

Fond adieu to Reverend Hughes

By **SHIRLEY WALKER**
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In the past 31 years, Rev. Leo Hughes and his wife Margaret have become familiar and much loved residents of the Arnprior area, ministering to their congregations, raising their family and serving in the community.

"We've had a good rapport with the folk in all the congregations," said Rev. Hughes. "Through church, we've become one flock, one family."

Recently the popular local figure officially retired from the pulpit.

In 1963, Leo Hughes graduated from the Presbyterian College of Montreal and with his Scottish born wife went to Kirkhill, in the County of Glengarry to begin his ministry.

After his ordination, the Hughes packed up their possessions and their five children and made the move to Arnprior. Their youngest daughter, Catherine, was born three months after they arrived.

"When we first arrived, we were impressed," said Rev. Hughes. "It was a nice place to live and raise a family."

And Rev. Hughes was put to work right away. He served at the church in Dewars Settlement and in St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Arnprior. When the Dewars Settlement Church closed in 1986, Rev. Hughes added the Lochwinnoch Presbyterian Church to his charge.

"People have said to me that it must be dull being a minister," he said. "But there are fun times, great memories and wonderful things if you just keep your eyes open."

Throughout his ministry, Rev. Hughes credits his wife and children for their constant support and understanding.

"The success of any ministry has to be built with tremendous help from your wife and children," said Rev. Hughes. "Margaret has been every bit as much a part of it as I have and the kids were always understanding and supportive. They made it so very much easier."

The co-operation of the elders and congregation are also high-points to Rev. Hughes.

"They were always supportive of new ventures, programs and ideas," he said.

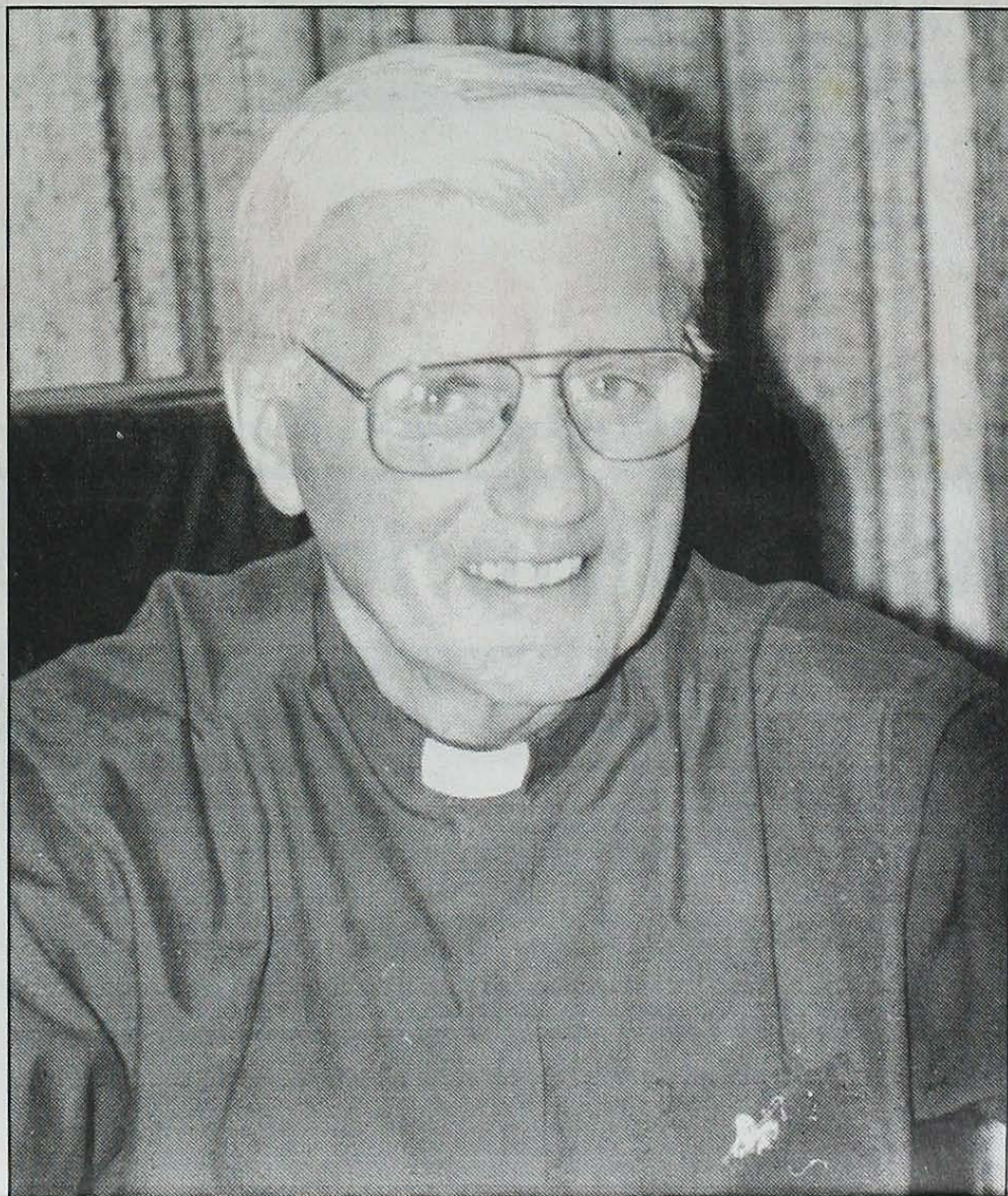
Over the years Rev. Hughes has served the community in many capacities, as a member of the ADMH board, the recreation board, the Ottawa Housing board and as a coach for minor hockey.

He was an integral member of the Ministerial Program in the area, that developed a religious education program for area children.

Margaret's ancestry helped to introduce a "Scottish element," giving the congregation much-enjoyed Scottish night outs.

A founding member of the Rotary Club, Rev. Hughes is still very active in the club and plans to stay involved during his retirement. "The club is always looking for new members," he said.

Rev. Hughes feels the high point of his ministry here was in 1976 when the 102 General Assembly was hosted in Arnprior. More than 350 visitors flooded the town and with the support of the congregation and community, the event was a huge success.



Ready to relax: Reverend Leo Hughes and his wife Margaret are taking an extended holiday in Scotland before settling in this area to be close to family and friends and to do a little golfing.

The Hughes are taking an extended holiday in Scotland and, upon their return, plan to settle in the area to be close to four of their children and five of their six grandchildren.

"I'll still be involved in some work," said Rev. Hughes. "Next year I'll probably challenge the high school kids to a walk again. There will be enough to do."

Rev. Hughes has several interests lined up to fill any

spare time he can find. His 1,200 piece Coca-Cola collection is always waiting for new pieces and the local golf courses are beckoning him.

"We'll never make the Masters, but Margaret and I like to golf," he joked. "None of the pros will have any problems with us though."

The people of Arnprior turned out to show their appreciation the Hughes at an April 25 for a dinner and roast. The over-flowing hall

at St John Chrysostom's amply demonstrated the special place the couple holds in the hearts of the community.

"When we announced our retirement in January, it seemed like such a long way off. I don't think it's really set in yet," said Rev. Hughes. "It probably won't until I don't need to go in on Friday. This is a new chapter in our lives. People say 'You'll enjoy it,' and I guess we're about to find that out."