

Maple Avenue crossing unsafe?**Residents fear bridge danger**By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

Residents living near the Maple Avenue railway bridge west of the Georgetown fire-hall are convinced the structure is architecturally unsound and say it's only a matter of time before traffic over the bridge takes a life.

"It's unreal the number of cars which have missed the bridge or gone through the railing," Dean Popiel told The Herald Sunday. "It's amazing no one's been killed."

While Mr. Popiel and his mother, Anna, a 25-year-old resident of the small neighbourhood on the west side of the tracks, have seen at least six cars slide into the ravine, they are concerned about the bridge's deteriorating structural condition.

Maintained by Canadian National Railways, the bridge was the subject of a recent engineering study sponsored by the town and released to councillors last week. Another bridge spanning Sixteen Mile Creek on the Third Line was found fit for heavy truck loads, but corrosion of steel girders and cracks in the

concrete foundation of the Maple Avenue crossing have reduced its load capacity from about 12 tons to just over five tons.

A bylaw passed by council restricting the weight of vehicles using the bridge may not be enough to prevent its collapse.

"I don't really trust the bridge anymore," Mr. Popiel said. "I've watched trucks go over it and you can hear it make a lot of noise."

Some residents appear confused about whether the bridge falls under the town's or CN's jurisdiction. At least one neighbor feels the solution to both the structural problems and traffic headaches around the bridge would be to tear it down entirely.

"I could care less if the bridge was gone," Marcel Larouche said, "and I don't buy the argument that having it there saves time for people living west of the bridge."

Mr. Larouche pointed out that most of the large traffic users coming down River Road turning west would likely use the Mountainview Road crossing south of the Maple Avenue Bridge. While it's com-

forting to have the fire station several hundred yards beyond the bridge, Mr. Larouche said, "a lot of people don't live as close to the firehall as we do. We can't use that excuse."

Contacted Monday, a CN official said that if the town wants to strengthen the bridge, bolstering its load capacity, it would first have to apply to the Canadian Transport Commission's railway transport committee.

"However, said John Jeronimus, regional engineer of bridges and structures for CN, "if the town wants the bridge removed, we would remove it."

While major reconstruction of the bridge would require the town to "follow the prescribed route" through the CTC, Mr. Jeronimus said the railway readily makes minor repairs to bridge and maintains an annual inspection of the structure.

Prepared by Phillips Planning and Engineering Ltd. of Burlington, the bridge study says the Maple Avenue crossing, with regular maintenance, will probably give good service for the next five years.

Meanwhile, neighbors have criticized the town for doing little to correct a number of dangerous traffic problems near the bridge, despite a petition five years ago warning about imminent accidents on either side of the crossing.

Two weeks ago, residents watched as two trucks rescued a westbound car which had rounded the corner leading to the bridge too fast, crashing through the railing and ending up on the lip of the bridge above several hydro lines.

If some drivers, unfamiliar with the bridge, are taking the eastern entrance to the bridge too fast, others rounding a steep incline on the western side are often dangerously surprised by a hidden intersection just before the structure.

"You take your life in your hands when you cross the bridge," resident Betty Bot said. "Some people are in just too big a hurry when they come over and they don't see people walking along the road."

Mrs. Bot and other neighbors in the area, including John and Tryphena Murphy, are concerned about the safety

of their children travelling to and from school. With a new townhouse and condominium development in the area, children have been playing near the bridge, they point out.

A proposal to turn the farm-

er town garbage dump on the west side of the tracks into a park may mean strengthening the bridge, but residents are concerned that the traffic danger may increase unless something is done about the approaches to the bridge.

'Coping with death' lecture

"Coping with death in the family: Problems faced by the Bereaved" is the topic of a talk by Margaret Dart, a member of an organization called Bereaved Families of Ontario. The talk, sponsored by the University Women's Club, will be held March 3 at 8:45 p.m. at Centennial Middle School.

