

# Fire Prevention Week October 4-10 "Think About Fire Every Week"

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Second Section.

### 30 Trained Volunteer Firefighters Ready To Face Danger, Fight Fires in District

Why does a community support a Fire Department? This is a question each and every person should stop and consider. A close look at records will prove carelessness on someone's part is the main reason.

Firefighters don't join the department for glory or to ride around in a shiny red fire truck, don boots, coat and hat, to distinguish themselves from everyone else? They are conscientious people protecting lives and property of others because some one became careless.

It's so easy to sit back and watch the firefighters haul around heavy hose, climb ladders and endanger themselves to loss of limb or life as they fight a house or barn fire—but think! Who is paying for the equipment? The taxpayers—some of whom became careless in the

first and caused a fire.

**True Story**  
The true story behind the Acton Fire Department is not one of a modern fire hall, shiny new trucks, two-way radios, hundreds of feet of hose and many other pieces of equipment. It is the story of 30 men trained to cope with all types of fires, save lives and buildings, volunteers who man the truck and equipment and spend tireless hours training to be firefighters.

Firefighting is a tough job, not just dangerous but dirty, hard and laboring—a race against time. Even practice sessions can be strenuous and all this is done by men who already have put in a hard day's work for their own livelihood.

**Stop for Nothing**  
Just for a moment, picture

yourself as a firefighter, sitting at the table eating a hot meal or lying in bed in the middle of the night or sitting in church with your best suit of clothes on. The siren sounds!

Would you hesitate to leave the meal, trundle out of bed or race home and change your good clothes? If so, you'll never make the Fire Department. They are a group of dedicated men who stop for nothing when the siren sounds.

These firefighters leave their jobs in industry and other places of employment. Praise must be given to their employers who, with consideration for the community and safety of lives, allow the men to depart from work without severance of pay.

Firefighting equipment must be serviced and the Acton Department is continuously striving to keep everything up to date. From time to time, Council is asked to approve lengths of hose to replace worn ones, purchase a new piece of equipment which is necessary for coping with fires.

**Constant Maintenance**  
All equipment stored in the fire hall must be maintained at all times. Trucks must be ready to roll at a moment's notice. Work crews are picked for these chores on a monthly basis.

Once the trucks have returned to the hall, it means the men have to remove wet hose and replace it with dry, check and clean all the equipment in readiness for the next call. Constant checking, weekly inspections and the running of equipment are only a few of the chores the 30 volunteers perform.

**Train and Study**  
One of the most important buildings in town—the fire hall—is kept spick and span by these men. Firefighters are able to enjoy some recreation by equipping the meeting room with television, dart boards, card tables and a coffee urn. Does this sound as though the back room is nothing but a recreation centre? On the contrary, this room is used for meetings, training and a place for firefighters to sit quietly and study books

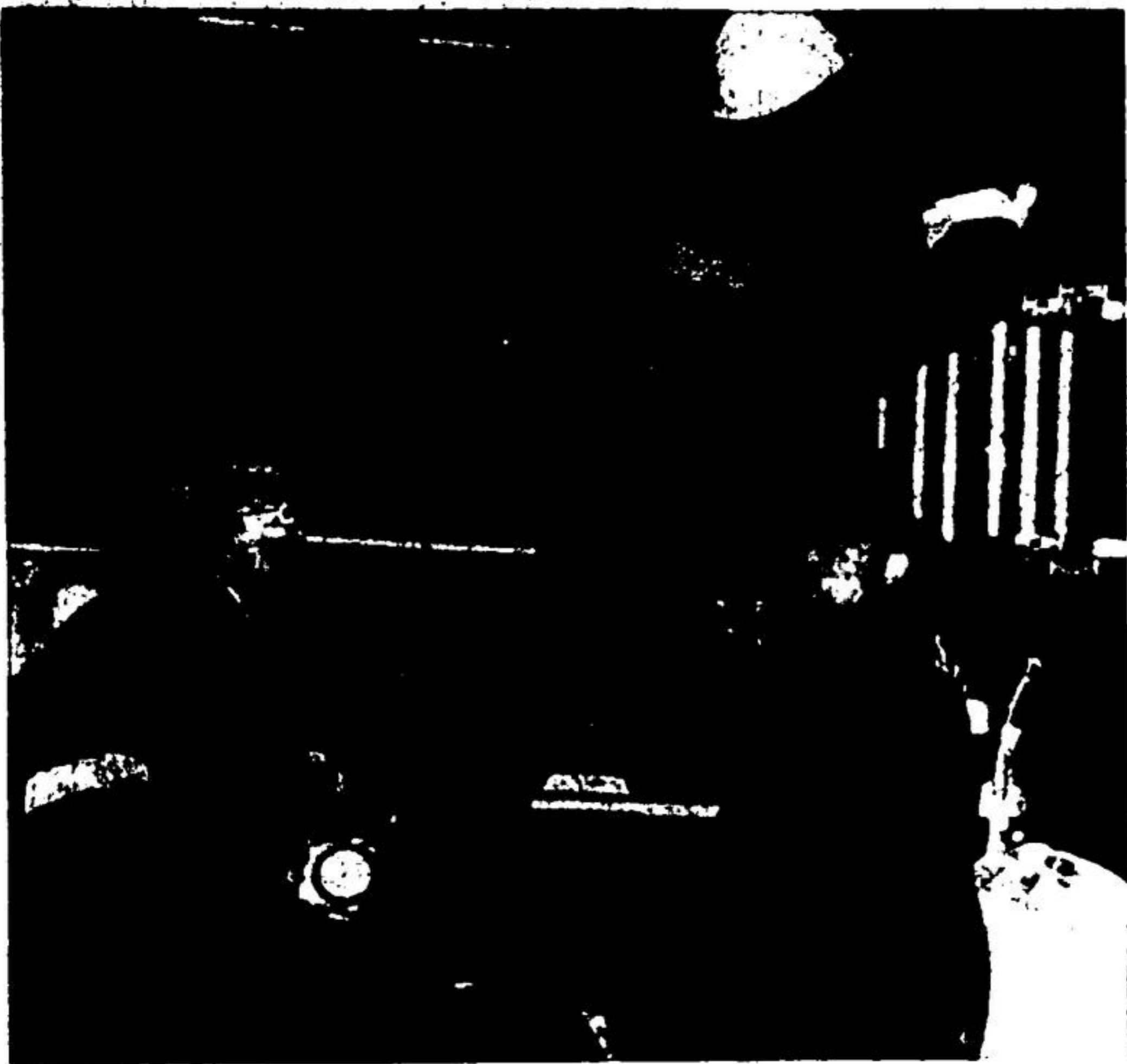
on the latest methods of fighting fires and saving lives.

