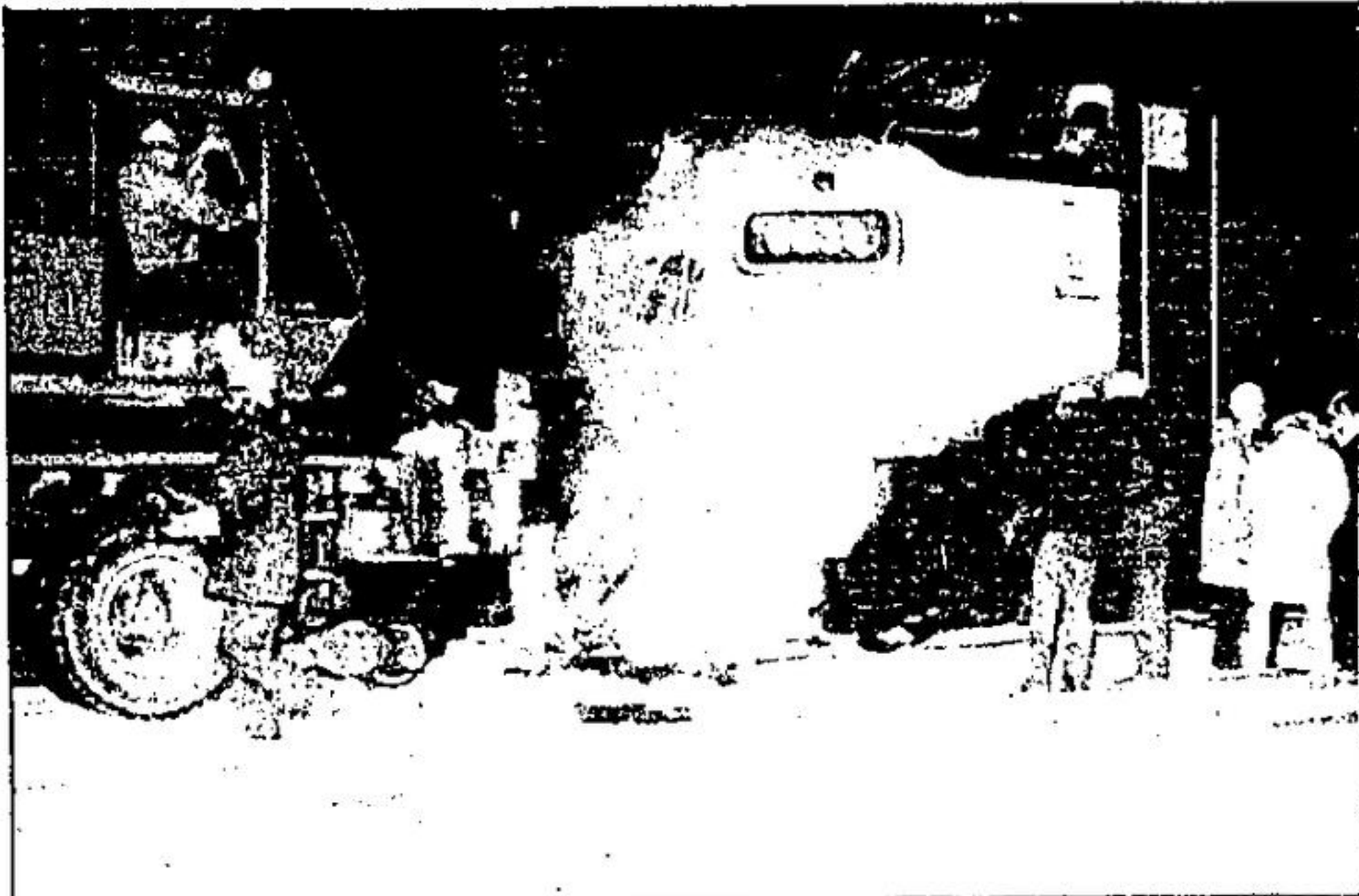


# Remembering 1982



A train derailed at the start of 1982 blocked the Mill St. crossing for hours one night.



A small plane made an emergency landing on frozen Fairy Lake in January.

## January

The first month of the year featured two attention grabbing accidents, one a passenger train derailed at the Mill crossing and an emergency small plane landing on Fairy Lake. There were no injuries in either incident.

A New Year's Eve party at an RR2 Acton farmhouse produced a mystery for police when an unidentified man was knifed. The victim and others at the party refused to identify the attacker. Police were called to the same home again in March when a man was murdered.

The Salvation Army announced plans to build a church on Mill St. near the Canadian Tire Store.

Acton's longest running merchant, Elma Braida, announced she was retiring and had sold her Acton Home Furnishings shop.

