

EDITORIAL

With Hartley Coles



Town hall could take on new life

This is one person who likes Heritage Acton's proposal to turn the old Town Hall on Willow Street into a community centre again.

The building, built in 1881 for just that purpose, is 115 years old but has undergone a transformation from the original red brick structure without losing its essential character. It has just never been finished.

When the fire hall was added onto the rear, the stage in the upstairs auditorium was cut in two and a cement block wall erected between the old and new facilities, retaining the stage arch. When Heritage Acton saved the building from demolition, the Town turned it over to them as administrators.

A large part of the old Town Hall has been restored but the auditorium upstairs has received only minimum restoration because it can't be used until there are enough fire safety exits. Downstairs, of course, the old hall, once the administrative centre of Acton, has been tastefully restored and is occupied by Acton Support Services and Information Centre (ASSIC).

Now that the fire department has gone to its new quarters on Churchill Road, the fire hall has been declared surplus by Halton Hills and has gone on the block for an asking price of \$160,000. Heritage Acton has requested that the Town turn the old fire hall over to them so it can be incorporated into the Town Hall.

Spokesman Dr. George Elliott told Town Council recently that Heritage Acton could incorporate the fire hall with the town hall by removing the cement block wall, which would enable them to restore the stage, a contingency allowed for when reconstruction for the fire hall took place. The upstairs could then be converted into a backstage area with dressing rooms while the downstairs, which housed the fire trucks, could be converted into rooms for rehearsals, meeting rooms or other uses.

Dr. Elliott foresaw the stage being used by local theatre and amateur groups who don't need something as professional as the John Elliott Theatre in Georgetown. The whole building, then, would be controlled and maintained by Heritage Acton as the old Town Hall now is.

Total cost to the Town? – donation of the building, which likely won't find a ready buyer with a suitable use anyway. In turn, Elliott says, the Town would acquire a recreational facility at no cost and an organization administering it, which has a track record for getting things done.

How can you argue with that? Anyone who remembers the entertainments which took place in the old Town Hall, the dances, the political meetings and countless other activities, will surely add their support to Heritage Acton's plan. It could help restore some of the vitality that made Acton such a special place to live and work. Over the years it has been sapped by political changes and loss of venues due to a number of reasons.

At some time or other in its 115 years of existence, the old Town Hall has been home to the town library, school classrooms, police offices, council chambers, jail cells (which still exist), fire department, and a variety of entertainments including minstrel shows, square dances, concerts, and even a pork exhibition. It was built as a community centre and used as one.

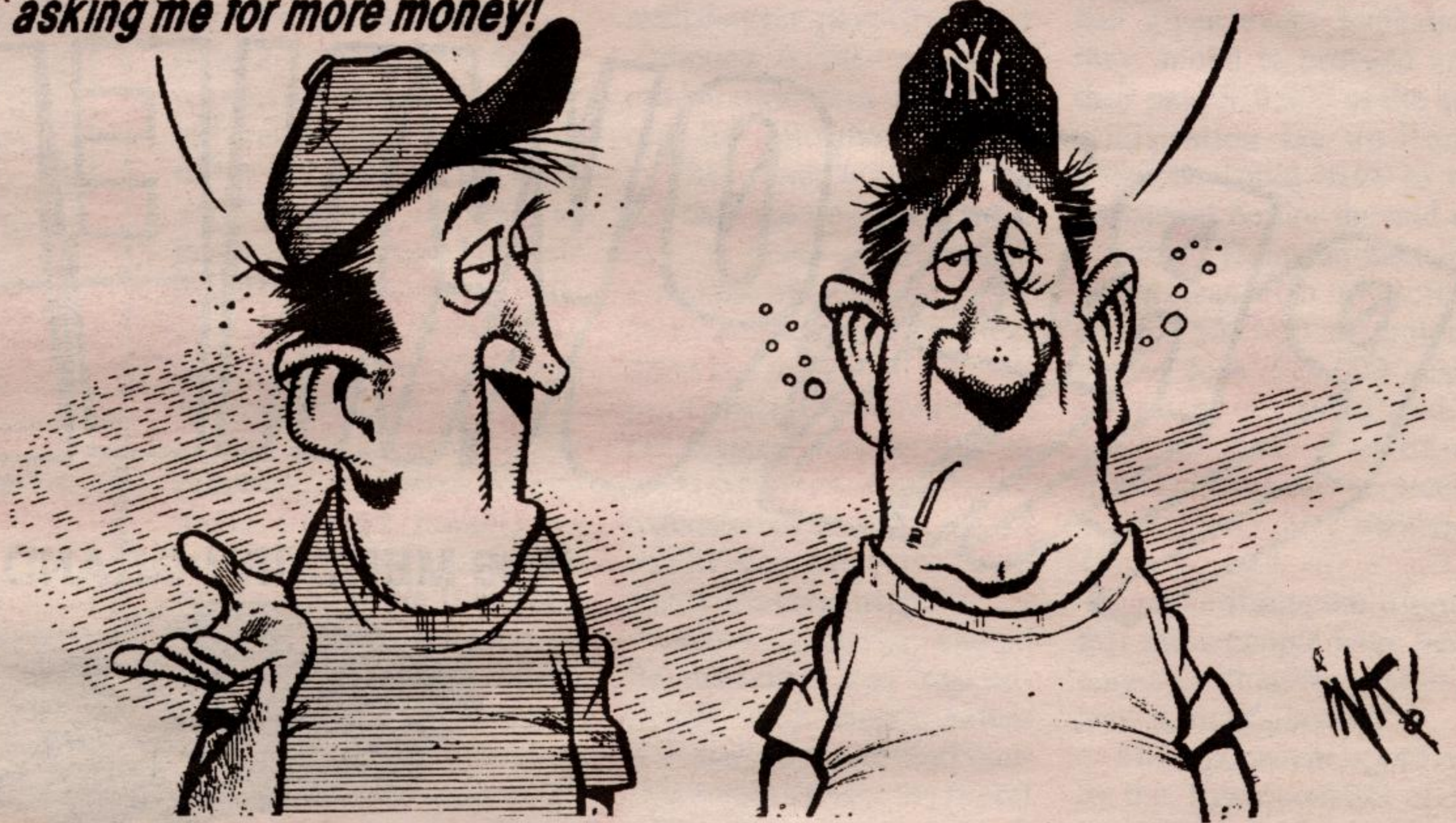
Besides that, it is just about the only tangible evidence we have of the town that once saw the Town Hall as the centre of Acton life.

