

The Acton Free Press

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Twelve Pages—Ten Cents

**Snow
Blocks
Lane**

Fire destroys home, contents firefighters powerless to aid

Acton firefighters could only stand helplessly as the farm home of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Craven, on the third line five miles north of Acton, was completely destroyed by fire Sunday-night.

Both the rural fire truck and a snow plow were unable to get up the long lane to the house. Deep snow plugged the lane up solid and prevented traffic.

Mr. and Mrs. Craven had just returned from a vacation in Florida early that afternoon and had no opportunity to get the lane open. Both they and their three children aged seven, six and four, were in bed when Mrs. Craven smelled smoke. The couple bundled up the children and carried them out to a car and then notified the fire department.

Acton firefighters responded quickly to the alarm and arrived on the scene about 10:30 p.m. The blaze looked to be confined to the rear part of the house and firefighters figured they could have saved the front part of the remodelled home if they could have got the number close. However, flames soon enveloped the entire structure and it burned right to the ground with most of the furniture and possessions.



A FEW POSSESSIONS were salvaged from the Craven home but most of the couple's furniture and clothing was destroyed by flames—(Staff Photo)

The blaze was also fuelled by two oil storage tanks, one in the cellar and another at the side of the house. Huge logs which comprised the original front part of the home were the last to burn. The Cravens had just moved

into the farm, formerly the George Mitchell place and commonly known as the old Harding farm, last April.

Mr. Craven said he had no idea what caused the blaze.

He remembers setting the alarm clock about 9:25 p.m. He was in bed only about 20 or 25 minutes when his wife detected smoke. The Cravens, with the help of some neighbors, got a few possessions out but most of the contents were destroyed along with the house.

The family spent the night at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Eckerich, R. R. 2, Acton, directly across the road. They got enough clothes together to

the children were able to attend school on Monday morning.

Fortunately, the wind took the intense heat and sparks from the blazing house away from the barn and other outbuildings. A covey of ducks disturbed by the fire took refuge in a snowbank.

Spectators came from miles around, attracted by the glow.

A small plow mounted on a pickup truck owned by Norm Turner cleared the laneway, and later the township truck widened the road but by this time the house was beyond hope of saving.

Firefighters stood by until the house had burned itself out early Monday morning.

FIRE COMPLETELY destroyed the house and contents of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Craven, R.R. 2, Acton, Sunday evening. Acton firefighters could do nothing to save the farm-home into which the Cravens moved last spring. Snow blocked the long laneway, making access to everything except pedestrian traffic and farm tractors impossible. Mr. and Mrs. Craven had just returned that afternoon from a holiday trip to Florida. Cause of the fire is unknown—(Staff Photo)



Loose Volkswagen

In spite of the slippery, treacherous roads, Acton detachment of the O.P.P. reported only two minor accidents the past week, one of them unusual.

The first occurred at the Glenlea plaza Friday, January 3 at 9:45 p.m. when a '67 Dodge taxi driven by Don Grein and a '69 Pontiac operated by Patricia

Bowles of R.R. 1, Limehouse, collided.

Police said the taxi was parked and the Bowles vehicle, backing up, failed to see it. Constable Nick Farion estimated damage to the taxi at \$30 and \$20 to the Bowles car.

One of the most unusual accidents ever to occur here happened on Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. on Main St. S.

Two vehicles, a '63 Chev. owned by James Morrison, R.R. 1, Acton, and a '60 Volkswagen owned by William Dusan, 506 Glenlake Ave., Toronto, collided. A third vehicle, unknown, was also involved.

The Morrison car was parked on Main St. S. and the Dusan Volkswagen was parked on Mill St. E. behind another car. Police said the third vehicle locked bumpers with the Volkswagen unknown to the driver and pulled away with it in tow.

The small car went part way down the street where it came loose and smashed into the Morrison car.

Constable Nick Farion assessed damage to the trunk lid of the Volkswagen at \$75 and estimated \$50 damage to the Morrison vehicle.

The unidentified driver of the third car went merrily on his way apparently unaware of the accident in which he was involved.

Appoint committees, name priorities at inaugural meeting Acton council

Four new members joined Acton council at their inaugural meeting Monday in the council chambers. Taking the oath of office for the first time were Bill Coats, Peter Marks and Orval Chapman. Jack Greer returns to council after an absence of some years.

