

GRAPEVINE



Four businesses close

More than one third of the new businesses that opened in the downtown core of Acton last year have now closed — stats that both surprise and disappoint officials with the BIA (Business Improvement Area) which is trying to revitalize the core. Sweet Dreams Café is now closed for good and both the business and the building at 35 Mill Street East are for sale. On the Window Ledge, a decorating store featuring dried flower arrangements, closed suddenly after Christmas because of personal reasons faced by owner Emma Tynan. The House of Leather, a discount leather fashion store open since late September at 145 Mill Street East, also closed right after Christmas. The Milton dry cleaner that opened at 39 Mill Street East also closed after only several months of operation.

Brochure reprint

A reprint of a BIA brochure that highlights local business, maps out a walking tour of interesting and historical properties and lists special events scheduled for Acton has proved so popular that a third printing of 10,000 is being done. BIA officials had anticipated that 10,000 brochures would last about two years but by early fall they were all gone, necessitating the additional printing. The brochures are distributed by the Halton Hills Tourism Board, through the Festival Country distribution system and by the Chamber of Commerce. BIA general manager Janis Fread said the cost to reprint the brochure is approximately \$1,500, money "well spent." The brochures are ready for distribution this week.

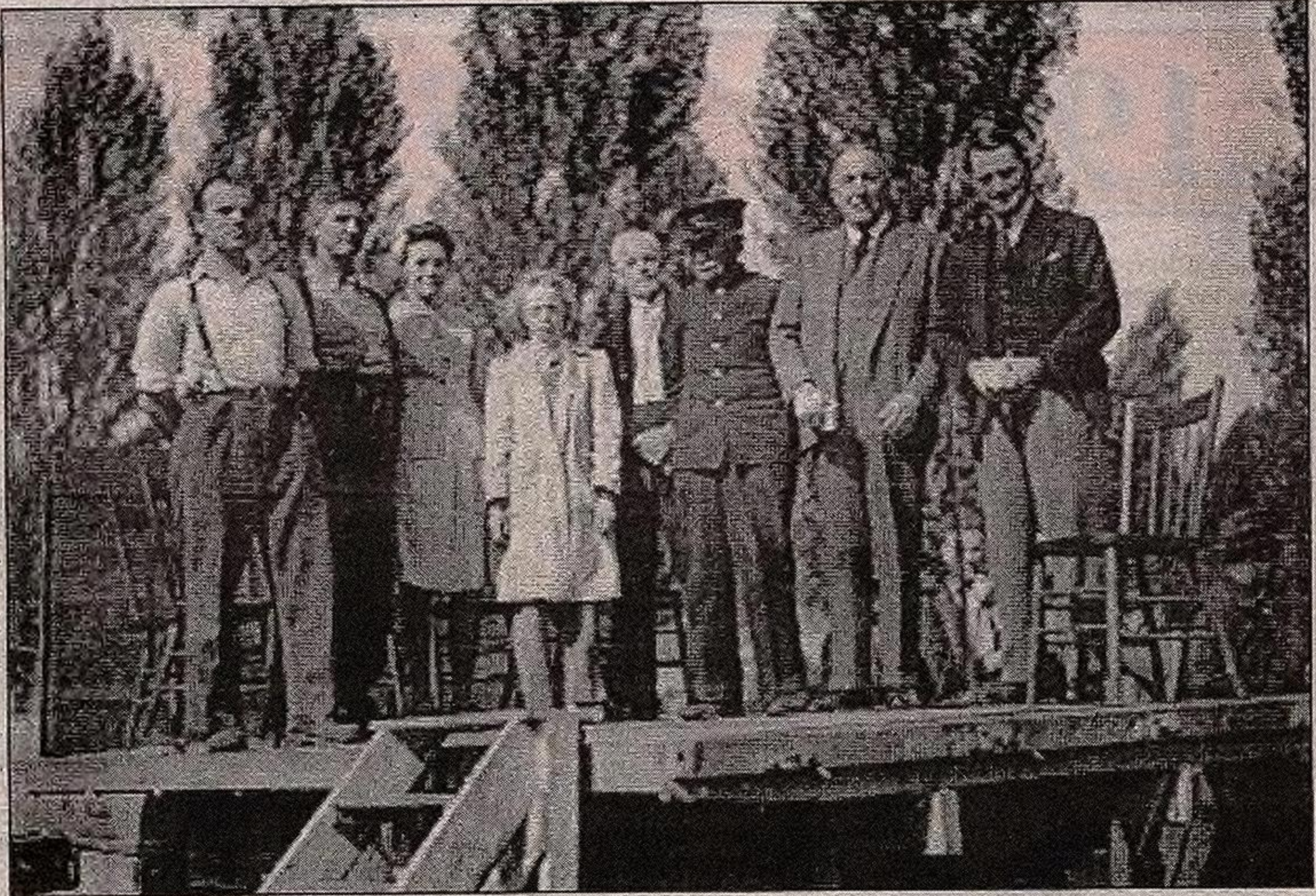
Snow woes settled

The Town will help some Kingham Road residents who have

no where to park because snow has clogged what few space there are in the area. At deadline the Town was preparing to temporarily switch the overnight parking ban to the south side of Kingham tonight (Thursday) to allow the ploughs to clear the snow from the street. In an area where parking spaces are scarce, one resident estimates they've lost about seven parking spaces because the plough hasn't been able to clear around cars left on the street by their owners. Several Kingham residents who parked on Greenore Crescent because the on-street parking spaces were snowed in were not happy to receive \$20 parking tickets on Saturday night.

