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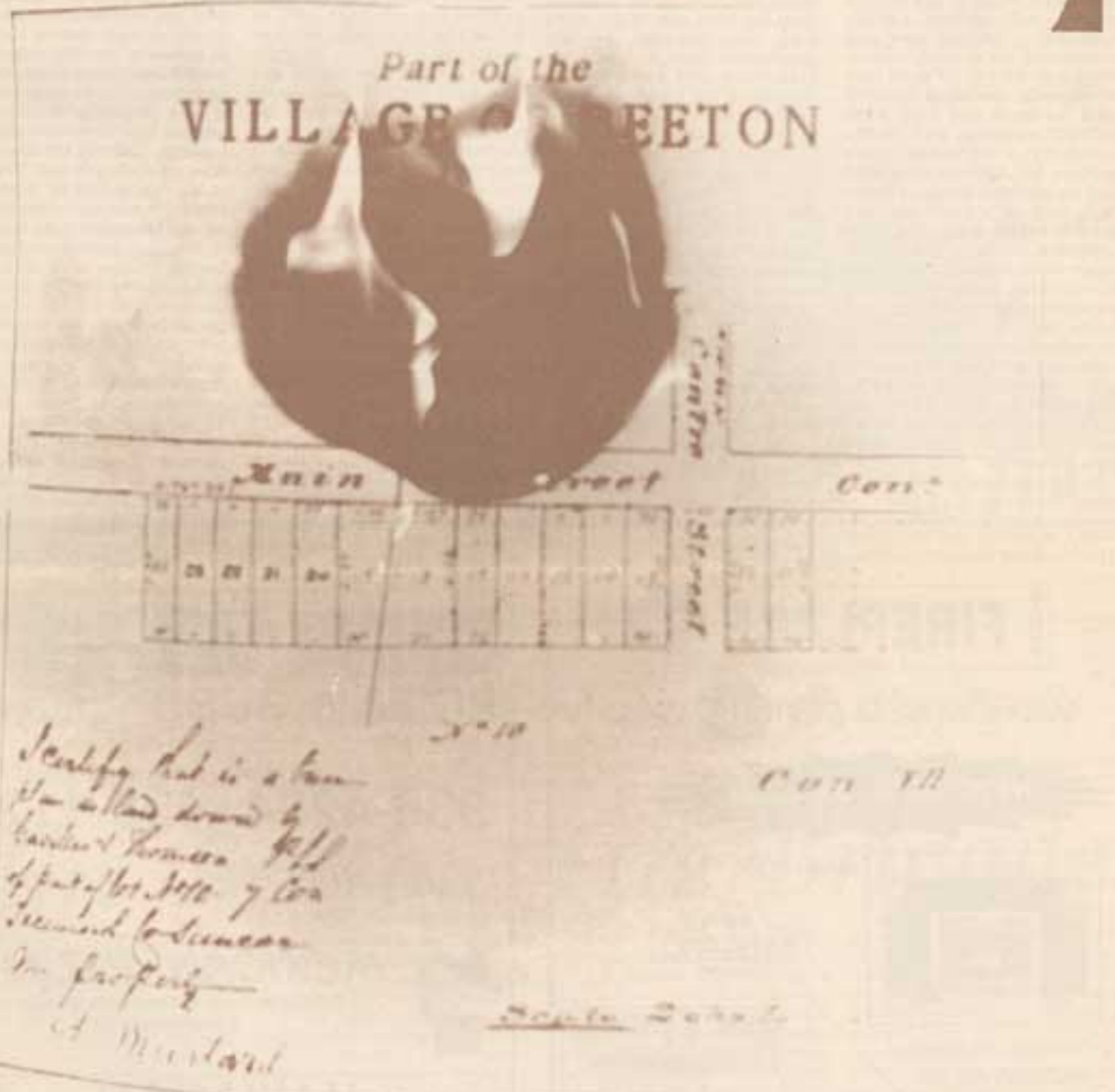
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A look back at The Great Fire of Beeton



October 19, 1892 - October 19, 1992

On behalf of the Record Sentinel/Times, I sincerely hope you enjoy reading this special edition, commemorating the 100th Anniversary of 'The Great Fire of Beeton', as much as I enjoyed researching it.