Clerk-treasurer Joe Hurst also administered the official oath to returned mayor Les Duby; reeve Dr. Frank Oakes; deputy-reeve Ted Tyler Jr. and councillors G. W. McKenzie and Earl Masales. (Missing from the new council are the two former members who challenged the mayor, Bert Hinton and Bob Drinkwater, former councillor Bill Williams and retired member Charlie Perry.)

After the declaration of office and Oath of Allegiance Rev. Harry Dawson read Scripture and led in prayers. He brought greetings from Acton Ministerial Association, saying they hoped they might be of assistance.

Only observer at the meeting was deputy-clerk Grant Usher.

With new name plates at each place and an absence of year-end files, the meeting included many explanations for the benefit of the four new members. Mayor Duby recommended all the council appointments during a prepared report, explaining he had given each one considerable thought. All but one were accepted by the council.

This was the Parking Authority, which had been suggested by the mayor to include five council members. Chairman of No. 2 committee,

Earl Masales, submitted it would be much simpler to meet if the parking authority comprised the members of his committee, which has jurisdiction over roads. This was agreed to.

The mayor explained the committee system.

No. 1 committee is for the administrative side of council operations, and meets the first and third Mondays if required.

On No. 1 committee, with the first named as chairman, are administration chairman G. W. McKenzie, finance and personnel chairman Dr. Oakes, assessment and development chairman Bill Coats, welfare and property chairman Peter Marks.

No. 2 committee, which meets the first and third Tuesdays, is for general works and maintenance. First named is

chairman, and members are roads and maintenance chairman Earl Masales, sewer and water Ted Tyler, lights and sanitation Jack Greer, fire and police Orval Chapman.

On the budget committee: Oakes, Masales, McKenzie, Tyler, Duby.

On the court of revision, which meets periodically to deal with tax rebates; chairman Duby, McKenzie, Coats, Greer, Chapman.

Dr. Oakes is again council's representative on the band committee.

Named to the board of parks management and recreation are Earl Masales and Peter Marks.

On development commission are Coats, McKenzie, Tyler, Greer and Duby.

On planning board are McKenzie and Masales.

Named representative to Hydro is Mayor Duby with Dr. Oakes as substitute, and to Library Board the mayor with Orval Chapman as substitute.

Priority items were recommended by the mayor for the various chairmen to consider before budget e by April 1.

For administration, with chairman McKenzie, the mayor suggested special meetings on bylaws be held in January, that the subdividers agreement be completed; and that the retention of legal aid drafting schedules for agreements be considered.

For Dr. Oakes' finance and personnel, he recommended

Ask by-law

The Free Press was informed by Mayor Les Duby this morning (Wednesday) that a special meeting of the roads committee of council was called last night to discuss the acute snow removal problem.

The road committee resolved that a recommendation go to the next meeting of council Tuesday for approval of a local highways and sidewalk maintenance by-law (Highways refers to all local thoroughfares, intersections and sidewalks as defined in the Act).

According to the Highway Traffic Act and Sections 476 and 379 of the Municipal Act, the mayor said the committee now found it necessary to ask for the by-law, "due to an obvious lack of co-operation from many individuals to assist the town in its snow removal program." Certain liabilities have been placed on the town due to improper placing of snow or debris from private properties on town thoroughfares.

The mayor said council was always reluctant to impose unnecessary by-laws but he felt the lack of co-operation made it imperative. "We now have no recourse but to recommend to council passing of the proposed by-law with added penalty as a deterrent which will be effective if and when it is approved by council," he stated.

Town workmen were engaged in removing snow from the main business section of town Tuesday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Priority is given to this section of town since most traffic is generated in these areas.



IN THE MAYOR'S CHAIR, Les Duby presided Monday for the inaugural meeting of council. Left to right seated are Councillor G. McKenzie, Reeve F. Oakes, the Mayor, Deputy Reeve T. Tyler Jr., Councillor J. Greer; left to right standing, Councillors E. Masales, W. Coats, O. Chapman, P. Marks, clerk-administrator J. Hurst.

Two new teachers in public schools

Two public school teachers move soon from classrooms to the new resource centres. Mrs. Kavanaugh will make the switch in the Robert Little school and Miss Sandy McDonald of Oakville is teaching now in Mrs. Kavanaugh's place.

Mrs. Smith will be in charge of the new M. Z. Bennett school library. Mrs. Grant Usher (wife of the new deputy clerk) has been engaged to fill the teaching vacancy.

