

Friendship, culture abound at Norval Newfoundland Club

By LYNN RHODES
Herald staff writer

Eastern hospitality kept my glass full as they told stories filled with custom and history. I came to understand the cultural heritage which links Newfoundlanders into a close-knit group. And that same fun-loving, brotherhood atmosphere is promoted at the Newfoundland Club.

Nestled in the village of Norval across from a hotel named the Hollywood House, the Newfoundland Club was established in 1964.

Graham Porter, one of the original members and now club treasurer, tells how the club used to rent halls for dances on special occasions and held meetings in private homes.

The club has grown from a small clique of homesick Newfoundlanders to a mem-

bership of 300 Georgetown-Brampton area residents from a diversification of backgrounds. The common element: a desire for a good time, and community involvement.

Every Saturday night the club is humming with preparations for the weekly dance. The large, well-lit ballroom is scrubbed and polished. The band, usually middle-of-the-road but specializing in country and country-rock with a few folk and identifiably Newfie tunes, sets up their instruments.

The ladies auxiliary of the Newfoundland club have finished shopping and are busy cooking for hungry patrons. Finally, the bar is open and hundreds of people join together for an evening of dancing and conversation. The only rules are no stags or blue

jeans. And the prices are reasonable.

President John Peters, a native of Bell Island, off the Newfoundland east coast near St. John's, stresses that besides filling a social need in the community, the Newfoundland Club is a non-profit organization which donates to various charities.

Last year, the club gave \$1,100 to the mentally retarded, \$500 to Georgetown hospital, \$100 to a Muscular Dystrophy telethon, among other contributions.

"If we've got money, we'll give it," explained Mr. Peters. "It's our way of paying back the community which accepted us."

In addition, the Newfoundland Club sponsors an industrial hockey team under the jurisdiction of members Frank Maddigan, coach, and

Danny Kabangh, captain.

These men are two of the estimated 50 "active members" who spend hours of volunteer time keeping the club operational while holding down full-time jobs.

Since the Newfoundland Club started renting part of the Burgandy Club two years ago, members have been responsible for alot of business-oriented work for a non-profit organization.

Functions must be arranged and cleaned up afterwards, supplies must be purchased, bills must be paid, tickets must be printed, advertisements must be prepared, bands must be engaged, books must be balanced.

But as secretary John Hayward justifies: "Our reimbursement is the satisfaction we get from seeing people enjoying themselves

Saturday nights."

Fellowship, be it through making charitable donations or indulging in dance and song, is what Newfoundland Club is all about.

Outside of a Toronto branch, it's the oldest Newfoundland club in Ontario, claims Mr. Porter.

"A townie" from St. John's, he's well-read on the history of his "hometown" and eager to relate this information. He'll tell you about a Mr. Anderson, of Newfoundland, of course, proclaimed as "the world's greatest showman next to Zeigfeld", one of his pupils being actress Bette Davis. And how his father, Governor Anderson, reigned during the advent of "Anderson lime", which made Newfoundland clocks different than those in any other part of the world.

And he'll describe the

migration of Newfoundlanders to Galt, Ontario, to work in rubber plants in the late 1930's prior to the outbreak of the war when the mines were shut down on Bell Island.

And he remembers "going upalong" or "across the mainland to Canada" before Confederation in 1949, and showing a police report and 'x-rays (there was a tuberculosis epidemic in Newfoundland) and others papers to immigration officers.

John Hayward and John Peters, being "some" younger than Graham Porter, allude listening to him to the fireside chats they had with family elders as children.

"That's how history was passed on, by word-of-mouth," said Mr. Peters, who cherishes the family as an institution.

Although trends are changing, he remembers

Newfoundland as a society where women, upon marriage, quit their jobs.

"Mother was always there", and 16-year-olds can buy weak ale at the corner store; and grandparents relate legends; an uncle would insist he drink a glass of stout before breakfast at age 6 to stimulate the appetite, and wakes are an important part of funerals and the whole family indulges in native folk music and jigs.

John Hayward recalls high school history textbooks, hundreds of pages thick without a word about Newfoundland, the first British colony with the oldest North American city being St. John's, founded in 1497.

He remembers visiting a tiny town called Albert in France and striking up a heartwarming relationship with a fellow Bell Islander native through reminiscences of home... the little ferryboat to "the mainland"; the "times" (social gatherings); the contributions Newfoundlanders have made to Canadian literature and art... Though hundreds of miles away from home, the Newfoundlanders have such a strong sense of cultural identity, they never really leave. And the purpose of the club is to recreate the same atmosphere of fellowship, for members of their new Ontario community, that they experienced "back home", and now miss.

