"Don't Give Fire A Place To Start" Slogan During Fire Prevention Week

The Acton Free Press.

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Three Fire Trucks, 25 Men Always Ready if Siren Wails

Protecting the Acton and rural area in case of fire are 25 volunteer firemen manning three pieces of fire fighting equipment, consisting of a 1958 Ford pumper, 1951 G.M.C pumper and a 1927 Studebaker pumper.

The G.M.C pumper, equipped with a 420 gal per minute pump, has a 400 gal tank with two lines of booster hose to dispense the water within the tank.

Ready in case of emergency are 1200 feet of two and a half inch hose and 600 feet of one and a half inch hose, compactly packed and easily rolled off as needed.

A 45 foot aluminum extension ladder and 24 foot ladder, as well as a roof and attic ladder, are stored on the G.M.C. Also carried on this unit are air packs, fire extinguishers, pike poles, hand searchlights and other rescue equipment.

New Addition

The newest addition to the Acton Fire Hall was purchased this year by surrounding townships. The 1958 Ford pumper contains a 500 gal per minute pump and a booster tank containing 500 gallons of water.

Equipment to proportion wet water and foam is contained on this new unit as well as a resuscitator and identical equipment as the number one truck.

Better known as a standby unit, the 1927 Studebaker unit is maintained in the Fire Hall at all times in case of emergencies. This unit has a 420 gallon per minute pump but contains no booster tank.

Maintained in the fire hall is a second resuscitator available for local doctors and police.

The local Fire Department have a meeting room and recreation quarters at the rear of the hall, including a complete kitchen.

A Fire Call

These points can save minutes when you have a fire:

1. Call 300.
2. Speak Distinctly.
3. Give Proper Location.
4. Give Directions.

On rural fires, station a man at gate who knows fire location and available water sources.

Make sure you have this phone number by your telephone at 30 times for any emergency.

An "early bird" to watch the man who opens wide the stove drafts before he goes to work, leaving family in bed.

Staff Photo

PROTECTING HALTON COUNTY against the loss of lives and property are firemen from eight departments. Pictured above are drivers of eight pumpers as they lined up in the park in Acton prior to the mutual and exercise held last Saturday. Participating in the practice session, which marked the opening of Fire Prevention Week for the Acton firemen, were Milton, Georgetown, Acton, Oakville, Burlington, number one, Burlington, number two, Trafalgar, number one and Trafalgar number two. Water was pumped in relays from truck to truck a distance of 2,100 feet, during the practice run.

Nine Out of 10 Fires Could be Avoided - Chief

"Don't give fire a place to start," is the slogan adopted for this year's Fire Prevention Week, and Fire Chief J. Newton and his 25 volunteer members of the Acton Fire Department strongly urge all citizens to adopt the slogan.

The fire department volunteers point out that with ordinary care nine out of every 10 fires might be prevented.

Chief Newton urges all citizens to make a check of all danger spots in the home where fire might, if given a chance, break out. "If necessary, call the fire department and they will gladly and freely help with suggestions," remarked the chief.

Inspect for Hazards

Acton firemen will during the week of fire prevention inspect homes and business places to root out the common hazards which give fire a place to start.

The chief pointed out that Canada's fire loss, per head of population, is one of the highest in the world today and that most fires were caused by human carelessness and neglect.

Experience throughout the continent, the chief said, had shown that a program of voluntary home inspection throughout the entire year was the answer.

Locally, it was encouraging to report increasing public co-operation, the chief said, pointing out that of course under provincial law any chief was empowered to enter and inspect any home.

On Wednesday of this week, an inspection of industrial and commercial properties was made by a group of fire inspectors, as part of the week long program marking Fire Prevention Week.

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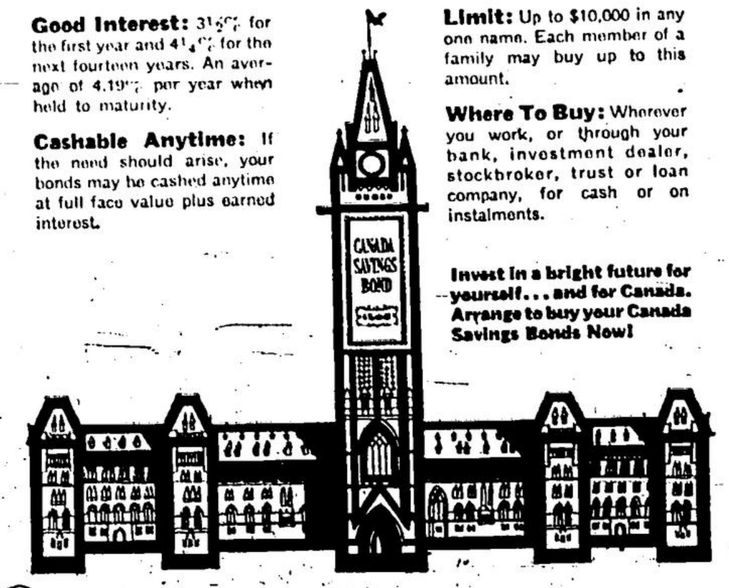

"We Just Left Them Alone a Minute..."

