

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Why out of town?

My licence renewal notice arrived in the mail a few days ago reminding me to purchase a new licence sticker before my birthday in October. The notice suggested I should either renew at the nearest licencing bureau office or use one of the Ministry of Transportation's kiosks situated in convenient places around the province.

It triggered the usual reaction to directives. I bristled that I had to go out of Acton to get my licence renewed.

It was a service available here for decades. When the office closed last year there was a notice posted that the Ministry of Transportation would advertise the position to open another office. Local people would be served.

It never happened. To renew one must either go to Georgetown, Milton or Guelph to have a vehicle licence (plate) renewed. Or use a kiosk in Brampton or Oakville or some other place miles (km.) away.

We have heard tales that the monetary rewards for the position are skimpy for the aggravation and knowledge required, as well as the public abuse. Maybe no one is interested. I do know that when you leave Acton for one purchase you're quite likely going to make other purchases outside town on the same visit.

The lack of a licence bureau certainly does not help business here. It's also downright annoying to be required to leave town to purchase a sticker on a driver's licence.

Surely some other business in Acton could add the service to supplement their income. Surely the 15,000 estimated people in the Acton market area deserve the same courtesy extended to other people in the province.

Kitties beware

Cats and skunks. They're a big topic in Acton these days.

In a letter to The New Tanner last week Eileen Hutcheson noted there is a program to trap feral (wild, untamed) cats in Acton. Coincidentally, the New Tanner has received several reports of domestic cats missing. Anxious pet owners have run classified ads seeking information.

Police and early risers have also reported there seems to be an extraordinary number of skunks, nocturnal animals, around the streets lately. One police officer said he thought the influx of *Mephitis mephitis*, the Latin name for this member of the weasel family, was due to the demolition at the old Beardmore tannery, once a domicile for many of these white striped sprayers. The skunks are looking for new homes.

In any event, there's a letter in this week's New Tanner from the president of the Upper Credit Humane Society confirming there is a program to trap feral cats and he says it is perfectly legal. Cat owners and lovers beware. Keep an eye on your cats!

As for skunks, it remind me of the old minstrel show ditty, which conveys the sombre warning:

*I once saw a black and white kitty,
And stooped to pet it - oh, what a pity!
For many a day, I'll stay away
From those little black and white kitties.*

Prayer

Never underestimate the power of prayer. Prayers are thoughts travelling straight to God. You don't have to get down on your knees or sit in a church for prayers to be effective. We are told to pray constantly and that means just letting our hopes and wishes be known to God in our thoughts, as we go about our daily routine. Thoughts of thankfulness for our many blessings.

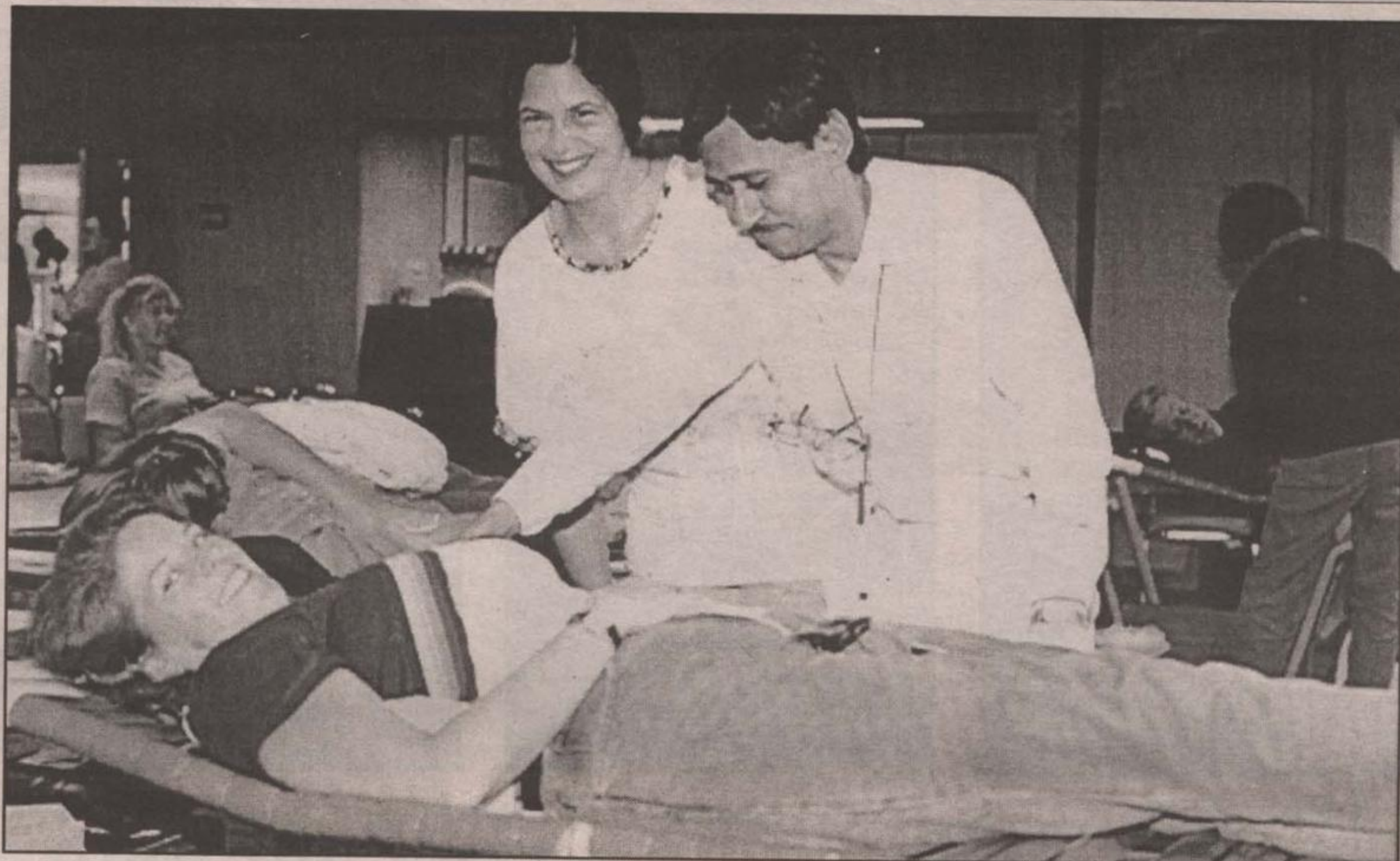
I have had many prayers answered and some unanswered. Those were the ones which would not have been to my benefit. Three of my most fervent prayers were for dear friends who had suffered severe heart attacks and I prayed unceasingly for them. Today they are in good health and enjoying life and work again.

