

The Acton Free Press

Legion hall plans set

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Town men, wife rescue man buried in sand

Completely buried under two feet of sand in a trench, Gordon Varcoe was frantically dug out Thursday by rescuers including his wife, Brent Marshall and John van der Brink. Police corporal Bob Arbour, who arrived when the man was uncovered to his waist, credits the quick action of the three with saving the man's life. "It would've been a matter of seconds," the corporal said. Gordon Varcoe, R.R. 2, Rockwood, had asked his wife to come along when he worked in the seven foot deep trench, 12 to 15 feet long, where he was rebuilding a sewer line for Rev. and Mrs. S. Thoman at the corner of Acton Blvd. and Mill St. E. Suddenly sand caved in

around him up to his shoulders as he leaned over cleaning the last pipe. His wife leapt down into the trench, cleared the sand away from his face and ran for help. Town workmen Brent Marshall, John van der Brink and Roy Arnott were putting in new culverts at the high school; over the noise of machines Mrs. Varcoe screamed to them to come and help.

No sign
Brent Marshall heard first, grabbed his shovel and ran with her; when they reached the trench another cave-in had occurred and the man had completely disappeared. Mrs. Varcoe showed where her husband had been.

Marshall jumped in the trench and began to dig, followed closely by John van der Brink. In seconds the two men uncovered two wiggling fingers with their shovels. Hearing his muffled voice below them they scrambled at the sand with their fingers until he was able to breathe.

Roy Arnott consoled Mrs. Varcoe and their two young sons, and kept arriving people away as the two men dug frantically.

Mrs. Varcoe had raced into the Thoman house and called police as soon as she saw the town men needed more help. They arrived in five minutes with other town staff but would likely have been too late if the other town men hadn't been close by.

Can't sleep
Mrs. Varcoe recalled the "awful experience" and said ruefully on Tuesday that neither she nor her husband sleep too well yet!

Her husband was pulled from the sand and, feeling a sore back where the damp dirt had struck him as he was bending over, he lay on the ground until the ambulance arrived. However at Guelph, nothing was broken and he was able to leave after 5 p.m.

New trousers
Worst casualty as it turned out, was his clothes. Mrs. Varcoe went out to buy him new pants and socks while he was in hospital. His pants were in shreds, his socks and shoes soaked and filled with mud. He arrived home safe and sound—in his sock feet. He is badly bruised and spent a day or two in bed, but is better now.

Town men under Alf Dudy finished his work for him at the Thoman house Thursday. He was just finishing the connection for a new sewer line.

Things would have been worse in a minute or two, when he would have been crouched at the bottom of the trench to make the last connection. As it was, he was slightly bent over with one pipe on a piece of wood.

His father Bill Varcoe, who lives next door at R.R. 2, Rockwood, completed the backfilling.

The Varcoes have six children. She often helps him with his work, and in the afternoons must take along the second youngest boy, Gordon Jr., five, when he's not at school, and their youngest, Jason, four. They watched in tears with their mother as the near-tragedy occurred.

The Varcoes this week have great praise for the men who saved his life. Gordon has experienced cave-ins before over years of work, but never this serious.

Brent Marshall, too, has some knowledge of minor cave-ins. "When it was all over," he said, "we got to thinking about what could have happened!"



MONTHS OF PLANNING and preparation led to a happy occasion Friday night when shelves were stocked at the Esqueving township library, which is temporarily being housed in the Esqueving Community Hall in Stewarttown. Madge Alwood (left) of the South Central Region Library System, who played an important role in establishing the

library helps library board members l. to r. Ruth Wilson, Joan Lister, Edna Mae Markham and Ann Berry. The library will be open in the hall Monday afternoons from 1 until 3 and Wednesday evenings from 7 until 9. Halton East MPP Hon. Jim Snow was a special guest at the open house Friday night. (D. Gibbons Photo)

Guelph parish for Rev. Dawson

Sunday morning at Harvest Thanksgiving service the Rev. Harry Dawson announced to his parishioners that he will be leaving here the end of October. He begins his duties as rector of the Church of St. James the Apostle in Guelph November 1. Mr. Dawson read the letter from Bishop Bothwell making the announcement.



Rev. H. Dawson

Mr. and Mrs. Dawson have been in Acton five and a half years and have two daughters, Sherry who is six and Alison, two. They won't leave Acton until the children have enjoyed Halloween here.

Involved
The family have become closely involved in the life of the community and will be much missed. Best wishes will go with them. She has been active in the church and curial here. Mr. Dawson is head of the Ministerial Association, sings with the Legion Choralists,

Quarry worker hurt in fall

After falling head first to a pit floor, Industmin employee Hilton Batchelor of Rockwood was taken by ambulance to Guelph General Hospital. He is suffering from a broken wrist, broken arm, slight concussion, damage to his shoulder and neck, and several broken ribs.

