

The year in review

Anyone purposely looking for hardship and tragedy, could easily make a stop in Halton Hills. The town in 1986 had its share of hard times and sad moments. We followed the lead of an imperfect world, full of promising moments and lost opportunities.

But through it all, the year was a good one in Halton Hills. Designated by the United Nations as the Year of Peace, 1986 was also the year of Halley's Comet, a year of economic growth and a housing boom.

Here at home, our community matured. We're not getting older; we're getting better, stronger, more confident, more independent. Halton Hills now has a chronic care facility, thanks to proper licensing from the provincial government. Our Chamber of Commerce in Acton and Georgetown met to plan joint projects and liaise to lobby for development.

The Georgetown Chamber is planning for a tourism/chamber office to help attract new businesses and visitors to town. Along Highway 7, we've noticed more retail businesses starting to blossom. Lower mortgage rates helped many buy their first home, stretching demand and providing opportunities for local builders.

Social service agencies assisted in the introduction of a United Way in Halton Hills. This charitable organization may eventually provide the funds to open more agencies

to help the needy. Council set its sights at improving our road systems in its budget and the 429-home development by Enterac was approved.

Halton Regional Police officers were smiling after being granted the go-ahead to build a safety village to teach children about the rules of the road.

Festival Five, celebrating five years at the Halton Hills Library-Cultural Centre, was a success. There was an opportunity for everyone who enjoys the arts to participate.

The Georgetown Girls Pipe Band did us proud in Scotland when they won the best overseas band award after many months and years of dedicated practice.

The future looks bright for the Scotsdale Farm property which could one day host a site for a heritage horse park. A study and negotiations are still underway for a use for the 54-acre property. A horse park would be a boon to tourism and help to further put Halton Hills "on the map".

The year also had its tragic moments and disappointments. But that's best left for another day, another editorial.

The town of Halton Hills is maturing; we can see the signs. Be a part of its growth, speak well of your home town, because it's a great place to live.

We could do with a little more promotion.

Flowering education



Staff
Comment

By SANDY CAMPBELL
Herald Staff

The flower of education became part weed in 1986. Some of those looking at the crossbreed saw more flower than weed, others saw more weed than flower.

For Roman Catholic separate school supporters 1986 was a vintage year. Through Bill 30, full funding was finally extended to Catholic schools.

It was a blooming lesson in justice to the Catholics, who have been waiting decades for its arrival. Some public school system supporters viewed it as a threat to their provincial funding which they see getting smaller every year.

The exodus of public school students to Catholic schools did not happen in Halton. That result was predicted by some as a result of extended funding. Those with such fears at least learned that money was not the only thing keeping high school students in the public system. Parents and students showed they are satisfied with public education.

Consolidation left an unpleasant scent in the noses of many Halton Hills residents. More upsetting than the closing of Speyside and Howard Wrigglesworth public schools was the secrecy with which it was done.

Information identifying which schools would close leaked out from some members of the consolidation committee. The committee as a whole did not want that information released too soon. Hopefully the Board will be more open about its plans to close schools in the future.

The fact that parents were informed so late in the consolidation process justified their anger. By getting involved in a protest opposing closures, many parents learned more about the Board. That was one of the benefits of the consolidation.

The closing of one public school

led to the opening of a separate school. Bishop Reding Secondary School is temporarily using what was the Speyside Public School building. This means shorter bus rides for many local Catholic students.

The future of Speyside and Wrigglesworth public schools is before the courts. Should the Speyside Area Ratepayers Association win its court case, both schools might open again. A victory for the Speyside group would mean reversing consolidation committee recommendations and many headaches for the public board in 1987. At least they would be getting a renovated Speyside school back: the separate board renovated the Speyside school.

One of the interesting relationships to watch in 1987 will not be on prime time television but in the news, as the public and separate boards grow more dependent on one another.

Local Trustees Arlene Bruce and Dick Howitt etched their names a little deeper in Halton's history by serving as chairman and vice-chairman of the public board. In the separate board, Trustee Irene McCauley served her first term as vice-chairman. All but Trustee Howitt were re-elected to these positions for 1987.

