

# 25th anniversary celebrations for

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Mercury reporter

On May 1, 1967 Horton Township council decided a 1900 percent increase, from \$500 to \$10,000, in the annual cost of purchasing fire service from Renfrew was too expensive.

As a result, council took steps to purchase a fire truck, hire a chief and form their own department. It took the better part of a year for everything to fall into place and the volunteer fire brigade has never looked back.

This Saturday, June 26, the Horton Volunteer Fire Department has invited the entire community to share in the 25th anniversary celebrations.

Festivities begin at 9 a.m. and run to 2 p.m. at the Horton fire hall with family fun events, fire equipment displays, free soft drinks and barbecued hotdogs and hamburgs. Sparkie, the talking Dalmatian dog that rides a tricycle, will be in attendance.

In the evening a gala dinner and dance will be held at the Renfrew Legion hall. Special guests will include former fire chiefs, original fire fighters and representatives from the Ontario Fire Marshal's Office, Fire Chief David Campbell said Friday.

Although it will be more than a bit late, this weekend will mark the official opening of the Horton Fire Hall built in 1978-79. The official opening was postponed several times in 1979, for one reason or another, and never did take place, Campbell explained.

## History of department

Horton Township council was com-

posed of Reeve Morris Burton and councillors Lloyd Hodgins, Thomas C. Smith, Adam Laird and John C. Russell in 1967. Bill Humphries was clerk-treasurer.

A peek back into the council minutes shows fire service was discussed at the February 2 meeting after a letter was received from the Renfrew Fire Department. The cost to Horton had been \$500 per year in 1965, 1966 and council expected to renew the contract in 1967.

However, at the April 3 meeting, Renfrew advised fire protection would be discontinued outside of the town after May 1. A meeting was called and Renfrew agreed to continue to supply fire protection at the standby rate of \$10,000 a year plus a fire fighting charge of \$100 for the first hour, \$75 for each hour afterwards and a car allowance of \$400 a year for the fire chief.

After considering the proposal, council decided the township couldn't afford the expenditure and passed a resolution to proceed to set up their own volunteer fire department.

In the meantime, Renfrew agreed to provide fire service for another three months at a standby rate of \$1,000 per month, plus the fire fighting fees and car allowance. At the May 15 council meeting, a motion was made by Russell and seconded by Smith that Horton did not care to meet the terms of the agreement.

Later the Braeside fire department came to the rescue and provided free fire service, and the Ross department

for a fee, while the new department was formed and fire fighters trained.

Russell and Smith contacted Maurice Roussy at the Ontario Fire Marshal's office regarding the purchase of a used truck from the Ontario government's Public Works Department. When none was available, council passed a bylaw on June 5 to debenture \$18,000 to purchase a brand new fire truck.

The new 1967 pumper truck was purchased from King Seagrave of Woodstock for \$13,800 with the chassis purchased from H. B. Elliott of Renfrew for \$4,198, a total of \$17,998.

A special council meeting was held on June 19 to discuss the hiring of Clark Eady as fire chief at the rate of \$150 per year, plus \$50 a month rent for housing the fire truck in a garage at his residence.

On October 2, council authorized payment to King Seagrave and was advised the fire truck would be delivered later in the month. Firemen's pay, \$4 for the first hour of fire fighting, \$2 for each hour afterwards, and \$1.50 per hour for practice and training, was discussed at the November 21 council meeting and on December 5, O'Neil and Co. Ltd. of Renfrew was selected as the insurance company to insure the new fire truck.

The original volunteer fire fighters were Thomas Nolan, Harold Nolan, Vernon Cruise, Thomas Dedo and Graham Forrest. All, or most, will be attending the dinner this weekend.

*See page A-8*

## Mailbox

Sr. Constable Barry Han-niman, community services officer, said Monday mailbox bashing has occurred throughout the Renfrew OPP patrol area.

The detachment is looking for assistance from the general public to help stop these mindless acts of vandalism. Anyone with information on the persons responsible for damaging rural mailboxes is requested to please call the Renfrew OPP detachment office at 432-5811.

## Guilty of breach

A Castleford man was sentenced to 21 days in jail following his trial. Kenneth R. McLean was charged on November 27, with breaching his probation order.

McLean, who represented himself in the case, was to abstain completely from the consumption of alcohol, as part of the probation order.

He has a lengthy criminal record.

*May 5/93*