Halt Regional Police announced they will keep the "dirty dozen", the 12 officers whole patrol Acton, intact if possible for 1982 and will hold another open house. There were only a couple of minor changes made in the group of officers assigned to Acton during 1982.

The St. Joseph's School project went to tender in January amid hopes for a March start if the weather was suitable. Construction of the new school didn't start until April.

Rotary exchange student Denise Dilby reported from Japan that she was thoroughly enjoying her stay in the Oriental country.

Dr. Michele Heath of RR 1, Acton, a professor at the University of Toronto, became the first woman ever to receive the prestigious E. W. R. Steacie Memorial Fellowship from the Research Council of Canada.

Parents, the Christian Reformed Church, and McKenzie-Smith School all protested a pinball arcade operation located in a former gas station on Highway 7 on the east side of town to municipal bodies and before the year ended it was closed because it didn't conform to zoning regulations. Halt Hills also came up with an arcade bylaw.

In a mysterious incident police revealed they were investigating the case of an Acton man who was forced off the road in a rural area and shot in the arm. It was thought to be a case of mistaken identity.

The Rotary club announced Alanna Bowen and Stephen Sojka were chosen to be exchange students. Their destinations would be announced later in the year.



The Barden's of Eden Mills once again earned honors for speedskating.

## February

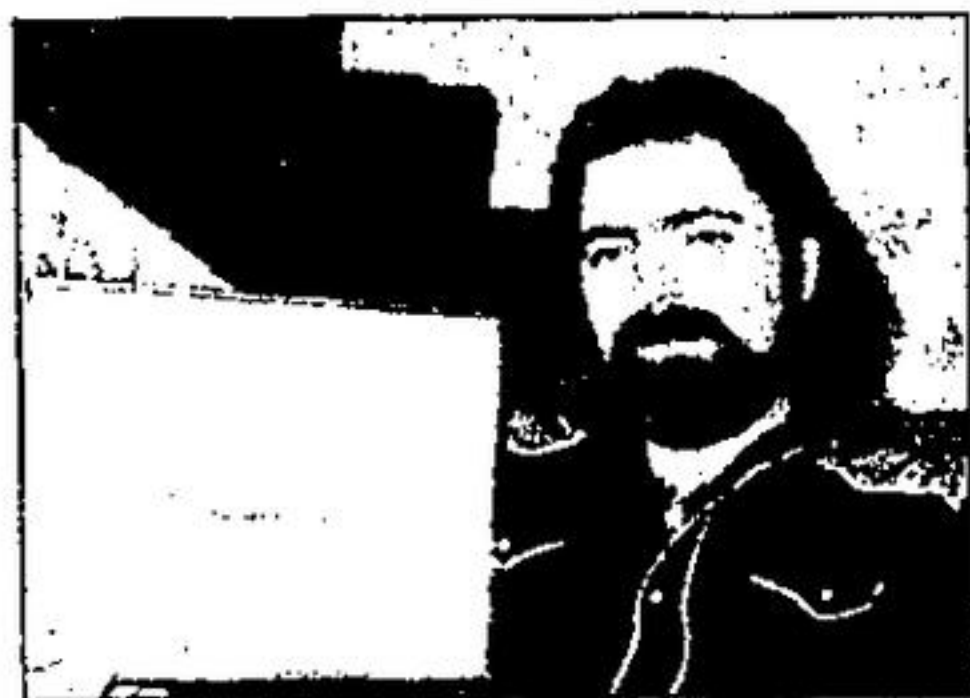
A major story all year, the town hall captured headlines in February when councillors decided to have staff look at the possibility of selling the building.

Ted and Evelyn Barden of Eden Mills came home from the seniors' Olympics at Lake Placid with medals and also won honors at speedskating competitions in Ottawa.

Protests from Poplar Ave. residents about parking, noise and vandalism halted Town plans

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port quotas.  
 The local Masonic Lodge announced the famed Central Band of the Canadian Forces would be playing two concerts in Acton in June.  
 The spectacular Dominion Hotel fire trial began in March.



Ron Hachey received a Halton Region Safety Council award for saving a little girl's life the previous fall.

## April

The fourth month of 1982 began with bad news for town hall supporters as council narrowly voted not to sell the building to the local groups for \$1 and instead decided to demolish the historic building and build a parking lot.

The spectacular Dominion Hotel fire trial wound up and went to the jury which deliberated for over 20 hours following four weeks of listening to often complex testimony. The case was built on circumstantial evidence and featured testimony by a self-admitted professional killer.

Cosimo Mercuri was convicted of second degree murder in the fire death of Howard Gibbons in 1979 and sentenced to life imprisonment with no chance of parole for 10 years. Co-defendant Michael McCristall was found guilty of the lesser charge of manslaughter and handed a sentence of two-years-less-a-day. A third defendant, Leonard Cripps, was acquitted at the end of the Crown's case when Mr. Justice Colter Osborne directed the jury to find Cripps not guilty because no case had been proved against him.

