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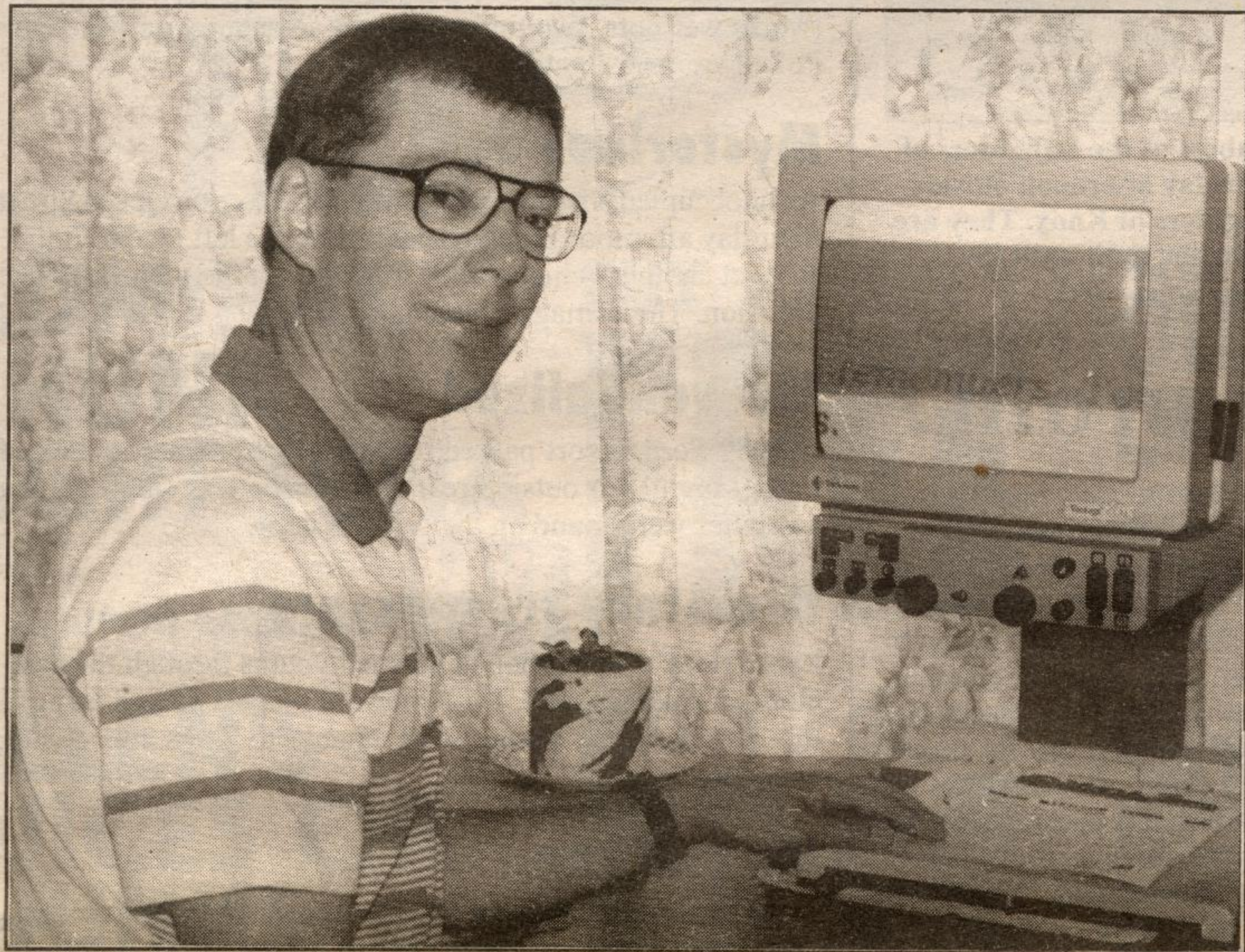
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"ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED"

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, 1993



REELING FROM RAIL CUTS: Visually impaired Acton resident Richard Hadfield will sorely miss the departing GO train service to Toronto. (Wendy Long photo)

Loss of GO train bad news for disabled Acton man

BY WENDY LONG
The Acton Tanner

After the last Acton GO train to Toronto pulls out July 2 getting to work is going to be a lot more difficult for Acton resident Richard Hadfield.

Hadfield, 48, is visually impaired and is registered as legally blind with the CNIB. For the next two weeks, he will continue to walk from his Mill Street home unassisted and hop the train to Union Station.

After that, Hadfield will have to rely on someone to drive him to the Georgetown station or catch a bus there. It adds one more obstacle to getting

through his day without total vision.

If a car were to hit him while crossing the street, Hadfield would not be able to see it until the last moment. That is, until too late.

Hadfield's sight began to deteriorate only three years ago, when he contracted a virus that attacked the centre of his retinas. Consequently, he maintains some vision but has lost a great deal of fine-tuning. Hadfield is independent and doesn't use a white cane or a seeing-eye dog.

"When people hear someone is visually impaired they

picture someone with a white cane stumbling around," Hadfield says, addressing disability stereotypes. "I'm mobile. I can get around and I don't usually trip over things."

In fact, on a recent business trip to San Francisco, Hadfield didn't reveal that he cannot really see until he was asked to survey documents.

Hadfield is aided in his job at an insurance company by electronic magnification machines that enlarge print to be several inches high. His talking watch lets him know the time. In fact, he even wears glasses to en-

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Hide House closes; Acton 'devastated'

Acton is in shock after yesterday's announcement of the closure of the olde Hide House, along with Jack Tanner's, Flight-Line and Leathertown West Wearhouse, pending a restructuring of the company's finances.

Shoppers found doors locked tight yesterday at all Hide House stores, where there were only brief notes of explanation posted. The story received lead treatment on area TV and radio newscasts.

In an announcement to employees, company president Steve Dawkins stated that the firm may be forced to seek court protection from its creditors. All but a few of the 120 employees are being laid off immediately.

Dawkins attributed the company's problems to the "continuing economic malaise," which has reduced demand for discretionary goods and services.

He indicated that it will likely be several weeks before the prospect of a financial restructuring

can be confirmed.

"This is devastating news," said Acton councillor Rick Bonnette yesterday. "The olde Hide House has been a flagship for bringing tourists into town. There are many stores that depend on these tourists and they will really feel the ripple effect."

"As far as the Town, if they (the Hide House and affiliated businesses) can't restructure, there's going to be a tax base lost as well."

"But we have to be positive. If anybody's capable of restructuring, Steve and Don Dawkins will lead the way."

"It's a real shame. The ironic thing is that it's almost six years to the day that the announcement came that Canada Packers was closing the tannery in Acton."

The operations of three associated companies — Blue Springs Golf Club, Blue Springs Developments and North Halton Construction — are not directly affected by this announcement.

Businesses still divided over Sunday shopping

BY WENDY LONG
The Acton Tanner

A year after Sunday shopping was officially approved by the Ontario government, Acton businesses remain divided over Sunday opening.

In a random survey of Acton stores, services and restaurants, half choose to be open Sundays while the other half decline.

Many of the local businesses that open Sunday say they were already open before the new legislation passed, based on tourist location exemptions.

"The main reason for this busi-

ness was to open Sundays when we opened nine years ago," said Jug City owner Linda Olson. "Back then everything was closed except convenience stores. We're not as busy now that everything else has opened Sundays."

"There's not enough business (to open Sundays)," said John Reeve, owner of Leathertown Feed and Pet Supplies. "I'm just scared that it will draw my usual customers from the six days over to the seventh (without adding any new business)," he said.

"I opened for two Sundays be-

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