



2000: Drowning inquest underway

At A Glance-Jim Quantrell

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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.

20 YEARS AGO

Second week of May 1990

City council's planning committee rejected a recommendation to preserve the 113-year-old Galt Curling Club building on Queen's Square by designating it a heritage property. The decision marked the third time in the previous six months that the planning committee had stymied efforts by the city's own heritage conservation advisory committee to preserve some of the city's heritage structures. The other incidents involved the former Galt Hospital and the Dorchester Hotel in Preston. The Cambridge library board had purchased the curling club property the previous month to provide room for a much need expansion to the central library building located on the lot next door. Plans for the expansion called for the demolition of the curling club building.

The Cambridge Home Builders Association came up with a plan to provide easier access to the local housing market for first time homebuyers. The association was proposing to build, with the co-operation of the City of Cambridge, a detached single family-starter home that would sell for around \$125,000. The house was to be a 650-square-foot "no frills" raised bungalow with one or two bedrooms on the ground floor. At the time, the city required a minimum of 900 square feet for new homes in the city. The house was to be built on a lot that measured 40 feet by 90 feet, and would have no garage. In addition, the basement would not be finished, but to assist new homeowners to finish the basement on their own, the home would have a new pressure-treated wood foundation in place of the more traditional concrete foundation.

15 YEARS AGO

Second week of May 1995

Officials from Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada unveiled plans for a new \$600-million Corolla plant to be built adjacent to the original Cambridge manufacturing plant. The new factory would take 27 months to complete, was to cover 1.4 million-square-feet, would produce 120,000 vehicles annually when the plant was working to capacity and, eventually, was to employ 2,200 people. At the same time, the company announced a \$200,000 donation to the University of Waterloo to be used to help with the construction of the \$31.5-million Centre for Environmental Science and Engineering.

Cambridge city council voted 7-4 in favour of designating part of the Galt Arena Gardens as a local heritage site. The vote ended a lengthy debate and almost a year of controversy that had seen the proposed designation go to the Ontario Heritage Review Board. While the original recommendation called for the designation of the entire building, council opted to modify the recommendation so that only the front façade was included in the designation.

10 YEARS AGO

Second week of May 2000

A coroner's inquest into the drowning deaths of Const. Dave Nicholson and Mark Gage at the Grand River dam at Parkhill Road two years previously got underway. The inquest jury was to review events surrounding the deaths, including safety rules relating to swimming and scuba diving around the dam, and other similar low-head dams. It was also to examine the training, equipment and supervision of the Waterloo Regional Police dive team, and was expected to make recommendations aimed at preventing similar deaths from occurring in the future.

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