I know it was the power of prayer, but some of my friends just laughed and say it was co-incidence; they would have recovered anyway. But one must have faith in God and His goodness or prayer is just futile.

As the old hymn says, "Prayer is the key to Heaven but faith unlocks the door."

Granny

Granny was Marion Jean Petterson who published her philosophy for her children and grandchildren in a booklet called "Meditations from an Old Rocking Chair"



DEDICATED DONORS: Acton Red Cross blood donor clinic volunteer and donor Sue Anderson gives blood for the 37th time at the last clinic at the Acton Legion. Anderson is helped by Red Cross technician Git Sambhi (right) and blood clinic chair Julia Roehrig. — Frances Niblock photo

Why we should preserve arena and how we can manage it

To the Editor:

All communities develop a character and personality over time. Acton is no exception. Many things here, pleasing to the inhabitants, are not found any place else and are uniquely ours. Sometimes supported by local taxpayer dollars, they are always managed by hundred of public spirited volunteers. This is what makes Acton, ACTON!

Regional governments unfortunately homogenize communities like milk; they become indistinguishable. Often they end up resembling the dominant community. This levelling effect doesn't impress me because I think people need to identify with something peculiarly their own. I would guess many Actonians feel the same way.

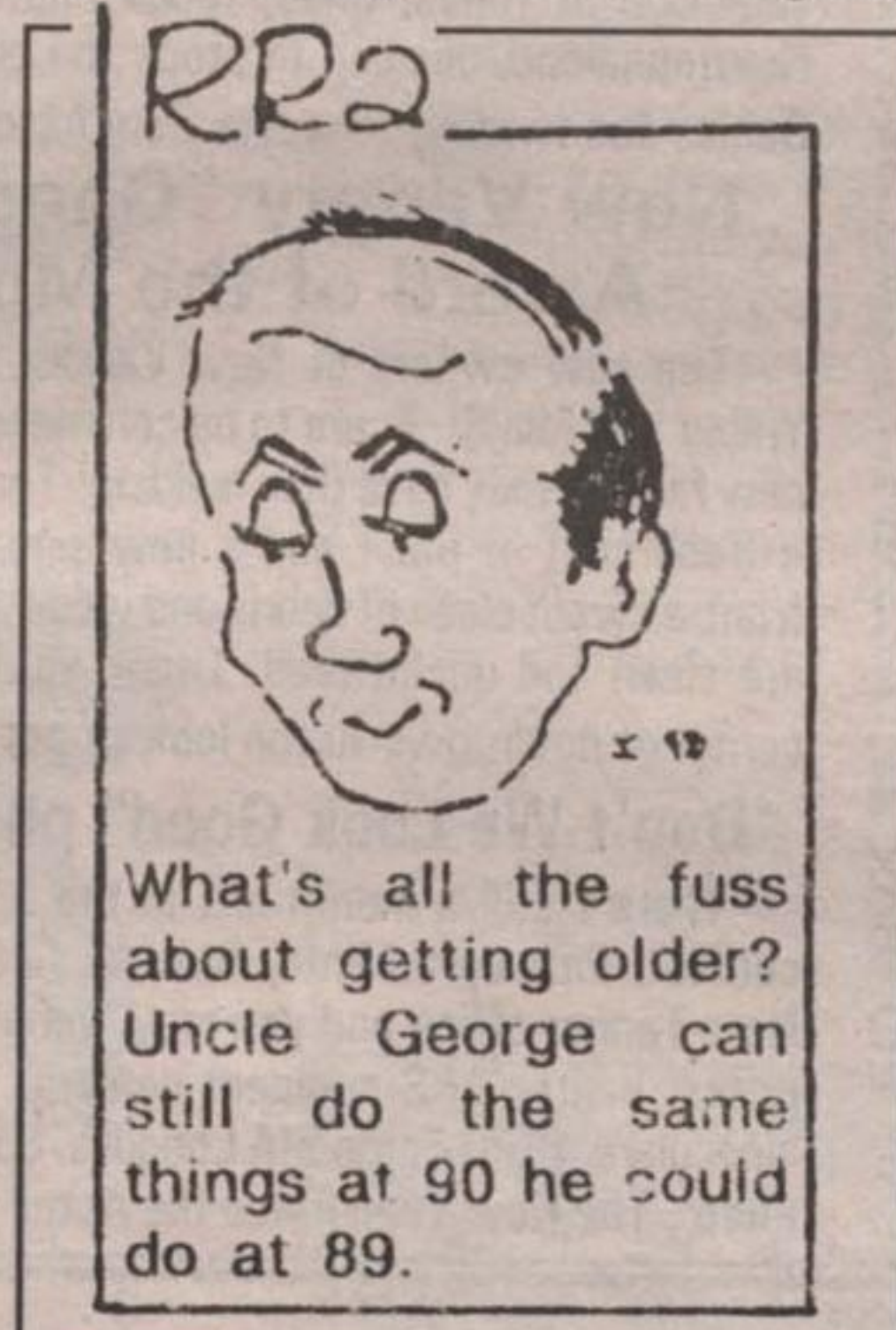
How does Acton differ from other communities in Halton Hills? Think about it. We have our old Town hall; the 1862 Drill Shed (Poultry Barn) in the park; the Firefighters with their Santa Claus parade and July 1 fireworks; the Royal Canadian Legion and its magnificent place on Fairy Lake; the Acton Citizens' Band still here after 126 years; the Leathertown Festival a new addition to our traditions, and, not least Acton Fall Fair in its scenic Prospect Park location. These are some of our distinctive features - I am sure you can name others.

If the Fall Fair is to survive successfully I feel it must have the arena. This building in its corner of the park has been a much used community centre for many years and it should, and must, continue to be a people place for many year-round activities. Tearing it down will leave us with a couple of thousand sterile square feet of grass mainly for the Canada Geese and not for the hundred, even thousands, who used and enjoyed that spot in the park because of the arena. That's why I think we have to keep it.

