



1988: McDougall Cottage sold by heritage group

Jim Quantrell, At A Glance

Published on Nov 20, 2008

Cambridge archivist Jim Quantrell takes our readers back for a glance at events which occurred 10, 15 and 20 years ago.

EVENTS FROM 20 YEARS AGO

Third week of Nov. 1988

Heritage Cambridge announced that it had sold the McDougall Cottage at 89 Grand Ave. S. Instead of designating the property and fixing it up prior to re-selling it, the local heritage group had sold the unimproved property to Tim Drennan, with whom they had reached a special development agreement. Heritage Cambridge had originally purchased the property using its architectural heritage conservation fund. Under the plan for this fund, Heritage Cambridge would purchase an endangered heritage building, restore and designate it, and then re-sell it on the open market for a profit. The enlarged fund would then be used to purchase another property. In reaching the deal with Drennan, Heritage Cambridge managed to reach most, if not all, of its goals, while avoiding the possibly costly pitfalls of restoration and the problem of attempting to re-sell the renovated property in the rather depressed local real estate market. The McDougall Cottage is now a museum operated by the Region of Waterloo and is open to the public on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday afternoons, and Thursday evenings until 8 p. m.

The city was to continue to sell industrial land at the rate of \$70,000 per acre, at least for the time being. A report to council had recommended that the selling price be hiked to \$90,000 per acre to “better reflect its market value and to ensure Cambridge could replace sold land without dipping into tax dollars”. Council decided not to approve the recommendation until the proposal was sent to the city’s industrial advisory committee for comments. For more than a decade, that committee had provided input into planning and other issues related to industry, and the some members of the council of the day felt it would be an “insult” to the group to not have their input before approving the new price. Others felt that forwarding the report to the



advisory committee was simply a way for council to avoid taking full responsibility for the decision.

While many in the city were pleased with the announcement that Simcoe-Fox Developments of Toronto was to demolish the old Capitol Theatre on Water Street South and replace it with a three-storey retail/residential/commercial complex, there were those who still thought the building worth saving. Architectural conservationists were claiming that had heritage conservation groups taken an interest in the building sooner, it may not have reached what many were now claiming was the “point of no return”. Neglect of the building aside, the opponents of the decision to demolish the old theatre felt that the building could still be used. They further noted that the destruction of the building represented not only the loss of a heritage building, but also the loss of the only downtown structure capable of attracting and accommodating large numbers of people for a variety of events.

EVENTS FROM 15 YEARS AGO

Third week of Nov. 1993

Both broadcaster and journalist Peter Gzowski and former hockey great Ken Dryden were scheduled to visit the Wellington Street Book Shoppe in Cambridge. Gzowski was to return to the city to sign copies of his latest book *Canadian Living*, while Dryden was to visit to promote his new book *The Moved and the Shaken: The Story of One Man's Life*.

Ten years of patient waiting finally paid off for officials at the Cambridge Memorial Hospital when Cambridge MPP Mike Farnan announced the approval of a \$15.8 million redevelopment project at the hospital. The project, first proposed in 1983, was to receive \$4.6 million from the Ministry of Health, \$8 million from the hospital foundation, \$2.6 million from the Region of Waterloo and \$600,000 from the hospital's special purpose endowment fund. The major redevelopment and expansion project was expected to begin in 1995 and was to include construction of a new ambulatory care centre for outpatient care, surgical day-care and community mental health services.

EVENTS FROM 10 YEARS AGO

Third week of Nov. 1998

A new 80-bed long term care centre was to be built in the city at a cost of \$6.1-million. The facility was one of three new centres for the Region of Waterloo.

Dickie Settlement School scored among the highest marks in the region in Grade 3 province-wide tests. Results showed that Dickie Settlement had more students performing at the highest level in reading, writing and mathematics than any other school in Cambridge. It was also announced that Grade 12 students throughout the region “significantly outperformed” students from other school boards on a writing assessment.

The lower section of Moffat Creek, from Christopher Drive to the Grand River and running through Churchill

Park, was in line for a \$1.6-million overhaul. City engineers had three goals for the project – to improve water quality in the creek and the pond in the park, to address erosion problems and to deal with flooding problems.

Jim Quantrell, archivist City of Cambridge Archives

46 Dickson St. Cambridge

(519) 740-4680 ext. 4610

quantrellj@city.cambridge.on.ca

CAMBRIDGETIMES
.ca

<http://www.cambridgetimes.ca/opinions/article/152311>



© Copyright 2008 Metroland Media Group Ltd. All rights reserved. The reproduction, modification, distribution, transmission or republication of any material from this Metroland West Media Group website is strictly prohibited without the prior written permission of Metroland Media Group Ltd.

