

Rubber dam fails, floods

A malfunction in the equipment designed to keep the rubber "fabridam" at Scotch Block Dam filled with air is blamed for the flash flood which occurred below the dam in Esqueving Township early Wednesday morning of last week.

Monetary damage was minimal because the creek below the dam flows through a large valley, but many residents were alarmed when the flood water started creeping toward low-lying homes. The water overflowed both the Third and Fourth Lines of Esqueving when narrow culverts could not cope with the sudden load.

Conservation officials estimate they lost over 88,000,000 gallons of water in two and a half hours. The level of the reservoir behind the dam dropped over three feet.

Stops quickly
Flooding began at approximately 6 a.m. but by 8.30 a.m. Authority staff had filled the rubber balloon with water and the flooding stopped as quickly as it had started. At its peak, the dam was releasing an estimated 12,000 cubic feet of water per second.

Problems apparently began around 6 a.m. when the air pressure in the fabridam dropped and the pressure of the water in the 130-acre lake created a "notch" in the top of the dam. Water pressure opened the notch to a width of 20 feet. Conservation Authority technical planner William Warwick said the dam is inflated with air in the winter months and water in warmer months. Engineers haven't been able to figure out why the air pressure dropped that morning.

Ironically, officials were awaiting a new manual from the Los Angeles-based company which sold HRCA the fabridam, which describes how to reset the limits and adjust the controls of the machinery at the dam, Warwick said.

Heavy runoff
Compounding the problem was an influx of water into the dam on Tuesday, caused by warmer temperatures and spring runoff.

When the problem was reported, HRCA superintendent Y. (Slim) Kangas rushed to the site and adjusted the controls to fill the balloon with water. It took only a few minutes to get the flow of water stopped.

Worst flooding occurred at the Third Line beside Boston Church, where water overflowed the road on both sides of a bridge. The Irving and D. Miller families were stranded in their homes for a few hours as the end of their laneway was flooded with a foot of water.

Flood waters also overflowed the Fourth Line but traffic was still able to get through. One farm lane was flooded there as well. At the Schreiber home on Five Sideroad, water lapped 10 feet from the west corner of the house.

At Highway 25 waters lapped at the side of the highway and filled a low field and parking lot at the nearby Chudleigh Nurseries, but the water was never high enough to meet the road.

Several small trees and stumps were uprooted as the water inundated lands south of the dam. Some fences and one footbridge crossing the stream were ripped out. HRCA has had few complaints of damage, however.

The "crest" of the flood water took all day to reach Lake Ontario and the further downstream it went, the slower it went, Warwick said. The flooding reached most of the areas in Esqueving Township within an hour after it started but it took until 2.20 p.m. to reach Derry Rd. in North Oakville and it wasn't at Drumquin until 4 p.m.

Photos helpful
Engineers are still studying the mechanism at the dam to see why the air pressure dropped. Photos of the flood taken by representatives of this paper are apparently the only pictures available and they are being studied for clues to the reason for the malfunction, and the extent of the flooding. (Two Milton Champion photographers and one from The Acton Free Press were at the scene early Wednesday morning and took about 40 pictures of the flooding at its peak.)

The east branch of the Sixteen Mile Creek meanders through Esqueving and Oakville on its way to the lake. The Scotch Block Dam and Reservoir is a million dollar project, opened last September to control stream flows and provide an adequate summer flow. Golf courses and market gardeners downstream use water from the creek. Located just below the escarpment at the rear of Tangmere Mushroom Co. east of Highway 25 and north of 10 Sideroad, the dam creates a long reservoir that stretches east past the Third Line.

Gauge reading
A stream gauge on the creek where it crosses Highway 25 between Five and 10 Sideroads indicates the brunt of the flood reached there about 6.15 or 6.20 a.m., Warwick said. He estimates it would take 15 or 20 minutes for the onrushing water to reach that point from the dam.

Authority officials said there was little chance of another flood happening while the fabridam is filled with water. Engineers are checking the controls to make sure no further malfunctions occur.

Main flooding occurred in the first few miles downstream. By the time it reached Oakville lands, the crest had dissipated and flooding was minimal.