Same time last year ...

Former Acton figure skater Kevin Parker dies ... The opening of Godfather Pizza is delayed as the management company waits for a building permit to be issued from the Town ... Fred Buckley, of Buckley's cough syrup fame, is filmed for a TV commercial at Blue Springs Golf Course.

*I can't figure out my teenager...
He moans and complains about living at home
and about how much we embarrass him, but then
he's got the nerve to turn around and to keep
asking me for more money!*

*Who's your kid
think he is...
Lucien Bouchard?*



Your LETTERS

Thanks for giving the 'gift of life'

To the Editor,

On behalf of the Halton Hills branch of the Canadian Red Cross, we would like to say "thank you" to all of the people who took part in the recent Acton Blood Donor Clinic.

Once again the people of Acton showed their concern and willingness to help others. Ninety units of blood were collected at the September 19th clinic. With the children returning to school and registering for teams etc. we appreciate you taking time to help. For those peo-

ple who couldn't make the clinic, we encourage you to make your donation at any other clinic, as the Red Cross's appeal continues.

Special thanks to RE/MAX, Blue Springs Realty, who sponsored this clinic and to *The Acton Tanner* for advertising the clinic in this paper. Of course, the clinic could not be such a success without the many volunteers who helped run it, and the continued support of the Acton Legion.

Thank you to all of the great donors and volunteers from Acton and the surrounding area. Through your efforts, you have made it possible to give others the gift of life!

We look forward to seeing you again the next clinic, on December 12, 1996. We appreciate your continued support.

*Joe Graf, Chair
Julia Roehrig, Assistant Chair
Halton Hills Red Cross Blood Donor Committee*

Kinsmen, Kinettes of Acton new 'official' service clubs

Special to The Tanner

The Ballinafad Community Hall was the site, last Friday night, for the formation of Acton's two newest service clubs.

Kinsmen and Kinettes from communities across Ontario joined 36 young men and women in celebrating the official chartering of the new Kinsmen and Kinette Clubs of Acton. The two new Service Clubs have now officially joined a national organization which has clubs in 600 communities across Canada. Kinsmen and Kinette Clubs are uniquely Canadian; promoting service, fellowship, family values and bettering of the community.

Kinsmen and Kinette Clubs have a long history of serving the communities' greatest needs dating back to 1920. National projects include the fight against cystic fibrosis and

Raise the Flag, which is a project dedicated to promoting patriotism among Canadian youth.

"The Town of Acton is a tremendous community in which to live and raise our children," stated Jason Ash, the Kinsmen Club's first treasurer. "With the recent announcement that a new community centre will be built, the clubs are already thinking of ways to involve ourselves in raising funds."

Though the Clubs have 36 members, they are always welcoming new members from the community. Both Clubs are holding regular meetings at the Prospect Park boathouse. If you are interested in meeting new friends, helping out your community and having a lot of fun, give either Dan Fry at 853-2604 or Heather Sampson at 853-5863 a call for more information.

Send us your thoughts in a letter to the Editor!
Mail or fax by Monday at noon

THE ACTON Tanner

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