Christine Kremer

SCOURGED BY FIRE

Business centre burned

Story reproduced from *The Beeton World* - October 19, 1892

One of the most serious disasters that has probably ever occurred to the village of Beeton took place this morning about 1 o'clock a.m., when a fire broke out in the premises of Mr. A.N. Hipwell on the north side of Main street and spread rapidly eastward, crossing over and continuing its easterly course along both sides of the street until it was finally checked in the north by a fire break just west of the WORLD building, and on the south by a narrower break between Mr. Ashton's drug store and the premises occupied by Mr. W.J. Bell as a hardware and general supply store. The latter premises, owing to the narrow space which separated them from the burning mass of the long adjacent range was temporarily protected by the almost superhuman exertions of volunteers, who kept the western gable thoroughly saturated by pails of water from above and below until the arrival of the steam fire engine with a pair of reels from Barrie.

In the meantime a message had been dispatched as early as possible by Reeve Wright to the Mayor of Barrie, and the Grand Trunk railway authorities for an

engine and assistance from the Barrie fire brigade. A detachment of nine men under chief Smith, with a steamer and a couple of reels, were sent off as quickly as possible and arrived here about 4 a.m. By that time the fire had expended itself within about twenty rods of the WORLD office, but it was still raging furiously upon the other side of the street over the remains of the Commercial hotel and Ashton's drug store, and was seriously threatening the integrity of Bell's hardware store in the next block. It was some time before steam could be got upon the engine, but as soon as it was finally at work, all fear for Bell's premises was abated, the first stream taking almost immediate effect. But here arose a fresh difficulty from the scarcity of the water supply, all that could be had being supplied from wells which the engine pumped dry in a very few minutes. Fortunately, however, the fire, with such aid as the Barrie men could give, was by this time pretty well under control, although from time to time some anxiety continued to be felt as to the safety of the next block. The force of the fire had been pretty well slackened, however, and by daylight all apprehensions had ceased in regard to its further ravages. But enough mischief had

already been done, and as the sun rose it revealed to the gaze of the citizens of Beeton the still blazing and smoldering ruins of the larger portion of their pretty village of yesterday.

As has been previously stated, the fire broke out in the upper part of the premises occupied by Mr. A. N. Hipwell, grain merchant, as store and residence, and, so far as can be ascertained, was caused by a defective chimney flue. A fire had been started at a late hour for the purpose of providing some warm water for Miss Hipwell who had been confined to her bed for a short time by serious illness, and so the fire was communicated to the chimney.

There was comparatively little wind blowing when the alarm was given, and what there was of it was about south west with accompanying rain. Almost simultaneously, however, with the outbreak, the wind veered more and more to the westward, then northerly until it settled at about north-west with gradually increasing force. This drove the burning embers right across the street and set fire to the opposite buildings on the south side, whilst the flames on both sides worked steadily eastward until the two breaks were reached. In its course the following buildings were quickly

wiped out. — First, Hipwell's store and dwelling on the north side, with Baxter's hotel and stable adjoining it due east. From Baxter's it crossed the street and set fire to a small dwelling house occupied by Mr. Shelton, who was himself absent at Orangeville. It was thought that this building might have been saved inasmuch as it had escaped attack from the somewhat more westerly outbreak at Hipwell's, and the ember drift from Baxter's appeared to bear considerably to the eastward of it. It was evidently fired by the intense heat from the opposite building, and was the first to go down on the south side. The next to go was Mr. W.H. Mitchell's furniture shop and store, followed by an unoccupied store belonging to Mr. W.J. Barton, of Toronto, then by Phillips Bro's, tailor shop and residence. On the other side of the street the destruction of Shelton's house was immediately followed by that of a building occupied by Mr. R. Scott as a store house, then by Mr. S. Hayes' boot and shoe store, Scott's general store and residence, the Commercial Hotel and an intervening empty store between that and Mr. Ashton's drug store, which was the last to succumb to the destroying flames.

