



1998: Kanmet gutted by fire

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 Oct. 1988

The Emergency Services and Public Safety Department (ESPSD) had its name changed back to the Cambridge Fire Department. The move had come out of a recommendation to city council from the master plan task force of the ESPSD. The task force wanted to bring back the term "fire department" to reflect that important aspect of the department's responsibilities and to "eliminate any confusion" in life threatening situations. The task force's original recommendation had been to change the name to "Fire Department and Emergency Services" but council, in an 8-2 vote, approved an amendment to simplify the name and return to the former Cambridge Fire Department. Another major recommendation of the task force was for a sixth fire hall to be built in the area of Maple Grove Road and Fountain Street. These and a number of other recommendations were approved by general committee with only minor adjustments and were to go to council for final consideration the following week.

The efforts by local MPP Mike Farnan to prove the unpopularity of Sunday shopping ran into another roadblock in the provincial legislature. For the first time in its three years in office the Ontario Liberal government used its majority to kill a bill at its first reading. That bill was Mr. Farnan's private member's bill that would have forced the legislature to sit on Sundays for the next six to eight weeks. In support of the bill Mr. Farnan explained that by taking Tuesdays off instead of Sundays provincial politicians would be demonstrating support of bills 113 and 114 - the legislation that allowed Sunday shopping, something opponents claimed the majority of Ontarians did not want.

EVENTS FROM 15 YEARS AGO

Fourth week of Oct. 1993

Following four months of consideration the citizens' task force examining the Cambridge Area Transportation Study (CATS) submitted its final report. The task force spokesperson told the city's planning committee that the region's \$100,000 CATS study had been correct in wanting to retain lands for the Highway 8 bypass and east-west arterial. At the same time the task force felt that the twin road projects should be scaled down to arterial roads similar to Franklin Boulevard. Instead of a super highway sweeping around the city's west side, the task force suggested an arterial road pushing south from the new Highway 8. It would cross Highway 401, skip across the Preston Parkway and cut across the Grand River south of Blair. The new arterial road would then link into Blair Road for a time and push south from the city limits to Cedar Street where it would end. The task force recommended that the city hold onto its plans for continuing the road south of Cedar Street for future development.

EVENTS FROM 10 YEARS AGO

Fourth week of Oct. 1998

When firefighters arrived at the Kanmet foundry site on Margaret Street in Preston they could do little more than watch as the controversial factory was gutted by flames. The fire was the largest in the city that year and caused an estimated \$50,000 to the vacant building. There was some concern that chemicals stored on the site might catch fire and send potentially toxic fumes across surrounding neighbourhoods. Residents were advised to vacate their homes or to at least shut all doors and windows until the fire had burnt itself out. Officials from both the regional public health office and the Ministry of the Environment were on hand to monitor the situation.

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