

# Acton man is honoured for Toronto fire heroism

By FRANCES NIBLOCK  
The New Tanner

Acton's Colin Ash doesn't think he's a hero but the City of York fire department (now Toronto Fire Service) does.

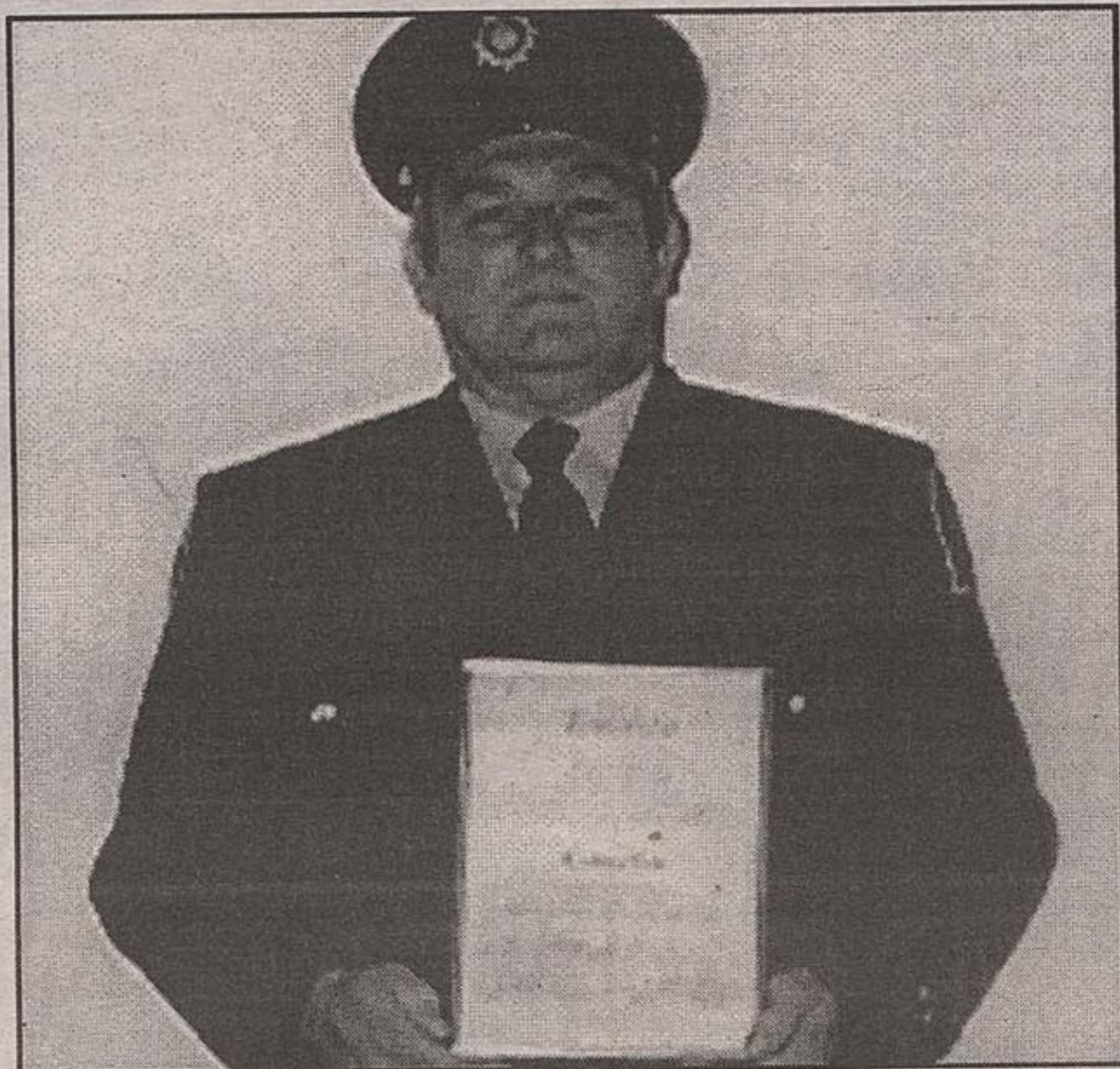
Ash and two other fire fighters were honoured last week for risking their lives to save a woman trapped by a Canada Day fire that killed a 2-year-old Toronto boy who had been playing with sparklers.

The plaque presented by Mayor Mel Lastman commends Ash for his "valiant act of bravery beyond the call of duty in saving the life of a woman and risking his own life."

A two-year-old boy and a live-in babysitter were trapped in the house when fire fighters arrived at the scene and entered the home. Ash and two fire fighters found the woman collapsed at the top of the second floor stairs and carried her to safety.

"I lost my helmet and face mask as we carried her down very narrow stairs. The woman didn't have any vital signs and when we got her outside I dumped the rest of the compressed air that I had in my cylinder on her and tried to do CPR until the paramedics arrived and the other guys went back in," Ash said.

The two fire fighters were both injured when they dove



**ABOVE AND BEYOND:** Acton's Colin Ash holds the bravery commendation he received last week from Toronto Fire Service for risking his life to save a woman trapped in a Toronto fire in July.

out a window to escape the inferno after the nozzle of their fire hose became clogged during their search for 2-year-old Aaron James. When the fire was under control again the boy was found dead, under his bed.

"When they brought him out I had to turn away. When it really hit me I think was the next morning when I got off work and went to get a coffee for the drive home," Ash said.

"There's a picture on the

front page of the fire with a little insert of the kid in the corner. That was it. I was gone - I didn't know what to do - I was like a zombie."

Ash said that while it was nice to be recognized, the whole crew deserves praise for going the extra distance to try to save a child.

Ash, a 20-year veteran with the York fire department, also operates Aquatic Pool and Spa from his Cobblehill Road home.



## Kids' program

Come join the fun at Acton Children's Corner every Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Parents, caregivers and their preschool children can enjoy crafts, songs and social interaction. The drop-in program is located at the Salvation Army (church basement - please use back door), 114 Mill Street East, Acton. For more information call HHCSI at 853-3310.

If you enjoy young children, why not consider becoming a volunteer at the Children's Corner. Volunteers help with setting up and cleaning up of the program area, craft activities, snack time and story time. If you might be interested in volunteering please call Cathy at 853-3310.

## Charges laid

At 11:30 p.m. on Sept. 16 a man was seen pouring gasoline on the detached garage of a house in Moffatt. He then set it on fire and fled.

The fire department extinguished the fire with minimal damage. A woman and her three children were in the house at the time were uninjured.

Police have charged Steven Shepherd, 31, of Milton with arson endangering life.



**FRIENDS:** Trunk Sale veteran merchants George (left) and Nick have enjoyed a season of good friends and even a few sales. - Angela Tyler photo

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**CINDERELLA FOR A YEAR:** Miss Acton Fall Fair 1998, Tonya Tonkovich, centre, was joined by her royal court during Saturday's parade. - Angela Tyler photo



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