**Professional Job**  
Firefighting today is a profession and Acton rates among the best in having well-trained volunteer firefighters, ready and willing to drop whatever they are doing, race to the hall, don coats and boots, and board the truck to fight a blaze.

With the advance in toxic and high volatile chemicals and plastics, a firefighter's headaches are increased but Acton volunteers are fully trained to cope with all types of fires.

The firefighters also find time to help children in the community and have sponsored hockey and baseball teams and encouraged youngsters to take a first aid course.

It is the duty of each and every citizen to prevent fires—not just during Fire Prevention Week but every week in the year.



DEPUTY CHIEF Bern Van Fleet watches as firefighters Bill Spielvogel and Don Van Fleet make a hose connection on one of the fire trucks during a practice session. October 4 to October 10 is Fire Prevention Week and firefighters will be busy demonstrating equipment, conducting fire inspections at schools and industries. Sunday winds up the week with a church parade to Trinity United Church, Acton.

### "We Left Them Alone Only a Few Minutes"

This newspaper has said before, and it says it again: for a compassionate community there is no sadder news than the death by fire of children in the home.

And the shadow deepens when the headlines read: "We left them alone only a few minutes..."

For the stricken family, the shadow of its wanton neglect will last for a lifetime.

Fire is no accident. Fires are caused by stupid, unthinking carelessness.

**Criminal Code of Canada**  
To parents and guardians of the young let it be known that, besides various provincial laws, the Criminal Code of Canada (section 149) reads:

"Everyone who unlawfully abandons or exposes a child who is under the age of 10 years, so

that his life is or is likely to be endangered or his health is or likely to be permanently injured, is guilty of an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for two years."

People have a duty to their children, to the community and to themselves to see that the youngsters are properly looked after.

### Why Gamble For a Dime?

An overfused electric circuit invites fire. Hundreds of thousands, perhaps even a million homes in Canada, may have the wrong fuse (costing less than a dime) in a socket.

This alarming conclusion develops from a survey of home inspection findings by fire departments teams in representative cities. For example, the fire chiefs of eight communities in one metropolitan area with a population of over a million report that about one quarter of the homes inspected were found to be overfused. Even more disturbing is the report from a municipality of 25,000 in the Eastern Townships—only 15% of homes visited were found to be properly fused.

There being nearly 5,000,000 homes in the nation, a 25% condition maintained across the board would make the projection 1,250,000. Utility and industry authorities consulted are in agreement with the estimate of the problem. They, too express concern over the end use of a small but vital safeguard.

### Defective Wiring Blamed for Blaze

How often in a news report of a fire, sometimes involving the loss of life, are we told that defective wiring may have been responsible.

Of course, there's another aspect. Maybe the wiring was asked to do more than it should, by being overfused. If you still do not comprehend call the Fire Chief, or an electrician or the utility, or ask a knowledgeable neighbor and make sure that appliances and cords are in good shape.