The public board lost three separate school trustees in 1986. Separate school trustees have sat on the public board since it was formed in 1969. Milton and Halton Hills Trustee Don Gordon lost that position with the public board.

Meanwhile, the separate board gained three French trustees, who will serve at large in Halton until the next municipal election. Georgetown resident Ken Norman is one of them.

For students of the public board the good news in 1986 was that the strap was abolished. It still exists in the separate board, but is very rarely used.

Public school taxes rose by 6 per cent in 1986. Whether the tax hike for 1987 will produce flowers or weeds has yet to be seen.

A holiday message

By DON KNIGHT, M.P.P.
Halton-Burlington

With the Holiday Season upon us I want to express my hope that the new year will be a healthy and prosperous one for all.

My colleagues and I have been working hard over the past few weeks to introduce some important initiatives before the Christmas break.

Among the items which were recently introduced was legislation regarding "Pay Equity" in the public and private sectors. The Honourable Ian Scott introduced this legislation which is the most comprehensive in Canada and which will ensure that gender discrimination has no place in our society. With pay equity, workers will receive the same wage for jobs that are considered to be of equal value to the employer, even if the jobs are not necessarily the same.

The Honourable Jack Riddell announced the OFFRR PLUS Program. With OFFRR PLUS the farming sector will receive an additional \$90 million in interest relief. This will bring the total to \$246 million over the next three years. As many as 18,000 farmers are expected to apply for the OFFRR PLUS program. New or beginning farmers will also be able to participate.

Initiatives were also taken in the Social Services and Environment



MPP

Don Knight

The rhetoric is getting rough.

"With this Minister of labor, workers do not have a chance of survival."

That was New Democratic Party occupational health and safety critic Eli Martel attacking Labor Minister Bill Wrye in the Assembly.

"I have spent the past while listening to a lot of nonsense from the (NDP) side. I have heard a lot of nonsensical so-called facts.

"When they are reviewed, they turn out not to be the facts."

And that was one Wrye response the same day.

Since the NDP took Wrye's charge as an insinuation that Martel was lying - and since accusing another member of lying is the biggest parliamentary no-no there is around here - one can gain some sense of the antipathy that exists between Wrye and his critics.

In fact, there is an edge to the NDP hostility toward Wrye that one can't remember hearing in any of their assaults on Conservative labor ministers over the past decade or so.

NDP House Leader Ross McClellan labelled Wrye the "worst"



Queen's
Park

By Derek Nelson

labor minister he'd seen in this place.

To which NDP Leader Bob Rae added that McClellan's comments had "prompted a lot of discussion in our caucus, and it was a very close decision in terms of railing who has been the worst labor minister in the past 11 years. However, the present minister still won the award."

And what has Wrye done or, more accurately, not done to deserve such contempt?

Strikingly, it is not that he is perceived as being any worse than his Tory predecessors in managing what Martel invariably calls the "swamp" - and of which he crowns Wrye the "guardian".

Those basic NDP complaints remain the same, from charging the middle echelon bureaucracy in

Labor with refusal to enforce existing law to a perceived bias toward industry in many decisions.

Rather, what seems to have embittered New Democrats toward Wrye more than other toward ministers is that they thought more of him.

When he was opposition labor critic, Wrye was verbally close to the NDP both in policy and attitude.

He had a genuine belief in the need for labor reform so that workplace safety was improved in Ontario. (The injury rate has actually increased since the Liberals came to power).

And since Wrye had no lack of confidence that he was the man to do the job, the tough words continued to flow from him even after he became minister.

But Martel says Wrye never got a handle on the ministry, that even with a new deputy minister acquired in the summer nothing positive is happening under Wrye.

Interestingly, the response of some of Wrye's people is puzzlement. They do see changes. They suggest good things are taking

place. They think the NDP is just politicking out of fear of losing labor voters to a popular Liberal government.

An outsider has a difficult time judging the truth of much of this, especially in as murky a ministry as Labor, about which no two stories describing the same event ever have the same punchline.