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BUSINESS CENTRE BURNED continued from page 2

Whilst the fire was still confined to the Hipwell building, but still with every certainty that the Baxter House adjacent to it must also go down, a determined stand was wisely conceived to confine the fire to these buildings by making a break easterly between the Baxter House and adjoining block by taking down the intervening range of open stabling and shed. If the work had been taken in time, it would no doubt have been very effective, either in entirely checking the fire there, or else in delaying its action until outside assistance could be had. Unfortunately, however, before the work could be accomplished, the fire reached the hotel and took such a vigorous hold that the attempt to effect a breach had to be abandoned. The break between Phillips Bros. tailors shop and the WORLD office was made more efficient by tearing down the intervening board fence, and the removal of a portion of the sidewalk. And yet after this was accomplished, so great was the heat that glass in the westward windows of the WORLD office were cracked, and others of them made uncomfortably hot.

Thus, in something less than four hours, the largest part of the business district of Beeton was completely wiped out, and ten shops, stores and residences destroyed with all their buildings and outhouses. It is difficult to estimate the amount of loss at present, but it must be something in the neighborhood of \$50,000. The losses, covered and uncovered, so far as we can learn, are about as follows:

A.N. Hipwell - store and dwelling - \$4,000
A.N. Hipwell - stock and furniture - \$3,000
C. Baxter - hotel, stables - \$7,000

Wm. Parkins - dwelling - \$1,000
Jas. Young - shop and contents - \$300
W.H. Mitchell - stock, building - \$3,200
W.H. Mitchell - empty store, house - \$800
W.J. Barton - store and house - \$2,500
J.M. Mitchell - store and house - \$700
W.G. Stevens - store and house - \$1,800
Phillips Bros. - store and house - \$400
Town hall building - \$1,000
B. Bucknam - bakery - \$300
S. Hayes - contents house and

shop - \$500
Mr. Ratcliffe - store and house - \$3,000
R. Scott - store, house and stock - \$7,500
J. Coulter - hotel, stables and contents - \$6,500
W. Beemer - store and house - \$4,000
W. Ashton - building and stock - \$1,500
A. McDonald - dwelling - \$900
M. Shelton - contents of house - \$400
Total of destruction - \$50,300
The destruction of property in all these cases was thorough and complete, and where they stood

Great Fire of Beeton - October 19, 1892-1892 - Page 3

there is not a brick or particle of timber left standing above the foundation walls.

From the beginning to the end numbers of our people worked most successfully in the removal of furniture and other property from the burning houses, whilst a greater number, we are sorry to say, looked on with idle indifference. The Beeton women, however, deserve the greatest credit for the manner in which they worked, and for the heroic way in which they "manned" the water buckets, and put to shame the useless drones of whom the crowd contained quite a number of representatives.



The Great Fire of Beeton in progress

Members of the fire brigade attempt to save this building during the Great Fire. Had there been less onlookers and more participants, maybe more of Beeton could have been saved.

The Beeton Fire Brigade

Numerous suggestions were considered and it was decided that the best system would be one which operated on a voluntary basis. With this in mind, the village council initiated a By-Law for the establishment of the fire brigade in 1897. By-Law 141 created a department consisting of twenty men, exclusive of the chief. This position would be filled by a By-Law of the village council. The brigade would consist of a captain, two lieutenants and a secretary-treasurer, to be elected by the other members of the fire brigade at the first meeting of each year.

This first brigade had a reserve force which could be called upon to fill the ranks. Among the members of this first brigade was 28 year old Daniel Watson. This man would be a volunteer firefighter for most of the following six decades.

There were several rules which were written into the By-Law. They were:

- no person under 18 could belong to the brigade
- the chief had the full responsibility at any fire
- the care of the equipment was the responsibility of the chief
- there would be a fire practice at least once a month
- if any member of the brigade received an injury while serving the village at a fire and this injury prohibited him from following his usual occupation, then this individual would receive compensation in the amount of \$5 per week during the disability period.

The members of the first fire brigade were:

Active: J.R. Croft (Chief), A. Goldsmith (Captain), Joe Brown, J.E. Milsap, F. Somers (Secretary), Sam Hayes (Treasurer), S. Robins, W.J. Young, F. Avarrell, James Washburn, J. Livingstone, M. Kearns and D.W. Watson.

