

# ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 51, Georgetown, Ontario, Canada L7G 4T1

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January - February

[www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.com](http://www.esquesinghistoricalsociety.com)

## HERITAGE HALTON HILLS

Properties to be highlighted at the January meeting are the McNiven-Elliott House on Bower Ave. in Acton; Former Georgetown Post Office; Former Gregory Theatre; McCannah-Biehn House, Queen Street, Georgetown; Georgetown Old Armoury; Georgetown Lawn Bowling and Lilac Lawns, Norval. Please note our new venue in "The Studio" in the Halton Hills Cultural Centre.

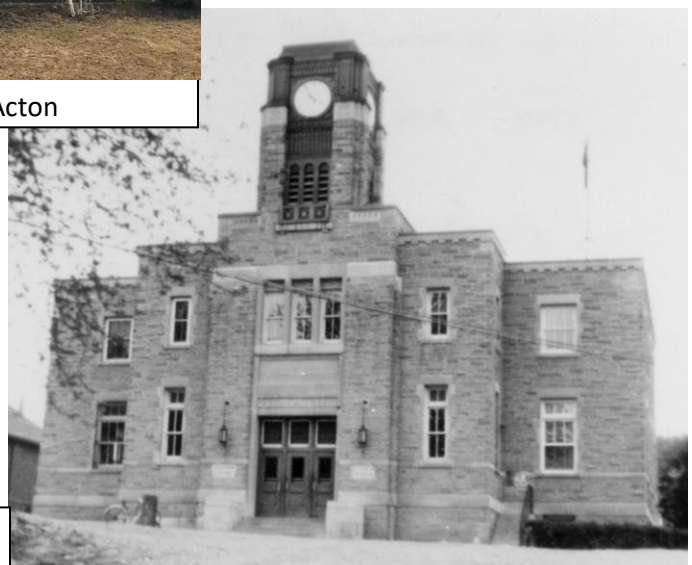


McNiven-Elliott House, 76 Bower Avenue, Acton

**The McNiven-Elliott House** in Acton was built about 1909 by David M. Henderson. In 1917, it was sold to Dr. J.A. McNiven who used the property as both his home and office for his medical practice. It was sold in 1941 to Winnifred Elliott. Her son Dr. George Elliott lived here until his death in 2019.

**The former Georgetown Post Office** was built in 1935

to serve as a post office, customs house with a large assembly room and a caretaker's apartment. It served as the Federal building until a new building was opened on Guelph Street in 1963. It was converted into apartments in 1964. It is an outstanding example of art deco architecture.



Georgetown Post Office c.1950s EHS10434



**The former Gregory Theatre** was built in 1928 by builder J. B. Mackenzie for Russell Gregory who owned movie theatres in Acton, Erin, Rockwood, Oakville, Brampton and Georgetown. This theatre replaced the former Wesleyan Methodist Church on Wesleyan Street as the Georgetown movie palace. In 1947 Gregory sold the theatre to Odeon Theatres of Canada, who changed the name to The Roxy.



A fire in 1958 damaged the theatre and it never re-opened. The building was renovated and has served several functions since then.



McCannah-Biehn House, 26 Queen Street, Georgetown  
-Toronto Telegram photo

### **The McCannah-Biehn**

**House** was built about 1900 using railway ties. Large, squared timbers, believed to have come from a dismantled railway trestle, were used to construct the residence.

It was built by Georgetown Station Master Edward McCannah who first leased it out before selling it. In 1949 it was sold to Walter and Mary Biehn the well-known publisher of *The Georgetown Herald*, as well

as a Town councillor and school trustee. Biehn lived here until 1987.

**Georgetown Old Armoury** was built in 1866 in response to the Fenian Raids that had begun in the Niagara region. The Georgetown Drill Shed was originally erected on the reserve block at the site of the old Market Square to house the Halton Regiment of the 20th Infantry





Battalion under the Norval Company. The Georgetown Drill Shed would serve as the military training site for the Halton Rifles, now known as the Lorne Scots (Halton, Peel and Dufferin Units). In 1994 the Colonel John R. Barber Armoury was completed on Todd Road and the Lorne Scots and cadet groups left the building, selling it to the Town of Halton Hills in 1997.