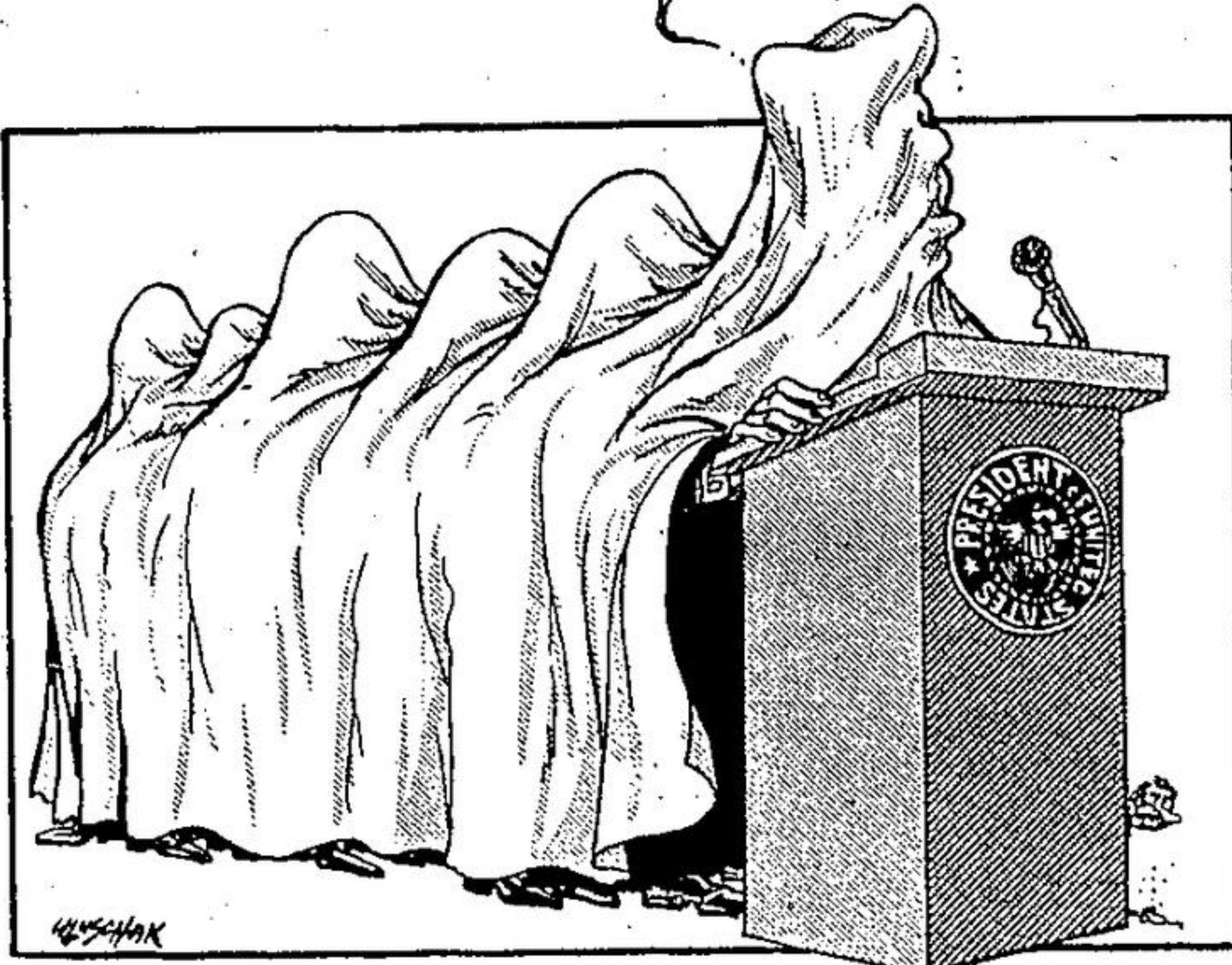
But there is no doubt that some of the arrogance is gone from Wrye's responses in the Assembly.

And one can't help but raise an eyebrow in wonder at how he is handling the allegations about sex, drug and treatment irregularities at the Downsview Rehabilitation Centre of the Workers' Compensation Board.

What the Assembly has seen is, as New Democrat Ross McClellan nicely put it, "the most extraordinary situation of three separate task forces commissioned by the same minister" on the same problem.

Frankly, it doesn't look good for Wrye's retaining his portfolio when cabinet shuffle time comes later this winter.

COVERUP?
WHAT COVERUP?



