

In town's early days there was no relief firefighting crew

28-year veteran Ace Bailey

By ANI PEDERIAN
Herald Staff Writer
At one time, it used to be the town siren that would rouse Ace Bailey to action. Today, it's a little brown pager tucked to his middle.

After 28 years of 'eating smoke', Mr. Bailey is still in the thick of it. The 56-year-old Halton Hills volunteer firefighter says the worst part is getting up at 3 a.m. to put out a fire, then back to bed and in to work a few hours later. That hasn't gotten any easier over the years.

With three town sirens blowing whenever there was a fire, it was hard to sleep through a fire call.

"They were quite loud, and would wake up the whole town," Mr. Bailey chuckled. "They used to bring quite a crowd out."

When he first joined, Mr. Bailey didn't own a car, so when the siren rang, he'd either run over, or hop on his bike and pedal to the firehall.

As well, the equipment firefighters now take for granted didn't exist. There were coats and boots, but not every man had a breathing apparatus.

"Years ago we didn't have as much safety equipment as we have now. Over the years we've got more and more," Mr. Bailey said. "The breathing apparatus is a must now with all those artificially made things that smoke and knock you flat."

DIFFERENT
Without the current protective equipment, firefighters in yesteryear were a different breed, according to Mr. Bailey. "You had to be really healthy. It seemed we

were a more hardy breed," he said. "There was no relief crew. If a fire lasted six hours, you'd be there. Now, you get relieved after two hours."

Injured a number of times answering fire

plode right up through the ceiling," Mr. Bailey said. "When you hear them start to explode, you start ducking because they can go in any direction."

Stairs, ceilings and floors can also be dangerous. Firefighters don't



...with the Halton Hills firefighters

The following feature about the firefighters of Halton Hills is the second in a series, as Herald reporter Ani Pederian takes an in-depth look at the problems and rewards of being a member of the volunteer force.

calls, Mr. Bailey has nevertheless not been deterred from firefighting.

The worst injury he sustained while battling a blaze occurred in a house-fire where he suffered second degree burns to his face and neck and had to spend two days in hospital.

Smoke had built up in the home so that it was ready for combustion. When Mr. Bailey entered by the front door, he let in fresh oxygen from outside; that ignited the home, and he was thrown back 40 feet.

Although he's been fortunate never to have fallen off a ladder, he has suffered ankle sprains working in rough terrain.

To try to lessen the chance of injury, firefighters work in pairs.

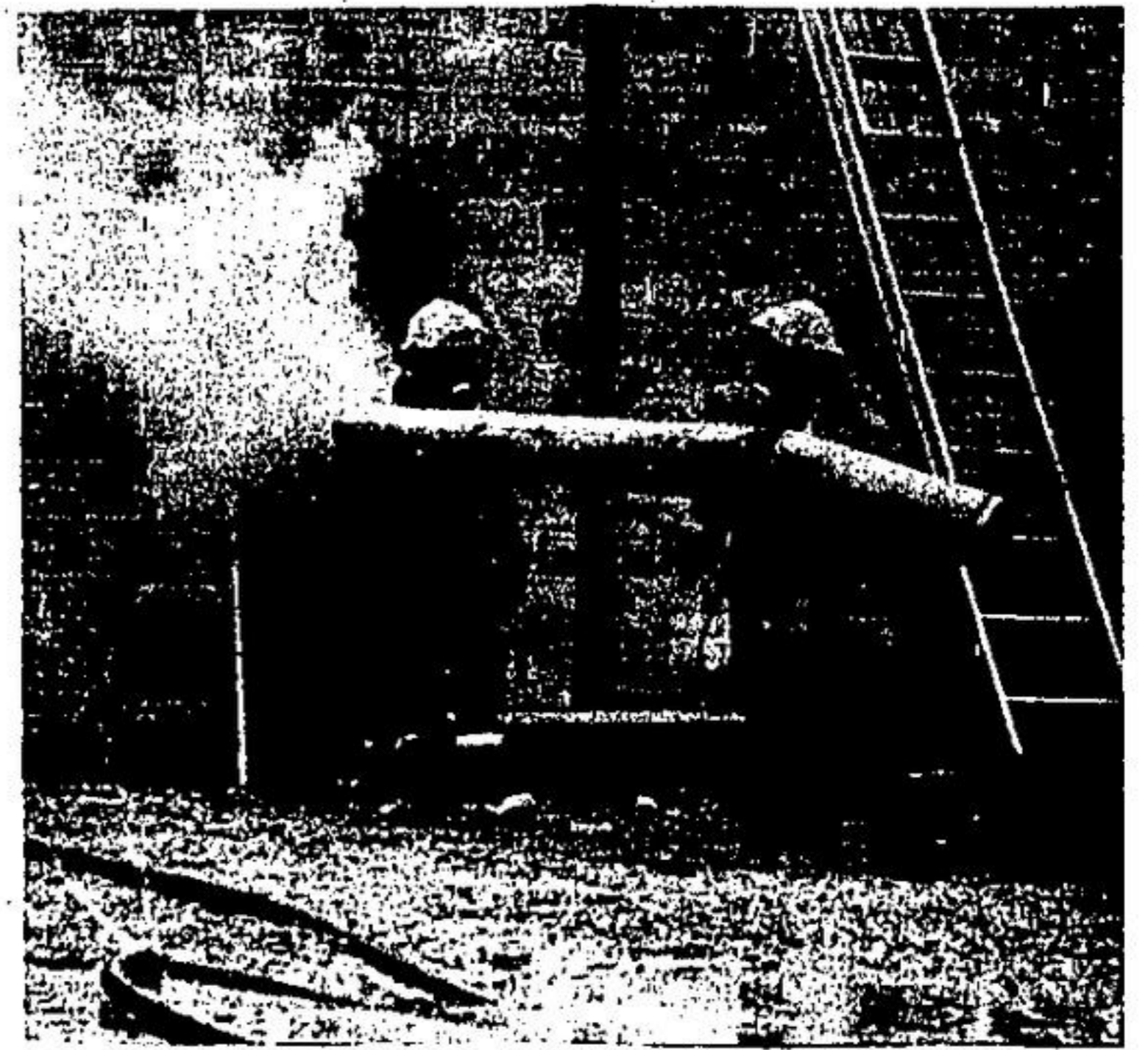
"It can be very dangerous. You never know what's going to happen from one minute to the next," Mr. Bailey said.

