

far to exceed my greatest expectations. We've already met our expectations, now we're exceeding them."

Kathleen Dills agrees.

"When the guests come up the main stairs and see the finished auditorium, there will be a huge 'wow' and they will certainly be impressed," said Dills. "I can hardly wait to see that day."

A celebration, opening the auditorium of the Acton Town Hall, will be held April 24. There will be two components of the celebration, with the first part open to invited guests, to recognize those who contributed to the project, followed by an open house for the community, with various groups entertaining all afternoon— school choirs, Acton Heritage Players' skits, period costumes and music.

The open house will showcase all aspects of the newly restored hall, from its stage, to its sound system, its eating capacity— all the ways the auditorium can be utilized.

"Sometimes people can't visualize how a hall can be used," said Dills. "So we want to take advantage of the open house to showcase this place."

On May 29, the committee is planning a gala night. Tickets must be purchased for the gala night, at a cost of \$100 per couple. Details will be released as the event gets closer.

A sidebar to the story centers around the original piano. When the hall was let go into disrepair, original committee chair George Elliott decided to rescue the original piano which had been in the hall since 1885. He had it moved into storage (a number of different locations around town over the years) and has since had it completely restored and tuned to be ready for the opening.

Once the Acton Town Hall is again the centre of the town— what's next for Birrell and his committee?

"Phase Two is the elevator, Citizen's Hall, storage, catering and a place for Acton's historical artifacts," said Birrell. "If we're successful with our grant applications, we hope to break ground September of this year, and have it open in April 2011.

"Moving forward on Phase Two is dependent upon the grants," says Birrell. "If the grants do not come through, there's no reason we can't turn our sights towards the bays (of the old fire hall) and create another revenue generating venture. Right now, the goal is the elevator, and we will get there somehow."

If the current project is any indication, Phase Two of Heritage Acton's ambitious project will most certainly be opened, fully functional, on time, exactly as Birrell says.



Volunteer Brenda LaRose paints the details that would grace the stage and the ceiling of the auditorium. (Left) Final touches are being put on the grand hall.

Photos by Ted Brown



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