

Police chase on Highway 25

Seven local youths die in fiery, head-on crash

by George Evashuk
Herald Staff Reporter

Seven Acton area youths are dead following a Saturday night high speed police chase that ended in a head-on, fiery collision on Highway 25 south of the town.

The seven dead as a result of Saturday night's collision are:
—John McHugh, 17, 274 Mill St., Acton.
—Kevin Broostad, 17, of 44 Nelson Court, Acton.

—Lynn Marshall, 22, RRA, Acton.
—Wayne Scott McTavish, 18, RRI, Limehouse.

—Timothy J. Bruslanowski, 18, formerly of Acton, now of Guelph.

—John Oudesluys, 19, of RRI, Moffat.
All six above were in a blue 1965 car driven by McHugh which was proceeding northbound from Milton.

Eric Couture, 18, of Church St., Acton also died. He was the driver of the stolen 1972 car which went out of control at a speed in excess of 100 miles per hour on the snow swept highway and crashed head-on into the McHugh vehicle after being chased by Const. Tom Roduck of Halton police.

Ontario Provincial Police Const. Bob Willmott, who is investigating the accident, said death was instantaneous for all involved in the fiery collision.

Couture, was burned beyond recognition moments after the incident occurred, Fire Chief Charles Holmes told the Herald.

He said the fire, in which flames had soared ten to fifteen feet in the air, was contained within five minutes of the fire department's arrival. The inferno was the result of an exploding gas tank which ignited immediately after contact with the McHugh vehicle.

The McHugh vehicle did not catch fire but the force of the impact threw two bodies free of the car. It was sheared almost completely in half by the high-speed impact.

The only eye witness to the accident was Const. Tom Roduck of Halton Police who was pursuing Couture after receiving a radio report of a stolen car in Acton.

The stolen car, owned by Cornelia Snook of Main St. in Acton, was stolen from the rear of Snook's laundromat shortly after Mr. Snook had left it to enter his laundromat. The keys were in the car. He reported it stolen to

Halton police cruiser near his laundromat.