**TOWN OF HALTON HILLS
NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNERS AND
TENANTS
WARD FOUR
POSTING OF PRELIMINARY LIST
OF ELECTORS**

A preliminary list of electors has been posted on Wednesday, January 26th, 1977, in the Office of the Clerk Administrator, Municipal Administration Building, Seventh Line, for inspection. A copy of the preliminary list of electors has also been posted up in several locations within each Polling Sub-division.

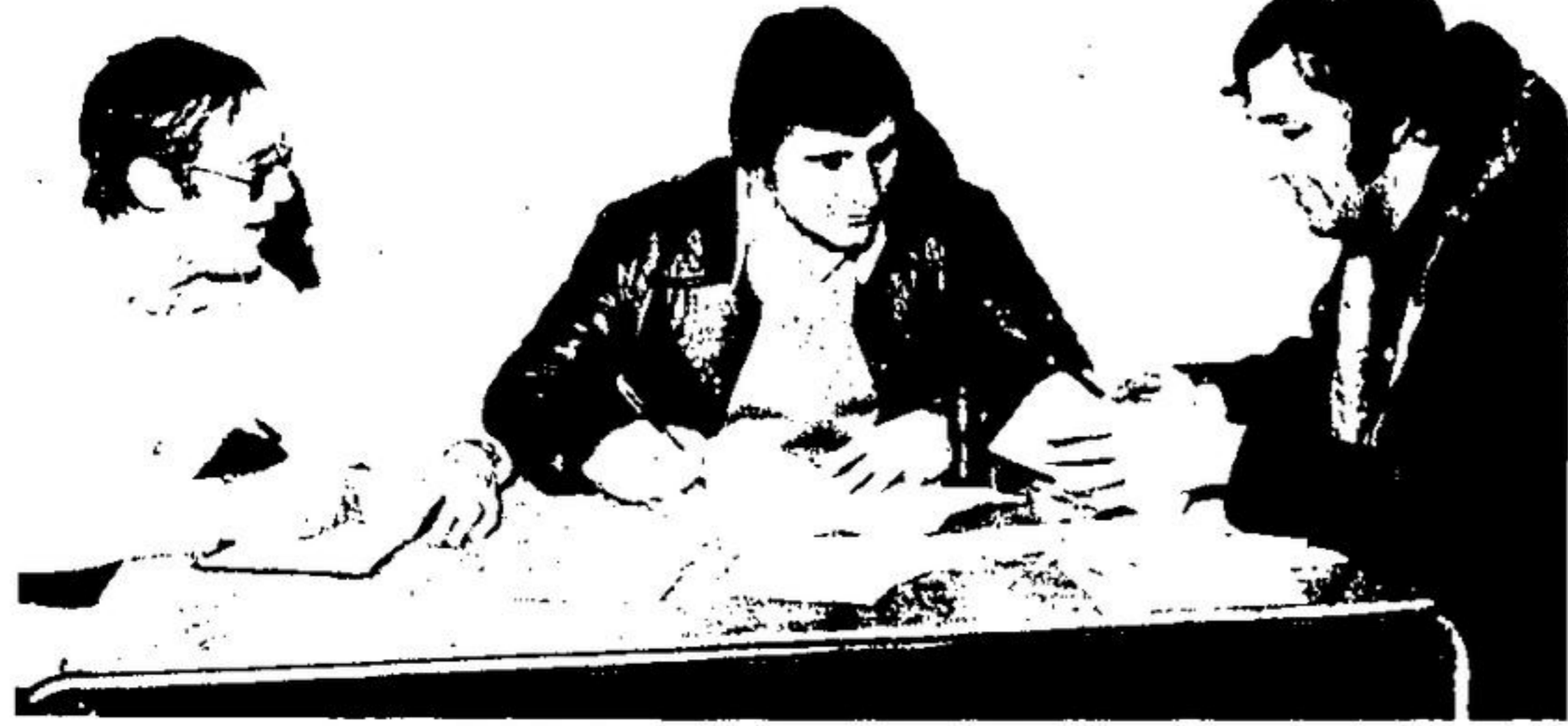
Property owners and tenants are requested to examine this list to ensure that their names and relevant information are correctly shown therein.

Attention is drawn to the necessity to complete the required form, available at the Office of the Clerk Administrator, respecting an Application for correction or alteration to the list.

All requests for additions, corrections or deletions from the list will be received by the Clerk Administrator at the Municipal Administration Building commencing on Wednesday, January 26th, 1977 through to Friday, February 4th, 1977 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. excluding Saturdays and Sundays.