The accident occurred last Thursday afternoon at 4:45 p.m. Mr. Batchelor was replacing a door on a P and H shovel at the quarry face, working from the bucket of a front end loader.

As he lay unconscious, Industmin employees were unable to obtain the services of a doctor in Acton after calling both medical centres. The ambulance from Guelph took the injured man to hospital. Mr. Batchelor is a lead hand maintenance mechanic with 10 to 12 years' service. Ironically, Mr. Batchelor is a friend of Gordon Varcoe, buried in a cave-in in town about half an hour before. They had both worked together at Industmin several years ago.

Planning board OKs property changes

Three locations on Mill and Main Sts. will show complete change soon, if plans approved last Thursday by planning board are carried through. Dr. Bob Steen presented the case for rezoning for a new medical centre on Mill; Alf Berry made a presentation for a new building to replace Highway Garage, and Henry Cripps sought commercial zoning of the lot at the corner of Mill and Wilbur. All received the approval of the board.

Chairman Sid Saltz was missing, in hospital with a heart attack. Vic Bristow chaired the meeting in the council chambers with regular members present Lou Bonnette, Frank Simoni, Orval Chapman and Les Dudy. Introduced was a new member, William Campbell, Nelson Cr. He fills the term of David Muckie till the end of December. Dr. Steen seeks rezoning of the lot at the corner of Mill and Wilbur. After Mayor Dudy was assured by Dr. Steen there is no interference in TV reception from the X-ray equipment, councillors agreed they had no objection. The recommendation for rezoning will go to council. Office building Alf Berry asked for the rezoning of the property on Mill N., where Highway Garage sits, from C2 to C1. The commercial 2 zone accommodated a service station but

A decision was reached Tuesday night at a general meeting which included members of the Acton Legion Branch 197 and the Ladies' Auxiliary. It was agreed to proceed with the \$350,000 building to be located on a 10 acre site north of Mill Street and west of Cameron Avenue directly across Fairy Lake from Prospect Park.

Initial discussions on the new building started in June of 1972 and presentation made to the executive branch in September '73. The decision to go ahead has taken a year to finalize.

Plans show that approximately 50 per cent of the building which will have a square footage of 17,600 square feet, will be absorbed by an auditorium which will seat 500 people.

Facilities
Club room facilities will include a mixed lounge, games room, kitchen, outdoor patio overlooking lake, and parking facilities for 200 cars.

President of the Acton Legion is Bob Angell and chairman of the building committee, and one of the spearheads of the project, is branch treasurer Gordon McCutcheon. Other members on the building committee include Ed Footitt, John Goy, Fred Allen and Gordon James.

The committee hopes to get foundations, steel work, and building enclosed by end of year.

Candidates interviewed

Meet the Candidates... day, interviews with all the local candidates appear in today's Free Press.

The Chamber of Commerce meet the candidates night is scheduled for tonight (Wednesday) Sept. 26 at the high school at 7:30 p.m. But since this meeting is too late for any coverage in the Free Press before election

Duck area polluted?

The nesting area for wild ducks at the south-west end of Fairy Lake was the concern of Councillor Norm Elliott at Tuesday's council meeting when he noted brown water was being pumped into the lake in this area from a neighboring construction project. He asked the town staff to ascertain from the developers what is going into the lake. Reeve McKenzie reported hydro power was off in Acton on Sunday for an hour and a half. He said this was the result of a dead tree falling on the town-owned lot hydro line serving the pumping station on Churchill Rd. North. He said that it was his understanding that this particular line was in bad shape and should be partially rebuilt. He asked the works committee to investigate and make a recommendation.

Bus service
Reeve McKenzie also suggested the committee should organize the bus service during the Christmas season. He felt an earlier start should be made this year as it was instituted in a rush last year. Mayor Dudy expressed his hope that there would be no delay in finishing Acton Boulevard and the ditching on Nelson Court. He felt the Works Dept. had got a great deal of work done in good time this year but wondered when a start would be made on the paving of Acton Blvd. Councillor Coats questioned the statement in the committee minutes that "they do not intend to eliminate the swale entirely" at Fairview Cemetery. He felt this information there would be further filling of the swale. Councillor Norm Elliott said in reply to the minutes are not to be taken 100 per cent literally. He said that the filled area will be levelled and dressed up, and no further filling of the swale would be made. Councillor Masales reported that the developer of the property adjoining the cemetery would be sodding his land when weather conditions were opportune. Finances A brief reference was made to the receipt of the auditor's financial statement. Mayor Dudy suggested council would have to watch their spending for the balance of the year. Deputy Reeve Marks expressed the opinion we are now "in quite good shape". Reeve McKenzie asked if the road markings would be replaced where new paving had been installed and Councillor Masales advised him all previous markings would be replaced as well as some new ones. An affirmative answer was also made to Reeve McKenzie's question as to whether the lines would be painted on Elizabeth Dr. to guide people around all those curves.

