

## EARLY MORNING FIRE DESTROYS HERITAGE HOTEL IN RUSSELL

The former Commercial Hotel in Russell was destroyed by fire on January 10, 1991. It now houses Russell's Meat and Grocery Store operated by Mr. Ken Gon and his wife Maureen. The Owner of the building Jan van der Veen was renovating the Heritage Building. An explosion occurred blowing the roof off sending debris across the street. Windows in the Campbell Building where Sheldrick Insurance is located across the street were broken. The sign of Forsters Flowers melted as did the panelling on the Town and Country Video Store. Russell Fire Chief Roger Pharand dispatched the Embrun Fire Department and they sprayed buildings on either side of the fire site.

The Commercial Hotel was built in 1899 and was one of the finest hotels in the Ottawa Valley. It survived the 1915 Fire that destroyed the core of the village.

Fire Chief Roger Pharand had much praise for the Volunteers who helped with their time and talents during the fire. Thanks to: the Russell Fire Department Women's Auxilliary, his wife & Marlene Paul for handling Base Communications and Jeff Hubbard for active participation, to the Embrun Fire Department for their assistance, for the coffee from Chandra Webster and the Bourguignons, to Carol Ann Stockley for soup and coffee, and Jerry Leroux for his services of excavating equipment. Also the Provincial Police, Fire Marshall's Office, the Township employees for hydrant problem solved, and to anyone else who he may have omitted.

