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1989: Arson cause of church blaze

JIM QUANTRELL, AT A GLANCE

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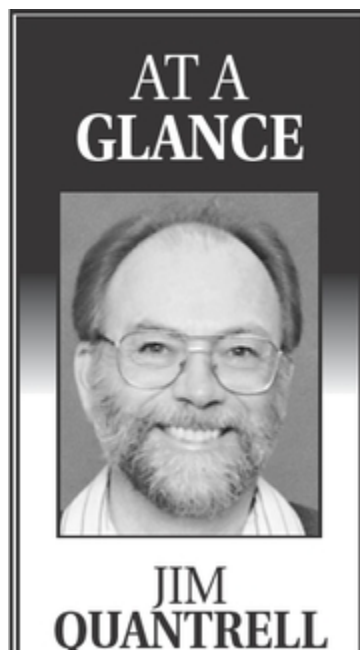
Cambridge archivist Jim Quantrell takes our readers back for a glance at events which occurred 10, 15 and 20 years ago.

EVENTS FROM 20 YEARS AGO Fourth week of April 1989

Investigators confirmed that arson was responsible for a \$2-million blaze that heavily damaged the annex of Knox's (Galt) Presbyterian Church on Queen's Square. Police and fire officials contended that one or more persons had broken into the annex at the Cambridge landmark church and after helping themselves to a "substantial amount of coinage" had started the fire, possibly to cover the break-in and robbery. City firefighters had been called to the church early on Sunday morning and, upon arrival, had found flames licking out of the windows on all three floors of the annex. At one point, firefighters poured more than 8,000 gallons of water per minute on the flames. Although the annex suffered extensive damage, the main body of the church was saved and it was hoped that the annex walls could be saved and the building restored.

EVENTS FROM 15 YEARS AGO Fourth week of April 1994

The city was reshuffling its priorities as it prepared to dip into the \$8.3 million it had been allotted in the federal-provincial infrastructure program. In addition, more than \$3.9 million was available for reassignment, as the city shelved plans for a new arena or arena improvements, and the Mill Creek stream improvement program. Arena funding had been set aside until a decision was made on what kind of facility was needed and where it was needed. The \$1.2 million that had been set aside for stream improvements would not be needed until officials at the Grand River Conservation Authority finalized the necessary design work. Council had already authorized applications to the infrastructure program totaling \$4.1 million. Included on that list were the plans to build the Blair Road pedestrian underpass, the reconstruction of several streets in Preston, construction of the Riverside Park sanitary sewer and completion of the third phase of the ornamental lighting program.



EVENTS FROM 10 YEARS AGO *Fourth week of April 1999*

The organizers of the Out of the Cold service that provided food and shelter for those without a home were searching for sites that would allow the service to be expanded and offered seven nights a week. In its first year, Out of the Cold served more than 800 meals and provided overnight accommodation for close to 400 people. The program operated Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from November to March at three local churches.

Community fundraising efforts were continuing for the Cambridge Arts Guild as it attempted to raise money for the \$2-million arts centre planned for the former Galt Public Utilities building at the corner of Wellington and Dickson streets. Organizers had been operating a relatively low key campaign that had focused on the area's larger businesses and industries. "We've been out to see a lot of companies and we've had a good response. People really seem to be keen on this," said a spokesperson for the Guild. Earlier in the year, Toyota Manufacturing Canada Inc. became the first major corporate contributor.

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