

Watch Tower once had an illegal counterpart here

The Witnesses' little 'secret'

By ANI FEDERIAN
Herald Staff Writer

Halton Hills residents who watched in wonder as a massive Jehovah's Witnesses complex was built on Georgetown's outskirts last year probably don't know that the organization's publication, "The Watchtower," was printed illegally from a Norval farm during the Second World War.

While today's Witnesses are free to express pride in the new Watch Tower complex, which will churn out hundreds of thousands of copies of "The Watchtower" and "Awake!" annually, there was a time not so long ago when their teachings, writings and other professions of faith could land them in jail in Canada.

In the 1940s, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King bowed to pressure from such Canadian religious leaders as Monseigneur Paul Bernier, chancellor of the archdiocese of Quebec, who called the Witnesses "the plague of Christianity in America". The



Thirteenth in a series

government had banned the movement.

The Witnesses were forced to take their long-standing beliefs "underground," and moved their "Watchtower" printing operation to a Norval

area farm on Winston Churchill Boulevard from its original Toronto headquarters.

"Whenever anybody came on the farm who they didn't know, they'd pick up a teacup that would turn on a light warning the people downstairs," according to Eva Wiltshire, a member of the Witnesses congregation in Georgetown since 1963.

POLICE ARREST
Besides a ban on the printing and distribution of Jehovah's Witnesses publications, door-to-door evangelizing was taboo for Jehovah's Witnesses, with police instructed to arrest such persons.

"It was a real challenge to go door-to-door in those days," said Mrs. Wiltshire. "I've always loved challenges, and as I was nimble on my feet then, I was never arrested."

The July 4, 1940, ban was defended by Prime Minister Mackenzie King in the House of Commons. Man-made authority and law isn't recognized by Witnesses if it conflicts with

their interpretation of the Bible, he pointed out. "They refuse to salute the flag of any nation or to hail any man; and, they oppose war." Their literature, said the prime minister, "underscores the ordinary responsibility of citizens, particularly in a time of war." And Canada was deeply involved in World War II at that time.

"People would call you yellow belly because they knew you wouldn't fight back," Jack Perry of Acton recalled.

Most Canadians shared fervent patriotic feelings, and when the sect took a neutral stand toward war, refusing to sing patriotic songs, salute the Canadian flag, or fight for their country, they were regarded as subversive.

Children from Jehovah's Witnesses families were expelled from school by public school authorities who demanded that all children salute the flag and stand for or sing the national anthem.

Banned from using or distributing the Watchtower maga-

zine, Jehovah's Witnesses changed the name of the publication to "The Word of Truth" and put their articles between plain covers.

