



Helping out with the Acton Swimming Stars are a dedicated bunch of family members. They are (left to right) Anita, Gerry and Garry Ockenden. (Herald photo)

The Ockenden family help swimming 'stars'

By DAVE ROWNEY
Herald Staff

Because Garry Ockenden was one of the silver seven who helped to start up minor hockey in Acton, it's no surprise his son Gerry did the same for swimming in town.

Three years ago Gerry Ockenden, 36, on the suggestion of swim coach Karen Brading, decided to help with the formation of the Acton Swimming Stars.

Ever since, the entire Ockenden family has been involved working to help make the swim club run smoothly.

The Ockendens moved to Acton 35 years ago, settling in town because it was away from the city and the town itself appealed to them.

Anita is active as a knitter and rughooker, having won prizes for her rughooking.

Mr. Ockenden has helped out over the years with Acton sports as both a coach and manager.

Neither of the grandparents admit to having much aptitude for swimming, but they enjoy their son's children as they progress in the pool.

Anita was born and raised in Cambelltown, N.B. and she moved to Toronto, marrying Garry in 1947.

Garry was born in Lloyd-minister, Saskatchewan on a farm. He moved away to join the RCMP in 1942.

He worked with the Mounties in Vancouver, Toronto and Ottawa and finally New Brunswick.

After leaving the RCMP, he came to Toronto and worked on the Avro Arrow project at Malton.

He now works at the subsidiary of Hawker Sidley called Orenda where they manufacture

jet engine parts.

The Ockenden children, ages 13 and 11 are the budding swimmers with the Acton recreational swim club which attract the parents and grandparents to the pool.

The Ockenden adults are like many of the volunteer parents with the club who help out for special duties whenever they can.

Anita organizes the food for the kids after the swim meets. If the meet was in Acton, it would be a matter of organizing the food and setting it up with the other parents.

The grandparents go to all the away meets to help out and watch the children swim.

Gerry Ockenden works for MacMillan-Bathurst Inc. in Guelph where they make corrugated containers.

He used to be the swim meet manager up until three months ago when he became president.

His main function as meet manager was to work with coach Karen Brading on the deck with the kids at the meet.

When Gerry first helped the Acton Swim Stars get off the ground, there were 12 kids; now there are 65 members.

The Ockenden family all agree strongly that head coach Karen Brading has been a driving force behind the club.

"Karen deserves a lot of credit for keeping the kids in line. They'll do anything for her either from a social aspect or of a competitive nature," Garry Ockenden said.

"She's still in it as an employee, but she's gone on beyond the call of duty," he said.

Brian's flour power

By MAGGIE HANNAH
Herald Special

ACTON — One of the most historical buildings in town is to be remodelled this summer.

Brian Dolotowica, owner of Halton Flour Mill Inc., said he will be putting a new front on the mill, beginning in early June.

The work is part of an extensive project aimed at installing modern milling equipment.

The new equipment, complete with computerized controls, will make Halton Flour Mill one of only a handful of such modern mills in the country.

Mr. Dolotowicz said the new equipment will ensure better consistency in the mill's product.

The three-foot thick stone walls of the building will have to be replaced, he said, to make room for the new equipment, to the dismay of local history buffs.

Mr. Dolotowicz said he has recently been able to document the history of the building. It was originally built for milling grain products by Ezner Adams, the minister of the three Adams brothers who founded Adamsville, or Acton as it is now called.

The mill will celebrated its 150th anniversary this year, Dolotowicz said.

Although the mill passed through the hands of several

owners in the century and half of its existence, it has always been used for flour milling or making cattle feeds.

At one point it was owned by the Beardmore Tannery, possibly so the tannery could control water levels at the dam on Fairy Lake which served both industries, says former mill owner Dave Lindsay.

Although the mill has not operated on water power for more than 80 years, the equipment for such an operation was still in place five years ago.

One of the unique historical notes about the mill is the fact there has never been either a major fire or personal-injury accident on the site.

Mr. Dolotowicz said in a central exhaust system included in his new equipment, will collect and re-cycle dust particles now escaping into the atmosphere.

In addition to easing the complaints of neighbours who object to the residue landing on their homes, the mill will benefit because is good flour which is flying away.

The new equipment has been approved by Environment Canada and is 99 per cent efficient in dust control, he said.

—Courtesy Guelph Mercury



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