

# Arguments presented opposing area twinning

By GEORGE EVASHUK  
Herald staff writer

Arguments against the proposed twinning of two pairs of schools in Halton Hills were heard Thursday by Halton board of education.

The board is proposing to twin Limehouse public school with Joseph Gibbons school in Georgetown and Speyside public school with Robert Little school in Acton.

But spokesmen for the parents—David Mullins of Limehouse and Janet Armstrong of Speyside—outlined reasons why the schools should not be twinned.

Mr. Mullins said Limehouse school will have an estimated 184 pupils this fall, well above the figure of 150 pupils cited by the Halton Public Schools Principals Association as the upper limit of a small school category.

He said that figure does not take into consideration a subdivision of 53 homes near Limehouse that will yield about 26 children, according to the board's formula, and of which 13 will attend Limehouse school. The board's enrollment projection for 1979 does not include these 13 extra children, he said.

Mr. Mullins said the Limehouse Concerned Parents Association, backed up their projected enrollment from the subdivision by using a 1976 demographic analysis by Halton Hills planning board of the Marywood Meadows subdivision in Georgetown.

According to the findings of the analysis, not 13 but 26 pupils will enter the school in fall, bringing 1978 enrollment to over 200, he said.

The advantages of twinning are far outweighed by the disadvantages, Mr. Mullins said. The disadvantages he cited were: workload of staff in the smaller of the two schools increases; teacher responsibility increases in disciplines areas because of the reduced possibility of calling upon the principal; emergencies disrupt instructional flow when an administrator is not

readily available; and, reduced community contact in a time when community involvement is increasing.

Mr. Mullins said the concerned parents group would appreciate having written answers to six questions which he posed to the board:

—"Why was Halton Hills not represented on the budget finance committee when costs were taken into consideration when twinning occurs?"

—"Why does the board insist on using an overall projection average of 2.7 per cent per household when it has been proven that the Georgetown area is one of the highest in Ontario at 4.4 per cent? The incorrect projection of our 1977 enrollment disrupted Limehouse school."

—"How does a teaching vice-principal divide his teaching time?"

—"What is the responsibility of the principal to the smaller twinned school?"

—"If the enrollment of the smaller unit in a twinned situation increases, will you then reinstate the principal?"

—"Can you prove to us that Bigger is Better?"

In concluding, Mr. Mullins urged the board to first consider the quality of education, secondly the acceptance of their decision and thirdly the cost of the decision.

Education director Emerson Lavender said the subdivision is not yet registered and the experience of the administration indicates that large houses do not yield as many children as less expensive homes do. He added that the yield factor has larger homes is not fully gained until three or four years has passed.

Some confusion existed on when the homes would be built, Frank Dana, assistant superintendent of finance and business, said talks he had with Mario Venditti, Halton Hills planning director, indicated that five or six homes in the 53-home subdivision would be built this year, 25 homes next year and the balance the following year.

But a spokesman for the

Limehouse parents said she had talked with the builder who had guaranteed that all the homes will be started in June and completed by October.

Mr. Dana added that as the subdivision straddles a concession and the boundary line between M. Z. Bennett school and Limehouse school, a recommendation will soon come before the board to include the subdivision in one school area or the other.

Mrs. Armstrong said Speyside school is a rural school with enrollment projected at 158 for the fall while Robert Little school, 4.6 miles away, is an urban school with enrollment projected at 457.

Twinning Speyside school with Robert Little school will mean the Speyside school loses a principal while Robert Little loses a vice principal and gains about 160 pupils, she said.

"We'll have a vice principal teaching 75 per cent of the time."

She said Speyside would lose one of the two strongest teachers in the school but gain only a quarter teacher but at the Kindergarten to Grade 6 level.

"A quarter teacher cannot know the children as well as a full-time teacher."

"We will also, perhaps, lose our name," Mrs. Armstrong said. "The whole thing may become Robert Little."

She said there is some question in the ministry of education whether twinning was legal.

She said the parents understood that twinning occurs in neighborhoods where all the conditions are similar but Robert Little and Speyside schools are different.

"We feel that the schools should have autonomy and decisions made by a local administrator."

She said weather conditions are "always bad at Speyside", and a full-time principal is needed to keep parents informed. "A principal is of the utmost importance. He'll have time to know the parents and children and the authority to make decisions."

