

Hard works pays off in scholarship for Acton student

Laura Kobsa keeps a busy schedule but her hard work off has paid off with a Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation excellence award.

The Acton High School student will receive a \$4,000 scholarship to use toward her post-secondary education. More than 8,000 students across Canada applied and only 900 earned scholarships.

An honour student throughout her high school career, Kobsa has had plenty to occupy her time besides studying. She plays alto sax in the school concert band, is a member of the graduation committee and student council and last year was co-editor of the yearbook.

"She's certainly been a contributive student during her five years," said Acton High School principal Greg MacPherson, who was the staff advisor on the yearbook. "She's been an honour student, she's been very involved in the music program and all in all demonstrated a lot of leadership."

Outside school the 18-year-old has been equally active. She was a member of the Acton Citizen's Band for nine years. This year she left the band to join the St. John's Ambulance Brigade. She also has helped out with the Acton Fall Fair's education day and was a member of the Mayor Youth Action



Laura Kobsa of Acton has earned a \$4,000 scholarship from the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation.

Photo by Herb Garbutt

Committee. On top of that, Kobsa works three days a week at Halton Flour Milling.

"It's busy but it's just a matter of managing your time," Kobsa said.

That's a skill that will come in handy in the fall when Kobsa begins attending the University of Toronto to study life sciences. Following that she hopes to continue on to medical school.

—By Herb Garbutt, staff writer

MS sufferer repays church's kindness with gift of stained glass windows

Annelies Kerkhof believes in blessings in disguise. In 1992, the rural Acton resident was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and her life underwent a dramatic change.

Once a full time employee at the Ontario Securities Commission, she suddenly found herself blind, handicapped and in a wheelchair.

"I was told by my doctor I had to stay at home," said Kerkhof, "I had pretty well lost my eyesight and was paralyzed from the waist down.

Determined to not give in to the disease which "short circuits the brain's signals to other parts of the body", she decided to explore an artistic interest, and took a number of courses in stained glass.

Fortunately, her eyesight returned over a three-month period and she found, in spite of her handicap, she could create some beautiful works of art. As a result, her talent became known locally.

Creating stained glass art seemed therapeutic in helping her overcome her disabilities. Eventually she was able to move from the wheelchair to a walker, then finally back to walking on her own.

In late 1999, she was approached by Rev. Emrys Jenkins of Churchill Community Church, to ask if she'd consider creating two stained glass windows for the church. Just living a few doors away, Kerkhof and her husband, Wim, had attended Churchill Church from time to time, and enjoyed community activities.

"It took me a long time to come up with a theme," said Kerkhof. "But I had it ready to be presented to the committee in April of 2000. The committee...then surprised me with a 50th birthday party after my presentation."

Once her concept had approval from the committee, Kerkhof began the painstaking job of cutting and assembling

the inserts. The job was unique since the frames had to fit into existing windows, the only two original windows left in Churchill Church, since a fire some 100 years ago.

"I had a couple of MS attacks during the actual job," said Kerkhof, "I hoped to have them ready for Easter, but I got behind in January and February."

Kerkhof said her eyesight suffered at that time, and she lost track of the number of pieces of glass in some of the windows. Consequently, some windows have as few as 80 pieces per insert, and others as many as 140.

Kerkhof realized the completion of her project this past Sunday, as the new windows were officially dedicated at

Churchill Church's 163rd anniversary as a church, and its 33rd anniversary as a community church.

"The congregation was quite amazed," said Jenkins. "When it was unveiled the whole congregation almost gasped—it was wonderful, and they no doubt gave Annelies the greatest compliment by that action. Following the service, there were so many positive comments—how they (the windows) fit the church so well, and complimented the existing windows."

Kerkhof was equally amazed at the congregation's reaction. "It was enough to give me goose bumps," says Kerkhof.

"This was my gift to Churchill Church for all the times they've propped me up," says Kerkhof. "Churchill isn't your typical church. It's like walking into a big living room, full of family."

"The project gave me a reason to take that extra step," continued Kerkhof. "When someone gets MS, there is no need to give up. You simply have to give yourself a reason and find another way to live. These windows did it for me."

