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## Andrew Asbil's last sermon at St. Alban's this Sunday

BY DOUG HARRISON  
The Acton Tanner

With each change in one's career comes the inevitable learning experiences, so it's only fitting that Rev. Andrew Asbil is heading back to school for his.

The soon-to-be former rector of St. Alban's Anglican Church will be preaching from a high school effective Oct. 15. The Right Reverend Walter Asbil, Bishop of Niagara, recently announced the appointment of Rev. Asbil as rector of the Anglican Church of the Incarnation in Oakville.

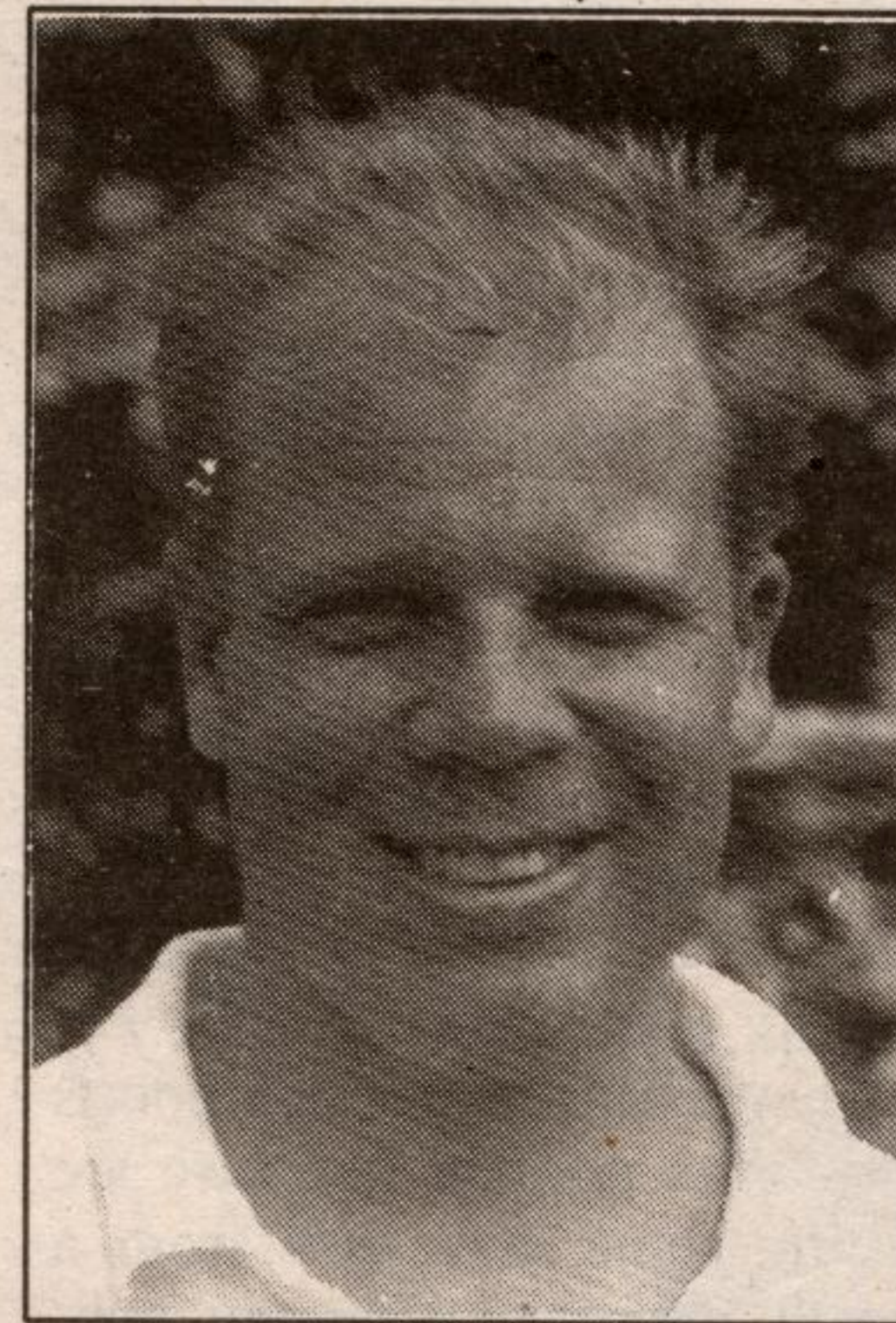
"I'm excited about the new prospects," he said recently, "but I have mixed feelings, because I'm sad about leaving Acton.

"It was a very difficult decision, because it was a new change mingled with feelings of wanting to stay here longer. I thought long and hard about it. But the opportunity may never come again."

However, the 33-year-old is excited about the new challenges he will face — working with a young congregation and being rector of a church that is only eight years old.

While Asbil says working in a high school instead of a church building will take some adjustment, he's looking forward to the people teaching him what they've created as a congregation and attracting new families and outreach.

"It (preaching in a high school) is very unusual, but there aren't any churches being built in our



REV. ANDREW ASBIL

diocese. It's part of the appeal for me. And I can't think of too many places where I'd want to be," said the Montreal native.

Asbil graduated from the University of Waterloo in 1985 with a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master of Divinity with Honours from Huron College in London.

In January 1991 he became rector of St. Alban's. He has served the diocese as a member of the Division of Congregational Support, the staff of the Niagara Youth Conference, and has been a co-chair of the Youth Synod Organizing Committee.

Asbil will be remembered for his talents as a story-teller and for his "clown" ministry. His interest in clowns began while still in seminary eight years ago and he has

built up that kind of ministry in his sermons, visiting other congregations and doing workshops.

And he has always fancied telling stories and took it more seriously about six years back.

"All of us relate to stories and eventually our lives become one big one. It's really my style of preaching," allows Asbil, who enjoys skiing, swimming, roller blading and lying on the beach, among other activities, while away from the church.

Asbil notes the people of Acton are what he's going to miss most.

"You get to know people in Acton incredibly fast. They're very welcoming, very down to earth, not only in the congregation but in my neighbourhood," comments Asbil, who says one of the positives in moving is the fact his wife Catherine, who works in Hamilton, will have a shorter commute.

Asbil reveals that each day has passed "in slow motion" recently.

"It probably feels that way because I'm terrible at good-byes and don't find them easy. I want to spend as much time with everyone in the congregation, but I'm not going to be able to do that," he says, adding he will preach his final sermon to likely all 200 St. Alban's families this Sunday.

"Being here has been the best four years of my life. It's been a tremendous experience — positive and warm. I'll be coming back for visits and who knows, maybe I'll even retire here."

## Sooner, not later, for Poplar and Crescent street repairs

Residents of Poplar Avenue and Crescent Street, described by local Councillors as "two of the worst streets in Halton Hills" will not have to wait until the turn of the century for much-needed and long-awaited road improvements.

During Monday night's Municipal Council debate on the long-range capital spending forecast,

Acton Councillor Rick Bonnette succeeded in having the proposed timetable for the road, curb and gutter work moved forward.

Now, engineering work for the project will be done in 1996, not 1998, and work will begin in 1998, not 2000.

"Even the Town engineer admits that this area really needs

these improvements," Bonnette said on Thursday.

"Every year they have serious flooding problems and the improvements can't wait six years," he explained.

The 1998 budget includes \$300,000 for Phase I of the improvements to the area, commonly known as "the Crescent."

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