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Birchwood closed in '89?

By Ken Lusk
The News

The ultimate fate of Terrace Bay's home for the aged, Birchwood Terrace, is now in the hands of the 17 municipalities that are represented by Thunder Bay's District Home for the Aged.

Representatives from the Thunder Bay home and the Ministry of Community and Social Services told both Terrace Bay and Schreiber councils that the 17 municipalities will now vote on whether to close Birchwood Terrace and build several smaller units across the region.

Harold McParland, council representative for the District Home for the Aged, told Terrace Bay council on Jan. 10 and Schreiber council on Jan. 11 that the board of the Thunder Bay district home is looking at "a new concept in the quality of care for seniors- a progressive step worthy of consideration."

What the home is hoping for is to close Birchwood Terrace and to open three, 20-bed units in Terrace Bay, Nipigon and Geraldton.

These towns were chosen because they are close to the areas that have the largest populations.

June Shaw, from the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and Tom Gash, from the Thunder Bay District Home for the Aged, were also in attendance at both council meetings.

Majority vote

But a majority vote from the 17 municipalities is needed before implementation of the smaller units can go into effect, McParland told the councillors.

He also said he "understands the reluctance of council (Terrace Bay) to do away with Birchwood Terrace."

McParland said the plan is to improve the quality of the homes and to give guides of the future needs of seniors.

Seniors across the region were contacted as part of the study and most want to stay in the community that they spent most of their

lives in, McParland said.

He added that home support programs for seniors supplied by the government are delaying the entry of seniors into these homes, therefore, there is a reduction of the number of seniors applying for entry.

Birchwood has a capacity of 62 people, he said, and the occupancy now is between 35 and 40.

In addition, the new homes would have barrier-free access, ambulance and wheelchair assistance would be increased and all beds would be the flex type.

The new homes would also have outreach services, home support programs, and if necessary, emergency response services, McParland said.

He summed up the plan by saying quality care is imperative in recognition that seniors have the right to stay in their own areas.

Council concerned

Understandably, Terrace Bay council is concerned about Birchwood closing, mostly because of the jobs that would be lost to this community.

"I assume the other communities voted affirmative," Terrace Bay Reeve George Ramsay asked McParland.

He replied by saying that the form for a yes or a no vote has just been sent out and the result of the vote is not known at this time.

Terrace Bay Councillor Jim Ziegler is the most concerned with plan. He asked the reps what would happen if they built three, 20-bed units, and a need for 40 beds arised.

McParland replied that statistics don't show a need for 40 beds.

"It doesn't make sense," Ziegler said. "How can the home handle the expansion in mining?"

Tom Gash replied by saying based on demographics, 15 beds are proportionate for the town.

Councillor Bill Houston said he doesn't actually disagree with the plan but that is a "heck of a shock to us."

Jobs will be lost, people will leave and the township will be hit with a \$700,000 bill (for the new

homes), he said.

We should "look for a way out. We'll look after our people on our own," he said.

The plan for the new homes looks "awful institutionalized," said Counc. Ziegler. "Birchwood is their home. Have people seen the rooms they're going to be in? I wouldn't want my mom and dad living there (in the new homes)."

"There is no privacy. (The seniors) have privacy now. Do they know what they're getting into to?," asked Ziegler. "Their independence will be taken away."

The reps replied by saying that during their study, there was no terrible response from any seniors about the homes or the rooms.

"They have seen that particular design," said Gash.

"Assuming you get approval (for the plan), when will it be put in place," Terrace Bay Clerk-Treasurer Dave Fulton asked the reps.

"The proposal will be submitted to the Ministry of Community and Social Services next week," replied Gash.

Ministry representative June Shaw told council, if there is a majority vote and the plan is approved by the ministry, "it's possible" it could go into effect for 1989.

The response from seniors is that they want to stay in their own community, she said.

It looks like it's going to be a 16 to 1 vote, said Reeve Ramsay.

Schreiber council

McParland, Shaw and Gash informed Schreiber council the next night about the plan and basically both meetings were identical except for the fact that Schreiber council does not have to worry about the loss of jobs as Terrace Bay does.

Counc. Tom Quinton said he supports the concept of the new homes.

Counc. Bob Krause agreed with Quinton but said it would be a good idea for Schreiber council to get together with Terrace Bay council to discuss the situation.



