

Prescription proposed for doctor shortage

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

Acton Councillor Rick Bonnette thinks getting Acton designated as a medically under-served area may be just the tonic to help cure this area's chronic physician shortage.

Bonnette convinced his colleagues to support a motion asking the Ministry of Health to designate Acton as an under-served area for family physician services.

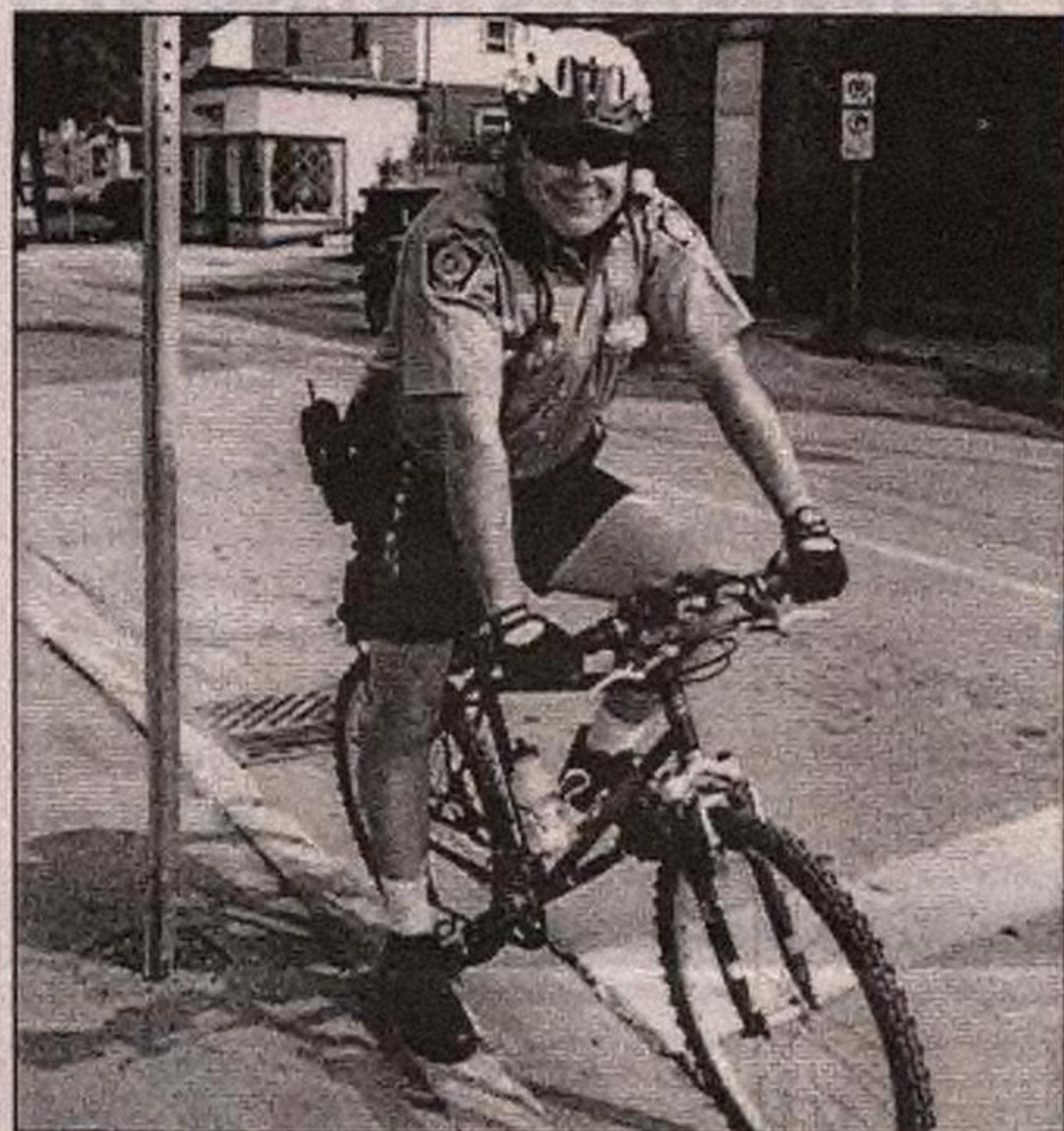
With just three doctors in Acton, and none of them taking new patients, Bonnette hopes the designation, which brings recruitment and retention incentives for doctors,

will help lure a family physician to Acton. Local doctors have been trying to find another physician for more than a year, but have had just two inquiries.

