

John Tinney
Town

Chronicle



Millbrook

And the

GREAT PINE RIDGE

SECOND CLASS MAIL
REGISTRATION 2792

December 11, 1975.

VIOLENT EXPLOSION ROCKS DOWNTOWN MILLBROOK-

The awesome power of propane gas was demonstrated at 4.00 a.m. on Thursday morning when an explosion in the Distillery Street home of Mrs. Muriel Steenburgh literally 'blew it to smithereens'. Veteran investigators are quoted as saying they had never before seen a building so completely demolished. Other buildings in the area in closest proximity to the blast were the 100 year old home of Mrs. Dave Lunn, which is described as a shambles, and the Orange Lodge Hall which was severely damaged. A decision as to its fate will be made soon.

The Millbrook and Cavan Memorial Arena, already considerably braced by steel plates and cables, and greatly underinsured at \$15,000.00, suffered further damage and is awaiting a professional opinion as to whether or not it is repairable. The building had been used by the curlers a few hours before but is now closed to all activities. As well as the curlers there is a large minor hockey league organization, figure skaters, and broom ballers that used this building as 'home ice'. The figure skaters have partially filled the gap with some ice time in Bewdley. A Little N.H.L. tournament was billed for March which would attract teams from all of central Ontario.

A plate glass window was a rarity on downtown King Street and house windows and doors were blown out as far as a point east of Bank Street South and as far west as George Street. Stained glass windows in the Presbyterian Church were broken. In addition windows were blown in houses on Tupper, Dufferin, Mill, Distillery, Union, Centre, Bank St. N. Princess and Gravel Road.

Harry Freelove was the only reported casualty - with a cut on the forehead which required six stitches to close. A couple of other citizens were sedated for shock.

The explosion, which wakened all but the deepest sleepers, was followed by a whoosh of sound and shock waves down the Baxter Valley and left people speculating if the cause was (1) thunder (2) earthquake (3) plane crash (4) plane breaking sound barrier (5) thieves blowing the safe in the Toronto-Dominion bank (6) boiler explosion at Correctional Institute (7) furnace explosion (8) and this one we like - a UFO having a "go" at us.

Sound and shock waves reached Peterborough, Cobourg, Wesleyville and all intermediate points. These alerted police cruisers on the highways who started immediately in the direction of Millbrook and picked up information on the more exact location by radio from their headquarters. O.P.P. quickly had the L.C.B.O. store under surveillance as it was minus its windows and the well stocked shelves might have been a temptation for thirsty individuals. (Incidentally, a ring of keys with a nail clipper was picked up near the store - apply at police office.)

It is interesting to note that it was 100 years ago that "the most fearful conflagration that ever has visited the Village of Millbrook was sadly recorded". The fire started about where John Tinney's home is and completely wiped out all buildings east of there to Tupper Street. It then burned out Tupper St. - at that time the main street of the village. In spite of the fact that 33 places of business were completely destroyed fire loss was estimated at \$100,000. Compare this with the present estimate of damage that runs, as high as \$2,000,000.00.

Note:- This story has left us with some holdovers for next week. We got this issue out with a taped up machine and a prayer and so are not running an extra sheet, as intended.

MORE NEWS ABOUT BLACK THURSDAY:

The almost lighthearted way in which most people reacted to the explosion and the damage was possibly a reaction from consideration of what might have happened. The house that was demolished was unoccupied - Mrs. Steenburgh was vacationing in Florida. The hour meant that the streets were deserted. If the explosion had happened at 4.00 p.m. the roadway from the school would have been heavily peopled with children, as it is used by all the downtown and west end children, and it runs within a few feet of the scene of the blast. The public school was closed for several days until windows could be replaced.

Russell "on-the-spot" Reid had the fire siren sounding so quickly that it appeared to have been touched off by the blast. This would appear to lend some credence to the rumour that he streaked to the fire hall in bare feet with a matching ensemble.

President Bob Carr had the Legion open soon after 4.00 a.m. and Vera had the coffee perking in short order. In the ten below weather it soon became a place to warm-up and have a bowl of soup, sandwich and coffee. It became an unofficial headquarters for the O.P.P., and news reporters who flocked into town. Art. Manley's supply of plastic sheeting and plywood was practically expropriated to use as makeshift windows. Later in the day the insurance adjusters and glaziers descended on the village en masse and were still in evidence many days later.

That sterling insurance duo, the OB (Ouellette-Bulger) - (obviously we couldn't reverse those letters) combination were kept on the jump processing claims.

Quite a bit of the greenery has disappeared from Lyle Nattress' barber shop. Some of the ferns were rescued but the ivy and cactus fell victim to the cold weather. A girl in an apartment directly across the street, whose name the Chronicle failed to get lost a number of geraniums, started the evening before, when the flower pots were blown out of the apartment.

