



FIREFIGHTERS FOUGHT blaze from both the front and rear end of the McPhedrins stately century-old stone farm home, but flames worked their way through the ceiling and enveloped the entire residence. Early in the fight, firefighters thought they had confined the fire to the rear of the home but they ran out of water and by the time more arrived the flames had got out of control. Right photo shows the damage inflicted on the rear of the large home about 12.30 a.m. The brigade was on the job until dawn. (Photo by H. Coles)

McPhedrins will rebuild home destroyed in all-night fire

Estimate \$80,000 loss

The stately home of Mr. and Mrs. Duncan McPhedran at R.R. 4, Rockwood, will be rebuilt along the lines of the original structure, destroyed by a costly \$75-\$80,000 fire last Wednesday evening.

Mrs. McPhedran told the Free Press that the existing walls of the 100-year-old farm home are 18 inches thick and were left intact. They hope to rebuild the home using the original walls although no definite plans as yet exist.

Neighbors and friends have assisted the McPhedran family cleaning up the rubble left by the night-long blaze. As a result building could start anytime.

Mr. and Mrs. McPhedran and their two sons Peter, 14, and David, 10, are staying at the

home of Elizabeth McPhedran, Duncan's sister in Rockwood, since the fire swept through their dwelling, one of the really fine examples of stone housing erected by township pioneers. They had recently spent considerable time and money restoring and improving the century-old home which has been in the McPhedran family since 1889.

Many kindnesses
The McPhedrins have been overwhelmed at the many acts of kindness which have been shown them since the fire.

"I have always believed in the innate goodness of man. Now I am sure of it," Mrs. McPhedran

told the Free Press. People have donated clothing, food, left articles in their car for them without leaving names.

"It has been fantastic," she says with conviction. The family lost most of their clothing in the flames.

The fire started in the kitchen of the farm home when grease caught fire. Ten-year-old Peter was alone in the house at the time on crutches.

He hopped to the barn to notify his father, there with David and the hired man. When Duncan tried to enter the house to phone for the Rockwood-Eramosa fire department the extreme heat drove him back and he had to travel to the adjacent farm of his brother Alex to use the phone.

The Rockwood brigade soon arrived but the intense heat of the fire had spread further than they realized.

Fire Chief Carl Meadows said he thought the brigade had the blaze under control at one point just as the pumper ran out of water. Water was ferried to fight the flames from a creek down the Sixth Line.

By midnight flames had broken through to the front section of the large stone home. Many of the valuables had been carried from the living and dining rooms and porch but volunteers and fire-

fighters could not save the pine furniture which included valuable pool beds and other heirlooms.

Firefighters were hampered in their efforts by a strong wind and the structure of the home which had dormers protruding from the roof, a sturdy example of a house built to stand for a century.

Overcome with smoke
One firefighter, Paul Bolton, Main St., Rockwood, was overcome with smoke while he fought the fire. He was sent to Guelph General Hospital for observation and released after staying overnight.

Although the McPhedrins

estimate damage to their home at \$75-\$80,000, the actual loss can never be recorded. Their home was filled with heirlooms and irreplaceable antiques which no price tag could cover.

The kitchen was completely destroyed and all the appliances including two freezers, a dishwasher and refrigerator melted in the intense heat.

Mrs. McPhedran was in Guelph when the fire started, taking the last in a series of guidance classes. She is a teacher at the Rockwood Centennial School. Two other sons and a daughter reside away from home. Neil, 24, lives in Toronto, Greta, 21,

attends the University of Waterloo and Allan, 19, is employed by the Bank of Montreal.

The hired man is staying at the home of Duncan's brother Alex on the adjoining farm while another hired man is vacationing in England.

Firefighters got the blaze under complete control about 6 a.m. but never completed their vigil until about 8 a.m., a very weary group. Neighbors served coffee and lunch to them through the long hours of fighting the fire.



FOUR GENERATIONS of pretty ladies from 79 to four years old as Mrs. Myra Vickers of Guelph (formerly of Rockwood) poses with daughter Moira Nightingale on her left, granddaughter Marjorie Griffenham to her right, and close to her great-grandmother's knee, little Barbara Griffenham. Barbara also has a younger brother Duane who was born in June, 1971. (Photo by Lorraine)

Happenings at Rockwood School



By Judy Finley
Last Wednesday the girls' volleyball team and the boys' basketball team played against Brisbane. The score was 6-4 for Brisbane's basketball team and for the two volleyball games the score was 9-6 for Rockwood and 9-8 for Brisbane. Rick Kelly got

both baskets for Rockwood's basketball team and Teresa Moss got the most points for our volleyball team.

The badge that will be used for Rockwood Centennial School was designed by Evelyn Druif and Kitee MacPherson. The other two well designed were Mark Hamilton's and Laura Milbourne.

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