Do you know that under the Criminal Code of Canada you may go to jail for two years for leaving a child exposed to fire?

There can be no sadder news than the death by fire of children in the home especially when the headline reads "We just left them alone for a minute." And such a tragedy is one that must shadow a family for a lifetime.

No matter the age no child should ever be left alone. This is a vital message from the Association of Canadian Fire Marshals and the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs and while it is stressed during Fire Prevention Week, it holds, like every other rule for good housekeeping, for every week and every day of the year. Parents who go out have a duty to their children, to the community and to themselves to see that the youngsters are properly looked after.

The heartening acceptance of this obligation in homes across the land is reflected by the fact that baby sitting has become more than a casual occupation for many people. It has even developed into a regular profession.

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Sure fire combination: one small child and one match.

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Fight 36 Fires In Town, Area So Far This Year

Fire chief "Jack" Newton this week reported the fire loss for the town of Acton during the year 1957 and pointed out that the loss was the lowest it has been for a number of years.

The chief announced there were 24 fires in the municipality with a total fire loss of $1,498 during 1957.

He further pointed out that a five year average from 1952 to 1957 amounted to $14,460 per year for the town of Acton.

Chief Newton emphasized the major cause of fires as reported by the fire marshall's office was smoking, with misuse of electricity as second and heating and cooking in third position.

Provincial Fires

In Ontario during 1957, there were 20,706 fires reported with a total property loss of $27,166,611, according to the fire marshall's report.

The Acton Fire Department has fought 16 fires locally to date this year and 20 fires in the rural area, reported Chief Newton.

The Acton fire chief urges all citizens to become fire prevention conscious, not just one week each year, but to keep in mind that fires can start anytime during a 52-week period.

One of the mottos used by the Fire Prevention Bureau could easily apply to many local residents, noted the Acton chief as he repeated, "Don't smoke in bed. The ashes that fall on the floor may be your own."

It Happened In A Flash!

"It happened in a flash, like a bolt from the blue."

Not all victims of sudden flash fires of the last year in Canada are alive today to tell their mournful tale.

A woman was about to make "french fries." She tossed the potato slices still wet from the soaking pot into the pan of 350 degrees grease. Water and grease having a strong dislike for each other the water made the grease sputter into the love flame setting her flammable fabric dress afire.

An elderly couples delight was to share a pleasant smoke before bedtime. The wife struck an ordinary wooden match to light her cigarette. Pfff! The match head soared up into the overhead plastic-wrapped lamp. The plastic flamed, falling on the woman. Instantly her frilly negligeen became a torch.

Another Canadian family's fun was to take the kids for a hike and have a beanie meal. Dad took along a bottle of gas from the power lawnmower supply to "kick up" the damp twigs. One of the youngsters dribbled gas into the embers. In a split second, he was his own "dying bonfire." Sadly today remembered by his family and chums.

These and scores of others which made recent headlines are typical of the ghastly record. If any relief is to be found in reading the sombre files of the Joint Committee of the Association of Canadian Fire Marshals and the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs, it is certainly not evident in the variety of geography of the incidents, although occasionally there is mention that somebody showed gumption and saved life such as by rolling in a rug to put out the flame.

More flash fire snapshots.

A light bulb fell and shattered in a garage gas pan. Children played with the oil control valve of a space heater, shutting it off and turning it on, for an explosion that blew them and the room apart. A woman left the pressing iron going and left the house, and a short while later the house and a next door garage were destroyed. In the kitchen category the cook left the pot roast simmering to exchange neighborly gossip and the pot boiled dry and caught fire and so did the kitchen. And out on a farm somebody lit a smudge to protect the cattle from mosquitoes and suddenly it was out of control, leaving a hard-earned new barn in ruin.

The 1959 flash fire record won't be as depressing if the thoughtless, careless, gas line possible cause, a few seconds of prior thinking.

Fire Equipment Most Modern Chemical Warfare New Feature

With the idea in mind to create a fast, efficient and co-operative Fire Department Chief J. Newton has in the past few years rounded out his 25-man force into just that, as the unheralded protectors of lives and property this week stress fire protection to every man, woman and child in the Acton area.

The 25-man force has been divided into three companies, consisting of A, B and C companies, guided by the chief, deputy-chief, captain and two lieutenants.

Each individual fireman, old or new to the force, is taught the proper and efficient manner of handling all equipment and fighting fires.

Modern Equipment

The chief stressed that Acton's Fire Department of today was a modern department organized to meet modern conditions.

Chief Newton pointed out the equipment used by the firemen today was a far cry from the outdated and obsolete equipment used in the past years. Today, firemen wage chemical warfare at most fires.

Although the Acton fire department has a modern fire hall, new equipment and two recent model fire trucks, the demand for additional equipment and supplies has not been exhausted," said the local chief.

He pointed out that as the community grows it is necessary for the fire department to enlarge in order to cope with the extra fire hazards and dangers to life.

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Acton firemen distributed fire prevention pamphlets and baby sitter cards door-to-door Monday evening.

In fighting an electrical fire, turn off the power or you may be electrocuted.

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