Reserve members: Herb Law, James Shaw, John Miller, Harry

Kribbs, H. Fenton, W. Hammell, H. Treadgold and Sam Hogg.

The Beeton Fire Brigade became an invaluable part of Beeton's history. Born out of the ashes of a disaster, it would, during the coming years, prevent further calamities. Over the years the fire bell was rung for many fires large and small. On April 18, 1916, the Beeton Public School caught fire. This building was destroyed but the brigade did save B. Dorsey's house and barn across from the school. Hoses were also connected in the downtown area and the rooftops were wet to prevent the spread of the fire. Even with this precaution, the Town Hall roof did ignite but the fire was quickly extinguished. By this time there were numerous hydrants located throughout the village.

Several other large buildings were destroyed by fire. In 1916, the "House of Industry" (now Simcoe Manor) a barn burned to the ground but the brigade did

prevent the fire from spreading to the home itself. In 1913, the Aiken Mill on Queen Street was destroyed. In 1944, the large Aiken Mill on Dayfoot Street caught fire. By the time the equipment reached the mill, flames were already through the roof and little could be done to save the structure.

There was considerable suspicion concerning this fire as it followed a series of fires which took place in Beeton during the early 1940's.

Another of these mysterious fires was the 1940 burning of the livery stable. Located on Main Street (site of present Municipal Office) it was a familiar sight to residents and travellers. By 1940 its use was negligible as the age of the horse was over. In August, 1940, the building was completely destroyed by fire.

In 1922, Gordon Nichol, who had been a brigade member for

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Luanne Wilton

THE FIRE BRIGADE continued from page 3

several years, was appointed chief. He held this position for the next 25 years.

In 1946, the Town Hall was sold and the fire department was compelled to move from the only home it had ever had. At this time the old blacksmith shop (originally built and operated by Wm. (Bill) Hammel) on Main Street was purchased by the village and the Fire Hall, prior to its last move, slowly took shape. Renovations and improvements were required, especially after a fire truck was purchased in 1967. In 1972 the Beeton Lion's Club contributed to the department by adding a smaller fire-rescue van.

Over the years numerous men have served the brigade with outstanding records. Wallace Hoover, chief for many years, was a member of the elite 50 year group, along with Gordon Nichol, James Hammel and S.R. McKelvey served over 40 years. Emerson Dale contributed 38 years, while numerous men have contributed 25 years.

In September 1990 the fire hall moved to its present location at the corner of Dayfoot and Prospect as the department needed more upgraded facilities. The former premises is now being used by the Ontario Provincial Police as an Extended Services Office.

At present, the Beeton Fire Department has six fire vehicles. Unit #1 (Old Gerty) - Bought in 1987 by the Association and used mainly for parades, but fully functional should it be needed; Unit #2 - Fire chiefs van; Unit #3 - Back up pumper; Unit #4 - Tanker; Unit #5 - Emergency Rescue Truck, bought by the town of Beeton in 1985 and Unit #6 - Main pumper also purchased by the town of Beeton in 1991.

Today the volunteer fire department stands ready as it did ninety-five years ago. The members are:

Chief - Lawrence Hawton
Former Chief - Bill Strachan
Deputy-Chief - Eric Saunders
Captains - Jack Colwell,
Edward Usher, Jeff Dawson and
Marv Wise

Members - Greg Bagisley, Len Bahen, John Beram, Tim Clark, Ross Elliott, Jerry Fullerton, Mike Harjung, Lawrence Henry, Al Hopper, Andy Joly, Joe Korzenko, Tom Lake, Gord MacNeil, Mike

Madaleno, Ron Mason, Robert Middleton, Scott Miller, Clarence Parry, Glen Petrie, Ralph Poick, Dave Roberts, Rick Simon, Mike Urbanski, Steve Weatherhead and Brian Young.

Help from Barrie called in to battle blaze

At approximately 3 a.m. on the date of the fire a telegram was received at the Grand Trunk Railway dispatcher's office, Allandale, stating that Beeton was on fire and asking for help from Barrie.

As soon as the night dispatchers on duty received the news, one went into the yard and ordered an engine and train to get ready. They also telephoned to Barrie for the fire engine and to ring the fire alarm for the brigade.

