



## Convention of Deaf Opens

The 41st biennial convention of the Ontario Association of the Deaf opened Thursday at Ontario School for the Deaf with Mayor Robin Jeffrey bringing greetings from the city. Superintendent Dr. J. G. Demeza, left, gave a lesson in fingerspelling to the mayor (third from left), watched by Maureen Baskerville, chairman for the convention and Robert Reid, president of OAS. The convention continues until Sunday.

## Deaf Association Elects Woman as Chairman

For the first time in its long history, the Ontario Association of the Deaf has a woman chairman for its biennial convention.

Maureen Baskerville, an OSD graduate, will preside over the convention that started at Ontario School for the Deaf here Thursday and will continue through Sunday.

The association, established in 1889, has met several times at OSD for its convention. Among the resolutions delegates will debate is one calling for the ministry of education to revise its communication policy a school for the deaf. At present the emphasis is on oral communication and fingerspelling and the deaf want sign language included. Most communication at the convention is by signing, with members of OSD staff on hand as interpreters for hearing people.

Dr. J.G. Demeza, many changes at the school told delegates they would see many changes at the school one of them the introduction of fingerspelling this year.

In September for the first time, the provincial government will permit deaf adults without basic teaching certificates, to enrol in the teacher training program at OSD. Former government policy of permitting only holders of a basic teacher's certificate to enrol had limited deaf teachers to those trained in British Columbia and the United States.

"We had one deaf person in teacher training last year, but she had a basic certificate," said Dr. Demeza.

Each of the three schools for the deaf, in Belleville, Milton and London, are recruiting deaf adults to train as teachers. Belleville has already selected one, and Dr. Demeza has hopes of recruiting another.

The school will start a new program for emotionally disturbed deaf children in the fall. One of the houses on the grounds will become a small group home for these children.

The superintendent noted that most OSD students now go home every weekend, under an arrangement by

which their local school boards pay the transportation costs. Those from the far north are able to return for long holiday weekends.

Teachers' professional development days at OSD are held on Mondays so that northern children can have a long weekend. Those from the most remote areas are flown home and the rest go by bus.

In common with its two companion schools OSD now has a superintendent's advisory council comprised of deaf adults, the president of the students' council, parents and others who work with the deaf. Its purpose is to keep the superintendent aware of the needs and desires of the deaf.

The convention continues with a keynote speech by Rev. Dr. Robert Rumball, of the Mission of the Deaf in Toronto Friday afternoon, and a cultural evening later. A field day and banquet and ball at the Four Seasons Hotel are scheduled for Saturday and an ecumenical church service Sunday morning will conclude the events.

Belleville - OSD