Georgetown Lawn Bowling Club, 29 Edith Street, Georgetown in 1945 EHS22149

**Georgetown Lawn Bowling Club** buildings were moved to Georgetown in 1917 from Chinguacousy Township. In 1975 the cabin and the stable were joined together when a kitchen and washroom were built. The club has been continuously active since it was founded in 1907 through the present day. The cabin has likewise been in continuous use as the clubhouse since it was first moved to its current location at 29 Edith St.

**Lilac Lawns** This two storey Classical Revival house is one of the very few of this architectural style existing in Halton Hills. Its location, 475 Guelph Street, Norval, contributes significantly to the historical character of the street scape of which it is a part. This 1854 home is in remarkably fine condition and despite periodic renovations, the exterior retains its original integrity. The natural heritage of the property is highlighted by the lilac trees which still stand after 154 years along the front of the house.





## **ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

2023

Wed. 11 Jan.

### **HERITAGE HALTON HILLS**

Since last January, Heritage Halton Hills has continued their designation work. Heritage Halton Hills members John Mark Rowe and Ray Denny will provide updates on the recently designated buildings in Halton Hills and discuss pending designations.

***“The Studio,” Halton Hills Cultural Centre, 9 Church St.,  
Georgetown, 7:00 p.m.***

Wed. 08 Feb.

### **EATON FAMILY**

Dave Bartlett, started bottle collecting in the early 70’s. One of the first sealer bottle he received was an Eaton’s Sealer Jar. This led him to learn and collect more information about Eaton’s Canada. Dave has collected books and items of interest from Eaton’s and he realized how important they were to the small towns across Canada. Dave joins us to share his presentation.

***“The Studio,” Halton Hills Cultural Centre, 9 Church St.,  
Georgetown, 7:00 p.m.***

Wed. 08 Mar.

To Be Announced

Wed. 12 Apr.

### **THE CORONATION**

In preparation for the May 6<sup>th</sup> Coronation of our King and Queen, the EHS is preparing a presentation on Coronation activities in this area from the past. We even have home movies of the Georgetown Coronation Parade. Please join us and bring your Coronation Day memories. If you have film of an event, contact us to have it digitized and included in our presentation.

***“The Studio,” Halton Hills Cultural Centre, 9 Church St.,  
Georgetown, 7:00 p.m.***

### **INVITE YOUR NEIGHBOUR TO BECOME A MEMBER!**

- All Meetings are FREE to attend -

MEETING UPDATES: Visit <http://esquesinghistoricalsociety.com>

INQUIRIES: [esquesinghs@gmail.com](mailto:esquesinghs@gmail.com)

## Society Notes

### EHS EXECUTIVE

Stephen Blake	President
Steve McNamara	Treasurer
Karen Hunter	Secretary
J. Mark Rowe	Archivist
David Borrett	Membership
Ray Denny	Publications
Brandi Gillett	Library Liaison
Jan Raymond	Social

Send all inquiries to: [esquesinghs@gmail.com](mailto:esquesinghs@gmail.com)

EHS website:

<http://esquesinghistoricalsociety.com>

### EHS NEWSLETTER

John Mark Rowe prepared this newsletter with help from Karen Hunter and Ray Denny.

Please consider an electronic newsletter sent to your e-mail address. Not only will you save the Society postage, you get to see the colour pictures!

### MEMBERSHIP

We currently have 81 paid 2022 members. Our membership year runs from February. The individual membership rate is \$20. The family or institution rate is \$25. The EHS is still very happy to accept personal cheques from our members. Please note that all cheques must be made payable to "Esquesing Historical Society", fully spelled out. Membership fees can be mailed to our post box, dropped off at the home of any executive member or at one of our meetings.

### CANADIANA ON-LINE

<http://online.canadiana.ca/search>

### ARCHIVES CANADA

On November 24, Library and Archives Canada (LAC) celebrated the opening of its new state-of-the-art Preservation Storage Facility in Gatineau, Quebec. A plaque was unveiled and guests toured the site. Completed earlier this year, the new facility enhances LAC's storage capacity and provides optimum environmental conditions for the long-term preservation and safekeeping of Canada's documentary heritage. For example, the overall design of the building provides the storage conditions required to preserve the documents for 500 years. In other words, a new

piece of paper stored under these conditions in 2022 should still be readable in 2522.

### ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

[www.archives.gov.on.ca](http://www.archives.gov.on.ca)

### EHS ARCHIVES

A detailed listing of our archives is available at

<https://www.archeion.ca/esquesing-historical-society>

### HERITAGE HALTON HILLS

On 29 August 2022, an Order in Council formalized the immediate transfer of responsibility for the Ontario Heritage Act from the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport to the Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism.

A new Heritage Halton Hills committee will be formed in the New Year. Laura Loney remains the Senior Heritage Planner.

### HALTON HERITAGE SERVICES

Heritage Services has been busy this year moving Region-related priorities forward, including our deaccessioning project, as well as rebuilding our team of professional staff. We hope to have the Learning and Engagement Coordinator position filled in the New Year, completing our team.

- Cindy, Kendrie, and Kylie

To book a research time with Heritage Services, please get in touch at

<https://www.halton.ca/The-Region>

### EHS ELECTION

The executive of the Esquesing Historical Society is elected by the membership at the February meeting. If you would like to be on the executive, let any current member know by the end of January.

### NEW EHS MEETING VENUE

The executive of the Esquesing Historical Society have decided to move the regular meetings from Knox Church to the Cultural Centre, next door. We have reserved "The Studio" next to the lower entrance to the Georgetown Library. Our meetings remain **FREE** to attend.

We have also moved the starting time up a

half hour, to 7 p.m. The new venue is wheelchair accessible with the use of the elevator. Mark your calendars!

#### **HALTON-PEEL OGS**

<https://haltonpeel.ogs.on.ca/>

Jan. 22 – *Carol Newall*, Carol Newall is the author of “Outside the Gate: The True Story of a British Home Child in Canada”. This is the story of her maternal grandmother who was a Bernardo Home Child sent to work on a farm near Georgetown, Ontario. -2 p.m.

ACCESS this virtual meeting by visiting the Halton-Peel OGS website above.

#### **DEVEREAUX HOUSE**

Ann Lawlor at [ann@devereauxhouse.ca](mailto:ann@devereauxhouse.ca)

#### **LIMEHOUSE MEMORIAL HALL**

The new Board of the Limehouse Hall are:

Alison Murray Brown, President; Ron Kirkwood, Vice President; Irene Westerveld, Secretary; Homer Vandenberg, Treasurer; Ray Shier, Catherine Hannah, Jill Johnson, Caleb Vandenberg and Iain Houston.

#### **HALTON HILLS SPORTS MUSEUM**

<http://haltonhillssportsmuseum.blogspot.ca/>

The Museum is ready to accept nominees for the 2023 Sports Hall of Fame. Get a nomination form from the HHSM BlogSpot listed above. The Museum is currently closed.

#### **L.M. MONTGOMERY MUSEUM**

The L.M. Montgomery Museum website is now live at <https://lmmontgomerynorval.com/>

Jan. 10 -Friends of the L.M. Montgomery Museum at 16 Adamson St. S., Norval.

#### **STREETSVILLE HIST. SOCIETY**

The Leslie Log Cabin at 4415 Mississauga Road is open on Wednesdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. after January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **BRAMPTON HIST. SOCIETY**

Jan. 19 -*J.M. Doucette*, Toronto’s Lost Golf Courses.

Feb. 16 – *Jonathan Scotland*, What was the life expectancy of Canada’s Great War veterans? Meetings are at Heart Lake Presbyterian Church at 7 p.m. \$5 fee for non-members.

#### **MILTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Waldie Blacksmith Shop at 16 James Street, Milton.

Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> – *Annual General Meeting*

#### **OAKVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Jan. 18 -*Allan Symons*, Virtual tour of Canadian Clock Museum -ZOOM meeting  
**NASAGIWEYA HIST. SOCIETY**  
[info@nasagiweyahistoricalssociety.com](mailto:info@nasagiweyahistoricalssociety.com)

The NHS meets at 7:30 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of March, April (Annual Meeting), May, June, July, August (BBQ), September October, November (Remembrance Day) and December (Christmas Potluck) at Nassagaweya Presbyterian Church, Fellowship Hall, 3097 15th Sideroad, Campbellville.