For MPP

No long-term guarantee

When Quebec MP Robert Toupin decided to become a member of the New Democratic Party caucus, Leader Ed Broadbent described it as a "Christmas present".

But the big question is whether the present comes with any long-term guarantee. And the answer, of course, is No.

The acquisition of Mr. Toupin, a 37-year-old notary who was elected as a Tory in 1984 and who quit that party last May, was obviously a cause for celebration by the NDP. After all, that party has never had a Quebecer in caucus, and the addition of this former Tory focuses renewed attention on the NDP's growing popularity in the province.

All opinion polls have been consistent in suggesting the NDP now are well ahead of the Tories in Quebec, the Liberals being far out in front. And Mr. Broadbent was pleased to declare that his new recruit will be "a spokesman for us in the province of Quebec."

The leader went on: "It was extremely important for me to have a person who is honest and who knows the philosophy of our party and is totally at ease with it."

But it's not just a question of whether Mr. Toupin is at ease with the NDP philosophy. The bigger issue is whether voters will accept him as a credible disciple.

NOT EASY
Quite apart from the fact that Canadian voters, and particularly Quebecers, tend to be rather unkind



Ottawa
Report

By Stewart MacLeod

to political turncoats, Mr. Toupin has other difficulties to overcome.

He not only walked out of the Tory caucus in a huff, he was earlier a supporter of the Quebec Liberals. And, rightly or wrongly, he had developed a reputation within the Tory caucus of not being a good team player.

Whether Mr. Toupin actually toyed with the idea of joining the federal Liberal caucus depends on whose version you accept. He says he never considered such a step, although he was invited in. However, Raymond Garneau, the Quebec lieutenant to Liberal Leader John Turner, says no such approach was ever made. He says Mr. Toupin lacks "sufficient political stability" for the Grifts.

Only when you think of some Liberals who were accepted, do you realize the enormity of this put-down.

Mr. Toupin, who quit the Tories over the closing of a Montreal oil refinery, said he was originally attracted to the party "because they presented it as the Progressive Conservative Party - but it isn't progressive, it's just conservative."

However, in some of his earlier parliamentary speeches, Mr. Toupin certainly didn't indicate he had trouble with this. In June 1985, as New Democrats were railing against the first budget of Finance Minister Michael Wilson, Mr. Toupin was stoutly defending it as "courageous because it increases indirect and direct taxes."

He said it contained "a new vision of Canada where individuals and the

private sector will play an increasingly important role." That's not exactly the stuff of the New Democrats.

RIDING PROBLEMS

Mr. Toupin had also applauded the Mulroney government for using "the living strength of the market and banks." He also had high praise for the government's \$500,000 lifetime capital gains exemption.

But on joining the NDP he had this to say about the Tories: "I reproached the party because of its lack of direction, because it favored the interests of high finance and the multinationals to the detriment of ordinary people."

As Prime Minister Mulroney once said in a different context, "we're having difficulty getting our message across."

But it's not just in political philosophy or credibility that Mr. Toupin is likely to run into trouble. There's the more practical problem of holding his Terrebonne seat. Although long held by the Liberals, the riding is regarded as somewhat conservative.

In the 1984 election, Tory Toupin swept the constituency with nearly 44,000 votes, defeating Liberal incumbent Roland Comtois by 25,000 votes. The NDP candidate received only 6,454 votes.

And the entire executive committee that worked for Mr. Toupin says it will remain loyal to the Tories. The party claims to have more than 700 members in the riding while the NDP has virtually no organization. To the astonishment of no one, the Conservatives now are planning a membership blitz in Terrebonne.

While all Quebec seats might well be up for grabs in the next election, you can safely assume that the Conservatives will spare no effort to hold Terrebonne. And given Mr. Toupin's political lineage, he could be in for a very rough ride - even if he does manage to say all the right things.

WRITE US A LETTER

What do you think about what is happening in Halton Hills...in this province...across the nation and around the world?

We are interested in your opinion. The Herald invites its readers to express their opinion through our citizen's forum section.

All letters must be signed and include an address. Your phone number should be listed in order for

us to verify the signature. Please keep your letter brief and to the point. The maximum length is 400 words.

