

# Worker injured in gas explosion

The owner of the Canadiana Restaurant in Acton suffered second degree burns after gas from a pizza oven exploded in his face Sunday afternoon.

Frederick Hodge, 55, of Guelph, is in Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital with burns to his head, scalp and arms after he attempted to ignite the pilot light on a gas-powered stove, say Halton Regional Police.

Police say Mr. Hodge was standing near the pizza oven when the explosion "hurled" him backward and lit his shirt on fire.

"It burnt the shirt right off me," said Mr. Hodge, who said his facial burns spread "right from one ear to another."

The restaurant was evacuated shortly after the 2:30 p.m. explosion and Union Gas officials were called to the Queen Street restaurant to determine the cause of the explosion.

Union Gas, said a spokesman, determined that "a pilot probe was not in its proper place."

"Normally, you have a licensed person to do a light-up," said Union Gas Operation Manager for Halton, Max Fantuz. But he added that legally, anyone can ignite the pilot.

Mr. Fantuz said the explosion, which he called a "flashback" from spilled gas in the oven, was unrelated to repairs made on the

stove several weeks ago by Union Gas.

"If a person tries to light the pilot all the gases accumulate," he said. He likened the pizza oven explosion to what would happen if a closed gas barbecue filled with fuel were ignited.

The explosion "doesn't appear to be the fault of Union Gas," he said.

Mr. Hodge said he would reserve comment until he talks with Union Gas officials.

"I want to give these people a chance to figure out what happened," he said.

Mr. Hodge works weekends and evenings at the restaurant when not at his full-time job in Hornby. He said he was at the Canadiana restaurant Sunday to give his daughter "a day off."

The restaurant is usually run by his daughter and son, he said. It was closed Monday, but is open for business now, he said.

Halton police say further investigation into the explosion will be conducted by the Halton Hills Fire Department.



Top Chickens

The Optimist "Chicken" and three members of the Optimist Club paid a visit to Robert Little Public School in Acton recently to present students with the "Chicken Flag." Chicken Clubs are anti-drug clubs for Grades 4 and 5 students in Halton Hills. On Chicken Days, members wear their Chicken T-shirts

to school, and the school with the highest percentage of members wearing the T-shirts wins the flag for the next month. CHICKEN stands for Cool Honest Intelligent Clearheaded Keen Enthusiastic Not interested in drugs. (Photo submitted)

