

## EDITORIAL

With Tim Morgetroyd



# First impressions of a terrific town

Record company executives used to boast they could tell if a record was going to be a Top-40 hit or Gold Record after hearing the first 10 seconds of it, and it's often too easy to slip into that attitude with people and places.

I try never to let first impressions of people stay with me because, more often than not, they are either entirely wrong or misleading. The same goes for cities and towns.

Fools gold or gold-plated plastic can make a pretty convincing gold record at first glance, and some very unlikely records can top the charts.

But when a first impression is as positive as mine has been of Acton and its people during the four weeks I have been working here, it's a greater relief than people not familiar with journalism may realize.

People can drive to a nearby city or town where they work, punch in at 9 am, have no contact with the people there, punch out at 5 pm, and go straight home. If they do have contact with local people, it is a very specific group coming to them: a fraction of the community.

With journalism you need the support and cooperation of everyone. No other profession, not even the police, depend on the kindness of strangers the way journalists do.

When the support is there, 95 per cent of your job is already done, and the stories seem to write themselves. This makes it such a joy to go to work that I sometimes stay long after I'm finished.

From my own experience with newspapers and from talking to other reporters, it seems most newspapers are either so bad a pessimist would think you were exaggerating or so good an optimist would think you were exaggerating.

And even a perfect office and staff like this one can't make you stop glancing at your watch and praying for quitting time if the local community would rather have you point a gun at it than your camera or run the one-minute-mile in the other direction when they see you coming.

Acton has been just the opposite — such a perfect environment for any reporter that if I had never worked anywhere else I might take it for granted that everywhere is like this.

When I was growing up in Halifax we never locked the doors of our homes when we went out, or car doors when cars were left in parking lots. It would have been like nailing shut and barricading the door of every room or closet you entered in your own home. I thought then it was like this everywhere, and still expect it to be this way.

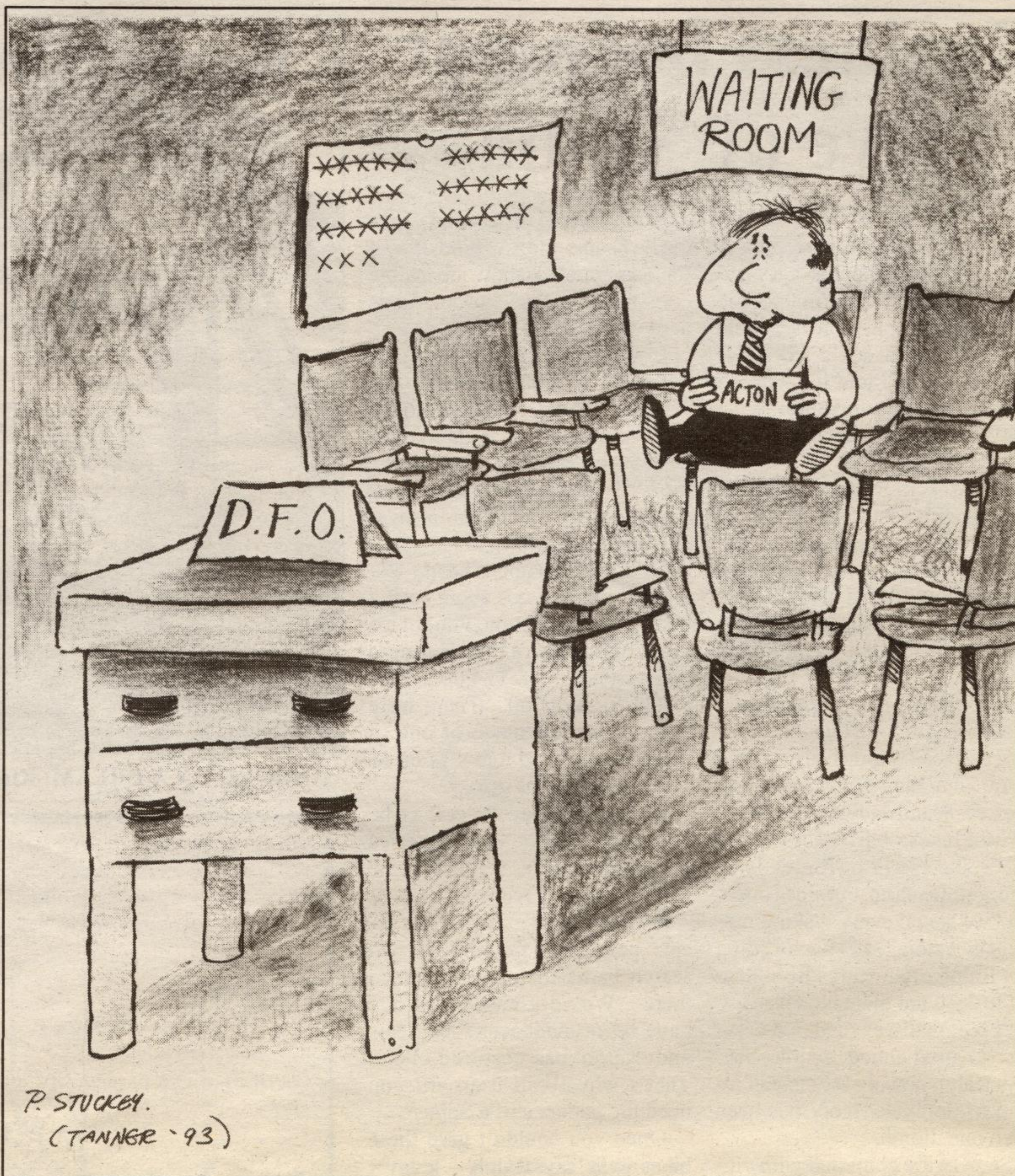
I have never lived or worked or visited anywhere since then that made me toy with the idea of ignoring locks and keys, and those days may never come back.