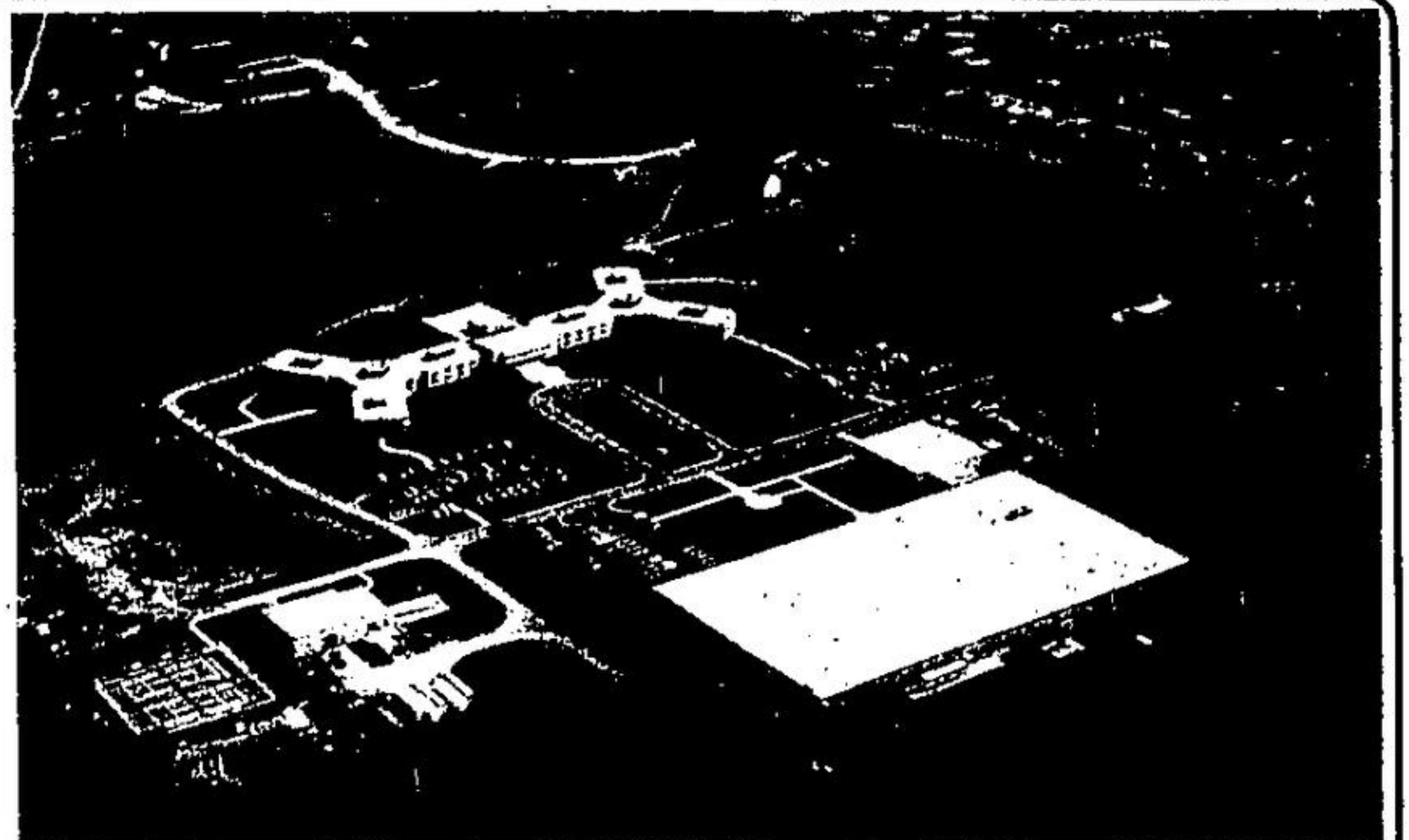
Melville Taylor, a member of the Georgetown congregation, recalls, when Watchtower magazines were very scarce and there was barely one per family.

"My brother could type, and he would make triplicate copies of articles in the Watchtower for others to study," said Mr. Taylor, who is 53.

Challenging the ban in court, the Witnesses eventually won their right to religious freedom through a number of cases. The Supreme Court of Canada recognized the right of all Canadians to practise their religious beliefs by the 1950s.

It was shortly after the war that the Georgetown congregation was formed. Prior to gathering in Georgetown, local Witnesses would go to Brampton for religious meetings.

Continued on page C7



Although not considered a religion by many people, the Jehovah's Witnesses movement is now well-established worldwide, its congregations continuing to grow. Many of the world's 2,270,000 Witnesses read translated copies of the sect's two publications, The Watchtower and Awake!, both of which are printed at the complex constructed on Georgetown's outskirts last year. Since founder Charles Taze Russell began publishing "Zion's Watchtower" in 1879, the Witnesses have grown despite a checkered history that included widespread persecution and, in the 1940s, a federal ban that prohibited Canadian Witnesses from preaching their beliefs. An "underground" printshop was set up near Norval to carry on the message, albeit illegally. (Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society photo)

877 5213

FOBERT
H. Fobert Real Estate Ltd.
Realtor

EXCELLENCE AWARD
"IN CUSTOMER RELATIONS"

the HERALD

Home Newspaper of Halton Hills — Since 1866

Life is a Mutual affair.

BRIAN GOODLET
Agent

Mutual Life of Canada
451-3460 or 877-4515

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1981

Hall's restoration cost hovering at \$400,000

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

While acknowledging that Acton's century-old town hall

probably doesn't have much of an illustrious heritage behind it, consultants studying the building's possible restoration

say it is sound and can be used again with extensive renovations.

