

Horton Centre levelled

By JOHN CARTER
Mercury Reporter

The cause of a fire that levelled the Horton Community Centre Saturday evening has fire officials mystified.

Horton fire chief David Campbell said that after an exhaustive investigation Sunday, the cause of the fire remains undetermined. While arson has not been completely ruled out, it's "not really likely," he said.

The Castleford Road facility, known for years as the Horton Sportsplex, was insured by the township, but several historical items were lost in the fire.

"It's a real shame," said Councillor Bob Johnston, noting that many thousands of volunteer hours went into building and maintaining the facility, built in 1976.

The blaze was noticed by two of the centre's main supporters, Helen and Bruce Golden, as they passed by about 10 p.m. The Golden's called the fire department and Johnston, then stood by with him helplessly watching it burn.

By the time the fire department arrived, the building was completely ablaze, making it impossible to save any items inside let alone the structure. "Two hours, that's all it took ... for all that work to be destroyed," said Johnston.

Thanks to information supplied by the Golden's, the origin of the fire was traced to a small shed on the back of the centre, Campbell said.

With the regional fire marshals busy with several major fires in the Ottawa area, the Horton department investigated the community centre fire. Campbell said attention was focused on a heat pump in the shed, but nothing was found to indicate it was the problem, he said.

He said arson was a consideration because of past vandalism at the community centre. Anyone seeing anything suspicious in the area Saturday evening should contact police.

Tuesday, May 2, 2000

Horton awaits decision on marina study

By JOHN CARTER May 2/00
Mercury Reporter

Plans for a marina adjacent to the Castleford boat launch is in limbo because of a demand for an environmental impact study by the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The originators of the plan, Clayton and Albert Reed, says they are weighing their options in light of an approximate \$10,000-plus cost facing them for an environmental impact statement needed before the project gets the go-ahead from senior levels of government.

The father-son team had proposed a marina and related services such as a boat repair shop and winter storage for the site. The plan also included gas pumps and a store aimed at River Road traffic.

Albert Reed said Monday that in response to MNR concerns the project will disrupt the wetlands at the mouth of the Bonnechere River, they changed their plans from a full-scale marina to gas pumps beside the river. However, the MNR doesn't like the dock layout and still insists on an environmental study, he said.

Reed said the project is on hold until they have received clarification about the study. Both MP Hec Clouthier and MPP Sean Conway have been contacted about the issue, he said.

Meanwhile, Horton council has appointed Janota-Patrick to review the site plan for the proposed marina. If the Reeds drop the water-related part of their plan, council will have to decide whether it feels it is an appropriate location for a convenience store/gas bar, clerk Mackie McLaren told council.

Horton card parties moved due to fire

The cause of the fire that destroyed the Horton Community Centre Saturday night is still unknown and groups that utilize the facility are forced to make alternate arrangements.

Due to the fire, the Horton Recreation

Euchre will instead be held at the Castleford United Church Hall.

The hall is located at R R 5 Renfrew, on the River Road.

This change is in effect from May 13 to May 17.

May 5/00