

The Canadian Champion

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MILTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1970

SECOND SECTION

ELECTRICAL WEEK SPECIAL

KELVINATOR WASHER AND SPIN DRYER

Big capacity tub and spin dryer. Tub and dryer capacity is over four lbs. of dry laundry - enough to wash nine dress shirts at one time.

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MILTON HYDRO—78 YEARS OF PROGRESS

It was in 1889 that the town fathers of Milton decided there was a need for electric street lights in the town. Until then, coal oil lamps atop the poles were in use in Milton although neighboring cities had the "flaming electric light."

Electric light companies were numerous in Ontario around 1890. Milton Council hassled with Edison Electric Light Co., Ball Electric Light Co. and Reliance Electric Manufacturing for a year before granting a contract to the Ball firm to erect 15 lights of 1,000 candle power, at 15 cents per light each night for 200 nights in the year, for a term of three years. They were finally installed and put into use just before Christmas of 1891.

On December 3, 1891 The Champion reported: "Contractor Sid Young set his dynamo to work on Monday evening and illuminated the town for the first time with electricity. The new method is a great improvement on the old coal oil lamps which were used up to last week, and the citizens of the town generally are more than satisfied with the change."

After the town of Milton got its first electric street lights in 1891, homes and business places began "living better electrically". The Ball Electric Co., which installed the street lights and the dynamo to keep them operating in the evenings, transferred ownership to the Milton Electric Light Co. Soon demands for power outweighed the local firm's facilities and residents were complaining that although the lights were on, they weren't very bright. In January of 1905 the "freeholders" of Milton voted 119 to 61 in favor of the council buying the electric utility at a total cost of \$8,000 and the business was turned over to the town that summer. "First class lighting service with power to spare" was promised by proponents of the day.

A by-law passed in November of 1905 urged Milton electricity users to "take due care to prevent waste of light and switch off all lamps when not in use." Rates in those days were 40 cents per month for up to two lights, 30 cents for up to five lights, 27 cents for up to eight lights, 25 cents for up to 12 lights, and all over 12 were to be

charged at 12 cents per 1,000 watts. The popular light was a 16 candle power light.

Having purchased the local power utility company in order to improve its service, the town council of 1905 purchased the lands next door to the town hall (now a service station east of the building) for the sum of \$275 for erection of a new power station. K. L. Aitken of Toronto built it at a cost of \$8,000 and it was first put in operation in January of 1906.

Ruby Ellis was the town's electrician in 1905 and he was responsible for running the power plant, handling its repairs, installation of all services plus

collection of the monthly accounts—all for a salary of \$50 a month. He was also to furnish power from dusk to midnight.

His assistant Richard Maurel earned \$40 a month and his shift provided power from 5 a.m. to daylight. His contract was limited to no more than 10 hours a day but left a loophole that if he did work more than 10, he was to be paid 20 cents an hour for the overtime hours.

When Milton Council first got into the business of supplying municipal electric power to consumers in 1905 there were 1,405 people in town. Taxes were based on a rate of 20 mills, it cost \$4 a day to hire a team and buggy, the chief constable

received \$50 yearly for his services, and the proposed removal of platforms in the school classrooms was a local issue.

After the new town hydro plant beside the town hall came into operation in January, 1906 The Champion of the day reported: "There is a tremendous improvement in the lighting, which was always dim and unsteady under the old arrangement. There were too many lights for the limited power. Now the lights are brilliant and steady and there is plenty of power to spare for extra lights." Not only did the new plant power the lights around town, it also provided steam heat for the town hall.

been making latterly." The Champion reported. It hinted the town's other amenities—location, water supply, fire protection, railway connections and shipping facilities—in addition to the great supply of electrical power—would make Milton a great manufacturing centre.

New hydro poles were placed along Milton's Main St. from Brown St. to Commercial St. (or from one hotel to the other) in 1913 after the town hooked up to Ontario Hydro, and a line was extended to provide the first hydro power to P. L. Robertson's screw manufactory on Bronte St. in March of 1913. "It is hoped the town will soon secure new industries," prayed The Champion of the day. "The Willmott buildings, vacated some time ago by the Edwards Motor Co., are vacant and manufacturers have been looking at them."

The Robertson plant was using 375 horsepower of current and shareholders of the still-young company were jubilant at their annual meeting to learn the installation had brought "greatly increased output."

