

# GRAPE VINE

Sandi reports that she will continue working full-time until Azelle settles in, but then intends to cut back and spend more time with her family. Azelle says the sale won't affect any clients and hopes they come in to check out the holiday specials.

## Soccer shakeup?

The rumoured full merger of the Acton and Georgetown Soccer Clubs will not happen for the '93 season. Although the Georgetown soccer club board is in favour of the move, the Acton board thinks it's premature. An Acton board insider says they are worried Acton's teams would lose their identities if they amalgamated at this time. The girls teams merged last season to mixed reviews. The Acton club is also looking for some new blood as several long-standing board members are stepping down.

## Tracing Warren Grovers

The search continues for everyone who lived in the Warren Grove war-time housing on Acton's Mason and McDonald Boulevards. Current and former residents are planning a massive reunion in May and are trying to trace all of the people who lived in the homes since 1947. The reunion committee may also hold a fund-raising dance in February.

## Hair-raising sale

Sandi's Styling salon on Mill Street no longer belongs to Sandi.

The new owner is a former Sandi student, Acton's Azelle Hurren, who does not intend to change the well-known salon's name.

## Passport hassle

At least one Acton travel agent is concerned about major inconveniences for Acton travellers because of new rules governing passport applications. As of Dec. 1, travel agents won't be able to help people get passports. In an effort to cut down on fake passports, applicants will have to personally go to a passport office or mail their application to Ottawa. Says Rob Warrington of Acton Travel, "I won't be able to send the applications in by courier for people or drop them off at a passport office. It will mean people will either have to wait the four to six weeks that it takes to mail it in, or go to a passport office in Toronto, Hamilton or Kitchener."

## Happy Birthday Mick

What a surprise! Former Acton fire chief Mick Holmes thought he was going to the fire hall Saturday afternoon to play cards. But when he got there he found 50 of his family, friends, fishing buddies and former colleagues were there, ready to wish him a happy 75th birthday.

"I couldn't believe that they had arranged all this and I didn't even have an inkling. Usually someone lets the cat out of the bag, but not this time. Thanks to everyone for a great surprise," Mick remarked after the party.



**AWESOME FOURSOME!** A quartet of friendly faces line up at the ever-popular bake table Saturday at the St. Alban's church bazaar. From left, Mabel Burkman, Barbara Dear, June Clancy and Jean McKee pause just long enough for us to snap a photo. (Eric Balkind photo)

# On Remembrance Day, looking back at the war years in Acton

At the age of 3, I was belligerent in the First World War. I drowned Germans in the backyard of my grandmother's home in Plymouth, England.

The only child in a household of adults, I was exposed to a lot of war talk, which I can't remember. Nor do I recall my entry into open hostilities, but the incident was chronicled years later by my mother and aunts.

They remembered that my grandmother first noticed unusual signs of activity around the reservoir in the backyard. She had caught glimpses of me trotting back and forth from the house to the tall soft water receptacle. Grandmother wondered aloud: "Whatever is that dear lamb doing? She looks very busy."

In a body, Grannie, Mom and aunts investigated to find that the dear lamb had been busy indeed. The reservoir was full of her toys floating sadly in the water. Mounted on a chair, the young warrior was all set to heave a final armful of play-things into the drink.

"What are you doing, love?" asked Grannie. "I'm drowning the Germans," replied the defender of England and Empire, bursting into tears as an aunt hauled out my beloved, half-drowned Teddy Bear. Teddy survived to come to Canada at the end of the war. Many of my other toys were ruined. An early sacrifice on the altar of war.

This Plymouth experience could explain my precocious worries about bloodshed. Its shadow hung over my early years, although until I was 9 I thought the war happened only in history books.

Some unthinking adult informed me bluntly at school that wars were not confined to history books. The horror of this cold realization haunted me throughout childhood. I used to wind up my nightly prayers with the fervent supplication: "Please God, don't let there be another war!"

I really believed that the Al-

mighty would intervene in the affairs of mankind, as He had come through when I prayed for a Christmas puppy — and received it. But God was busy and his troublesome tribes were busy looking for trouble and finding it.

A friend and I were invited to weekend with a former Anglican rector and his wife in a Niagara Parish, rejoicing in the hospitality and the glorious fall weather. Our pleasure was short-lived. Over the dinner table, we heard that war had been declared against Germany. I dashed from the room, stumbling outside to head for Lake Ontario. There blindly, I ran gulping and sobbing by the uncaring waves, where our host located me an hour later, distraught and tear-grimed. For some reason, God had not seen fit to answer my prayers. My faith sustained a shock from which it never recovered.

The war years in Acton were unreal. We suffered few hardships but the shadow hung over our daily lives. We wanted to contribute, but short of buying war bonds and sending overseas parcels, there was little to do, except hope and pray. And prayer seemed remote from the hideous happenings of 1939-1945.

I remember one gallant old gentleman who did his bit faithfully. The late Robert Lowrie collected salvage weekly for the Red Cross with his horse and wagon. He was a familiar figure during Acton's war years.

I tried twice to enlist in the CWACS, unforgettable experiences resulting in rejection by the fattest, most heavy-handed medics I have ever encountered. In hindsight, they did well to refuse my

services (for heart murmur and skinniness). With my character kinks, I might not have taken kindly to military discipline. The army had enough troubles.

I was working in a Mill Street clothing store when we heard the message that Germany had surrendered. Without a word to my Jewish employers I galloped from the counter, racing down Willow Street where I rang the old bell until I was exhausted. For the first time since war was declared, I was on speaking terms again with the Almighty.

At Remembrance Day services, I think of George who was killed in Normandy. He was a friend, linked to our family by his brother's marriage. He was a big, kind and gentle lad, a farmer's son who loved the land, who should have spent his days quietly and productively. No warrior he, but he heeded the call of duty. In Plymouth visiting an English aunt, he spoke of a presentiment that he would not return home to Canada. Unofficially we heard, that by one of the ironic screw-ups of modern warfare, he died as the result of an Allied air attack.

For me, George's death exemplifies the appalling waste of war. Our country needs the qualities of kindness and gentleness and decency which were lost when George and thousands of young Canadians like him perished on foreign soil or in hostile waters.

I think of Lawrence Binyon's poem For The Fallen, and the last verse as follows: "As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust./ Moving in marches upon the starry plain/ As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness/ To the end, to the end, they remain."

## PETUNIA PATCH

With Esther Taylor



# HEY!

*What, if anything, are you remembering about Canada's veterans this Remembrance Day?*



"I'll be remembering the boys I went to school with that didn't come back. I'll be remembering my service with the Royal Canadian Air Force and the friends I made. It was the best experience of my life."

*Irene Watson, Tidey Avenue*

"I'm remembering mainly the World War II veterans because my father fought in that war. I think it's appropriate that we make sure that they are remembered for their efforts."

*Dan Dolliver, Mowbray Place*



"I will be remembering all veterans, but especially the Dutch ones because my father fought in Holland. I think we should remember them at other times of the year as well, but this is their day."

*Annette Bardoel, Cook Street*

"Remembrance Day really doesn't mean too much to me. No one who is any relation to me fought in the war. I think about it, but not a lot."

*Phil Garner, R. R. 4, Acton*