How? Well don't expect Halton Hills Council to fund things not found in other communities. This is the homogenizing effect. We have seen this in their refusal to take part in restoration of the town hall, and, to continue support of the musical recreational programs of Acton Citizens' Band. They are reluctant because these amenities are not found in other Halton Hills communities. If we want to keep things which set Acton apart then we have to do it ourselves - make no mistake - and it will cost us. That's life in today's world.

If Heritage Acton can take possession of the arena for Acton, funds could be raised over time to preserve it as a community centre. Heritage Acton has already saved Halton Hills about \$100,000 in demolition costs for the town hall and fire hall. By assuming responsibility for the arena they could save the town almost \$150,000 in demolition costs. These savings benefit all taxpayers of Halton Hills not just those in Acton. This makes a lot of sense for taxpayers.

But the people of Acton are going



to have to give until it hurts to make it happen and restore this piece of our character. I strongly believe the project is important for preservation of some of Acton's distinctiveness. Although not rich, contrary to some opinion I suppose, I will put my money where my mouth is and pledge \$2,000 to saving Acton's old arena if Heritage Acton is given the go ahead.

Here I stand! Let's all come together and show the world what Acton can do.

George Elliott

Walking by lake is no longer fun

To the Editor:

As a long time resident of Acton, for some 40 odd years I have enjoyed walking along the west end of Fairy Lake, watching the weather change, birds with their young swim around, as well as see many different facets of nature.

It is now no longer a pleasure to walk by the lake.

About a year ago I complained of the garbage to one of our councillors - the brilliant action was to put a garbage can at the entrance. Great idea - if it was used part of the time.

Some local residents cleaned up the mess - two weeks later it was just as bad.

The things one sees - pop cans, pop bottles, paper plates, fish bones, stinking fish left in plastic bags, used diapers, used toilet paper, nylon fishing line, etc., etc. - I could go on.

Many of the people who leave this crud cannot speak English - so one cannot post signs that would do any good. There is only two ways to solve the problem, in my view. One is to put a gate at the entrance - issue keys to the locals, or the other way is to charge admission at weekends - the money could pay for the clean up. Oh, I forgot to mention the large amount of broken bottles.

It's about time people who live here took back control of what's ours.

John Shadbolt

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