That year 1913 was a memorable one. The population had climbed to 1,959, there was a five hour power break in June, and a new bookkeeping system

(Continued on Page B3)

Those early coal oil lamps caused constable consternation

The tallow candle and the coal oil lamp long ago gave way to the magic of electricity. The changes wrought have been significant, the forces unleashed for industrial growth dramatic, and the brightly lit streets of today would be unbelievable to those who, 79 years ago, introduced the first electric street lights to the county town of Milton.

In 1889 the town was being lit with coal-oil lamps—about 40 of them—strategically located in the town whose confines were considerably more restricted than the expanded town of today.

Each night the village constable made his rounds, filling and lighting the coal oil lamps for which he earned \$1 a day. Carrying the ladder was part of his job, although in Oakville the constable tired of this part of the task and a newspaper reporter's life-support system, computer, communications and other systems. "The unwanted task of carrying a ladder through long miles of streets in order to reach the top of the several lamp posts soon proved too much for the town cop and he accordingly devised a scheme calculated to materially lessen his labors. He cut down the posts to his own height so that he could open the glass door of the lantern and light up while standing on the sidewalks."

The lights were also fair game for pranksters. One early story was recalled in Milton when youngsters extinguished one

lamp and placed a cat inside the barely warmed globe. They then teased the lamp-lighting constable into returning to light the lamp. As he mounted his ladder and opened the globe the escaping cat so surprised him that he tumbled backwards from the ladder while the pranksters watched from a safe distance.

Our constable was probably quite happy when the town's first electric street lights were installed in December of 1891.

ELECTRICITY - WONDER ENERGY IN THE SPACE AGE

The Apollo 12 spaceship that took man to the moon and back is an amazingly complex assembly of more than two million parts and ten different systems, one of which, the electrical system, is the heart of the spaceship.

The lives of the astronauts depended upon an uninterrupted source of electrical power to maintain the spaceship's life-support system, computer, communications and other systems.

All systems were carefully monitored by the astronauts. A defect in any one of the components had to be corrected or compensated for immediately.

Our industrial plants, office buildings, transportation systems, defence complexes, hospitals and other essential facilities are also dependent upon an abundant, uninterrupted source of electricity. Maintenance staffs ensure that electrical circuits are not overloaded and that defects are remedied promptly.

The homeowner, like the astronaut and commercial building staff electrician, should ensure that the home's electrical system is maintained at peak efficiency, says the Electrical Bureau of Canada.

Replacing a blown-out fuse is easy, and safe, if certain precautions are taken. A fuse is a safety device. It operates like a safety valve. Too much current flowing through the wires causes the fuse to burn out, cutting off the flow of electricity.

Instead of being annoyed when a fuse blows, the homeowner should be concerned about finding out why the fuse burned out. Generally it is just a matter of

plugging too many lights and appliances into a single circuit. For example, most circuits are capable of carrying 15 amperes, therefore most fuses in the fuse box should not be rated higher than 15 amps.

Roughly speaking, an amp is little more than 100 watts. About 1,600 watts (sixteen 100-watt light bulbs or some such combination burned at the same time) will fully "load" a 15-ampere circuit. Add one more light bulb and you have an over-loaded circuit and a burned-out fuse.

Another cause of blown-out fuses is a short circuit. The sudden surge of electricity through the short circuit causes the fuse to blow. If it didn't blow, you would have a fire instead.

Do not use a fuse of a higher rating than your circuits call for. Using 20-amp instead of 15-amp fuses will reduce the number of blown fuses but increases the danger of overheated wires and the hazards of a fire.

Keep replacement fuses handy, on top of or next to the fuse box is the best place. It just isn't bad luck that most fuses burn out at night—it's more likely that you are using more electricity than usual.

Keep a flashlight handy. Don't try to replace a fuse in total darkness. Know where the main house service switch is located. It should be right there beside the fuse box or circuit breaker. Pull the switch to "off" before you change any fuses.