But if that Garden of Eden is lost forever, Acton has turned out to be one of its flowers preserved between the covers of a book that still holds just a hint of the fragrance and carries you back to what really were the good old days.

P.S. A special thank you to Loretta, Sheila, Ali and everyone at *The Tanner* for helping me make a smooth landing my first month here.

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On another note, Bob Malcolmson, president of the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce is to be commended for expressing so well the need to put the community first and listing the consequences if we do not, at the OMB hearings. Let's hope the DFO was listening.



P. STUCKEY.  
(TANNER '93)

## LETTERS

### Money to burn?

To the Editor,

Last Thursday the Hide House issued a News Release to update the community on the progress of restructuring the company's finances. I am writing this letter, not as an officer of that firm, but as a concerned citizen of Acton.

The high and mighty DFO officials, egged on by meddling members of POWER are subjecting Acton's growth plans to an arguably historic level of "scrutiny" (obstruction?).

Local councillors have warned of the "disastrous" economic consequences of further delaying development, but to no avail.

Meanwhile, the time-and-money-burning posturing by the DFO has already prolonged the uncertainty past the point in time

### FoodShare says thanks

To the Editor,

We want to thank your newspaper for the coverage you gave us promoting and covering our recent yard sale.

This was a first-time event and proved to be very successful, raising over \$500 and 180 pounds of food. The money will be used to buy much-needed food items.

We also acknowledge the cooperation of Steve Dawkins at the Hide House for the use of the parking lot, the Esso Station for their advertising, other businesses, churches, groups and individuals who donated articles, the many people who supported us with

where the Hide House could have legitimately included a coming 40 per cent increase in the local population as a premise of its Restructuring Proposal.

So what? Everyone knows the Hide House is reliant on tourism anyway, you say? While tourism is, of course, the fundamental business of the company as a whole, certain divisions have become increasingly dependent upon local-area patronage for sustenance: Flight-Line, West Warehouse and Jack Tanner's in particular.

Would the addition of 3,000 new local customers have allowed Hide House management to save these three divisions by deeming them viable components of the Restructuring Proposal?

In the case of West Warehouse, maybe. Jack Tanner's Table, probably.

Does this mean that the DFO and POWER may already be partly responsible for the loss of more than 40 local jobs?

Steve Dawkins  
Acton

buying or just dropping by with a cash donation, and of course the volunteers who spent a hot and sunny Saturday to help those less fortunate in our community — thank you all!

Loretta Duclos, Co-ordinator  
Acton FoodShare

**WRITE A LETTER  
TO THE EDITOR!**

**Deadline is Monday  
at noon. And don't  
forget to sign it!**

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