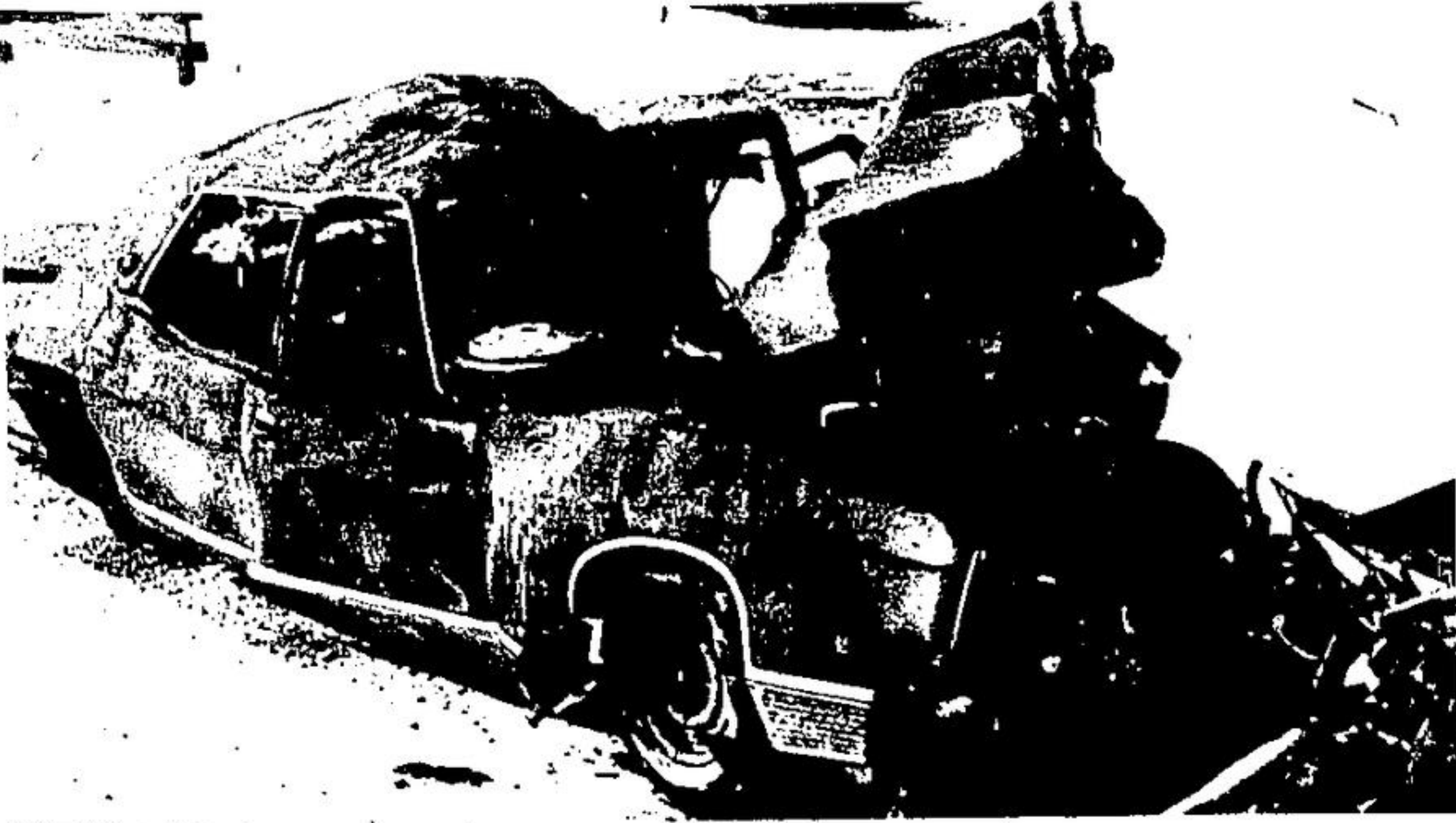
Const. Tom Roduck had already spotted the car weaving from side to side on the road and was following it when the report of its theft came over the air, it is reported. Upon hearing of the theft he turned on his cruiser's flashing lights but the car sped away.

A mile down the road, after fleeing at speeds of more than 100 mph, the stolen car is reported to have hit an icy patch on the road, crossed the centre line and collided head-on with the vehicle driven by McHugh.

The sound of the explosion alarmed members of the Robert Charette family who live about 500 feet from the scene of the accident.

Mrs. Charette told the Herald she at first thought the Gulf service station next door was on fire because of the reflections of flames in the station's windows.
"I went down and looked at the cars," she said, "but I had to come home. I couldn't take it."

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The stolen vehicle... One dead

KILLED IN THE ACCIDENT



John McHugh



Kevin Broostad



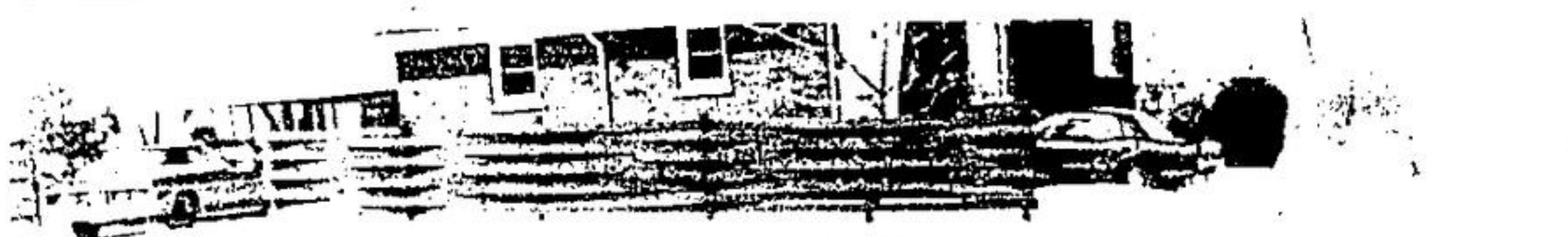
Tim Bruslanowski



John Oudesluys



Lynn Marshall



The McHugh car... Six killed

Police commission will investigate circumstances of crash

Halton Hills' two representatives on the Halton Police Commission will wait for a full report on the incidents surrounding the fiery death of seven area youths Saturday night before determining whether a review of police "high speed chases" should be carried out.

