



Snow. There's been lots of it in Halton Hills and that's putting a strain on the town's public works staff and the department's winter maintenance budget. Snow crews keep 286.4 kilometers of roads in Halton Hills clear of snow, sometimes working around the clock to open major arteries and connecting routes. Here, driver Ernie Corbett and wingman Danny Engleby plow the Eighth Line north of Wildwood Road.

Herald photo

Town braces as 'bad' winter arrives

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald staff writer

Unlike the ski industry, a "bad" winter for the town's public works department is one in which there's a lot of snow.

And, as public works superintendent Frank Morette acknowledges with a roll of his eyes, Halton Hills is having a bad winter.

As of Dec. 20, weather had already taken a sizeable chunk out of what was left of the 1983 winter maintenance budget.

There was \$121 remaining for road salt and the allotment for sanding was already overspent by \$25,000.

"Spend it in the most efficient manner," Mr. Morette said, in the message behind the town's winter maintenance policy which was endorsed last year by council.

Striving for efficiency doesn't please everybody, he noted. Residents often call when they feel the clearing of their road has been unduly delayed.

GUIDELINES

The policy is a guideline on how and in what priority the 286.4 kilometers of roads under Halton Hills' responsibility are cleared.

As a rule of thumb, snowplowing usually gets underway after two inches of snow has fallen on major arteries and trucks start clearing important routes when three inches of snow has accumulated.

"We try to do it so that no matter where you live, you're close to an open road, although the road by your front yard isn't cleared yet," Mr. Morette explained.

Major routes through subdivisions (like Georgetown's Delrex Boulevard) which feed a number of smaller, side streets are among the first to get done.

There are a number of roads in Halton Hills which are cleared by Halton region's public works department and the province's ministry of transportation and communications including Highways 7 and 25 leading into Acton and Georgetown.

TWO MAN PLOWS

"There are 13 plow routes," Mr. Morette said, "and each truck plow takes two men, one at the wheel and the other working the wing — the large sideplow." Plus, we have three graders clearing snow, with one man apiece."

A heavy snowfall, like the one which dumped about 13 centimeters of snow on Halton Hills last Wednesday, puts extra strain not only on the town's winter maintenance budget, but on the public works department's 34-member staff. Getting the worst cleared away may require men working from 7 a.m. to 9 or 11 p.m.

"We lose men that might normally be on snow crew duty to illness, or they may be required to collect garbage or work at the cemetery," Mr. Morette explained. "That can substantially reduce the level of service and may mean it takes us longer to clear less important routes."

There's the added problem, he pointed out, of delays caused by machine breakdowns which are bound to happen as the workload increases.

STRUCK MANHOLE

During last Friday's interview with The Herald, a couple of pieces of snow clearing equipment were being repaired by town mechanics. One plow had been removed from the truck after it struck a manhole and was bent out of shape; the other needed to have a weld repaired and parts replaced. The town may go through a score of metal plow shoes and blades which wear out under heavy usage.

It costs about \$37 an hour to keep a two-man snowplow on the road, and that much alone for the hourly operation of a grader, excluding the cost of a driver.

The town also owns three sanders and has a number of two-way sanders mounted on the backs of the snowplows.

SANDING POLICY

According to the winter maintenance policy, roads are only entirely sanded if there is a severe ice storm; otherwise, sanding is limited to hazardous stretches of roads, such as hills, curves and intersections.

Sanding is limited to the town's paved roads since it contributes to the softness of gravel and dirt roads during the spring thaw, Mr. Morette explained.

"Sand is 'pickled' at a rate of one tonne of salt per 20 tonnes of sand," he said. "We do this so that the sand won't freeze on the road. Salt has a detrimental effect on dirt roads — it turns them into mush."

the HERALD Features

Rhoda Geggie: A cheery smile behind the cart

By ANI PEDEHIAN
Herald staff writer

Some things just aren't the same anymore, but Rhoda Geggie's smile is just as cheering and welcome, even after 23 years.

The RR5 Georgetown woman is the face behind the gift shop cart every other Friday at the Georgetown Memorial Hospital, and her smile has been cheering patients for a good score and more years.

Active with the hospital's Women Auxiliary since she moved to Georgetown in late 1969, Mrs. Geggie hasn't stopped pitching in and adding the human touch to the hospital care patients receive.

"I enjoy going around the hospital and just sort of visiting as I go," Mrs. Geggie said. "I think the patients enjoy it. There are a lot of people in there who don't get visitors in the afternoon and I always felt they were really pleased to see me, the

older ones particularly."

On the Auxiliary even before the hospital was built, she has continued to be an active member, working on the executive, looking after the knitting for the gift shop and doing some promotional work as well.

FIRST CART

"When we first started out, we had a man make us our first cart. It was a big, wooden thing. I could hardly see over the top of it," Mrs. Geggie laughed. "It was heavy to push, and one time I remember I had a lovely collision with a girl coming with a tray of drinks."

She was later teased about having to get a driving licence to operate the cart safely.

When the auxiliary had the money, a new cart was purchased, the one that's used now, Mrs. Geggie said.

