



STOP IT! CASTLETON W.I. CLAIMS A WIN!

COLBORNE CHRONICLE June 13/02 PHOTO BY MANDY MARTIN

A new stop sign in Castleton village is a victory for the Castleton Women's Institute: just ask members, left to right, Shirley McComb, Joyce Clarke, Irene Osborne, president Beth May and Sue LaBerge. See story on page 2.

Cramahe CAO responds to media report

By MANDY MARTIN
STAFF WRITER

A numbered Ontario company once owned by Cramahe Township CAO Merlin Dewing is one of 52 companies, along with five former Ontario Realty Corp. (ORC) employees, from whom the Ontario government and ORC are now seeking \$47-million in damages for alleged corruption, government kick-backs and bid-rigging, according to a report in *The Sunday Star*, June 9.

However, Monday morning, Mr. Dewing said he has received no notification of the civil action. In fact, his first indication of pending legal action came from *Star* business reporter Tony Van Alphen.

"Last Thursday or Friday, I talked with the (*Toronto Star*) reporter. That was the first I knew of it," Mr. Dewing said Monday. "I explained I had sold my numbered company in 1999. I asked him (the reporter) where he got my name and he said he wouldn't tell me. I said I was going to call to talk with the police officer I had talked with 1.5 years ago, but (the reporter) told me not to at this time."



Merlin Dewing

Just over a year ago, Mr. Dewing says, he talked with Ontario Provincial Police investigating contracts and business dealing stemming from his former numbered company being involved in an alleged bid-rigging incident in North Bay. The latest provincial government/ORC planned action includes the numbered company.

"Since 1985, I had had a numbered company. It had been dormant, not doing anything. This guy (Ivan Sirman) bought it from me. It wasn't doing anything at all. In 1985, I was building a house. I was going to build a second house, so created the company to protect me from liability issues. Then the company sat and sat and sat. One day (Mr. Sirman and I) were talking and I offered to sell the company if he wanted to buy it. Now I know why he wanted it. I had a numbered company I sold to this guy (Sirman) in 1999."

Mr. Dewing alleges Mr. Sirman continued to use Mr. Dewing's name, forging it on documents. "I spoke with police about this over a year ago," Mr. Dewing said.

Sirman-owned companies are allegedly involved in a land-flip deal in Bowmanville according to the June 9 *Sunday Star* article.

Mr. Dewing's numbered company was sold to Mr. Sirman November 1999.

"I'm waiting for (Mr. Sirman's) lawyer to call me with the documentation," Mr. Dewing said Monday morning.

"I'm comforted to some extent because I have documentation" for the sale of the numbered company, Mr. Dewing says.

However, he says he feels much like "a person who's been charged with rape and they didn't do it."

continued on page 2