Both Mercuri and McCristall appealed their convictions. McCristall was later released from jail pending his appeal while Mercuri remained behind bars.

Taxpayers learned the bad news in April that taxes were soaring in 1982. Thanks mainly to a staggering education mill rate hike, the average property tax in Acton jumped \$135.57.

Departing Trinity United Church minister Rev. Chuck Beaton was honored as Acton's 25th Citizen of the Year. The Chamber of Commerce also took advantage of the 25th anniversary of the prestigious award to honor the 24 past recipients. They were G.A. Dills, Amos Mason, Dr. W.G.C. Kenney, Madeline Gibbons, John Goy Sr., M.Z. Bennett, Billy Middleton, Fred Wright, George Musselle, St. John Ambulance, Charlie Thompson, Steve Papiilon, Ted Tyler Sr., Dave Dills, George Elliott, Les Duby, Acton OPP, Isabel Watson, Dr. Frank Oakes, Acton Firefighters, Rev. Andy McKenzie, Arlie White, and Ron McKnight.

It was announced that three local youngsters would be going on trips sponsored by the Rotary Club. Marlene Lott was selected for the Adventure in Citizenship journey to Ottawa while exchange students Alanna Bowen and Stephen Sojka are bound for Sweden and Denmark respectively this summer.

Students and staff of St. Joseph's School gathered on the site of the new school on Mill St. West to watch an informal sod turning ceremony in which Trustee Irene McCauley, principal Fred Springer and Father Ralph Diodati dug up some dirt, marking the beginning of construction of the new school.

During a tour of Beardmore, Halton MP Otto Jelinek vowed he and other Conservatives would fight the government for the re-instatement of import quotas on footwear to help tanners and shoe manufacturers.

Quick rescue efforts by Acton firefighters saved the life of baby Andrew Coe, bringing attention to the extensive rescue training volunteers receive.

Ron Hachey was honored by the Halton Region Safety Council for saving the life of a little girl who had fallen in a pond the previous August.

For the second time Halton Hills failed in an attempt to convict two officials of the Yugoslavia recreation centre on Highway 25 south of Acton for noise bylaw violations in the summer of 1981.

The province decided not to close the D and G group home south of town where hard to manage youngsters, mostly natives peoples, had been staying.

Developer Jerry Sprackman dropped his legal manoeuvres to build a plaza on the east side of town ending his plan.

## May

Spring didn't bring an improvement in the local economic situation, the Acton branch of the TD Bank announced it would be closing in June and the four day week at Beardmore became a fixture. Beardmore and Heller's announced the firms were applying for work sharing.

Halton Hills Hydro solved its housing problems by moving all maintenance operations to the Alice St. operation in Acton while settling on the Georgetown office for administration.

Barry Alexander Wilson of Acton was acquitted at the end of his often remanded preliminary hearing of three driving charges, including criminal negligence causing death, in connection with the accidental death of a Guelph man on a rural road near Rockwood in 1979.

The region warned there might be water use restrictions in Acton if it was a dry summer, but it turned out they weren't needed.

Acton merchants joined the campaign to persuade the federal government to reinstate import quotas for shoes. Their petition was accepted by the House of Commons.

Halton Hills council decided to check out the

## March

In March the Credit Valley Conservation Authority rejected a coroner's inquest jury's suggestion that a pond on Main St. South behind the Kingham townhouses be filled or drained. A little boy drowned in the pond the previous September. Halton Hills and region also decided not to put up a fence between the homes and pond as the jury had recommended.

RCMP and Halton police staged a big region wide series of drug busts which netted four Acton men on trafficking charges.

It was announced that Halton Hills fire chief Mick Holmes would be handing in his pager and retiring at the end of June.

The controversy over user pay fees for ball and soccer teams erupted and sports groups vowed to fight the steep cost increases which would put up registration fees.

Plans by CN to fix the railway crossing on Mill St. were revealed. The work is expected to take place in the summer.

AN RR2 Acton man was found dead in his rented farmhouse on the Sixth Line of Erin Township shortly after midnight on March 24. Within hours Guelph OPP issued Canada wide warrants for the arrest of two Georgetown men, David McClean and Brad Fendley.

Later in the day they were found in an apartment in Georgetown by Halton Regional Police and while they were being taken into custody McClean pulled out a sawed-off shotgun and fatally wounded himself in the belly. Fendley was charged with first degree murder.

Local leather workers joined their union brothers across Canada in a nation wide push to persuade the government to re-instate footwear im-



Departing Trinity United Church minister Rev. Chuck Beaton was honored at the 1982 Citizen of the Year.

The Chamber of Commerce also honored past recipients of the prestigious award in April.

legalities of putting an international question on the ballot, but supported the idea of a nuclear referendum for the 1982 municipal election.