It would also be a good morale booster for staff to keep the principal in the school.

Trustee Barry Shepherd said the only advantage of twinning the schools is economics, and when such an issue comes before the board the amount of money should be stated.

Trustee B.H. (Bert) Hinton said the sum saved by twinning the schools is between \$4,000 and \$7,000. "It seems so ridiculous with the appalling waste elsewhere."

John Harrington, another Speyside parent, said the group recognizes the need for economy, "but we ask that you keep your priorities in order."

The board had gone on record as not being afraid to spend a bit of money to get classroom benefits, he said. "We're not asking you for new resources or a gym but just a reasonable and fair share of resources."

The board is expected to vote on the proposed twinning at its April 27 meeting.



John Kulken presents the Citizen of the Year award to Halton Hills Fire Chief Mick Holmes and the Acton firefighters.

## Acton Chamber honors firefighters for efforts

A special citation from Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau was among the gifts and best wishes bestowed upon town Fire Chief Mick Holmes and Acton District 1 volunteer firefighters when they were applauded as Acton citizens of the year for 1978 this weekend.

At an awards banquet sponsored by the Acton Chamber of Commerce Saturday, Chief Holmes and about 31 of his 33 men collected payment on some long overdue debts of gratitude.

Chamber President Jake Kulken called their efforts during this and past year "work well done but never done."

Halton M.P. Dr. Frank Philbrook presented Chief Holmes with an inscribed certificate bearing a message from Prime Minister Trudeau. Informed by Dr. Philbrook of the impending honorary banquet, Mr. Trudeau called the tribute,

## Go-cart track rejected area residents object

A proposal for the construction of a go-cart track on about 80 acres of land near Norval was rejected Wednesday after about 90 per cent of area homeowners objected.

Robert Davies, a spokesman for the homeowners, presented planning board with a petition opposing approval of the rezoning of about 80 acres of land at the corner of 10 Sideroad and the 10th Line.

John Malecki, who appeared before planning board a second time in two months, saw his proposal for a go cart track and possible other recreational ventures, rejected despite his

"fitting reward" and sent his "warm best wishes" for the future.

Dr. Philbrook apologized for being unable to find time to frame the certificate prior to the banquet, but said he will be happy to frame it, "even if it has to be done after the (forthcoming) election."

Halton-Burlington M.P. Julian Reed and Halton Hills Mayor Tom Hill were also on hand to extend their congratulations to the guests of honor.

Mr. Reed commented briefly that the operative word for this season's citizens of the year is "volunteer," a factor of the firefighters' work which he said must always be remembered.

Reaffirming the old dogma that "behind every good man there is a good woman," Chamber secretary Janet Fleming presented a bouquet of flowers to Chief Holmes.

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## Herald offices given early OK

Halton Hills planning board has approved in principle a plan for the construction of new offices and production facilities for The Herald.

The Herald proposes to build on the northeast corner of Main and Cross Streets in Georgetown. An application

has been made to rezone the quarter acre lot to commercial and to change the designation within the town's official plan.

Bill Eydokimoff, publisher, said the newspaper has outgrown its present offices at 103 Main St. S. The new facility which will be built in two phases is two stories in height and will be constructed into the present slope on the property. Estimated cost of the project is between \$300,000 and \$500,000.

Conn. Les Duby said the proposal could aesthetically fit into the area. He moved the approval in principle and sent the application back to the planning department for circulation to various agencies for comment.

## One killed, one injured in crash

(Special)—A Georgetown teen-ager was killed and another suffered serious head injuries following a three-car collision in Brampton Sunday.

Allan Durand, 15, was pronounced dead on arrival at Peel Memorial Hospital Sunday afternoon. John Humberstone, 15, also of Georgetown, was taken to hospital with head injuries.

Police said the two youths were passengers in a car driven by another Georgetown teen-ager, William Henson, 17, who was making a left-hand turn off Heart Lake Road onto Vadden Street. A southbound vehicle collided with the car and sent it spinning into a third car at the intersection.

Police said the two youths were passengers in a car driven by another Georgetown teen-ager, William Henson, 17, who was making a left-hand turn off Heart Lake Road onto Vadden Street. A southbound vehicle collided with the car and sent it spinning into a third car at the intersection.

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Fire department officials said the cause of the fire, which resulted in structural damage to the home, is believed to have been a defective chimney.

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