Candidates speak to empty seats at Stewarttown



EMPTY CHAIRS filled the Stewarttown school auditorium Monday night, as less than 100 Ward 2 (Esqueving) ratepayers showed up for a Meet the Candidates night. A similar meeting in Georgetown was also poorly attended. (D. Gibbons photo)

Less than 100 of Ward 2's (Esqueving) more than 6000 eligible voters showed up at Stewarttown school for a Meet the Candidates night Monday, lending support to the popular prediction that the October 1 regional government election may set a new low for percentage turnout at the polls. A similar night in Georgetown last week was also poorly attended. The event, organized by a group of Ward 2 ratepayers offered the four mayoralty candidates in the new North Halton area (Acton, Georgetown and Esqueving) and the three area council candidates in Ward 2 an opportunity to present their platforms and then ratepayers a chance to question them. Esqueving Deputy-Reeve Len Cox who was acclaimed as Ward 2's representative on the Halton Region council also spoke, expressing his thanks to electors for the acclamation.

First of three candidates for area council to speak, Dick Howitt a member of the present Esqueving township council said he is mainly concerned with the possibility of the new 13 man area council becoming remote from the people and the chance the area council will lose controls of planning. To avoid the first potential problem he suggested the new council retain the system of allowing deputations to attend regular meetings, one that is presently practiced in Esqueving. The council should also continue to make citizen appointments to planning board and the land division committee, he said. Howitt said the new council should consider the possibility of hiring a full time planner. He explained that the new Halton Region will have a plan of its own and that the area plan which would eventually be an incorporation of the Acton, Georgetown and Esqueving official plans would have to fit into that larger plan. Presenters record Second candidate for area council, George Malby, also an incumbent in Esqueving preferred to stand on his record as a councillor during the past year. He told the meeting he has already attended 70 meetings this year and has made arrangements with his employers to spend the necessary time under increased workload conditions at the area council level. He explained he had advised Norval residents last spring to petition Esqueving Council for a solution to their well pollution problem, advice that was finally accepted

when a deputalion approached council last week. He said he would welcome a similar petition from Glen Williams where he claimed some water problem does exist. Malby expressed concern about the cost of the new regional policing system, but said he had learned from speaking to many ratepayers that they would not object to a slight mill rate increase if the money were spent on a responsible road improvement program in the township. He expressed confidence about his capabilities to deal with urban problems as well. Former Esqueving Deputy-Reeve Russell Miller, the third area council candidate to speak said he is running mainly because of his interest in the community and Esqueving township. He said he hopes to be able to do something about costs, which he claims will rise under regional government. Miller said he feels his experience serving on county council will be an aid to him, if he is elected to the area council. He also referred to his participation in local sports and church organizations, supporting his community interest claim. Mayoralty runners Among the four mayoralty

candidates, Esqueving Reeve Tom Hill spoke first, telling the audience they should look at the new form of government as a means to use their numbers to gain more influence at Queen's Park. He said Esqueving township is in good shape financially on the advent of regional government with assets in the capital reserve fund being used to offset an over-spent roads budget. Hill said he hoped the recently approved official plan will help maintain Esqueving's rural character, while allowing for some industrial expansion to provide job opportunities for local residents at the same time. He promised to attack the job of mayor with determination and said he has arranged for up to four years leave of absence from his employers to serve full time.

Second mayoralty candidate, to the microphone, Georgetown Councillor Bill Hunter recalled his municipal government experience, serving 12 years on council, nine of them also on county council. He was Halton County Warden in 1968. During that time he explained he sat on every county council committee and also took part in early regional government discussions. He predicted it will take at least a year for a plan for the Halton Region to be formed and said he doesn't think there will be much change in planning in the area before then. Hunter said he has always supported active sports programs which benefit personal development and promised he will be a full time mayor, available to the people and their needs, if elected. More business Georgetown Councillor Phil Siddall, third mayoralty speaker expressed the opinion local government should become more businesslike without becoming bureaucratic. Council should not be doing the work of the staff and when the work isn't being done, the staff should understand that such a situation cannot be tolerated by the taxpayer, he said. He said he will propose to the other municipalities and to Queen's Park that taxes be frozen for senior citizens for as long as they remain in their homes. This would give dignity to the very people who worked to give us the prosperity we enjoy today, he suggested. (Continued on Page 14)