



1989: Parking committee a 'failure'

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

First week of Feb. 1989

Described as “an abysmal failure”, the downtown ad-hoc parking committee was disbanded. Formed a year previously to review downtown parking rates, the committee recommended that another parking lot be established and that rates at attendant lots be raised, including eliminating the one-hour free parking in attendant lots enjoyed by downtown shoppers. Those recommendations were approved by council, only to be rescinded a short time later thanks to complaints by downtown merchants who maintained that losing the free hour of parking in attendant lots would lead to a major loss of business. In discussions of the parking problem in the downtown core, it became clear that some of the city’s councillors felt that part of the lack of “premium” parking spots close to downtown businesses was caused by the employees of those businesses, who insisted on parking close to work rather than in a lot farther away and leaving the “premium” spots for downtown shoppers.

Local heritage groups, genealogists and history buffs were outraged that what they saw as a “valuable part of Ontario’s history” was about to be destroyed. It seemed that land titles, wills, deeds, mortgages and leases dating from 1868 to 1948 were to be transferred from the local land registry offices to the Archives of Ontario as soon as microfilming of the records was completed. Once at the provincial archives, certain “housekeeping” records were to be shredded to reduce the number of records to be maintained at the provincial archives to a manageable level. The officials responsible for the records reasoned that once the documents were microfilmed the information would be preserved and the originals would no longer be needed. The public outcry put the shredding scheme on hold as an alternate solution was sought.



EVENTS FROM 15 YEARS AGO

First week of Feb. 1994

Though the Ontario Medical Association had asked the province's doctors to take a week's holidays in March, local doctors were to decide for themselves when they would take time off to meet the funding cuts imposed by the province's "social contract". While some doctors planned to take their traditional "March Break" holiday, others were planning to take a number of long weekends spread out over the year. Under the terms of the social contract, doctors could earn only 95 per cent of what they had earned over the last two years. Anything over 95 per cent would not be covered by the province's health insurance plan.

While it was held by some that the amalgamation of the public and separate school boards would result in substantial cost savings, such a move was not considered appropriate for Waterloo Region. It was noted that the local boards were already of such a size that amalgamation would not result in any significant cost savings. It was suggested by some that even if amalgamation was not in the cards for this area, there were still a number of areas where the boards could co-operate to realize significant cost savings. One suggested area of co-operation was in the sharing of existing facilities, where school populations from both boards might be amalgamated in existing schools instead of closing old schools and building new ones. Management at both school boards were challenged to start thinking creatively and looking at the delivery of all aspects of education.

EVENTS FROM 10 YEARS AGO

First week of Feb. 1999

Over the previous 18 months, a special task force had been looking at the viability of a trade centre for Cambridge. Now it appeared that the trade centre proponents had an ally in the person of Steve Stavro, the owner of the Knob Hill Farms property at the corner of Hespeler and Pinebush Roads. Stavro was prepared to offer the site and premises of the giant food store available for "conversion into a world class trade/convention centre and hotel." All that was needed now was investors. If brought to fruition, the project was expected to cost in the vicinity of \$60 million to \$70 million.

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