

GRAPE VINE

P.R.E. & Video — together
Loyal Video Station customers will be seeing a lot more of the east end of Acton starting in November. The Video Station is closing as of Friday, Oct. 30 and its owners hope movie-renters will start to use its sister store, P.R.E. Video in the Becker's plaza. Owners Paul and Robin Elliott want to be able to spend more time with each other and their family. Since everyone with a Video Station membership is automatically a P.R.E. View member the change won't mean any new fees. In fact, P.R.E. View is cutting the rental fee on 80 per cent of the soon-to-be combined stock of movies as part of its seventh anniversary celebration.

Kendra Kellas honoured
Acton's Kendra Kellas has a hot date next month with Ontario Lieutenant-Governor, the Honourable Henry Jackman. Kendra is being honoured for her work in organizing the Canada 125 birthday bash at the Acton Parent and Child Resource Centre. Kendra, and 50 other special guests who volunteered their time to organize Canada 125 celebrations, will be wined and dined at a luncheon at Hamilton's Royal Botanical Gardens on Monday, Nov. 23.

B.C. bound
Acton's loss will be British Columbia's gain when long-time tire-

less, community worker Lorna Clarke heads west next month. Lorna, best known for her 23 years with the Town, her work with Meals-On-Wheels, the Senior's Advisory Committee and St. Alban's Church is moving to be near her family on Vancouver Island. Lorna will be honoured by the Ladies Auxiliary at St. Alban's Church on Sunday, Nov 8.

Store conversion continues
The transformation of the Mill Street Doll Emporium into a Queen Anne-style doll house is right on schedule. Owner Elly Snels is happy to report the second storey classroom will be finished by the scheduled Saturday, Dec. 5 grand opening of the new School of Dolls.

Got a budget beef?
You can find out everything you need to know about the Town's proposed budget at a special open house at the Civic Centre tonight (Wednesday). For the first time, staff and politicians are inviting the public to comment on the Town budget before Council decides on the mill rate increase. The meeting begins at 7 pm.

Library without walls
If you have a computer with a modem, you now have direct access to the Acton library's computerized catalogue. The Halton Hills Public Library has launched its "dial-up" computer access service so home, school and office computers with suitable software can tap into the computer and check what titles are in the library collection, which branch owns the copies and whether they are available. For more information about dial-up access, call 853-0301.



Acton's Nan Hurst recently dropped by the Tanner office with this photo of an impressive-looking squad of lady ballplayers from days gone by. Nan figures the photo was taken in the Roaring 20's but we aren't really sure. Might there be readers out there who'd help us put some names to these faces?

Happy Hallowe'en! May you remember your October 31 trips with enjoyment!!

When Acton was just a sprout of a village, Hallowe'en pranksters exercised inventiveness and hard work to celebrate the witching night of October 31. To hear old-timers spin yarns about those remote Hallowe'ens, no effort was spared in hatching memorable tricks that set the village buzzing for days afterwards.

True conspirators, mainly young blades in their late teens and early 20's, had one characteristic in common; rebellious reaction to the stuffiness and hypocrisy of pre-war society. They chose their victims with malicious intent, notably the long-gone publisher of the Acton Free Press, when the paper was quartered in a venerable building on Mill Street, next door to the Methodist Church.

The publisher, a leading Temperance Advocate in a community of hard drinkers, never missed an opportunity to thunder about the evils of alcohol. He was a member of the Methodist Church, which as a congregation strongly supported temperate ways, in common with the Baptists.

One year when Hallowe'en fell on a Saturday night, a gang of nameless young citizens, who were never identified, spent the darkling hours, after the village was in bed, at work on the Free Press building. They decorated the facade with bottles and barrels and other containers of evil spirits, from what sources the perpetrators kept secret.

It was a beautiful, convincing job. Methodist churchgoers beheld the work of art as they gathered for Sabbath worship. The text of the minister's sermon that Nov. 1 Sunday is not recorded. One suspects that the congregation gave less than usual attention, their minds being occupied with other matters.

According to local legend, village authorities launched an in-

vestigation of sorts. Suspicion was rampant, but no actual proof. Actonites who knew about the caper kept silent, chortling behind their hands. The cause of temperance suffered a blow and a gaggle of hobgoblins rejoiced in a memorable Hallowe'en.

Other pranks recalled by old-timers and passed on to their storytelling heirs were less original, but indicative of prodigious physical effort.

How and who hoisted a wagon on to the roof of Robert Little School? Who tolled the school bell in the early hours of the morning? Only the Village Shadow knew, and he wasn't about to tell.

The prevalence of outdoor plumbing inspired strong-armed hellions. Some privies went walkabout, never to recover from their Hallowe'en travels. Not only the owners suffered as a result of these shenanigans. Overly rash gallants reportedly paid for their crimes in a messy fashion.

The years mellowed Acton. As kids, my generation welcomed Hallowe'en in a spirit of fun and excitement. We concentrated on tossing together improvised costumes, in shoe-blackening our faces to venture forth in quest of loot.

At home, my sisters and I drove our poor mother bonkers as we tore the house apart to find old coats and pants for our disguises. Our dog Smutts, who thought she was a PERSON, joined in the excited preparations, refusing to behave herself until we togged her out in sweater and cap.

Smutts lived with us when the

Y' hosted costume parties in the arena. She accompanied the tribe dressed outlandishly, but never losing her family, regardless of the yelling congestion. We collected no costume prizes, but enjoyed the hilarity and afterwards departed to knock on doors.

In our judgment, Miss M.Z. Bennett, principal of Robert Little School, made the best fudge in town. Her home on Lake Avenue attracted youngsters of all ages. This was one stop we made annually, to be welcomed with a warm smile and an understanding twinkle.

Hallowe'en had a witchery and a magic quite unique in those remote years. There was no celebration to compare with it and we relished its distinctive flavour, enjoying the fun without resorting to vandalism.

Speeding along smoky-leaf streets, toting bags of sticky loot, we laughed and greeted one another cheekily, glad to be alive on such a night. It was a FUN time, to be remembered with nostalgia when we grew too old for the annual adventure.

My generation can not regale their young with tales of weird pranks because we were too busy to commit mayhem. Damage was done by older gangs, but their pranks lacked the inspired hellery of much earlier Actonites.

To the kids of today I say: *Happy Hallowe'en! May you remember your October 31 trips with enjoyment and content.*

(This column originally appeared in the Acton Voice in 1985.)

PETUNIA PATCH

With Esther Taylor



HEY!

What are you going to be for Hallowe'en?



"I'm going to be an old lady in a drama club play at McKenzie-Smith. I'm an old lady and I have white hair, a cane, and I'm wearing a dress."
Coryna Foster, Roseford Terrace

"I'm going to be Beauty from Beauty and the Beast. It's (the costume) at Woolco. There's a long, gold dress."
Ashley VanDam, Mill Street West



"I'm going to be a witch with a long black dress, long hair and a pointed hat. I won't have any warts."
Amanda Nelissen, Wright Avenue

"Ariel, me Ariel." Mom Wendy said Billy loves The Little Mermaid and watches it daily on TV. "I'm going to try and make him an Ariel costume; he just loves it."
Billy and Wendy VanDam, Mill Street