A wag (droll humorous person) who has now tagged Millbrook a boom town claims the shock set off mouse traps in Fraserville. This well known bovine basher (cow puncher) will have a float in the Christmas parade and has intimated that some comments regarding the Chronicle appears thereon. They had better be flattering for we'll have a battery of high-priced legal talent standing by to watch for anything libelous.

One plus from the broken glass windows - it removed all the old out-of-date sale and dance bills some of which dated back several months.

King St. drama - Husband "Get up there's been an explosion. Wife "I can't see the ceiling is on top of me".

Chronicle December 11, 1975

So many sight seekers drove in to town on Sunday that small traffic jams were in evidence. This was a result of newspaper and radio coverage over a wide range. (The editor's niece - Nancy Innis - called from London where a radio station had broadcast a much garbled account of things. After an exchange of shouts, to overcome the Docon Disease, we straightened things out.)

Commenting on the widespread coverage one man was heard to remark - "This certainly put Millbrook on the map". To which his more realistic companion replied - "It damn near took it off the map".

Incidentally, if you have complaints about the telephone service they'd like to hear from you at Ontario Telephone Services Commission, 3625 Dufferin Street, Suite 2000, Downsview M3K 1Z2. Mr. David Duncan is the man to address your letter to.

The Village Shoppe is the local agent for New Service Cleaners, whose pick-ups are Tuesdays and Fridays. The Cleaners have discontinued pick-ups and deliveries at the residences.

The Village Shoppe - telephone 932-2888 have a big Santa Claus Parade Special - 10% off everything in the store - fabrics, yarn, candles, giftware and all crewel and stitchery kits.
20% off all knit co-ordinates.
There is a selection of Polyester Knits - regular \$7.98 Spec. \$3.98
60" Fur Fabric - \$2.98 a yard.

Annette's Beauty Salon and Boutique on King Street - phone 932-2762 - are offering complete hair care for the whole family, Mom, Dad, Boys and Girls. Hairstyling and Haircutting, Blow Dry, Colors, Perms to suit your personality.

Lyle Nattress has a pair of Girls Boots and Skates for sale - size 8 Price \$10.00.

We have quite a number of young people operating newly opened businesses in the village. So why don't we help them over the first business hurdles by forgetting that slippery and snowy drive into Peterborough and do our buying in town. The most recent of these is the Village Mill on the south side of King Street, which is well stocked with Christmas cards and gifts.

If that word 'smithereens' used on page one baffles you it is of Irish origin and means small fragments. "Smash the bottle to smithereens, the Devil's in 'im". Tennyson - Northern Clobber

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE:

The Legion program -
10.30 Comrades meet at Legion Hall.
10.45 Parade fall in.
10.55 Parade to Cenotaph.
11.00 Two minutes silence.
One verse "O, Canada".
Prayer - Rev. David Bauman.
Scripture reading-Rev. David Sissmore.
Placing of wreaths.
Last post by Mrs. Ralph Cawker.
One verse of "The Queen".
Benediction by the Rev. David Bauman.

LIONS HALLOWEEN PARTY:

Prize winners in the various age groups- what the costumes represented, as shown, following the names is not guaranteed.

Pre-schoolers:

Brian Landry
Jamie Reynolds
Kyla Todd
Red headed ?
Palace Guard
Sunbonnet Sue.

6 and 7 year olds:

Denise Lunn
Ricky Kennedy
Krista McCue
Brer Rabbit
Accident victim
Sheik of Araby

8 and 9 year olds:

Darren Lunn
Debbie Gillis
Teresa Gillis
Space man
Tramp
Princess

10 and 11 year olds:

Laurie Dracup
Jeff Snelgrove
Debbie Hicks
Bus driver
Lady of street.
Genteel lady

12 and 13 year olds:

Janet McCue
Bobby Fallis
Kenny Hicks
Religious sister.
Tramp
Punchy boxer

CLIFF SKINKLE - Celebrates golden anniversary of barbering.

A district newspaper advises that Cliff, who started barbering with Harold Nattress, has now completed 50 years as a barber. He started at the age of fifteen, and while he may not know it he was referred to (behind his back) as "The Little Shaver", during his time in Millbrook.

A FEW COUNCIL ITEMS:

Mrs. Doris Ingham was re-appointed to serve on library board.

Prices are to be obtained on fire siren for west end of village.

Annual inspection of the arena was approved.

George Sheppard to be engaged to take picture of council and village employees.

Stewart McCue resigned from the fire department. Deputy Chief Wayne Richards who has moved from the village and will be replaced by George Corfe.

Barrel Bell, Jack Foottit and Randy Brooks were recommended as new members of the department.

Proceedings on the Olan property were cancelled by council and the village solicitor notified.

The village resolved to make no change in existing boundaries, of the village unless warranted by an updated survey performed by an approved Ontario land surveyor.

Gravel will be sold to the village from the municipal stockpile at \$3.00 per yard.

