

housed about a dozen occupants at one time.

"I think there were rooms in the attic as well those days. The basement was just an old-fashioned cellar used for storage and stuff," continued Bould.

A housekeeper and staff members attended to the needs of the residents. Meals were served and laundry facilities were available in the basement area, she said.

"With that home we definitely filled a much-felt need at the time. But in later years, the government started doing so much — setting up apartments around town. It was not as much of a need any more and that's why we had to close it."

Stella Smith, another board member, said her mother resided in the retirement home for two years in the mid-'70s. The occupants, she recalled, were all elderly women in their 80s.

In the '40s, a county-run home for the aged known in its early days as the House of Refuge existed on Dundas Street East, just past MacDonald Avenue, in Belleville. A grand and massive building overlooking the Bay of Quinte, it had opened its doors to the aged, the handicapped and the destitute in the county since 1908. The name was changed to the Hastings County Home for the Aged in the late 1940s. In 1951, when the City of Belleville and the Hastings County jointly opened the Hastings Manor, its 80 plus residents and staff members moved into the new structure west of Belleville. But the WCA-run residence was the only privately run senior's home in the area at the time, said Smith.

"My mother was quite happy there. She had her own room. Every one of them did. They were served

their three meals. They used to have a television in the livingroom but later each of them got one in their rooms. There was really not much interaction among them. I guess they preferred to live quietly," said Smith.

The old house changed hands one more time when WCA sold it in 1996. Today, the house is still run as a residence for area women by the new owner.

Contact Benzie Sangma at:
bsangma@cogeco.ca

place like a home. We used to give them afternoon tea etc. It was set up to be like a home for them at very little expense to them."

The organization made just minor changes inside the century old home, said Bould.

"We had to make some changes, of course. I think it was in pretty bad shape when we got it but I don't think we changed a lot of its basic plan. A lot of it remained, as it was — the fireplace, the staircase and the rooms, they were kept as they were."

The three-storeyed building often

Intell, Jan. 15, 2005