



1988: Hospital faces \$3-million deficit

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 July 1988

As yet no decision had been made by the Ministry of Health on whether or not Cambridge Memorial Hospital would receive the assistance of two advisors proposed by the hospital's board of directors to assist the hospital in arranging its finances in a manner acceptable to the ministry.

The chairperson of the local hospital board had written a letter to the ministry requesting that the two independent hospital administrators - one a retired administrator from Chatham, the other a financial director from an Ottawa hospital - be approved to assist the board in overcoming its financial difficulties and in preparing a budget acceptable to the ministry.

The proposal came in the wake of a ministry demand that a budget be prepared that eliminated a projected \$3-million deficit. The ministry had also proposed appointing a supervisor to find a solution to the deficit problem. The board was opposed to a financial team that originated with the Ministry of Health.

Plans were unveiled for two new residential subdivisions that would potentially create 1,300 new homes in Hespeler in the area bounded by Ellis Avenue, Townline Road and River Road. Tyron Estates Ltd. planned to build the most southerly subdivision on an 88.3-acre plot bordering Ellis Road. The project called for 272 single-family homes, 59 semi-detached homes, six blocks of linear row housing, a local shopping centre, a four-acre neighbourhood park, a six-acre public school site and a half-acre water management site.

To the north, Melran Holdings proposed building 484 single-family, 98 semi-detached homes, three blocks of multi-unit residential housing, 4.9 acres of parkland and a 1.65-acre shopping centre on its 160.74-acre site. Residents in the area expressed concerns about dramatically increased traffic, particularly on Queen Street, the impact on drainage and neighbourhood water wells and overcrowding in Hespeler's already overcrowded schools.

The summer's dry spell continued unabated. A lawn-watering ban had been in place in Kitchener-Waterloo for five weeks and for almost two weeks in Cambridge as the result of low rainfall coupled with increased demand. The normal amount of rainfall in the region for June was 77.7 millimetres. In June 1988, only 8.4 millimetres of rain had fallen on the area. Weather forecasts suggested that the drought conditions would continue into July but that temperatures would be somewhat lower.

EVENTS FROM 15 YEARS AGO

First week of July 1993

The Grand River Conservation Authority issued a high water warning for the Grand River and its tributaries.

Recent rains measuring as much as 90 millimetres in some areas of the upper watershed were now running off causing "unusually high water levels". The high water mark in Cambridge reached 1.5 metres above normal and water pressure was measured at 200 cubic metres per second or 10 times the normal level. For the time being, canoeists were being asked to stay off the river.

Plans were unveiled for a new driving range and miniature golf course to be located on the former Galt landfill site off International Village Drive. Residents in the area aired concerns about damage from errant golf balls, bright lighting, storm water runoff and methane gas emissions that could be caused by disturbing the soil layer covering the old dump site. If approval was granted, work on the site was expected to be completed in the fall for a spring opening.

The 1993 Cambridge Outboard Grand Prix was launched. The power boat races had previously been run in conjunction with the annual Riverfest. Due to the overwhelming popularity of the event, organizers felt it needed a venue of its own. The event was sanctioned by the Canadian Boating Federation and was expected to draw top racers from across Ontario and the northeastern United States to race in five different classes. It was expected that speeds in some of the races would exceed 220 km/h. The Cambridge Boat Club, formed the previous year to support the races, was organizing the event.

EVENTS FROM 10 YEARS AGO

First week of July 1998

It was announced that Dickie Settlement and Cecil Cornwell Central Schools in North Dumfries Township were to be closed in 1999. At the same time, a new \$3-million elementary school with classes from kindergarten to Grade 8 was to be constructed in Ayr. The closures meant that approximately 105 students living in the rural areas near Cambridge would now be accommodated at Blair Road elementary and St. Andrew's senior elementary schools. While many of the parents of the affected children were upset at the decision to close the rural schools, school board representatives noted that the decision would save the board \$240,000 in annual operating costs.

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