

Hovercraft development hindered by dollars

Canada may be desperate for jobs but money for investing in new developments is scarce. Just ask Acton resident John Shadbolt, who's known as a "finder".

"Finders" match money and new products so production can start. Production lines create new jobs and capital but there aren't many risk takers in this country, says Shadbolt, who has been trying to raise capital for a new concept in hovercraft for years.

Research and development worth \$150,000, some of it government money, has been spent on designing the new concept in hovercraft but the company needs funds to

develop a prototype and they've reached the bottom of their barrel.

Shadbolt joined the company, Vareure Hovercraft, founded by inventors John Schwingshandle, in 1991 upon Schwingshandle's retirement.

The inventor after 20 years of producing hovercraft discovered a new design concept in 1988, which Shadbolt says would be revolutionize the industry. He was so impressed he bought the patent.

"The design of the hovercraft hasn't changed, outside of cosmetic changes, since it was invented, says the Acton entrepreneur.

"Schwingshandle got in-

volved thinking there is a better way of doing this," he says.

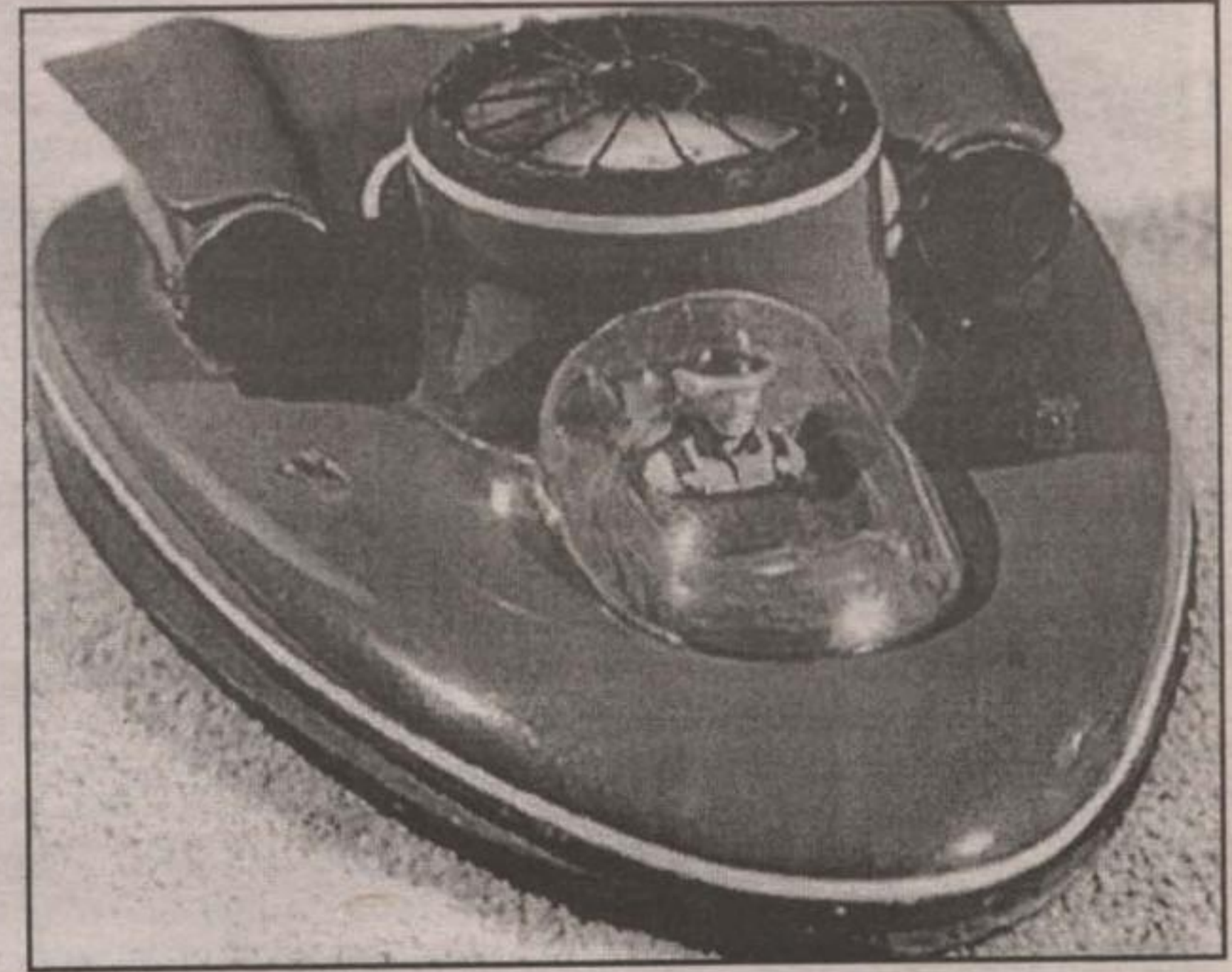
The hovercraft design made it difficult to manage; it's the reason they haven't gone anywhere. Noise is another factor as well as inadequate payload, Shadbolt says.