#### **TRAFALGAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

All events at former Palermo Schoolhouse, 2431 Dundas Street West, Oakville.

#### **LOCAL DIGITAL RESOURCES**

Our Digital World, host of Halton Hills newspapers, Halton Images and Halton News hosts newspapers from across Ontario. You can start searching at:

<https://ourdigitalworld.net/>

#### **CREDIT VALLEY TRAIL**

The Town of Halton Hills and Upper Canada College (UCC) have agreed to construct 1.7 km of Credit Valley Trail route in Halton Hills! Working together, the Town and UCC developed a compressive management agreement to create a publicly accessible section of the CVT route along UCC property. It is to be completed by mid-summer 2023.

#### **A NEW HIKING TRAIL**

The Region of Peel has acquired the former Orangeville Brampton Railway corridor and they intend to transform it into a 55 KM recreational trail.

#### **STEVE PAIKIN’S BOOK**

Canadian journalist, author, documentary producer, and anchor Steve Paikin has published, *John Turner: An Intimate Biography of Canada's 17th Prime Minister*. As the keynote presenter for the Ontario Historical Society's 134th AGM, Steve Paikin emphasized the importance of studying Ontario's history and explored the contents of his book through an interactive discussion with the OHS membership.



## TIMOTHY EATON

### The Early Years

Timothy Eaton was born the youngest of nine children in County Antrim at Clogher, Ireland, 1834. His father died just two months before his birth. As soon as he was able, Timothy pitched in and helped with his family's farm. Even as a boy, Timothy was quiet and private, but he also possessed a strong character and was willing to stand by his beliefs.

Timothy's mother died in 1848, leaving him an orphan. At the time, most of his brothers and sisters had already emigrated to Canada, so circumstances left him few choices but to develop a degree of resourcefulness and self reliance.

### From Humble Beginnings

At age thirteen, Timothy left school to apprentice at a fairly prosperous general store. Even though the days were long, the work grinding and his employer severe, Timothy used it as an educational experience. At this point in his life he decided how he would treat his employees if given the opportunity. In short, he would strive to be fair, honest and generous.

### Discovering the land of opportunity

About 1854, Timothy sailed to Canada. With a little money, some work experience and a lot of ambition, he followed his brothers' and sisters' footsteps. They had made the trip earlier, escaping Ireland's devastating potato famine just in time. Two brothers, three sisters, an aunt, uncle and cousins all helped Timothy make Canada his new home.

### Glen Williams

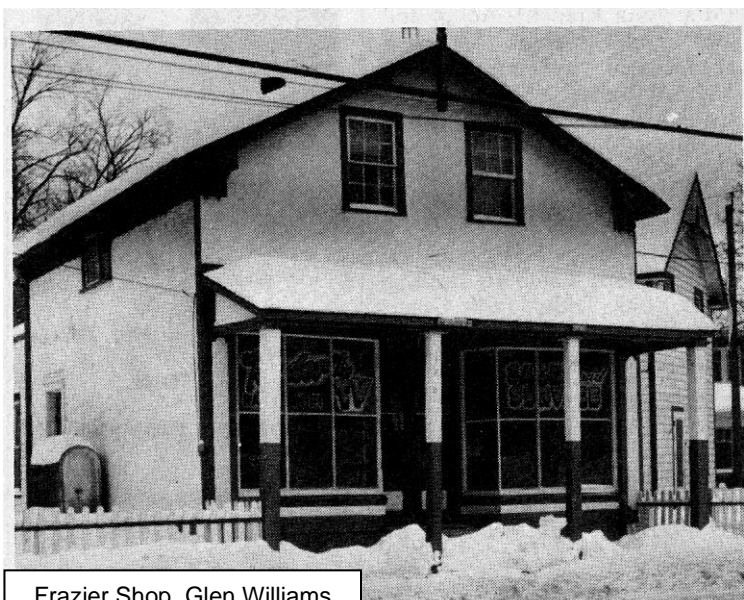
Richard Tracey, who was the Clerk of Esquesing Township was also the postmaster and a general merchant in the village of Stewarttown. He began to expand his holdings in 1853 with the purchase of a shop in Glen Williams and other property in Stewarttown. He converted the Glen Williams store to a grocery and hired someone to run the shop. He hired Timothy Eaton as clerk and bookkeeper for his Glen Williams branch store. Timothy Eaton, the future founder of the T. Eaton commercial empire, had emigrated from Ireland and had come to live with his maternal aunt Margaret Eaton. She had just married Robert Reid, after the death of his first wife in 1851, Mary Bowman Frazer. In April 1854 Tracey sold the business and Eaton soon moved to Kirkton where he went into business with his brother.

