



STALLED TRUCK WAS CUT in two by passing train in Rockwood Tuesday. Nobody was hurt in the accident. The driver of the truck, David Douglas, was in Northern Stag phoning for assistance when the collision occurred. For further details see "Train crunches stalled truck" on page B6, in the second section.

Meet Ministry, push Sr. Citizen housing here

A meeting is being arranged for Monday afternoon in the town offices, to discuss the planned senior citizens apartments in Acton. Officials of the Ontario Housing Corporation will attend the meeting with councillors and others, to discuss the building of the units on Elizabeth Dr.

Councillors who had had assurances the units would be built soon began to realize two weeks ago there could be a snag in their hoped-for accommodation. The second building for low income housing has been "in the works" for three or four years. However, councillor Les Doby heard from several applicants who were very concerned, since they had been asked if they would be willing to accept accommodation in the senior citizen units in Georgetown. Mr. Doby started the series of

questions which is resulting in a rash of phone calls this week and the subsequent meeting.

Councillor Pat McKenzie, just back from Florida on the weekend, was also very concerned when he learned of the unexpected turn of events. He, too, got right on the phone to find out what's happening.

The two councillors now have the impression Acton is being required to "prove a need" for the units here.

Georgetown first

Construction is due to start on 89 units in Georgetown this month.

Councillor Les Doby questions the need of filling the 89 units in Georgetown before considering Acton. "Why should we suffer if the requirement has diminished in Georgetown?" he wants to know. He thinks if not all the units are needed in Georgetown, the building

should be reduced in size, and the one in Acton built at the same time. It, too, could be built in two parts if the requirements call for fewer units. He pointed out he was already told this could be done.

Approved

In August of 1975, Halton Hills council approved the Ministry of Housing recommendation for 38 units in Acton. There are 13 units already in town on Cobblehill Rd.

Georgetown already has 74 units, and the building due to start this month is to have 89 units. The Georgetown application was first. The Georgetown building has suffered from delays, but it is expected work will begin there soon.

Acton councillors assured their colleagues on council that the units in Acton could be filled.

"I was confident that by fall we would have people in their apartments looking over the lake," said councillor Doby, Tuesday.

However, the Ministry of Housing now apparently thinks otherwise.

Prove need

Gordon Hickory, manager of special projects for Ontario Housing in Toronto, had indicated to council the department would be making application to the planning department and would proceed.

However the councillors have been given the impression the department feels the need for the Acton unit should be proven, before construction starts.

Ron Burnett of the Halton Hills planning department suggested to the Free Press that the Ministry is looking on Halton Hills as a unit, and wishes to fill up one building before proceeding with the second one. The high rise building in Georgetown is first on the list. Planner Mario Venditti says the Ministry has not yet applied for rezoning as he had expected. As far as the planning department is concerned, all requirements have now been met. A land exchange has been effected between Rugby Construction and Lou Bonnette, and the land has been purchased by Ontario Housing.

The planning department had expected the application for rezoning and that construction would begin soon this year. "We're all set," says Mr. Venditti.

There would be no delay as far as council is concerned.

No late list

Actonians who have applied in the past few years for housing are listed, but since their original applications the situation has changed for some of them. There is no up-to-date list of applicants.

Laura Beckwith of Halton Housing Corporation, Oakville, who visited some of the applicants here, says that few of the people she spoke to wished to move to Georgetown.

Halton Housing Corporation is a recently-organized office which administers senior citizens housing in the region.

Dave Ishikawa, manager of Halton Housing, explains his office is still getting established and maybe there has been a "misunderstanding".

Mr. Hickory of Ontario Housing has said it is not a matter of money, Mr. McKenzie reported to the Free Press. The Department (Continued on page two)

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BP closes pipe plant 30 employees laid off

Building Products of Canada Limited announced Thursday that effective from March 31 it will cease the manufacture and marketing of plastic pipe and fittings in its Acton plant on Main St. N. The announcement was made by Brian Lockhart, plant manager of the division.

In making the announcement, Mr. Lockhart said that the company had suffered significant losses in the plastic pipe business over the past several years. He pointed out that current forecasts of future demand and prices for these products were not encouraging, and that losses could be expected to continue. Accordingly, the pipe operation at the Acton facility will be discontinued.

This will mean, Mr. Lockhart added, that the present facilities would be fully engaged in the manufacture of vinyl siding.

This close-out of the plastic pipe operation is expected to mean the lay off of approximately 30 employees.

Canada Manpower has been requested by the Company to

assist in the relocation of those employees affected by this reorganization.

A shock

"It was quite a shock," says union president Hector Daigle. The 72 men and three women in the union have seen their ranks decline in recent years.

The union is presently trying to get everybody situated in the plant seniority-wise and in other departments. This shuffling will leave about 23 for whom new jobs elsewhere will be needed.

Some employees are taking their severance pay and leaving now, Mr. Daigle says. Others are being shifted to other jobs for a while. As well as the pipe producing machines, the machine shop and lab will close down.

The cut-down in numbers occurs in four stages, on March 31, May 31, and July 12 and October 31. By then the number of people in the union will be down to 44.

They belong to local 603 of the United Rubber Workers of America, an international union.

After the announcement of the closing was made last Thursday morning, the union held a membership meeting at the Legion in the afternoon.

The union members questioned company officials on the changes. Apparently there are no jobs available for them at the Rexdale division of Building Products, where there is no similar manufacturing operation.

Mr. Daigle said the employees were told that of 134 plastic pipe plants in Canada, only one broke even last year.

