

# Efficiency spells effectiveness for Acton firefighters

When the fire alarm rang last Friday, Fire Chief Mickey Holmes and his volunteer crew were at the scene within four minutes. For the Acton Fire Department this is nothing unusual. According to Chief Holmes, the department usually takes "between three and five minutes" to get to the scene of a fire.

This sort of efficiency is one reason for the effectiveness of the Acton Fire Department. The 30 members practise every Monday to improve their technique and reduce their time even further. The practice pays off: Acton enjoys one of the lowest insurance rates in the country, according to Chief Holmes. "Population-wise," Chief Holmes says, "Acton is as well equipped as any town." They have three pumpers, the last one purchased in 1975, which pumps an average of 750 gallons of water per minute.

**Pagers**  
Personal pagers were bought last year, and have been "generally successful" according to Chief Holmes. "However," he continued, "there are some problems which you just can't defeat." One of these involves people who work at noisy jobs, who "just won't be able to hear the signal."

Another is the problem of dead spots, common to all radio waves. If the pager is not pointing in the right direction, the signal can fade out, as happens with transistor radios. Because of this, the siren is still being used.

Both siren and pagers are tied into a dispatcher in Georgetown, which gives immediate responses, 24 hours a day.

**30 Men**  
When the siren does go off, there are 30 men ready to answer. These people may be working and have to drop what they are doing in order

to answer the call. "The department could not exist without the generosity of the employers who let the firemen go without penalizing them," says Chief Holmes. "I'd like to extend my appreciation to these men."

There is a lot of experience in the ranks of the Acton Fire Department. There are over a dozen men with more than 20 years on the force. Chief Holmes has been a member for 31 years, and one firefighter, Sam Tennant, has been involved since 1945 giving him 32 years' experience.

**Election**  
The department elections were held recently, with the following results: assistant Chief Bern van Fleet, A captain Alfred Duh, B captain Herb Dodds, and C captain Wilf Duval. Chief Holmes is a full time fire chief, and is not elected.

**Other duties**  
The duties of the Department extend over more than just putting out fires.

It also covers accidents, operates resuscitators, gives talks on fire safety and first aid, supports a Bantam Hockey team, lets the handicapped people use the fire truck for meetings, and gets cats down out of trees. The fire department frowns upon this last; a cat can get down out of any tree it can get up into.

It may seem as if the Department is busy enough keeping the people of Acton safe, but there is more.



Fire truck in action this week



Doors fly open when siren wails

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### ON ONE ACRE

This cov'd country rancher south of Acton features 3 bedrooms, fullywooded kitchen, dining area with walkout, 2 fireplaces, rec room, and double garage with breezeway. Priced at \$73,900.



### 2,500 SQ. FT. - LUXURY LIVING

Set on 10 acres, this custom-built home will satisfy the needs of the most discerning buyer. A few of its outstanding features include 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 2 fireplaces, plus built in stone bar-b-que, 2 balconies, 3 walkouts, built in appliances, and an inground pool. Bins for sale, asking \$131,900.

### LAKEVIEW HEIGHTS

Located in a prime residential area on a large private lot that offers you the peace and quiet usually associated with country living, this lovely 4 bedroom brick split-level also includes a large living and dining area, eat in kitchen, 2 baths, rec room, garage and pool. Asking \$64,900.

### COUNTRY SETTING

This custom-built brick bungalow is set on a scenic 1/2 acre wooded lot and features 3 bedrooms, large living room with fireplace, separate dining room, 3 pc. en suite and 5 pc. master bathrooms, and a walkout basement with Franklin fireplace. Asking only \$65,900.

### HIGH SCHOOL AREA

Set on a super lot on a quiet one-way street in one of Acton's nicest residential areas, it's a home with a lot of character and features; 3 bedrooms, a formal dining room, living room with fireplace, fitted breadroom, and more. Asking only \$57,700.

### BUILDING LOTS

These two scenic 3 acre parcels located south west of Acton have 400 feet frontage, a new drilled well on each, and they're all approved and ready for you to build. Asking \$37,000 each.

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**Mutual aid**  
The Georgetown fire of last week was a good example of the Mutual Aid system used by volunteer departments in Canada. Georgetown firefighters, being closest, were the first called, while the Acton department went down to help. This same backup system works everywhere; if the Acton department had trouble with a fire, then Milton and Georgetown

trucks would be standing by to help.

Mutual Aid is only used in larger fires, and is proving quite successful when it is used.

**New post**  
The Fire Department has just recently hired a full-time Fire Prevention Officer, whose duties involve talking to organizations in both Acton and Georgetown about fire safety, and prevention.

It could be that his work is paying off already: there were fewer fires in 1976 than in 1975. Grease and electrical fires were the two most common of these, according to Chief Holmes. "These fires can usually be attributed to carelessness," he said.

**Want to join?**  
If anyone is interested in joining the Fire Department, applications are available at the Town Hall. The force is kept at a constant 30 members, and people who work in Acton are preferred over

commuters, because they can get to a fire faster.

Applications are kept on file for one year, and then applicants have to reapply.

## Receives award

Catherine Hart of Acton was one of only nine nurses to receive 15 year service certificates from the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital. The awards were presented at a special Christmas party at the Hospital. Mrs. Hart is a central surgical supply technician at the Georgetown institute.

Haltom Winterfest, a joint project of the four recreation departments in Haltom, will be staged Sunday, Feb. 13 at Kelsco.



A PARADE of icicles along the roof of this house adds to the beauty of winter scenery in Acton.

# WHEN IS YOUR

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## Excellent speakers

The largest attendance in recent years—95 Haltom farmers—attended the annual meeting of the Haltom Soil and Crop Association Friday at Hillcrest Church. Outgoing president Ed Segsworth of Milton chaired the all-day meeting and handed the office over to newly elected president Frank Anthony of Limehouse.

A series of interesting speakers highlighted the meeting. Ross Milne, MP for Peel-Dufferin spoke on Canada's future energy supply. Another interesting speaker was Professor Tom Lane of the Soil Science Department, University of Guelph, who warned farmers are plowing too deep with their large tractors. They are turning up too much subsoil which is lower in fertility, not loose enough and breaks up in heavy rainfalls, he warned. He also felt farmers are trying to plow too quickly. Speed and the lower depth use up more energy, he pointed out.

Prof. Lane also said some growers are planting too early in the spring, before the soil is ready.

United Co-operative representatives Ed Clutten said there was a good supply of seed, fertilizer and herbicides for 1977. John Kessler, secretary-manager of the Farm Machinery Board, Guelph, also assured the guests there will be good supplies of parts and machinery available this year, because money is tight and total sales will likely be down.

## OPP keeps full shifts

The Ontario Provincial Police detachment at Milton was kept busy throughout Monday's storm with 14 minor accidents and helping stranded motorists but the staff was not without their own minor annoyances due to the storm.

A spokesman for the police said two of their constables, P.C. Bob Haines of Guelph and P.C. Jeff Marriott of Cambridge found they were unable to make the drive home during the storm when they finished their 4 p.m. to midnight shift on Sunday.

Both constables, however, were able to find sleeping accommodations at friends' homes in Milton.

Fortunately they were able to maintain full working shifts by having the midnight to 8 a.m. shift work overtime.

The spokesman added Highway 401 was not blocked off in the Milton area, but he said only one lane was open during the storm.