

## Government funds cut

# Work stopped at Awenda

by Marilyn Lee  
Work has come to a standstill at Awenda Provincial Park on Methodist Point and there is no telling when it may begin again. The park superintendent, Tom Stott was informed last week by the province that the park would have to close down because of the provincial cutback in spending.

Stott said the notice came as no real surprise to him as there had been rumours to that effect around the area for the past several weeks.

Stott was asked by the government several weeks ago to outline three possible levels of funding for the park.

He said he gave the government the levels and was made to wait their response.

The government answered Stott by granting him only the minimum level of spending.

"That amount would allow us to finish the buildings on the outside and that's it. It means closing the park until we get more money."

The work stoppage will mean 20 construction workers will be laid off. "Some of these men have been working here for two years."

Sixteen men were laid off last week and the others will go as soon as work is completed on the outside of buildings.

Spokesman for the Ministry of Resources, Dennis Schafer said he does not feel Awenda is being singled out. He said this sort of thing is happening all over the province as a result of the cutback.

Parks which have been in operation for some years have been forced to cut down on their operational expenditures said Stott.

It was hoped the park would be ready for official opening next year.

"This is now an impossibility," said Schafer.

Considerable building has gone on within the park already. Last fall and winter new roads were built and plans for the buildings were drawn up.

During the winter several buildings were erected, none of which are completed.

The washrooms and comfort stations are almost complete except for electricity and water. The administration building must be finished off on the outside so it will brave the elements without damage.

Aside from this, no other building will be carried on. The buildings will stand as they are until more money is allocated to the park.

"We will honor all our commitments as far as contracts go. We have tendered for electricity and heating and that is where much of the money we did receive will go," said Stott.

By honoring previous commitments, Stott has been unable to use the money granted for extensive completion of the buildings.

Awenda Provincial Park on Methodist point was conceived about 15 years ago but

for various reasons work was not begun on it until about three years ago.

A routine archaeological dig changed the plans for the park dramatically. The construction was held up for three or four years because the dig proved the park area to be rich in archaeological finds.

The first plan for the park was an extensive recreational one but that changed after the dig said Stott. The plan is now to make it very natural, one of passive recreation like hiking and appreciating nature.

"There will be trails for tourists to discover, that is if we ever get that far."

"From a forestry stand point, this is paradise," said Stott.

"The area is one of the few in southern

Ontario with a continuous hardwood forest."

Stott said he felt approximately \$700,000 has been spent on the park in the three years that he has been superintendent.