### Kirkton -St. Mary's -Toronto

In 1856, Timothy and James Eaton opened a general store of log construction in the hamlet of Kirkton. From 1860 to 1868 the Eaton brothers operated a dry goods business in the nearby community of St. Mary's. In the latter year Timothy moved to Toronto. There, in December, 1869 he opened a store, from which grew the nation-wide business that bears the Eaton name. Endowed with exceptional business acumen, he pioneered many aspects of retail merchandising in this country.



A young Timothy Eaton



Frazier Shop, Glen Williams

Acton Free Press, 22 April 1886

**T. EATON & CO.**  
**190, 192, 194, 196 Yonge St. TORONTO**

Toronto is the metropolis and centre of commerce for Ontario. Eaton's store is known far and near. Hundreds of shoppers from afar daily purchase in our metropolitan store.

It is not strange – it is easily comprehended. Shoppers make their railway fares and expenses and have a fair balance left, and the pleasure of the trip costs them nothing. The variety is infinitely greater – the styles are later – the prices are cash prices – home prices are credit prices. Doing an immense and reputable business, Eaton buys direct from the factories of Europe and America. Your home stores have to buy from home wholesales. We sell at the price at which they buy. Our gigantic and immense stock is an irresistible magnet to economical buyers.

We sell MILLINERY at DRY GOODS PRICES. We look upon millinery as a necessity, not as a luxury. No one can go bareheaded. Note your home prices, and then these: -Fine black and coloured Milan straw hats, 300 styles, 62½c., regular selling price \$1.50 to \$2; loop straw bonnets, latest styles, all colours, 45c., regular price 85c.; porcupine straw hats, 37½c., regular price 85c. and so on *ad infinitum*.

**We Cater to Children**

Hamburg embroidery hoods from 12½c., 28c., 33c., 37½c., up to \$1.75. Lace hoods from 35c. up to \$3. Straw sailors from 25c. up, chenille and ribbon trimmed; girls' and misses' straws, N.Y. styles, from 50c. up.

-Beautiful flowers, new bonnets, aigrettes, new ribbons, trimmings, etc. Courtauld all-silk, rain-proof crape.

- Hats and bonnets from \$1.40 up, just half the usual prices.

No waiting, everything cheerful. On entering to your left, en route to dress goods, you pass laces, ribbons, hosiery, gloves, etc.

**Dress Goods**

Don't pay credit prices. But at Eaton's for cash, two dresses for the value of one. Make your halves do duty for dollars. Make your selection from one of the largest and correctest stock of dress goods in the country. The shelves are piled ceiling high with the most beautiful fabrics at prices less than the lowest. All kinds of dress goods, French, English and American. All wool ottoman cords, all colours, 16c., worth 30c. New tricot, etamine canvas cloth and coloured crape cloths, albatross and every kind of fashionable open-meshed cloth at unapproachable prices. The new cloths and all the newest shades, from 36 in. to 42 in. wide, at from 4½c. and intermediate prices up. All-wool cashmeres from 25c and up, all widths and colours. Silks, crapes, and every conceivable kind of dress goods form one of the completest stocks that have ever been shown in Toronto.

We have a perfect letter order department. Write for what you want.

