

Five weekend fires under investigation

by Kerry Chalmers
Village residents were aroused from sleep at 3 a.m. last Saturday morning when the fire alarm echoed through the village calling for help. Within six minutes firemen had arrived at the Swanston farm at R. R. 3 Rockwood where the barn burned out of control.

The house was saved due to the fast action on the part of the Rockwood Fire Department but still shows the affect of the extreme heat on the insul-brick siding. The men quickly hosed down the house preventing any further damage but despite their haste the barn was completely destroyed as well as a horse barn. The horse barn built mostly of stone caught fire when the heat ignited the gable ends of the roof. The end of the building collapsed.

Changes made
Murray and Marilyn Swanston bought the farm last year and had planned to move in this weekend. They have been fixing up the house all winter and Murray has been remodelling the stables in preparation for beef cattle. The farm was used for dairy cattle so changes were necessary to accommodate a beef herd. Mr. Swanston has been cash cropping this past year. He teaches high school in Kitchener and his wife Marilyn works as a receptionist-secretary for a doctor

in Guelph. The couple and their two daughters Kerri and Kelly will move in this weekend as planned and will re-build.
Mr. Swanston was at the farm on Friday night cultivating and left at 6:30. He was not in the barn but had been in and out of the driving shed situated behind the barn.

Edgar H. Bonner, a neighbour across the road, had had trouble sleeping Friday evening. He had looked out his window at 2:30 and all was well. A short while later as he lay in bed, a flash of bright red illuminated his bedroom walls. He sped to the window and could see the Swanston barn engulfed in flame. He called his son Harry who immediately called the Rockwood Fire Department.

Five fires
This was just one of five fires that occurred over the weekend and are under investigation by the Ontario Fire Marshal's Office and the Guelph OPP. There were no injuries or deaths and all buildings were without livestock or extensive equipment. Hillsburgh firefighters were busy fighting a fire Friday night in the Disciples Church ruins on the 17th side-road and the 6th line where hay was stored when the Erin Fire Dept. was called to a barn fire on the 4th line. They saved the barn there.
Earlier on Friday evening

the Acton Fire Dept. put out a shed fire on the 1st line of Erin Twp.
On Saturday evening a fire broke out in Orton at the farm of Art Turner. A neighbour called in the report. The Hillsburgh firefighters had quite a job saving the house because of its proximity to the barn.

Clifford Swanston, Murray's father, was at their farm Tuesday helping clean up the rubble. He spoke with the Fire Marshal who dropped by the farm to look for evidence as to the cause of the fire. He concluded it was definitely caused by lightning. When Mr. Swanston questioned the likelihood of this on such a clear night, the Fire Marshal explained that when the weather suddenly changes from one extreme to the other there can be a lot of electricity in the air. He illustrated his point by the damaged lightning rods.

No reason had been given for the cause of the other fires at press time.

Budget adopted
The budget for the Village of Rockwood was adopted by motion this week.
Expenditures planned for 1976 are: roads \$14,950; tractor \$1,000; street lights \$7,700; garbage removal \$5,600; Town Hall \$1,500; general administration \$10,890 to a total of \$41,640. The revenue for 1976 is estimated at: taxes \$22,740; roads subsidy \$7,480; severances \$2,100; tractor \$600; Town Hall rent \$2,830; hydro and cemetery \$4,800; miscellaneous \$1,090. (Expenditure includes \$4,800 repayable by hydro and cemetery.)

CLIFFORD SWANSTON, Murray Swanston's father, holds two lightning rods that are evidence for the Ontario Fire Marshal in his decision that the Swanston barn fire was caused by lightning. The rod on the left is damaged, the one on the right is as it should be.



DEMOLISHED ROOF pieces and a crumpled grain elevator lie among the burning remains of Murray Swanston's barn at R. R. 3 Rockwood. The Ontario Fire Marshal has said the blaze was caused by lightning.



