



## 2000: Pay for play

Jim Quantrell, At a Glance

March 31, 2010

Cambridge archivist Jim Quantrell takes our readers back for a glance at events which occurred 10, 15 and 20 years ago.

### 20 Years Ago - Last week of March 1990

The Preston Springs Gardens Retirement Home had been placed in receivership. Although staff had been ordered by the receiver to say nothing about what was happening at the building it appeared that the receiver would continue, for the time being at least, to operate the facility that was home to 31 residents and provided employment for 30 staff members. Ownership of the facility had recently changed hands and after a time operating funds had dried up. Staff members had been unpaid for a month and had been paying for residents' food because there was no money. To add to the facility's woes a Fire Marshall's order had been placed on the front door informing the public that the building violated various elements of the fire code. To make things worse the facility's elevator system was failing and would be shut down by provincial authorities unless necessary repairs were performed immediately. Given the lack of funds that seemed unlikely.

### 15 Years Ago - Last week of March 1995

Cambridge council passed a recommendation authorizing city staff to officially begin talks involving a potential partnership with the separate school board at St. Benedict High School. The city and the school board had a long-standing agreement on the shared use of recreational facilities but that relationship was about to expand. The school board was about to spend \$17-million to either build a new high school to replace St. Benedict High School or to overhaul the city's first Catholic high school. It appeared that building a new school was the most likely decision since the school board was negotiating the purchase of a parcel of land just off Franklin Boulevard near Clemens Mills. At the same time the city library system had identified the need for a new library in the Clemens Mills area and a combined facility seemed a natural solution to both needs.

### 10 Years Ago - Last Week of March 2000

Community groups that made use of facilities in the region's schools would now have to "pay as they play". Since 1973 the regional public school board had had agreements with cities and townships for the reciprocal use of facilities at no cost. Community groups booked school facilities through municipalities while the board had access to city pools and rinks. Now with decreased funding from the province the school board was faced with the choice of reaching into funds used to provide programs and services to students or charging a user fee to cover the costs of community use of school facilities. An analysis of the reciprocal agreements showed that the schools were using municipal facilities for about 4,500 hours per year while community groups were using schools for about 32,000 hours per year. Under the new rate structure non-profit youth groups would be charged \$16 an hour for a single gym, \$26 an hour for a double gym, \$6 per hour for a classroom, \$11 per hour for a kitchen and \$51 an hour for a lecture room.

*Jim Quantrell, archivist,  
City of Cambridge Archives  
46 Dickson St. Cambridge (519) 740-4680 ext. 4610  
[quantrellj@city.cambridge.on.ca](mailto:quantrellj@city.cambridge.on.ca)*

---

This article is for personal use only courtesy of CambridgeTimes.ca - a division of Metroland Media Group Ltd.

---