The cart rolls about with a selection of most everything that's sold in the gift shop except



STARS ON ICE

The Christmas holidays are traditionally the time when family can spend time together. Here, dads, Dave Bell, left, and Ken Key help out with their youngsters as they learn to skate at the Gordon Alcott arena last Monday. Ryan Bell, 4, was on skates for the second time ever; Matthew Key is 3 years old.

(Herald photo)



Visitors are nice when you're in the hospital, and Gladys Robinson, 89, of Georgetown, was pleased to see Rhoda Geggie out and about with her Georgetown Memorial Hospital Auxiliary cart. A volunteer with the auxiliary for 23 years, Mrs. Geggie is a regular in the hospital corridors.

Herald photo

cigarettes. In the early days they used to sell cigarettes and it was a hot seller. That product was taken off the cart after a hospital fire due to careless smoking.

"We carry baby outfits, dolls, toys, magazines, writing paper, stationery, candy, chips, gum, toothbrushes and creams," Mrs. Geggie named off.

Candy bars are now the hot sellers and in the maternity wing, a new mom may buy birth announcement cards, a baby outfit, or a stuffed toy for the child at home.

LOST

"I remember one of the first times, taking the cart around with Lena Johnson, and I couldn't figure out the plan of the hospital. Somebody had told us it was built on an H and we were trying to find that H," Mrs. Geggie laughed. "Hard to believe we could get lost in it!"

It's been with the help of dedicated workers like Mrs. Geggie that the Auxiliary has been able to serve the community to the extent it has.

POLICE

An Acton man was defrauded out of \$500 by a Zorra Township man from Embro, Ontario. The 18-year old Embro man has been charged with fraud, after giving out a cheque that bounced.

FIRE

An off-duty Peel regional police officer followed an impaired driver from Brampton after spotting erratic driving. In Georgetown, the officer alerted Halton regional police.

FIRE

A malicious false alarm brought Georgetown firefighters out of their warm beds at 1:41 a.m. Dec. 28. The false alarm went off at the Cedar Springs Motel.

There was a chimney fire at a Maple Avenue home Thursday at 3 p.m. Firefighters reported no damage and no injuries.

Queen's sculpture here at Artcast

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald staff writer

A bust of the Queen cast in Georgetown is bound for the Confederation Centre in Charlottetown, PEI.

The bronze work by Toronto sculptor John Reynolds was commissioned by food-store magnate Frank Sobey in memory of his wife and donated to the Centre where it will stand in the Great Hall.

Mr. Reynolds, a member of the Royal Society of British Sculptors, was granted a sitting with the Queen last summer. He spent several weeks in England, using about 200-pounds of clay to model a one-quarter life size bust.

Although Mr. Reynolds has commonly used British foundries, he told The Herald in a recent interview that he's pleased with the work Georgetown's Artcast Inc. has done with the Queen's portrait.

"I much prefer working at Artcast," he said. "I've been dealing with a lot of very enthusiastic people working in a most careful way."

FIVE SESSIONS

Mr. Reynolds was granted five sittings over a four-week period which began July 6. The sittings were held in the Yellow Drawing Room of Buckingham Palace and would usually begin at 1:30 p.m., ending at 2:30 p.m.

"It was my first appearance at the Royal Court," he said, and it was not disagreeable either.

Mr. Reynolds said the Queen wore her navel cape, adorned with the Order of Canada.

"Our conversation was just normal conversation," he said. "I found myself completely at ease with her. I



JOHN REYNOLDS

is a bust of Dr. Norman Bethune, a copy of which stands at York University's Bethune College.

(Several years ago, the original accompanied then-external affairs minister Donald Jamieson several years to China). "But I couldn't back out. It was a learning experience. If I had another chance I'd probably do it better."

But he hopes that his sculpture of the Queen has captured what he believes good portraiture should be: the facial code which not only identifies the person, but also reveals the "essential quality of person."

"In the Confederation Centre, people will immediately realize who it is, because it not only looks like her, but symbolizes her."

was expected to greet her as 'Your Majesty' and bow slightly. The second reference was 'ma'am'."

Mr. Reynolds' son, Rolf, was also helping during the sittings.

"The Queen treated him in a sort of motherly way," Mr. Reynolds recalled. "Rolf's about the same age as Prince Andrew."

When he was contacted to do the work, Mr. Reynolds said he had some doubts about his ability to do it. Another well-known work of his

Car stolen

Ready to head home after a New Year's Eve party at the Acton Sit 'n' Bull Tavern, an Acton man reported his car stolen. The vehicle was later found in a snow bank on Main Street South.

Safe beats thieves

An attempt to enter the safe at the Acton Halton Hills Hydro building on Alice Street proved unsuccessful Thursday. The thief broke a window, causing \$150 damage, to get in.

Tape deck ditched

An unlocked car left in a ditch had a Marantz Solid Gold stereo-cassette deck worth \$800 stolen from the back seat Dec. 28. The car had been left on Sideroad 5 east of Fifth Line.

Peace Council speaker

Guest speaker at the January meeting of the Brampton and area peace council will be Dave Monie from the UAW.

He will bring a film entitled war without winners which was produced by the centre for defence information, Washington, D.C. and features the viewpoints of a group of retired military and former CIA officials.

The meeting is at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 11, Rm. 2, The Annex, Cardinal Leger School, corner of Guest and Mary Streets in Brampton. Everyone welcome.

For more information 453-0288.

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