BLISTERED insul-brick is reminder of the fire that could have completely destroyed the Swanston home if not for the fast work of Rockwood Fire Department last weekend. The men watered down the house before any further damage resulted. The barn and horse barn were destroyed despite all effort of firefighters.



WALLS OF the horse barn at the Swanston farm collapsed after the extreme heat from the main barn ignited the gable ends of the roof. The fire broke out close to three a.m. according to neighbour Edgar Bonner who saw flames from his bedroom window.

Rockwood roundup

by Kerry Chalmers
Village friends and neighbors welcome Don Hills home. He was in Guelph General for tests this past week.

Friends and neighbors are pleased to have Mrs. Rose Oakes back home after her stay in hospital.

The scouts and brownies approached the Trustees regarding the use of the Town Hall on Tuesdays and Thursdays on a no charge basis. The scouts were represented by Gary Lawton and John McLeod and the brownies by Mrs. M. McKendry and Julie Thatcher. The groups will look at various projects to help improve the village. A litter driver is being planned for the near future.

Attention all green thumbs or people who would like to develop a green thumb! The Rockwood Horticultural Group meets next Thursday evening at 8 p.m. at the Town Hall. Pat Tucker, the Director of the Grounds Dept. at the University of Guelph, will be guest speaker and will discuss Spring planting. His presentation will include slides and he will concentrate on plants that will grow well in this area. Anyone who is interested is invited to attend.

Calling all mothers of preschoolers. If your child is turning three or four by this December and you are interested in enrolling him or her in nursery school now is the time to act. Marla Reid, president of Rockwood Co-operative, Nursery School, reminds mothers that Thursday evening April 29 is registration night for next term. There are still openings for two or three day programs. Three year-olds attend two mornings a

week, four year-olds attend three mornings a week. Mothers are invited to come to the registration at the Town Hall at 8 p.m. It is not necessary to bring your child.

A trip to Quebec for the grade eight Rockwood students comes up on May 5. The students, 75 in all, leave Wednesday by deluxe coach and return Saturday four days later. They will study the history of the city and enjoy side tours while in Quebec. After studying two years of French the students should enjoy their chance at communicating. The children have been selling pens, will hold a bake sale and have a draw on an Easter figure coming up to raise money for the trip. Many pupils who need money have found ways and means to earn their money for the trip. One girl is making handicrafts and another boy is collecting bottles. The trip is educational in many ways—it even teaches the group the value of money!

Parent-teacher conferences are being held at Rockwood Centennial Public School this week. Any parent wishing to see a teacher is asked to phone the school and make an appointment. The teachers are available after school all week and into next week if needed. The school finds it more beneficial to leave the talks open like this instead of setting up definite times in which a parent may come to the school. The teachers were, in past years sending students home early and would spend afternoons in an empty classroom. This method seems more productive in that any real interested parent will make an appointment if he feels it is necessary.

Free Press

Rockwood and District

At Centennial school

Pet can invented for education week

Education week at Rockwood Centennial Public School proved interesting. The general theme was "education is understanding" and the staff worked with the students to illustrate how this is so. Each school proposed activities within its educational environment and teachers at Rockwood Cen-

ennial Public School came forward with their ideas.

One example of an activity was when Mr. Love, Gr. 8 Science teacher, and his students put on a Science display in the gym for the rest of the school. The students were asked to invent something that was functional. One

student invented a "pet can"—he rolled the can away from him and when he called it, it returned! The uses of elastics proved helpful in this example.

A play put on by class 82, Gr. 8 under the direction of English teacher John Root, was a real success. It was a play about fantasy and when introduced the group told the audience they would look into their minds. This was enjoyed by the whole school who saw this in two different groups.

Last Friday a fun activity for grades four to eight took place. It was called Spring Carnival and included wagon races, tug of war and "draw the principal" in five minutes. The principal found the results of interest. Everyone enjoyed this day of fun in the Spring weather. The Kindergarten to grade three classes will hold their carnival this Thursday.