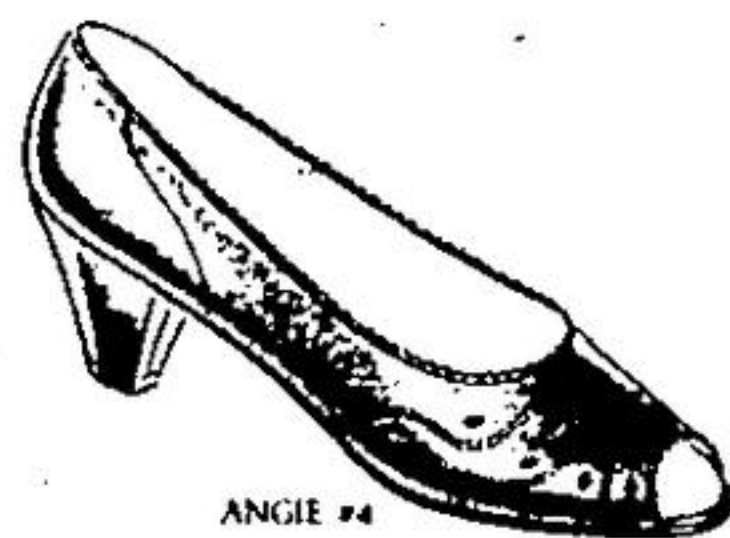
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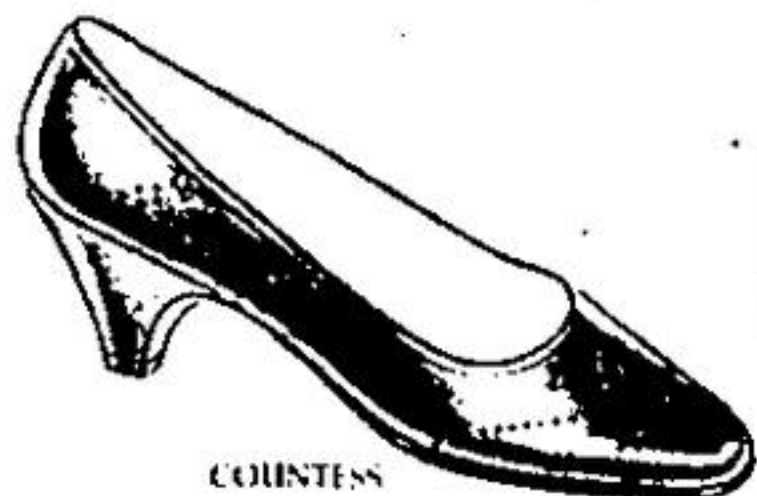
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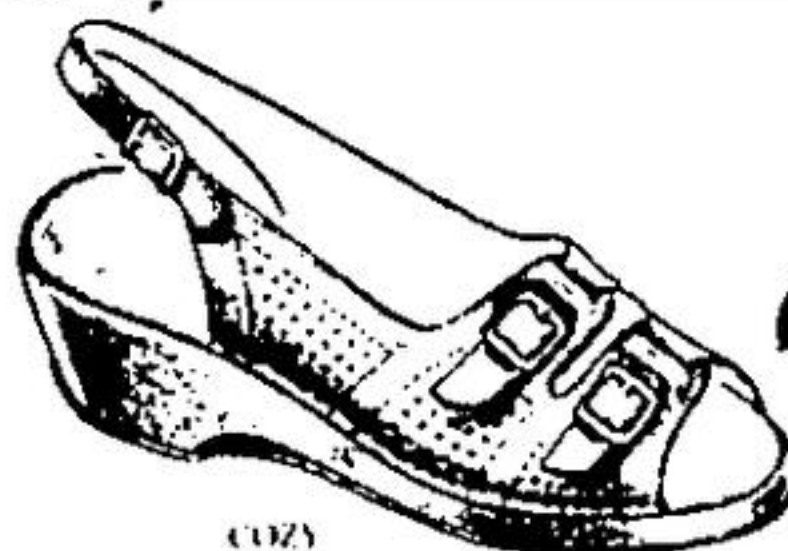
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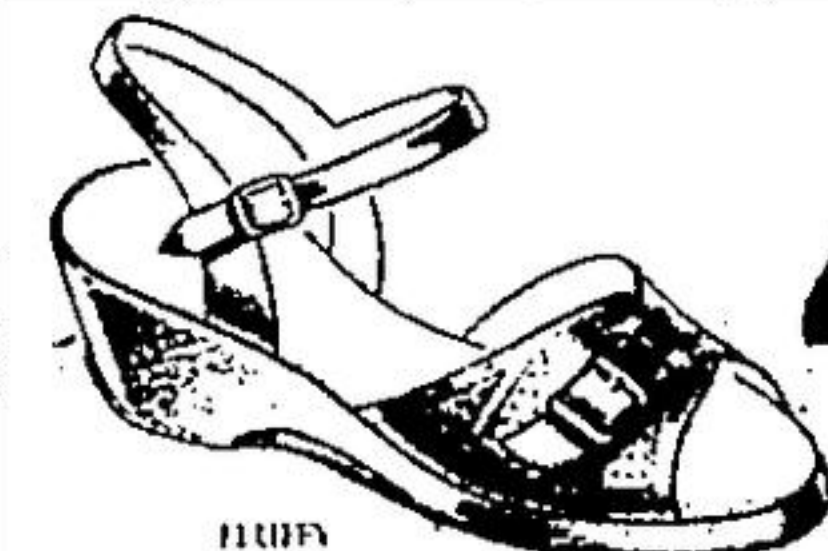
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