



# the HERALD

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## Musical legend Ralph Ursel chosen top citizen

By CHRIS AAGAARD  
Herald Staff Writer

The man behind many of Georgetown's best musical memories has been named the 1983 Citizen of the Year by the community's Lions Club.

Ralph Ursel, one of 17 nominees for the honor, will be tributed at a dinner-dance Feb. 25. Selection committee chairman Ron Breen said Mr. Ursel was nominated in two letters received by the Lions Club after it advertised for top citizen suggestions Dec. 1.

Sixty-nine people endorsed Mr. Ursel's nomination as a candidate for Citizen of the Year.

A native of Stonewall, Manitoba (about 32 kilometers northwest of Winnipeg), Mr. Ursel came to Georgetown via Toronto in 1954.

The minstrel ventures were strictly for fun. Mr. Ursel recalled one of the road shows was performed with a cast of 60 to an audience of 12. On another occasion, a member of the Scarborough Optimists invited the cast to a small party following a show.

"We pulled up in a large Burns transport truck and 60 people converged on a small bungalow in Scarborough," he said. "I'll never forget the look on the hosts' faces."

**MINSTREL SHOWS**  
The minstrel shows were followed by a series of Pantomimes which were performed annually from 1964 to 1966 and the first Globe Productions also evolved at about the same time, producing such hits as "Finnegan's Rainbow" and "My Fair Lady".

Sprinkled liberally in between



Citizen of the Year Ralph Ursel is a familiar face to those involved with music or theatre in Halton Hills.

"I was always interested in the piano," the 64-year old Citizen of the Year told The Herald last Thursday. "I started when I was seven and then, like many kids, I quit when I was 14. I never really touched it until I came to Georgetown."

### CREDITS

Stretching almost 30 years, his list of musical accomplishments and contributions in the community is almost endless.

While more recent residents to Georgetown may be familiar with his work in Georgetown and District High School musicals, and the new Globe Production's "Anything Goes" production of 1981, long time residents recall Mr. Ursel as the man behind the ivories in the old Globe, a series of pantomimes in the late 1960s and the Rotary Club minstrel shows a few years earlier.

He helped launch the new Georgetown Choral Society in 1971, and joined John Roe in 1976 to get a local arts council off the ground.

Mr. Ursel was instrumental - excuse the pun - in bringing musical productions back to Georgetown High in the early 1970s.

He would sometimes juggle as many as three productions a year. For many residents in Brampton and Georgetown, "Rehearsal With Ursel" was a catch-phrase which helped them plan their week.

### MUSICAL TOWN

"Georgetown has always been very musical," Mr. Ursel said. "We (he and his wife, Enid, have two grown children, Lee and Denise) came here when the town was starting to grow. There were a lot of new people looking for something to do, for an outlet to be involved in, like stage music."

A Rotary Club member since 1955, Mr. Ursel musically directed a number of the memorable minstrel shows the club used to perform - locally and on the road - in the early sixties.

these accomplishments (which found him spending hours behind the piano or writing and adapting scores), are productions with the Brampton Musical Society, the Kodak Theatre Group and a rollicking musical interlude called "Operations '62" with the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital in 1962.

For 20 years, Mr. Ursel commuted back and forth between Toronto and Georgetown as a chemist with CIL. In 1969, he joined the staff of Georgetown High. While he is largely involved with the school's music program with musician emeritus Harry Hamilton, he continues to teach the odd, science program.

High school musicals returned in 1973 with GDHS's production of "Anything Goes".

### COACHED

He has musically directed, produced and encouraged students through 10 others: The Boyfriend, Godspell, Little Mary Sunshine, L'il Abner, How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying, Bye, Bye Birdie, Oliver, My Fair Lady, Anne of Green Gables and, most recently, Grease.

In the late 1970s, Mr. Ursel was involved with the Arts Plus committee and later a building advisory committee (an advisory body to the building committee) which planned the library-cultural centre in Georgetown. It opened in the fall, 1981.

There are special rewards in seeing the participants of those productions involved in larger more ambitious projects, Mr. Ursel said, recalling the contributions of former students Brenda Archer and Jack Langedyke.

Tickets for the Lions Club tribute to Mr. Ursel are \$12 per person. Ticket inquiries can be made by calling 877-0131 or 877-3562.

The Citizen of the Year dinner-dance will be held Feb. 25 at the Lions Hall behind Georgetown's Memorial Arena.