Glen Magnusson and Mayor Tom Hill both told the Herald that they wanted to have the full details of the accident before considering any further actions.

Mayor Hill stated that the police com-

mission will certainly ask for a full report on the accident from Police Chief Ken Skerrett and the investigating Ontario Provincial Police officers.

Commenting upon the accident Mayor Hill stated, "It's certainly a terrible loss to a community when seven young lives are wiped out in an accident."

"I don't know how anyone can express his feelings to those parents."

He promised a "full investigation" by the

Halton police.

Halton Police Chief Ken Skerrett said he will wait for a full report on the accident before considering any further actions.

"I don't know how anyone can express his feelings to those parents."

Four minutes...and seven lives

The time elapsed between the moment Cor Snook's car was stolen and its 100-mile-an-hour, head-on collision which brought instant death to seven youths Saturday night was only four minutes.

"I couldn't believe it," said Mrs. Cor Snooks in her home two miles up the road from the scene accident.

She told the Herald in an interview her husband's car had been stolen from behind the laundromat they operate on Main St. Shortly before 11 p.m. Saturday night, she and

her husband were playing cards in their home with friends. Mr. Snook left to check that no vandals had attacked the laundromat and to lock up. She said that lately the laundromat had been the target of a "lot of vandals."

Mr. Snook pulled up behind the laundromat, she said, left the keys in the car and entered the rear of the business. As there were still customers washing clothes, he walked straight back out, she said, but by that time the car was gone.

She said that Mr. Snook noticed a parked police car across the street from the laundromat, went over to it and told of the theft to the officer who put it on the police radio.

She said her husband heard over the police radio that the car had been noticed by another police cruiser operated by Const. Tom Roduck of 10 Division, Halton Regional police who was in chase.

At this point Mr. Snook left to telephone and tell her of

what had happened, Mrs. Snook said. While they were on the telephone the fire siren sounded.

"It was four minutes," Mrs. Snook said. "I couldn't believe it."

She said it wasn't until 1:30 Sunday morning that she and her husband learned it was their stolen car that had caused the accident.

"We haven't eaten all day," she said. "I feel so terrible for their parents. Just imagine what they have to go through."

Council delays 10% pay cuts

Regional councillors are obviously having second thoughts about that 10 percent pay cut.

The pay cut, passed by a narrow vote of council early in January, was to cover the remaining 12 months of the councillors' three-year term in order to demonstrate visibly to regional staff the concern that the councillors had towards cutting costs.

"I, quite frankly, can't afford to take an \$850 cut in my pay," commented Burlington Mayor George Harrington last week as he led a move to delay passing the bill that would officially cut councillors' \$6,500 annual salaries by 10 percent.

"It affects everyone," commented Milton Mayor Anne MacArthur, "so everyone should be here when the bill is presented."

She noted that five of the 24 regional councillors were not present at that particular point in Wednesday's meeting.

She presented a resolution that presentation of second and third readings of the bill be delayed until the first council meeting in April. By a narrow 10-9 vote the resolution was passed.

Councillor Carl Erikson complained that the pay cut was supposed to cover all of 1976 but "I see here that it's now supposed to come into effect on the date that the bill is passed."

"We're playing games with the public."

Arena rental rates jump \$2 to \$6 an hour for sports groups

With the net losses last year for the three arenas in Halton Hills totalling \$84,806 and the projected 1976 net losses totalling \$82,644, the town's recreation department and the town's recreation advisory committees have presented revised rental rates to the general administration committee for the arenas in hopes of reducing the yearly net losses.

The new rental rates for all three arenas, as proposed by recreation director Glen Gray, were recommended by the general administration committee and will now seek approval by town council.

The rental rates are divided into four categories those being: regular use by groups and individuals; use by groups or individuals for special events such as carnivals, tournaments; casual use rates for individuals; and summer use.