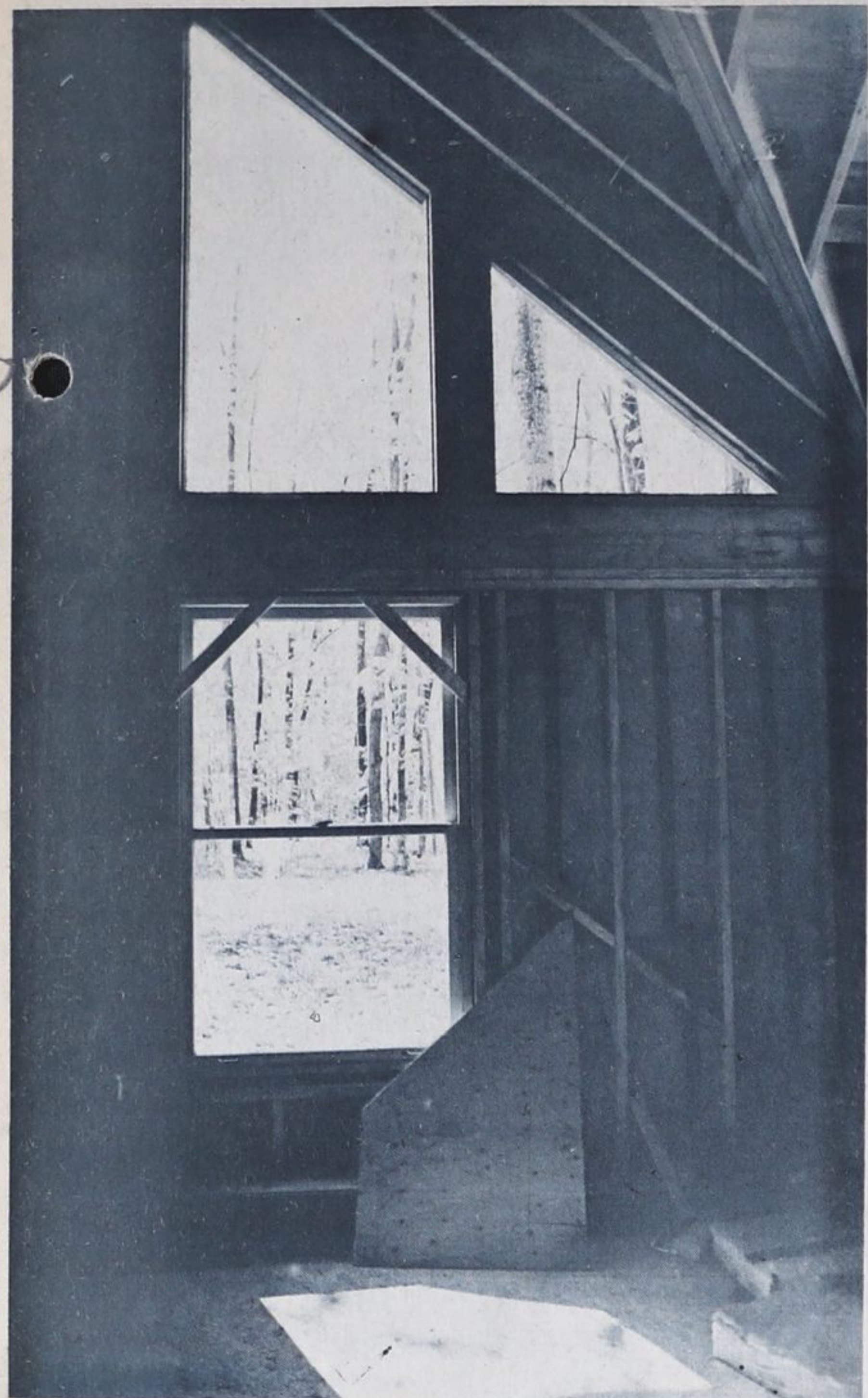
"I can't see the government walking away from it and leaving it indefinitely."

He said he has no idea when funds might be

reallocated and construction begun again.

He said he is at a loss when it comes to plans to keep the park going.

"I guess the only thing left is for the people to put pressure on the government and that will only happen when they realize they really want a park."



Looks empty

Things look rather bleak at Awenda Provincial Park on Methodist Point. Because of government cutbacks in spending, work on

the park and its facilities has ground to a halt. Several buildings were erected during the winter but have yet to be completed.

## Penetanguishene youth killed Friday

One person was killed and three injured Friday night when the van in which they were riding went out of control and over an embankment on Heritage Drive opposite Brandon Road.

Dead is Mark Patenaude, 18, of 88 Poyntz Street in Penetanguishene. Patenaude, a passenger in the vehicle, was thrown from

the van as it rolled over the embankment. Michael Duquette, 17, of John Street in Penetanguishene, and Debbie Lacroix, 14, also of Penetanguishene, were injured but have been released from hospital.

Richard Beausoleil, 20, of 84 Poyntz Street, has been charged with criminal negligence in operating a vehicle and failure to wear a seatbelt.

### Midland arena

## Cost exceeds \$200,000

The total costs for the demolition and construction work done on the Midland Gardens Arena roof will exceed the expected maximum figure of \$200,000.

Chairman of the arena committee Jim Malcolm said tenders for the demolition of the roof were opened at the committee meeting on Monday night.

The committee passed the motion to award the tender for demolition to Green Spoon Brothers Limited of Toronto. The Green Spoon contract is for \$35,275 and this includes the mechanical and electrical work which had been pretendered.

Consultants told the committee that the estimate for the construction of the new roof would be \$196,300, bringing the total figure, including consultant fees, up to \$254,732.