When the firemen and engine arrived at the Barrie station an express train was on hand and landed them at Beeton one hour and 55 minutes from the time the news was first received in

Allandale.

The brigade set to work and got the fire under control.

Some twelve business places in the centre of Beeton village were destroyed, besides dwellings and other places. They managed to save two hotels and otherwise confine the fire.

The Barrie fireman, who went, fortunately arrived there in time to render some assistance. They were Chief Smith, 1st Lieut. W. Holmes, with branches W.J. Sutherland, F. Bemrose, W. Johnson, L.E. Lane, P.C. Houlahan and firemen T. Rastor and J. McPhee.

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FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST

- ☐ INSTALL & TEST SMOKE DETECTORS ON EVERY LEVEL OF YOUR HOME
- ☐ KEEP A FULLY CHARGED FIRE EXTINGUISHER IN AN ACCESSIBLE LOCATION & ENSURE EVERYONE KNOWS HOW TO USE IT
- ☐ KEEP DOORS CLOSED WHENEVER POSSIBLE
- ☐ HAVE A FIRE ESCAPE PLAN WITH TWO WAYS OUT
- ☐ HAVE A MEETING PLACE OUTSIDE YOUR HOME
- ☐ IF THERE IS A FIRE...LEAVE IMMEDIATELY
- ☐ CRAWL LOW IN SMOKE
- ☐ CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT FROM A NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE

"The best way to fight fires is to prevent them from starting."

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BEETON Fire Fighters Association

The Beeton Fire Fighters Association members would like to take this opportunity to THANK YOU, the people of New Tecumseth (Beeton) and surrounding area for your support down through the decades, a century of them to be exact!

Your 'Community Spirit' and backing, with donations and attendance at our fundraisers, for example, raffles, dances, casino nights, buy a block campaign, and golf tournaments, have helped bring us from a bucket brigade department to a state of the art Fire Department.

We started as a bucket brigade and manual labour to move water in the early 1900's, to a hand pulled hose and nozzle wagon, 1940-60's, built by the volunteers, when hydrants came in to use, then to Old Gerty, our first pumper truck in the 1990's. An emergency response van was donated to us by the Beeton Rotary Club in 1973.

We then hosted a dance and car draw in 1978 and purchased a new pumper truck with the proceeds. In 1984 the association purchased a tanker truck, and lastly, we furnished our new Fire Hall in 1990-91 with donations from our 'Buy a Block Campaign'.

All of the above accomplished because of you. Your property tax dollars have also been utilized by Beeton town council to purchase a rescue van in 1993, build a new Fire Hall in 1989-90 and a purchase a new pumper truck in 1991.

Again our thanks and may you never need our professional services in your lifetime.



There you have it -
100 Years
of Beeton
Fire Fighting



Waterworks by-law defeated

Only four days prior to the fire which destroyed the business section of Beeton, council voted on a by-law to raise money for a system of waterworks, which was defeated by a majority of nine.

An editorial published in the Beeton World, one week after the fire, read as follows — "We had no opportunity to refer to this last week and to the lamentable defeat of this important measure. Perhaps it was scarcely necessary. Our people had just been served with a first class object lesson upon the value of a water system, which needed no rubbing in.

If we had only been wise two or three years before, what we ought not to do two or three years after, the village of Beeton would today be better by three or four times the amount of the expenditure necessary for securing a sufficient supply. Let us hope that what may be regarded as a persistent

indifference in the future, Beeton's blaze has been brilliant enough to enlighten our darkness, if we are not positively stone-blind."

The Shelburne Economist closed its article on the fire by stating — "In this connection the result of the recent vote in the village is not without a lesson. When a vote was taken on waterworks the other day it was defeated by a majority of nine."

Another exchange says — "A disastrous fire occurred in Beeton on Wednesday of last week. It started in the Hipwell's General Store and spread quickly to the adjoining buildings. The by-law for a system of waterworks was voted down only the Saturday before."

Still another says, — "On Saturday, the 15th ult., the village of Beeton voted on a by-law to raise money for a system of waterworks, which was defeated

by a majority of nine. On the following Wednesday, a fire occurred and destroyed some fourteen business places and dwellings. Comment is unnecessary.