Send your letters to:
The Herald,
45 Guelph Street,
Georgetown, Ont.
L7G 3Z6

Minor changes to Enterac agreement

Minor changes to the Enterac Property Corporation's plan of subdivision for Georgetown South were approved by town council last Monday night.

Most of them are design changes to the draft plan approval conditions passed last December by council.

Coun. Betty Fisher had some difficulty with one alteration that stated Enterac, out of its pocket, must prepare a park concept plan that satisfies the town's planning director.

Coun. Fisher was concerned the "concept" might be beyond council's budget and would be leading home buyers to expect great and wonderful things.

Town Planner Ian Keith said the lot levies pay for the development of the community park and the concept plan will be on a budget accordingly.

He reassured Coun. Marilyn Serjeantson there won't be any active recreational uses for the community park near the residence. Rather there will be more passive uses like swings and slides for small children. There won't be any lit tennis courts.

Coun. Norman Elliott said he was satisfied with the alteration and said if delegations were to come to council from the Enterac homes, they could be complaining about a lot more than the park, likely about things council hasn't even dreamt of.

Halton History

from our files

30 years ago

The winners of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce home decorating contest were announced. The twelve winners are Harry Copland, 91 Mountainview Road; Bob McColegan, 3 Temple Road; Herb Koshier, 20 Churchill Cres.; Basil Pacini, 2 Bard Lane; Cecil Davidson, 10 Albert St.; Dick Parker, 41 Albert St.; Harold Henry, 15 Market St.; Bill Carr, 81 Prince Charles Dr.; Ted Evans, 97 Prince Charles Dr.; James Young, 10 Shelley St.; Cal Lalster, 14 Valleyview Road and Clarence Heslop, Reid Court.

J.H. Taylor of Appleby was elected president of the Halton Federation of Agriculture at the annual meeting in Fairview School. His vice-presidents are R. Laking, Mac Sprowl, Ed Fish and Brock Harris.

The Norval Presbyterian Church had their Christmas concert. The chairman of the event, Rev. G. Lockhart, and Sunday school superintendent Thomas McGee organized the concert.

15 years ago

Kenneth Blair of Guelph was named judge of Halton district and county courts. The announcement was made in Ottawa by Justice Minister John Turner.

Bud James was featured in the Herald as a man who dedicated 20 years to minor hockey. He recently retired as the Royal Canadian Legion's Saturday Morning Hockey chairman.

Rick Dowding, one of the professionals of the Georgetown Figure Skating Club, is training an Oakville brother and sister for the Canadian championships. Debbie and John Dowding will skate in London for the Canadian title.

Three Georgetown midgets were in the lineup of the Tri-County Midget All-Stars, who were defeated by a North York all-star team. Representing Georgetown were Glenn Robinson, Alex Ovenden and Gord Williams.

10 years ago

Georgetown lawyer Dick Howitt and Acton School Principal Gary Dawkins received appointments to the Halton Board of Education. Mr. Howitt will serve three years with the Halton Hills Library Board. Mr. Dawkins will be the new principal at Acton's middle school. He has been the principal of M.Z. Bennett.

The Halton-Peel Highland Games Association received a Wintario grant of \$1,594. The money will be used for transportation, and fees for judges.

George Gray and Fred Zorge were at the opening of Mountclair Developments on Armstrong Avenue. The company had an official opening after offices were moved from Guelph Street.

5 years ago

Town council opposed restoring the century-old Acton town hall. A 7-5 vote decided the matter.

Maria Jaramillo presented her husband with a new baby Christmas Day. The baby, Jesus Antonio Jaramillo, was eight pounds six ounces and was born in Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital.

Evelyn Madden won a 14 inch color television from Zellers. The prize presented by Zellers' rep Helen Robertson was second place in the store's Christmas Sweepstakes Draw.

The local Red Cross is seeking donations for Poland. The international effort called Polish Relief Program is seeking to raise \$7.5 million for needy Poles this winter.

POETS CORNER

PLEASE BE THERE

Wanting to know you more completely than the reflection you shares my mirror
I search
Each time
I turn my back
you both disappear
When I look again
will you be back.

-By MARLOWE C. DICKSON,
Beeton, Ontario