



**ALAN THRASHER** sprinted his way to an Ontario record for the 100-metre sprint at the Ontario Disabled Games. Thrasher competed in the cp-5 category.

Chris Bovie photo

## A golden performance by local athlete

By Chris Bovie

In only his first competitive season, Whitby's Alan Thrasher set a provincial record in the 100-metre sprint at the 1991 Ontario Disabled Games held over the weekend in Hamilton.

Setting the record time of 19:11 in the CP-5 category, Thrasher also captured a gold medal in the 200-metre race.

He was also second in both javelin and shot put. Thrasher, 16, who has cerebral palsy never thought he would take part in track and field on a competitive basis.

"I used to race at school but I was always finishing last." It wasn't until he started running with the Durham Hot Wheels that his potential was realized.

"I knew I could run fast but I hadn't raced at this level of competition."

Now he has developed a system that is paying off. "I check to see what the best time in the event is and I work towards beating it."

While he excels in sprints, Thrasher hopes to become more competitive in the field events.

"I'm better at running than at field," Thrasher admits. "But I prefer the field events."

Not having a junior category, Thrasher must compete with athletes possessing a much larger frame. But, having recently started a weight-lifting program, he hopes to soon be on an equal level with his competitors.

Training requires internal discipline, and Thrasher prefers practicing with others, including close friend Joe Zuppanic who set two Canadian records in Hamilton.

"When we race each other, it takes him (Joe) a while to get going. Sometimes near the end I get tired and start to drag."

While the competitive edge may be fairly new to Thrasher, he is used to being in good condition.

Before learning to ride a bike last year, walking long distances was very common.

"I would walk to my friends' houses all the time. By the time I got there it was almost time to go home."

Now that Thrasher has set an Ontario record, he will work towards becoming the fastest in his class in all of Canada.

## Plan includes space for museum

# 'Major changes' part of Centennial facelift

By Mike Kowalski

Whitby's Centennial Building may be in store for a major facelift. On Monday night, Town council's planning and development committee recommended approval of a proposal to expand and renovate the former Ontario County courthouse on Centre St. S.

If endorsed by council, a refurbished Centennial Building will house an enlarged community theatre, the Whitby archives and a museum.

The project will cost \$5.2 million and will be funded by both public and private sectors, according to a consultants' report prepared for council.

But even if approved by council next week, work on the 'Centennial Building Redevelopment Project' will not begin immediately.

The recommendation only refers the matter to next year's capital budget discussions.

A new council to be elected in November, will decide when, or if, the project proceeds.

Built in the 1850s, the old courthouse and county council chambers has been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

purpose room will be added to the northwest corner and will enclose the existing historical facade.

"Our whole concept is based on preserving and conserving as much of the building as we can," explained Tanner.

The Whitby archives will occupy the entire south wing of the ground floor while a museum will occupy most of the second floor.

Other areas of the building will be used for storage and offices.

In documenting the project's financing, Sears said four different scenarios were considered, ranging from \$2.1 million to \$5.2 million.

"Just to clean it up and get it in shape would cost \$2.1 million," said Sears.

"Right now it doesn't have proper mechanical systems and doesn't meet fire safety regulations."

Excluding the foyer addition, the cost would be \$4.5 million and with the foyer, \$4.7 million, said Sears.

The \$5.2 million figure includes the cost of providing "proper environmental controls" to preserve museum artifacts, he said.

"If a building is not well-sealed, moisture can be destructive," said Sears.

The \$5.2 million price tag includes \$4.3 million in construction costs; \$523,000 in consultants' fees and \$350,000 for museum exhibits.

The Town would be responsible for \$1.74 million to be paid over four years, said Sears.

The balance of the funding would be contributed by federal and provincial agencies, as well as through a private sector fundraising campaign which has already begun.

Although no details were disclosed, Sears said \$1 million has already been collected in a municipal trust fund established in connection with the project.

With revenues of \$140,000 and expenses of \$330,000, Sears expected the facility to have an operating deficit of \$190,000 in its first year.

However, this is a "fairly conservative estimate," said Sears.

"I think other monies could be made available from other levels of government. Whether you get them all are subject to negotiations."

Noting that it now costs about \$94,000 annually to operate the existing facility, Sears said, "The difference is much more effective."

Councillor Joe Drumm was "delighted" with what he termed a "tremendous" proposal.

## Concept is based on 'preserving and conserving'

It operated as a courthouse until a new facility was erected on Rossland Rd. in the 1960s.

In 1965, the courthouse (now owned by Durham Region), was leased to the Town for 99 years.

In 1967, a Centennial project turned it into a community centre and since that time, the building has served a variety of community functions.

While a final decision is still pending, there were only positive comments when the proposal was outlined to the committee.

In making their presentation, representatives of the consulting firm which prepared the study gave their assurance the building's historical character will be protected.

At the same time they noted that "significant changes" to the structure must occur if the building is to serve a worthwhile purpose.

"It can be a facility which can play a significant part in the cultural life of the community," said Henry Sears of Sears and Russell consultants.

"It's an important historical structure and our intention was to respect it, but there must also be some major changes," he added.

As described by Catharine Tanner of Sears and Russell, there will be two notable changes to the existing structure.

A one-storey addition will be constructed on the west side of the building for backstage facilities for the theatre which will remain in its current location on the ground floor.

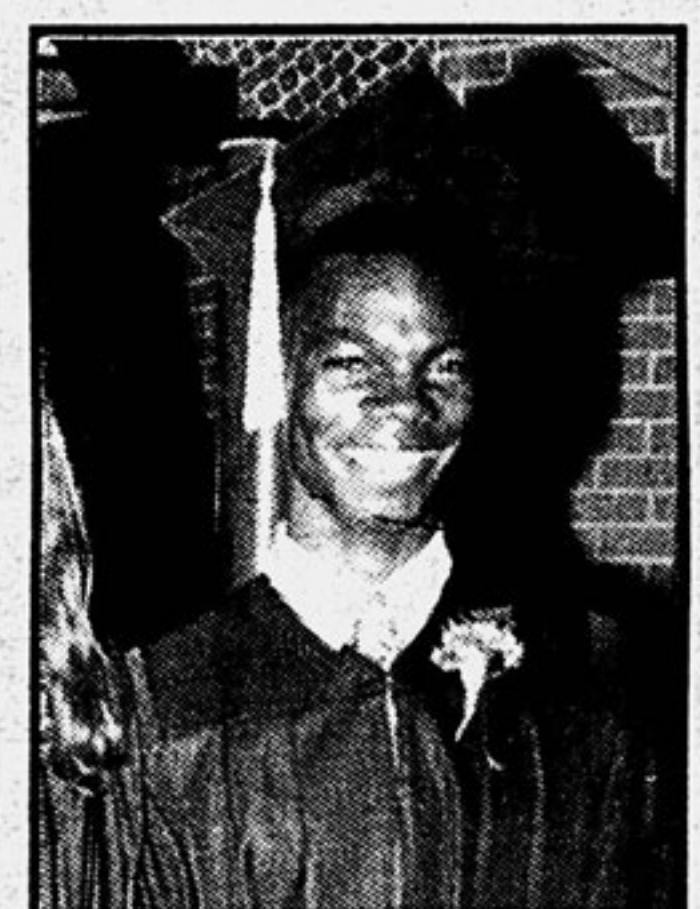
A two-storey foyer and multi-

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