

Acton student plays part in new 'Santa Clause' movie

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

Philip Eddolls had the honour of being the first Actonite to get a sneak peak of Santa Claus this year and during his visit made sure the jolly old elf will have a smooth ride into Leathertown come Christmas.

For 14 days, Philip, who has been an avid volunteer working cameras for Halton Cable, stepped from behind-the-scenes and into the limelight, experiencing Hollywood North — otherwise known as Toronto — at its merriest.

The 14-year-old Acton high school student won the part as an extra in the recently released *The Santa Clause*, starring Tim Allen, after making the highest bid while watching the Georgetown Kinsmen's annual television auction earlier this year on Cable 4.

His brother John dialed the number, Philip put in his bid and 30 seconds before the prize was auctioned off, Eddolls' bid of over \$100 appeared on the screen.

And instead of appearing for just two days as advertised during the auction, Philip spent two weeks on the set as a welder elf. He was responsible for making Santa's new sleigh and welding toys, such as bikes.

"You needed a hook to pull him away from the set," says Philip's mother Margaret, who adds her son worked steady 10 to 12-hour days. "He would say 'I want to go for 12 hours. I can stay, I'm 14.' He had the best time of his life."

While the Grade 9 student only appears in on screen for about two minutes in the background, Philip did do five or six features (close up shots). Unfortunately, they were all cut out in the final edit.

Also, Philip — who's always aspired to being in commercials — did a photo double for the star elf who, under contract, was to leave after working a 10-hour day. So the aggressive Philip obliged to fill in when approached by director Jack Pasquine (*Roseanne*, *Home Improvement*).

"You see my body and hands, but not my face. And a lot of it was cut in the movie," he says, adding the opportunity was big for his first feature film, but not something he'd put on a resume.

Philip was excited to meet the comical Allen, but it quickly wore

off after the latter made only small talk to the youngsters on the set and mostly kept to himself.

Philip, who's currently rehearsing for his first school production, *A Christmas Carol*, began showcasing his talents as a five-year-old with his Fisher-Price magic set. It escalated from there to doing stage magic, appearing on CKCO-TV's *Big Top Talent* twice and then volunteering at Halton Cable working with the cameras and doing graphics work.

"Working at Cable 4 gave me the confidence to stay in front of the camera," says Philip, who did live commentary of last year's Acton Santa Claus Parade.

Since appearing in *The Santa Clause*, Philip has hooked up with Toronto-based agent Sarah Freeman and picked up parts as an extra in four productions, including *Taking the Falls*, starring Cynthia Dale from *Street Legal*.

Margaret says Philip is just a

natural in front of the screen.

"He's a big ham," she states. "He's a whole different human being when he's in front of the camera — a very confident, competent person who knows what he has to do."

Despite being told to stay the way he is and not pursue acting lessons, Philip doesn't foresee a career as an actor.

"I'd like to see a career as an actor, but I heard a statistic on CBC that one is more likely to win a lottery than become a star," he explains. "It's just something I'm doing. I see the cameras and just do it. It's extremely fun."

"The greatest learning experience was seeing how the movie was filmed, the basic feel of being in front of the camera, the make up and the atmosphere of the movie. If I do 100 other productions this will be the film I've done, because it was the first one and the most fun."



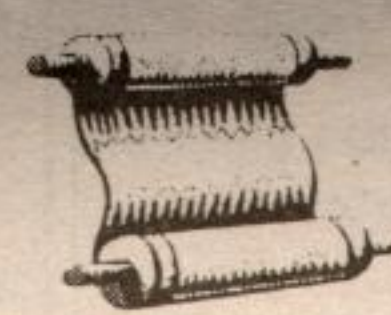
ELFISH! Philip Eddolls in his on-screen garb. (Submitted photo)

