



1988: Health Ministry provides hospital loan

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 July 1988

The Ontario Ministry of Health agreed to provide the financially strapped Cambridge Memorial Hospital (CMH) with a loan of \$650,000 to help cover its normal operating expenses. Hospital officials had warned at a press conference held in May that if CMH did not receive additional funding it would be bankrupt by July. The hospital's treasurer had later noted that while "bankrupt" was perhaps too harsh a word to describe the hospital's economic prospects, the hospital would not be able to meet its July payroll without some form of assistance. The hospital faced an operating deficit of \$3 million for the year and had become the focus of a financial investigation by the Ministry of Health after a deficit was allowed to develop in the local hospital's operating budget - even though the ministry announced that it would no longer finance hospital deficits.

The Cambridge Professional Fire Fighters Association was leading a campaign to have the name of the city's fire department changed. In August 1986, the name of the department had been quietly changed to Emergency Services and Public Safety Department. That name change had not been well received by members of the department. Members of the association presented the task force a 37-page report outlining why the department's name should be changed back to Cambridge Fire Department. Primary among the reasons presented was the confusion caused among the citizenry by the new name. Additional reasons involved the department's esprit de corps and the costs of changing the name on fire trucks and other equipment, on departmental letterhead and on all uniforms. Thus far, after two years operating under the new name, only the department's letterhead had been changed to reflect the name change.

EVENTS FROM 15 YEARS AGO

Third week of July 1993

After two years of lobbying for the return of school bus service between Sheffield and Cambridge, residents of the rural community were continuing the battle with a new proposal that they hoped would ensure the right of students to attend Glenview Park Secondary School. The chair of the Sheffield busing committee asked the Waterloo County Board of Education to support a proposal that would see Sheffield students considered part of the Waterloo school board for the purpose of secondary school education. Since 1991, members of the busing committee had fought to change a decision by the Wentworth County Board of Education to discontinue a decade-old practice of busing Sheffield and area students to Glenview Park in Cambridge and begin busing them instead to Highland Secondary School in Dundas. Sheffield students who wished to continue to attend Glenview Park could continue to do so but had to supply their own transportation.

The real estate market in Cambridge was described as "stable" with the average sales price of a local home coming in at \$134,009. The previous year the price had been \$135,271. Lower end homes had been selling quite well, but most activity in the city real estate market was in the resell market in homes valued between \$100,000 and \$139,000.

EVENTS FROM 10 YEARS AGO***Third week of July 1998***

Organizers of the Grand Galt Reunion were no longer on the hook for a \$16,000 deficit rung up in operating the event when city council agreed to pick up the tab. In putting forward the motion to accept the debt, a Cambridge councillor noted that the organizers had the best interests of the city at heart, had brought many people back to the city after a long absence, had brought new business to the community and should be supported. Opponents of the motion contended that agreeing to foot the tab would set a dangerous precedent that would make it difficult for council to refuse other groups who might get themselves into financial difficulties while organizing special events.

A family of foxes was making life a little tense for people living in the area around Elgin Street North and Munch Avenue. For the previous six weeks, residents had been calling city officials reporting sightings of a fox wandering city streets. It appeared that a family of seven foxes was living in the area but since the den was located on private property, little could be done. Residents were told to treat the foxes as they would any wild animal and "just leave it alone".

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