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This 55-year-old bridge along Maple Avenue crossing the Georgetown CNR tracks is once again the subject of concern among nearby residents after a westbound car took the entrance to the bridge too swiftly and slammed into the guard rails. Although no one was hurt in the incident, neighbours recall pointing out the traffic situation at the bridge to town councillors five years ago and say it's only a matter of time before a pedestrian or driver is killed. The structural condition of the bridge, the subject of a recent engineering study, also worries residents, who feel that its "light load" posting won't deter larger trucks from using it as a shortcut to Maple Avenue. (Herald photo)

Halton squeezes MOE for Site F fundingBy CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

Halton region is determined to make the provincial environment ministry pay for a recent decision on its controversial proposed garbage dump in Milton.

During last Wednesday's council meeting, acting chief administrator Dennis Perlin charged that environment minister Harry Parrott "changed the rules of the game" Feb. 9 when he decided that public hearings on Site "F" will be held under the broad-based conditions of the Environmental Assessment Act. The province, Mr. Perlin said, should be asked to pay the estimated \$250,000 that will be needed as a result to look at other landfill site possibilities in the region.

Had the minister ordered the hearings held under the Environmental Protection Act, only evidence concerning Site F itself, excluding other proposed sites, would be admitted. Over \$500,000 has been spent on Site F, located near the town's Tremaine-Britannia Roads intersection, including engineering fees and legal costs.

While the town of Milton and a 500-member citizens group opposed to destroying prime agricultural land at the location are pleased with the minister's decision, regional councillors are concerned that the additional expense may jeopardize other solid waste management plans for Halton unless the province picks up the tab.

In a lengthy report, Mr. Perlin stated he felt that more than enough money had already been spent studying Halton's landfill site possibilities, adding that there is no evidence Site F will become an environmental disaster if turned into a garbage dump.

But Milton's regional contingent, excluding Coun. Brad Clements, absent from Wednesday's council meeting, opposed the region's bid for provincial funding and a further recommendation imploring the town to obey an Ontario Municipal Board ruling allowing the property to be rezoned for the landfill site.

Calling any decision aimed at making Site F the solution to Halton's garbage problems "morally and environmentally wrong", Milton Coun. Bill Johnson said the region brought the Site F headache upon itself. Earlier councils, he said, were ill-advised by previous studies proposing the location as the best of 11 sites in Halton to accommodate the region's future waste disposal needs.

However, councillors unanimously supported a gesture of "good faith" on

behalf of the region, waiving interest charges on legal costs incurred by the Tremaine-Britannia citizens group during its unsuccessful 1978 contest against rezoning the Site F lands.

Although the region is fast approaching its 1984 dump capacities at landfill sites in Burlington and Oakville, Oakville Mayor Harry Barrett warned that residents in Halton's southernmost municipalities are entitled to the same kind of lengthy deliberation which has preceded Site F if the search for a new garbage dump continues.

"We're asking nothing less than the same kind of investigations for Oakville and Burlington if the dump heads down our way," he said, slamming area politicians George Kerr and James Snow for not "telling us how to get

out of this mess".

While some councillors proposed amending The Regional Municipality of Halton Act to allow individual municipalities to operate their own landfill sites, Halton Hills Coun. Mike Armstrong denounced the idea.

"Let's get back into reality," he said. "You're never going to go back to the old system of having four dumps in four areas."

While a site in Ashgrove, south of Stewarttown was considered several years ago as a possible garbage dump, the most favored alternative to Site F lies in Burlington.

Known as Site A, the 158-acre Burlington shale quarry owned by National Sewer Pipe of Canada Ltd. could become a privately operated landfill site. Private projects are, as yet, unaffected by the Environment Assessment Act.

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two weeks prior to the field trips, regardless of whether they have gone on the trip before, Mr. Allen said. The trips are supervised by a ratio of one instructor for twelve students.