## 'Pope ignored debate' Coun. Sheldon says

"Nothing has changed," Esquering Coun. Pam Sheldon said, referring to the province's stance on aggregates.

The town's general committee Monday agreed to have the aggregates task force and staff review the policies which are designed to ensure that the province has a consistent supply of gravel for future construction need.

Last year, councillors argued that previous policies would restrict land uses in many areas of the region, because of the need for unhampered access to gravel resources.

The aggregates issue was a hotly debated item when natural resources minister Alan Pope visited Acton in April.

"They came to Acton, listened and then simply ignored everything that was said," Coun. Sheldon commented. A letter from the Foundation for Aggregate Studies, a watch dog agency which has focused on the province's demand for gravel, says the new policies continue to put provincial concerns ahead of those of individual municipalities. The policies, the Foundation maintains in a Jan. 11 letter, fail

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By CHRIS AAGAARD  
Herald Staff Writer

A town staff-general committee response to a report submitted by the Stevens property citizens' group maintains the town has done nothing wrong in purchasing the 29-acre site off Georgetown's Maple Avenue.

And by withdrawing from the agreement now, the town risks "costly legal ramifications", the report, presented to Monday night's general committee, concludes.

In a Jan. 9 presentation, the citizens' group delivered a detailed report on the process which led council to buy the land for \$600,000 last fall.

The report suggested that, in buying the land for development purposes, the town was acting outside the powers accorded to it under the province's Municipal Act.

On that basis, the report recommended that the town repeal the bylaw which led to the property purchase under an agreement which closes at the end of March.

Citizens' group chairman Norm Elliott said (following the staff report) that he wasn't surprised with the town's conclusions.

### OPTIONS?

"We're pleased to get a written response to our submission," Mr. Elliott told reporters during a recess Monday night. "The group will meet shortly to decide where we go from here."

He declined to say what options the group has to continue its oppo-

sition of the Stevens property purchase.

The town's general committee endorsed the staff-committee report.

Mr. Elliott said he was "naturally disappointed" that the town will go ahead with the land purchase.

The Maple Avenue site was chosen over several others during active search which stretched over a year and a half.

In a presentation last September, then-mayor Peter Pomeroy explained that while the town hopes to build a town hall on the property in the future, the excess land could be sold off for development purposes.

Revenues from the sale would be used to offset the cost of the administrative centre.

The staff-committee report countered several comments made in the citizens' group submission. The report says that council was aware of the property search process, either through members of the building committee or the committee's minutes.

**NO COMMITMENT**  
Council has not committed itself to the development of the property, the report stresses; nor has it committed itself to servicing the land with sewer and water mains.

That's a regional responsibility, the report comments, and would have to be approved by regional council.

It also said that lot levies may be used to pay for larger projects beyond the essential services required for new residential, commercial and industrial development.

## Staff report on Stevens property

# Refutes citizens' group

The citizens' group was concerned that the consultant the town relied on for much of its land search, R.A. Nicholl, also turned up as the agent for the Stevens estate in the property sale negotiations with the town.

But the town report says council was aware of Mr. Nicholl's involvement on behalf of the Stevens estate. That is why the town sought an additional appraisal on the property's worth in January, 1983 and had the terms of reference established by the town, not

the property agent, the report says. While the citizens' group argues that the town may have paid too much for the property, the report says the town paid a fair price for the land. A number of points remain to be looked at

by council in the future, the report says. If it decides to use the land for an administrative property, it will have to dispose of the rest of the property, how it will raise money for the centre and how to time the project



An Alliston driver was unhurt Thursday afternoon when the gravel truck he was driving went through a guardrail on Sideroad 17, east of the papermill dam. The eastbound truck was climbing the steep hill beyond the dam, the air brakes failed

and the truck slipped backwards across the southbound lane, went through the guardrail and rolled down a steep incline on the other side. The truck was carrying a load of gravel. (Herald photo)

## Plummets down Glen hill, Alliston driver unhurt

A 1968 dump truck being driven by a man from Alliston Thursday at 4:30 p.m. had trouble with the uphill grade on River Drive at Maple Avenue, and ended up by the river, resting on

its side. The 22-year old driver of the truck wasn't injured. Damage was estimated at \$5,000. Halton regional police said the driver was eastbound on River Drive,

and while going uphill began to change gears. The truck slowed down and the air brakes gave out, causing the vehicle to roll backwards onto the southbound shoulder, into the westbound

lane, through the guardrail and down a cliff till it finally came to rest on its side. There was \$100 damage to the broken guardrail. No charges were laid.