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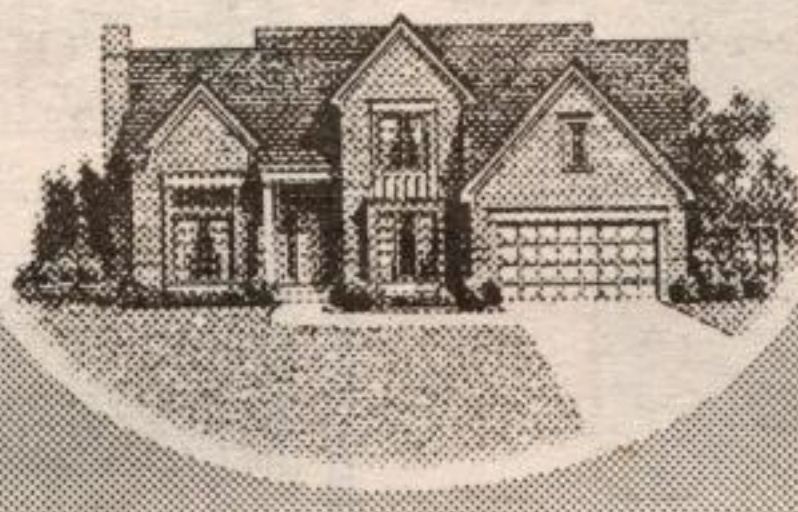
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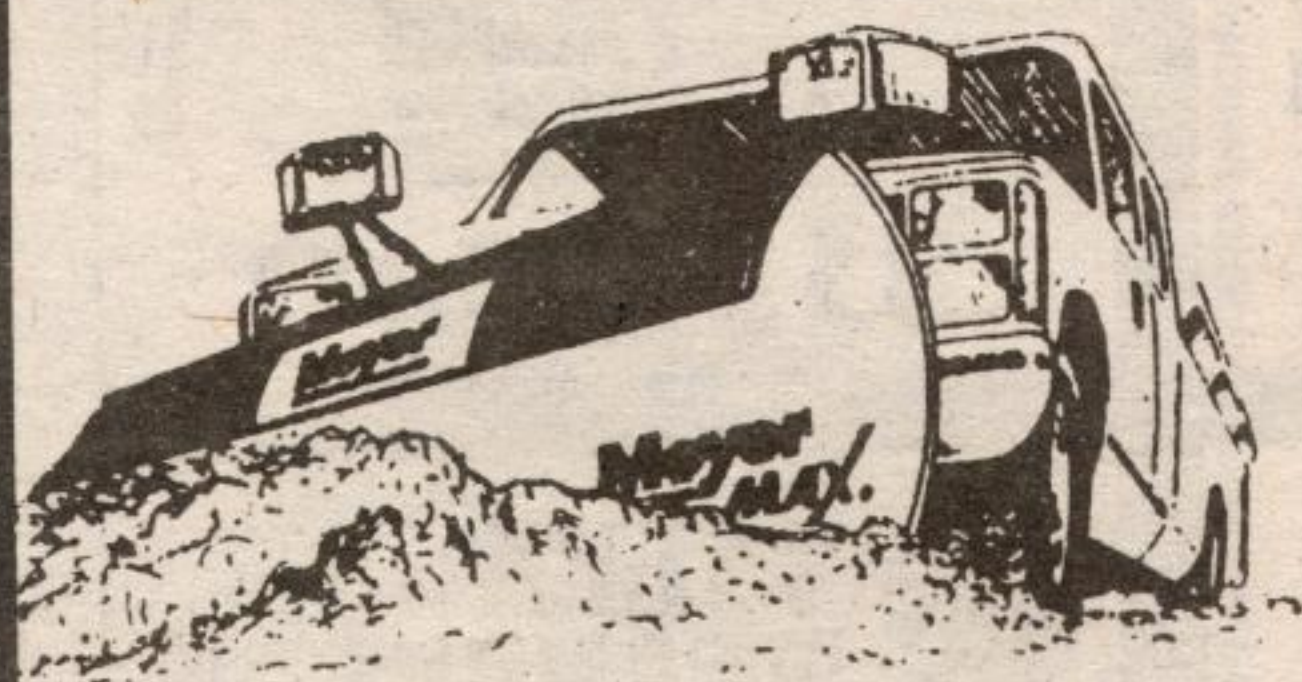


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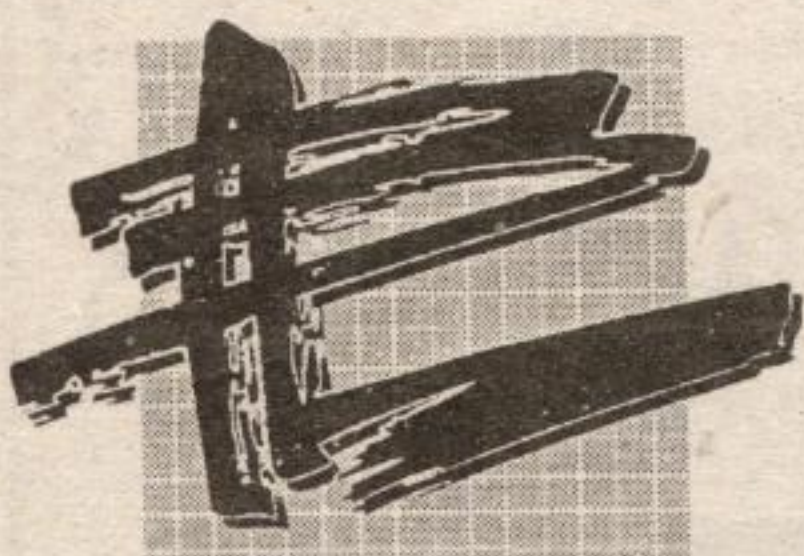
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