

by The Cordwainer

Reflections

Town's first lady councillor

Walkerton was almost 100 years old before a lady was elected to town council.

The breakthrough came in 1948 when Mayor Charlie McNaughton approached Mrs. Gordon Crozier to run for council. Mrs. Crozier's father had been the mayor of Parkhill, so she had some knowledge of the headaches a council member could encounter. She had long felt that women should take a keener interest in political affairs, so it was hard for her to refuse.

Helen Crozier was born and raised in Parkhill. After her marriage to Gordon, they lived out west for some years. In 1919 her husband was made manager of the Walkerton branch of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, and the family moved into the house the bank owned at 601 Colborne Street. They lived in that house for over 25 years and raised their family of seven children there. The last of their children, Norm, was born two years after they moved to Walkerton.

Mayor McNaughton had good reasons for wanting Helen to sit on his council. She had been council representative on the welfare board during the depression. She had been convener of the women's workroom during the war. She was an active member of the flourishing IODE of her day, and she had been instrumental in the formation of the Walkerton Hobby Club, which later led to the formation of the Recreational Commission.

In her first bid for a council seat Helen led the polls. During her six years on council she filled her positions with energy and tact. She was chairlady of the Recreation Commission, and also of the cemetery board, as well as a member of the property committee and the library board.

It was with all this experience behind her



Helen Crozier

that she came through with a large majority when she ran for deputy reeve in 1953. This automatically made her a member of county council.

She was the first lady to ever sit on county council.

When Helen retired from public life in 1954, Harry Buehlow was the mayor, and he paid her a fitting tribute when he stated she had served her town well.

In closing, it might be well to mention that her children also served their country well. One son, David, lost his life in World War II. Daughter Nora was in the service, and received a decoration for "service beyond the call of duty"; and sons Douglas and Norman both served with the air force. Three of her sons entered the banking field and both daughters became nurses.

Next week - Silver Creek



A GANG of Mennonite workers tore down the former Walkerton Agricultural Services building, next to Kelly's Tavern, in short order last week. The vacant lot will be used for parking by MacDuff's Motor Sales. (Wassink photo)

Sparling & B.S.