## Mobile home destroyed, family escapes blaze

A six month old baby and its young parents awakened in time to escape serious injury in the fire that destroyed their mobile home Feb. 1.

Shawn Mark, 20, wife Mary, 20, and child Kristi were taken to Georgetown Memorial Hospital where they were treated and released for smoke inhalation.

Their home, owned by Leslie, suffered \$25,000 damage, the Halton Hills fire department reports.

## Victimized driver helps with arrest

A 20-year old Ashgrove man was charged with impaired driving, driving with over 80 milligrams of alcohol in the blood, failure to remain, and was arrested Saturday night.

The man had been involved in an accident on Sideroad 10 and Ninth Line, having rear-ended a 1983 Thunderbird. The driver followed him, and when he went out of control and into a ditch at Sideroad 5, the victimized driver called police who subsequently arrested him.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

**Features**  
It's French Week in Halton Hills, Page B8. Farmers are worried over coyotes and dogs that attack their livestock, Page A2.

**Sports**  
Six local figure skaters captured gold medals at the Peel-Halton Inter-Club finals on Sunday. See Sports Page B1.

**Family**  
In a special section starting on Page B5, you'll find community news along with stories on drug awareness, adult education and our BIG business series.

**Entertainment**  
Wendy Buyles finds it more inspiring to work as a graphic artist in the winter. Page A9.

## ABOUT THE HILLS

**Open House**  
Get ready. Over 57 organizations in town are putting on a show Feb. 25 at the Holy Cross School. The Community Open House goes on all day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and features displays and exhibits, demonstrations of sports, arts, crafts, hobbies, and pony rides. Admission is free and there's lots to share with the entire family.

**New playground**  
Students at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic School in Acton will be clamoring all over a new creative playground by the end of May.

Similar to the playground at the Robert Little Public School, the creative playground will be open for the use of all Acton children.

Parents at St. Joseph's have raised \$3,000 of a total \$5,794 goal. Total cost of the playground is \$11,362, including installation costs. The town will be responsible for maintaining the playground.

**Historical Society meet**  
Feb. 8 is the annual meeting for the Esquering Historical Society. Election of Directors will take place at 7:30 at Knox Presbyterian

## Ambulances collide while responding to car crash

Two ambulances responding to an accident on Trafalgar Road near Sideroad 15 Saturday at 7:15 p.m. collided with each other and another vehicle with four passengers.

There were no serious injuries, although ambulance driver Brian May, 40, of Hillsburgh suffered minimal injuries.

The first ambulance was southbound on Trafalgar Road, and, attempting to slow down, struck the rear of the second ambulance which was moved off the road. The first ambulance then struck the rear left of a 1980 Chevrolet being driven by a 29-year old Georgetown woman.

No charges were laid by Halton regional police.

It was snowing and road conditions were slushy, police reported.

The original accident to which the ambulances were responding involved a 1977 Buick and 1977 Datsun which collided just seven minutes earlier, causing minor injuries to Wilfred Pugh, 53, of Hamilton and Isabelle Pugh, 54, also of Hamilton.

Both were taken to hospital by ambulance where they were treated and released.

The first vehicle was northbound on Trafalgar Road, beginning to slow down for traffic ahead, the driver slid into an oncoming vehicle in the southbound lane. There was \$1,000 damage. No charges were laid.

## Sports editor wins best column award

Herald sports editor Gerry Timbers was honored by the Ontario Community Newspaper Association last week in the premier awards category.

His sports columns were voted to be the best out of all the OCNA submissions for 1983.

Mr. Timbers, 28, has been with The Herald since February 1982. Before coming to Georgetown he worked as a reporter with the now defunct Milton Tribune and the Brampton Daily Times.

Mr. Timbers was judged on three columns: a minor hockey dispute involving a young boy playing away from home; a



GERRY TIMBERS

former Halder hockey legend Kent Robinson and the financing required to support a Senior A hockey franchise. He will be presented with a trophy March 2 in Toronto at a special dinner for award winners.

## Officials brace for trash site selection

Officially, Halton Hills has had little to say about the ongoing study the region is still far from making a choice in an expensive, time-consuming process for which he fully blamed the political ambitions of the provincial government.

"Halton made its choice a long time ago," he said, referring to a farm at one corner of Milton's Tremaine and Britannia Roads intersection.

During the 1981 provincial election, then-environment minister Harry Parrott scuttled the region's hopes by ordering a more

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