Alternatives were discussed, such as renting part of the building, but "the alternatives didn't sound hopeful," Mr. Daigle said.

Building Products head office is in Montreal. It is a

division of Imperial Oil which is owned by Standard Oil of New Jersey.

Laid off employees will have a hard time getting work, according to Nancy Evans of the Canada Manpower Centre. She explained that the job market is "very slow" at the present time, and said one of the reasons is because so many factories are laying off workers.

Mrs. Evans continued to say that usually in the spring the job rate is up, but this year is an exception. This is happening all over, she says, not just locally. She suggested that laid off workers go to the Canada Manpower Centre in Acton to see what jobs are available, on Fridays between 10 a.m. and 3.30 p.m.

About 30 people lost their jobs last December 31 when United Carr closed down its operation after 16 years in Acton. Plant manager Ernie Parker said at the time that "competition, high rates of pay and internal problems killed us."



FIRST PRINCIPAL of the new St. Joseph School will be Sean Briggs, presently principal of St. Joseph's in Oakville.

St. Joseph's K to 8 assured

Between 30 and 40 children were registered for St. Joseph's separate school last Thursday at St. Joseph's church. Combined with the children whose parents have already made a commitment, they make a total of 111 who will attend the first Roman Catholic school in Acton.

Separate school director of education Cliff Byrne said registration is higher than expected.

Since there are about 18 boys and girls registered for grades seven and eight, these classes will be included in the new school. It had been felt

originally that the school would only go from kindergarten to grade six. However there are enough students to make a viable program, Mr. Byrne told the Free Press Tuesday. He will recommend to the board that all grades be included.

The new principal is contacting all the parents concerned.

The school, in the old stone school at the Robert Little school site, will open in the fall. By then the senior students from Robert Little will be attending the new middle school.

License lineups avoided this year

Acton managed to escape the crushing lineups which were common in Toronto Monday at license renewal stations, Edwin Watson, who runs the Motor Vehicle Bureau in Acton, said that the publicity helped to ease the load.

The biggest day for the office was Friday, when 460 applications were processed. Only 247 people renewed their licences in the first month

and a half they were available.

The load was spread out over the last few days this year, instead of all coming on the final day. "We've been running three to four thousand dollars a day for the last few weeks" said Mr. Watson.

Mr. Watson pointed out that there is a fine as of Tuesday if the new sticker is not on your car now. "In the glove compartment doesn't count", he said. "It has to be on the car."



EDWIN WATSON

Water project jumps \$69,000

Citizens of Acton won't go short of water this summer providing construction of a new piping station and main go as planned, but they'll pay more than was earlier anticipated to have the work done.

Tenders for the construction of a pumping station and a 12-inch watermain came in at \$69,000 over the 1974 estimate. The total of the work will run to \$204,000.

Regional Director of Public Works, Bob Moore said there was a definite need for the additional water for the town

and the job would have to be done soon to prevent water shortages this summer.

The region will have to go to the Ontario Municipal Board for approval to debenture the additional \$69,000.

Chief Administrative Officer Ernie Reid said the work would be paid from the Acton Water Rates and noted those rates would definitely have to be increased to pay for this and other projects in the town.

Pepsi gives clock

Acton arena will have a new sports timer, compliments of Kitchener Beverage Co. (Pepsi Cola), if council accepts a Halton Hills finance-administration committee recommendation made Monday night.

Recreation Director Glen Gray said there would be no advertising on the clock. He pointed out new cable and (Continued on page two)



HALTON SCUBA TREK club divers made their first winter dive of the year Sunday afternoon at Fairy Lake. The first to go down into the frigid black water were Dan Hewitt, Glen Williams and Dave Hannah, Acton. Six divers took their turn as shivering spectators ringed the hole cut in the ice.

You'll pay \$20 more for education

The average Acton taxpayer could pay between \$20.84 and \$23.83 more this year in education taxes if Halton Board of Education ratifies a proposed \$81.9 million budget. Ratepayers in Esquewaug could pay anywhere from \$21 to \$25 more in education taxes this year. Average assessment is \$5,884 in Acton and \$6,170 in Esquewaug.

Thursday the board's finance committee unveiled an \$81,968,666 budget which board Vice-Chairman Noel Cooper predicted would add 3.5 to 4 mills to the tax bills in Halton this year.

He said the committee had limited the mill rate hike as much as possible and taken current economic conditions and financial restraints into account while preparing the budget.

"This is the lowest figure we thought we could bring in taking into account all facets of our complex system.

The proposed budget calls for the board to spend nearly \$10 million more than last year. In 1976, Halton's education system cost \$72,380,542 while it is expected to cost \$81,968,666 this year. The budget is up 12.33 per cent.

As usual, the greatest portion of the budget will be spent in area instruction which includes teachers' and principals' wages, fringe benefits, and other items connected with classroom activity.

Instruction costs have gone up from \$54,162,105 to \$59,797,238. It will account for 72.95 per cent of the total budget.

Debt charges have gone up only slightly, from \$5,921,678 to \$5,981,537. This expenditure is 7.30 per cent of the total budget.

The cost of transportation will go up \$190,683 in 1977 while capital expenditures have risen by \$1,809,095. Maintenance of the schools

has gone up \$41,684 from the cost in 1976 and business administration will cost \$104,583 more this year.

Educational services such as supplies services and staff for libraries, audio visual services, guidance and support staff will cost \$98,936 more in 1977 than in 1976. Attendance, health and food service costs are expected to be up \$14,435 this year. (Continued on page two)