Part of the social studies program throughout the school centered around the theme of "what is good citizenship?" as part of education week. The week inspired thought in all the classrooms.

Rockwood bowling

Final Standings, Unpredictables 120, Jr. Farmers 118, Countrymen 115, Carneys 111, Raggedy Pans 109, Nortons 105, Kays Feeds 103, Optimists 102, Pin Pals 101, Four Corners 94, Mustangs 93, Guelphites 87.

Men Over 600, Dave Cleland 662, Ted Josten 661, Bill Elliot 655, Sam Lawler 628.

Women Over 500, Eva Bosch 602, Ruth Kingsbury 590, Gerda Bakker 578, Helen Elliot 565, Nellie Stokman 559, Gerda Birkholz 553, Ann Parkinson 545, Corrie Kulper 542, Ivy Ritchie 541, Grace Britney 511, Betty Hamilton 518, Viv Nightingale 510, Kathy Holman 508.

Jr. Farmers 7, Bill Atkinson 180, 199 (538) Wayne Tarzwell 180, 211 (530); Four Corners 0, Nellie Stokman 215, 193 (558), Ann Parkinson 170, 213 (545).

Optimists 7, Ted Josten 203, 257 (601) Gerda Birkholz 201, 178 (553); Carneys 0, Bob Lilley 215, 150 (503), Nancy Ferguson 150, 193 (495).

Kays Feeds 7, Elmer Allen 194, 213 (582), Ruth Kingsbury 213, 221 (580), Nortons 0, John Lorfoot 178, 186 (543), Ivy Ritchie 160, 223 (541).

Countrymen 5, Eva Bosch 207, 208 (602), Peter Bosch 194, 226 (565), Pin Pals 2, Kathy Holman 152, 210 (508), Paul Holman 238, 173 (536).

Unpredictables 7, Gerda Bakker 195, 228 (578), Eugene Ferguson 189, 196 (531), Guelphites 0, Sam Lawler 188, 235 (628), Lloyd Marsden 204, 219 (594).

Mustangs 4, Dave Cleland 224, 258 (662), Harry Sanderson 175, 183 (538), Raggedy Pans 3, Bill Elliot 218, 222 (655), Helen Elliot 175, 234 (565).

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Eden Mills

Birthday, meetings

by Mrs. Georgina Wright
The family of Mrs. Harry McIntosh gathered at her home on Sunday to celebrate her 80th birthday with all the trimmings. The birthday cake was three cakes in one in the form of 80 and had 80 candles on it. Thinking the Gramma would be unable to blow all the candles the grandchildren all gave her a hand. Those present were: Mr. and Mrs. M. Merker and family, Downsview; Mr. and Mrs. T. Foster and family, Wallaceburg; Mr. and Mrs. Bill Slinn Jr. and family, Ridgeway; Mrs. W. Slinn and family, Hamilton; Rev. Bill Slinn, Mississauga; Mr. and Mrs. Bob Slinn and family, Niagara Falls; Bob Simpson and family, Niagara Falls; Donna Anderson, Niagara Falls.

No fireworks
The monthly Community Club meeting was held Monday evening in the hall with a good turnout. Old business was attended to and the membership drive

has been postponed until May. Plans have been made for an auction sale in April. It was decided to have no fire crackers on May 24 this year owing to the increase of cost. The Community Club held their spring dance recently with a good attendance. Harry Arbie of Acton, disc jockey, supplied the music. Successful luncheon
The United Church Women were successful again with their monthly luncheon in the hall. An added feature was a craft display upstairs put on by the Tuesday afternoon Craft Group. All items were for sale. These young women deserve credit for their fine display.