A quote in the Alliston Herald said — "Were it not for the Barrie engine the whole town would probably have been a mass of ruins, as they have no fire protection whatever. A by-law to put down a system of waterworks was defeated when voted on last Saturday, but it is hoped this will revive the movement and

before long Beeton will have a complete system of waterworks, as in other progressive towns in Canada."

On the same subject The Creemore Star said — "On Saturday last, the village of Beeton voted on a by-law to raise money for a system of waterworks, which was defeated by a majority of nine. On Tuesday, a fire occurred and cleaned out some fourteen business places and dwellings. Comment is unnecessary."

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HELP FROM BARRIE continued from page 4

The men worked with a will and could have done wonderful service with their splendid machine if they had had a supply of water to work on. As it was they deserve the thanks of Beeton for what they did, and the manner in which it was done. The boys were a genial good natured

lot of fellows and were a credit to the town.

Before the Barrie Fire Brigade left town, Alderman Bell took them all in and treated them to their breakfast at the Queen's. He afterwards presented them each with a pair of the Canadian Hosiery Company's "Arctic Socks" to show his appreciation of the services rendered in saving his building with contents.

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Captain Jeff Dawson
14 years of service



Captain Mary Wise
6 years of service



Mike Harjung
14 years of service



Brian Young
13 years of service



Ross Elliot
13 years of service



Steve Weatherhead
11 years of service



Ron Mason
10 years of service



Mike Madaleno
9 years of service



Robert Middleton
9 years of service



Al Hopper
9 years of service



John Beram
7 years of service

Points of interest regarding the creation of Beeton's Fire Department

THROUGH THE YEARS THEY CONTINUE TO BE MANNED BY VOLUNTEERS

- The Beeton Fire Department was established in 1897, five years following a fire which destroyed the major business district of Beeton
- Equipment consisted of two hand-pulled hose reels, two lanterns, 12 rubber coats, 12 hats and one ladder wagon
- The Fire Hall was a room in the rear of the Town Hall, which is now occupied by the Beeton Record Sentinel
- The fire alarm was a special clapper attached to the town bell which gave a distinctive sound

Beeton Fire Department



Len Babin
6 years of service



Tom Lake
6 years of service



Joe Korsenko
6 years of service



Andy July
6 years of service



Tim Clark
6 years of service



Jerry Fullerton
5 years service



Dave Roberts
5 years of service



Greg Baguley
5 years of service



Glen Petrie
5 years of service



Mike Urbanaki
5 years of service



Gord MacNeil
4 years of service



Clarence Pardy
3 years of service



Ralph Puick
2 years of service



Lawrence Henry
2 years of service



Scott Miller
1 year of service



Rick Simon
1 year of service

- The Beeton Fire Department has in its possession the minutes of all meetings from the first one in April of 1897
- In them it is noted that an electric alarm was first discussed in 1904 and was installed in 1950, 46 years later
- The original fire hose was used until 1950 at which time Wallace Hoover, a member of the Fire Department, designed and built a hose wagon suitable for towing with any available vehicle
- In 1967 firefighters themselves purchased the first fire truck, a 1953 International pumper, that is still operational
- In 1973 the Beeton Lions Club presented a rescue van to the Department
- In 1978 the firefighters, at a monster draw, raised \$50,000 to purchase a new pumper
- In 1985 the firefighters purchased a 1975 tanker to help service the surrounding area of Tecumseth
- In 1987 the Village of Beeton purchased a cube van to house equipment and be used as a rescue vehicle

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WATERWORKS BY-LAW continued from page 5

Long awaited By-law was finally passed

Almost one year later, September 11, 1893, council finally carried the by-law for a new waterworks system for the village of Beeton.

The 11th was a day long to be remembered by the residents of Beeton and surrounding country, as on this day the good people of Beeton by their votes at the polls lifted their village out of the slough of despond into which she has been gradually sinking for some time past.

Promptly at 9 o'clock Returning Officer Overall, with his little box under his arm, appeared at the Town Hall prepared to receive the votes of the freeholders which would decide whether or not we

should have a system of waterworks for the village. The ball was started rolling by John O'Brien placing in the box the first slumper for waterworks, remarking as he passed in his ballot, that the cross he made was so large it could scarcely go into the box.