In house fires, aerosol cans can be a real hazard. "I've seen them ex-

know if they'll cave in or will support them. Often after the blaze is over, they'll marvel at how lucky they were.

One hair-raising experience Mr. Bailey had occurred 20 years ago when a railroad car derailed and two people were trapped in the caboose, requiring aid to get out. However, in trying to get them out, firefighters discovered themselves coming eye to eye with five box cars of steers which had escaped and were running around in the dark. The steers were on their way to the stockyards in Toronto.

"That was quite a night. They were all over the place, in people's backyards," Mr. Bailey



Volunteer firefighters were kept busy Friday morning at Halsey's on Guelph Street when fire broke out.



Ace Bailey has seen 28 years of service with the volunteer firefighters. (Herald photo)

Alf Duby

Acton's area chief remembers Rockwood human bucket brigade

By ANI PEDERIAN
Herald Staff Writer
From the time Alf Duby was a youngster taking part in a bucket brigade in Rockwood, he's been keen on fighting fires.

"I think every boy from the time he's six years old wants to be a fireman," the 25-year veteran with the Halton Hills fire department said. "It's part of growing up."

At 62, the Acton area chief is still enthusiastic about following the call of the siren.

Anticipating retirement from the department he's served so faithfully over the years since first moving to Acton, Mr. Duby doesn't see his interest lessening any.

"I'm sure I'm going to be nosy enough to go down to the firehall and see what's going on even after retiring," he smiled.

It was his childhood experiences in helping out the Rockwood fire chief that developed Mr. Duby's involvement in fighting fires, and made firefighting a big part of his life.

With 36 pails to its credit, the Rockwood human bucket brigade would form at the sound of the siren to carry and pour water into two 80-

gallon tanks on a hose cart. Everybody who was able, would go out and help fill them up.

ADDED PRESSURE
Into the tanks would be dumped a bag of baking soda and a jar of sulfuric acid. Together, the two

When he first became a firefighter, Acton had two pumpers and an antique Studebaker. The town's population was 2,200. It's grown to 8,000 since then.

With the increased population, naturally enough, calls to the station have multiplied.

Whereas before firefighters would never be called for car accidents, the trend now seems to be otherwise, Mr. Duby said.

"They figure, I guess, when they call you, that you have the equipment to rescue a trapped person and the knowledge of first aid and resuscitation so that you can help until others come along," Mr. Duby said.

With the ambulance service centred in Georgetown, the fire department fills a real need in Acton until others can come along and carry on. Also with Fairy Lake there, there's more opportunity for resusc-

Working with the Acton public works department meant Mr. Duby had to be on call to man the two pump houses whenever there was a fire. Water was in reservoirs then. As he became acquainted with the Acton firefighters, he was asked to join.

lator calls to the fire department in the case of drownings.

