

4.2 magnitude earthquake shakes up area

Thousands of people throughout Northern Grey and Bruce Counties were shaken out of whatever they were doing last Thursday afternoon when a 4.2 magnitude earthquake struck the area.

The quake struck at 5:16 p.m. shaking homes and businesses causing many to rush outside. Police reported that the 911 number was swamped with calls from concerned citizens.

Former Wiarton Mayor Barney McKillop said he

was in his home just below the escarpment when he felt his home shaking.

"I thought a piece of the escarpment had fallen," he said, never thinking it might have been an earthquake.

Reports on the length of the quake varies from about 10 to 30 seconds with the most violent shakes lasting only a few seconds.

Echo editor Keith Gilbert said he first thought a piece of heavy equipment was passing by.

"I could hear it. The win-

dows began to vibrate and the house seemed to shudder."

Gilbert said he got up from his chair to see what was going by when the whole room began to shake.

"The shaking was pretty intense... I knew then that it was an earthquake and yelled at the family to get outside. About 10 seconds later it had stopped and then my phone began ringing."

Warton resident Doug Gilbert was sitting in his truck fishing near the water

treatment plant when he said his truck began rocking.

"I looked out the back to see who was shaking it." When he realized there was nobody around and the truck was still shaking he said he suspected it was a quake.

He looked out at the water but said there wasn't a ripple. About 10 seconds after it had stopped he noticed quite a few fish started jumping.

He reeled in his line, cast out to where they were jumping and was rewarded

with a 7 lb rainbow.

"It was strange," he said.

Marg Fletcher who lives at Colpoy's Bay said, "It sounded like a big truck coming down the driveway, but it got louder and louder and the house started shaking. Referring to a 3.1 quake in the Georgian Bay area on May 24, 2000, she stated that she recalled her dishes rattling in her cupboards some time ago "but I don't remember that loud noise.

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Most people who talked to the Echo said they thought the shaking was caused by some heavy machinery passing by with some stating they thought their furnace had blown up.

The only damage reported was a picture falling off a wall.

An assessment made by the Geological Survey of Canada said the center of the quake was 12K north of Thornbury.

It was also confirmed that the quake was the biggest one in this

area in the last 20 years.

Ontario is considered to be in the centre of the North American tectonic plate and as a result is relatively stable.

Quakes here are considered to be normal background activity.

People from Tobermory to Port Elgin, across to Owen Sound and Barrie and up the east shore of Georgian Bay reported feeling the quake.

An unconfirmed report said that the quake was felt as far south as Barrie.