Heritage help

The promotion and preservation of local heritage is the main objective for the recently incorporated heritage foundation of Halton Hills. Faced with dwindling provincial and municipal funding for heritage, the not-for-profit charitable organization, will raise money privately and go after private and public grant initiatives and will be able to issue tax receipts.



BEARDMORE AND CO. made presentations to employees at different events like this one in September of 1944. Pictured here with Col. Torrance Beardmore and S.G. Bennett, far right, are left to right Theo Papillon, Bill Brennan, Marg Toogood, Willa Darby, Bud Williams and Joe Kennedy. The photo was loaned by Don Ryder who thinks it was taken at a company picnic on the Beardmore grounds which were once meticulously landscaped.



Remember when horses used to spew hockey pucks?

Complaining about uncleared sidewalks and the plow blocking your driveway with snow just after you laboriously cleaned it? They're symptoms of one of the snowiest winters experienced in this neck of the woods for decades.

The snow's been as high as an small elephant's eye, the mercury has plummeted below zero, water pipes have burst, cars wouldn't start, buses and meetings have been cancelled and red noses and ears have been frost-bitten. Maybe those stories dad told about winter weren't embroidered after all.

What were those old-fashioned winter like? Are you old enough to remember when horses pulled bobsleighs over the unplowed streets of Acton strewing future hockey pucks in their wake? This scribbler bids you turn back the hands of time to the '30s when Acton was a village of 1800 souls and winter wrapped the streets in a snowy mantle.

When the winter Olympics consisted of a 50 yard dash to the outside unheated privy for that blessed relief.

When kids were dared to stick their tongues on the steel railing at the public school bridge — and did, their tongues sore for days.

When coal had to be lugged from the cellar to feed the ravenous appetites of the cook stove and the Quebec heater in the parlour.

Coles' Slaw
by
Hartley Coles



When Saturday was bath night in a galvanized tub around the kitchen stove.

When milk bottles left at the door blew their caps and glorious white cream was licked by the kids.

When your bedroom was only heated by a stove pipe through those cold winter nights — and the fire was turned down.

When boys wore gum boots and breeches and girls long beige stockings as they trekked to school for 9 a.m. classes, let out at 12 noon for "dinner" and back again from 1:30 to 4 p.m.

When you prayed for cold weather so there would be ice in the arena.

When Acton Citizens' Band played for Saturday night skating and between periods at hockey games.

When farmers drove spanking teams of horses into town on Saturdays pulling huge bobsleighs piled high with oats for chopping at the two feed mills. And kids hitched rides.

When hotel beverage rooms were crowded as farmers waited for their chopped oats.

When horses occupied all the church horse sheds, munching on feed as they waited for their drivers.

When rural families did their shopping Saturday nights in stores that stayed open till midnight, driving home in cutters with sleigh bells jingling.

When drying your socks and gum boots in the oven and beside the kitchen stove was a nightly ritual.

When clothes turned so stiff on the clothes line the wouldn't fit into a basket.

When kids always had strings on their mittens so they wouldn't lose them.

When the first crow that cawed was a sign of spring.

When Henderson's pond, Fairy Lake and the filter beds were sites for pick-up hockey games and kids trying out their bob skates.

When two foot thick blocks of ice were cut from Fairy Lake to be stored for ice boxes used in the summer.

When hockey sticks were 10 cents and pucks a nickel.

When the principle recreation on long winter nights was listening to Lux Theatres on the radio.

If I'm tugging at your nostalgia a little, it's just an exercise. Few of us would want to live those times over, but they involve happy memories.