Kleinfeldt Consultants of Brampton presented a draft copy of their findings to the town's general committee Monday night, barely four and a half weeks after they began the \$11,000 review of the town hall's future. They will also be on hand to answer questions from the public tonight at the community's library branch beginning at 7 p.m.

Six different scenarios can be envisioned for the two-storey town hall, project leader Dr. Barry Graham told committee members, one which proposes shoring up the building to prevent it from further decay while funds are collected for its complete restoration; four which describe different ways of restoring the building and putting it to use and a sixth option — demolition.

Excluding grants which could help costs in some cases

and the office furnishings and architect's fees which add to the final price tags, the four restoration proposals hover around \$400,000 each. If the town decides to go ahead with the restoration, almost \$75,500 would be available immediately. Acton's town hall restoration committee has already raised about \$40,000 for the project, matching the town's original \$40,000 commitment. To pay for its share of the Kleinfeldt study, the town took \$5,500 from its original fund while the province agreed to fund the balance.

According to the draft report, town officials can consider restoring the building with or without attempts to restore its interior to its original historic character. All of the restoration scenarios suggest using at least one part of the building for office space.

Although the proposals suggest that the town should manage any future use of the building, none promise revenues sufficient enough to cover operating costs, building, even in circumstances where the town is renting out parts of the building for private office needs.

However, some proposals for the restoration may be eligible for government subsidies, including Wintario funds, as long as the building is maintained as a public service.

JOINT USES

Grants from such agencies as the Ontario Heritage Foundation and through the Community Recreation Centres Act (CRCA) become considerably more constrained as the scenarios suggest entering joint private-public uses for the hall. CRCA money may be available for exterior work under a private-public venture if the building is to be historically restored. Wintario officials have indicated to the consultants that they may also participate under this scenario by providing one-third the costs of restoring the building's interior.

Much of the building's exterior visual appeal has been marred by neglect and lack of foresight. The building has been vacant for almost a decade and was condemned to the wrecker's ball in 1977 until a citizens' group successfully called for a reprieve.

The hall's front view is webbed with hydro lines, parking is scarce and the modern fire hall adjoining at the rear clashes the weather-beaten brick — increasingly in need of painting and repair itself — which makes up the body of the old building.

Birds flying through holes in the attic have damaged ceiling beams below and the roof is also in need of a major overhaul.

With a set of slides, structural analyst Ivor David described some of the repairs needed inside. While the woodwork around doors and along walls is in remarkably good shape, there are

Continued on Page A3



WORTH THE WAIT!

After a long hard sleighride, Santa stepped from his float in Saturday into the arms of Zeller's hostesses Trisha McPherson and Kaiser. He stayed at the store for quite some time, gathering lists of toys for boys and girls who crowded around a temporary throne set up at the centre of the store. Now back at the North Pole, Santa and his elves are working hard to get all those gifts ready in time for the holiday season. The jolly fellow is back in town this Saturday, though, visiting Acton for a parade starting from McKenzie-Smith School around 1:30 p.m. Acton youngsters: have you got your lists ready? (Herald photo by Chris Aagaard)

his Georgetown parade son (left) and Patty of toys from boys and girls who crowded around a temporary throne set up at the centre of the store. Now back at the North Pole, Santa and his elves are working hard to get all those gifts ready in time for the holiday season. The jolly fellow is back in town this Saturday, though, visiting Acton for a parade starting from McKenzie-Smith School around 1:30 p.m. Acton youngsters: have you got your lists ready? (Herald photo by Chris Aagaard)

Mayor will continue Irwin-Dorsey probe

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

Mayor Pete Pomeroy plans to continue his own review of the Irwin-Dorsey Ltd. closure, preparing a report for town council's Dec. 7 meeting.

The mayor and Brampton-Georgetown Conservative MP John McDermid met last Wednesday afternoon with officials of the federal government's Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA) which has been blamed for

forcing the shutdown of the Georgetown publishing firm, putting 28 people out of work by the end of the year.