Par excellence

Above are members of the Terrace Bay Figure Skating Club who competed in the 14th Annual North Shore Inter-Club Competition held in Marathon January 8th, 9th, and 10th, 1988. The following girls represented Terrace Bay in their respective categories: Jessie Wilkes, Shauna Singleton, Jessica Notwell, Crystal Luxmore, Mellissa Kenny, Kim and Erin Callaghan and Karen Baldwin.

Many medals brought home by local skaters

Members of the Terrace Bay Figure Skating Club competed in the 14th Annual North Shore Inter-Club Competition held in Marathon January 8th, 9th, and 10th, 1988.

The following girls represented Terrace Bay in their respective categories: Jessie Wilkes, Shauna Singleton, Jessica Notwell, Crystal Luxmore, Mellissa Kenny, Kim and Erin Callaghan and Karen Baldwin.

The girls were very competitive, with the club bringing home the following medals: Interpretive Bronze, Ladies'-Shauna Singleton- Bronze; Interpretive Silver, Ladies'-Karen Baldwin- Gold; Interpretive Gold Ladies'- Kim Callaghan- Silver; Can-Skate Skills- Erin Callaghan- Gold; Can-Figure Skate- Ladies' Singles: Crystal Luxmore- Bronze; Mellissa Kenny- Silver; Karen Baldwin- Bronze.

The club would like to thank all who have assisted the girls in their efforts, with special thanks to Danny O'Keefe for the excellent choreography of the skating routines.

Nothing but disaster to Mary Hubelit

The headline read: "Hairdressers Leading Mental Health Agents." Wow! What a story! Wish I'd written it!

It seems some enterprising psychologist from Ohio is conducting workshops on "salon psychology" for the members of this "unsung profession" in Canada. (Possibly for a fat fee?)

His concern for their self-respect and value-image is touching, deeply touching. In fact, "touch" is the operative word in his praise of these hard-working people.

He says "They touch the very roots of society...baseball players get their hair done before the World Series, criminals get their hair done before going to court, touch builds trust, touch is

a very important part of people's lives. Touching has been shown to lower the heart rate.

Client-hairdresser bonds are common because of the frequency of contact around special and emotional events."

Presumably these grooming sessions serve as pressure-values for the client. The person who gravitates to this choice of career has to be a caring, gregarious and a manually-adept individual. It makes me very happy to see mental health so securely in the hands of everyday, ordinary people, however skilled.

It also makes me wonder what's wrong with me. My first experience of other people at my hair occurred when I was in Grade IV. I was unmercifully kid-

ded at school because of my ringlets. The only other girl with ringlets was a towering blonde who could have made Mohammed Ali look like Alice in Wonderland. The day I came home with an ultimatum was typical of parenting at that time: "Wait till your Father comes home."

I stood on a kitchen chair, Dad took the ribbon off the big ringlet that swept from the forehead past the crown and hung with the back curls. He pulled all that hair forward over my eyebrows, picked up the scissors and asked nobody in particular: "Here?" He cut. I still have the ringlet. I also have a memory of the result. From the way he grasped the ringlet, I was left hairless in the centre of the

forehead with an inverted V of bangs along the sides.

I don't remember what we had for supper. I don't remember any reaction from Mother or my brother- all I know is when your hair is lopped off in a naked peak above close-set pale blue eyes and a generous nose, you'd better be ready to fight!

The next time my life was touched by a hairdresser was the day before N. and I were married, in 1957. His sister-in-law and her daughter dragged me, kicking and screaming, to have my hair "done". It was done, all right- the next day I couldn't keep on my head that adorable little navy blue feathered hat I'd paid \$35.00 for! We finally had to glue...no, that's not so, but you get the picture

Once more I tried to be in touch with society, couple of years after we moved here. The hairdresser assured me she knew how to cut naturally wavy hair. First thing I knew she had it plastered to my head with water and was scraping away with a razor blade! I couldn't get up and leave then! But when she finished, she sent me out, in the middle of winter, with a set head. "Drying is extra", she said. "You didn't ask for it", she said.

So you see why I was so fascinated by the newspaper item with its praise for a class of people who have meant nothing but disaster to me. I hope they don't miss my patronage.