Check your home right now to ensure that your fuses are in their proper sockets.

For less than a dime, why gamble with fire?

### IOU Of Fire

Every ten years wasteful Canadians run up a staggering IOU in fire destruction of more than \$1,000,000,000.

Every Canadian in the long run has to chip in and pay off the debt, through insurance premiums. Else the victims take it on the chin.

An obligation not so easily squared is the terrible human toll of life by fire—more than 5,000 victims, the bulk of the dead being children and aged. It's worth thinking about.



NOT FOR REAL! Merely a practice session for firefighters Herb Dodds and Jack Pink as they try on the smoke mask at the fire hall. Saturday of next week will be "Open House" for everyone to become acquainted with firefighting equipment at the fire hall.

### Don't YOU Be the Cause! Help Prevent Fires Now

As we once again observe Fire Prevention Week, we are reminded that last year, Canada racked up yet another set of scary statistics. Why?

Why did FIRE cause a property loss total of almost \$150,000,000?

Why did FIRE snuff out the lives of over 500 Canadians?

Why were there well over 80,000 FIRES in Canada?

Why were most of these FIRES in homes?

Why? Why? Why? There is a simple answer to this question and a simple solution to the problem of FIRE in Canada, and it is the common, three-letter word YOU!

Three out of every four FIRES are the result of human carelessness! They should never have occurred, but because someone was careless, they did! Those persons that experienced these fires, if they survived, won't have to learn their lesson again but how about YOU?

**Children Alone**  
Are YOU prepared to profit from the sad experience of others and really do something about fire prevention, or are YOU going to insist, as do most Canadians, on waiting until you learn your own bitter lesson?

Over and over again, we see headlines that read something like this: "Children Die as Parents Unable to Enter Burning Home." Why were the parents away from the home in the first place? And, if they simply had to go next door to play cards, WHY wasn't a competent baby-sitter hired and told what to do in case of fire?

**Expensive Wait**  
"Frayed electrical appliance cords are dangerous," repeat the Fire Prevention experts, so what

have YOU done about the tray cord on YOUR electric kettle, steam iron or toaster? If YOU are waiting "just a little bit longer, until it really needs replacing," it could be the most expensive wait YOU will ever experience!

**Don't Overfuse!**  
What is overfusing? It is the use of a 20, 25 or 30 ampere plug fuse in an ordinary household branch circuit. Such a circuit is one serving lamps, ardo, TV and other small appliances.

Why is the use of a 20, 25 or 30 ampere fuse in an ordinary circuit a fire hazard? Because it engenders a sense of false security. It does not "blow" when the "load" is dangerously increased. The wiring heats. Heat plus fuel plus oxygen means fire. If the wiring is concealed, fire may start in the wall. In minutes it may be out of control, perhaps tragically.

Because the fuse is the electrical watchdog, overfusing is akin to muzzling the watchdog. Or cutting out the safety valve.

Says the Fire Chief of a large prairie city with 25,000 homes: "In most older homes where we found overloaded circuits, practically all were using 30 amp fuses, and even pennies and tin-tail behind the fuses!" The fire service director of a Quebec city of 35,000 people reports that 60% of homes are overfused.

About 20,000,000 fuses are made each year in Canada. Of these, 15,000,000 are 15s. The 5,000,000 of the 20, 25 and 30 ratings are designed for use with stoves, dryers, sump pumps, home workshops, water heaters and special installations.

"Clean out attics and basements," say the experts, so what about YOUR attic or basement? All that junk that has been lying around for a donkey's years is nothing but a perfect breeding place for FIRE. Those old books and magazines for instance; when do you think you are going to read them? That old checkered chair and those boxes of baby clothes, to say nothing of the old window blinds and lamp shades that have been in the attic for the last ten years!

**Quit Junk**  
Stop kidding yourself! If an item has been dumped in the basement or the attic and has not been brought out or looked for in over a year, the odds are 100 to 1 that it never will be, so do yourself a favor and get rid of it! It will do away with a serious fire hazard and besides, it will give you more room for this year's accumulation of junk!

Finally, let's mention smoking. Every smoker has, at one time or another, experienced drowsiness while smoking, and has usually suffered minor singeing as a result. They are the lucky ones! Our cemeteries are filled with others who didn't wake up in time and became charred statistics in our FIRE record.

Nobody could help these people, the responsibility was theirs and theirs alone. They had most certainly heard all the warnings, just as YOU have. They chose to ignore them, secure in the ridiculous assumption that "it can't happen to me." Just for the record, it can happen to anyone, anyone, that is, who is foolish enough to ignore the warnings and who considers fire prevention as something strictly for others!

### List Firefighters

Acton Volunteer Fire Department—John Turkosz and Grant Withers, ment is rated second to none in its class. According to reports of fires last year, the firefighters can boast of an enviable record among other fire departments.