The increased arena rental rates for minor sports groups using the arena during prime time would involve a jump from \$14 an hour in Acton to \$20 an hour; \$18 an hour to \$20 at the Georgetown Memorial Arena and \$23 to \$25 an hour in the Gordon Alcott Memorial Arena.

All other local groups renting in prime time would face increases of \$5.50 per hour in Acton, \$3 in Georgetown Memorial and \$3 per hour in the Gordon Alcott.

Out-of-town groups renting in prime time would face increases of \$7.50 per hour in the Acton arena; \$5 in the Memorial and \$5 in the Gordon Alcott. Sports groups not renting during prime time would face a \$3 an hour jump in Acton; a \$1 increase in the Memorial and a \$2 hike in the Gordon Alcott.

All other groups in town renting in non-prime time (this only presently exists in the Gordon Alcott) would pay an

increase of \$2 an hour. Out-of-town groups booking in non-prime time would face an increase of \$5 per hour in each of the three arenas.

Included in the recommendation passed by the committee were the rates for special events. The recreation department recommended that regular ice rental rates be applicable to special events such as carnivals, tournaments etc.

However a separate recommendation was made by the G.A. committee that if an organization approached town council in search of the town subsidizing an event and if the town agreed, then the amounts specified would come from general revenue, not from the recreation budget.

Adjusted recommended rates included fees to be paid by casual use of individuals who have booked the rink only if a previous cancellation was made within 48 hours. Rates were revised to \$7 for the first person from \$5, however keeping the \$2 fee for every additional person. The fees under the same category for the Gordon Alcott arena would

rise from \$10 for the first person to \$12 with the \$2 for additional person remaining. Summer use of the arenas, Acton and Georgetown Memorial, by the junior and minor lacrosse teams, will have higher fees if the rental rates are approved by council. The cost for practices for juniors will remain at \$10 an hour however rental for games and playoffs will increase by \$5 an hour. Minor lacrosse practices, games and playoffs

will rise from \$5 to \$7. Community organized functions or professional events sponsored by a community group or individuals will each increase by \$25 an hour. Mr. Gray strongly pointed out that even if these new rates are approved by council the three arenas would not be operating at a break-even basis, however the yearly net losses would be reduced substantially.

No Crazy Boat Race this year?

The Crazy Boat Race, that annual spring excursion of makeshift crafts down the Credit River, may not be held this year.

This Wednesday the Georgetown Jaycees, who have annually organized the event for a number of years, will meet to discuss whether or

not to once again sponsor it. According to one representative of the club the reasons for possibly cancelling it are two-fold: safety and a desire for new sponsors.

"Even if we held it this year many of the newer members in the club want us to hand it over to some other organization or group to run in the future."

HFA's running 'from hell to Hornby'

The Halton Federation of Agriculture "is running from hell to Hornby fighting against little, unimportant issues," angrily commented Milton Mayor Anne MacArthur at last Wednesday's regional council meeting, as she attempted to block the region's \$3,000 annual grant to the HFA.

"The federation is severely split," she continued. "A very few people are running that operation while many others can hardly get an audience with them."

"We must be assured they are a united group and that they are acting on behalf of all their members before we give them any money at all."

Jim Watson, another Milton represen-

tative on the regional council, added that the federation tends to be particularly critical of Milton council. "They're ready to jump on our town on any and all occasions."

"The problem," replied Halton Hills Councillor Dick Howitt, "is an internal problem with the federation, but I see no reason why that problem or any problems between the federation and Mrs. MacArthur should have any effect upon our funding to that group."

A majority of the councillors agreed with him that the funding should continue. However, when Mayor MacArthur was asked just how far "hell to Hornby" she replied, "roughly the distance between Georgetown and Hornby."

the HERALD

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GUESS WHO LIKES PANCAKES? Kristy Johnson, 14 months old, gave her dad, Ron, a helping hand with his plate of pancakes on Shrove Tuesday at St. John's Church in

Stewarttown. The Johnsons made the trip from Limehouse because Mom didn't feel like cooking and "loves" pancakes. They were "mmm...mmm...good!"