J. Krul is the new school caretaker.

Fire hydrants out of sight; help sought

Fire chief Mick Holmes appeals this week to householders and business owners to help the firefighters locate the town's fire hydrants.

There are about 126 red hydrants throughout town, but most of them are completely buried beneath banks of snow this week.

If people within easy reach of the hydrants would shovel them out, firefighters could find them immediately in the event of a fire.

To shovel out the hydrants at your own home is for your own protection, the fire chief pointed out this week. It could save the firefighters precious time...it could even save a home.

The town workmen have been extremely busy with a burden of snowplowing as well as their regular work, and they have not been able to dig out each hydrant separately.

O.P.P. report

Tickets, removal in store for cars left on streets

General occurrences during the O.P.P. reporting week of Dec. 29, 1968, to Jan. 4, 1969, show a variety, if nothing else.

One break and enter and theft was reported and is under investigation, as is a report of a stolen car on New Year's Eve. Liquor charges, malicious damage and the removal of three vehicles from town streets to allow snow removal, make up the remainder of the occurrences.

The town cruiser has patrolled 429 miles during the week, while the six man detachment worked a total of 168 duty hours.

One minor traffic accident was investigated. Five motorists were issued traffic summonses, and three more were warned for infractions of the Highway Traffic Act.

There were no charges of impaired or drunk driving laid by the detachment over the holiday season; in fact, generally speaking, the town was quiet.

There were no Acton cases slated for Magistrate's court on Dec. 30, 1968, at Milton.

During the holiday season the town got its first real winter

storm. The snow removal equipment was out in full force trying to clean up the streets so traffic could move around. Some vehicles were left sitting in the middle of the streets, locked up tight, and others were partially off the streets. Three of these vehicles were removed at the owners' expense.

No doubt there is a parking shortage in certain areas of town. However, if the cars interfering with snow removal they will be towed away at the owners' expense. Cars left parked on the town streets overnight can and will be issued with parking tags, during the winter months.

With so much snow piled on the side of the streets, we would ask motorists to pull in as close as possible to the snow bank when parking, otherwise the street becomes a narrow little alley in which traffic accidents so easily occur.

Dances fill both halls

New Year's Eve dances at both the Legion and Music Centre drew capacity crowds last week.

The band runs the dance at the music centre with the band auxiliary preparing the midnight meal. About 75 couples attended.

There were many house parties as well, with cars out on the streets well on into the night.

Recover car

A car stolen from the Station Hotel parking lot on New Year's day was recovered by Milton O.P.P. on the 4th line of Esquering.

The vehicle, a '58 Ford, was owned by Stewart Richardson.

Weather outside frightful

Council discusses snow

My telephone is turning to jelly on the wall, groaned Mayor Les Duby at council.

Snow removal was the subject as members nodded in agreement at the many problems while more tons of snow dropped outside.

A demonstration of a snow blower will be arranged as soon as possible. Milton has agreed to send up one of their two blowers for Acton to test. Another blower will be brought from Elmira to be tried out here.

The work staff is to be commended. They do the best they can and they know that despite their best efforts there'll be criticism, said the mayor,

echoed by councillor McKenzie.

It's inevitable that walks and driveways are filled by the plows, yet the town superintendent is being "harassed" by calls of complaint. "We have to determine what's the responsibility of private enterprise," said the mayor. "It's ridiculous to keep answering irrational calls."

He explained that the nine town men, collecting garbage in the midst of their plowing program, were suddenly faced, with opening two graves. It took half a day to even get through the cemetery to the grave sites.

The plows have been damaged on manhole covers and the tracks.

Extra chloride was purchased to add to the salt—an expensive proposition—and almost half of the stockpile of sand is used up already.

Councillor Coats inquired about the plowing pattern, wondering if churches could be plowed out for Sundays. The mayor explained priority is given to the shopping area, then the fire hall and doctors' offices. A regular pattern is followed so there will be a minimum of overlapping.

One of the police officers was particularly concerned about the

corner of Mill and Young, where high banks impede the view of school children crossing.

Asked about the town's previous snowblower—purchased while councillor Greer was on council—the mayor explained the town now has proper equipment to run one. Despite improvements, the price of snowblowers has come down considerably, Mr. Greer was surprised to learn. "That's a switch," he said.

"It takes people from out of town to bring to our attention that our streets are better, that the streets in other places," the mayor mused.