—By Ted Brown, staff writer



ANNELIES KERKHOF

Town to pay architects additional \$65,000

The town will pay its architects of the new recreation complex in Georgetown South Community Park an additional \$65,000 for a total \$445,000. During the design phase, additional services, beyond the scope of the initial contract were required. These included site plan approval

process, storm water management study, sanitary pumping station and gross floor area adjustments.

The design of the facility is about 95 per cent complete and the additional funds will enable the work to proceed to the final drawings in preparation for the tendering.

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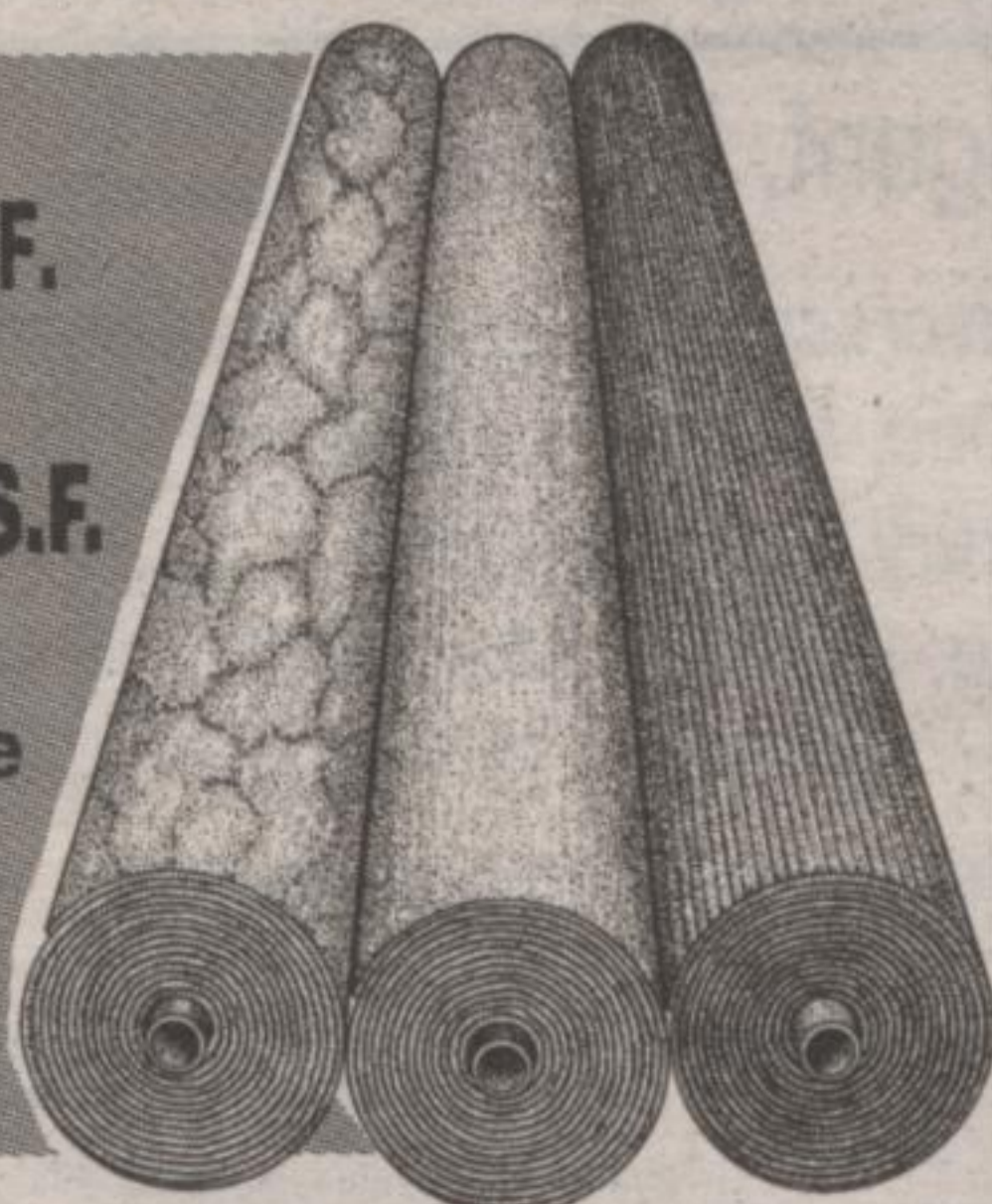
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