The province boosted its contribution for the new St. Joseph's School well past the \$1 million mark with an extra \$57,190.

A release from the Ontario Ministry of Environment revealed there is some water contamination caused by Beardmore in both the Black Creek and ground water near the tannery, but the chemical runoff is no danger to humans and isn't too serious.

A region report announced since 1976 over \$3 million has been spent on new water and sewer lines in Acton and another \$8.4 million worth of water and sewer improvements is planned between 1982 and 1986.

A chapter of the Knights of Columbus was launched in May at St. Joseph's Church.

In a move to curb noise at the Yugoslav Centre south of town in the coming summer Halton Hills council rejected a request for support in securing liquor permits. Eventually council relented and approved permits for a few weekends.



Mick Holmes retired as fire chief at the end of June.



Police offered demonstrations of the use of their night stick as an added feature of their annual open house in Acton.

## June

Halton Hills council had voted to lift the historic designation of the town hall, but first because of official protests from citizens, there would be a Heritage conservation Review Board hearing.

The TD Bank branch in Acton closed after three hectic weeks of the staff arranging account transfers.

Halton Hills council learned it would have to make some minor budget adjustments so structural repairs could be made to the Acton arena or else it couldn't be open again in the fall.

There wasn't bad economic news all year, two small firms, Trailert Manufacturing and Elso Chemicals opened their doors in Acton in the spring.

Halton Police announced a crackdown on minibikers, with the threat of steep fines for parents too, after they received numerous complaints at the annual meet the force open house. Turnout at the open house was down from the previous year, leading police to believe citizens are happier with their service.

A member of the Acton Legion, Dave Capperault, moved up to the presidency of the Dominion Legion.

The Hide House announced plans for yet another expansion, this time a crafts and artisans

Two local teens, Roni Skeffington and Michelle Jones, were chosen for a year of adventure and hard work in Canada with Katimavik.

Attendance wasn't as big as expected, but the Central Band of the Canadian Forces thrilled those who went out on a rainy Saturday to hear them perform.

Construction of the new St. Joseph's School was delayed by a series of trade strikes, but work quickly caught up following the settlement of the labor disputes.

Robberies were up across Canada, and Acton was no exception with an armed man escaping from John's Auto Service with about \$250 in cash.

Councillors voted to raise their own pay \$666 and the mayor's \$1,683 as dictated by a complicated economic formula but then rolled their 10.2 per cent wage boosts back to six per cent to follow federal pay guidelines.

Acton wasn't amused about being left off one Ontario roadmap altogether while being given the same status as Speyside on another.



An Acton Legion member, Dave Capperault, became the president of the Dominion Legion in 1982.

## July

Ottawa decided to reinstate shoe import quotas, but local labor and industry spokesmen predicted this move wouldn't turn their business around too quickly.

A crew of canoeists from Acton High School won a championship in Ottawa over the Canada Day weekend. In Acton, Canada Day was quieter due to the cancellation of Back to Acton Days.

After discussing the problems with police, councillors delayed making any decision on changing the overnight parking ban despite complaints from many residents, particularly about ticket blitzes in recent years. Later in the month they voted to keep the ban, but consider exempting some streets.

Police sergeant Bill Cunningham, a long-time volunteer firefighter in Georgetown, was named Halton Hills fire chief replacing the retired Mick Holmes.

Quick action by Halton Regional Police officer Gavin Hayes saved the life of a drunk Acton man who needed artificial respiration after lapsing into unconsciousness.

The drowning death of two 7-year-old boys at Fairy Lake within an hour of each other shocked the community.

Rotary exchange student Denise Dilbey returned from a year in Japan with native dress and lots of memories.

Armed thieves tied up an Eden Mills family which came home and surprised them during the burglary and then escaped in the family's car.

Halton Hills unveiled the long awaited draft of its first Official Plan.

Vandals smashed windows and caused other property damages on several hot weekends during July. Once a police cruiser was damaged and another time a policeman was assaulted while trying to get youths to move along late at night.

Urea Formaldehyde Insulation is a problem for numerous Acton citizens, but none more so than the Hilton family who built their dream home and used the federal government recommended insulation. It has caused family illness and is far too costly to remove so they may eventually have to bulldoze the home if they can't come up with funds from suing the government.

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**REFUSE PICKUP**

Due to the closing of the Regional Landfill Site in Oakville at the end of December, 1982, the Town has established new routes respecting refuse pickup commencing in January 1983.

Refuse pickup by Town forces will still be the SAME DAY in your area but may be at a DIFFERENT TIME than normal.

Please ensure your refuse is set out for collection by 7:30 a.m. on your normal day.

Compliments of the Season  
 R.C. Austin, P. Eng.  
 Town Engineer