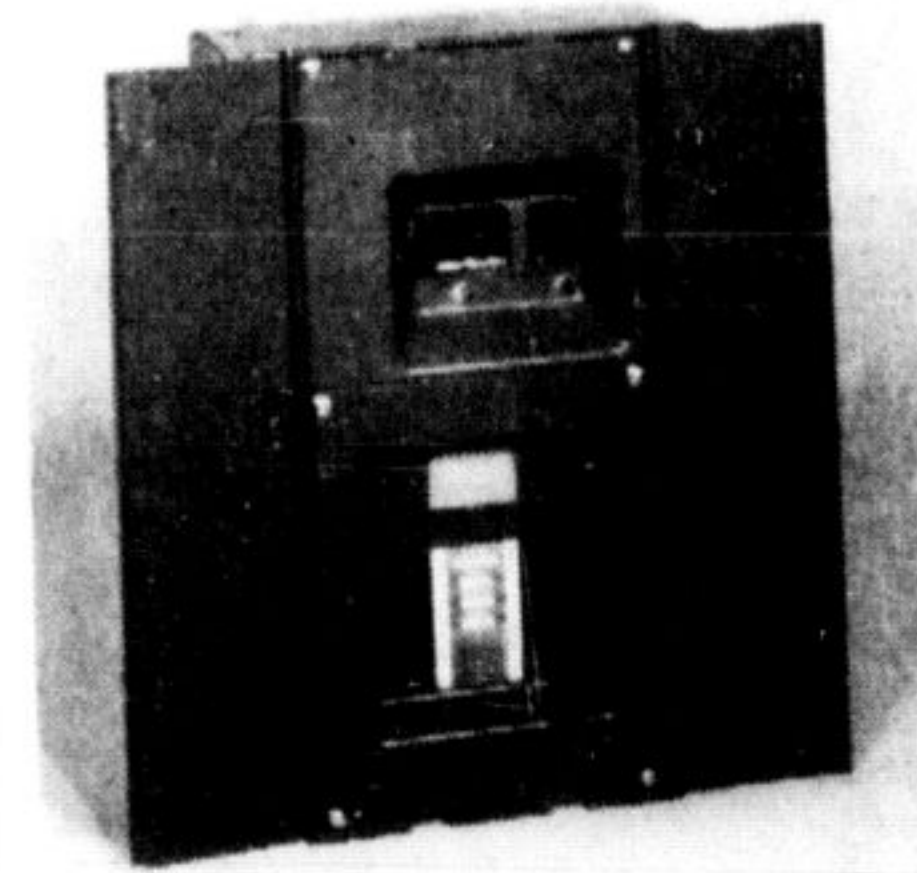
A circuit breaker panel replaces the fuse box in many new houses. Each circuit has a breaker that looks like an ordinary light

switch; these flip to the "off" position when a circuit is overloaded. Instead of replacing a fuse, you simply move the breaker to the "on" position. If the breaker continues to flip off, look for the trouble and eliminate it.

The most common fuse in the one with a glass or mica window in the top. The window will be blackened or the wire inside burned through in a blown fuse. Never, NEVER, use a coin or foil underneath a fuse. You might as well not have any fuse at all.

Stove cartridge fuses are held in place above the screw-in fuses by a fuse holder equipped with a small metal handle. Pull the handle out to cut off the flow of current. Replace the burned out fuse and replace the fuse holder.

Know which fuse or breaker controls each circuit in your home. A numbered list of the circuits or a wiring diagram should be glued inside the cover of the fuse box or circuit breaker panel.



HOUSEHOLD CIRCUIT BREAKER PANEL — the top circuit breakers control the kitchen range and other heavy appliances, i.e. washer, dryer, etc. The breakers below control branch circuits, i.e. lighting and portable appliances.

This is National Electrical Week, a good time to make sure that electricity is used properly in your home. Faulty extension cords are a major cause of electrical fires. They provide a quick, easy and convenient method of hooking up a lamp or other appliance but the convenience is often misused. Don't run them under carpets, over nails or through walls. The extension cord could become damaged, the bare wires touch and a fire could result.

Keep your home safe.

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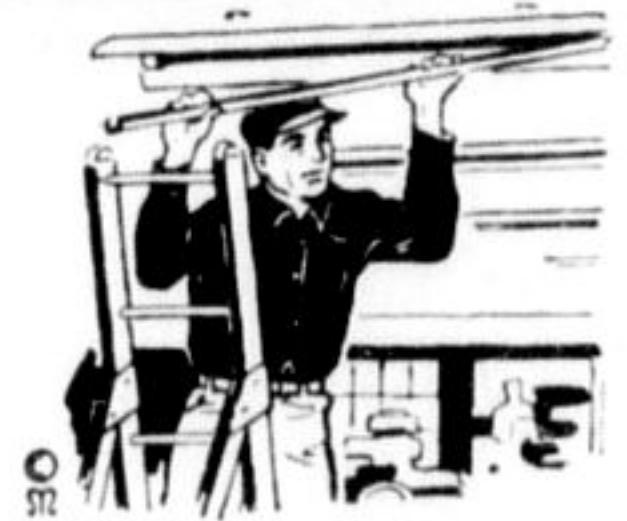
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