Seniors meeting
The Friendly Seniors of Eden Mills met Wednesday for their meeting with the president, Mrs. Anna Wilson in the chair. The minutes and treasurer's report of the previous meeting were given after first singing O Canada. The president then welcomed

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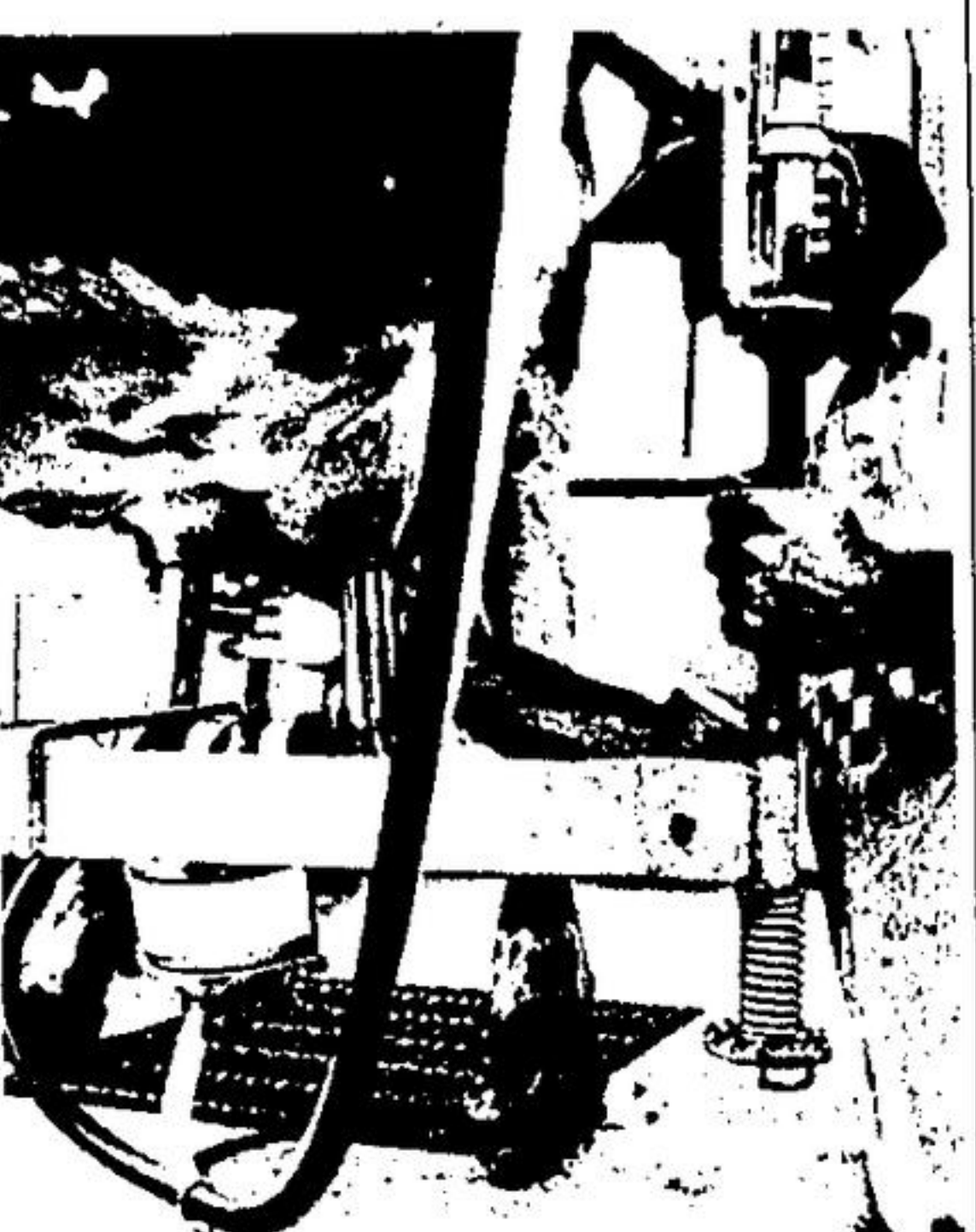
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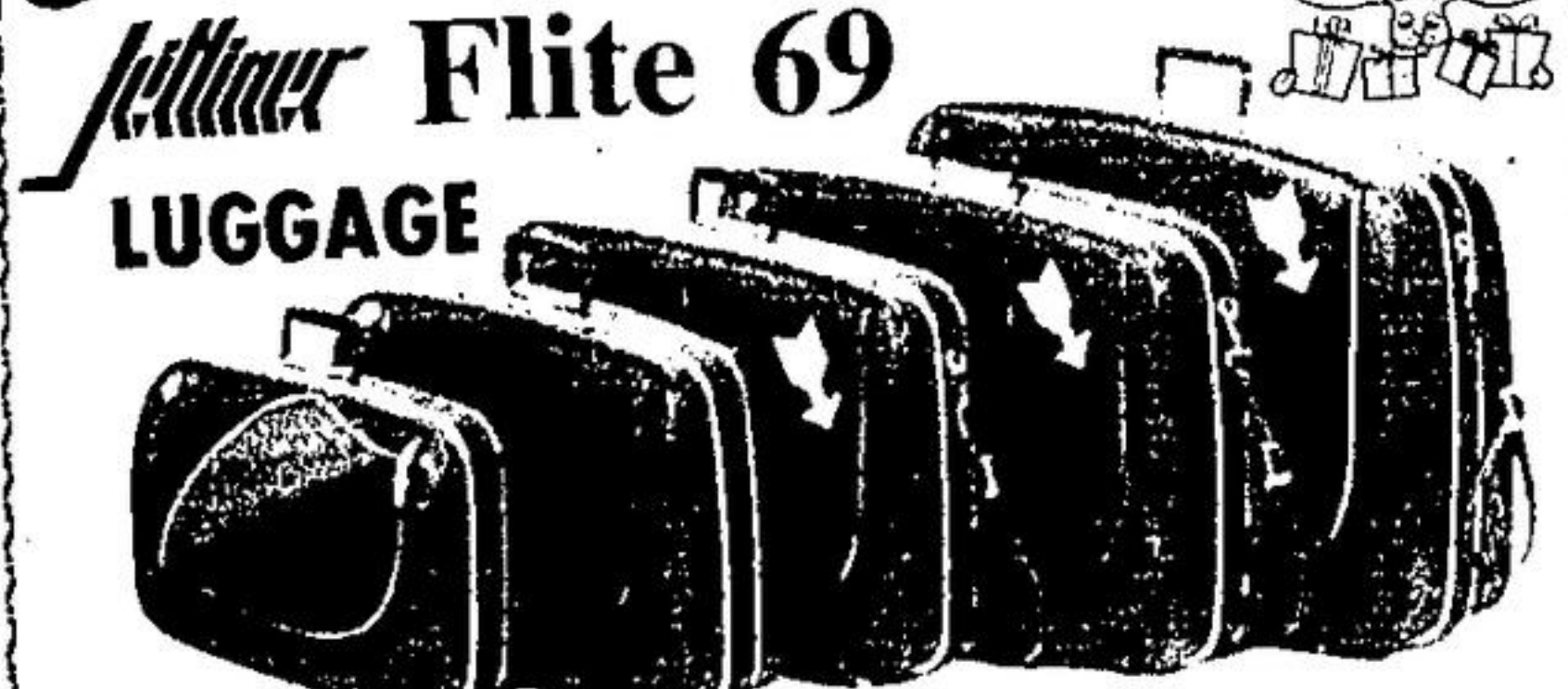
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Indian speaker

The students at the Rockwood Centennial Public School enjoyed an interesting speaker as part of education week. Violet Shwanda, a Canadian Indian from Christian Island in Georgian Bay spoke to the fascinated youngsters on the life of a modern-day Indian. Ms. Shwanda spoke to the students in the school who have been studying Indians. She has been working for the ministry giving talks to various groups but will return to Christian Island in September to resume teaching.