

# COMMENT



*The way  
we were*

## A Hornby Classic

As the first organized Anglican Congregation to serve Esquesing, St. Stephen's was built circa 1841. Featuring elements of both the Neoclassical and Gothic Revival styles of the period, the headstones in the surrounding churchyard cemetery include those of local pioneers who first settled the area.

*Text courtesy of Heritage Halton Hills  
Photo courtesy of Esquesing  
Historical Society*

From our readers



## THE COLOUR OF AUTUMN

Andrew Katerberg took this photo of the Barber Paper Mill recently. It was built in 1854. Have a photo you want to share? Email — with details — to [cgamble@theifp.ca](mailto:cgamble@theifp.ca).



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## Two-hatters serve a vital role in protecting our communities

Thirteen-years ago, I introduced a controversial Private Member's Bill to support "two-hatter" firefighters in the Ontario Legislature.

Typically, two-hatter firefighters work as full-time professional firefighters with a city department, but may live in a small town nearby. On their days off, they offer to serve as part-time firefighters in their home communities.

Their skills and training strengthen the capability of many of our small town fire departments.

The firefighters' union's constitution has a section which prohibits two-hatting. In some cases, two-hatters have been told they must quit their part-time service in their home towns, or face expulsion from their union.

This is a very serious threat, as collective agreements often stipulate that professional firefighters must be members in good standing of their unions in order to be employed full-time. For firefighters to be kicked out of the union might mean the loss of their full-time jobs.

When this issue was brought to my attention in 2002, I quickly concluded that the need for community safety in small town Ontario and the freedom to volunteer on a person's free time should come ahead of an obscure clause in a union constitution that was clearly not in the public interest. I decided to introduce a Bill to protect two-hatters.

Eventually, we received expressions of support from the Fire Fighters' Association of Ontario (representing volunteer firefighters), the Association of Fire Chiefs of Ontario, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and the Fire Marshal of Ontario.

My Bill to provide legislated protection for two-hatters received more hours of de-

bate than any other Private Member's Bill in the history of the Ontario Legislature. Unfortunately, it was defeated on a Third Reading vote on Dec. 11, 2002.

How is all of this relevant today?

Earlier this month, on Oct. 8, the Legislature started debating the Government's Bill 109. This Bill appears to show that the Government is now in favour of the kind

of legislated protection for two-hatter firefighters we fought so hard to put in place 13 years ago.

If Bill 109 passes into law, it will be good news for public safety in rural and small town Ontario.

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After the longest federal election campaign in memory, a new House of Commons has finally been elected.



**TED ARNOTT**

I want to congratulate our re-elected Member of Parliament, Mike Chong. I look forward to continuing our work together on behalf of our mutual constituents in Wellington-Halton Hills.

All of the candidates who sought public office deserve credit for demonstrating the courage of their convictions and putting their names on the ballot.

Many in our Riding volunteered and worked very, very hard to support their preferred candidate. Others worked at the polls for Elections Canada.

They all have our sincere thanks.

Now, it is up the elected MPs to gather in Ottawa, and seek to act in the best interest of their constituents, and the country as a whole.

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*Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott welcomes your comments. He can be reached at 1-800-265-2366. His website address is [www.tedarnottmpp.com](http://www.tedarnottmpp.com).*

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