The committee passed the motion to have council apply for a \$275,000 debenture from the Ontario Municipal Board.

"Everything hinges on getting the approval from the OMB. Hopefully we will get it before the end of June because the tender price runs out in 30 days and at that time Green Spoon can increase its fees by 10 per cent."

Green Spoon will begin demolition within seven days after the approval is given by the OMB. The job should take about six to eight weeks from the time demolition begins.

Malcolm said the committee also passed a motion to give consultants the go ahead to pretender for the design of the new roof and to make-up drawings for it.

"This is just to get a jump ahead of the OMB approval," said Malcolm.

He said he thought the building of the new roof would not be started until September and the completion of the roof not until the middle or end of October.

## School board protests restraint program

The Simcoe County Board of Education is taking action against the province's timing and method of financial restraint.

Along with its copy of its 1976 budget, the board is sending minister of education, Thomas Wells, a five-page letter pointing out the inequities of the government's financing.

At a board meeting last week, it was pointed out that "the single most disturbing factor with respect to these restraints is the lack of sufficient time to plan dramatic changes effectively."

The board pointed out five inequities in the government's method of financing.

According to the government plan, Simcoe County will receive less than a two per cent increase in enrollment.

The cuts in transportation grants effect the rural areas greatly, while having little effect on urban boards.

"The board's budget has been so emasculated that newly announced cost increases granted by federal and provincial governments or their agencies will create a deficit and increase in mill rates in 1977."

## Dance-a-thon Friday

A 12 hour dance-a-thon will be held at the Arena lounge on Friday, June 4, commencing at 8 p.m. until June 5 at 8 a.m.

This project is being cosponsored by the Penetanguishene Arena, Parks and Recreation Board and interested girls and boys who play softball.

The music for the dance is being donated by D.J. Rick Lemieux. All proceeds from the dance will of course go towards the installation of the softball lights at McGuire Park. Your cooperation and assistance would be greatly appreciated.

## Police report quiet weekend

A total of four charges under the Highway Traffic Act were laid by Penetanguishene town police over the weekend. One charge was laid under the Liquor Control Act.

**One Accident**  
Marcellene Ladouceur, 50, of 117 Fox Street has been charged with careless driving following a two vehicle collision Friday afternoon in front of 54 Water Street, Penetanguishene.

The Ladouceur vehicle sustained an estimated \$15 damage, while the parked car, owned by Anthony Quigley, of 54 Water Street suffered an estimated \$50 damage. No injuries were reported.



Replace underground wire

Lorne and Steve Ogden worked in the pouring rain on Monday tearing up and replacing two main underground wires in the town dock

parking lot. Recent street lighting failures caused by short-circuits prompted the town to have the work done. Public works

superintendent Fred Lynn expects the work to be completed by the end of the week.

Staff photo

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### Budget set last week

## Tay Township taxes increase 30 per cent

Taxes in Tay Township are skyrocketing this year and it's not going to make the residents very happy, says township clerk Walter Lumsden.

As a result of the new budget set by the township last week, taxes will jump as high as 30 per cent over last year.

According to Lumsden, the large mill rate increase is due to the higher school board and county levies.

The increase represents the largest single year hike in many years. Until last year, tax rates in Tay Township remained relatively stable.

Prompted by the large increase, council removed several items from their own budget to prevent the general rate from going even higher.

The general rate must increase this year to take care of the costs of garbage collection, hospital debentures, street lighting, planning

and general administration. "We know the taxes are way up, much more than the people are going to like, but we need to do it."

Based on an average township assessment of \$2,500, a residential public school supporter will see an increase of \$70 on his 1976 tax bill—bringing his total taxes from \$233 to \$304.

The mill rate for a residential public school supporter jumps from 93.22 to 121.92 mills in 1976.

From a rate of 97.45 mills in 1975, a residential separate school supporter will be paying at a rate of 122.64 mills in 1976.

A commercial public school supporter will see an increase of 34.96 mills in 1976, up from the 1975 figure of 103.46.

The mill rate for a commercial separate school supporter will rise from 108.16 to 139.22 mills in 1976.



Out walking in the rain