I think we've solved all these problems with the new design, he says. On our hovercrafts the motive force is supplied by a horizontally mounted fan, forcing air down into a chamber. The effect is so precise the unit can turn in its own space. Acceleration is immediate because with this thrust you are preparing the air in

chambers and introducing it to the outside air with no vortex.

In this new system we have incorporated the acceleration direction, braking and reverse in one simple mechanism so we have a very simple single fan hovercraft that is stable and fully maneuverable in all directions as well as having the hovering capability some other hovercraft possess, Shadbolt says.

The company approached the federal government to see if they could help develop the new hovercraft design. "A spokesman said it was one of the best things they've seen but they wanted \$10,000



from us before they would do anything," Shadbolt said.

"I'm personally convinced government departments are set up not to help but give the appearance of it," he says, noting he had also contacted MPP Ted Chudleigh but nothing has transpired. Banks are also not risk-takers, he notes.

Shadbolt points out that

development of the hovercraft could revolutionize transportation especially in countries with inaccessible terrain. Highways would no longer be necessary, even a strip of plastic could serve as a highway. Instead of the high cost of concrete curbs and earth moving conventional roads to be, it would just require a right-of-way.



THE NEW TANNER Sales Representative, Dianne Preston, presents Cathy Gerrow of the Acton Branch of the Canadian Cancer Society with a donation on behalf of The New Tanner and the participating advertising sponsors with the recent Cancer Society support page. — Ted Tyler photo

ACTON SENIORS' RECREATION CENTRE

By DOT REDEKOP

Everyone enjoyed the trip to see the Lippizaner horses in Kitchener on March 26.

Our lunches are going well but we still have room for more folks. Flo, Maxine, Lydia and helpers do a great job. The lunches are every Friday. The first one is a pot lunch, then soup and sandwich, mystery lunch and soup and sandwich. Come out and join your friends for lunch and stay for bingo.

Anyone interested in ballroom dancing? We are trying to start up a new activity. If you are, phone the centre at 853-5951 and put your name on the list.

We are in the process of putting together our next newsletter. Look for it at the end of April. If you are not a member just drop in to the Centre and pick one up. Maybe you can come up with some new ideas for us to look into. Come join us for fun and friendship.

We now have two donated computers up and running. They are for the members to use — learn how or brush up your skills.

If you need instructions we have someone to help you. Just phone the centre and have your times slotted.

Don't forget our monthly euchre on Wednesday, May 6 at 7:30 p.m. Come out and bring your friends. A light lunch will be provided.

We are going to Casino Rama on April 29 and again on May 19. The bus leaves the centre at 8:45 a.m. and the cost is \$12 per trip.

Folks have been asking at what age they can join up. Anyone 55 years or older can register. Come out and see what we do.

Betty and Barb are working on a trip for May 15 — Niagara Blossom Tour. We go to Niagara-on-the-Lake for time on your own to explore and shop, then on to Niagara Falls, lunch on your own and then visit the Niagara Greenhouses. Leave the centre at 8:30 a.m.

Our newsletter will be out by the end of the month. If you are not a member but are interested in our events, just drop in to the centre between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. and pick up an application.

Dan C. Dolliver

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With Village Constable
Bill Riddle



Know your bike by-laws

Last week I talked about some rules of the road that we should all obey now that spring is here and bicycle season has arrived. This week I'll list the by-laws that govern the operation of a bicycle in Acton.

- Every rider of a bicycle shall at all times when riding on a highway, keep his feet on the pedals and both hands on the handlebars except as may be necessary to give proper hand signals.
 - No person while riding a bicycle on a highway shall indulge in trick riding or otherwise ride so as to prevent the full use of both hands to control the bicycle.
 - No person shall ride a bicycle on any highway abreast of another bicycle except in the course of passing the other bicycle.
 - No person shall ride a bicycle on any highway and carry more than one person on a bicycle designed to carry only one person.
 - No person shall ride a bicycle on any highway and carry any goods in such a manner so as to interfere with the full control of the bicycle.
 - No person shall park a bicycle on any roadway, shoulder, bicycle route or combined facility.
 - No person shall park a bicycle on any boulevard or sidewalk except in an upright position and in a manner so as not to impede the intended use of the boulevard or sidewalk.
- A breach of these by-laws can result in a fine of \$55 for each offence. I hope all bicycle riders will follow the rules and have a safe bike season.

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