A "watchdog" organization designed to protect Canadian business interests from too much foreign ownership, FIRA insisted that Dow Jones of Delaware, Irwin-Dorsey's parent company, relinquish its Canadian publishing interests. Refusing to sell out to Canadian investors, Dow Jones decided to close the healthy Georgetown operation.

"FIRA said they would consider another application for appeal from Irwin-Dorsey," Mr. McDermid told The Herald Monday. "They claimed that they offered Dow Jones more than one alternative to solving the problem, but I'm not convinced that the feds really tried that hard. I think they want to say 'we'll show these people that we mean business' and picked on one small company which they thought wouldn't mean very much."

Mayor Pomeroy agreed that the meeting was helpful in clarifying FIRA's decision.

...while 110 are laid off at Abitibi plant

A seasonal drop in the market for fine papers is being blamed for lay-offs at Abitibi Paper Company's Georgetown mill this week.

About 25 of its 135 hourly paid employees were informed that their jobs were being indefinitely suspended a week and a half ago. Another 85 employees were laid off Friday.

Plant manager George Lockwood told The Herald that the mill's management was unsure how long the lay-offs will last.

"It may take one week or longer," he said, before workers return to their jobs.

He denied that the lay-offs have anything to do with Abitibi's future in Georgetown, which dimmed considerably last July amid speculation that the plant would shut down by

Continued on Page A2

About the Hills

Red Cross' biggest tippers

The local Red Cross blood donor clinic sponsored by the Rotary Club of Georgetown a week ago Monday saw multiple donation awards presented to the following donors: making their 50th donations were George Louth, Reginald Hawley and William Burt; John Walana, Albert Leferink and Ronald Snow made their 35th donations; number 20 was recorded by Sherrie Chisholm and W.C. Stanel; and tenth donations were made by Michael Buck, Earl Merrill, D.G. Beauchesne, Clarence Otten, Gillian Callaway, C. Vaneghond, Mrs. M.K. Boureau, Sheila Ford and Cheryl Gunby.

Bryant appeals ruling

Halton region will oppose an appeal from single parent Barry Bryant, the Georgetown father who has been trying to get welfare and a mother's allowance from the regional body which decides whether he is eligible. Regional council agreed to uphold the decision of its social assistance review board which determined that because Mr. Bryant is fit he is eligible to work. However, Mr. Bryant and with the Halton Hills Community Legal Clinic maintain that the ruling is discriminatory, since it readily gives mother's allowances to unemployed women with children. Mr. Bryant said he does not yet want to send his two-year old son, Kristoffer, to a day care centre.

Roll on, skaters!

Just because the ice is installed at Georgetown Memorial Arena, it doesn't mean roller skating is over until spring. Roller skating, the town's recreation department insists, is a winter sport, too. So, with the co-operation of the "Roller Alley" in Guelph, the department has initiated a new program, busing people to Guelph Sundays for afternoon skating. There's no need to register, just meet the bus. Starting Sunday, and continuing each weekend until further notice, a bus will leave the Moore Park Plaza parking lot and Gordon Alcott Arena at noon, returning at 5 p.m. The cost for each visit is \$3 and roller skates can be rented at Roller Alley for 75 cents. For more information, call the department at 877-5185.



'THIS HAM IS YOUR HAM...'

St. Alban's Church hall in Glen Williams had its own version of "Honky Tonk" Sunday morning during the Georgetown Jayettes' pancake breakfast held to raise money for E.C. Drury School for the handicapped in Milton. Providing the musical entertainment while diners munched were (left to right) Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed, Iva Davidson and Bob Armstrong. (Herald photo)



SESAME SNUGGLE

The Georgetown Leglon (Branch 120) annual bazaar was held before the Santa Claus parade got underway Saturday. Santa himself visited for photos around noon hour and so did his familiar beast from television land, Sesame Street's Cookie Monster. Giving the fanatic chocolate chip craver a warm welcome at the Legion Hall are Bobbi Hyde (left) and three-year old Alan McCaughy from Georgetown. (Herald photo)