Esqueving Township roads department superintendent Bud Snow said some repairs were necessary to the Third and Fourth Lines but there was no estimate on how much it would cost to put the roads back in shape.



WINNER OF THE ACTON Curling Club's three-day Hospitality Bonspiel was the Taylor rink with curlers from Acton, Milton and Brampton on the roster. The two Bill Taylors are in front, the Acton one on the left, Milton skip on the right. Back are lead Carol Walker, Brampton, bonspiel sponsor Stan Bowen of Bowen and Zuccala and Barbara Durman, Milton, vice skip. The spiel was heralded as one of the best ever held in Acton.

Three day Spiel Taylored

By Bob MacArthur
The past weekend saw a three day Hospitality Bonspiel being played at the Acton Curling Club, through the enterprise of Stan Bowen a club member, the real

estate firm of Bowen and Zuccala sponsored the spiel, which started Friday evening and continued Saturday with two and Sunday with one game. Saturday evening, a supper and

party was held in the club house. Sunday morning, before the curling, a champagne breakfast was served.

As one curler said: "Oh Boy, the eats, both Saturday and Sunday." Of course that came from one of the younger curlers, who does not have a diet problem.

This spiel was to acquaint outsiders with the facilities that are offered at the Acton club. A number of outside curlers took part in the event. A couple who came the farthest, from Lorraine, Que., were the guests of the Drinkwaters.

Taylored win
Taking the unique trophy and individual trophies were the Taylor team. Bill Taylor of Milton skipped the top team in the first draw and won the trophies. With him was Barbara Durman, Milton, Bill Taylor, Acton, and Carol Walker, Brampton.

Second top team in the first draw was skipped by Jerry Branigan with the third place team skipped by Ken Marchment.

In the second draw, the top team was Jerry Sproat, Carol Anne Sproat, Jeff Sproat and Denise Drinkwater.

Second place went to the team skipped by Claude Cook. Third prize was won by Dr. Joe Vukovich and his in-laws.



MONDAY NIGHT DRAW CHAMPIONSHIP AT THE Acton Curling Club went to Ron Cooksley's rink. Front row l. to r. are Ethel Nicol and Nan Hurst. Standing are skip Ron Cooksley and Bruce McArthur, who substituted on the final night for regular rink member Bud Ennis. —(Photo by D. Gibbons)

Who won the game?

Acton A-B novices wound up a most successful hockey season by defeating their parents 5-4 in the annual father and son game Sunday afternoon. At least that was the score, according to the novices.

Astute observers on the parents' side thought they saw 5-5 on the scoreboard at the end of the game.

Referees Jean McPhail and Dodie McGilloway could not be reached, before press time to hand down a decision on the final score.

One of the best looking units on the ice for the parents consisted of Donna Neeley, Doreen McIntyre, Doreen Malcolm and Lenore Vickery.

Kerwin McPhail added a

valuable bit of dippy-doodle to the parents' lineup and Lloyd "J. C." McIntyre, Don "Donkey" Van Fleet were towers of strength behind the blueline.

Dave Neeley and John Bonnell shared goaltending duties for the novices.

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Need help for girls' lacrosse

Women are needed to help with the newly-formed girls' lacrosse league in town.

At a meeting in the community centre Thursday night, Howard Dwyer and Bob Turkosz of the junior Rams explained the fundamentals of the game to about 12 girls.

Organizer Jim James says another meeting will be held very soon. He hopes to get more help from women interested in serving as coaches, managers or trainers.

GENERAL MEETING
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ACTON MINOR BASEBALL
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at
Acton Library, 7:30 p.m.
Everyone Most Welcome
Including Interested Ladies

LEGION HOUSE LEAGUE Hockey Banquet and Trophy Presentation

for
Atoms, Novices and Pee Wees only

at the
Acton Legion Auditorium

Saturday, April 15th at 1.30 P.M.

