building and construct a parking lot for the attached fire hall.

The program is administered by Employment and Immigration Canada.

At the hearing, Campisi testified that the application for the money met all the criteria, which includes number of people involved. She noted the town hall project, if okayed by town council, would employ 10 people for about a year for a total of 457 work weeks. These would be unemployed people whose employment insurance benefits have run out.

The grant would furnish the wages for the 10 people, at \$300 for a project manager and \$180 for the other workers per week.

Campisi described the town hall restoration as "a viable project". The money has been approved

on the condition that the town accept legal sponsorship, or hand that sponsorship over to another group. Once this is received, work can commence on February 25. The money is assigned and just waiting, she said.

Once her office gets an application for a grant, Campisi explained, she consults with the members of the committee and the various levels of government. She then made recommendations to the Ministry and the national headquarters in Ottawa, who made the final decision.

Campisi continued to tell the hearing that the legal sponsors are to add \$48,000 to the government's money. Already \$38,000 has been raised with more money coming in from Actario, a planned Leathertown Market and other activities.

The project officer explained that various areas across Canada are allotted so much money and the \$133,720 would be coming out of Halton's share.

Ted Tyler, of the Town Hall Restoration Committee, at the hearing noted Halton Hills council must decide if they are going to retain the building now that some money is "upfront." He is hoping council will give the committee the authority to go ahead and form a non profit entity.

The next step he said, before the February 25 deadline would be to get "some very fast engineering advice". His committee deadline for the start of work is February 1, which will hopefully have the hall renovated by January 1, 1984, in time for a New Year's Party.

Using the "UIC expires", Tyler noted, salary costs would be about 60 per cent of the union rate. He feels the work could be done at much more reasonable figure than the \$400,000 figure a consulting firm put on it.