

Acton Scout Hall celebrating 75 years of history at 11 School Lane

For three-quarters of a century, 11 School Lane has been the home of the Acton Scout Hall; a place for the local scouts to meet and to partake in various scouting activities.

Prior to the construction and opening of the Scout Hall, dating back to 1910, the Scouts would meet at various places across Acton, with the first meeting place at St. Alban's Anglican Church.

Other meeting locations included the Drill Shed at Prospect Park, Knox Presbyterian Church, the Baptist Church and the Beardmore Tannery's recreation hall. It was not until 1948 when talks got underway for the Scouts to have a meeting place of their own.

The year 1948 marked an important milestone in the development of Scouting in Acton, with the charter night of the Acton Rotary Club on March 31st, 1948. Although it would be 13 years before the Rotary Club began to sponsor the troop, this group of businessmen, some of them former scouts, always supported the organization.

At this time, the Scouts were sponsored by the people of Acton themselves - a fact that the Acton Scouts were very proud of. It was the people of Acton who therefore sponsored the drive for Acton's own Scout Hall.

Initially, there was the question of where to build the Hall but that issue was soon resolved by the Acton Public School Board, allowing the Scouts to build their Hall on the property of Robert Little School.

The arrangement was made through a \$1 lease starting on May 5th, 1948 for 10 years from the School Board. Two members of the building committee, Tom Watson and Wes Wolfe, happened to be on the School Board, making it easier to secure the land.

Other members of the Scout Hall building committee included Bill Middleton, Dave Dills, Bill Coon, and John Goy.

Once the site was secured, a meeting was held on September 24th, 1948 in an effort to help raise funds for the Hall's construction. By November, the committee had secured pledges from 11 local organizations and companies, and construction commenced on November 12th, with the plan of constructing a 24'x40' frame building that would have a bevel siding finish and a fireplace.

Posts were sunk in the ground by Bill Coon, Tinkey Leishman, John Goy, Ted Tyler Sr., Allan and Roy Kirkness, Cecil Gibbons, Pat McKenzie, Bill Ruddick and Fred Stewart.

The following weekend, volunteers put the sills, joists and two sides of the building in place, with additional help from Tom Jones, Albert and Morris Van Gils, Dave and Jim Dills, Jack Locker, Jean Marcoux and Ellis Rognvaldson.

The Troop itself excavated the foundation for the fireplace, and the Leishman and Allen brothers volunteered to build the fireplace.

(Article continues on page 13)



Clipping of an article from *The Acton Free Press*, proclaiming approval of lease of school grounds to Scout Hall; 1948.

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