The 14 year olds, and over, were backward in coming forward so a free-for-all was substituted and the winners were Linda McCoy and Sheila Jessop as witch doctors - Greg Gillis and Allan Lunn - Indians - and two cute little Tricks, Lisa and Laurie, as a clown and a fairy.

In addition to the above there were fishermen, bandits, satans, royalty in ermine, angels, tiger men, Mexicans, and a hockey player, with a black eye and fittingly wearing the colours and crest of the Toronto Leafs.

HELPFUL HINT, WE HOPE:

If you ever run into Alfred Hitchcock and he says - "Pleasant period following death" all he means is "good mourning". If he says "genuine chopper" he is suggesting that you "real-axe".

FIRST WORLD WAR VETERANS PHOTOGRAPHED:

Following the Remembrance Day parade these veterans of the first world war posed for a group photograph in the Legion Hall - Roy Pengelley, Sam Fields, Art Millgate, Henry Jakeman, Art Thorn,

The Legion parade, headed by Rex Park, had the music supplied by the three Brown sisters of Norwood garbed in the tartans of the Stuarts. These young bagpipers, aged 16, 17 and 18 played for three years with a pipe band and then started out on their own. They played to an appreciative audience in the Legion Hall, after the parade.

A FEW CATCH-UP ITEMS - OUT-OF-SEASON - but don't strawberries taste better in March?

LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM:
Northumberland-Durham Grants.

The Legion Picnic - August 9, 1975

\$9,000 Vincent Massey Memorial Centre in Bewdley - for painting.

List of winners in various track and field events - win, place and show -

\$21,450.00 To build a park in Hastings - a picnic and fishing area on the Trent River - for free public use.

Race - 5 and under - Kerry Lynn, Jennifer Lynn, Leslie Dyer.

\$20,100.00 For improvements on the Alderville Reserve - a new docking facility for boats and improvements on community centre.

5 to 6 yrs. Jimmy Park, Mary Baker, Steve Racz.

9 to 10 - Fred Baker, Scott McCambley, Richard Farr.

\$43,650.00 to develop 17 acres into a family park - bicycle paths, footways, etc. - Bowmanville.

11 - 12 - Heather McDonald and Cody Baker (dead heat)
Lorne Raper, Debby Baker.

\$25,050.00 for an addition to the existing community hall, - in Bethany

3 year olds - Mary Baker, Kerry Raper, Leslie Dyer.

\$10,450.00 for a program to teach leisure skills etc. in Blackstock.

13 - 14 yrs. Fred Baker, Lorne Raper, Cody Baker.

Port Hope - Skeena Hall - for repairs and renovations. \$13,800.00

15 years and over - Tony Sistermand, Don Dew, Art Richards.

Newcastle Nursery School and Day Care Centre - \$9,000.00 to hire additional staff for the Newcastle Nursery School.

Married Ladies - Rose Dyer, Betty Park, Marg Baker.

MILIBROOK AND DISTRICT RED CROSS:

Three-legged (mixed) Elsbeth Park, Ron McCall, Rose Dyer and Ted Farr, Mike Slack and Bernice Little.

A standard First Aid Course will be given, in the village, if a sufficient number of people are interested. It is of eight weeks duration - one night a week for two hours. The cost is \$15.00 For further information please contact the Red Cross at 932-2892. Please enrol before the end of 1975.

Sack Race - Rosella Lamb, Lorne Raper, Cody Baker.

Kick Shoe - Ladies - Sharon Sistermans, Marg Baker, Dolores Flood.

SENIOR CITIZEN HOUSING FOR MILIBROOK???

All the above activity at Pen-Ed Camp, near Rice Lake.

A government survey will be undertaken to determine if there is sufficient demand for senior citizen housing in the village.

The next big event scheduled by the Legion is the Santa Claus Parade on December 13th. Three bands will be belting out Jingle Bells and old "Ho' Ho' Ho'" himself will be in attendance. The Ladies Auxiliary will be in charge of this event - which should guarantee its success.

"Residency is usually limited to persons, 60 years of age or older, who are capable of looking after their daily needs. They should have lived at least one year in the community. In some cases housing may be developed in one location to serve a number of surrounding municipalities.

President Bob Carr reports a very successful year for Branch 402 - \$50,000 has been expended in renovations and additions - all paid for - and the bank loan reduced to \$9,000.00. The combined membership for the year totalled 255.

A typical apartment consists of bedroom, living room, bathroom and a kitchen equipped with stove and refrigerator.

The Legion Hall serves as a community centre and is frequently made available to local clubs and organizations.

Rent, which scales from about \$40.00 per month upward, includes heat, electricity water and hot water - but not telephone. Pets? Maybe, or maybe not. Lounges and laundry rooms are provided. A point system determines priority in granting leases.

Margaret Isaac of Scotland visited the Parks. Rex is an uncle. Margaret is a registered nurse in a Lanarkshire hospital.