"We have a critical situation in Acton... and the sooner we can try to get this community designated as under-served for family physicians the sooner we'll be on the list," Bonnette said when questioned why he wanted council to deal with his motion on Monday night.

"I met today with MPP Chudleigh and he said that this resolution would be the first step to trying to get Acton designated to get the wheels in motion."

The designation would put Acton on a list supplied to doctors looking for work and would also on the Ontario Medical Association's Internet website. Benefits of being designated as a medically under-served area also includes Ministry of Health funded visits to Acton by interested doctors and money to send local representatives to an annual recruitment tour to speak to new graduates. Council's resolution asking for designation as a medically under-served area will be sent to the Halton-Peel District Health Council for its endorsement and to Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh.



ACTON'S FINEST: Acton's newest police officer, Constable Hansen, took advantage of Saturday's warm weather to explore the town by bicycle. He and other officers will be going to Acton schools this month to teach bicycle safety. - Angela Tyler photo



TOO MUCH PUP: In human age Goldie the puppy is just about the same age as Acton's Amber Smith, 4, who found the squirmy pup quite a handful. - Frances Niblock photo

That's just Dad - doin' his job

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with a 1954 Ford which just squeezed between the door posts. Naturally in my early driving, there came a day when I didn't squeeze just right. Dad spent a Sunday afternoon straightening out the dent in the side of the passenger's door. That was a vocabulary-enlarging experience, as I recall and neither one of us mentioned it to my mother.

Dad drove when I went to Porquis to teach the first year. One thing he never did was complain about the distance. Of course, he didn't go back until my wedding. That's another story, how my poor ex-husband on his first visit to meet my parents spent an hour working up his courage to ask my father's permission to marry me. Dad's reaction was typical.

"It's up to her."
I could have warned David there'd be no words of caution, wisdom, or anything else. Dad never wastes time on advice. He knows people don't listen anyway.

Another typical Dad incident was the cupboard he built to complete the set in my kitchen. It was my birthday present and I got to help

him install it. Dad is a stickler for perfection so he had measured this thing exactly. Well, almost. He forgot the plaster settled as it hardened so it was a quarter inch thicker at the bottom than the top. Have you ever chiselled plaster and planed wood to get an overly tight cupboard to fit? I don't recommend it. But hey, once it was installed and painted, you'd need to be told it wasn't an original.

After we built the house beside his, Dad continued to cut our grass. The night he rolled the riding lawn mower over while he was on it he didn't even bother to call me until after he found out he couldn't right it by himself.

Dad has been cutting the grass at the Pioneer Cemetery for the Bannockburn Women's Institute since the mid 1960s. Finally this year he gave up. He has also had to give up driving because of his eyes.

But he still has his garden and his cat. In all the heat last Wednesday he was rototilling the garden to plant another row of potatoes. The cat was smarter than Dad. When it got too hot he went for a nap under the garden shed in the shade and didn't reappear

until 3 a.m.

Dad wound up in hospital that night with his blood sugar out of whack and goodness knows what else. He didn't have another heart attack or stroke, both of which seemed likely at different points, but no one has quite figured out exactly what is wrong. Meanwhile, he's still looking after his women - worrying about whether Mom had a visitor, whether my daughters completed things they discussed with him, worrying about two of his great granddaughters with the flu, wondering whether I can find someone to dig a flower bed for me. Is that what fatherhood is all about - looking after your family?

I think it's our turn to worry about him - but don't tell him I said so or he'd think he was falling down on his job.