From this on the votes kept rolling in. Those villagers who had horses cheerfully performed the task of transporting the voters to and from the poll, and from the beaming expression that showed itself on the countenance of six out of every seven it was quite evident the By-law would carry with it an overwhelming majority.

Immediately after 5 o'clock the Returning Officer opened his little box and revealed the contents of same, which told that 67 votes had been polled - 75 for and 12 against the By-Law.

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Beeton women put many a stalwart man to shame

The Beeton women were credited for the manner in which they worked during the fire and for the heroic way in which they "manned" the water buckets, and put to use the useless drones of whom the crowd contained a number of representatives."

One week after the Great Fire a quote in the Beeton World read -

"We would suggest that the young ladies of Beeton form a fire brigade, as their efforts on Wednesday morning to prevent the fire spreading were certainly worthy of notice and put many a stalwart man to shame, - provided you can call him a man who would stand by and watch the girls carrying water and say, 'Ain't them girls great workers.'"



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Our volunteer firefighters have been very active in helping our community, in both fundraising and keeping our department up to date with highest current rescue and fire fighting methods. We established a rescue squad in the early sixties and we acquired the first (in Canada) recording Resus-Artie in 1973.

The Tottenham Fire Department, without the help of past and present residents, would not have had the capability to assist our community.

Credit is due to past and present volunteer members and our chief since 1956, Jim Stone, who have faithfully served our community and surrounding area.

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(Minimum purchase required)

This offer expires Dec. 31, 1992 and is not valid with any other offer. Some restrictions apply. Details in store.

OR

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PRICE**

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with the purchase of a complete pair of
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OR

**1/2
PRICE**

on LENSES
with the purchase of a complete pair of
PRESCRIPTION EYEWEAR
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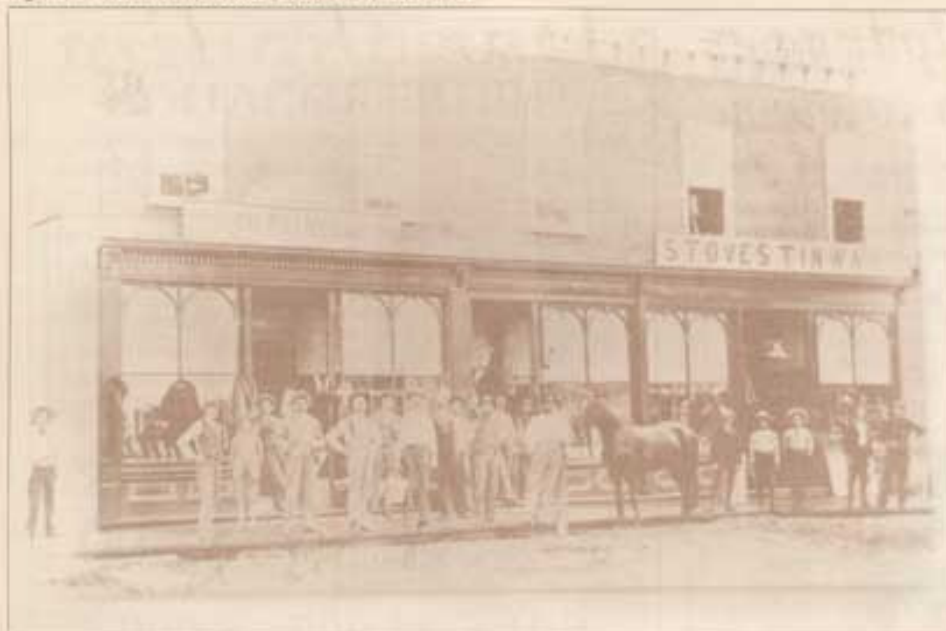
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W.J. Bell's hardware store - saved from ruins

This photo was taken in 1890 - two years prior to the fire which wiped out most of Beeton's business district. W.J. Bell's hardware and general supply store, located on the south side of Main Street was saved during the fire, owing to the narrow space which separated them from the burning mass of the long adjacent range. It was protected by the almost superhuman exertions of volunteers, consisting of both men and women, who kept the western gable thoroughly saturated by pails of water from above and below until the arrival of the steam fire engine with a pair of reels from Barrie.

