
1988: Arena site selected

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

Third week of March 1988

The city had asked the provincial Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) to investigate the possibility of stocking the Grand River with migratory trout and salmon to establish a sport fishery as part of its master plan for fisheries in the area. The MNR district biologist noted that while it was theoretically feasible to stock the Grand River with young fish there were various biological and economic factors to consider. One of the potential snags in the fisheries proposal was that the river downstream from West Montrose, including the Cambridge area, was too warm for trout to live in during the summer months or to spawn in. As a consequence annual restocking of 50,000 to 100,000 fish would be necessary to replenish the population. That would be an expensive proposition. At the same time the MNR was managing the Grand River for bass, pike and walleye and were interested in expanding walleye fishing to Cambridge.

Cambridge council selected a 19-acre site on Ellis Road as the site for the new Hespeler arena. Some neighbours were concerned that the traffic generated by the arena would have a detrimental effect on property values. The Ellis Road location was one of nine potential sites under consideration and was considered the best option available.

EVENTS FROM 15 YEARS AGO

Third week of March 1993

After going three years without any pay increases in spite of recommendations that they take one recommended by an independent task force, council members finally voted themselves a one per cent wage increase. As a result a local councillor's remuneration jumped from \$11,900 a year to \$12,000. A number of councillors felt that the pay they received was adequate for their part-time positions but argued that the mayor's salary should be higher than the \$38,700 base pay assigned to the position. The mayor also received allowances for serving on the regional council and the hydro commission. The base salary paid to the mayor of Cambridge was the second lowest in the area. Only the mayor of Guelph received less and that was for a job that was considered to be part time. By contrast the mayor of Waterloo was paid \$44,949 while the mayor of Kitchener received \$54,440 a year.

EVENTS FROM 10 YEARS AGO

Third week of March 1998

In spite of council's decision not to build a canal along Main Street the Cambridge councillor who proposed the "off the wall" idea declared that the fight "ain't over yet, this is just the beginning". During a slide presentation in support of her concept the councillor showed how San Antonio, Texas had used a canal to rejuvenate its downtown. She also dusted off plans drawn up for Cambridge in 1983 that proposed creating a canal system in the downtown core running down Thorne and Warnock streets. In the end, council decided to pump \$150,000 into a more simple plan to re-energize Main Street. The approved plan would improve sidewalks with new concrete, trees and benches and would provide wider sections of sidewalk at key locations to accommodate sidewalk cafes and special events. The changes would also eliminate about one-third of the parking spots on Main Street.

The fine details had yet to be worked out but Cambridge city council had agreed in principle to go forward with bike patrols in the three core areas during the coming summer months. The patrols were designed to "beef up" surveillance in the three core areas and were developed by the Core Areas Revitalization Advisory Committee (CARAC) in association with the core area business improvement associations and Waterloo Regional Police. The patrol members would not be police officers but would be trained by police and equipped with radios to call the police when needed.

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