For the most efficient firefighting, the department is divided into three companies. A captain is appointed to head each one. Listed below are the names of the firefighters in each company. All are under the direction of Fire Chief Mick Holmes and Deputy Fire Chief Bern Van Fleet.

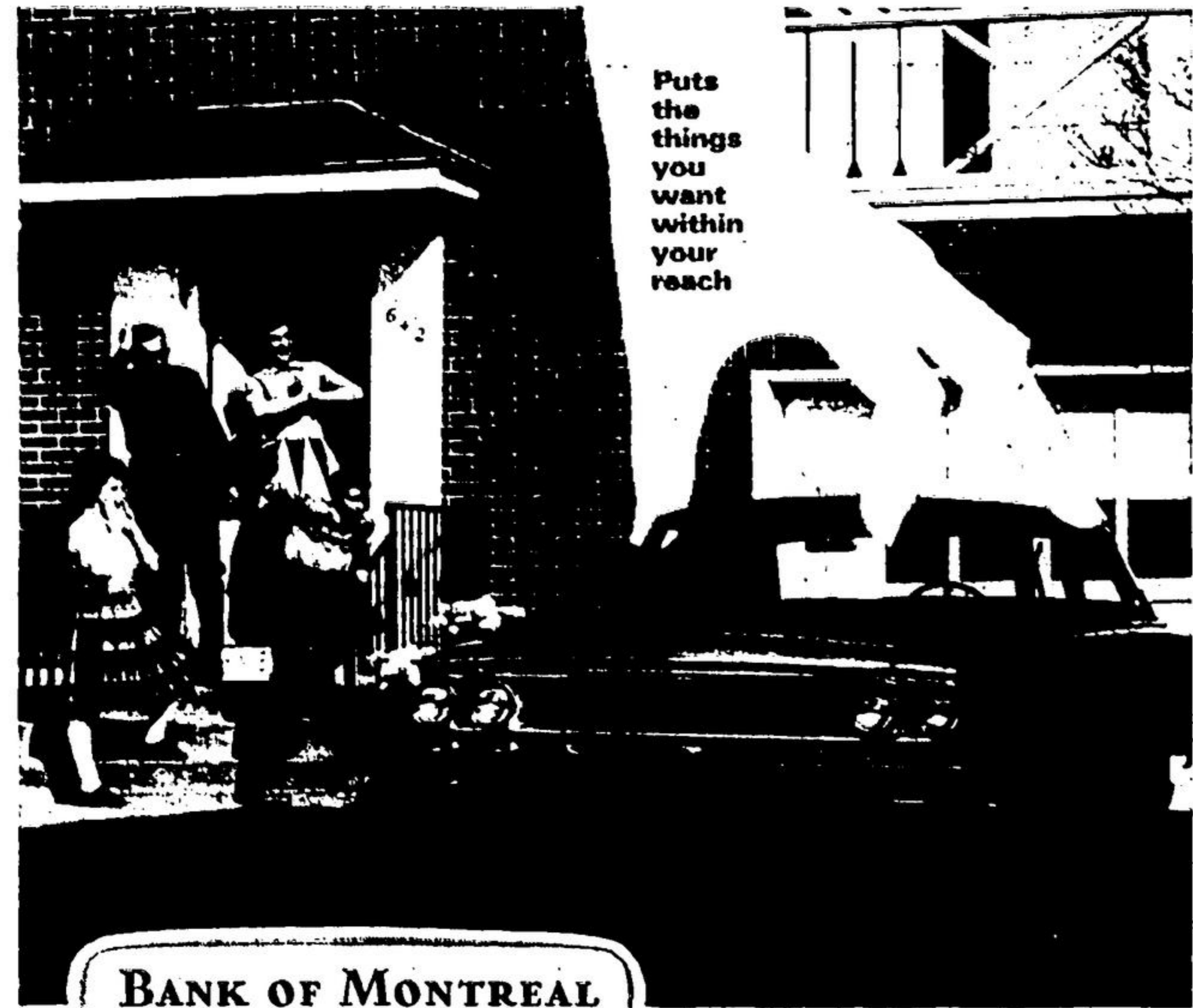
"A" Company: Captain All Duby, Don Van Fleet, Doug McEachern, Lloyd McIntyre, Dorson Frizzell, Leo Synott, Herb Dodds,

### Fire Strikes Every Week

Every week fire strikes at more than 1,000 Canadian homes. In terms of dollars that means a yearly loss of below \$30,000,000 although the typical house fire averages under \$500 in damage.

But the truth is that three quarters of all fire deaths occur in those homes. And not only deaths, for hundreds of Canadians are horribly burned and often permanently scarred in these fires.

Fires rarely just "happen." Nine out of every ten fires are the result of carelessness and neglect and the victims are often trapped by their own ignorance. They might have gotten out if they had known how.



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