**T. EATON & CO., 190,192,194,196 Yonge St., Toronto**

**Terra Cotta**

The ten Toronto young ladies from T. Eaton Co. who have been camping here, returned home last week after a most enjoyable sojourn among us. They were a jolly bunch and on several occasions were taken for farmerettes as their garb was generally bloomers and middies, set off with big straw hats. They appreciated the hospitality of those in the village who did everything possible to make their holiday enjoyable. We hope to see

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*We sell MILLINERY at DRY GOODS PRICES.  
We look upon millinery as a necessity, not  
as a luxury. No one can go bareheaded.*

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them again next year. Those in the party were: -Misses Lindsay, Misses Sargent, Misses Ham, Misses Suttie, Miss Ness and Miss Miller. -*Georgetown Herald*, 21 August 1918

**We See This Week THAT**  
Eaton's Order Office had a new coat of paint this week in its attractive colouring of blue and black with silver lettering. -*Georgetown Herald*, 24 Sept. 1947

### **Local People lose jobs in catalogue cancellation**

Employees of the Acton Eaton's catalogue shopping store will find themselves out of work at the end of May as a result of the company shutting down the service.... The Acton office was opened on August 6, 1953... -*Acton Free Press*, 21 Jan. 1976



Acton's Eaton's Order Office, Mill Street. 1958 EHS13932

### **LOCAL NEWS – 150 Years ago!**

GEORGETOWN BAND – This band which has become quite an institution in Georgetown, will give its first annual concert on Friday 7<sup>th</sup>, when it is hoped there will be a large attendance. -*Canadian Champion*, 30 Jan. 1873

A new lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, to be known as Orion Lodge, is we understand, shortly to be instituted in Georgetown. -*Canadian Champion*, 6 Mar 1873

We understand that the enterprising folk of Acton want to have their village incorporated. -*Canadian Champion*, 17 Apr, 1873

### **LOCAL NEWS – 100 Years ago!**

**Sleighs and Cutters on New Highway** -The three-mile section of the new Toronto to Sarnia highway on which the grading was completed recently, from Acton to Crewson's Corners, has been in commission since sleighing commenced. It is quite popular for it saves a number of hills on the old road, avoids at least two level crossings and is considerably shorter. -*Acton Free Press*, 25 Jan. 1923

Council Chamber to be used as a School Room – Overcrowding of School at Easter likely to result in another teacher and room being necessary. -*AFP*, 15 Feb. 1923

GEORGETOWN Contractor J.B. Mackenzie has his men busy building and remodeling Cedar Vale Farm for the Armenian Relief Association. -*Acton Free Press*, 17 May 1923

## LOCAL NEWS – 50 Years ago!

Gordon Alcott of Erin, a former Georgetown resident, was an honoured guest at a civic dinner held in Copper Cliff last Thursday to honour its citizens of the past 50 years who have made an outstanding contribution to Copper Cliff. -*Georgetown Herald*, 4 Jan. 1973

It will cost Georgetown close to \$50,000 this year to establish a new landfill site for municipal waste. The present site, in use for some years, is almost full, and the town has a lease agreement with the owner of industrial land nearby. The site, according to Reeve Ric Morrow, will serve the town for at least 15 years...-*Georgetown Herald*, 18 Jan. 1973

The \$11 million rush hour commuter train service between Georgetown and Union Station will start in late 1973 says W.T. Howard, director of GO Transit. Georgetown commuters, said Mr. Howard, will have three trains going to the city during the morning rush hour and three trains returning at night. Trains will not operate during the day or on weekends. -*Georgetown Herald*, 25 Jan. 1973



GO Train opening ceremonies held at Georgetown station on 27 April 1974.  
EHS13447

Anticipating a season of top-quality racing meets, solicitors for the Toronto International Dragway, east of Acton, have asked Esquesing Council to amend its racing bylaw to permit meets on Sundays from May 1 until September 30 and from Monday to Thursday nights inclusive until 11:30 p.m. -*Acton Free Press*, 31 Jan. 1973

Acton CN station, boarded up and opened only twice a day for passengers, is a good example of early Canadian railroad architecture. Acton Lions Club would like to move it to the park, alongside Fairy Lake. -*Acton Free Press*, 14 Feb. 1973

A full house of Brownies, Guides, mother and guests enjoyed the annual banquet, held last Tuesday at Acton Meadows golf course, and applauded the announcement that Mrs. C.K. Browne is the Brownies' Citizen of the Year... *Acton Free Press*, 28 Feb. 1973