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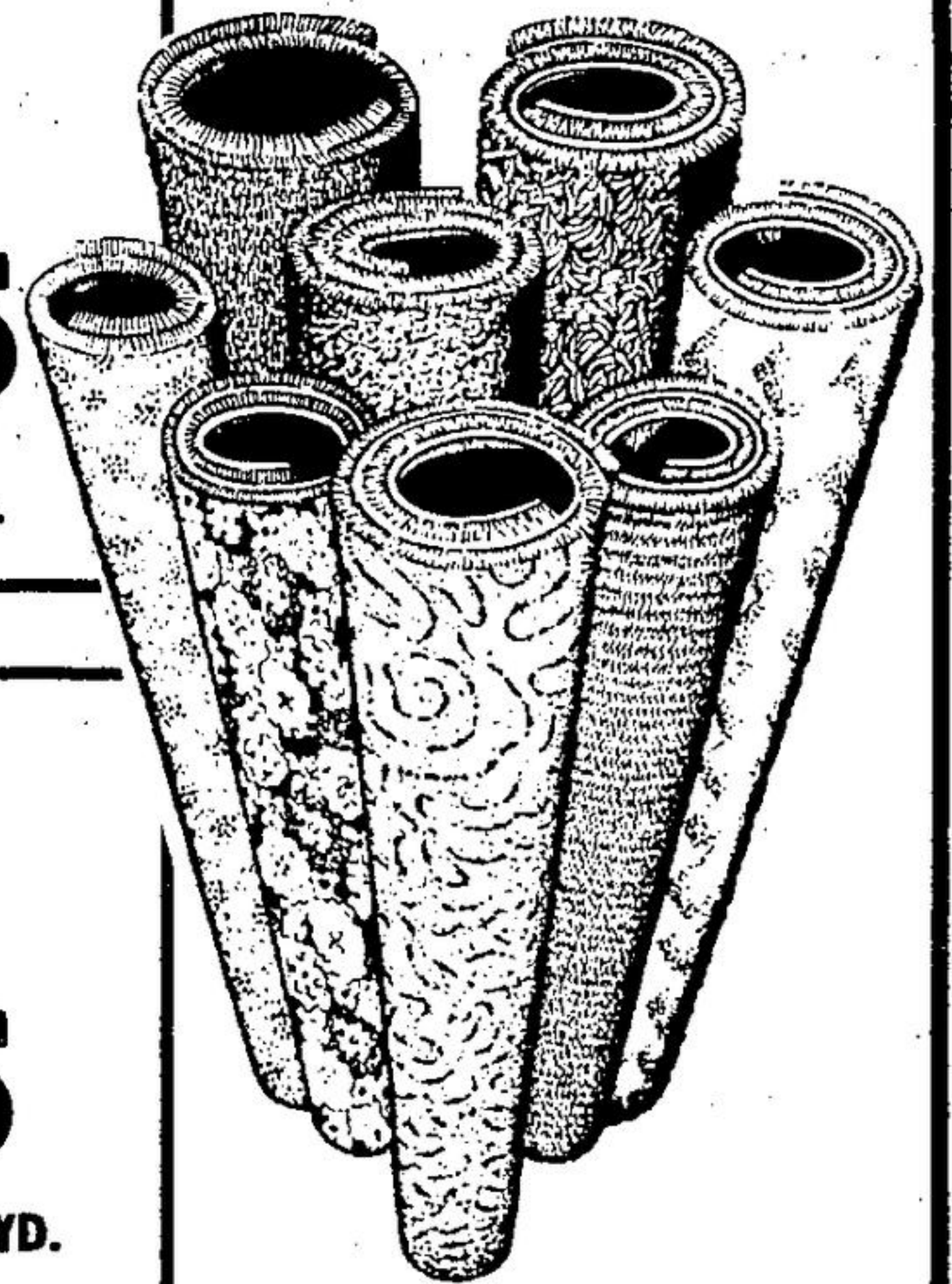
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