MORE WATER
With tank trucks able to hold up to 2,500 gallons of water, fire departments no longer have to use water sparingly, even in rural areas.

In the past, firefighters would have to hunt for a pond or stream from which to draw water with a portable pump. In the winter it was tougher finding moving water.

"We've had a good cross-section of fellows who know the area so we've always been very lucky," Mr. Duby said, noting there were never any street names or house numbers when he first started.

Although there have been many big fires over the years, each fire's different and it doesn't matter how small or big, they're all serious to those involved, Mr. Duby said.

"We try to get across to each firefighter that regardless of what's there they respect it because that's somebody's lifesavings. When we leave, we don't talk about what we've seen," he said.

The men working with him are all there because



ALF DUBY

would generate the gas that would increase pressure in the tank so that the water would come out with some force from the attached hose.

It wasn't until the early fifties that Rockwood got its first fire truck. By that time, Mr. Duby had married and left to work for the public works department in Acton.

"From boyhood on, I had the yen to follow the siren and go where the excitement was," Mr. Duby said.

HALTON HILLS ARTS COUNCIL

Outdoor concerts abound

The night shall be filled with music
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The poet, who penned those immortal lines, obviously did not live near the C.N.E. Band shell during a rock concert. This is indeed a musical summer in southern Ontario.



Outdoor concerts are filling the night air with the sounds of pop, rock, country, jazz and even a smidgeon of classical music. The weather has co-operated beautifully so far. Already we have had the opportunity to enjoy

stars of the magnitude of Anne Murray, Bette Midler, Simon and Garfunkel, Lou Rawls, Buddy Rich, Ben Vereen and many more. Still to come are the likes of Paul Anka, Harry Belafonte, America, Peter, Paul and Mary, Hall and Oates and countless others.

Not quite qualifying as an outdoor production, but not your average indoor show either is the Canadian Opera Company's production of *The Barber of Seville* in the tent at Harbour Front. This abridged version of Rossini's well known opera has received mixed reviews.

From opera to acid rock with everything in between, there has truly been something for every taste this summer. In fact there may even be too much. The entertainment dollar can only stretch so far. Some of the concerts are going as high as \$22. Granted most are less, but even at \$10, it can be an expensive evening.

There is one outdoor show which is absolutely free. It is not a musical production, but rather a dramatic one. I'm referring to the Toronto Free Theatre's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in High Park. The magic begins at 8:15, Wednesday to Sunday until August 14. It all takes place just east of the Grenadier Restaurant.

The works of thirty-five Ontario student craftsmen will be displayed at "Crafts of the World, Kaleidoscope '83", in the Kortright Centre's Nature Art and Photography Gallery, daily from August 15 to October 9, 1983. The Kortright Centre is the only place in Ontario to exhibit the entire show.

To see the crafts at the Kortright Centre, near Kleinburg, go north on Hwy 400 to Major Mackenzie Drive, west to Pine Valley Drive, then south. Kortright is open every day, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For further information, contact Metro Region Conservation, at 661-6600.

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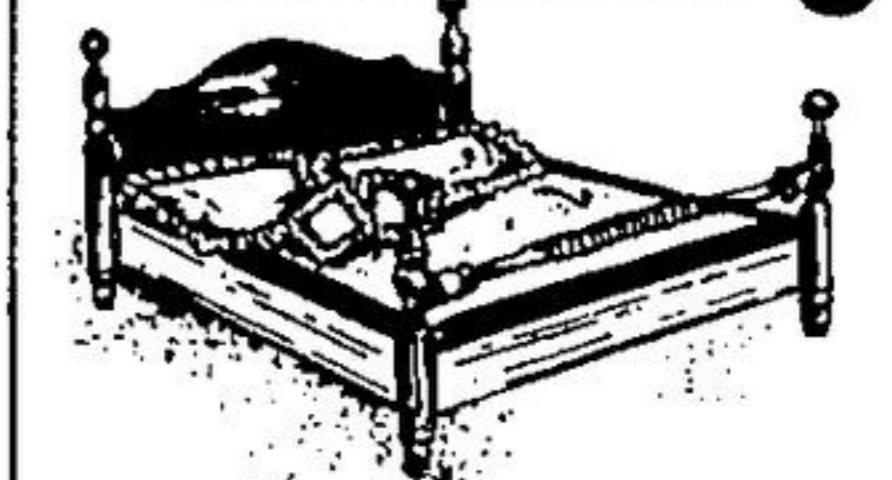
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