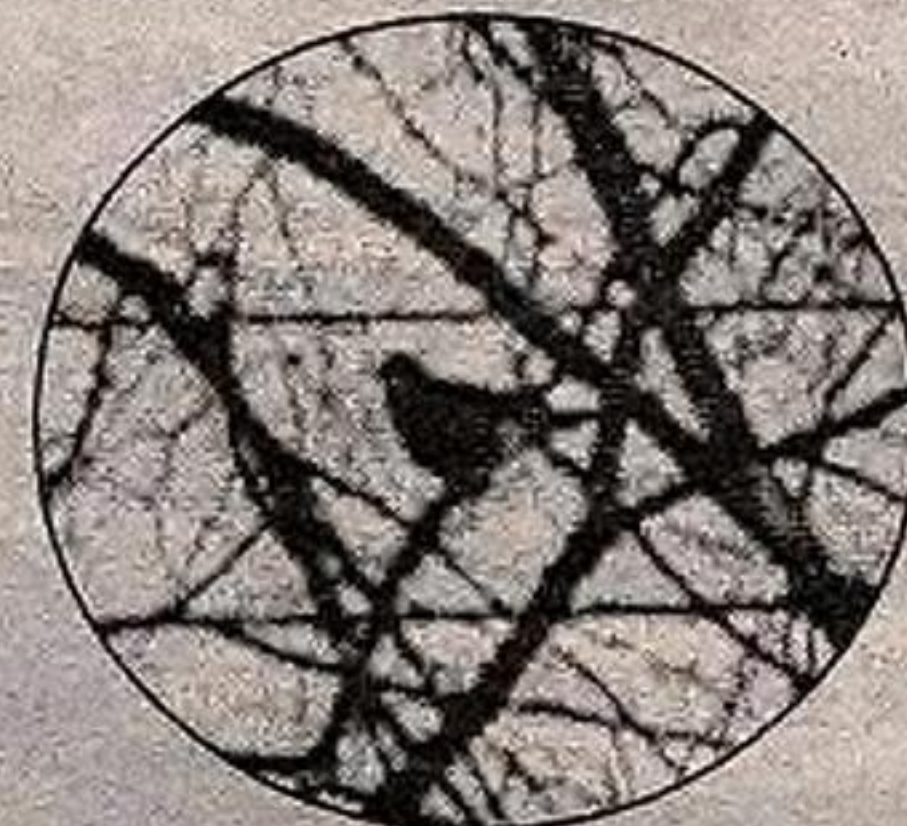
Volunteers appreciated

Dear Sir:
There is a group of Actonians we hear little about and to whom, I and I'm sure many more, owe a great deal. It's those people who give of their time and vehicles to take seniors to medical appointments, etc.

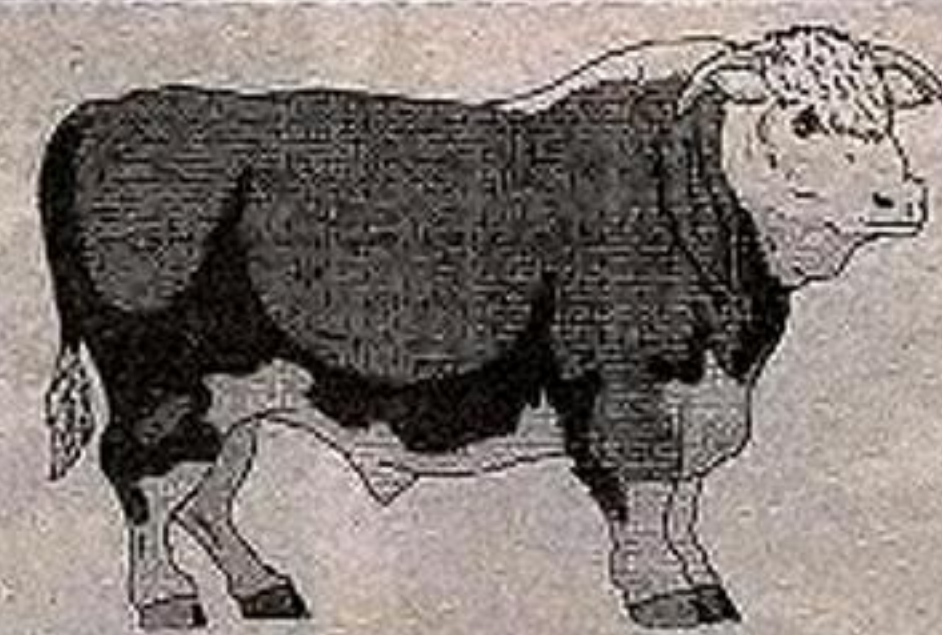
For years ASSIC (now HHCSI) has been looking after this and I will be eternally grateful to them. Now the Red Cross is doing the same thing. Many thanks to them all. Lil Cook

Four robins spotted in Lakeview area

Families in Lakeview subdivision report seeing a flock of four robins in their back yards over the past week in the block bounded by Tidey Ave., Elizabeth Drive and Jeffrey Ave. The birds have been spotted by Doreen Lindsay, Neil Miller, Bridget and Pat Galton and Frances Marcoux. Mrs. Lindsay snapped the accompanying photo of one of the birds which normally fly south for the winter. Robins are usually counted as harbingers of Spring since they are early to arrive, often before the snow has gone. These birds, however are here to enjoy one of our worst winters in years.



Neil Miller thinks the birds might normally have made the old arena their home and when it was razed flew to nearby Lakeview for the winter.



WHAT'S YOUR BEEF?

Put it in a letter to the Editor!

Deadline is Tuesday at noon.