The last day for filling forms requesting additions or corrections to or deletions from the list will be Friday, February 4th, 1977 at 4:30 p.m.

**G.D. FRITCHARD,
CLERK ADMINISTRATOR AND
REVISOR OFFICER
TOWN OF HALTON HILLS**
Dated this 26th Day of January, 1977.



BUSY BALANCING THE BOOKS ARE NEWFOUNDLAND CLUB MEMBERS (LEFT TO RIGHT) TREASURER GRAHAM PORTER, PRESIDENT JOHN PETERS AND SECRETARY JOHN HAYWARD.

Bell Island history in play and song

Two executive members of the local Newfoundland Club have used their creative talent to perpetuate the legendary history of their home through songs and a play.

President John Peters wrote a song entitled "Wabana after Bell Island located off the eastern shore of Newfoundland. Recently recorded by the band Bloodthick, a name borrowed from a Newfoundland Indian tribe, the record should be released soon.

The lyrics trace the experiences of Bell Islanders following the shut-down of mines which created a unemployment chaos there more than 30 years ago.

The same theme is the basis of Newfoundland Club secretary John Hayward's play "While the Drovers Goes Up Along", which translated from the Newfoundland dialect means going to the Canadian mainland.

The result of a meeting last week between Mr. Hayward and a professional theatrical director are unknown, but it is hoped the play will be featured at the annual Newfie reunion in Galt this summer.

The play is set on Bell Island, Mr. Hayward's hometown, where two men face the choice of staying "home" on welfare or travelling west to look for work after the iron mines are closed down.

Being adventurous, they take a government paid flight to Toronto following a "time" or farewell party featuring jigs, riddles, music, songs, laughter and a bit of "screetch" with friends.

Upon arrival in Toronto, they seek out lost relatives who reluctantly agree to accommodate them until they can find work. An uncle gets them a job in a Brewers Retail, where they help themselves to a bit of beer, get drunk and fired.

Finally, they return home via a fish truck, and to save face tell friends they earned enough money in two weeks to spend a winter in Newfoundland. They trick friends into loading the fish truck, as planned to pay for the ride, on the grounds they would get a lift to the land of opportunity after a six month job.

Busy first quarter trend ebbs, Acton fires drop: Chief says

Despite a busy first quarter, the Acton area fire department witnessed "a slight downward trend in fire incidents" during 1976, according to area Chief Mick Holmes.

In his annual report to council, tabled at works committee, Chief Holmes listed the 70 separate calls from Halton Hills, Erin Township and the Milton and Rockwood areas to which the department responded last year.

Financial losses for the 41 fire incidents reported in the Acton area totalled \$55,725.

An overall decrease in activity was noted despite the fact that fire losses during the first three months of the year jumped by more than 75 per cent - to \$30,000 - compared with the \$11,500 in damages

recorded during the same period of 1975.

Contributing to the financial loss losses at the beginning of 1976 was a serious blaze at the Dominion Hotel on Acton's Main Street, one of two hotel fires which took place last year.

In the Acton area, children playing with matches were blamed for three of the 16 residential fires to which the department was summoned. Grease fires accounted for four more.

Other calls included a gas spill, a commercial dip tank fire, nine car fires, a garage fire, three grass fires, a garbage container blaze attributed to arson, two overheated tar pots and two chimney flue fires.

Also notable were last summer's oil spill on Main Street triggered when an oil tanker truck climbed an embankment and rolled over onto its side, and two highway accidents, one of which involved the tragic deaths of seven Acton-area youths.

Acton's 31 firefighters and three drivers were also called into Erin Township to battle

four minor fires, to Milton to assist with 10 blazes and to Rockwood to the village brigade.

Four incidents were reported by insurance companies and four false alarms were turned in. The department answered five resuscitator calls and helped the police on one occasion.

Chief Holmes' other activities during 1976 included travels to Vancouver and Whitby for fire prevention conferences, 13 related meetings in Halton Region, inspections of schools, factories, churches, garages, apartment buildings and many homes and conducting guided tours of the Bower Street firehall for interested residents.

"With the addition of individual papers to our personnel, our response to fire calls has been about 75 per cent," Chief Holmes reported.

"We hope in 1977 to increase this percentage with the addition of a repeater box located at our base station. (Minimal cost)."

Chief Holmes also noted in his report a need to expand

Acton's "quite cramped" firehall accommodations as soon as possible.

"My glasses?"

House of Spectacles, of course."

House Of Spectacles

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