Meet Memory Artist JAMES LUMBERS

(accompanied by Artist David Ward)

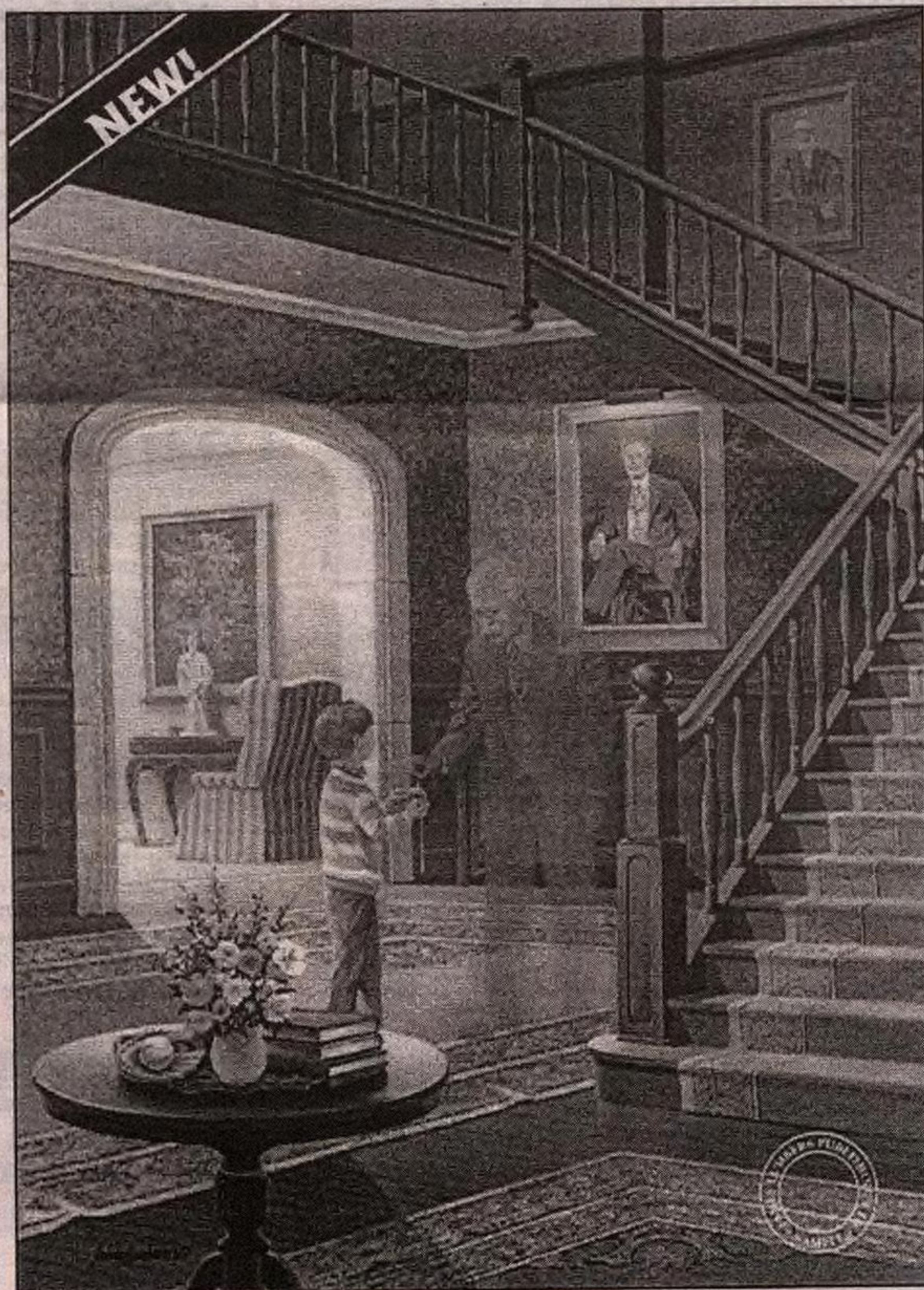
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