



## 1988: Shopping centre slated for Blair Road

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

#### ***Second week of Sept. 1988***

City council approved a proposal from Freure Homes to construct a 50,000-square-foot shopping centre on Blair Road near the CPR tracks. Area residents, almost unanimously, threw their support behind the project, citing the distance to convenience or grocery stores as the main reasons for backing the shopping plaza in their neighbourhood. Some councillors felt that the neighbours might be supporting the proposal as the lesser of two evils - either the new plaza or the never-popular subsidized housing. A draft plan of subdivision approved in 1982 had earmarked the land on which the plaza was to be built as an area for the development for multi-family housing. It was noted that when a similar shopping plaza plan was proposed in the late 1970s the neighbours were vehemently opposed to the plan that was finally turned down following an Ontario Municipal Board hearing. As the lawyers for Freure Homes pointed out several meetings between the neighbours and representatives from Freure Homes along with the residents' strong support at council indicated that neighbours had experienced a major change of heart since the time of the previous proposal.

### EVENTS FROM 15 YEARS AGO

#### ***Second week of Sept. 1993***

Teachers in the region's Catholic schools were upset with a plan that would require them to take professional development (PD) days as the unpaid days off required under the social contract in order to avoid disrupting regular school days. The days would still be called professional development days and the board would continue to offer activities but teachers would not be paid for the days. The school board was concerned that that the PD days would be adversely affected since it was likely that very few teachers would attend the

scheduled activities if they were not to be paid. Some school board members expressed the hope that teachers would view their professional development to be important enough to attend the activities despite the lack of pay. Representatives of the teachers' union dismissed this view as "naive". A spokesperson declared: "The board is too committed to the position that those days be days off and we'll be taking them as days off just as the other 950,000 public sector workers are doing".

Jacob Hespeler Secondary School was beginning its transformation to a regular composite high school. The secondary school had been built in 1986 as a vocational school but would now offer the same academic programs offered at other high schools in the city. Also new this year at the school was a 14,400-square-foot addition valued at \$1.9 million that was scheduled for completion in October. The new addition was to provide a drama room, a music facility, change rooms, computer labs and classrooms. The Waterloo County Board of Education had voted to convert the school in 1990 when it became apparent that the school would be faced with continuing low enrolment while other high schools in the city were overcrowded.

## **EVENTS FROM 10 YEARS AGO**

### ***Second week of Sept. 1998***

All the teachers in the region were heading back to school but it was unclear for how long. Secondary school teachers with the region's public board stated that they would return to classes on the first two days of the new school term but whether they would be there on day three and beyond depended on whether contract talks with the board resumed. A spokesperson for the teachers' union noted that rotating strikes would begin soon if negotiations did not resume and a full-scale walkout was not out of the question if negotiations faltered once they were resumed.

It was reported that the sluices in the Park Hill Road dam on the Grand River were to be closed as soon as possible. Mark Gage and Const. Dave Nicholson died on August 12 when they became trapped in a sluice in the dam.

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