Bantam and Midget Banquet will be held
at the Legion, Monday, April 24th



ACTON ROADRUNNERS are improving with every outing in their exhibition basketball schedule. Team members are front row l. to r. Baginski, Guy Payne, Steve "Beano" Barry Payne, David Galbraith, Bernie Bennett. —(Photo by D. Gibbons)

REGISTRATION

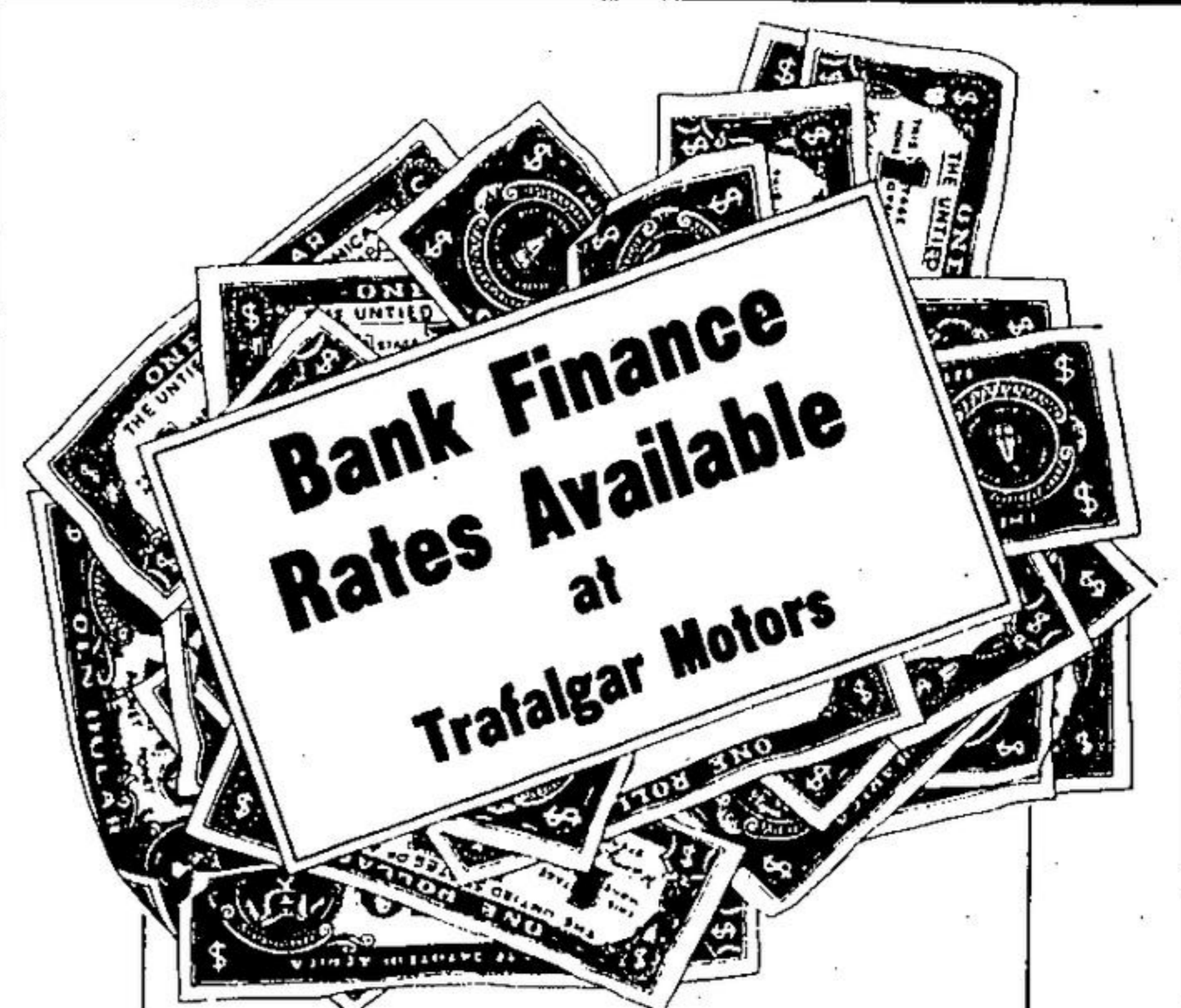
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