TO ALL FIREFIGHTERS

Thanks for all you do

The numerous volunteers who make up our area fire departments, Stations 1, 2 and 3 - Alliston, Beeton, Tottenham - Adjala and Schomberg are a group of people who deserve our utmost thanks and support.

They give unselfishly of themselves at fires, rescue calls, assisting the ambulance and the police or any other type of emergency.

They are the ones who get up in the middle of the night, in a blinding snowstorm or on Christmas Eve, to be there to offer their assistance to people they don't even know.

These individuals have risked their lives many times to save the life of a stranger.

On behalf of the residents of New Tecumseth and it's surrounding area, thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.

Christine Kremer

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TOTTENHAM MALL

Rebuilding after the fire

Following the fire, the village council passed a motion allowing the citizens to build temporary establishments for business. These could be used for a period of one year.

Mr. D.A. Jones and Mr. C. Baxter joined forces and preparations were soon made for a rebuilding program. A section of block was proposed by D.A. Jones which was to have five stores with apartments above.

Brick layers were employed from Toronto, being enticed to Beeton by the wages of 10 cents an hour or \$1 a day. The new block of shops went from the corner of Centre Street along the north side to the former Stafford Red and White store.

The following parties, who were burned out at the fire, located as follows: — Mr. R. Scott, in the building owned by the late James Scott; James Young rented a room above it; Mr. S. Hayes occupied Paget's old photostand; W.H. Mitchell occupied the Old Marshall hotel and began fitting the old Presbyterian church as a furniture factory and warehouse; John Coulter and Charles Baxter erected temporary buildings and commenced building at once; B. Bucknam set up his bakery in the rear of the lot purchased by Mr. Richardson from Mr. D.A. Jones; Phillips Bro's occupied the store in front of Dr. Cheffy's; Walter Ashton disposed of his stock of drugs, stationery and jewellery to Dr. W.C. Law and Co. who relocated in the store recently occupied by E. Tomlinson, at the Queen's. The doctor intimated to the public generally that he would keep on hand a complete stock of the best drugs. A number of the above parties made active preparations for

rebuilding in the spring.

As many of the parties who were burned out were probably working people depending upon their daily labour for their daily bread, and to whom the loss of their personal and domestic effects and chattels, was a very serious disaster, a relief committee was formed to look after these fire sufferers.

The committee was composed of Reeve Wright, Councillor W.J. Bell, H.R. Jackson, banker, and Dr. Law. These gentlemen gladly received contributions and saw that they were applied in accordance with the views of the donors.

Dr. Armstrong, Mayor of Alliston, was kind enough to call upon the reeve the day after the fire to ascertain if there were any sufferers by the later fire in need of immediate relief. If so, he would call the Alliston Council together at once and have them take action. Otherwise they would do what they could on Friday, their usual night of meeting.

Large crowds from the surrounding country and villages began weaving through the site of the great fire. Reeve Wright had been busily engaged overseeing and looking after the needy. On the day of the fire he swore in several special constables to watch the effects of those who had suffered from the fire.

Two important needs were emphasized by The Great Fire. First, Beeton would have to find a way to provide an adequate water supply and secondly, that a fire-fighting body should be organized to handle such an emergency, should it ever occur again.



Main Street Beeton - 1925

This photograph of Main Street in Beeton was taken in 1925, after the village was rebuilt. Today, looking from the same perspective, there has only been a minimal amount of change in the village.

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Your smoke detectors are only as good as the batteries that power them. Test them weekly by pushing the test button.

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Beeton Fire Department's new Fire Hall

The Beeton Fire Hall was originally housed in the old Town Hall until the building was sold in 1946. They then moved to the Main Street location, which used to be a blacksmith's shop. The firefighters converted this into a serviceable unit. Over the years the Fire Department outgrew its location and had to place units in other garages. In 1990 the Village of Beeton, with the support of area residents through the "Buy a Block Campaign," constructed the new Fire Hall at 130 Prospect Street.



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